2014 Annual Operating Instructions

Garnet, Baby Wagon, & Hazelton S&G Allotments

Powder River Ranger District

Bighorn National Forest

District Ranger _____ Date _____

Permittee _____ Date _____

Garnet, Baby Wagon, & Hazelton S&G Allotment
YEAR 2014 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Permitted and authorized use for year 2014:

Mark Lyman Trust	LS Kind	LS Class	Permitted		
			LS #	From	To
Garnet Creek	Sheep	Ewe/Lamb	1250	07/08	09/12
Hazelton Babywagon	Sheep	Ewe/Lamb	1400	07/06	09/05
	Horse	Horse	2	07/06	09/05
			Authorized 2014		
Garnet Creek	Sheep	Ewe/Lamb	No Change From Permitted		
Hazelton Babywagon	Sheep	Ewe/Lamb			
	Horse	Horse			

- Before Entering the Allotment

I suggest that you review your term grazing permit and the following Annual Operating Instructions, and ask questions if any portion is not clearly understood.

Year 2014 grazing fees are $.27/head month for sheep, and must be paid before livestock can be turned onto the Forest. Let Scott or Kerri know the date and number of livestock entering the National Forest and, upon request, provide for having stock counted.

Rotation sequence for year 2014 is as follows:

Pasture	Sequence		
	2012	2013	**2014**
Hazelton/Baby Wagon			
Trail through Webb Creek & Upper Units of Powder River C&H Allotment, no more than 7 days.			**Trail**
North Unit	3	4	**3**
Powder River Unit	1	2	**1**
Canyon Unit	4	1	**4**
Baby Wagon (includes parts of McLain Lake & Crazy Woman S&G)	2	3	**2**
Garnet			
Leigh Creek	2	3	**1**
Garnet Creek	3	1	**2**
Bull Creek / Gravel Pit	1	2	**3**

*Portions of McLain Lake and Crazy Woman allotments are authorized for use.

- Entering the Allotment

The authorized turn on date for Baby Wagon and Hazelton S&G Allotments is July 6 and Garnet S&G Allotment is July 8. This includes any trailing on National Forest. Plan to turn livestock onto the allotment on or after these dates unless you feel that forage is not ready to be grazed, or unless you have been notified that delays are necessary to allow for further plant development. The actual date livestock may be turned onto the allotment depends on range readiness. The value of animal months lost due to a delay for forage development may be credited against next year's fees, if requested by the end of the calendar year.

Indicators to determine range readiness are soil and vegetation conditions. Rangeland is generally ready for grazing when soil has become firm after winter and early spring precipitation, and when plants have reached a stage of growth at which grazing may begin under a specific management plan without long-lasting damage. This occurs when grasses are headed out, forbs are in full bloom, and shrubs are leaved out. Livestock should not be turned on until all portions of the first pasture of a rotation are determined to be "ready", and subsequent pastures in a rotation will be "range ready" when their scheduled grazing use is to occur.

Give the Forest Service advanced notice prior to trailing livestock through the Leigh Creek area so they can monitor utilization and distribution, or counted; this will be critical for future trailing authorization.

- Resource Guidelines

Resource guidelines are described in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines, and in the Bighorn Forest Plan. The allowable use guidelines for utilization of the current year's forage are listed in the following tables. These guidelines are applicable at the time the livestock leave the unit and include use by both livestock and wildlife. Baby Wagon, Garnet, and Hazelton S&G Allotments are managed under a "Deferred Rotation" grazing strategy and the existing rangeland condition is considered "satisfactory". Existing rangeland condition determinations may be revised as trend assessments are conducted.

Maximum allowable use guidelines (percent utilization by weight of forage species)		
Type Of Management	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Deferred Rotation	50	40

Riparian Vegetation Residue Guidelines		
Season Of Use	Existing Rangeland Condition	
	*Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Early Use Pasture Livestock leave pasture prior to 08/01	****5 inches**	5 inches
Summer & Fall Use Pasture Livestock leave pasture after 08/01	****5 inches**	7 inches
*Satisfactory is defined here as meeting or moving toward desired vegetative condition, unsatisfactory is defined as not meeting desired vegetative condition or undetermined. ** Vegetation residue guidelines are expressed in terms of the inches of stubble height to be left, measuring longest leaf of designated Carex species, after livestock use. In this case, all wide leaved sedges have been designated, subject to update.		

Moves between pastures are dependent upon forage utilization levels and other resource objectives being met for a pasture. When it is determined that further use and impacts in a pasture will exceed allowable use levels, livestock are required to be moved to the next pasture in the scheduled rotation, or off National Forest if they are already in the last pasture. It is your responsibility to see that livestock are managed to best utilize available forage while assuring guidelines are not exceeded. Since precipitation, forage production levels, and other factors change from year to year and livestock utilization patterns vary, this will require monitoring by you and/or your rider throughout the season.

