ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2015 Grazing Season
(3/01/2015-2/28/2016)

Reserve Ranger District
Gila National Forest

Cox Canyon/Eagle Peak Allotment

Agreed To By: David Westbrook Rosa M. Westbrook Date: 11-21-14

Dave and Rosa Westbrook, DBA Flying W Ranch, *Permittees*

Approved By: John D. Pierson Date: 11/24/14

John D. Pierson, *District Ranger*

2015 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)

Allotments: Cox Canyon and Eagle Peak
Permittee: Flying W Ranch
Permit Number: 61173

Permitted Use:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Flying W Ranch	90 Cow/Calf	Eagle Peak - Term	3/01-2/28
Flying W Ranch	95 Cow/Calf	Cox Canyon - Term	3/01-2/28
Flying W Ranch	4 Horses	Cox Canyon - Term	3/01-2/28

1. **Authorization:** Authorized to graze the following in 2015:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Flying W Ranch	147 Cow/Calf	Term	3/01-2/28
Flying W Ranch	4 Horses	Term	3/01-2/28

Counting Livestock: The standard for counting livestock on an allotment is as follows:

a. All cattle six (6) months of age or older **at the time of entering** the National Forest **and all weaned** animals regardless of age will be counted against the permitted numbers on the allotment and charged for at the current rate.

Nonuse: Application for credit or refund must be made in "**writing**" and "**in advance**" by the permittee to the District Ranger using Form FS-2200-1 (Refund, Credit, or Transfer Application). When it is not possible to be timely in getting to the Ranger District Office, the permittee may phone in a request for refund or credit. The permittee will then complete Form FS-2200-1 (Refund, Credit, or Transfer Application) at the next visit to the Reserve Ranger District Office. **Note**: Credit or refund applications will not be processed unless value is $100.00 or more and District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time livestock are removed from NFS Lands.

Bovine Trichinosis: Virgin bulls not exposed to breeding are exempt from testing if under 12 months of age. As of 2/26/10, bulls 12 months of age and older are required to have a negative trich test within 30 days prior to entry. **A signed affidavit from the owner for the virgin status of bulls 12 TO 24 months of age is no longer applicable.** Non-virgin Breeding age Bulls must be tested negative prior to import into New Mexico. Non-virgin Breeding age Bulls sold within the state of New Mexico must be tested negative within 30 days prior to change of ownership. Please contact the New Mexico Livestock Board for more details.

2. **Management:** 2015 Pasture Rotation:

Pasture	Time Frame	Comment
Juniper/Wilson/Tularosa	3/01-4/28 (all cattle)	
Cox Canyon East ½	5/01-8/15 (all cattle)	
Cox Canyon West ½	8/16-10/31 (all cattle)	
Juniper/Wilson/Tularosa	11/01-2/28 (all cattle)	
Largo	11/01-2/28 (as needed)	Hospital/heifer pasture
Holding and Holding #1	3/01-2/28 (horses)	

No Livestock are allowed within the riparian area of the Tularosa River on National Forest System Lands. Please maintain all fences and water gaps necessary to keep your cattle out of the Tularosa River on NFS lands. Utilization is limited to 15% use in Negrito Creek. Please monitor and distribute livestock to prevent exceeding the allowable use in Negrito Creek.

Please notify us of cattle movements onto and off the allotment, as well as refinements that may be needed to enhance the management system. If you identify the need to differ from this management system by more than 15 days, please contact this office at least two weeks in advance so the District has time to conduct monitoring and assess your request.

