

2016
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
VAN WYCK S&G ALLOTMENT

Cascade Ranger District
Boise National Forest

INTRODUCTION

The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) provides direction for livestock management and how it will be conducted on Van Wyck S&G allotment during the 2016 grazing season.

Allotment	Permittee	Permit Number
Van Wyck S&G Allotment	Soulen Land and Livestock Company	00329-2

Permitted Use				
Permittee	Allotment	No. of Livestock	Livestock Class	Permitted Season
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	10,000	Ewe/Lamb	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	10,000	Bucking	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	32	Pack/Saddle	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	32	Pack/Saddle	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	10,000	Ewe/Lamb	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	10,000	Bucking	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	32	Pack/Saddle	5/15-11/30*
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	32	Pack/Saddle	5/15-11/30*

*Variable Season

Authorized Use for the 2016 Grazing Season				
Permittee	Allotment	No. of Livestock	Livestock Class	Permitted Season
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck South	1,500	Ewe/Lamb	1 Day in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck South	1,000	Ewe/Lamb	1 Day in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck North	1,000	Ewe/Lamb	1 Day in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck North	1,000	Ewe/Lamb	1 Day in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	16	Pack/Saddle	1 Day in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck North	2,300	Bucking	2 Day in Fall
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck South	2,300	Bucking	2 Day in Fall
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck S&G	16	Pack/Saddle	2 Day in Fall
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	4500	Ewe/Lamb	3 Days in Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	16	Horse	3 Days Spring
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	4600	Bucking	2 Days Fall
Soulen Land and Livestock	Van Wyck Driveway	16	Horse	2 Days Fall

For the 2016 grazing season four bands will be authorized in the spring and two bands in the fall to trail over the Van Wyck Stock Driveway. Two bands of sheep will be permitted per day to trail on the Van Wyck Stock Driveway between the top of West Mountain and Lake Cascade.

Four ewe-lamb bands will graze the Van Wyck S&G allotment in the spring and 2 bucking bands in the fall. In the spring two bands will spend one night in the North Pasture and two bands will spend one night in the South Pasture.

In the fall two bucking bands will graze the allotment. One band will graze the North Pasture for two nights and the other will graze the South Pasture for two nights. The bands will trail through between June 1 and June 30 in the spring and October 15 and October 31 in the fall.

The other spring band that trails over the Van Wyck Stock Driveway in the spring will graze on private land near the reservoir.

Camping and sheep bedding locations will be rotated with each band of sheep on both the North and South Pastures in order to distribute those uses on the allotment. Sheep bedding locations will be allowed on both the east side of the West Mountain road and also on the west side in the openings in the timber. Only one night/one time use of bed grounds is allowed.

There will be 16 saddle and pack animals authorized in the spring and 16 in the fall on the allotment in order to manage the livestock.

LIVESTOCK BRANDS

Soulen Land and Livestock Company

Sheep xx (Anywhere)

Horses cc (Right Hip)

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a).

Procedures For Modifying AOI. Situations may develop during the grazing season, which require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

All hay, straw, and mulch products used on the Boise National Forest must be certified as weed free or weed seed free by a qualified inspector of the State of Idaho or neighboring states which have weed-free feed or crop certification programs (Region Special Order Number: 04-00-097).

PREVIOUS YEAR GRAZING RESULTS

During the 2015 grazing season, six spring bands and three fall bands trailed over the Van Wyck stock driveway to the Van Wyck S&G allotment. Two bands were permitted per day on the stock driveway.

There were four spring bands and two fall bands that grazed the Van Wyck S&G allotment in 2015 as follows:

- Van Wyck S&G (North) – Two Spring Bands for 1 day
- Van Wyck S&G (South) – Two Spring Bands for 1 day
- Van Wyck S&G (North) – One Fall Band for 2 days
- Van Wyck S&G (South) – One Fall Band for 2 days

The other two spring bands and one fall band that trailed over the stock driveway grazed on private land near the reservoir.

BILLING

FEES – The grazing fee for sheep is \$0.42 per head month. The fee for pack and saddle stock is \$2.11 per head month. The New Meadows Ranger District of the Payette National Forest is responsible for issuing the grazing bill.

