

RIO CHIQUITO ALLOTMENT #402
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2006

The annual meeting for the Rio Chiquito Allotment was held on February 24, 2006, at the District Office in Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were, Joe and Betty Romero, Presiliano Sandoval, and Michael Dominguez from the Rio Chiquito Grazing Association. Melvin Herrera and Sean Kelly represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Rio Chiquito 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 authorized numbers, season of use, pasture rotations, and possible early off dates. Permittees volunteered a 31 percent reduction in number of permitted livestock to deal with prevailing drought conditions. This number reduction will allow for rangeland plant recovery. Grazing nine head on the Canada Ancha and/or Canada Abeyta of the Trampas allotment was agreed to with the members of the Trampas allotment.

1. Permittee	Permit Number and Kind	Authorized Number and Kind
Rio Chiquito Grazing Association	180 cow/calf, 9 bulls	125 cow/calf, 6 bulls
Gene Dominguez	(6 cow/calf)	(6 cow/calf)
Joe and Elizabeth Romero	(112 cow/calf)	(110 cow/calf, 5 bulls)
Joyce Sandoval	(5 cow/calf)	(5 cow/calf)
Presiliano Sandoval	(4 cow/calf)	(4 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Archie R. Velarde	(53 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)

2. Season of Use	
05/16 - 9/30	(138 days)

Table 1 - Pasture Rotation

<u>3. Pasture Rotation</u>	<u>Planned</u>		<u>Actual use</u>	<u>utilization %</u>
Pasture	Estimated Dates	Estimated Time		
Lower Entrañas	05/16 - 06/05	21 days		
Jacinto Canyon	06/06 – 06/15	10 days		
Cejita Mesa	06/16 – 07/06	21 days		
Cebadilla	07/07 - 08/10	35 days		
Rio Chiquito	08/11 - 09/30	51 days		
Vallecitos (Dominguez)	05/16 – 09/30	138 days		
Canada Ancha- Canada Abeyta (Pres, Joyce)	06/07 – 09/30	117 days		

Presiliano and Joyce Sandoval will start in the Lower Entranas pasture then move to the Canada Ancha and use this pasture in combination with their private land and the Canada Abeyta pasture on the Trampas allotment.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittees. Assigned allotment boundary fences, 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 Discussed

The 2005 grazing year went well on the allotment. Permittees contributed to a good season by keeping cattle well distributed and volunteering a reduced stocking of the allotment of 34 percent. Utilization was within the utilization guidelines in key areas as monitored by Forest Service employees. Maintenance of range improvements was good.

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.

Grazing Instructions for 2006 were discussed and are the same as in 2005.

Utilization guidelines for 2006 are 40% of available annual forage in key use areas and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Use guidelines can be adjusted to 60% use on crested wheat stands west of the highway. Forage utilization will be measured in key forage areas.

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

Permittees were encouraged to monitor their allotment and provide documentation copies to the FS.

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 expressed their strong opposition to FS

enforcing State Laws having to do with the issue of Trich, but did think it was to their benefit to test their bulls.

The issue of NM highway right of way fence maintenance responsibility was discussed. FS will discuss maintenance needs with the highway department prior to livestock entering the forest this year. There was also some discussion on the NM Highway Department's responsibility in fencing of Right of Ways. About ¼ mile of fence is needed along the highway right-of-way to keep cattle in the Vallecitos unit. The highway department has been unwilling to fence the area and the permittee has not stocked livestock for the past few years because of that.

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

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2006:

1. Stock tanks in Rio Chiquito pasture
2. ¼ mile of fence is needed east of highway 76 on the south end of the Cebadilla pasture.
3. Cejita Mesa Trick Tank #1 is leaking from rust holes and needs storage tank replaced.
4. Water development and drift fence in Osha Cienega
5. Troughs to replace old ones across the allotment.
6. Storage tank for Vallecitos.
7. Burning and thinning projects in Entrañas.
8. Corral in mouth of Rio Chiquito
9. Reconstruction of corrals in Lower Entrañas, Jacinto Canyon, and along FR 160 in Ojito.

Tank #4 needs some work so that the storage tanks will fill. FS and permittees will look at the situation. This year FS is planning to work on building the stock tanks in the Rio Chiquito pasture and providing materials for maintenance of the corral in Lower Entranas. Permittees from the Trampas allotment are willing to help with the maintenance on the corral. Troughs are also available from the FS to replace any old ones on the allotment. A cattleguard between the Lower Entranas pasture and the Trampas allotment needs to be cleaned out and drained to avoid being silted in.

FS will look into providing new tags this year with yellow tags as the current black tags are no longer legible.

Joe mentioned that he was having difficulty keeping his cattle on the allotment till the end of September and asked if the season of use could be shifted to allow earlier grazing in the spring and reduce some days in the fall. FS responded that this would have to be considered whenever the allotment undergoes NEPA as we would be proposing to use dry grass and going on before range readiness was achieved. NEPA is scheduled for this allotment to occur several years out. Discussion on what the process would entail followed. FS discussed the possibility of using the pastures west of the highway in late fall if cattle cause problems again in September by wanting to come down early.

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 permittee.

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.