

2014 Annual Operating Instructions

Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment

Powder River Ranger District

Bighorn National Forest

District Ranger \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Permittee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Dry Tensleep C&H ALLOTMENT

### YEAR 2014 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Permitted and Authorized for 2014:

Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment Permittee	LS Kind	LS Class	Permitted Use			Authorized Use		
			LS #	From	Use To	LS #	From	Use To
Galloway LLC	Cattle	Mature	285	07/01	10/16	150	07/01	10/16
	Cattle	Yearling Heifers				100	07/01	10/16
	Cattle	Spayed Yearling Heifers				60	07/01	09/10

As applied for Galloway will not be in nonuse status, but will be stocked at 79% of permitted in AUMs

- 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 \$1.35/head month, 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.

The rotation for year 2014:

Pasture sequence	2011	2012	2013	2014
Sick	4	1	1	<b>4</b>
Upper Zaybrook	1	4	Rest for Rx Burn	<b>Rest for Rx Burn</b>
Brokenback (Lower Zaybrook)	5	5	5	<b>5</b>
Lone Tree	3	2	3	<b>2</b>
Warner	2	3	2	<b>3</b>
*Antelope			4	<b>1</b>

- Entering the Allotment

The turn on date for Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment is tentatively authorized for July 01. Plan to turn livestock onto the allotment on or after this date 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.

- Resource Guidelines

Resource guidelines are described in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines, in the Bighorn Forest Plan, and in your revised Allotment Management Plan (AMP). 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. Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment is managed under a "Rotation" grazing strategy, and 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
Growing Season Long	30	10
Fall and Winter	45	15
Rotation	<b>45</b>	35
Deferred Rotation	50	40
Rest 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	<b>5 inches</b>	5 inches
Summer & Fall Use Pasture Livestock leave pasture after 08/01	<b>5 inches</b>	7 inches
*Satisfactory is defined here as meeting or moving toward desired vegetative condition and 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 an administrative action in subsequent years, such as an adjustment to the season of use, in order to allow plants a chance to recover and restore root reserves.

- 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 jointly determine appropriate locations and protocols. Permittees are no longer required to submit annual stubble height data; however, it is strongly recommended that you continue monitoring. Actual use data is still required to be turned in by permittees. Any data you collect and submit will be maintained in permanent 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 in the premise that if utilization in these key areas does not exceed allowable utilization standards, then use in the rest of the unit will most likely not exceed standards either. This is not to imply that standards need only be met in key areas. Allowable use standards apply to all rangeland on the allotment. Key areas may be revised by the District Ranger as needed, and are displayed on the Benchmark Sites and Key Area Map included in your revised AMP.

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 data. The Forest Service will conduct spot checks throughout the grazing season, and I encourage your participation.

I encourage you to keep thorough notes while taking measurements and making observations during the grazing season. Should your data indicate changes might be needed in key area locations, contact Scott or Kerri to discuss adjustments.

- 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 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. 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.

Springs and Stock Tanks: Inlet and overflow pipes are to be free of crimps or breaks, completely buried or otherwise protected from livestock, and capable of delivering water to and away from spring boxes and tanks. Over-flow outlets on stock tanks shall prevent excessive water spill in the immediate vicinity (30 ft) of the tank. Tanks are to be level, completely surrounded by dry soil, gravel, or rock, and easily accessible by both cows and calves. Livestock barriers over tanks must be sturdy and poles and planks must be in good condition and fastened in place. Drain the system and components following periods of use where freezing may cause damage.

Reservoirs and Stock Ponds: Any fill material used to create a dam must maintain sufficient vegetative cover to prevent erosion. The emergency spillway, if present, must also maintain sufficient vegetative cover to prevent erosion. Livestock travel routes must be planned such that trailing does not generate additional erosion in and around the reservoir. Erosion damage that does occur will be repaired as soon as is practicable. If ponds are not sealing well, bentonite or other sealers should be used to reduce seepage. Deeper reservoirs reduce evaporation loss over shallow reservoirs; as reservoirs silt in, they should be cleaned.