PAYMENT - Confirmation of payment through the "lock box" process is required and must be received before livestock can enter any National Forest System lands.

REFUNDS – If permitted livestock are required to leave the allotment early due to excess utilization, drought or other reasons as determined by the Forest Officer, a refund may be requested. A written request for refund must be submitted to the District Ranger if this situation occurs.

LIVESTOCK ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE FOREST STANDARDS AND GUIDES

COMMUNICATION – The Range Specialist or Range Technician is the Ranger's Representative for the Cascade Ranger District. Notify the Range Specialist or Technician at least five days in advance of the date, time and place where each band will enter the allotment. The Rancher's Representative must communicate with the Ranger's Representative on a regular basis, and keep the Forest Service informed of sheep numbers, routes, locations, shipping dates, grazing and predatory problems.

MANAGEMENT – High intensity, low duration once over lightly grazing. Livestock management will emphasize moving sheep in a timely manner. After watering the livestock, remove them from the riparian area. Streams, lakes, ponds, rivers or any area within the influence of water must be left with at least a 4-inch stubble height for grasses. Practice open or loose herding and minimize the use of herding dogs to decrease soil displacement.

CLOSED AREAS – The French Creek Campground is closed to grazing and you must keep the sheep out of this campground.

NOXIOUS WEEDS – The Cascade Ranger District, in cooperation with Valley County and the Upper Payette Coordinated Weed Management Area (CWMA), has been involved with a treatment program over the last few years and will continue this year. If you see areas that appear not to have been treated, contact the Cascade Ranger District so they can be added to the list for treatment.

STREAMBANK UTILIZATION - Will be measured along the "greenline" in riparian areas. The standard of measurement for riparian areas will be maximum use 45 percent, 4 inches stubble height of hydric greenline species remaining after livestock are removed from riparian areas. A safe, easy way to visualize this is "Graze half, and leave half of the grasses. To prevent exceeding these standards, it is important to begin moving livestock slightly before this limit is reached. In the flats or meadows adjoining riparian areas and/or uplands areas, we will adhere to the Forest Plan standard of 40 percent utilization for early season and 50 percent for late season pasture use.

UPLAND INSPECTIONS AND UTILIZATION MONITORING – It is the responsibility of the permittee to periodically monitor and document utilization levels. The Forest Service will periodically check the permittee's utilization monitoring to ensure good land stewardship and perform documentation. At times, the Permittee and the Forest Service will jointly inspect range conditions.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS – The permittee is responsible for annual maintenance of all range

improvements listed in Part 3 of your TERM GRAZING PERMIT. All listed range improvements must be maintained for functionality, and a neat, clean appearance. The Forest Service shall provide all necessary materials for construction or reconstruction of range improvements. You must provide all incidental materials and labor for normal maintenance. Anything above normal maintenance should be discussed with the Ranger's Representative so that a plan for repairs will be completed.

SALTING - The placement of salt is to be used as a management tool in helping to minimize livestock use in riparian areas, tree plantations, and to distribute the livestock. Do not place salt next to roads, trails, and tree plantations or water. Livestock salting will be prohibited in riparian conservation areas. Salt must be placed in containers to prevent leaching and trampling of salt grounds. When salting, attempt to use the correct amount so that all salt is consumed by the livestock that same day. This helps eliminate damage to the soil caused by wildlife use of leftover. There will be no salting of sheep along the Van Wyck sheep driveway between the top of West Mountain and Lake Cascade.

RANGE READINESS – Heavy snows or a prolonged cool spring could result in delays in range readiness. This could require later than scheduled turnout dates. Light snows or unseasonably warm springs could result in an opportunity to begin the grazing season early. The Forest Service will notify you at least 2 weeks in advance of your scheduled turnout date.

CARCASSES - When sheep, saddle or pack animal carcasses are located near campgrounds, roads or water reasonable and appropriate action must be taken to remove any carcasses. The permittee will contact the District Ranger's Representative to discuss the problem and determine what action would be appropriate. 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.

FOREST ROADS and TRAILS - Forest roads and trails used for trailing of sheep and saddle stock must be cleared and restored to their original condition immediately after use.

Motorized Use - The Forest Service's Motor Vehicle Use Travel Management Rule is in place on the Cascade Ranger District, which prohibits off-road travel. 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 on other system routes for administrative use within your allotments for livestock management purposes. 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.

