



File Code: 2230

Date: June 2, 2014

Mr. Robert Randall
Muleshoe X Cattle Company
PO Box 185
Pine, AZ 85544

Dear Mr. Randall,

This document serves as your 2014 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Willow Valley Allotment. This AOI is part of your Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, section 8(a).

I. AUTHORIZED LIVESTOCK NUMBERS/PERIOD OF USE/APPROVED NON-USE

Your 2014 Authorized Use Request has been approved and you are authorized the following Livestock Numbers and Periods of Use:

75 Cattle (Cow/yearlings and 2 bulls) May 20, 2014 to October 14, 2014

II. GRAZING SCHEDULE

The Annual number of livestock and dates are considered approximate. The actual dates and numbers may change due to many variables. Annual stocking level (annual authorized livestock numbers and dates) is determined based on current and expected forage production; livestock numbers can/should be adjusted if conditions change (either up or down; but not in excess of the permitted numbers).

To aide in determining the initial livestock numbers the Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) and the US Drought Monitor Report was discussed. The SPI shows our area as Normal and the US Drought Monitor showed our area in a Moderate drought. It was agreed that due to the above factors as well as that with the current precipitation conditions and the fact that there was abundant forage left over at the end of the growing season the livestock numbers would remain the same as last grazing year (560) unless the allotment continues further into a negative drought status.

The following is the planned grazing sequence for the 2014 grazing period. The pasture move dates shown are an estimate and may need to be amended based on actual conditions. It was discussed that pasture moves needed to allow for plants to grow and set seed every other year. It was determined that several pastures are being grazed at about the same time each year and these need to be change for continued sustainability of the plants.



PASTURE NAME	PLANNED GRAZE PERIOD	LIVESTOCK NUMBERS
Deer	5/20/14 - 6/21/14	75 C/Y/B
Riparian	6/22/14 - 6/27/14	75 C/Y/B
D7	6/28/14 - 7/29/14	75 C/Y/B
Antelope	7/30/14 - 8/30/14	75 C/Y/B
Mud Lake	8/31/14 - 10/01/14	75 C/Y/B
Randall (ships cattle out of this pasture)	10/02/14 - 10/14/14	75 C/Y/B

Changes from the grazing schedule will be made only with Forest Service approval. The planned use period in a pasture may be shortened or lengthened depending on forage availability and utilization in key areas. Livestock pasture moves will be completed within a five (5) day period and livestock will be actively herded from one pasture to the other. It is imperative that once a pasture move occurs, the livestock remain within the designated pasture. For various reasons (i.e. pasture gates left open, cattleguards not maintained, cut fences, etc.), cattle may stray from the designated pasture. Preventing livestock from grazing adjacent allotments, your allotment's rested pastures, or regrazing previously used pastures is the permittee's responsibility.

III. DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

Drought is an inevitable occurrence in the southwestern United States. Both the Forest Service and grazing permittees must plan for drought as a normal part of management. During periods of drought, the following management actions may be necessary:

- Stocking levels may need to be reduced. Reductions may be necessary prior to the permitted season of use and/or during the permitted season of use.
- Season of use may need to be shortened. Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, a reduced grazing season may be necessary.
- Pasture use periods may need to be shortened. Pastures will not be re-grazed during the same grazing season and this may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
 - Utilization and/or seasonal utilization (grazing intensity) standards may need to be reduced. Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, reduced utilization standards will likely result in shortened pasture use periods and may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
- Lack of livestock water, or poor distribution of livestock water, may result in reduced pasture/allotment use periods. Depending on forage conditions, this effect may be mitigated by hauling water to temporary livestock watering facilities.

Allotment Management Plan direction for pastures requiring rest or deferment will be followed. Livestock use of planned rested pastures due to drought will not be authorized.

IV. GRAZING STRATEGY

Graze livestock on the Willow Valley allotment using a deferred rotation management strategy. The management of livestock pasture moves will continue to be based upon a forage plant phenology. Permitted livestock (cows/calves/bulls) will be run as a single herd while on the allotment.

V. RESOURCE MONITORING

Allowable Grazing Intensity & Utilization Guidelines

Grazing Intensity

Grazing intensity is defined as the amount of herbage removed through grazing or trampling during the grazing period. Grazing intensity would be managed to allow for the physiological needs of plants. This may result in earlier pasture moves than indicated in the Grazing Schedule (section II).

Generally, grazing intensity would be managed at; light levels (0-30%) during the late spring (critical growth period of plants). Moderate levels (40-50%) in the early summer months when sufficient opportunity exists for plant re-growth, Conservative levels (30-40%) during mid/late summer to the dormant period when the potential for plant re-growth is limited. Moderate levels (40-50%) in the dormant months when the plants are less vulnerable to grazing.

