



File Code: 2210/2230

Date: February 28, 2014

Ted Borda
Borda Land & Sheep Company
1432 Ezell St.
Gardnerville, NV 89410

Dear Mr. Borda,

This letter will document the informal Annual Operating meeting held between Borda Land & Sheep Company, and the USFS, via telephone conversations in February, 2014, and serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2014 grazing season on the Leviathan S&G, Mt. Rose S&G, Cottonwood S&G, Bagley Valley S&G, and Dumont S&G Allotments. The use permitted in your Term Grazing Permits' are listed below along with the authorized use for the 2014 season:

PERMITTED USE:

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Number of Stock</u>	<u>Season</u>
Leviathan S&G	1460 ewes/lambs	6/21-9/20
Cottonwood S&G	3,274 head months	5/1-9/30
Bagley Valley S&G	722 head months	6/1-10/20
Dumont S&G	3,233 head months	6/1-10/20

AUTHORIZED USE:

Due to the ecological rating of the Cottonwood, Bagley Valley and Dumont Allotments, less head months are authorized until ecological conditions improve. Rest for resource protection, due to drought will be taken on the Leviathan S&G Allotment.

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Number of Stock</u>	<u>Head Months</u>	<u>Season</u>
Leviathan S&G	Rest for resource protection in 2014		
Cottonwood C&H	810 ewes/lambs	533 HM	7/1-7/20 (Band 1)
Bagley Valley C&H	Trailing Livestock	320 HM	7/21-8/01 (Band 1)
Dumont S&G	810 ewes/lambs	107 HM	8/02-8/05 (Band 1)
	1400 ewes	921 HM	10/1-10/20 (Band 1)
Mt. Rose S&G	450 ewes		5/01-9/20 (Band 2)
Dumont S&G	450 ewes	518 HM	9/16-10/20 (Band 2)

Please keep a detailed actual use record so you can apply for a credit/refund at the end of the grazing season if needed. The following excerpt from Forest Service Handbook 2209.13, chapter 80, 81.5- Refunds and Credits should give you some context:



“Requests for refunds of grazing fees paid or credits towards the payment of the following year’s grazing fees must be made in writing and approved by the authorized officer and may be available in limited situations where the total amount of grazing by the permittee’s livestock during a grazing season was less than the amount assessed in the Bill for Collection. Refund/credit requests of less than \$100 will be processed as credits against the grazing fee for the next authorized grazing season. Refunds or credits may be approved only if the permittee delays placing permitted livestock on the designated allotment(s) at the beginning of the grazing season, places fewer permitted livestock on the designated allotment(s) than authorized by the permit, or removes permitted livestock from the designated allotment(s) prior to the end of the permitted grazing season at the request of the authorized officer. However, requests for refunds or credits may only be approved when the basis for the request is related to the condition of National Forest System rangeland resources; for example, the forage was not ready for grazing at the beginning of the grazing season or the utilization level was reached prior to the end of the grazing season. Requests for refunds or credits which are based on the permittee convenience or business motivations of the permittee shall be denied.”

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT:

Actual turn on date will depend on range readiness. For the purpose of livestock accountability, contact the Carson Ranger District **five to seven days prior to turnout** and when you make unit moves. Please keep us posted about activities and conditions of the allotment.

The schedule dates of use are flexible as long as they are within the permitted use parameters, but a one-week notice must be given before any changes are made to the above dates. The District Ranger must approve any changes in the planned use.

Graze the allotments using open herding in a once over pattern. Do not bed or noon sheep in riparian or aspen stands (with the exception of Silver King meadow- move sheep every day in meadow). Do not bed or noon sheep within 100 yards of water or meadows. Sheep will not bed in the same place for more than four days at a time. Salt must be placed at least ¼ mile from water, (springs, seeps, and streams), roads, and trails. Dead livestock must be moved at least 100 yards from water, roads, and trails used by the public. All garbage associated with managing your livestock/Herder’s Camp on Forest Service allotments must be removed from National Forest System lands. Herder’s camp must be kept clean at all times.

Cottonwood, Bagley Valley, and Dumont S&G:

Band 1: The tentative grazing plan is to enter the Cottonwood Allotment via Leviathan Mine Road on the north end on or around July 1st, and graze Haypress Unit until June 20th or until utilization has been met. Sheep will then trail out to BLM Bagley Valley utilizing the Forest Service portion for water and trailing from July 21st to August 1st. Sheep will continue to move south to utilize the upper east side of the east ditches within Silver King Valley of the Dumont Allotment from August 2nd to August 5th. Sheep will then be trailed to Pickle Meadows where the lambs will be sold. This band will be combined with another band (from Bridgeport) and trailed back to the Dumont Allotment to graze from October 1st to October 20th.

