

# Boone Creek C&H Allotment 2014 Annual Operating Instructions

Salmon-Challis National Forest  
Lost River Ranger District  
PO Box 507  
Mackay, Idaho 83251

Approved By: /s/ Diane L Weaver 6/25/2014  
Diane L. Weaver Date  
District Ranger

Prepared By: /s/ Thad Berrett 6/25/2014  
W. Thad Berrett Date  
Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted By: /s/ Jake Johnson 6/20/2014  
Jake Johnson Date  
Churn Dasher Ranch  
President, Boone Creek Grazing Association

/s/ Stephen Bauchman 5/24/2014  
Challis Creek Cattle Company Date  
Steve Bauchmann  
Permittee

/s/ Slim Qualteiri 6/23/2014  
Boone Creek Partnership Date  
Slim Qualteiri  
Permittee

**Please sign and return this page to the above address**



2014 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
 BOONE CREEK ALLOTMENT  
 SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

Below is your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Boone Creek Allotment discussed at the spring meeting on April 2, 2014. This AOI addresses Forest Service administered lands within the Boone Creek Allotment. Please review your Term Grazing Permit for grazing utilization, range improvement maintenance, and salting standards. Actual on-dates and off-dates are dependant on range readiness and when allowable use standards are met. The Forest Service may approve changes to the grazing rotation in consultation with the permittees to address range condition situations that may occur due to weather related circumstances.

Permitted Cattle Authorized

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Non-Use</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Brand</u>
Steve Bauchman	986	286	450 250	6/6-10/15 7/7-10/15	
Boone Creek Partnership	25	3	22	6/6-10/15	
Churn Dasher Ranch	264	114	100 50	6/6-10/15 7/1-10/15	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>6/6 – 10/15</b>	

<u>Grazing Unit Rotation</u>	<u>Estimated Days</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Rock Creek	11	6/6-6/16
Main Boone/Castle Cr.	30	6/17-7/16
Fox Creek	20	7/17-8/1
Ramey Creek	31	8/2-9/3
Road Creek	13	9/4-9/16 (Weaning 2-3 Days)
Right Fork Boone	25	9/17-10/8
Garden Creek	9	10/9-10/15

**These dates are an estimate and may vary  $\pm$  2-5 days under normal circumstances. Particular attention will be made to moving based on resource conditions rather than strictly adhering to dates and estimated days. Moves will be authorized by Rangeland Manager based on resource conditions.**

The NRCS SNOTEL sites across the Lost River Ranger District currently range from 68-88% of the Water Year average through the month of March. The Upper Big Lost River ranges from 72-78% of average. All indications show that cumulative drought impacts could persist or worsen this year. If this occurs the Forest Service expects that cattle may need to be moved more quickly through units and removed prior to the scheduled off date. Even when drought conditions subside there is a lag time for plants to physically recover from the stress of the drought. In preparing, thoughts of running fewer cattle, less time in each unit and lighter use will reduce the

chances of long lasting impacts to the forage species on the allotment.

Permittees are voluntarily running fewer livestock to alleviate grazing pressure due to potential dry conditions this season and allow plants to recover from past dry growing seasons. Permittees requested to start on the allotment with fewer cattle and then add more livestock in July. This will likely lead to more days of grazing in the early units and then more typical days grazed in the latter units. Permittees also requested to leave cattle that are located high within units longer while the main herd moves to the next unit. The permittees will keep the Forest apprised of such situations so the Forest can monitor conditions within these units.

Modifications to the grazing unit rotation and estimated days of use must be requested by the permittee in advance and approved by the Forest Service. The Forest Service may initiate modifications in consultation with the permittees when changes to scheduled use are needed due to unexpected deficiencies in range conditions such as but not limited to: predatory issues, forage production, soil moisture, precipitation, insect damage, fire, hail, plant growth/recovery during drought condition.

It is imperative that permittees on both the Boone Creek and Wildhorse allotments maintain their portion of the boundary fence west of Castle Creek. When grazing the Castle Creek pasture ensure that Wildhorse cattle are not grazing the areas adjacent to Castle Creek on the Wildhorse Allotment. Permittees will contact Wildhorse and coordinate grazing operations. While it is known that livestock will sometimes travel between the two allotments in this area it is important that the use on the neighboring allotment is kept to a minimum.

