BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST
GREYS RIVER RANGER DISTRICT

COTTONWOOD CREEK ALLOTMENT
2016 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

These Annual Operating Instructions are made part of your term grazing permit consistent with Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). It references the meeting held on March 16th. Situations may develop during the grazing season which may require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions prior approval must be given before initiating any changes or deviating from these instructions.

Only livestock branded according to the Certificate of Brand Registrations provided to the Forest Service will be allowed to graze on the allotment. Confirmation of payment by the Forest Service must be received before livestock will be allowed to graze on National Forest lands.

Permittee	Authorized Number	Season of Use
Kunzler Sheep & Cattle	1200 ewe/lamb	7/11 – 9/15

Table 1 – Cottonwood Allotment – Proposed Grazing Schedule and Proper Use Criteria[1]

Order	Unit	No. of Days	Planned Dates	Proper Use Criteria
Trail on	NA			≤50% of key forage species ≥ 4" RSH of graminoids along the greenline
1st	Red Top	16	7/11 – 7/26	
2nd	Dry Creek	18	7/27 – 8/13	
3rd	Trail Fork	18	8/14 – 8/31	
4th	South Unit	11	9/1 – 9/11	
Trail off		3	9/12 – 9/15	

[1]Dates are estimates and may vary based upon range readiness, drought, proper use criteria being reach prior to the proposed move date, permittee needs and/or other factors. Utilization will be monitored at key areas of the allotment. Key areas are those areas most preferred by livestock, are typically grazed first, and receive the most concentrated use.

An allotment map is enclosed; this map shows the allotment boundary, unit boundaries, and scheduled move dates. Please review and follow it. If you feel there are any corrections that need to be made, contact Brad. Some variation between units prescribed for grazing and actual areas being grazed may occur at areas where units are adjacent to each other and where a clear geographic boundary or other marker is not present. However, every effort should be made to ensure sheep are in the appropriate unit to be grazed at the prescribed time.

Notify us 3-5 days in advance as to when you plan to put your sheep on the allotment.

Permitted livestock will be shipped onto the Greys River Ranger District and the allotment to be grazed via the Cottonwood Creek road and immediately commence grazing. Sheep will be trailed off of the allotment from the South unit to Poker Hollow where they will be shipped of Forest Service administered lands. This should take no more than 3 days.

You are authorized to vary the number of days between unit moves by three days either way. Prior approval must first be received if the need arises to vary the number of days by more than this.

Bed your sheep one night in one area only. Multiple days use of the same bed ground is prohibited. Keep camps clean at all times. Pack out all garbage off of the National Forest; this includes any garbage that may have been left from previous years. All camps are to be located away from trails, lakes, and other high use recreational area. You are also encouraged to follow Order Number 04-00-104 as it relates to the management of your livestock on this allotment (see attached order). While not currently a requirement of your Term Grazing Permit, it is the intent of the Bridger-Teton National Forest to implement this order forest-wide over the next several years.

Proper utilization is 50% in upland forage areas in all units. A 4" to 6" stubble height of riparian species (i.e. sedges) shall be left along the greenline (i.e. stream corridors and wet meadows). Any area reaching proper utilization means it is time to move into the next scheduled unit or to come home.

You are responsible for proper utilization of forage by your sheep. If inspections reveal areas of over utilization or riparian damage, corrective measures will occur (which may mean taking your sheep home early) and action may be taken against your permit.

Equal utilization of the range is the objective. This requires herding and salting be properly conducted throughout the entire grazing season. Sheep are to be open herded once over with light to moderate utilization. Rotate your salting areas during the grazing season and from year to year. Place your salt in good forage producing areas where the sheep do not go by preference. Do not place your salt next to water, roads, trails, or in open meadows.

Every effort must be taken to completely remove sheep off the National Forest by the scheduled off date.

Adaptive Management

1) Domestic Sheep & Big Horn Sheep Best Management Practices (BMPs): The following management practices are designed to limit livestock losses and interactions between domestic and bighorn sheep. They are consistent with the Final Report and Recommendations from the Wyoming State-wide Bighorn/Domestic Sheep Interaction Working Group.
    a) Do not turn out sick or diseased domestic sheep onto the grazing allotment/trailing route(s). Any domestic sheep which becomes ill while grazing on the allotment should be promptly treated to ensure it does not infect other animals.
    b) Do not allow contact between domestic and bighorn sheep. If bighorn sheep are sighted in a particular area then do not enter that area with domestic sheep. As necessary promptly move your domestic sheep to an area where they will not come into contact with the big horn sheep. Contact Brad to adjust the grazing rotation.
    c) Promptly report all sightings of bighorn sheep during the grazing season to the Wyoming Game & Fish Department and Brad. Sightings should be reported the same day they occur or as soon as possible thereafter. Reports to include number of bighorn sheep observed, sex of animals (*if it can be determined*), location, and distance from domestic sheep.
    d) All livestock losses are to be reported each year using the attached Actual Use Record. Report the number of livestock lost and the reason(s) (*cause of death*) for the loss(s). If the cause of death is unknown or the carcass(s) is not found, this information should be included in the Actual Use Record.

