United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Bridgeport Ranger District
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File Code: 2210
Date: MAY 27 2014

Judy, Dwain & Alan Chichester
PO Box 44
Coleville, CA 96107

Dear Dwain

This letter will document the meeting between Dwain Chichester and Rixey Jenkins on May 21, 2014 and serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2014 grazing season on the Mount Jackson C&H and Sardine C&H allotments. Permitted use and grazing management for the Little Walker C&H allotment was covered in the AOI for the Little Walker C&H allotment.

PERMITTED USE

The following is a summary of your permitted use which expires on 12/31/2022:

LIVESTOCK			PERIOD OF USE		GRAZING ALLOTMENT
NUMBER	KIND	CLASS	FROM	TO	
152	Cattle	Cow/calf	6/16	9/15	Little Walker C&H
76	Cattle	Cow/calf	6/16	9/30	Mount Jackson C&H
125	Cattle	Cow/calf	7/16	9/15	Sardine C&H

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8 (a). Situations may develop during the grazing season which requires changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

AUTHORIZED USE

Allotment	Number	Season
Mount Jackson C&H	50	7/1-9/30
Sardine C&H	125	7/16-9/15

The grazing use on each allotment is season long with continuous use.

ALLOWABLE USE

Mt. Jackson C&H:

- Riparian plant communities can be grazed a maximum of 55% of the current annual growth of key herbaceous species (grass and grass-like species) and a maximum of 30% of the current annual growth of key shrub species (willows).
- Upland sites (sage and mountain brush plant communities) can be grazed a maximum of 45% of the current annual growth of key grasses and 30% of the current annual growth of young aspen trees.
- A maximum of 20% streambank disturbance along any natural stream is allowed.

Sardine C&H:

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 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 streambanks 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:

- Sage and mountain brush plant communities can be grazed a maximum of 45% of the current annual growth of key grasses and 40% of the current annual growth of bitterbrush.

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 allotment, please err on the side of caution when monitoring utilization on riparian species. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rixey.

In areas of Yosemite toad habitat, livestock are excluded from standing water and saturated soils in wet meadows and associated streams and springs occupied by Yosemite toads or identified as "essential habitat" in conservation assessment for the Yosemite toad during the breeding and rearing season. If fencing of the area is impractical, grazing will be excluded from the entire meadow until the meadow has

been dry for two weeks. Wet meadows are defined as relatively open meadows with low to moderate amounts of woody vegetation that have standing water on June 1 or for more than two weeks following snow melt. If these conditions do not persist in the meadow for more than two weeks, grazing will only be allowed in those portions of the meadow where dry conditions exist.

The management of Yosemite Toads on the Sardine C&H allotment was discussed. Amphibian surveys were conducted on the Sardine allotment during 2001. Yosemite toads were found on the allotment near Leavitt Lake, Latopie Lake, Koenig Lake, and along McKay Creek in Sardine Meadows. Cattle seldom use the allotment around the Latopie and Koenig lakes, however they do use Sardine Meadows and a small meadow surrounding portions of Leavitt Lake. In order to mitigate impacts to Yosemite toad around the small meadow surrounding Leavitt Lake, cattle will not be allowed to congregate around the lake, but will be moved through the area enroute to Kennedy Canyon.

The location of the electric fence in Sardine Meadows was discussed. My office will contact you to set up a field trip to determine where the fence needs to be placed.

MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Allotment maps and management requirements for those allotments you are permitted to graze have been provided to you.

Only the Lazy H Vertical Quartercircle brand is authorized under your term grazing permit.

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 allotments. If an improvement is inaccessible prior to the on date, you must notify staff in my office prior to livestock entry into the allotment. It is your responsibility to maintain the drift fences separating the Mt. Jackson and Sierra Blanca allotments on even numbered years. R.N. Fulstone maintains these fences on odd numbered years. It is also your responsibility to maintain the fence between the Mt. Jackson and Frying Pan-Murphy Creek allotment on even numbered years. Todd Sceirine maintains this fence on odd numbered years.

Place salt at least ¼ mile from water, roads, and trails. If there are specific areas that require salt placement outside these guidelines, you must obtain approval from this office prior to salting. Haul dead livestock at least 100 yards from roads, trails, and water. All garbage and debris associated with managing your livestock on Forest Service allotments must be removed from the National Forest.

If you or your employees spot a wildfire on any of your allotments, report it immediately to the Interagency Dispatch Center in Minden, NV at (775) 883-5995. As a reminder, if the Bridgeport Ranger District enters into fire restrictions during 2014, this restriction applies to your operation as well.

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 are concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments, and salting areas. A Noxious Weed Free Hay order has been implemented on our Forest. This requires any hay that is brought onto the National Forest must be certified free from noxious weeds. All livestock entering the National Forest are recommended to be fed Certified Noxious Weed Free Forage for at least 2 days prior to entering the Forest. Pelletized feed is not affected by this order.

REPORTING

I have included forms for recording your actual use and range improvement maintenance on the allotment. Please complete the forms and return them to my office no later than November 30, 2014.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

The 2014 grazing fees are the same as last year. The fee is $1.35 per head month.

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.

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.

The Bridgeport Travel Management Record of Decision was signed on March 5, 2010. With the issuance of this decision all roads and trails designated for motor vehicle use will be identified on a motor vehicle use map (MVUM). As detailed in 36 CFR 261.13; 36 CFR 212.51a the prohibitions on motor vehicle use will not apply to motor vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization issued under Federal law or regulation (e.g., term grazing permit). Through the 2014 grazing season, you and your employees are authorized to travel on routes within the allotments in your permit to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of your term grazing permit (e.g., improvement maintenance, dead livestock removal)

If you have any questions regarding your allotments please contact Aaron Coogan at 760-932-5852.

Sincerely,

Jeff Ulrich

JEFF ULRICH
District Ranger