

2012
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
BLUE RIDGE ALLOTMENT

I. Authorization You are authorized to graze the following in 2012:

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Grazing Period</u>
Scotts	75 c/c	June 1 to June 15
South	75 c/c	June 16 to July 30
North	75 c/c	August 1 to September 1
Twin Burn	75 c/c	September 2 to September 22
Chimney	75 c/c	September 23 to October 31

The level of authorized use and grazing schedule as indicated in this AOI is based on the best information available at this time and are subject to change as actual sight specific forage conditions and available livestock watering sources are determined and at the start of, and during the annually authorized season of use. Limited use on Porter Creek.

II. Administration The following procedures will be followed:

1. Grazing fees must be paid before placing livestock on the allotment.
2. At least 5 days notice must be given to the District before placing livestock on the allotment.
3. Sub-leasing is prohibited. You must own the livestock placed on the allotment. They must be branded and registered in your name. A current copy of your brand certificate must be on file at the District office.
4. The permittee will record actual use as it occurs. Information should be recorded as it occurs. "Actual use as it occurs" means livestock numbers and dates your permitted livestock are in a pasture. It also means livestock on your allotment from an adjacent allotment as a result of broken fences or open gates.
5. Any change or deviation from this Annual Operating Instructions is to be coordinated and confirmed at least 14 days in advance with the District. If emergency conditions require making a change immediately, the permittee will notify the District as soon as practical.
6. Failure to place livestock on the allotment on time is not sufficient reason for an extension of the grazing season.
7. If you elect to take non-use, it must be requested in writing at least 45 days prior to the grazing period.
8. Any request for an extension in the grazing season will be done at least 14 days before the end of the grazing season. Livestock left on the allotment after the "off" date may be considered a violation of your Term Grazing Permit and will be charged for at the commercial rate.
9. Livestock allowed to remain in pastures beyond the specified rotation date, allowed to drift between pastures, or allowed in a rested pasture may be considered a violation of your Term Grazing Permit.
10. Livestock should be moved within 3 days of planned rotation dates or when forage utilization objectives have been met. At least 90% of the permitted livestock should be moved by the

scheduled date.

11. The District will spot check fences before the entry date to insure fences are in a satisfactory condition. Livestock will not be allowed to enter the Forest if fences will not keep livestock where they are placed.

12. The District, with input from the permittee, will determine if late entry or early removal is needed for resource protection based on existing conditions.

III. Range Readiness Livestock will not be permitted to graze until both vegetation and soils are ready. This may vary from year to year. Range readiness checks may be made in advance of the scheduled entry date. These checks will be conducted on designated key forage species in key areas with the permittee whenever possible.

IV. Allowable Forage Utilization The scheduled rotation, grazing season, and livestock numbers are in these Annual Operating Instructions. They may vary due to drought, late or early springs, or specific permittee needs. Adjustments in livestock numbers, rotation schedule, or season of use will be made if allowable forage use standards are exceeded. Cattle will be moved to the next scheduled pasture or off the allotment before forage utilization standards are exceeded. To achieve the desired allowable forage utilization, it is important that the livestock are evenly distributed across the range. The **maximum** allowable forage use is denoted in the following Monitoring Guide and Schedule:

Woodland and associated grasslands – 35% on grass and shrubs

Ponderosa pine – 20%-not to exceed 40%

Riparian – 0-45% on grass and shrubs

V. Livestock Distribution Livestock need to be distributed evenly throughout the pasture. Herding and proper salting practices are some ways to help achieve proper livestock distribution to reduce impacts on key areas like riparian areas and meadows. Trailing livestock the length of riparian areas is not allowed. Efforts will be made to avoid conflicts with other Forest users while trailing livestock.

VI. Salt and Mineral Block Salt or mineral block will not be placed within a quarter mile of water and ideally no closer than one-half mile. The blocks will not be placed within Mexican spotted owl PACs. Place blocks in lightly used areas until allowable forage use is achieved before moving to the next least utilized area. Blocks should be placed in areas before livestock are moved onto the unit and will be removed when allowable use objectives have been met. Blocks may be removed by the District if found near water, over-utilized areas, meadow bottoms, or roads. Every time blocks are placed on the allotment they will be put on a different site. Do not use the same area used in previous years. Blocks will be placed on hard ground not susceptible to erosion.

VII. Fire Prevention All vehicles should be equipped with a properly functioning exhaust system. A shovel and axe for use in extinguishing camp and forest fires should be carried. All authorized open camp and branding fires must have a fire ring down to mineral soil, and be handled in a safe manner. All State and local fire regulations and restrictions will be observed. Report any fire to the District.