GARBAGE – All garbage generated by the present herder, or previous herders must be cleaned up by the camp tender for the ranch foreman to haul away. All garbage will be hauled by the Ranch Foreman to a county waste disposal facility. Any garbage left on the permittee's allotment reflects on his and the Forest Service's ability and interest in being a good land steward.

GUARD DOGS – Use extreme caution with guard dogs while around Lake Cascade.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION –

1. In cooperation with the State of Idaho, all feed, hay, or straw brought to the allotments must be certified weed-free.
2. Report any known invasive plants in your grazing areas.

3. Report areas you have accidentally over-used so the Forest Service is aware of a critical situation before an unhappy public makes us aware of it. This will keep the Forest Service up to date and provide the opportunity to repair the damage if necessary. In addition, it will reflect more positively on you as a good land manager.
4. It is recommended that the permittee use GPS units to record each camp or utilization monitoring site area during the grazing season.

REQUIRED REPORTING – Enclosed are year end grazing reports to record actual use data and range improvement maintenance for the 2016 grazing season for the Van Wyck S&G Allotment. You need to record the date and number of sheep turned onto each pasture, the number and date sheep are removed from the pasture, and estimate the time and cost of management actions including livestock herding and improvement maintenance associated with the allotment. Accurate records of these dates, maintenance work, and range improvement needs 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 Cascade Ranger District no later than December 1, 2016.

ALLOTMENT MONITORING – The proposed monitoring on the allotment for the 2015 grazing season will be as follows:

1. Inspection compliance monitoring
2. Utilization monitoring
3. In-season stubble height monitoring
4. Yearend stubble height monitoring

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 following the adaptive management strategy.

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

COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOREST PLAN - The Van Wyck S&G Allotment will be managed to achieve the Desired Future Conditions as described in the revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Boise National Forest. All permitted actions including grazing will comply with standards shown in the revised Boise National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Utilization Standards from the revised Forest Plan are as follows: Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the grazing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site specific or project level decision according to direction in FSM 1922.5.

1. Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use of hydric greenline species.
2. Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use.
Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

FIRE – Never leave campfires unattended. To meet Forest Service requirements, wood smoke, from camp stoves must be filtered through 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.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 2016 GRAZING SEASON

WOLVES

Questions about what can or cannot be done in reference to defending flocks, harassing wolves, or shooting wolves should be directed to Todd Grimm, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services in Boise, Idaho (208 373-1630); or local Wildlife Services contacts. Permittees should continue working with their local Wildlife Services representative on depredation issues. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is responsible for wolf management in Idaho. The wolf biologist for Idaho Fish and Game is Jennifer Struthers. Any questions you may have regarding wolf management should be directed to her and she can be reached at (208-465-8465 x350).

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. The permittee will contact the District Rangers Representative to discuss the problem and determine what action would be appropriate.

We also recommend that you work with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Wildlife Services to implement other effective preventative actions to reduce the risk of depredation.

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:

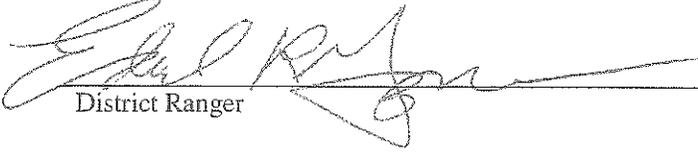
- Re-routing individual band trailing patterns to avoid denning, rendezvous;
- Escort affected sheep bands through the vicinity denning, rendezvous or other sensitive wolf sites. this may include increased human presence and or additional deterrent actions to deter wolf-livestock conflicts;
- Reduce 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.

If the permittee is planning on waiving all or part of the permit or changing anything tied to the permit such as base property please notify the Forest Service immediately.

These Annual Operating Instructions for Soulen Land and Livestock Company's Term Grazing Permit are consistent with the Boise National Forest Plan. If you need further clarification of any portion of these Instructions, or need to alter this plan to fit your grazing season, please notify Gilbert Jackson in Emmett at 208-365-7010 or Jake Strohmeier in Cascade at 208-382-7400. We appreciate your cooperation, and look forward to a good season.

Signatures:


District Ranger

9/6/2016
Date

Date