

**2016 Annual Operating Instructions
East Fork Ranches LLC #4590
Lower East Fork C&H Allotment #45700**

1: INTRODUCTION:

Permitted Use

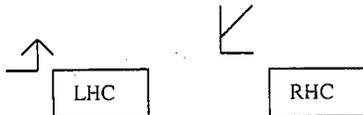
Permit	Numbers	Season	Head Months
<i>Your portion of the 590 total Head Months (HMs) for Lower East Fork C&H Allotment is a maximum of 118 HMs which will be allowed from 06/11-09/30, and a maximum of 158 HMs which will be allowed from 06/22-09/30.</i>			
<i>When resource conditions as specified in the ROD are met & fence is built, your portion of the 962 total Head Months (HMs) for Lower East Fork C&H Allotment is a maximum of 457 HMs which will be allowed from 06/11-09/30.</i>			

Authorized Use: Upon payment of fees, you are authorized to graze as follows:

Unit	Numbers	Season*	Head Months
French	99 c/c	06/23-09/15	277

*Actual on-dates, off-dates, and grazing rotations will be determined on the basis of range readiness, utilization, or other resource considerations as deemed necessary by the authorized Forest Officer. Such changes will typically be made in consultation with the permittee(s).

Permitted Livestock Brands:



2: COMPLIANCE:

This AOI is made part of your Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2 Item 8(a) of the General Provisions and Requirements. Your compliance with these instructions is essential for the proper management of National Forest System lands. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of your permit and these instructions may result in issuance of a notice of non-compliance with the terms of your grazing permit.

Permittees with livestock in rested units, grazing units outside the season of use, and grazing areas not authorized, will be held non-compliant with the terms and conditions of their Term Grazing Permit. Such non-compliance may result in billing for excess use, permit modification / cancellation, or other actions as provided in FSH 2209.13.

Routinely inspect the previously grazed area for stray cattle, if cattle are found move them off in a timely manner.

Continue to routinely check the lower Holman Cr and Mill Cr gate, making sure the drift fence/gate is repaired and closed while livestock graze the allotment.

Situations may develop during the grazing season which require modifications 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 livestock feed or straw brought on to the forest is required to be certified weed free.

3: BILLING:

The 2016 cost per Head Month for cattle is \$2.11 per head month/cattle. A Bill for Collection will be mailed to you. Grazing fees must be paid by the date specified on the Bill for Collection to:

USDA Forest Service c/o Citibank
 PO Box 301550
 Los Angeles, CA 90030-1550

Confirmation of payment through the “lock box” process must be received before livestock can enter NFS lands.

4: LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT:

Pasture	2016 Rotation
Sullivan Unit	The Sullivan Unit ridge will be used for trailing this year. <i>The Sullivan/Potaman area needs to be routinely checked and cleaned of all cattle.</i>
French Unit*	The herd will be split with ½ using Pistol and French Creek, and ½ using Holman, Mill and Silver Rule. If Silver Rule / Slate Creek is used - livestock will enter after July 15 for steelhead emergence, and will be removed prior to August 15 (for bull trout spawning) <i>Utilization will dictate the length of time spent in each drainage.</i> <i>Previously grazed areas need to be <u>routinely checked and cleaned</u> of all cattle.</i>

****When utilization standards are met in each pasture, cattle are to be moved on to the next scheduled pasture or removed from the allotment.***

Actual on-dates, off-dates, and grazing rotations will be determined on the basis of range readiness, utilization, or other resource considerations as deemed necessary by the authorized Forest Officer. Such changes will typically be made in consultation with the permittee(s).

You will be responsible for monitoring livestock move thresholds or “triggers” during the grazing season. These “triggers” will assist you in ensuring that end of season utilization standards are not exceeded. The Sawtooth NRA range staff will conduct spot checks as necessary. Typically, “triggers” will be the standard(s) listed below in section 6, “Standards and Guidelines”. **It is strongly suggested that livestock be moved before utilization standards are reached.** This will help to prevent forage utilization in excess of standards, allowing for time to clean the unit of stray cattle.

Please realize that it is in your best interest to keep cattle distributed throughout useable areas in the currently authorized pasture. **Use of riparian areas needs to be carefully monitored by you.** If cattle

are allowed to concentrate in riparian areas and around water developments, utilization standards will likely be reached prior to the scheduled pasture move or "off-date". This may result in directed early pasture moves or early removal of livestock from the allotment.

5: STANDARDS AND GUIDES:

Timing restrictions from current ESA consultation agreements to protect TES spawning and incubation periods are listed below. These dates will remain in effect unless revised in future consultation efforts that result in Biological Opinions or Concurrence Letters. (ROD page 5)

- Silver Rule Creek and Wickiup Creek – livestock removed by August 15 for bull trout.
- Big Boulder Creek livestock would enter on July 15 above the tributary off Red Rocks in Section 8 for steelhead and be removed by August 15 for bull trout below falls in Section 15.
- Little Boulder Creek livestock would enter on July 15 above the tributary in Section 20 for steelhead and be removed August 15 for bull trout.
- Germania Creek livestock would be removed by August 1 below the falls for Chinook salmon and by August 15 above the falls for bull trout.