It is your responsibility to take all reasonable precautions to prevent person caused fires from your actions. You are expected to take diligent efforts to suppress and report promptly all fires on or

endangering lands and property used in conjunction with your Term Grazing Permit. Work involving the use of heavy equipment will be done only with prior approval. The equipment will be inspected first to insure its spark arrestor and muffler system meets Forest Service standards.

Please notify the District if you plan to conduct any debris burning on your private lands. This will allow us to notify our fire lookouts.

VIII. Range Improvements A permit modification will be prepared for new projects. The permittee will sign a permit modification and receipt for materials. New range improvements not specifically listed below and all ground disturbing activities will not be initiated by the permittee until proper archeological clearances have been obtained and approved by the state. The following improvements are planned for construction this year:

A. Fences Proper maintenance of fences will help ensure they will hold livestock in a pasture and will extend their useful life. Forest Officers periodically will inspect assigned improvements for compliance with maintenance standards. Many fences are very old and are in need of major reconstruction. The permittee will help to identify these fences for the District Ranger. Fences in need of reconstruction will be inventoried and prioritized by the District for reconstruction. The following will be implemented:

1. Pasture fences will be maintained before moving livestock to a new pasture.
2. Abandoned fence wire and steel posts will be removed from the Forest.
3. Broken wire will be spliced with good quality double strand, 12-1/2 gauge barbed wire or smooth wire.
4. Wire spacing will be similar to original spacing. Where possible, the top wire height will not exceed 42"; and the bottom wire will be smooth at least 16" from the ground.
5. Wire will not be over tightened and will be stretched to remove slack.
6. Broken posts or rotten wood posts will be replaced with a steel post, juniper post or treated wood post greater than 5" diameter.
7. Brace posts will be maintained in tight and serviceable condition.
8. Steel posts which have settled may need to be jacked up and possibly moved. Leaning steel posts will be straightened.
9. Gates will be maintained for easy opening. Gate sticks will be 2-3" diameter. Smooth wire will be used for gate loops.
10. At least 90% of wooden fence stays will be sound. Replacement stays will be of good quality wood 1-1/2" by 3" in size. The bottom of each stay will rest on the ground. galvanized stay wire will be used for tying stays.
11. Missing staples and fence clips will be replaced.
12. All trees which have fallen across the fence line will be cut and removed from the fence right-of-way.

B. Water Stock water is important for proper livestock distribution. If natural water is not available, the permittee may need to haul water to obtain proper livestock distribution. The following will be implemented:

1. Springs

- a. Fences to protect springs will be maintained to standard.
- b. Collection boxes and inlet pipes will be clean of sediment and debris.
- c. Broken pipe will be repaired or replaced. Material not usable will be removed from the Forest.
- d. Troughs that leak will be repaired. Troughs should be level. Overflow pipes should be placed to avoid creating a boggy area at the trough.
- e. Float valves will be cleaned and set to prevent overflow.

2. Stock Tanks

- a. Check stock tanks for seepage.
- b. During maintenance activities, whenever possible, spillways will be flat and will have a minimum height of three feet and width of ten feet. They will be free of debris. Eroded portions will be repaired.
- c. Tanks will be cleaned to their original capacity. Special care will be taken during cleaning to prevent future water loss. This work will be coordinated with the District Ranger.

IX. Permit Conditions These Annual Operating Instructions are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, Section 8(a). It complies with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan.

Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions specified in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of your Term Grazing Permit may result in suspension or cancellation, in whole or in part, after written notice. This is found in Part 1, Section 3, of your permit.

X. Appeal Process These Annual Operating Instructions are appealable under 36 CFR 251. If you decide to appeal these instructions, you must file a notice of appeal in accordance with 36 CFR 251.87. You have 45 days from the date of these Annual Operating Instructions to file a notice of appeal with the Forest Supervisor, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, P.O. Box 640, Springerville, AZ 85938 and you must send a copy of the appeal to the District Ranger, Lakeside Ranger District, 2022 W. White Mountain Blvd., Lakeside, AZ 85929. It is the responsibility of the appellant to provide the Forest Supervisor sufficient narrative evidence and argument to show why the decision should be reversed or changed in accordance with 36 CFR 251.90.

I am willing to meet with the permittee to hear and discuss any concerns or issues related to these Annual Operating Instructions.

Sincerely,

EDWARD W. COLLINS
District Ranger

