



ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
2016



**Borsini Ranches
Casino West
Mike and Tana Powell
Willow Stay Ranch**

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Bridgeport Ranger District

Sweetwater C&H Allotment

Recommended by [Signature] Date: 5/10/2016
Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted by: [Signature] Date: 5-10-16
Permittee

Accepted by: [Signature] Date: 5-10-16-
Permittee

Accepted by: _____ Date: _____
Permittee

Accepted by: _____ Date: _____
Permittee

Approved by: [Signature] Date: 5/17/16
District Ranger

Upon signature by the District Ranger, these Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit.

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
Sweetwater C&H Allotment

Permitted # of Livestock:

Permittee	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
Borsini Ranches	140	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	562
Casino West	250	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	1003
Mike and Tana Powell	241	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	967
Willow Stay Ranch	244	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	979

Authorized # / Rotation of Livestock:

Permittee	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
Borsini Ranches	140	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	562
Casino West	250	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	1003
Mike and Tana Powell	15	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	60
Willow Stay Ranch	244	Cow/Calf	6/16 – 10/15	979

Rotation Schedule

- ✓ Dates for rotation are considered approximate; actual dates will be determined by utilization levels. When utilization levels are reached for a particular area or the allotment as a whole, the cattle will be moved to the next area or off the forest. All livestock must be removed from National Forest system lands within 72 hours of notification and controlled to prevent re-entry

Nonuse

- ✓ Personal Convenience Nonuse must be requested in-writing, 30 days prior to permitted on-date. This will provide the Forest Officer sufficient time to review the request and approve/ disapprove the application or consent to an alternative resolution. This type of nonuse is only allowed for up to three consecutive years and no more than four years in any 10 year period. Approval of nonuse is not automatic.
- ✓ Nonuse for Resource Protection or Development may be implemented by the authorized Forest Officer if necessary to facilitate the protection or development of National Forest System Lands and Resources.
- ✓ Nonuse applies only to livestock numbers, not to season of use. In the absence of approved nonuse, the permittee must place 90% or more of the permitted livestock numbers on the allotment.
- ✓ A permit cannot be waived based on sale of permitted livestock if that permit is in personal convenience nonuse status.
- ✓ Nonuse does not relieve the permittee from range improvements maintenance responsibility. Improvements used in common will be maintained before either operator turns on.

Authorized Nonuse:

- **Mike and Tana Powell will be in 94% nonuse for permittee personal convenience. This is the first consecutive year of personal convenience nonuse. This is the second year of personal convenience nonuse in any ten year period. The last personal convenience nonuse for Mike and Tana Powell on the Sweetwater C&H Allotment was in 2011.**

Livestock Brands & other Identifiers:

Only livestock marked, tagged, or branded as shown in the application upon which this permit is based, and as may be required under Section 8(f), will be allowed to graze under this permit unless the permittee has advance written approval from the Forest officer in charge to do otherwise.

The following brands are the only ones authorized on the Sweetwater C&H Allotment:

Borsini Ranches:	DB, TJ Combined R, State of Nevada
Casino West:	Lazy S over W, L Bar M
Mike and Tana Powell:	Bar 7 L Bar
Willow Stay Ranch:	Standing Quartercircle I Standing Quartercircle, L Open A over Bar

COMPLIANCE

AOI is Part of Grazing Permit

Review all Clauses of your Term Grazing Permit, and the following Annual Operating Instructions (AOI), prior to grazing livestock during 2016. Listed below are the topics we discussed and agreed to during your Annual Operating Meeting. Be sure to ask questions if any portion of any of these documents is unclear. Upon signature, these Annual Operating Instructions supplement and become part of your Term Grazing Permit, as provided for in Part 2, Clause 8(a).

Your compliance with this instruction is essential for the proper management of National Forest System lands. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of your permit and this instruction will result in permit action which can include suspension or cancellation of part or all of your Term Grazing Permit.

Modifying AOI

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

Notice of Non-Compliance Actions

Noncompliance is any violation of the terms and conditions identified in the Term Grazing Permit as well as the current seasons AOI. Infrequent, minor, or first time offenses may be easily remedied by a telephone call to or personal contact with the permittee, preceded by a follow-up discussion. Administrative action such as partial or total suspension or cancellation of grazing privileges can occur when noncompliance is habitual or where immediate action is necessary to protect public health, interest, or safety. A Notice of Noncompliance (NONC) will be sent to the permittee identifying specific permit violations, corrective actions that must be taken by the permittee to demonstrate or achieve compliance, a timeframe to complete corrective actions, and possible administrative actions that may be taken if violations are not remedied.

Livestock Requirements

- ✓ *Notification of Turnout*
 - It is the permittees' responsibility to notify the Forest Officer a minimum of five days before turnout of when and where livestock will be turned out so a count can be made if desired.
- ✓ *Certified Weed Free Hay:*
 - By USDA order 04-00-097, all non-palletized hay, straw or mulch possessed, stored, or transported on National Forest System Lands, in individual bales or containers, must be tagged or marked as noxious weed free, or must have the original and current evidence of noxious weed free certification documentation present. All markings must meet the State and/or county standards for certification as noxious weed free.
 - If the animals are being fed hay prior to coming on to the National Forest, please see to it that they are fed weed free hay for several days to allow the majority of seeds to pass before turn on. It is your responsibility to ensure that your livestock do not contribute to the transport of noxious weeds onto the allotment.
 - Any hay, straw or other feeds used on the allotment either shall be certified as being free of noxious weeds, or shall consist of heat treated palletized feed.