The following restrictions apply to this allotment:

- ✦ **Areas above 9,000 feet elevation are restricted from livestock grazing. Areas where physical barriers are not in place the permittee will need to routinely inspect and remove any livestock from the closed areas.**
- ✦ **Areas where physical barriers are not in place the permittee will need to actively manage to minimize livestock drift, routinely inspect and remove any livestock in the rested or closed areas.**
- ✦ **Riders are expected to be on the allotment almost daily, actively herding to minimize livestock drift, routinely inspecting known areas of concern (areas above 9,000 feet elevation) and promptly remove livestock found in rested or closed areas.**

Proper Use Standards:

Your Term Grazing Permit specifies maximum allowable utilization levels applicable to your allotments. To comply with the Amended 2012 Sawtooth FLRMP, changes to some of the allowable use levels have been implemented; specifically when the riparian goals and objectives are not being met. When utilization estimates indicate that allowable use levels have been reached in the pasture currently being grazed, livestock must be moved to the next scheduled pasture, or removed entirely from the allotment regardless of any time remaining in the grazing season schedule.

You are responsible for tracking forage use levels and complying with utilization standards. For your convenience, the Lower East Fork C&H Allotment maximum allowable forage utilization levels under the Sawtooth FLRMP are listed below.

Riparian Areas (greenline):

Water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*) and/or Nebraska sedge (*Carex nebraskensis*) are normally the key grasslike species measured to determine riparian (greenline) utilization. In their absence, the same utilization standards apply to the palatable forage species that are present. In areas dominated by Kentucky bluegrass no more than 40% (dry weight) or less than 3" stubble height is allowed.

- Forage Utilization standards for riparian areas shall not exceed 30% use of most palatable forage species, or must retain a minimum 6 inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first, *when riparian goals and objectives are not being met* (Management Area 3, Standard 03109).

Upland Vegetative Cover Types:

Bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*) and Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*) will typically be the key species measured to determine upland utilization, though other species may be measured to estimate utilization at the discretion of the Forest Officer.

- **Early season grazing** (ie: through early July): **40% use** (Standard RAST01), Or retain a minimum of 3-inch stubble height for Kentucky bluegrass, a 6-inch stubble height for Bluebunch wheatgrass, and a 2-inch stubble height for Idaho fescue.
- **Late season grazing**, after seed ripe conditions: will not exceed **50% use**, (Standard RAST01).
- To meet wildlife winter range needs, maximum bluebunch wheatgrass utilization will not exceed 30% at any time during the livestock grazing season on bighorn sheep winter range in Big Lake Creek, Bluett Creek, and Corral Creek (ROD Page 2).

Alterations:

- A maximum of 10% streambank alteration due to current years use. (Appendix D-2 of FEIS)

Aspen/Cottonwood:

- Any species of willow (*salix* spp.) may be used to determine riparian (greenline) utilization of woody species.
- To manage for the maximum re-establishment and recruitment of aspen and cottonwood, as well as to prevent high utilization of willows, forage utilization of woody species will not exceed maximum of 30% use of current year's growth (ROD Page 2).

6: IMPROVEMENTS:

All improvements for which you have maintenance responsibility are listed in Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit.

Improvement maintenance must be completed prior to livestock turn out. If it is found that maintenance has not been completed, and the responsible permittees livestock are present on the allotment or unit, the permittee may be billed for unauthorized use and / or permit action may be taken for non-compliance.

Extra efforts need to be made to maintain the drift fence at the head of Sullivan Creek. Also, additional riding for any cattle drift in Sullivan Creek or other areas where utilization standards have been met.

Permittee (or authorized agent of permittee) use of ATVs and motorcycles outside designated routes shown on the Sawtooth National Forest/Sawtooth National Recreation Area Motor Vehicle Use Map is limited to that required for allotment management operations such as maintenance and repair of range improvements, and distribution or retrieval of salt during or immediately after the authorized grazing season.

If an allotment is in non-use status, the permittee is still responsible for improvement maintenance.

Improvements used in common with an adjoining permittees, such as allotment boundary fences, must be maintained to standard before either permittee allows livestock to enter the allotments.

All troughs must have a wildlife escape ramp installed in them. Failure to install these ramps may result in non-compliance for the season. Please contact SNRA range staff if you need ramps or instructions for installation.

No ground disturbing activities may be conducted by the permittee or their personnel on National Forest System lands without prior approval from the authorized Forest Officer.

Any plans to reconstruct or build new improvements on the Forest should be coordinated with the range staff.

