

**FEATHERVILLE S&G ALLOTMENT  
2016 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

Boise National Forest  
Mountain Home Ranger District

**INTRODUCTION**

The following information is direction on how livestock management is to be conducted on the Featherville Sheep and Goat (S&G) Allotment for the 2016 grazing season. The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are part of your Term grazing Permits consistent with Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a), and you are responsible for compliance with this direction.

Situations may develop during the grazing season that could require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact Holly Hampton at 587-7867 or Cindy Lancaster at 587-7870, district range staff, and obtain approval before initiating or deviating from your AOI. Failure to obtain prior approval could result in permit action.

The following table displays the permitted numbers and seasons of use for your allotments:

<b>Allotment Name</b>	<b>Permitted Number and Class</b>	<b>Permitted Season of Use</b>
<b>Featherville</b>	2950 ewe/lamb	05/20-08/20
	3750 ewes	08/21-09/30
	5 horses	05/20-09/30

The Featherville Allotment has a variable numbers and season permit, which permits a total of 7834 sheep Head Months (HMs) for the period of use.

For the 2016 grazing season, you are authorized to graze your allotments as outlined below. In addition, because your herders will spend most of the summer packing and not using camp wagons, you are authorized 5 head of horses per band this grazing season.

<b>Allotment Name</b>	<b>Authorized Number and Class</b>	<b>Authorized Season of Use</b>
<b>Featherville</b>	950 ewe/lamb (#7)	06/01-09/01
	900 ewes	09/02-09/30
	5 horses	06/01-9/30
	800 ewe/lamb (#8)	06/01-09/07
	770 ewes	09/08-09/30
	5 horses	06/01-09/30

Some flexibility will be allowed for weather conditions, range readiness and livestock needs. The period of use is also subject to compliance with Forest Plan standards and guidelines and Implementation Monitoring requirements as discussed below. Please review carefully the standards and guides listed.

#### **BILLING INFORMATION**

The grazing fee for the 2016 grazing season is \$0.42 per head month for sheep and \$2.11 per head month for horses. You will be billed based on the authorized use listed above. Confirmation of payment through the National Finance Center is required and must be received before livestock can enter National Forest System lands. In order to meet this requirement, please ensure that bills for collection are paid by the due date indicated.

If permitted livestock are required to leave an allotment early because utilization standards have been reached, drought conditions persist or other reasons as determined by the Forest Officer, a credit/refund may be requested. **This request must be submitted in writing to the District Ranger by December 1, 2016.**

#### **LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT**

The general routing patterns for your bands are depicted on the attached maps. The bands will be routed along these general patterns, with specific direction outlined below. Deviations of more than ½ mile from either side of the defined route should be discussed with Holly or Cindy. The shipping dates listed are tentative and will be firmed up as the summer progresses.

#### **LAMB BAND #7 (Bear Hole)- Herder & Camp Tender: Elmer and Arturo**

950 ewes/lambs	6/01-9/01	BNF Featherville Allotment
(cull 50 ewes)	(9/01 ship lambs)	Trinity Creek Corral
900 drys	9/02-9/30	
2 horse and 3 mules	6/01-9/30	

**Lamb Band #7** will enter the Featherville allotment in the Dog Creek Pasture on June 1st at Towne Creek. This band will graze in a southerly direction utilizing the Cannon Gulch, Bird Gulch and Badger Creek areas. The band will then head in a northerly direction towards upper Camp Creek and Tally/Baker Creek as depicted on the attached routing map. This band will utilize the upper Bear Hole, Windy Creek and Rainbow Creek areas heading north towards the Trinity Creek corrals where they will ship on approximately September 1<sup>st</sup>. Be careful to not use bedding areas more than one time near shipping corrals. **Avoid impacting roads, trails, erodible soils, steep slopes, and especially areas that have not recovered from past fires.** Once the lambs are shipped, the dry ewes will combine with Band #8 dry ewes and graze in a southerly direction utilizing Rainbow Creek and Parks Creek. Sheep will exit the allotment near the bottom of Green Creek no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. Depending on allotment conditions sheep may have to come off the allotment early.

