

Glenwood Ranger District

Gila National Forest

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2015

Holt Gulch Allotment #410

Prepared By:

/s/ DK Brown
District Range Staff

Date: 02/11/15

Approved By:

/s/ DK Brown for Debbie Cress
District Ranger

Date: 02/11/15

Annual Operating Instructions

I. INTRODUCTION

Kendall Brown (Forest Service), and Bill Cupit (permittee) & John Sheldon (manager) met on February 11, 2015, to discuss management of the Holt Gulch Allotment for the upcoming grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions are the result of that discussion.

Holt Gulch Allotment Term Permitted Livestock Numbers

Number and class of livestock	Dates
150 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01 – 02/28
5 Horses-Saddle	03/01 – 02/28

Holt Gulch Allotment Annual Authorization

Number and class of livestock authorized	Dates Authorized
150 cow/calf	03/01 – 02/28

Holt Gulch Allotment Scheduled Pasture Rotation

Class of Livestock	Scheduled Rotation Date	Pasture
Heifers	03/01 – 05/31	Deer Park (59 head)
Heifers	06/01 – 02/28	Goat (59 head)
Cow/calf	03/01 – 05/31	Los Olmos/York (91 head)
Cow/calf	06/01 – 02/28	Holt Gulch (91 head)
REST	REST	Mesa, Shelton

Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. If there is a need to deviate from the above pasture rotation schedule by more than 15 days, you must notify the District Ranger of the proposed change in the pasture rotation date and the reason for the change. A deviation from the above schedule of more than 15 days must be approved by the District Ranger verbally or in writing. The District Ranger must be notified 5 days prior to the time livestock enter or leave the Forest if the placing on or removal of livestock is not planned in the above schedule and if more than 10 head are being moved.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture or on a key area. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible. Failure to maintain control of your livestock may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in a functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify this office so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available.

Range improvements planned for repair/reconstruction in 2014:

- 1) Repair pipeline #4131 in Holt Gulch and replace 1 drinker (FS will provide these). **COMPLETED in 2014.**
- 2) Clean York Tank (#0534). Clean Los Olmos Tank (#0961). Clean CCC Tank (#0525). Permittee will call district before cleaning so that we can document the tanks are dry and clearances have been obtained. Kendall will obtain archeological clearances for access with dozer to these tanks.
- 3) Repair/replace pipeline #4131 from road where it crosses Holt Gulch past Lucky Tank upstream to Holt Spring. This section of pipe was washed out during flooding in September 2013. **COMPLETED in 2014.**
- 4) Repair roadways in Red Colt Canyon to well, Holt pasture to Stanley cabin, Shelton to solar well and to tanks mentioned above, and Whitewater (C48) from trailhead up to end of road. FS road crew may complete this work, if not Kendall will obtain archeological clearances prior to permittee starting this repair work.
- 5) Waterlots around earthen tanks need varying level of repair/reconstruction on the allotment. Permittee will work with Kendall to determine priority and availability of materials.

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment: not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District may allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers; dates of entering and leaving pastures, shipping dates and cattle losses (grown stock and calves). This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal, prior to, or at the time, the livestock are taken off the allotment. **You will be required to provide your**

Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

A \$25 administrative fee will be charged for any additional bills for collection that are sent to you due to either late payment or for split billing on seasonal allotments. This fee will be collected to pay for the cost associated with issuing an additional bill for collection. There is no administrative fee for the normal "split billing" on yearlong allotments.

It is necessary for you to write the bill number on your check prior to submitting it to the lockbox. This is necessary to insure that your payment is credited to your account.

5. Short Age Calf Policy: Any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31 need to be paid for starting January 1.

6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of energy supplements on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplements is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved.
- b. Feeding of hay on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be **certified weed free** hay and you must provide the proper documentation.
- c. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks or molasses licks on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.
- d. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use. You may place salt near water or in corrals only after you have contacted district personnel and informed them of where the salt will be and how long the salt will remain.

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

The Allotment Management Plan (AMP) on this allotment is in need of update to meet Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines. At the present time, direction for management of this allotment will be documented in these Annual Operating Instructions. Once the National Environmental Policy Act process is complete the AMP for this allotment will be updated.

VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

You indicated that you are in favor of Wildland Fire on your allotment, if alternate pastures can be found for your livestock. The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to this AOI to accommodate fire management.

VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Keep track of conditions on your allotment and make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing. The forecast for the upcoming spring is dry and warm. If dry conditions continue through the summer growing season, a reduction in herd size or pasture use changes may be recommended. If the herd size is reduced, restocking of allotments to full numbers will not take place until forage plants regain vigor.

VIII. Utilization Monitoring of Key Areas

Monitoring Schedule

Monitoring will be conducted periodically to verify compliance with stocking in assigned pastures and to verify use levels. Utilization will be monitored in spring, to estimate winter grazing intensity, and after the summer growing season, to determine annual utilization.

Allowable utilization for your allotment is set at a conservative level (31 – 40%). Conservative use is described as: choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks; areas more than a mile from water show little use; about one third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas. Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of use within a pasture (utilization mapping). Verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described and mapped in the following utilization categories.

If the utilization guideline for the pasture is exceeded on 30% or more of the pasture in any year, livestock will be immediately removed from the pasture. Within a pasture, areas found to exceed allowable use will become key areas for monitoring the following year. The AOI for the next year will be adjusted to correct livestock management practices (distribution, number, timing, salt and water availability, etc.) that may have led to the overuse.

In the event that 30 percent or more of the pasture exceeds the set allowable use in a grazing year, that area will be required to be less than or equal to allowable use the next year. If that same area, or a substantial portion of the same area, exceeds allowable use in two consecutive grazing years, the entire pasture will be rested for one calendar year and stocking will be adjusted to balance with forage supplies. If the same area of a pasture exceeds allowable use in two years out of five, the stocking rate and management plan will be adjusted to balance with forage supply.

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI, please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District to obtain approval of change(s). Advanced notice of change is requested so that field inspections can be conducted. Verbal approval of changes will be followed with a letter documenting the change. Failure to follow the instructions provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).