Annual Operating Instructions

Red Hill & Grandfather Allotments
Alpine Ranger District
Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest
2011 grazing season

1. PASTURE USE SCHEDULE

We have approved 15 head of cattle on the Red Hill Allotment, and non-use for resource protection, due to the Wallow Fire, on the Grandfather Allotment for the 2011 grazing season.

Grazing Rotation Schedule:

ALLOTMENT	*PASTURE*	*ON*	*OFF*	*NUMBER*
Red Hill	Foote Bush Creek	03/01/11	03/15/11	15
Red Hill	Bush Creek	03/16/11	05/31/11	15
Grandfather	West	RESTED	RESTED	RESTED
Grandfather	Holding/Caldwell	RESTED	RESTED	RESTED
Grandfather	East	RESTED	RESTED	RESTED
Red Hill	Bush Creek	TBD	TBD	TBD

The schedule above is an estimate, and may be modified at any time during the grazing season if the utilization levels, identified below, are met, if water availability is inadequate, or for other resource management reasons. If allowable use levels are met early in the scheduled pasture, cattle will be rotated into the next pasture or off the Forest. If you are scheduled to rotate livestock to the next pasture, but feel there is adequate forage to sustain them in the current pasture and would prefer to hold off on the rotation, please contact range personnel for an inspection and approval. No re-grazing of any pasture will be allowed. Cattle are to be completely removed from a pasture by the off date. Please notify this office when you begin to move cattle and when a pasture rotation is complete.

2. UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The following utilization standards will be applied on the Red Hill Allotment:

- 30% on browse species from 3/16 to 5/31.
- 40% on browse species from 11/1 to 3/15.
- 35% on perennial grasses in fair or better condition rangeland from 11/1 to 5/31
- 25% on perennial grasses in poor condition rangeland from 11/1 to 5/31

The following utilization standards will be applied on the Grandfather Allotment:

- 30% on perennial grasses from 6/1 to 7/15 in good condition rangeland.
- 25% on perennial grasses from 6/1 to 7/15 in fair condition rangeland.
- 20% on perennial grasses from 6/1 to 7/15 in poor condition rangeland.
- 40% on perennial grasses from 7/16 to 10/31 in good condition rangeland.
- 35% on perennial grasses from 7/16 to 10/31 in fair condition rangeland.
- 25% on perennial grasses from 7/16 to 10/31 in poor condition rangeland.

3. KEY AREA MONITORING

Utilization levels will be checked prior to livestock entering the allotment and near the midpoint, or sooner, of the grazing period for each pasture at key areas. A key area is defined as:
"a portion of range, which because of its location, grazing or browsing value, and/or use, serves as an indicative sample of range conditions, trend, or degree of use seasonally. A key area guides the general area of which it is part" (Forest Service Region 3 Rangeland and analysis Management Guide, June, 1997).

Utilization measurements will be taken on key livestock forage plants (key species). Key forage species is defined as:
"1. Forage species (plants) whose use serves as an indicator to the degree of use of associated species. In many cases, key species include indicator species and species traditionally referenced as increaser, decreasers, desirables, or intermediates. 2. Those species (plants) which must, because of their importance, be considered in the management program" (Forest Service Region 3 Rangeland and Analysis Management Guide, June 1997).

- Riparian areas will be monitored for use on riparian woody species' current year's leaders, as well as % use, by weight on riparian grasses.
- Upland areas will be monitored for use on perennial grass species.
- Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted habitat will be monitored to ensure that current management is providing cover for rodent prey species, the residual biomass that will support prescribed natural and ignited fires that would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Forest, and regeneration of riparian trees.

District personnel will contact the permittees to coordinate site visits to monitor key areas, when practical. Permittee participation is encouraged. Forage utilization estimates will be consistent with the Forest Service Range Analysis Handbook methodology, and may also include FS Regional stubble-height standards, as well as other techniques generally accepted in the field of range management.

4. RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Range improvements must be maintained to standard before cattle are allowed into a pasture. It is the permittee's responsibility to ensure that range improvements remain functional. This includes boundary fences in pastures not currently being grazed. Routine maintenance of existing improvements does not require written clearance; however, construction/reconstruction of new improvements must be authorized in writing from this office.

5. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The following restrictions will be implemented so that management remains in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. The instructions below relate to threatened, endangered, and proposed to be listed species, as well as range/watershed conditions.

- No salt or mineral block may be placed in protected and restricted Mexican spotted owl habitat from February 1 to August 31, and no concentrations of livestock (i.e., corral use, traps, or large gatherings of livestock).
- Stock tanks must be surveyed for possible aquatic habitat before earth-disturbing maintenance is authorized.

- No livestock grazing is allowed on National Forest System Lands within the Blue River riparian corridor. This excludes the use of the North River Pasture, Forest Service Trap, and Bush Trap.
- All livestock crossing the Blue River on National Forest System Lands will occur at the low water crossing on FDR 567.
- All fences must be maintained to a standard which prevents passage of cattle into the Blue River riparian corridor.

6. OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

The permittee must obtain permission from the District Ranger, before conducting earth- disturbing activities on the National Forest. The Forest Service will arrange inspections of project areas and will prepare appropriate environmental and cultural documents before earth-disturbing activities proceed. These activities include road/earthen tank maintenance, as well as construction/reconstruction of trails, roads, earthen tanks, etc. Do not conduct any earth-disturbing activities on the Forest without written clearance from this office.

Salt must be located at least ¼ mile from water, and preferably on ridges and/or areas of low use. Do not place salt blocks in the same location as the previous year, and locate blocks on hard ground not susceptible to erosion. Supplemental feeding, other than mineral or supplement block is not authorized on the National Forest.

Livestock on the Red Hill and Grandfather Allotments will be grazed as a single herd.

The Annual Operating Instructions are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 1, Section 3, and comply with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan. They also comply with the Endangered Species Act found in the Biological Assessment for the Red Hill and Grandfather Allotments. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the Annual Operating Instructions.

I have read and understand these Annual Operating Instructions for the Grandfather and Red Hill Allotments for the 2011 grazing season.

[redacted] 7-12-2011

Permittee(s) Date