Livestock use beyond allowable guidelines could result in administrative action in subsequent years as described in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guideline. Actions are not limited to but may include adjustment to the season of use in order to allow plants a chance to recover.

- Monitoring

The primary emphasis for monitoring should be placed on measuring stubble height in riparian areas, and estimating percent by weight of forage removed on upland sites, as described above. If issues are raised indicating the need to monitor aspen, stream banks, or willows, we prefer to establish monitoring protocols and locations together with you. It is strongly recommended that permittees monitor and document forage use levels. Submission of monitoring data is not mandatory; however, actual use data must be turned in by permittees. Any utilization data you collect and submit will be maintained in permanent monitoring files.

To facilitate monitoring livestock use levels, and to avoid the need to measure utilization on all rangelands, monitoring will be done using a "key area" concept. Key areas are generally those areas of a pasture which livestock have the tendency to go to and graze first. They are chosen based upon the premise that if utilization in these key areas does not exceed allowable utilization guidelines, then use in the rest of the unit will most likely not exceed guidelines either. This is not to imply that guidelines need only be met in key areas. Allowable use guidelines apply to all rangeland on the allotment. Key areas may be revised by the District Ranger as needed.

I encourage you to contact Scott or Kerri should you have any questions, want assistance with measurements, or need monitoring forms. In order to assure your results accurately reflect livestock use, all measurements should be completed within 7 days of the time livestock are removed from the pasture. Be sure to record the date measurements are taken, and the name of the data collector(s). Photos of the transect showing its general location and actual forage remaining will support your numerical documentation. The Forest Service will conduct spot checks throughout the grazing season and I encourage your participation.

- Key Areas

Key areas serve as a monitoring and evaluation point for the degree of grazing use occurring in each pasture. Properly selected key areas give an indication of the overall acceptability of current grazing management to meet all resource objectives.

I encourage you to keep thorough notes while monitoring during the grazing season. Should your monitoring indicate changes may be needed in key area locations, contact Scott or Kerri. The following table displays key area locations for the grazing allotments you are authorized to graze.

Pasture	Location
Hazelton S&G	SWNE Section 10, T48N, R85W
	SWSW Section 4, T48N, R85W
	SW Section 5, T48N, R85W
	NENE Section 5, T48N, R85W
	NENE Section 33, T49N, R85W
Babywagon S&G	Riparian area along Baby Wagon Creek (includes both forks): Sections 21, 22, 27, 28 29, & 30, T49N, R85W
	NWNE Section 28, T49N, R85W
	SWSW Section 21, T49N, R85W
Garnet S&G	Riparian areas along Leigh Creek (includes both forks): Sections 2-48-86 & 36-49-86 & Sections 31, 32-49-85
	Riparian areas along Bull Creek: Sections 2 & 3-48-86
	Riparian areas along Garnet Creek: Sections 34 thru 36-49-86; SWNW Section 35 & SWNW Section 34
	NWSE 34-49-86
	SWSE 34-49-86
	NWNW 3-48-86
	SENE 31-49-85

- Maintenance of Improvements

Term grazing permits state that permittees will maintain assigned range improvements to standards of repair, orderliness, and safety acceptable to the Forest Service. A complete list of the improvements and designated maintenance responsibility is included in Part 3 of your term grazing permit. Maintenance of each improvement must be completed prior to the time livestock enter the pasture in which the improvement is located each year, or in the case of allotment boundary fences, prior to livestock entering the pasture on either side of the fence. Materials from abandoned range improvements or maintenance activities must be removed from the Forest. Contact Scott or Kerri to revise your maintenance responsibility inventory list, accounting for improvements no longer present. The minimum maintenance standard for improvements is as follows:

- ✓ Wire Fences: Fences are to be in an upright, vertical position with all broken wires repaired, wires tight and properly spaced, and all corner posts, braces, line posts, steel posts, stays, loops, staples, etc. replaced as needed. Gates are to be tight enough to prevent sagging but must be able to be easily opened and closed by the general public. Any 'let-down' fences for which you are responsible should be let down after grazing use, for the winter. Obstacles, such as down logs and trees, shall be removed from the fence line. Dead and leaning trees that may fall onto the fence shall be felled and removed from the fence line.

- ✓ Buck and Pole Fences, and Pole-top Fences: Fences must be in an upright, serviceable position. Bucks that are spreading and lowering the overall height of the fence must be stabilized with a bottom brace or replaced. All poles must be fastened to bucks or posts, and all broken or rotting poles and bucks are to be replaced. Obstacles, such as down logs and trees, shall be removed from the fence line. Dead and leaning trees that may fall onto the fence shall be felled and removed from the fence line.