Stock Pipelines: Maintain cover over buried pipelines, and maintain backfill around structures. Avoid travel over shallow buried pipelines. Repair any damage to above-ground and on-ground pipelines immediately. Remove all foreign debris that hinders system operation. Drain the system and components soon following periods of use. Maintain erosion protection at outlets. Protect the area adjacent to the trough with gravel or cover. Be sure that any outlet pipe is free and not causing erosion.

- Planned Range Improvement Projects for 2014

Impt #	Improvement name	Project Discussion
UNNO	Zabrook Rx Burn	Planned for fall 2014.
502005	Warner Spring	Install solar pump and pipeline on Warner Spring (502005) to Warner Ridge Pipeline (502166) to increase the water capacity of the Warner Ridge Pipeline. Keith to shoot elevations and determine needs in 2014.
502030	Corner Spring	Construct new buck and rail around old water gap site and remove wire. Project may precede pending availability of materials, at permittee request.
502060	Pasture Number 4 Division Fence	Fence needs rebuilt, should be let-down at least in portion adjacent to the road that gets heavy snow and snowmobile traffic. Project may precede pending availability of materials, at permittee request. Not likely to be completed in 2014.
502097d	Antelope Storage Tank	Buck-and-rail fence around the new Antelope storage tank to keep cows from rubbing on it. Two rails all the way around would be sufficient. Will let KL know for sure number of post and rails needed.

502106 and 106a	Zaybrook Overflow Number 2 Pipeline & Tank	The tank with hole-needs replaced or repaired. Keith to take the tank to Fiberglass Industries in Laurel, MT (where FS purchased it) for them to repair. If it cannot be repaired FS will replace it with 10' fiberglass tank. Need 6 new rails and 3 posts for the livestock barrier. KL will make sure those are available. Box style of fence planned to allow access at the same time to tanks in Sick Pasture and the adjacent Antelope Pasture. Two tanks in the area with fence design so livestock can use the tanks when they are in either the Sick or Antelope pastures. Not planned for 2014.
502166b	Warner Ridge Pipeline & tank east	Bury existing pipeline. Materials provided 2013. Planned for 2014.
502200	Zaybrook East Allotment Boundary Fence	Elk are causing damage on the south corner; may need re-design. Also, the area where logging is still going on (west of FSR442 and south and west of Tyrell Work Center) the fence is not installed yet.
502201	Brokenback Storage Tank	Bury new pipeline to this tank from Lone Tree Spring; Keith has pipe. FS provided line for it in 2013. Hope to complete in 2014.
502205	Warner East Allotment Boundary Fence	Proposed north of 502200 if cattle drift becomes a problem to the east. Should be located in the timber.
502206	Warner Seep Development	Install Warner Seep Development (502206) solar pump and pipeline at the Warner Seep Reservoir (502052) to Warner Ridge Pipeline (502166) to increase the water capacity of the Warner Ridge Pipeline. Instead of or in conjunction with 502005; NEPA is completed; Keith to shoot elevations to determine whether a solar pump is capable of serving this purpose.

The USFS is planning to Rx burn a portion and/or portions of Upper Zaybrook pasture in fall 2014. Forage use should be restricted as much as possible to ensure fine fuels. Upper Zaybrook pasture is planned for 'rest' this year except for minimal trailing and loading purposes.

Grazing permit modifications for cooperative range improvements (form FS-2200-113) must be completed prior to expenditure of Forest Service funds for project work. As materials for these projects become available, these activities can be coordinated through Scott or Kerri.

- 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:

- Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
- Salt should be placed between water developments, and at least 1/4 mile from water if possible.
- Salt away from small parks, trails, roads, and areas of concentrated public use.
- Salt should be placed in areas of rock outcrops, mature timber stands (other than aspen), or areas of dense sagebrush.
- 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 year after year.
- Remove salt from an area when proper use is reached.

- Other

Permittees are authorized to maintain a camp trailer at a designated site if needed. The Forest Service will provide an extended stay permit for stays longer than 14 days upon permittee request.

Any dead livestock shall be moved to a location greater than 200 feet from water, 500 hundred feet from developed campgrounds and out of view from roads or trails.

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.

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.