The electric fence will need to be put up around the wet meadow in Little Boone Creek. Riding will be necessary to keep the cattle dispersed in the units and keep them from congregating on riparian areas and causing resource damage.

You will be weaning calves on the Forest again this year around September 8th. Permittees will advise the FS if cattle are to be weaned at the cow camp or Johnson's corrals. Temporary facilities in the cow camp pasture will be utilized and as the cows settle they will be moved to the Road Creek unit. This plan will be re-evaluated around the end of July based on forage conditions and changed if needed through close conversation with the Forest. You have requested to reconstruct the existing corrals at cow camp and can contact Thad Berrett for materials.

The Forest Service and the permittees will work together to identify appropriate salt and mineral locations. Motorized travel for allotment management needs to be requested in advance to the District Ranger, who then may authorize use to a specific route through a letter. Permittees may request to deliver salt to central locations to then distribute using horses.

- Ramey Creek: south above the water tank; north- near trails
- Little Boone: between forks and riparian
- Rider Creek: 1 mile up road

**Allowable Use:** End of season 4-inch stubble height on hydric sedges & grasses is required

along the greenline of riparian areas. A patchy or uneven use pattern along the greenline will usually result in stubble height being met. While adequate regrowth may occur under average growing season conditions, the opposite may be true during below average conditions. Special attention should be made to drier weather conditions. It is recommended a stubble height trigger above 4 inches be used in drier conditions to plan cattle moves. While triggers are used in determining the movement of cattle, it is not necessarily indicative of the condition of the 'green line' along the creek. Examples: Little Boone Creek key area is located where cattle trail in and out, thus may not be an indicator of whether the pasture meets minimum range standards; right Fork Boone Creek key area is a dead-end where the cattle come in from the top, but don't leave unless taken back out.

Stubble height use levels were exceeded last year in Little Boone Creek for the third year. Permittee has noted that the trigger location is not indicative of the condition of the rest of the pasture, and consideration needs to be given to moving the key area. Without some change in the trigger it will be difficult to meet the end of season requirements. The Forest and permittees will evaluate the condition of Little Boone Creek and the current management as well as future management if the stream has a downward trend in greenline ecological condition when reviewed this season. Permittee has requested to be present during the trend monitoring.

The drier mesic meadows adjacent to streams and springs should be watched to ensure that 50% use is not exceeded. These meadows are of concern across the district and more focus is going to be put on use levels in these areas. While all adjacent meadows should be looked at, the drier meadows have less chance of regrowth and therefore are of highest concern. Permittee in its management has considered the overall condition not just at or near the triggers, to gauge the overall condition. The upland annual use level of 50% should be used to manage the dry meadows and your rangeland management specialist will work with you to determine when a desired use level has been met, so that everyone understands what the meadows should look like after livestock use. Woody Browse use of riparian shrubs will not exceed 50% of new leader production.

Permittees have intentions to repair the dugouts in the uplands for watering to hold the cattle off of the streams and creeks. Additionally, they have demonstrated that sufficient herding will result in an even distribution of cattle, resulting in achieving rangeland standards, except in areas where they key areas need to be addressed.

Riparian areas with greenlines dominated by Kentucky bluegrass and tufted hairgrass should also receive special attention to achieve end of season stubble height. Greenlines dominated by these plants have less bank stability than those dominated by deep-rooted plants and are sometimes in a lower state of ecological condition. They should be managed to increase the amount of stable hydric sedges, grasses, and shrubs where appropriate. Some intermittent streams will never support hydric vegetation and in those cases are either inappropriate monitoring sites or should not be held to a hydric stubble height standard.

Other factors should be considered for planning cattle moves between units. These include prevention of stream bank trampling, increase in rate of stubble height removal, changes in livestock behavior, changes in grazing preference from grasses and grass-like plants to young willows and other shrubs, large groups of cattle congregating in fence corners, at gates, or

riparian areas for long periods of time.

