

Glenwood Ranger District

Gila National Forest

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2018

Pueblo Creek Allotment #310

Prepared By: /s/ Andrew Bryant
District Range Specialist

Date: 01/24/2018

Approved By: /s/ DK Brown
Acting District Ranger

Date: 01/24/2018

Annual Operating Instructions

I. INTRODUCTION

Andrew Bryant and Kendall Brown (Forest Service) met with Jerry Jump (permittee) on January 24, 2017 to discuss management of the Pueblo Creek Allotment during the current grazing year and to plan grazing management for the upcoming grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions are the result of that discussion.

Authorized Livestock Numbers

Allotment	Number and class of livestock	Dates
Pueblo Creek	280 cattle (cow/calf herd)	03/01 – 02/28
	7 horses	03/01 – 02/28

Pueblo Creek Allotment Pasture Rotation Schedule

Class of Livestock	Dates	Pasture
Cow/calf	03/01 – 04/30	Indian Hill (120 head)
Cow/calf	05/01 – 10/30	Bear Canyon (120 head)
	11/01 – 02/28	Indian Hill (120 head)
Cow/calf	03/01 – 04/30	Chimney Rock/Blackbull (160 head)
Cow/calf	05/01 – 07/30	Hinkle Park/Johnson (160 head)
Cow/calf	08/01 – 10/30	Cottonwood (160 head)
Cow/calf	11/01 – 02/28	Chimney Rock/Blackbull (160 head)
Cow/calf	03/01 – 02/28	Pueblo (use for holding, working)
Horses	03/01 – 02/28	Highway/Indian Hill/Home*

*Horses can remain in pasture until allowable use is reached. Once allowable use is reached horses will be moved to another pasture or off the allotment as appropriate.

The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. If there is a need to deviate from the above pasture rotation schedule by more than 15 days, you must notify the Ranger District of the proposed change in the pasture rotation date and the reason for the change. A deviation from the above schedule of more than 15 days must be approved verbally or in writing. Credit/Refund applications will not be processed unless District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time of removal of stock.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

The permittee is responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is the permittee's responsibility to move livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. The permittee is responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event that livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, it will be required to find, gather, and return animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

2016 projects completed:

Maintained access road to Gut Ache Corral #3471

The following are priorities for completion this year (2017):

- Continue maintenance on pasture fences and report progress to District
- West Pueblo Cabin repair (waiting on FS archeological clearances)
- Reconstruct/heavy maintenance fence #5080 (division fence between Blackbull & Chimney Rock pastures)
- Maintain access road to Gut Ache Corral #3471 and repair corral
- Replace trough on Gray Bull and add a trough.
- Reconstructing fence (25084) for a ¼ mile where fence crosses Pueblo Creek
- Rebuild/maintain Gray Bull corral (5094)
- FS will look into pumping water up into Pueblo Trap from Pueblo Park Spring.
- See 2013 MOU for detailed list of improvements to be reconstructed

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District is planning to allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. You have indicated that you are in favor of managed fire on your allotment. We will notify you and solicit your input if we have a wildfire on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers such as dates of entering and leaving pastures. This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal prior to or at the time the livestock are taken off the allotment. You will be required to provide your Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

5. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of hay or other bulk feeds on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be certified weed free hay and you must provide the proper documentation.

- b. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks or molasses licks on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.
- c. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use.

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

This allotment has recently undergone environmental analysis and has sufficient NEPA and a current Allotment Management Plan (AMP). At this time management direction is provided in this AOI which implements the AMP and the 2013 Memorandum of Understanding.

VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

You expressed concern over the ability of single pastures (namely Johnson canyon, Hinkle Park, and Cottonwood) to carry full permitted numbers due to lack of available water. You believe that forage is not a limiting factor, but a numbers of water points and amount at each point may not be adequate for full permitted numbers to be restricted to single pasture use. As you continue to reconstruct and maintain structural improvements, and therefore have the ability to increase your herd to permitted numbers, we will explore options of using more than one pasture at a time.

VII. UTILIZATION MONITORING

When monitoring of grazing utilization occurs it will be targeted within 2 weeks before or after above scheduled dates. Monitoring for forage utilization will occur after the summer growing season.

You will be notified when monitoring is to be conducted on your allotment in order for you to be involved.

Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of utilization of forage plants within a pasture. When necessary, verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described in the following utilization categories:

Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity
Light to no-use	< 30%	Only choice plants and areas show use: there is no use of poor forage plants.
Conservative	31-40%	Choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks: Areas more than a mile from water show little use: About on third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas.
Moderate	41-50%	Most of accessible range shows use: Key areas show patch appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants showing use: Grazing is noticeable in zone 1-1.5 miles from water.
Heavy	51-60%	Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas: Palatable shrubs show hedging: Key areas show a lack of seed stalks: Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1.5 miles from water.
Severe	61 +%	Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no stubble height): Shrubs are severely hedged: There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage: Areas over 1.5 miles from water lack stubble height.

Holechek, J.L. and D. Galt. 2000. Grazing Intensity Guidelines. Rangelands 22(3), pg 11-14.

If you observe utilization levels approaching moderate intensity (40% or greater use) you will need to take action for making changes to the grazing in that area. There are many actions that can be taken, such as pasture moves, locating your livestock on different waters, moving of salt and supplements, etc. We will work with you in order to insure that any actions taken are appropriate.

Utilization monitoring will normally coincide with pasture moves of livestock. The percent grazing use will be documented at that time. The following dates have been tentatively been scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are strongly encouraged to participate in monitoring.

Monitoring Schedule

Pasture	Date	Allowable Use
Indian Hill, Black Bull, Chimney Rock	05/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Johnson, Hinkle, Cottonwood, Bear Canyon	11/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Home, Pueblo, Highway	06/01	Conservative 31 – 40%

Monitoring of utilization for woody riparian will be conducted in the areas below and concurrently with the associated pasture. (See table below)

Pasture	Reach description	Allowable Use
Bear Canyon	Pueblo Creek within the Bear Canyon Pasture	Woody riparian not to exceed 25% of stems in a reach heavily hedged.
Black Bull	Pueblo Creek within the Black Bull Pasture	
Bear Canyon	West Fork of Pueblo Creek within the Bear Canyon Pasture	
Bear Canyon	Chimney Rock Canyon within the Bear Canyon Pasture	
Highway	Saliz Creek within the Highway Pasture	
Cottonwood	Cottonwood Canyon within the Cottonwood Pasture	
Bear Canyon	Bear Canyon	
Bear Canyon	Tige Canyon	
Indian Hill	Pueblo Creek within the Indian Hill Pasture	Woody riparian not to exceed 25% of stems in a reach heavily hedged.
Hinkle Park	Sheep Basin Wet Meadow (Two years of rest. When in upward range condition trend and properly functioning condition, interdisciplinary team will determine time of use and number of cattle.)	Woody riparian 0%. Herbaceous riparian 0%.

IX. TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

The Gila National Forest Travel Management Decision signed in September 2013 was implemented January 1, 2017 on the Glenwood Ranger District. This rule prohibits cross country motorized travel and has restricted all motorized vehicle travel on the Gila National Forest (GNF) to authorized motorized routes only on NFS land.

Some motorized uses are exempt from the prohibitions of the designation process (36 CFR 212.51(a): “Motor vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization issued under Federal law or regulation” (CFR 212.51(a) (8) is one of the exempted uses. The permittees and/or their employees must comply with all GNF Travel Management regulations, except those allowed under this authorization as described below:

1. The permittees and/or their employees will be authorized for off road or unauthorized travel routes on their specific grazing allotment(s) to carry out the necessary activities for grazing and livestock management. This includes range improvement maintenance and/or reconstruction as designated in their grazing permit, placement of salt or other supplements, and for emergency livestock health purposes.

2. It is prohibited to operate any vehicle off NFS lands, State or County roads in a manner which damages or unreasonably disturbs the land, wildlife, or vegetative resources (36 CFR 261.15(h)). Moist soils are especially susceptible to damage through rutting or compaction; therefore, use of motorized vehicles on saturated soils should be avoided.
3. Utilize roads or trails designated for motor vehicle use to access range improvements, salting grounds, or livestock emergencies where possible. This includes trails and roads open for public use, those specified as “administrative use only”, and keeping within fence rights-of-way while accomplishing fence maintenance where possible.
4. This authorization and associated activities are specific to your grazing permit(s) and allotment management only; recreational use including hunting or game retrieval with motorized vehicles is not authorized.

X. MODIFICATIONS

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District. Change requests should be made in advance so that field inspections (if necessary) can be conducted. Approval of changes to this AOI may be verbal or written, depending on the nature of the change requested. Verbal changes will be documented to your file for record keeping purposes. Failure to follow the direction provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).

Open and positive communications concerning all AOI content is encouraged. Feel free to contact Kendall Brown if you have any questions or concerns.