Band 2: The dry ewes will come out of Mt. Rose S&G, and trail through Bagley Valley to access Dumont S&G. Sheep will graze the allotment from September 16th to October 20th.

Additional management standards incorporated from the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the East Alpine Rangeland Project signed on September 28, 2012:

Cottonwood S&G:

- ✓ River Ranch Unit will be rested until resource conditions improve due to noxious and invasive weeds.
- ✓ Use is not to exceed a maximum of 122 days grazed.

Bagley Valley S&G:

- ✓ Alternate use between BLM and FS administered lands.
- ✓ Use is not to exceed 12 days grazed.

Dumont S&G:

- ✓ Avoid trailing sheep on established hiking trails to reduce conflicts with trail users, and to minimize damage to trails.
- ✓ Trail sheep on the east side of the Carson River trail in the East Carson Unit except when unavoidable. Fix any minor trail damage caused by sheep traverse in these areas, and notify the Carson Ranger District.
- ✓ Use is not to exceed 97 days grazed.
- ✓ Be cognizant of the new allotment boundaries: Little Antelope Trail, Poison Creek, and Silver King Creek.
- ✓ Cross over to the Snodgrass Unit at the point where the Snodgrass Trail and Silver King Trail converges.

Mt. Rose S&G: Sheep will be trucked to the Thomas Creek parking lot and complete the 1,000 acre Arrowhawk targeted grazing fuels reduction project. Once you have completed this targeted grazing project, you may continue to graze the rest of the allotment. Keep sheep in the higher elevations out of the medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusa*) patches on the north and northeast side of the allotment, and away from the Hunter Creek trailhead. Sheep will graze the Hunter Lake Road corridor moving up to Hunter Lake. Utilize Bronco Creek road and dry meadow prior to Big Meadows and Davis Meadow- stretching entrance into these meadows until **July 15** to provide for critical deer fawning requirements. Avoid the newly constructed Tahoe Rim Trail to prevent trail damage; please notify the Carson Ranger District if trail damage occurs. Once utilization has been met on the west side of the allotment, sheep will be trailed back to the Thomas Creek area where they will exit the allotment. Make the Carson Ranger District aware of any alternate routes you have established for trailing/trucking sheep off of the allotment.

INVASIVE WEEDS:

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 is concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments, and salting areas. We have implemented a Noxious Weed Free Hay order on our Forest. This will require any hay that is brought onto the National Forest to be certified free from noxious weeds. It is *strongly* recommended that all

livestock entering the National Forest be fed **Certified Noxious Weed Free Forage** for at least 3 days prior to entering the Forest.

You are required to avoid noxious weeds, and known rare plant populations. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with noxious weeds, as the Forest Service may be unaware of some populations.

ALLOWABLE USE:

Mt. Rose S&G:

Riparian Sites:

- * 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** meadow area in **bare soil and active erosion**) **total rest** from grazing is required until they have recovered and have 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 the annual leader growth and is not to exceed more than **20 percent** of individual seedlings.
- * Disturbance of meadow-associated stream banks and natural lake 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 ecological status is moving in a downward trend.
- * Pesticide application to livestock is prohibited within riparian conservation areas and critical aquatic refuges.

Upland Sites:

Aspen, Sagebrush, Mountain Brush, and Grassland sites:

- * Maximum of **45 percent** use of current annual growth of key herbaceous species.
- * Maximum of **40 percent** use of current annual growth of shrubs.

Cottonwood S&G, Bagley Valley S&G, Dumont S&G:

Riparian Sites:

- ✘ 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 **degraded** (such as those in early seral status with a greater than **ten percent** meadow area in **bare soil and active erosion**) **total rest** from grazing is required until they have recovered and have 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 the annual leader growth and is not to exceed more than **20 percent** of individual seedlings.
- ✘ Disturbance of meadow-associated stream banks and natural lake 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 ecological status is moving in a downward trend.
- ✘ Pesticide application to livestock is prohibited within riparian conservation areas and critical aquatic refuges.

Upland Sites:

Aspen, Sagebrush, Mountain Brush, and Grassland sites:

- ✘ Maximum of **45 percent** use of current annual growth of key herbaceous species.
- ✘ Maximum of **40 percent** use of current annual growth of shrubs.