**Designated Monitoring Areas (DMA's):** DMA's are used to monitor representative riparian areas within a grazing unit which establishes a record of utilization and trend. The information from the DMA is also used to plan cattle moves, determine if end of season indicators are met, and to evaluate whether current management is effective or needs to be modified. Permittee monitoring, documentation and photos are encouraged before entering and when leaving each unit. Permittees will conduct a species inventory pre-season, to record the dominant plants.

The Forest Service plans to monitor the greenline along East Fork Boone Creek, Little Boone Creek, Rider Creek, and Road Creek in 2014. Other sites may be re-read if time allows. This will help determine if resources are meeting and/or moving towards resource objectives on the allotment through current livestock management. Any monitoring with the allotment will include the association's consultant, Mr. Wally Butler if he is available.

**Riding:** Provide help to the rider in back riding and in their absence to maintain smooth operations on the allotment. Early pastures will be monitored to ensure that the unit is clean for the remainder of the grazing season.

Cattle are not to graze around the lakes in Bellas Canyon. Continue to monitor the Bellas Lakes area for livestock use while using the Ramey Creek pasture. The Forest Service will continue to evaluate the potential drift fence location to reduce possibilities of livestock going off the allotment around Bellas Lakes. The Forest and permittees will install a temporary electric fence near the Ramey Creek Unit boundary to Bellas Lakes to deter livestock from traveling to the lakes.

**Cleaning Grazing Units:** Livestock need to begin moving from a unit prior to the stubble height standard being met to ensure allowable use standards are met. This is especially important during drought conditions. In most cases 7 days should be adequate. Permittees should be prepared to assist range riders in checking that the unit cleaned stays clean. Range riders should keep permittees informed of problems cleaning grazed units. Bulls should be kept with the main herd or removed from the allotment when they disrupt herd management. Frequent back-riding may indicate there is a herd management problem. It is also the permittee's responsibility to correct problems caused by drift from other units on the allotment. Any cattle from neighboring allotments should be taken care of as neighbors and if that is ineffective contact the Range Specialist and inform them of the situation.

**Fence & Water Improvements:** Please refer to Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit. Allotment boundary fences should be maintained prior to cattle entering the allotment, interior fences should also be maintained prior to cattle entering a new unit. Existing improvements should be maintained each year before requesting new improvements. In years of non-use maintenance of improvements is still a requirement.

Work with Forest Service personnel on dugout cleaning as part of the RAC project. Regardless of the outcome of the RAC funding request, permittee intends to perform some work this season. Further evaluate the potential for some pond to trough conversions on the allotment. Forest will

provide materials to reconstruct a portion of the Ramey and Road Creek boundary fence and the Rock Creek Forest/BLM boundary fence. Permittees can request materials in advance and Thad will make them available.

**Weed Free Hay:** In accordance with State Law, please ensure that range riders bring hay that is certified and tagged noxious weed free.

**Gray Wolf:** The Boone Creek Allotment is an area of known wolf activity. Any knowledge of wolf activity on the allotment needs to be exchanged between the permittees and the Forest Service. If any livestock are found dead or injured and predation is suspected the local Idaho Fish and Game Conservation Officer should be contacted as soon as possible. If a kill is not reported immediately it may be impossible to confirm.

**Grazing Fees:** The grazing fees for the 2014 season are \$1.35/head month. Your grazing fee payment will need to be received prior to turning livestock out on the National Forest. Receipt of payment could take up to 2 weeks from the date payment is sent.

**Actual Use Report:** An Actual Use Report will be mailed to you shortly before cattle leave the allotment. This form is to be completed and returned to the Lost River Ranger District two weeks after you have removed livestock from your allotment. The association President will need to provide a consolidated report with the numbers and dates when cattle entered the allotment, moved from unit to unit, when cattle were removed from the allotment. Each permittee will need to provide an individual report with dates when their cattle entered and left the allotment.

This information is used for the purpose of evaluating and analyzing: grazing allotment and grazing unit use, compliance with annual operating instructions, and planning next season's grazing management strategy

Applications for refunds/credits for unused portions of your allotment must be requested and filed separately. Please contact our office if you need an application for refund/credit.

Questions and assistance regarding these instructions should be directed to Thad Berrett at 588-3400.