

2009 Annual Operating Instructions
Meadows Valley C&H Allotment
New Meadows Ranger District
Payette National Forest

These Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the Meadows Valley Cattle Allotment for the 2009 grazing season. These instructions were developed with the participation of the livestock permittees on April 21, 2009. Those in attendance were:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <u>Darla Johnson</u> | <u>Permittee</u> |
| 2. <u>Stan Branstetter</u> | <u>Permittee</u> |
| 3. <u>Neil Osborn</u> | <u>Permittee</u> |
| 4. <u>Pete Grinde</u> | <u>Range Specialist</u> |
| 5. <u>Chet Johnson</u> | <u>Rider</u> |
| 6. <u>Brian McMorris</u> | <u>Range Specialist</u> |
| 7. <u>Kimberly Brandel</u> | <u>District Ranger</u> |

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. Any changes in management from these instructions require approval by the Forest Service prior to implementation. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions that apply to these operating instructions.

Grazing fee of \$1.35/head month must be paid prior to livestock entering the National Forest. The New Meadows District Office must receive confirmation from Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

2009 AUTHORIZED USE

| <u>PERMITTEE</u> | <u>LIVESTOCK NUMBERS</u> | <u>SEASON</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Osborn Ranch | 310 cow/calf | 6/1- 9/30 |
| (private land) | *15 cow/calf | 6/1- 9/30 |
| Rod & Darla Johnson | 310 cow/calf | 6/1- 9/30 |
| Stan & Mary Branstetter | 44 cow/calf | 6/1- 9/30 |

* Term Private Land Grazing Permit

TERMS AND CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO SEASON OF USE AND LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

The season of use and livestock numbers permitted on any given year may be adjusted by the District Ranger. The season of use is dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation and temperature) which influence annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify permitted grazing use is further described in Part 2, Section 8(c) of your permit.

GRAZING PRESCRIPTION AND LIVESTOCK ROTATIONS

The grazing prescriptions are designed to meet the resource needs of the soils and vegetation. Fisheries biologists have completed Biological Assessments on this grazing activity for Chinook salmon, steelhead trout and bull trout (species listed under the Endangered Species Act). Any known and/or potential effects of livestock grazing on the fish species have been mitigated.

Turnout will not occur prior to range readiness. Range readiness is measured by soil moisture and plant growth. Soils may be damp, but not saturated, and should be firm to avoid excessive compaction due to livestock. Grass species other than bulbous bluegrass and cheatgrass must be a minimum of 6 inches in height and out of the boot stage. Arrowleaf balsamroot should be in bloom or past bloom.

Livestock Rotations and Allowable Use (Incorporate Mitigation Measures)

As allowable use grazing criteria are reached, livestock are moved to the next grazing Unit or off the allotment.

2009 Grazing Rotation

| <u>Unit</u> | <u>Prescription</u> | <u>Allowable Use</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Meadows Slope Unit | Turnout 6/1 or at Range readiness | 40% allowable use on upland vegetation. 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 30% use in riparian areas. |
| Ecks Flat Unit | Turnout 6/1 or at Range readiness | (See Meadows Slope Unit) |
| Goose Lake Unit | Use after flowering | 40% allowable use in riparian areas that drain into Goose Lake. In all other riparian areas 30% allowable use or a 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 30% use in riparian areas 40% allowable use in uplands. |

Corral Creek Unit Last 40% allowable use on upland vegetation. 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 30% use in riparian areas.

Meadows Slope/Ecks Flat Units

Cattle will be turned out in two areas. Osborn Ranch will turn out their cattle in the Ecks Flat Unit. Branstetter and Johnson will turn out in the Meadows Slope Unit. Monitoring of these units will occur several weeks after turn-out. Once allowable use is reached livestock will be moved into the Goose Lake Unit.

Goose Lake Unit

This unit will be monitored after the livestock enter the unit. The permittees will move their livestock to the Corral Creek Unit once allowable use is met.