It is your responsibility to monitor utilization and ensure that the allowable use standards are not exceeded. You are responsible for determining when allowable use has been reached and to move or remove livestock from the allotment to prevent exceeding these standards. The Forest Service is responsible for monitoring your compliance with the allowable use standards. Because we do not know the ecological condition of every meadow located within the allotments, please err on the side of caution when monitoring utilization on riparian species.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS:

Range improvements listed in your permit must be maintained to standards listed in Part 3 of your term grazing permit prior to livestock entering the allotment. If an improvement is

inaccessible prior to the on date, you must notify the Carson Ranger District range staff prior to livestock entry into the allotment. If there is a need for any additional improvements and/or major repairs to existing improvements, please contact the Carson Ranger District range staff for assistance. The permittee is responsible for supplying any materials required to maintain improvements to acceptable standards.

Improvement

Location

Leviathan S&G:

The permittee will not be required to maintain the watering ponds on Leviathan S&G for the 2014 grazing season because of rest for resource protection.

Cottonwood S&G:

Haypress Flat Water Trough

T10N, R21E, Section 17

*Work with the NRCS and Forest Service to replace the spring development, pipeline, and cattle trough with sheep troughs. Move the troughs out of the riparian area; new location will be determined by the NRCS and Forest Service.

The following standards apply to water developments:

- * Remove sediment and foreign objects from headboxes.
- * Repair headbox covers.
- * Mend fences protecting spring sources.
- * Replace cracked or broken pipelines.
- * Remove objects that plug pipelines.
- * Clean out sediment from troughs.
- * Clean and repair overflows and float valves.
- * Reset and level troughs.
- * Clean stockwater ponds and spillways of debris, dead animals, etc.
- * Replace broken trough braces.

Haypress Unit Fence

T10N, R21E, Section 16, running north and south

Cottonwood/Leviathan Drift Fence

T10N, R21E, Sections 24, 25, and 36

*Work with the NRCS and Forest Service to remove the remaining Haypress Unit fence, and complete removal of the Cottonwood/Leviathan Drift fence.

Dumont S&G:

Silver King Valley Irrigation System

T8N, R21E; T9N, R21E (Silver King Valley)

*Focus work in the fall; notify the Forest Service when working within wilderness. Work with FS and NRCS- reference NRCS Operation and Maintenance Plan for Water Control (Approved July 2002). Follow the Minimum Requirements Decision Guide for mechanized use within the wilderness. More information can be found in the approved Allotment Management Plan for the Dumont S&G Allotment.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT:

Forms for recording your actual use and range improvement maintenance costs are included with this plan. Please complete and return the forms by December 31, 2014.

If you see a wildfire, please contact the Minden Interagency Dispatch Center, at (775) 883-5995.

The grazing fee is \$0.27 per head month.

Only sheep with an ear tag in the left ear with "Borda" on it are authorized to graze on Cottonwood S&G, Bagley Valley S&G, Dumont S&G, and Mt. Rose S&G Allotments.

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 their earliest on date to provide adequate time to plan for the upcoming grazing season.

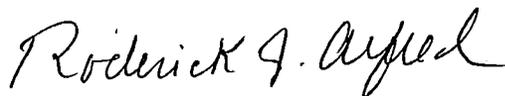
As a reminder, approval of requests for permittee convenience nonuse is not automatic and the authorized officer should discuss the reasons for the nonuse request with the permittee. Approval of a request for permittee convenience non-use must be in writing by the authorized officer. Full or partial permittee convenience nonuse may be approved by the authorized officer for no more than three consecutive years and not more than four years in any ten year period.

OTHER:

This summer we will be visiting the allotments to conduct permit compliance monitoring. Our range staff will be in contact with you to discuss any issues or successes that may arise during the grazing season. Also, continued data collection may occur on the Leviathan S&G Allotment to be used in the upcoming Leviathan-Loope Environmental Analysis. Your continued input on the grazing strategy and water improvements are essential.

If you have any questions regarding these instructions or any aspect of grazing on the National Forest, please contact our Range Staff, Courtney Ghiglieri at (775) 884-8150 (until April 1, 2014), our Natural Resource Officer, Maureen Easton at (775) 884-8151, or HTNF Range Program Manager, Dave Palmer at (775) 355-5387.

Sincerely,



RODERICK ALFRED
District Ranger