

SANTA BARBARA ALLOTMENT #403

Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2006

The annual meeting for the Santa Barbara Allotment was held on March 14, 2006, at the District Office at Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were Andie Sanchez, Pete Contreras, Octavio Griego, Anthony Esquibel, Joe Griego, Estevan Lopez, Armando Romero, Antonio Sanchez and Charlie Sanchez from the Santa Barbara Grazing Association. Melvin Herrera represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Santa Barbara Grazing Association.

FS and permittees discussed current drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment, and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming season. Some considerations in dealing with drought are reduction in authorized numbers, season of use, pasture rotations, and possible early off dates. Permittees volunteered a 29 percent reduction in number of permitted livestock to deal with prevailing drought conditions. This number reduction, as well as good management to achieve better distribution on the allotment, will allow for rangeland plant recovery.

1. Permittee	Number and Kind	Authorized number and kind
Santa Barbara Grazing Association	192 cow/calf, 11 bulls	134 cow/calf, 11 bulls
Pete A. & Gloria M. Contreras	(10 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Lloyd, Anthony, & Norman Esquibel	(25 cow/calf)	(25 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Dorothy K. Gonzales	(18 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Joe G. & Helen Griego	(7 cow/calf)	(7 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Manuel A. Griego	(7 cow/calf)	(7 cow/calf)
Octavio Griego	(12 cow/calf)	(12 cow/calf)
Estevan R. Lopez	(10 cow/calf)	(10 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Rutilio A. Martinez	(10 cow/calf)	(10 cow/calf)
Armando Romero	(10 cow/calf)	(10 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Clarence R. Romero	(9 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Joseph Oliver Rodarte	(4 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Lee and Betty Maestas	(30 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Andie R. Sanchez	(22 cow/calf)	(22 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Charlie F. & Brenda M. Sanchez	(18 cow/calf)	(18 cow/calf, 1 bull)

2. Season of Use	
06/01 - 9/30	(122 days) Santa Barbara

Table 1 - Season 06/01 – 09/30 of Use

3. Pasture Rotation				
Pasture	Dates	Time	Actual use	Utilization%
Santa Barbara (hayfield)	06/01 - 6/04	4 days		
Santa Barbara (bottoms)	06/05 – 6/10	6 days		
West Fork, Middle Fork, East Fork	06/11 – 08/05	56 days		
Indian/Jicarita	08/06 – 08/20	15 days		
Osha/Bear Mtn/Comales	08/21 – 09/20	30 days		
Santa Barbara (bottoms and hayfield)	09/21 – 09/30	10 days		

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, pasture division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattleguards, and other range structural improvements must be maintained prior to the permittees going on to the allotment.

5. Other Items of Discussion

The 2005 season went well overall. Stocking the allotment with a 17 percent reduction in numbers allowed the permittees to graze all season long within the utilization guidelines of 40 percent in key areas as monitored by Forest Service employees. Distribution of livestock needs to improve as many areas of the allotment are receiving little or no utilization. Distribution of livestock is key and requires diligent riding from all members. Permittees did a good job with maintenance of range improvements on the allotment. This upcoming season the East Fork and Middle Fork will be used at the same time as the West Fork with about 60 percent of the livestock in the East and Middle Fork and 40 percent In the West Fork to try to improve distribution.

Utilization guidelines for 2006 are 40% of available annual forage in key use areas and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Forage utilization will be measured in key forage areas.

The grazing fee this year is \$1.56 per head month for cattle.

FS discussed ongoing projects in Santa Barbara which include additional thinning and burning.

Permittees were asked to furnish the Forest Service with an actual use report showing all costs incurred with management of the allotment for last season.

Some discussion on the upcoming NEPA process planned for this allotment took place. The allotment is scheduled for analysis in the near future. Forest Service is continuing to read old transects established on the allotment and would encourage permittees to participate in data gathering again this season.

Forest Service again encouraged permittees to cut the hay meadow prior to Canada thistle setting its seed. There has been a visible reduction in the amount of Canada thistle in the last few years.

FS will provide replacement tags this year as needed.

FS relayed information in cooperation with the New Mexico Livestock Board on required bull testing for Bovine Trichomoniasis on all bulls entering FS lands.

Permittees were encouraged to attend a two day workshop in Abiquiu at the Ghost Ranch on innovative grazing management. Flyers were passed out to all members.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2006:

1. Thinning (Cañada Honda)
2. Prescribed burns
3. Stock tank in Bear Mountain
4. Cattleguard on road between Hodges and Llano
5. Trough for Trick Tank in Bear Mountain

FS will provide up to a quarter mile of fence materials for reconstruction of the fence in Bear Mountain.

Forest Service will continue helping to maintain the fence around the Santa Barbara campground.

Permittees would like to install a cattleguard along the private boundary in the Bear Mountain pasture. FS has been unable to determine if they have easement. FS can provide "please close gate" signs to help alleviate the problem for the near future.

Permittees and FS will look at the range together to determine range readiness and on-date.

Forest Service would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management (either season or numbers) so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittees.

APPEAL RIGHTS:

This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90. In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to closing or the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).

A notice of appeal must be filed with the Forest Supervisor, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta, Taos, NM 87571, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with the Camino Real District Forest Ranger, who was the deciding officer and the address for mailing the appeal copy is P.O. Box 68, Peñasco, New Mexico 87553.