e) All domestic sheep are to be counted upon exiting the National Forest. This will assure all domestic sheep are accounted for when exiting the allotment and trailing routes. The number of sheep that entered the National Forest should equal the recorded livestock losses, plus the number that exits. Any differences to result in further riding/searching for any potential stray sheep.
f) If you are missing domestic sheep upon exiting the National Forest, re-ride the allotment and trailing routes and remove any sheep found.
g) Any domestic sheep found on the National Forest past October 15th may be disposed of by personnel authorized by the Forest Service.

Maintenance of all your improvements listed in Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit will be completed at least one week prior to the proposed on date. This allows time for the inspection of your improvements and any potential concerns to be addressed before your livestock enter the allotment. *If your maintenance responsibilities have not been completed to the standard they were initially constructed, or if reconstructed, to the standards listed in your permit, livestock will not be allowed to enter National Forest lands.* All labor and materials needed for maintenance are your responsibility. Other items particularly discussed included:

- No nooning, shading or bedding within 100 yards of all streams and riparian areas.
- Only one night/one time use of bed grounds.
- Do not bed sheep within 200 yards of designated campgrounds, trails, trailheads, or maintained roads.
- Practice open or loose herding and minimize the use of sheep dogs to avoid soil displacement.
- Only once-over grazing.
- Graze rather than trail to water and do not water at the same locations.
- Route sheep to avoid steep slopes with loose soil, snowbank areas, and active rills or gullies.
- Highline, picket or hobble pack and saddle stock.
- Clean and repair all roads and trails to the condition prior to sheep impacts.
- No salt in riparian areas, under trees or within 200 yards of water or maintained roads.
- Star Valley Vegetation Prescribed Burn Treatment: Implementation of this project is expected to commence as early as late fall 2016. Areas to be burned include portions of the Cottonwood allotment. A review of areas burned will occur post-treatment to determine any resource protection measures that may need to occur as they relate to grazing of sheep on the allotment (i.e. rest, deferred use; etc.). Contact Brad should you have any questions in regards to this project or how the project may affect your grazing on the allotment.

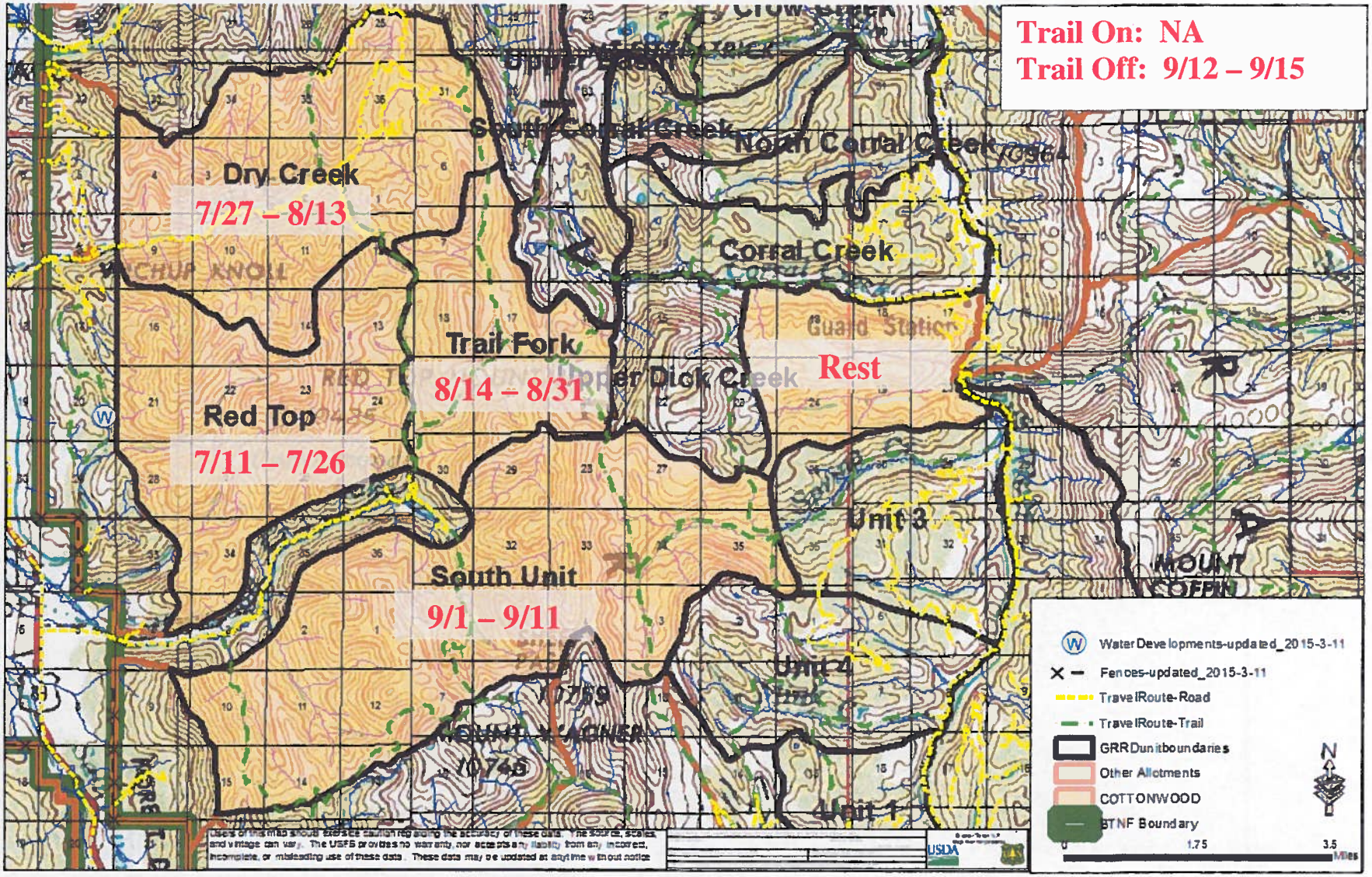
Please let us know of any new noxious weed infestations so we can keep them from becoming established. Noxious weeds of concern in the allotment are: Spotted Knapweed, Musk Thistle, Canada Thistle, Hound's Tongue, Dalmatian Toadflax and Leafy Spurge. As a reminder certified weed-free hay, cubes, and straw are required on the Forest.