7: PERMITTEE OR RIDER INSTRUCTIONS:

Please notify SNRA range staff at 208-774-3000 before allowing your livestock to enter the Lower East Fork C&H Allotment.

Because of increasing public use, gates are often left open and cattle stray into the wrong pasture. We realize this is an inconvenience. However it is still the **permittees responsibility to keep their permitted livestock in the approved pasture/allotment.** Routine checks should be made by you and your rider to assure compliance.

Salt should be used to spread livestock utilization across the pasture being grazed. The permittee is responsible for using water and salt to achieve the best distribution of cattle throughout the pasture.

Livestock salting is prohibited within riparian areas and wetlands. Do not place salt within 100 yards of any watering area or meadow unless you receive prior approval. This includes, but is not limited to, springs, seeps, water troughs, and creeks.

Salt will be removed from areas where the maximum allowable use levels have been reached or at the end of the grazing season, whichever occurs first.

By USDA order #04-00-097, all non-pelletized hay, straw or mulch possessed, stored, or transported on National Forest System Lands, in individual bales or containers, must be tagged or marked as weed free, or must have the original and current evidence of weed free certification documentation present. All markings must meet State and/or County standards for certification as weed free.

8: REQUIRED REPORTING:

Enclosed is an actual use record form for the upcoming season. Please use this form to record the time (dates) livestock spend on an allotment as well as other information such as livestock loss, salting, grazing use, resource concerns, improvement needs etc. The grazing use record should be returned to the district office within 30 days after the grazing season.

Please submit requests for credits or refunds before December 31.

9: INSPECTIONS & MONITORING:

Due to a requirement from NOAA fisheries, data must be collected for at least one annual indicator in each grazed pasture each year to maintain compliance with their consultation letter. This applies to the 2016 grazing season.

- Permittee assistance with photo and stubble height of aquatic big leaf sedges estimates were discussed with the permittees at the 04/08/2010 annual meeting. The permittees agreed to

taking photos and write down stubble estimates as the cattle are put on a pasture, and when leaving the pasture. A map of MIM sites was provided to you in 2010. Contact Robert Garcia (774-3014) or Beth Brattie (774-3013) if you would like help locating the MIM sites or need a new map. Please be sure to get this information to the range staff in Stanley at the end of the grazing season.

Brands will be checked periodically throughout the grazing season.

Range inspections may be made several times during the grazing season to check maintenance of range improvements, forage utilization, and compliance with the grazing rotation and standard requirements. If you are interested in participating in allotment inspections, please notify the range staff at the beginning of the grazing season.

End-of-season compliance monitoring will be conducted by the SNRA Range Staff. Exceeding end-of-season utilization standards will be regarded as an instance of non-compliance with the terms of your grazing permit. In addition to the potential for permit action, this may further result in the modification of grazing management (including reductions in Head Months or permitted area) until the risk of adverse impacts to habitat is minimized.

10: COORDINATION & COOPERATION:

Questions about what can or cannot be done in reference to defending livestock, harassing wolves, or shooting wolves should be directed to:

- Craig White, IDFG SW Idaho Regional Wildlife Program Mgr. - Nampa, Idaho (208-465-8565)
- Todd Grimm, State Director USDA APHIS Wildlife Services - Boise, Idaho (208-378-5077)
- Sam Kocherhans, Wildlife Services Technician - Ketchum, Stanley & Fairfield (208-681-8792)
- Jason Husseman, Idaho F&G Regional Wildlife Wolf Biologist – Salmon, Idaho (208-756-2271)

Permittees should continue working with their local Wildlife Services representative on depredation issues.

In order to reduce the potential for depredation, the Forest Service recommends that the following procedures be implemented each grazing season:

- Remove cattle and saddle stock carcasses from the area where they will not serve as an attractant to predators. The intent of this recommendation is not to require removal of carcasses from the allotment, but to remove them out of areas currently being grazed or areas soon to be grazed.

Work with IDF&G and Wildlife Services in implementing other effective preventative actions to reduce the risk of depredation.

11: OTHER:

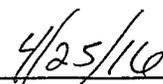
If you are planning to waive your Term Grazing permit – based on either sale of permitted livestock or base property, please submit this intention to me in writing prior to the transaction.

We look forward to working with you and solicit your cooperation and involvement in bringing about sound range and livestock management practices that will enhance all of the allotment's resources. If you have any ideas or suggestions that will improve the management of this allotment, we would like to

hear from you. If you have any questions concerning these Annual Operating Instructions, please call Robert Garcia 774-3014, Beth Bratlie 774-3013 or myself at 208-727-5000.

12: SIGNATURE:


Kirk Flannigan, Area Ranger


Date

14: MAPS, FORMS & ATTACHMENTS:

- a) Permittee actual use form (use, losses, costs, etc.)