**LAMB BAND #8 (Trinity) - Herder & Camp Tender: Erasmo and Nilo**

800 ewes/lambs (cull 30 ewes)	6/01-9/07 (9/07 ship lambs)	BNF Featherville Allotment Trinity Creek Corral
770 drys	9/08-9/30	
2 horse and 3 mules	6/01-9/30	

**Lamb band #8** will enter the Featherville allotment in the Casey Gulch Pasture on June 1<sup>st</sup> from private fields in the Deer Creek area. After utilizing this area they will trail up FS Hwy 61 from Casey Gulch and enter the Bear Creek pasture at Trinity Creek. The band will graze in a northwesterly direction towards Cow Creek, Lincoln Creek, Spring Creek, Wide West and Horse Ranch Mountain toward the head of Whiskey Jack Creek. Slow and loose grazing of sheep through the tree plantations planted last year is permissible if the area is needed. Sheep shall not be bedded or nooned in the recently planted areas. **Areas to avoid include the plantations marked with a red "X" on your routing map in the Trinity Creek area through the Cow Creek/Lincoln Creek and Feather River locations.** This band will ship at the Trinity Creek Corrals approximately September 7<sup>th</sup>. Be careful to not use bedding areas more than one time near shipping corrals. **Avoid impacting roads, trails, erodible soils, steep slopes, and especially areas that have not recovered from past fires.** Once the lambs are shipped, the dry ewes will combine with Band #7 dry ewes and graze in a southerly direction utilizing Rainbow Creek and Parks Creek. Sheep will exit the allotment near the bottom of Green Creek no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. Depending on allotment conditions sheep may have to come off the allotment early. Avoid the area between Dismal Swamp and Phifer Creek to allow for another year of vegetation recovery from fire.

**Avoid the highlighted area – see map – of known wolf denning/rendevous locations.**

You must notify the Forest Service no less than five (5) days prior to livestock being placed on the allotments so that authorized livestock numbers can be verified by district range staff if the Forest Service elects to do so.

**Herd management:**

Avoid impacting roads, trails, erodible soils, and especially areas that have not recovered from past fires.

Each band must have at least one herder to control sheep. Request map if needed for specific areas where sheep should not be grazed or trailed. Also review your Term Grazing Permit content under Terms and Conditions for site specific grazing limitations.

Generally, we are more concerned about soil displacement caused by sheep than we are about the amount of forage they consume. Light-once-over grazing, resembling 20 percent use of forage, is the easiest way to obtain proper grazing use on your sheep allotments. This practice can be achieved by spreading the sheep out and slowly grazing them across the landscape. If the routing areas we have discussed or identified do not meet the foraging needs of your sheep, that implies the area lacks protective cover, is susceptible to erosion, and is probably too fragile to be grazed, therefore you will need to discuss these situations with us to get them corrected for the future.

## **STANDARDS AND GUIDES**

Close monitoring of utilization levels and diligent removal of livestock when they are reached is critical to ensure compliance with end-of-season utilization standards. Failure to meet these standards may result in the modification of grazing management, including reductions in Head Months or permitted area.

The following standards and guidelines apply to your allotments:

- The applicable Forest Plan Standards (including those reflected in permit Terms and Conditions and Annual Operating Instructions) may be modified by the Responsible Official to accelerate attainment of the desired conditions, and may include:
  1. Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture containing NFS lands would not exceed the values shown below at the end of the growing season:
    - Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Maximum 40% use for early season or season-long pastures, and maximum 50% use for vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late-season pastures (Forest Plan Standard RAST01, [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
    - Riparian Areas: Maximum 30% use or retain a minimum 4-inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first (USDI Fish and Wildlife Service 1999). Utilization of woody species will be limited to 30% or less of available new growth (USDI Fish and Wildlife Service 1999).
  2. Livestock salting would be prohibited in Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs). Sheep would be salted only at bed grounds, and salt shall be placed in containers and moved with the sheep (Forest Plan Standard RAST04 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
  3. Only one-night/one-time use of bed grounds would be allowed (Forest Plan Standard RAST05 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
  4. Only open or loose sheep herding would be practiced, except where site-specific vegetation management is needed and has been prescribed (Forest Plan Standard RAST06 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
  5. Only annual once-over sheep grazing would be allowed, with the exception of designated sheep driveways or travel routes or where specifically authorized (Forest Plan Standard RAST07 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
  6. Bedding of sheep and salting of livestock in plantations would be prohibited until plantation trees have grown to a size that reduces their susceptibility to damage from livestock (Forest Plan Standard RAST08 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-47]).
  7. Sheep should be routed to avoid slopes with loose soil conditions, active gullies, and snowbank areas that have low productivity, soil puddling, and compaction conditions (Forest Plan Guideline RAGU08 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. II-49]).
  8. Damage to or loss of NFS trails from timber harvest, livestock grazing, road construction, mining, special uses, and prescribed fire activities should be repaired or mitigated by the