- Identified improvement maintenance needs and new projects

As discussed in our spring meeting, the remaining abandoned wire located in the North Unit of Hazelton Allotment is to be removed (related to 552108 – Garnet/Hazelton Boundary Fence). Pile, for burning, untreated burnable material from the old corrals near Gilligan Spring. As discussed in our spring meeting, contact Scott or Kerri to discuss development of the Leigh Creek Corral Spring (553154).

- Salting Practices

The proper use of salt can be used as a management tool to help achieve proper utilization. The following guidelines must be followed when salting unless you have been given direction by a Forest Officer to do otherwise:

a) Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
b) Salt should be placed between water developments, and at least 1/4 mile from water if possible.
c) Salt away from small parks, trails, roads, and areas of concentrated public use and view.
d) Salt should be placed in areas of rock outcrops, mature timber stands (other than aspen), or areas of dense sagebrush.
e) Change your salt location at least every year and preferably every time salt is placed. Moving salt blocks at least 100 feet can prevent an area from becoming abused from salt placement.
f) Remove salt from an area when proper use is reached.

- Stock Management

1) Bedding Areas: Sheep must be bedded in a new location every 1-3 days to avoid leaving bed grounds with little residual vegetation and/or trampled soils.
2) Horses will not be picketed within 100 feet of open water such as stream, lakes, or ponds. Move picketed animals on a regular basis to prevent exceeding allowable use guidelines.
3) General Guidelines: Sheep will be open herded. Excessive trailing and bunching of sheep should be avoided. Snow bank areas and steep, sparsely vegetated slopes should be avoided to minimize soil movement. You or any of your employees shall not use or place poison, including cyanide guns, for predator control on National Forest lands.

- Sheep Camps

Move camps as often as necessary to comply with allowable use standards. Three “Extended Stay” permits will be provided upon request. Permits should be placed in a highly visible location on trailers or vehicles allowing public and Forest Officers visible evidence of the authorized use when they are in the area. Excess firewood will be moved to the next campsite or scattered, and any garbage will be removed and disposed of off the National Forest.

- Off Road Permits

Much of the allotment is closed to off-road travel. Permittees are required to abide by all Forest road restrictions and closures, as are all users of the public lands. No exceptions will be made without prior written approval which may be requested through Scott or Kerri.

Hazelton and Babywagon S&G Allotments:

1) Right off Road #452, Gold Mine Road, near the counting corrals. No "Off Road Permit" needed as long as the trailer is not more than 300 feet from an open road.

2) The base camp will be at the corrals on the Leigh Creek Allotment: T48N, R85W, Section 6, SWSE. Access is via Highway 16, the Canyon Creek Road #25, and then old U.S. Highway 16 east. The herder's trailer may be at this site while the sheep are in the lower Hazelton Units. An "Off Road Permit" is not needed as long as the trailer is not more than 300 feet from an open road.

3) Up the closed road opposite the Powder River Dump Station, NWNW 5-48-85. This site does require an "Off Road Vehicle Permit".

4) About 1/4 mile up the two-track road north of Highway 16, NWNW 4-48-85, out of view from travelers on US 16. This site does require an "Off Road Vehicle Permit".

5) Adjacent to the Powder River Road #29, in Section 10-48-85. An "Off Road Permit" is not needed as long as the trailer is not more than 300 feet from an open road.

6) Right on top of a knob in T49N, R85W, Section 32 NWNW. Access to this site is off road #419 on a 2 track in and easterly direction about 1.5 miles to the knob overlooking the Babywagon Creek. This site does require an "Off Road Vehicle Permit".

Garnet Allotment:

1) Right off Road #419 near the corrals. An "Off Road Permit" is not needed as long as the trailer is not more than 300 feet from an open road.

2) Right off Road #419 in the NENE of Section 36 of T49N, R86W. An "Off Road Permit" is not needed as long as the trailer is not more than 300 feet from an open road.

3) NWNW Section 3 T48N, R86W; Off closed road, old number 513118. This site does require an "Off Road Vehicle Permit".

- <u>Other</u>

In accordance with discussion at spring meetings, sheep permitted to Mark Lyman Revocable Trust are authorized to trail through and graze Webb Creek & Upper Units of Powder River C&H Allotment, for a total of no more than 7 days, with an on-date tentatively authorized for July 6 as shown above. The objective is to reduce risk of Larkspur grazing to cattle.

Carcasses of dead livestock on National Forest lands will be removed or caused to be removed by the owner to a distance of at least one hundred (100) feet from live water, and at least five hundred (500) feet from any areas of concentrated public use.

Documentation on the enclosed Annual Use Report is required, and will help us to plan livestock use in the future. Please make sure both on and off dates are recorded for each pasture as well as the number of cattle. Feel free to make any other pertinent management notes, as they will be helpful in determining future management decisions for the allotment. Return the Actual Use Report to the Powder River Ranger District Office by December 31, 2014.