



File Code: 2230
Date: May 14, 2014

**2014 Annual Operating Instructions
Laguna Seca Allotment # 340**

Dear Permittee,

This letter details your 2014 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Laguna Seca grazing allotment as discussed in your annual operating meeting at the district office.

During the 2014 grazing year, the Laguna Seca and Valencia grazing allotments will be managed together to give more flexibility in managing livestock, making use of available water, and maintaining conservative use levels. The Laguna Seca and Valencia allotments have been managed together in previous years and it has proven to be beneficial in managing our rangelands.

A. LIVESTOCK NUMBERS & SEASON OF USE

The following numbers and classes of livestock will be permitted to graze the Laguna Seca allotment this year.

Table 1. Livestock numbers and season of use.

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Permitted #'s</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Authorized #'s</u>
Laguna Seca	237	Cow/Calf	06/01 – 10/31	208

B. GRAZING SYSTEM Grazing Schedule and Pasture Sequence:

Table 2. Grazing schedule and pasture sequence.

Pasture or Key area	Dates
Companero / Jaramillo / Vigas	06/01 – 07/31
Chosa / Scissors Flats	08/01 – 08/31
Valdez (aka. Compressor)	09/01 – 09/30
Cottonwood/ Ciruelas / Chief Brown	10/01 – 10/31
Campo (aka. Laguna Seca)	REST

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Laguna Seca allotment which means that season of use, numbers grazed, and rotation schedules may be



adjusted throughout the grazing season based on resource conditions. Distribute cattle to the extent water and forage availability will allow. To attain the prescribed minimum average leaf lengths at the end of the season, it will be necessary to maintain good livestock distribution throughout the grazing season.

C. RANGE IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

Continue with routine maintenance on existing improvements as assigned in your permit. The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Ensure that any pieces of old plastic pipe, old fence wire, or any discarded materials involved in range improvement maintenance is cleaned up and removed from Forest lands.

An inspection of your allotment prior to the entry date will be made to determine if maintenance is adequate. Permittees failing to fulfill maintenance responsibilities will result in cattle not being authorized to enter the allotment.

Any range improvement maintenance that involves physical ground disturbance must have prior approval from the District Ranger. Please contact the Range Staff Sean Kelly with any questions you may have regarding this issue.

D. SALTING AND SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING

Salt and supplemental feed will be used as a range management tool to draw livestock into areas of little or no use. This normally does not include areas adjacent to water or canyon bottoms. Salt should be checked and moved periodically to avoid potential overuse.

E. PROTECTION

The permittee, his agents and employees, when acting within the scope of their employment, and his contractors and subcontractors will protect the land and property of the United States, waived private land, and other land under jurisdiction of the Forest Service covered by and used in conjunction with this permit. Protection will include taking all reasonable precautions to prevent wildfires, and reporting promptly all fires on or endangering such land and property. During periods of extreme fire danger, branding fires will be prohibited or else be allowed by permit only. All work involving the use of heavy equipment will be accomplished only with prior approval of the District Ranger.

F. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Mexican Spotted Owl Protected Activity Centers (MSO PAC'S)

The Laguna Seca allotment contains a MSO PAC. It is critical that use levels within this PAC be closely monitored. A maximum forage use level within MSO PAC's has been set at 30%. If use becomes a concern within the PAC, livestock must be promptly moved away from this area.

Monitoring

Grazing intensity is a critical factor in managing the Laguna Seca and Valencia allotments. Forest Service personnel will be using a variety of accepted methods to monitor key grazing areas. Permittees are invited and encouraged to participate in monitoring visits.

Key forage species have been identified for the Laguna Seca and Valencia allotments. A maximum forage use level of 30-40% has been set for the Laguna Seca and Valencia allotments. Maintenance of the appropriate minimum average leaf lengths on key species will result in conservative use levels.

Table 3. Monitoring location, key species, and stubble height.

LOCATION	KEY SPECIES	STUBBLE HT.
All Key Areas	Western Wheat	4 - 5 in.
	Blue Grama	2 – 2.5 in.
	Galleta	3 - 4 in.
	Crested Wheatgrass	4 – 5.5 in.

G. DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Due to drought conditions experienced in past years and the possibility of drought conditions in the future, management during and after a drought should be devoted to overall health and as needed, recovery of rangeland vegetation. Please ensure that you have a contingency plan for management of your livestock if drought conditions return this summer. If conditions warrant, we will need to work closely together to amend your annual operating instructions in order to meet rangeland resource objectives.

Our mutual goal should be to protect the long-term productivity of the range resource while considering the needs of your livestock operation. I strongly encourage you to closely monitor forage use levels using the guidelines in the Special Management Concerns described above. It is important that we communicate effectively to address proper grazing management and avoid emergency situations.

I also encourage you to read the paper handed out in the past entitled “Rangeland Management Before, During, and After Drought” by Larry Howery, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. That paper has many helpful, universal concepts regarding forage recovery and livestock husbandry practices pertaining to drought management and may provide us all with important information to consider and act on. This paper is available at: <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/natresources/az1136.pdf>.

OTHER

You are authorized to park your camper trailer above the Laguna Seca corral. Please ensure that you keep this camping area clean.

H. Appeal Rights

This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90. In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to the closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).

A Notice of Appeal must be filed with the Forest Supervisor, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta, Taos, New Mexico 87571, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with the Jicarilla District Ranger, 1110 Rio Vista Lane Unit # 2, Bloomfield, NM 87413.

If you have any questions or concerns about the management of the Laguna Seca allotment for the 2014 grazing season, please contact Sean Kelly at (505) 632-2956.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sandra Imler-Jaquez

Sandra Imler-Jaquez
District Ranger
Jicarilla Ranger District
Carson National Forest