



ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
2016



Swauger Ranch

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Bridgeport Ranger District

Slinkard C&H Allotment

Recommended by Maureen Clogg Date: 3/25/2016
Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted by: Bobbi L. Chasson Date: 3/25/2016
Permittee

Approved by: David D. Gault Date: 03.25.16
District Ranger
For Duncan Leao

Upon signature by the District Ranger, these Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit number 20041 approved by the Bridgeport District Ranger on March 3, 2011.

As permittee, my signature on these Annual Operating Instructions certifies that there is *no change to my permitted livestock or base property ownership as described in my grazing permit.*

Any changes or deviation from the direction outlined in the Annual Operating Instructions will need to be requested in a written notice to the Bridgeport Ranger District. This includes changes in animal numbers, class of livestock, period of use (changes in entry or exit dates form unit to unit), or changes in pasture rotation. No changes in these instructions will be recognized without written confirmation from the Bridgeport Ranger District.

INTRODUCTION

Swauger Ranch

Permitted # of Livestock:

Allotment	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
Slinkard C&H	50	Cow/Calf	5/1 – 8/30	200

Authorized # / Rotation of Livestock:

Allotment	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
Slinkard C&H	40	Cow/Calf	5/1 – 8/30	160

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing season which requires 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.

ALLOWABLE USE

The allowable use levels listed below for the Slinkard C&H Allotment must be followed. You are responsible for determining when allowable use has been reached and to move your stock to the next planned unit of use or off the allotment after the last unit has been grazed. If you need any assistance determining utilization levels, please contact Aaron and he will assist you. Because we do not know the ecological condition of every meadow located within the allotment please err on the side of caution when monitoring utilization on riparian species. The Forest Service is responsible for monitoring your compliance with the allowable use levels. You are encouraged to accompany us on field inspections to determine use levels.

UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The following standards and guidelines are applicable to the Slinkard C&H Allotment:

In meadows that are in early seral status (an early stage of succession in a plant community or vegetation type, generally characterized by plant species that are adapted to colonizing disturbed areas with a high proportion of bare soil) livestock utilization of grass and grass-like plants must be limited to 30 percent (or minimum six-inch stubble height).

In meadows that are in late seral status (fifty percent or more of the relative cover of the herbaceous layer is late seral with high similarity to the potential natural community, a diversity of age classes of hardwood shrubs is present, and regeneration is occurring) livestock utilization of grass and grass-like plants must be limited to a maximum of 40 percent (or minimum four-inch stubble height).

In meadows that are degraded (such as those in early seral status with a greater than ten percent area in bare soil and active erosion) total rest from grazing is required until the area has recovered and moved to a mid or late seral status.

In riparian areas browsing on mature riparian shrubs (including willow and aspen) is not to exceed 20 percent of annual leader growth and is not to exceed more than 20 percent of individual seedlings.

Disturbance of meadow-associated stream banks and natural land and pond shorelines is not to exceed 20 percent of the stream reach or 20 percent of the natural lake or pond shoreline.

Livestock grazing will be modified or suspended on meadow ecosystems when it is determined that the ecological status is moving in a downward trend.

Pesticide application to livestock is prohibited within riparian conservation areas and critical aquatic refuges.

Under intensive grazing systems, where meadows are receiving a period of rest, utilization levels can be higher than the levels described above if the meadow is maintained in late seral status and meadow associated species are not being impacted. This standard would keep the utilization level at 55 percent use of key herbaceous species on the Slinkard C&H allotment.

Utilization on upland areas within the Crested Wheatgrass seeding shall not exceed 65 percent of Crested Wheatgrass and 45 percent for all other key species.

MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Allotment maps and management requirements for your permitted allotment have been provided to you.

The reverse GK connected brand is the only brand authorized under your grazing permit.

Range improvements listed under part three in your term permit must be maintained before livestock enter the allotment. The maintenance standards, also listed in part three of your permit, must be followed when maintaining improvements. Range improvements must be maintained even when there is non-use on an allotment; for whatever reason.

Place salt at least ¼ mile from water, roads, and trails. If there are specific areas that require salt placement outside these guidelines, you must obtain approval from this office prior to salting. Haul dead livestock at least 100 yards from roads, trails, and water. All garbage and debris associated with managing your livestock on Forest Service Allotments must be removed from the National Forest.

If you or your employees spot a wildfire, report it immediately to the Interagency Dispatch Center in Minden, NV at (775)883-5995. As a reminder, if the Bridgeport Ranger District enters into fire restrictions during the 2016 season this restriction applies to your operation as well.

Invasive weeds are becoming a serious threat to the welfare of our rangelands. Your assistance is needed to identify new outbreaks of weed populations and to prevent the establishment of weeds on the forest. Pay particular attention to areas where stock are concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments, and salting areas. A Noxious Weed Free Hay order has been implemented on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. This requires that any hay that is brought onto the National Forest must be certified free from noxious weeds. All livestock entering the National Forest are recommended to be fed Certified Noxious Weed Free Forage for at least 2 days prior to entering the Forest. Pelletized feed is not affected by this order.

REPORTING

I have included forms for recording your actual use and range improvement maintenance on the allotment. Please complete the forms and return them to my office no later than November 30, 2016. Failure to report actual use numbers and days may result in Non-Compliance and subsequent permit actions including but not limited to reduced numbers, season, and partial or entire permit cancellation.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

The grazing fee for the 2016 season has increased over last year. The Fee is \$2.11 per head month.

Payment of your grazing bill is due five days prior to your earliest turnout date to allow time for processing. As a reminder, the Forest Service is required to give permittees a minimum of 30 days to pay your grazing fees. The Forest Service is requesting that permittees schedule their AOI meeting a minimum of 35 days prior to earliest on date to provide adequate time to plan for the upcoming grazing season.

The Bridgeport Travel Management Record of Decision signed on March 5th 2010 and subsequent issuance of the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) identifies all roads and trails designated for motor vehicle use. As detailed in 36 CFR 261.13; 36CFR 212.51a the prohibitions on motor vehicle use will not apply to motor vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization issued under Federal Law or Regulation (e.g. term grazing permit). Through the 2016 grazing season, you and your employees are authorized to travel on routes within the allotment to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of your term grazing permit. Please keep a copy of this AOI to provide to Forest Officers as authorization for traveling non MVUM routes within your allotment.

If you have any questions regarding the management of the Slinkard C&H Allotment please contact Aaron Coogan of my office at (760) 932-5850.