BILLING/CREDIT

- ✓ 2016 grazing fees are set at \$2.11 per head month for cattle.
- ✓ All bills need to be processed through our payment center and confirmed before livestock can enter onto National Forest Service Lands.
- ✓ Livestock remaining on the National Forest after the authorized grazing season must be billed for at the unauthorized use rate, and may be cause for administrative action against the grazing permit.
- ✓ If you are required to delay turnout or leave the allotment early, you may request for a credit against the next years' bill for collection for the unused head months. Actual use records document dates livestock spend within particular pastures or allotments, as well as other useful information such as loss, resource concerns, improvement needs, etc. In order to be eligible for credit, all credit applications and actual use records need to be received, in writing, by December 31 of the current grazing season.
- ✓ Extensions of the authorized and paid for grazing season, if desired, must be requested at least 21 days in advance of the off date to allow time for inspection and billing and subsequent payment of additional grazing fees.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Entering Allotment

- ✓ On-date for livestock entry onto the allotment for this grazing season is tentatively scheduled for June 16.
- ✓ You will need to contact the Forest Officer at least five days prior to this turn on date to confirm that the rangeland is ready and that required maintenance is complete. The actual on date will be based on a general range readiness check and as time permits, spot-checks of maintenance.
- ✓ **Turn-Out Locations:** After a sufficient time for mothering up, livestock are to be distributed throughout the pasture on the same day as they are turned out. In no case is it acceptable to leave the livestock to distribute themselves. Livestock are not to be turned out onto areas of resource concern such as riparian areas, areas near concentrated public use, trailheads, and so forth.

Pasture Movements and Exiting Allotment

- ✓ The Forest Service recognizes that moves from one pasture to another cannot usually be accomplished in one day. It is your responsibility to begin early movements of livestock to ensure that pastures are clean by the dates specified. Early movement shall not exceed five days unless approved in advance by the Forest Officer.
- ✓ Depending on the pasture, the permittee should spend as much time as needed in moving livestock away from areas of concern (meadows, riparian areas, key areas, and so forth) and into areas of normally light use. This is entirely to the benefit of the permittee as it allows the livestock to make use of forage that otherwise will not be grazed before allowable use standards are met in the key areas and the livestock are required to be removed from the pasture.
- ✓ Permittees are encouraged to employ gentle herding techniques based on slow movement, herding in the afternoon and early evening rather than morning, bedding livestock in the desired area overnight, letting the livestock respond to your movements, rather than pushing them hard, and so forth. This has proven to result in better overall distribution with less stress on the livestock
- ✓ The off date for a pasture is the date when the livestock are to be fully out of the unit, or in the case of the last pasture, fully off the National Forest System lands. It is your responsibility to ensure compliance with this requirement. **Failure to completely remove livestock from a pasture by the off date may result in action being taken against the grazing permit(s).**

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Proper Use Standards

Allowable use is the degree of grazing specified for a particular area and/or plant(s).

Utilization Standards

Utilization is based on current year's growth for browse and shrubs. The utilization percentages represent the maximum that will be allowed based on current livestock management practices and is measured as point in time.

ALLOTMENT: Sweetwater C&H

The following allowable use standards apply to the Sweetwater C&H Allotment:

Riparian Sites:

- 30% use of the current year's growth of overall species
- 55% use of the current year's growth of key species

Upland Sites:

- 55% use of the current year's growth of the following key species: Nevada Bluegrass, Indian Ricegrass, Needle and Thread Grass, Western Needlegrass, Junegrass, and Crested Wheatgrass.

Streambank Disturbance:

- 20% maximum streambank disturbance by cattle

- The maximum utilization levels would normally be used where the plant community is at or near the desired future condition.
- The listed value is the maximum rate that can be prescribed unless otherwise approved by the Forest Supervisor.

Please review the following Utilization Standards table obtained from your permit prior to turning out as the use level stated is the maximum utilization allowed for the planned season of use. Once these use levels have been reached you will be required to move your livestock to another unit or remove them from National Forest System lands regardless of the time remaining in the grazing season or how many Head Months you have paid for. You are responsible for tracking and complying with your permitted forage use levels.

