ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
2014

Silver Creek Ranch Inc.

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Austin/Tonopah Ranger District

Lake Flat C&H
Bunker S&G
South Kingston S&G

Approved by: _____Date: _____
District Ranger

Upon signature by the District Ranger, these Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit number 30064 approved by the Austin/Tonopah District Ranger on March 8, 2012.

We would like to thank you for meeting with us for your Annual Operations Meeting. The following is your Annual Operating Instructions for the **Lake Flat C&H, Bunker S&G and South Kingston S&G** allotments, as discussed.

Introduction

Permittee

Silver Creek Ranch Inc.

Permitted # of Livestock

Allotment	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
****Lake Flat C&H**	1250	Ewes/Lamb	6/15-7/1	699
Bunker S&G	1250	Ewes/Lamb	7/1-10/30	5014
South Kingston S&G	1250	Ewes/Lamb	7/1-10/30	5014

**** Sheep are authorized on the east slope of Lake Flat for the 2014 season.**

Authorized # of Livestock

Allotment	Number	Kind/Class	Season	Head Months
Lake Flat C&H	2500	Ewe/Lamb	6/15-6/30	699
Bunker S&G	1250	Ewe/Lamb	7/1-10/4	3945
South Kingston S&G	1250	Ewe/Lamb	7/1-10/4	3945
Lake Flat C&H	2500	Ewe/Lamb	10/01-10/30	1315

Sheep will need to be kept out of the Kingston Meadow Research Area.

Trailing over Austin Summit will be authorized for the 2014 grazing season. Trailing over Austin Summit will be authorized on a year to year basis.
Sheep will be authorized 10 days to **trail** across Bade Flat, Cahill, Birch Creek and Reeds/Indian Canyon C&H allotments to reach Bunker S&G and for billing purposes will be included in the Lake Flat portion of the bill. **Permittee is responsible to notify the Austin Ranger District of sheep location during this move**.

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, sheep will be moved to the next area or off the forest.

Non-use

- ✓ Personal convenience non-use must be requested sufficiently in advance of the permitted "on date" to allow the Forest Officer to approve or disapprove the application and to explore other options (normally 30 days).
- ✓ Personal convenience non-use will not normally be approved for more than three consecutive years or for more than four years in any consecutive ten-year period.
- ✓ A permit cannot be waived based on sale of permitted livestock if that permit is in personal convenience non-use status.
- ✓ Nonuse may be implemented by the authorized officer if necessary to facilitate the protection or development of National Forest System lands and resources.
- ✓ Non-use applies only to numbers and not to seasons. Approval of non-use is not automatic. In the absence of approved non-use, the permittee must place 90% or more of the permitted numbers on the allotment.

Permitted Livestock Brands

- ✓ JL Combined: located on RH of sheep and on RSH of horses.

Compliance

AOI is Part of Grazing Permit

- ✓ Please review your Term Grazing Permit, #30064, prior to grazing livestock during 2014.
- ✓ Upon signature, these Annual Operating Instructions supplement and become part of your Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a)of the General Provisions and Requirements. Be sure to ask questions if any portion of any of these documents is unclear.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ All livestock must be removed from National Forest system lands within 72 hours of notification and controlled to prevent re-entry.

Procedures for 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

- ✓ None

Noxious Weeds/Invasive Species

- ✓ By USDA order 04-00-097, all non-pelletized 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 Forest, please see to it that they are fed weed free hay for several days before turn on.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.

Billing

- ✓ Year 2014 grazing fees are set at $0.27 per head month.
- ✓ Payment must be received by the due date listed on the Bill for Collection.
- ✓ Confirmation through “lock box” must be received before livestock can enter National Forest Service Lands.
- ✓ If you are required to delay turnout or leave the allotment early, you may request and be given credit against the next year’s bill for collection for the unused head months. Requests need to be received by the end of the current years grazing season. The permittee will not be eligible for a credit if credit applications and grazing use records are received after December 31.
- ✓ 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 remaining on the National Forest System lands after the end of the authorized grazing season must be billed for at the unauthorized use rate, and may be cause for action to be taken against the grazing permit.*

Livestock Management

See chart on page 2 for Allotment numbers and dates.

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.

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.