Complete the actual use report and return it to the Greys River Ranger District by December 31st. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Brad @ 307-828-5115). Thanks for your cooperation in managing this allotment.

/s/ Richard Raione Richard Raione — 4-25-16

District Ranger — Date

Figure 1.0 Cottonwood Allotment – 2016 Schedule, Unit Boundaries, and Other Items of Interest



2016 ACTUAL USE RECORD

BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST
GREYS RIVER RANGER DISTRICT

Cottonwood Allotment	
Permittee: Kunzler Sheep & Cattle LLC	
Authorized Season of Use: 7/11 – 9/15	Authorized Numbers: 1200 sheep (ewe/lamb)

Planned Use				**Actual Use**						
Unit	*Days Planned*	*Enter Date*	*Leave Date*	*Numbers*	*Unit*	*Days Used*	*Enter Date*	*Leave Date*	*Losses*	*Cause*
					Trail On					
Red Top	16	7/11	7/26							
Dry Creek	18	7/27	8/13							
Trail Fork	18	8/14	8/31							
South Unit	11	9/1	9/11							
	3	9/12	9/15		Trail Off					

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Kunzler Sheep & Cattle LLC)

Comments: (Included needed range improvements; improvements maintained or visited; new noxious weeds locations; and etc.)

Appendix A: Other Permittee Instructions

- Salt can be used to improve livestock distribution. No more than 50 pounds of salt will be placed at any one location at any time. Salt will be placed on rock or hardened areas to prevent salt leaching into the ground and permanent site damage. Salt will not be placed outside the allotment boundary. All salting will be done away from key forage use areas and traditional livestock congregating areas. Prior to an area reaching the forage use standard, all salt will be removed.

- The permittee will insure that all personnel performing on the ground livestock management are thoroughly familiar with the terms of the grazing permit, annual operating instruction and allotment management plan.

- All camp sites used in conjunction with livestock operations must be maintained to present a clean, neat and orderly appearance. Flammable trash will be completely burned in a safe and reasonable way. All unburnable material will be removed to a disposal site. Burying of trash is not allowed. Temporary holding pens, corrals, mangers and hitching racks will be removed when the camp is moved or relocated. Facilities authorized on a permanent basis must be kept clean at all times and cleaned up after use. All camps must have a serviceable axe and shovel for fire control.

- There will be enough herders to achieve proper distribution of livestock within the allotment for proper forage utilization. Livestock will not be turned onto the allotment or allowed to congregate within any portion of the allotment for an extended period of time that creates areas of non-uniform and inappropriate forage utilization.

- Horses and mules used in conjunction with this permit will not be picketed or tied to trees in a manner that creates trampled vegetation and compacted soils.