- appropriate party (Forest Plan Guideline REGU22 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-68]).
9. Only certified noxious weed-free hay, straw, or feed is allowed on NFS lands (Forest Plan Standard NPST01 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-38]).
  10. On all lands outside of designated travelways, motorized use is prohibited, unless otherwise authorized (Forest Plan Standard REST04 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-64]).
  11. Livestock trailing, bedding, watering, and other handling efforts shall be mitigated, through avoidance, to address adverse effects to occupied threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate (TEPC) plant habitat (Forest Plan Standard TEST22 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-13]).
  12. Management actions occurring within occupied sensitive plant species habitat must incorporate measures to ensure habitat is maintained where it is within desired conditions, or restored where degraded (Forest Plan Standard BTST01 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-35]).
  13. Livestock salting and/or bed grounds shall be located outside occupied TEPC plant habitat so that plants shall not be adversely affected by associated trampling (Forest Plan Standard TEST24 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-13]).
  14. Adverse effects from livestock access or activities which may result in trampling redds or disturbing spawning or reproductive staging of Endangered Species Act listed fish species should be mitigated through avoidance (Forest Plan Standard TEST25 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-13]).
  15. Grazing system design and implementation and livestock handling adjustments should be made so that effects to occupied TEPC plant habitat are avoided (Forest Plan Standard TEST26 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-14]).
  16. Noonning, shading, or bedding of sheep shall not occur within 100 yards of any stream. After watering livestock, they shall be removed from the RCA.
  17. Sheep shall not be bedded within 200 yards of designated campgrounds, trails, trailheads, or roads.
  18. Sheep should be grazed, rather than trailed to water. Watering would not occur at the same location more than once during a grazing season.
  19. Livestock would cross designated bull trout critical habitat streams at road/trail stream crossings, where available. If no road/trail stream crossing is available, livestock crossing of designated bull trout critical habitat streams would not occur after August 15.
  20. Livestock use should be discouraged in progeny sites, seed orchards, and plantations that have not been certified (Forest Plan Guideline RAGU06 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-48]). In addition, livestock use should also be discouraged in areas with natural whitebark pine regeneration.
  21. All garbage generated by the present herder or previous herders must be cleaned up by the camp tender and hauled away by the ranch foreman or herder to a County waste disposal facility.

22. The permittee would promptly notify the Forest Service if noxious weeds are observed on the allotment. The Forest Service would determine a treatment regime for noxious weeds on the allotment.
23. Use of aspen groves would be discouraged for nooning sheep in order to minimize use of clones and understory vegetation.
24. Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known nest or denning sites of TEPC species if those actions would disrupt reproductive success during the nesting or denning period. (Forest Plan Standard TEST12 [USDA Forest Service 2010, p. III-48]).

### **IMPROVEMENTS**

Your Term Grazing Permit contains a complete list of range improvements associated with the Featherville Allotment. Please note that all range improvements must be maintained to a proper functioning condition before livestock are placed on the allotment. Failure to do so is a violation of your term grazing permit and is subject to permit action. In the event improvements cannot be practically maintained to standard, you should notify this office so we can identify them for reconstruction as funds become available.

Non-functioning range improvements need to be brought to standard, or arrangements made with district range personnel to have them removed. Abandonment of improvements is not acceptable – if developments are not functioning and are no longer needed, they must be removed.

### **HERDER OR PERMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS**

There is a three day limit for herder camps. Ensure that camps are kept clean and moved frequently. Pack stock should be picketed, hobbled or highlined when at camp.

Designated roads and trails used for trailing of sheep and saddle stock must be cleared and restored to their original condition immediately after use.

The Forest Service recommends that the following procedures be implemented each grazing season:

1. Keep camp meat in coolers and not hung.
2. Burn, bury, or pack out food leftovers, bones, garbage etc. including food not consumed by dogs accompanying the herders.
3. Bury or remove sheep and saddle stock carcasses from the area where they will not serve as an attractant to predators.
4. Never leave campfires unattended. To meet Forest Service requirements, camp stoves must be fitted with a spark arrestor screen with 3/8 inch or smaller mesh. Employees must be kept informed of the current fire situation and the permittee's fire prevention responsibility. The Forest Service will advise the permittee when special fire restriction orders become effective.
5. Camps will be kept in primitive condition. No improvements will be allowed. If a new fire pit is constructed, dismantle it and restore the area before moving to the next camp.

Permittee monitoring of utilization levels is not mandatory, but is highly advised since permittees will be held accountable for any failures to meet end-of-season compliance monitoring.