Standards and Guidelines

Proper Use Standards

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

Once Over Grazing System

Non Meadow Species	Meadow Species	Ground Disturbance
40%	50%	50%

Permittee Instructions

Salt and Supplement Placement

- ✓ Proper placement of 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 trailheads, roads and key areas and at least ¼ mile from available water.
- ✓ Unless otherwise agreed to by the Forest Officer, salt or supplement shall be removed from a pasture when the livestock are removed.
- ✓ Salt or supplement fed in loose form shall be contained in an approved receptacle that will keep it from spilling onto the ground.

Herder Instructions

- ✓ The herd manager or permittee will provide sufficient riders or herders to get proper distribution, protection and management of sheep on the allotments.
- ✓ **All bed grounds should not be used more than one night, except in emergencies or with prior approval of the Forest Officer in charge**.
- ✓ **Sheep will not be bedded within 300 yards of any running stream or live spring. There may be some exceptions to this standard due to the topography of the allotments.**
- ✓ Sheep will not be shaded or salted on or near water or riparian areas.
- ✓ Sheep will be open-herded and dogs will be used to a minimum to prevent heavy trampling and over-grazing. All predator control will be in accordance with Federal and State Laws.
- ✓ All camps must have a serviceable axe and shovel for fire control. Each camp will be kept clean, litter picked up and either hauled off or disposed of. Holding pens, corrals or mangers used for riding stock should be removed and cleaned up when the camp is moved or relocated.

Required Reporting

Year-end or Periodic Recording Requirements

- ✓ You are responsible for monitoring: livestock numbers; pasture entry and exit dates; allotment entry and exit dates, maintenance activities for assigned improvements. This information should be kept in written format and will be made available to the Forest Officer upon request. The Forest Officer will provide a reporting form for your use and may specify a due date for its return to the District Office.
- ✓ Also it is recommended to make note of information such as salting areas, 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.

Inspections & Monitoring

Monitoring Requirements and Responsibilities

Monitoring has two key aspects. The first, Implementation Monitoring, is designed to show that we are doing what we said that we would do. In other words, that we are using pastures as planned, meeting the allowable use standards, maintaining improvements as specified, and so forth. Much of this monitoring is the permittee responsibility to a large degree. The second, Effectiveness Monitoring, is designed to tell us whether what we are doing is working as planned and to what degree.

- ✓ **Implementation Monitoring**
  - Your term grazing permit includes the specific maximum allowable utilization levels applicable to your allotment. Allowable use is calculated at a point-in-time. 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.
  - The Forest Officer will work with you to ensure that you understand the methods used and that you know the key areas and key species on your allotment. This will enable you to conduct your own monitoring to insure you are meeting your allowable use levels. We will also provide forms for recording the monitoring data. You are requested to send copies of the monitoring information to the Forest Officer on a regular basis, but no later than one month after the end of the authorized grazing season.
  - The Forest Officer will conduct inspections of the allotment as time permits. When feasible, you will be contacted ahead of time and invited to participate. However, informal inspections may occur at any time as the opportunity presents. Significant findings from these inspections will be made available to the permittee in a timely manner by personal contact, letter, or both. If an action is required, the Forest Officer will notify you regarding what specifically needs attention (e.g. is out of compliance), by when, and to what standard.
- ✓ **Effectiveness Monitoring**
  - The Forest Service will conduct most of the Effectiveness Monitoring on the allotment. You are encouraged to participate and can receive the results of any monitoring simply by asking. We will also demonstrate techniques if you are interested.

Location of Studies and Key Areas

We will work with you to identify key areas.

Other

Disposal of Dead Livestock

Any dead livestock shall be moved to a location greater than 200 feet from water, out of view of roads or trails, and away from any areas of significant public use.

Maps, Forms & Attachments

- ✓ You will find attached to your AOI an Actual Use Form.
- ✓ You will be provided with an updated allotment map.

Notification of Problems/Coordination

The permittee will provide the Austin/Tonopah District Ranger with written notification of any changes or deviation he or she wishes to make in these Annual Operating Instructions. 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. The Austin/Tonopah District Ranger or his staff will verify the response in writing to the permittee. No changes in these instructions will be recognized without this verification.

In order to prevent small problems from becoming big problems, please work closely with your District Ranger or your Rangeland Management Specialist, Meagan Carter. Their office telephone number is 775-964-2671. The mailing address is USDA Forest Service, Austin/Tonopah Ranger District, P.O. Box 130, Austin, NV 89310.

We look forward to working with you and solicit your cooperation and involvement in bringing about sound range and livestock management practices that will enhance all of the allotment resources. If you have any ideas or suggestions that will improve the management of the allotment, we would like to hear from you.