- Permittees are strongly encouraged to store, handle and dispose of all human and animal food stuffs and garbage that makes them unavailable to bears and other wildlife. See attached Order #04-00-104.

- All predator control will be in accordance with State and Federal Laws. Black and Grizzly bear, wolf, and lion predation should be reported to the Wyoming Game & Fish Dept., and coyote predation reported to the USDA-APHIS office.

- Dead livestock within 300 feet of any live stream, spring, roadway or trail will be promptly removed and properly disposed of. Proper disposal would include removal of the carcass off of the allotment, or dragging the carcass at least 300 feet away from any live stream, spring, roadway or trail. Final removal of livestock carcasses within ¼ mile of system roads, system trails, and all developed and undeveloped recreation areas will be coordinated with the Forest Office in Charge to provide for public safety. This may require various additional mitigation measures.

<u>Appendix B</u>: Bridger-Teton Land and Resource Management Plan Standards and Guidelines

- Vegetation Range Prescription: Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed conditions while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.
- Forage Improvement Standard: Range in less-than-satisfactory condition will be improved. Disturbed areas will be stabilized or regenerated prior to resuming grazing use.
- Forage Utilization Standards: The following utilization standards will be the maximum utilization levels allowed for all herbivores on key vegetative species.

Upland Range Sites

Season Long Grazing		Rotation Grazing	
Unsatisfactory Condition 40%	Satisfactory Condition 50%	Unsatisfactory Condition 50%	Satisfactory Condition 60%

Riparian Range Sites

Season Long Grazing		Rotation Grazing	
Unsatisfactory Condition 45%	Satisfactory Condition 55%	Unsatisfactory Condition 55%	Satisfactory Condition 65%

During Allotment Management Plan revision, an Interdisciplinary (ID) Team and livestock permittees will prescribe site-specific use levels needed to meet plan objectives. Maximum forage use guidelines apply cumulatively to all types of grazing use including wildlife, livestock and recreational stock. During monitoring and evaluation a utilization guideline may be changed if the prescribed level is not accomplishing planned objectives. An ID team will establish site-specific utilization levels on key wildlife ranges. ID teams will prescribe other proper-use standards to achieve site-specific objectives for the range resource being managed. The standards will be a combination of forage utilization, ground cover, plant vigor, soil disturbance, or stream bank stability.

- Desired Future Conditions within the Allotment:
  - 1B - Theme: An area managed for timber harvest, oil and gas, and other commercial activities with many roads and moderate to occasionally substantial emphasis on other resources. Management Emphasis – is on scheduled wood-fiber production and use, on livestock production, and on other commodity outputs. Vegetation: Range Prescription - Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed condition while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.
  - 2A – Theme: An unroaded area managed to give a quiet, almost primitive recreation experience. Management Emphasis – is to maintain or enhance Primitive and Semi-primitive Non-motorized dispersed recreation opportunities. Vegetation: Range Prescription - Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed condition while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.

- 2B – Theme: An area managed to give a motorized recreation experience. Management Emphasis – is to maintain or enhance dispersed recreation opportunities including Semi-primitive Motorized and Roaded Natural. Vegetation: Range Prescription - Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed condition while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.
- 4 – Theme: An area managed to protect municipal water supplies. Management Emphasis – is to protect or improve the quality of municipal water. Vegetation: Range Prescription - Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed condition while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.
- 10 - Theme: An area managed to allow for some resource development and roads while having no adverse and some beneficial effects on wildlife. Management Emphasis: is to provide long-term and short-term habitat to meet the needs of wildlife managed in balance with timber harvest, grazing, and minerals development. Vegetation: Range Prescription – Range is managed to maintain and enhance range and watershed conditions while providing forage for livestock and wildlife.

Appendix C – Range Readiness

Livestock will not be placed on the allotment until soils are dry enough to prevent damage to soils/vegetation and when key plants are phenologically ready to be grazed. Range readiness indicators for vegetation are shown below.

Plant Type	Visual	Phenology
GRASS		
Wheatgrass spp.	8 inch plant height	Seed stalk showing
Idaho Fescue	5 inch leave length	Seed head present
Prairie Junegrass	5 inch leave length	Seed head present
Sandberg bluegrass	Plant mature	Seed head in dough stage
Pinegrass	4-6 inch leaves	
Tufted hairgrass	6+ inch height	Seed head present
Kentucky bluegrass		Seed head present
GRASSLIKE		
Nebraska sedge		Seed in late dough
FORBS		
Western Yarrow	Flower stalk showing	
Arrowleaf Balsamroot	¾ leaf development	Blossom beginning
Geranium	4 inch leave length	Flower in bloom
SHRUBS		
Serviceberry		Blossom present
Antelope Bitterbrush		Flower bud swollen
Snowberry		7-8 bud leaves unfolded