The length of the actual grazing period in each pasture will be determined by the allowable intensity established for the allotment; as a result, the planned use period in a pasture may be lengthened or shortened depending on forage intensity in key areas.

Utilization

Upland Areas

The allotment's maximum allowable utilization on perennial forage species in upland, non-riparian areas is 30-40%. This allowable use level is the utilization level permitted by both livestock and wildlife. If use levels in key areas exceed the maximum allowable utilization level before livestock enter a pasture, the pasture will not be used.

Riparian Areas

Some riparian and open water areas within the Willow Valley allotment have been fenced to control livestock grazing use. These important and diverse habitats will be closely monitored to insure that the proper allowable use is not exceeded. To comply with the Coconino Forest Land Management Plan, the District will coordinate with you to improve and maintain riparian vegetative communities by promoting three age classes of woody vegetation (early, mid, and mature). A maximum allowable utilization level of 20% on woody species is

acceptable if all three classes of riparian vegetation are present. If the early or mid-age class is absent, the maximum allowable utilization level on woody species will be limited to 5%.

VI. RESOURCE MONITORING

Forage Utilization

Forage utilization within each pasture will be monitored and the allowable utilization standards (section V) will be strictly enforced. This may result in earlier pasture moves than indicated in the Grazing Schedule (section II).

Numerous key areas for forage utilization monitoring have been identified for the Willow Valley allotment. Key areas are defined as, "...a portion of range, which because of its location, grazing or browsing value, and/or use, serve as an indicative sample of range conditions, trend, or degree of use seasonally. A key area guides the general management of the entire area of which it is a part." Key areas will generally have the following characteristics: they will be approximately 20 to 500 acres in size; they will be located on productive soils with slopes less than 15%; they will have a plant community that is representative of the larger area; and they will generally be located 0.25 to 1.0 miles away from livestock water sources.

The location of key areas for forage utilization monitoring, key vegetation species, and the specific application to your allotment should be discussed with your Rangeland Management Specialist. Permittee participation in utilization monitoring is encouraged.

Permittee Monitoring

The permittee will document the following items on the enclosed Actual Use Form during the 2013 grazing year: 1) Actual Grazing Period; 2) Actual Livestock Numbers.

The permittee is encouraged to participate in Intensity and Utilization Monitoring. **It is very important that this monitoring be completed during the timeframes specified, and that the Actual Use Form is submitted to your Rangeland Management Specialist at the end of the 2013 grazing year.**

VII. MITIGATION MEASURES FOR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Attached are two (2) grazing mitigation documents that address grazing mitigation measures for the Mexican spotted owl and the Chiricahua leopard frog. Please review and familiarize yourself with these required grazing measures; Forest Service personnel will field check your compliance with these mitigation requirements.

VIII. RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Maintenance of Existing Range Improvements

Range improvements assigned to you for maintenance have been identified in red on the permit maps of your term grazing permit. These improvements are to be fully maintained annually to comply with permit requirements (Part 2, section 8i). Any maintenance you perform must conform to the standards specified by your District Rangeland Management Specialist. The grazing permittee is responsible for all maintenance materials, supplies and equipment necessary to properly maintain all range structural improvements. The Forest will replace range structural improvement materials and/or supplies at the end of the improvement's life; when maintenance and repair is no longer feasible to keep the improvement properly maintained and functioning. **Please note that you must notify the District Rangeland Management specialist at least 60 days prior to beginning any maintenance work that requires the use of heavy equipment (ex. Maintenance of earthen stock tanks). Please also note the updated leopard frog mitigation (for tank cleaning) letter toward the end of this document.**

IX. SALTING AND PROTEIN BLOCK PRACTICES

Proper salt and protein block location can be a good tool to aid in livestock distribution and they will be used in a manner to spread livestock utilization throughout the pasture. A detailed description of the Coconino National Forest Salting and Supplemental Feeding policy can be found in Part 3 of your term grazing permit; however, the following guidelines are provided as a general reference:

1. In general, salt and protein blocks should not be placed within ¼ mile of water, roads, trails, riparian areas, mountain meadows, or non-riparian drainages in ponderosa pine unless being used for a watershed restoration project
2. Salt and protein blocks will not be placed in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
3. No more than three blocks (50 lb. blocks) of salt/protein will be placed at any location at any one time.
4. Salt/protein will not be placed at the same location twice during the same grazing season.
5. The use of portable salt/protein block containers is encouraged but not mandatory.
6. All salt/protein blocks as well as containers/tubs will be removed from the pasture when the livestock are moved.

The above listed guidelines will be used in conjunction with the salting mitigation measures listed in Section VI, Mitigation Measures for Special Status Species.