Corral Creek Unit

This unit will be monitored after the livestock enter the unit. Once allowable use is reached (or September 30, whichever is sooner), livestock will be removed from the allotment.

Salt placement is required to be at least 1/4 mile from live water and should be located 1/4 mile from timber plantations until the trees have grown to a size that reduces their susceptibility to damage from livestock. If this can't be accomplished, the New Meadows District range personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations. All salt blocks shall be removed when livestock have been moved out of a unit or off National Forest.

Livestock Trailing Instructions/Livestock Shipping Instructions

Livestock are trailed onto the allotment from adjacent private land or trucked to the first grazing Unit. All livestock are trailed off of the allotment onto adjacent private lands through the Meadows Slope Unit.

MAINTENANCE OF RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

All range improvements must be maintained prior to turning livestock into the Unit scheduled for use. If an existing range improvement has been properly maintained but requires reconstruction, a cooperative effort can be made between the Forest Service and permittee to reconstruct the development depending on funding. The permittee is required to provide the materials and labor during routine maintenance.

Maintenance responsibility of range improvements has been divided between the three permittees. It is your responsibility to maintain those improvements assigned to you.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. If you are aware of spring developments that need reconstruction or extensive maintenance, please discuss this with the Forest Service. All water developments which utilize a storage tank must have a wildlife escape ramp installed and maintained.

The Association drift fence on the boundary between the Corral Creek and Goose Lake Units needs rebuilt. The Forest service will work with the permittee to accomplish this. If the fence is not rebuilt before the cows are in the Goose Lake Unit the fence will need to be put up as best as possible until it can be rebuilt.

We have received water rights for the Rock Flat and Bear Creek water developments. These will need to be developed within five years of the issue date (February 6, 2009). The Forest Service would provide the materials and the permittees would provide the labor. This improvement will require NEPA before work can start on it. There is no funding to do NEPA for fiscal year 2009.

The Ecks Flat Pond needs to be cleaned out this year. This will need to be done when the meadow around the pond has dry soils. The equipment (used to clean the pond out) will need to stay on the spur road that goes by the pond until you are next to the pond. This is because of a sensitive onion found in the meadow around the pond.

Krigbaum Spring is scheduled to be rebuilt in the fall of 2009 if funding and time permit. The Forest Service will provide the material and the permittee will provide the labor.

MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING ACTIVITY

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed. Forms may be completed by each individual permittee or one form can be completed by the group. However, a form should be completed for each unit grazed by livestock. If you have any questions about completing the form, please call the Range Department at the Forest Service at (208) 347-0300. We request the forms be returned no later than February 1, 2010.

MULTIPLE USE REQUIREMENTS

All plantation grazing must be coordinated with the Forest Service prior to grazing the plantations. The plantation fence above Last Chance was pulled out in 2008. You will need to make sure cattle do not hang out in this area.

The Meadows Slope and Meadows Slope 2 projects may have some work done on them this year. This is taking place in the Meadows Slope Unit. It is a fuel break around the Forest Boundary and private land. There may be logging activity and pile burning in both these projects in 2009.

If there is damage to Forest System trails by the permittees' livestock the permittees will need to repair it or pay for it to be repaired.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT

In the event a designated mitigation measure fails to protect a species listed under the Endangered Species Act, a change in authorized grazing activity will occur. If proper use grazing levels are reached then livestock are to be moved to the next grazing unit or off of the allotment. If livestock grazing does not comply with the terms and conditions of these Annual

Operating Instructions, then Forest Service policy and procedures regarding administrative permit actions will be followed.

You are responsible for ensuring that your rider is informed and understands the standards, guidelines, and other management direction in these instructions.

/s/ Kimberly A. Brandel
Kimberly A. Brandel
District Ranger

4/30/2009
Date

Osborn Ranch Inc.
Permittee

Date

Rodney and Darla Johnson
Permittee

Date

/s/ Stan Branstetter
Stanley and Mary Branstetter
Permittee

5/8/2009
Date