### **REQUIRED REPORTING**

Enclosed is a Year-end Grazing Report for you to record actual use data and range improvement maintenance for the 2016 grazing season for your allotments. You need to record the date and number of sheep and horses turned onto the allotment and removed from the allotment, noteworthy changes in sheep numbers, estimate the time and cost of management actions, including livestock herding and improvement maintenance, associated with the allotment, occupied camp locations with dates of occupancy and periods of use within specific drainages. Please notify us of significant losses from predators such as wolves and poisonous plants, herding problems (whether they are logistical or related to unforeseen circumstances), conflicts with any other Forest users, and any other grazing related information you feel is worth reporting. Accurate records of this information should be kept and returned to our office at the end of the grazing season. The Forest Service uses these records to help allocate Range Betterment Funds. These funds are used to purchase materials for improvements. **This report should be returned to the Forest Service's Mountain Home Ranger District office no later than December 1, 2016.**

If you are planning to waive your Term Grazing permit – based on either sale of permitted livestock or base property, please submit this intention to me in writing prior to the transaction.

### **INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING**

Range personnel may require you to delay your entry date on any of your allotments based on range readiness inspections that they have completed. You will be notified as soon as possible if your turn-on date is delayed.

Range personnel may conduct utilization monitoring and improvement inspections periodically on your allotments.

### **COORDINATION AND COOPERATION**

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is responsible for wolf management in Idaho. The Regional Wildlife Wolf Biologist for the Fish and Game is Jennifer Struthers. Any questions you may have regarding wolf management should be directed to her. She can be reached at 208-465-8465 ext. 350.

If you suspect a wolf depredation has occurred on your livestock, USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services (Wildlife Services) should be contacted as soon as possible. The local Wildlife Services contact for this area is Jered Hedelius. He can be reached at (208) 681-8756. In the event that you cannot reach Jered, Todd Grimm should be contacted at the Boise District Office at 208-373-1630.

The Forest Service shall coordinate targeted preventative measures to be taken within a one-mile buffer of active wolf den or rendezvous sites to reduce spatial overlap of wolves and livestock during the grazing season, with the intent of reducing the risk of wolf-livestock conflicts and depredations. The Range Management Specialist or District Ranger will present known wolf den or rendezvous areas at the annual AOI meeting and will notify permittee(s) if new sites are discovered during the grazing season. Den and rendezvous sites must be documented as actively in use in the current grazing season by a Forest Service District Wildlife Biologist and/or through communications with Idaho Department of Fish and Game. To the extent practicable, the Range Management Specialist will work directly with the permittee on the necessary preventative measures to be taken to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflicts. Actions may include, but not limited to:

- Re-routing individual band trailing patterns to avoid denning, rendezvous;
- Escort affected sheep bands through the vicinity denning, rendezvous or other sensitive wolf sites. This may include increased human presence and or additional deterrent actions to deter wolf-livestock conflicts;
- Reduce band exposure in the vicinity of denning, rendezvous or other sensitive wolf sites by increasing rate of band passage or other actions to minimize the length of time of band's presence in those sites;
- Other site-specific actions taken to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflicts

If a wolf-livestock conflict occurs, the Range Management Specialist or other designated Forest Service employee will contact the permittee to coordinate targeted preventative measures to try to reduce further conflicts.

#### **OTHER**

When livestock carcasses are located near campgrounds, roads, trails or water reasonable and appropriate action must be taken to remove any carcasses. The permittee will contact the District Ranger or her representative to discuss the problem and determine what action would be appropriate for each site specific instance. Although the Forest Service recognizes that disposal of carcasses is not always feasible in many situations there are a number of reasonable options available for the disposal of single or multiple carcasses. In most cases, carcasses should be moved at least 100 yards from campgrounds, roads, trails or water. Animal carcasses in highly visible areas need to be relocated to more remote areas.

A gate has been placed at the 183A/183A7 road junction, implementing a full-time road closure. You are authorized to use existing roads behind the locked gate for livestock management. A key can be picked up at the Mountain Home Ranger District Office to allow access behind the gate. The gate should be kept locked at all times and the key must be returned to the office prior to September 25.

The Forest Service's Motor Vehicle Use Rule is in place on the Mountain Home Ranger District. Public motorized, wheeled vehicle use is prohibited on all NFS lands except on routes that are designated on the current year's Motorized Vehicle Use Map. This AOI

authorizes you and your employees to use wheeled motor vehicles off of designated routes for administrative use within your allotments for livestock management purposes. However, specific routes will need to be identified each year. See description of routes needed for administrative use below. This administrative use includes salting and herding of livestock, maintenance of range improvements, and forage utilization inspections. Use of heavy equipment, such as bulldozers or backhoes is not included in this authorization. Use of heavy equipment will need to be requested through and approved by the District Ranger on a case-by-case basis.

Routes Approved for Administrative Use not on the MVUM map:

**Featherville Allotment**

- 1). Access to roads 151 C, 151 D, and 151E.
- 2). Access to roads 101A, 101B, 101J, 101J1, and 101K.

Stephaney M. Kerley	5/16/14
District Ranger	Date