X. PORTABLE WATER HAULING

Temporary sites for portable haul water may be needed and should be used as necessary to assist in livestock distribution. The following requirements will apply to portable haul water locations:

****Archeological and Biological Clearances must be completed prior to placing portable waters.****

1. Coordinate with the District Rangeland Management Specialist to identify portable water haul locations for individual pastures prior to the grazing period.
2. To aid in livestock distribution, the portable water haul locations should generally be in areas of light forage utilization.
3. Generally, portable water haul locations will not be located at sites used in previous years.
4. Portable water hauls will not be located in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
5. Portable water haul locations will be moved when the desired forage utilization levels have been reached.
6. Portable haul water storage tanks and troughs will be removed when livestock leave the pasture.

XI. FIRE

Please use caution during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles must be equipped with an axe, shovel, and water bucket. All open camp and branding fires require a ten foot fire ring cleared down to mineral soil.

During periods of critical fire danger the Forest Supervisor may declare a Red Flag Alert or issue other special orders. Under these conditions, the building or use of fires, the use of power saws, heavy equipment, ATV's and other motorized equipment may be prohibited on Forest Service land. All Federal, State and Local fire restrictions and regulations must be observed.

Report all fires to the Ranger District Offices at: Red Rock (928-282-4119), Happy Jack (928-477-2172), Mogollon Rim (928-477-2255); or to the Coconino National Forest Fire Dispatch Office (928-526-0600). Cooperation in the reporting, prevention, and suppression of fires will be expected as specified in Part 2, section 10 of your Term Grazing Permit.

XII. MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS

On May 1, 2012, the Coconino National Forest began implementation of the Travel Management Rule. The Travel Management Rule requires the designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use and these routes are identified on the Motor Vehicle Use Map.

Implementation of the Travel Management Rule requires active management of all motorized use, including use related to permitted grazing activities. Motorized travel off the designated road system, including off-road access, by grazing permit holders will be based on the need to carry out required management practices necessary to comply with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit. Examples of required management practices include, but are not limited to: the repair and maintenance of structural range improvements; transport and placement of mineral and protein supplement; herding of livestock; and tending to sick or injured animals. Legitimate motorized use off the designated road system, including off-road access, for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit will be authorized as follows:

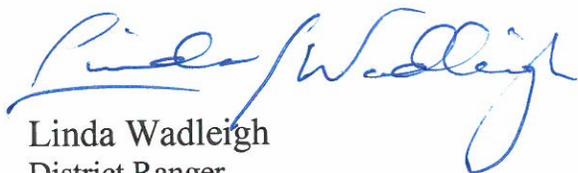
1. **For motorized use with ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles, and full-size pickup or smaller vehicles (curb weight less than 8,000 pounds):** Grazing permittee must obtain a grazing allotment specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which absolutely necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.
2. **For motorized use with larger vehicles (curb weight greater than 8,000 pounds or larger than a full-size pickup) or any heavy equipment:** Grazing permittee must obtain a site specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which absolutely necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit. To request site specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit, the grazing permittee must provide their Rangeland Management Specialist with the project details a minimum of 30 days prior to the proposed starting date for the permit.
3. A copy of the approved Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit must be with the vehicle operator while operating the vehicle off the designated road system.
4. A Permit Placard must be attached to all permitted vehicles while operating off the designated road system.
5. Off-Highway vehicles (ATVs, UTVs, and motorcycles) used for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit must be licensed and permitted in accordance with Arizona State law.
6. The Motor Vehicle Use Map for the Coconino National Forest identifies certain roads as "Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only". These roads are open only to motor vehicles licensed under State law for general operation on all public roads within the state. Grazing permittees operating motor vehicles on these roads must comply with the legal requirements. Operating a motor vehicle off the designated road system to avoid the legal requirements of "Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only" is not permitted.
7. Grazing permittees will utilize motorized vehicles off the designated road system in a manner that will not result in damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, wildlife, heritage, or other forest resources.
8. Failure to comply with the conditions of the Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit may result in the immediate cancellation of the Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit and the issuance of a Notice of Non-Compliance for violation of the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit.

Grazing permittees that do not obtain a Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit are required to operate motorized vehicles only on the designated road system. Operating a motorized vehicle off the designated road system without a valid Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit will result in the immediate issuance of a Notice of Non-

Compliance for violating the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit (Part 2, Section 8a). A Notice of Non-Compliance may result in Term Grazing Permit suspension or cancellation proceedings.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss anything further, please feel free to contact Marc Stavropoulos at (928) 203-7515, or Kathy Sevy at (928) 203 - 7537.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Wadleigh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends under the first name and loops back under the last name.

Linda Wadleigh
District Ranger