IMPROVEMENTS

Current Structural and Non-Structural Improvements

- ✓ You are responsible for maintenance of all rangeland improvements assigned to you in your grazing permit, whether grazing occurs or not.
- ✓ All assigned improvements are to be maintained to a level that fully serves the intended purpose and perpetuates the effective life of each improvement.
- ✓ Improvement maintenance and responsibility is adequately described on part 3 of the grazing permit and clearly displays the requirements for completing maintenance prior to turn out of livestock into the area/unit/allotment.
 - Exterior Fences- must be maintained to standard prior to the earlier turn on date or either yourself or your neighbor on the adjacent allotment. It is your responsibility to coordinate with your neighbor to ensure that the maintenance occurs on time. All interior fences must be maintained to standard prior to turning livestock against them.
 - Water Developments- must be maintained to standard prior to livestock entering the pasture containing the development, including maintenance of wildlife escape ramps.
- ✓ Maintenance must occur throughout the season and cannot be a one-time action. Damage resulting from big game, wind or other acts of nature, or human caused actions, must be repaired in a timely manner to ensure the integrity of the structure. If serious or repeated problems occur, contact the Forest Officer and work to determine long-term solutions.
- ✓ The Forest Service will spot check maintenance as time permits; or if we are made aware of a problem, additional checks will be conducted.
- ✓ Failure to properly complete the assigned maintenance to standard and in a timely manner will be cause for denial of permission either to place livestock on the allotment, or to move to another pasture, and/or may result in action being taken against the grazing permit.

Proposed Construction/ Reconstruction of Structural and Non-Structural Improvements

- ✓ Structures that are deteriorating to the point where maintenance is no longer able to adequately repair them, the permittee will work with the Forest Officer to schedule replacement. In general, this work will be completed on an approximately 50:50 cost share basis between the permittee and the Forest Service.
- ✓ Please be aware that it is necessary to plan projects with at least one-year lead-time to allow for the required documentation and clearances.
- ✓ Project work will be performed only under an approved Permit Modification for Cooperative Range Improvement. This agreement will contain and specify the project standards and timeframes.

RIDER/ PERMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ **Salt and Supplement Placement**
 - Salt or supplement can be used to improve distribution of livestock into areas of light use and to lessen grazing impacts to key areas.
 - All salt or supplement will be placed away from key areas and available water, in areas where livestock is usually light.
 - It should be moved progressively to allow animals to find it and to become used to grazing in the vicinity. Animals may also need to be herded to the salt and bedded in the general vicinity.
 - In no case will salt or supplement be placed closer than ¼ mile to streams, springs, water developments, or other wetlands without prior approval of the Forest Officer.
 - Salt or supplement will not be placed within tree regeneration areas where the smallest trees are less than three feet tall.
 - Salt or supplement will not be placed near trailheads, on open roads, in areas of concentrated public use, or in other areas where such placement is liable to result in conflicts with other Forest or Grassland users.
 - Unless otherwise agreed to by the Forest Officer, salt or supplement shall be removed from a pasture when the livestock are removed.
- ✓ **Noxious Weeds/Invasive Species**
 - Any equipment used in the transport of livestock, including horse trailers and stock trucks, should be washed before coming onto the allotment, if they have been used in areas where noxious weeds are present.
 - Any seed used on the allotment must be tested by a certified laboratory to AOSA standards and certified to meet State standards based on the All States Noxious Weed list.
 - Your assistance in locating noxious weed sites and reporting them to your Forest Officer is greatly appreciated. If you are able and willing to assist in treating noxious weeds, please work with your Forest Officer to determine how best to help.
- ✓ **Animal Damage Management**
 - Animal damage management activities must be conducted in accordance with both Federal regulations and State law. Requests for assistance will be done through APHIS and must comply with the Forest Plan. For further information, contact the Forest Officer.
- ✓ **Disposal of Dead Livestock**
 - Any dead livestock shall be moved to a location greater than 300 feet from water, out of view of roads or trails, and away from any areas of significant public use.

Travel Management/ Access

- ✓ The Bridgeport Travel Management Record of Decision identifies all roads and trails designated for motor vehicle use on a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). As detailed in 36 CFR 261.13; 36 CFR 212.51a the prohibitions on motor vehicle use will not apply to 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 allotments in your permit to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit (e.g., improvement maintenance, dead livestock removal). You or your personnel should keep a copy of this AOI when traveling non-MVUM routes within your allotment to provide to a Forest Officer upon request.

REQUIRED REPORTING

Year-end or Periodic Reports

- ✓ The Actual Use and Improvement Maintenance Record need to be returned to the district office within 30 day following the scheduled off-date or by December 31 of the current grazing season.
- ✓ The permittee is responsible for monitoring and tracking livestock numbers; pasture entry and exit dates; allotment entry and exit dates, maintenance activities for assigned improvements. It is recommended to make note of information such as salting areas, grazing loss, grazing use, resource concerns and improvement needs to provide to the Forest Officer.
- ✓ Permittees shall notify the Forest Service immediately by telephone, and with written confirmation, the discovery of human remains funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony pursuant to regulation Section 10.4(b), of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

COORDINATION & COOPERATION

Notification of Problems/Coordination

In order to prevent small problems from becoming big problems, please work closely with your rangeland management specialists. Contact information for you rangeland management specialist is listed below:

Aaron Coogan Desk Phone: (760) 932-5850; Cell Phone: (760) 616-0045

Mailing address: USDA Forest Service, Bridgeport Ranger District, HC 62 Box 1000, Bridgeport, CA 93517

ATTACHMENTS, FORMS, & MAPS

- Actual Use Record/ Improvement Maintenance Record