3. **Utilization Standards and Monitoring:** In accordance with the 12/14/2012 Cox Canyon Decision Notice the maximum allowable use levels set for the Cox Canyon Allotment will be conservative use **(30-40%).** In accordance with the 12/13/1999 Eagle Peak Decision Notice, the allowable use level for Eagle Peak Allotment will be **35%**; in addition stubble heights should not be less than an average 3 inches on blue and hairy grama. Stubble heights also should not be less than 5 inches on sideoats grama, and no less than 6 inches on mountain muhly. Utilization is limited to 15% use in Negrito Creek. Use of browse is not to exceed the **50%** level. Monitoring will be conducted within two weeks before or after livestock leave a scheduled pasture. If utilization levels within portions of a scheduled pasture approach allowable use, you are required to move livestock into areas not approaching allowable use. If cattle cannot be effectively managed away from areas within the pasture that have met allowable use or if utilization objectives are met throughout the pasture prior to scheduled rotation, contact District Personnel. Cattle will be moved into the next available pasture within the annual rotation. In the event that forage utilization objectives are met in all available pastures, livestock will be removed from the allotment. Management adjustments will be made to the following years Annual Operating Instructions to avoid recurring situations. The following dates have been tentatively scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are highly encouraged and invited to participate in monitoring with District personnel and/or on your own.

Allotment	Pasture	Monitoring date
Eagle Peak	Juniper/Tularosa /Wilson	6/04/2015
Cox Canyon	Cox Canyon East	8/20/2015
Cox Canyon	Cox Canyon West	10/22/2015

4. **Grazing Restriction:** The Eagle Peak and Cox Canyon Allotments include Mexican Spotted Owl Protected Activity Centers (PAC). In these PAC's the following activities are restricted during the breeding season (March 1-August 31): livestock concentrations or trailing, fence construction, and livestock salting. Routine maintenance of range improvements is allowed.

5. **Forage Growth and Water Availability:**
Per Part 2, clause 8(c) of your Term Grazing Permit, if forage growth and water availability are not adequate during all or portions of the 2015 grazing season, total or partial livestock removal from the allotment may be necessary.

6. **Salt and Supplement Policy:**
Supplemental feeding of livestock is allowed (to strategically manage livestock distribution and forage use) as follows:
   a) Place supplements on previously disturbed areas (i.e., borrow pits) or natural bedrock outcrops when possible (supplement sites).
   b) Locate supplement sites 0.25 mile or more from waters and key areas except where prior written permission has been obtained from District Ranger.
   c) Locate supplement sites where forage is abundant and utilized less than average.
   d) Limit supplement types to non energy feeds such as salt, protein and mineral blocks.
   e) Use products that prevent the spread of noxious weeds, no feeding of hay on National Forest System Lands.

7. Range Improvements: All assigned range developments identified in your Term Grazing Permit must be maintained to a functional status.

Advance planning is needed for any range improvement reconstruction or replacement, including fences and water systems to evaluate the need for any additional surveys. General maintenance/repair is excluded. Advance planning is also needed for authorized stock tank cleaning so surveys can be scheduled accordingly. Please contact the District in advance if you are proposing this type of work to inquire about the availability of materials, necessary clearances and for a permit modification.

Please protect natural springs and areas with riparian type vegetation. Drainage bottoms, creeks, springs, and cienegas, where water is available, are most susceptible to livestock concentrations.

The following range improvements were discussed and planned for this grazing season:

Fences:
1. Eagle Peak - Fence #6116, approximately 3 miles needs heavy maintenance
2. Cox Canyon – Fence #6161OA needs maintenance on the northern portion.

Water:
3. The permittee plans to seek funding to complete the drilling of an additional 200 ft. of Antelope Well located at Antelope Tank #6230.
4. Extend Collins Park Well Pipeline into Cox Canyon per the 12/14/2012 Cox Canyon Allotment Decision Notice
5. Sheep Camp Tank #6509 needs cleaned when dry.
6. Dry Mesa Tank #6134 needs cleaned when dry.

The Cox Canyon/Eagle Peak Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 3, Section 8. It complies with the standards and guidelines found in the 12/14/2012 Cox Canyon Decision Notice, the 12/13/1999 Eagle Peak Decision Notice and in the Gila National Forest Plan. It also complies with the Endangered Species Act on-going grazing consultation for the Eagle Peak and Cox Canyon allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the annual operating instructions.