



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern Region 3
Carson National Forest
Tres Piedras Ranger District

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2014
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS (AOI)
JAWBONE ALLOTMENT (00649)
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST
TRES PEIDRAS RANGER DISTRICT

LIST OF JAWBONE PERMIT MEMBERS:

Brock and Tandi Canty
Lonell and Leon Crowther
Griego Ranch
Chad and Kristina Rush
Jake and Eric Vigil

Approved By:

/s/ Chris Furr
CHRIS FURR
District Ranger

6/6/14
Date

Introduction

The Annual Operating Instruction meeting was held on March 21, 2014 at the Tres Piedras Ranger District. Permittees that attended the meeting included Thomas Griego, Chad Rush, Cody Rush, and Jake Vigil, and Brock Canty. Gilbert Vigil, representative of the Rio Tusas-Lower San Antonio Landscape CFRP Planning Project 2013-2016 also attended the meeting to present information of the Planning Project. Wayne Yonemoto and Anna Dominguez represented the U.S. Forest Service.

The Annual Operating Instruction (AOI) is a decision document that is made part of the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit. The AOI includes guidance criteria described below that addresses annual resource conditions, livestock numbers, period of use, pasture rotations, monitoring and range improvements projects. The 2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan for the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests continues to be program guidance. The objectives of this strategic action plan continue to be a high priority and emphasize collaboration, rangeland health, rangeland monitoring and Permittee involvement. The livestock grazing fee is \$1.35/HM (cattle).

The dry weather pattern conditions include the following. Within the area, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 3-month forecast is for moderately above normal temperatures with equal chances of precipitation.

The SPI definition that indicates the end-of-drought is for the SPI values to be positive 1.0 (or higher) for the past 12 months. The SPI for the past 12 months January thru December is described as Near Normal (-0.74 to +0.74) so the end of drought has not occurred.

SPI values of negative 0.70 or less for the past month signal drought conditions. The SPI for the past 1-month thru February 2014 is described as very dry (-1.99 to -1.25), so 1-month drought conditions are present. Within the District, during the periods of October to December 2013 there were various areas of favorable normal to above normal precipitation but also areas of below normal precipitation. Also, below normal to normal to above-normal temperatures occurred.

The authorized ear tag color is blue. All authorized cattle will be ear tagged correctly with the authorized letter/number. The authorized use for the current grazing season is as follows:

Members Information and Season of Use (Term Permit/Annual Authorized Use Request Form)

Jawbone has 4 cattle permits and 1 sheep permit	Permitted (c/c, 6/16-9/30) (e/l, 7/1-9/15)	Authorized livestock number and season will be determined at Range Readiness	Ear tag blue/letter	Remarks 2014 Actual Use
Brock and Tandi Canty	(6/16-9/30) 88 c/c		C	
Griego Ranch	(6/16-9/30) 125 c/c		A	
Chad and Kristina Rush	(6/16-9/30) 84 c/c		G	
Jake and Eric Vigil	(6/16-9/30) 121 c/c		L	
Total c/c	6/16-9/30, 107 days, 418 c/c1470 HM			
Lonell and Leon Crowther	(7/1-9/15) 556 e/l		C	
Total c/c and e/l HM/AUM	2879 HM			

Range readiness inspections will determine the final authorized livestock number and whether range vegetation and soils meet the criteria for grazing. Range readiness will be scheduled to meet on June 9 at 9 am at the Tres Piedras Ranger district.

Compliance with New Mexico Statewide Regulation, 21.30.6 NMAC, Bovine Trichomoniasis, effective June 17, 2005, becomes a term and condition of the United States Forest Service term grazing permit. We ask that you comply with the NM State Trichomoniasis regulations.

All livestock must be scheduled for counting prior to entering the Allotment. Tres Piedras district range personnel must be notified 5 days prior to the time that livestock enter or leave the Carson NF.

Nonuse of term permit must be requested in writing for all of the permitted numbers (Full Nonuse), or part of the permitted numbers (Partial Nonuse). Verbal applications will not be accepted. If a permittee is approved for “Full nonuse”, the permittee is still responsible for maintenance of assigned range improvements.

Review of 2013 Monitoring Data

The monitoring information in the Allotment Study file was reviewed. The forage production improved after the July, August precipitation (normal to above normal). Participants discussed areas of below average to average production and average to above average production, livestock distribution management and utilization. All pastures had a majority of grazeable acres at average to below average production.

A utilization guideline of 20% to 40% (end of season) in each pasture was met. FS monitoring indicated end-of-growing season utilization: Hopewell-40%; La Manga/Gavilan-40%; Broke Off-40 %. Erratic/sporadic precipitation negatively influenced forage production and adaptive management in adjusting the rotation timing in La Manga and Gavilan.

2013 AOI Compliance

1. All pastures met the utilization guidelines of 20% to 40% utilization measured at the end of the growing season.
2. Met the riparian standards for the 2013 grazing season

2013 Actual use

Actual use: Slightly staggered herd entries, within one week 90+ % of TCLP cattle were brought into Jawbone, 6/16-9/30, 107 days, 1269 HM, (14% reduction from permit). Non-use occurred by sheep permit. 2013 Total reduction of Jawbone permits was 56% reduction.

Broke Off

238 c/c, 6/16, 1 day, 9.3 HM

362 c/c, 6/17-7/18, 32 days, 381 HM

Total 33 days, 390 HM

La Manga/Gavilan

362 c/c, 7/19-8/27, 40 days, 362 c/c, 476 HM

Hopewell

362 c/c, 8/28-9/30, 34 days, 404 HM

Actual Use by Permittee

Griego Ranches 393 HM

Chad and Krystina Rush 260 HM

Jake and Eric Vigil 341 HM

Brock and Tandi Canty 275 HM

Lonell, Leon and Leona Crowther non-use

Tentative Rotation Schedule

Initial distribution of your livestock in tentatively planned as follows (actual dates will be based on the range readiness determination);

Tentative Rotation Schedule (6/16-9/30, 107 days c/c. 7/1-9/15, 77 days e/l)

Pasture	Tentative Dates (# of Days)	Days (min to max)	Actual Use	Reason for Adjustments
Hopewell	6/16-7/18 (36) c/c	20-33		
Broke Off	7/19-8/17 (36) c/c	20-30 5-10		
La Manga/Gavilan	8/28-9/30 (35) c/c and sheep	20-30		
	(10-40 days) e/l			
Total	(77-107 days) Range readiness determines the authorized entry date: utilization determines the exit date.	65-107		

Monitoring

Please contact Tres Piedras RD with any questions regarding monitoring and whether you wish to participate in the annual monitoring of your allotment. Your participation I encouraged. The following monitoring assessments, evaluations and methods may be conducted on the allotment:

Weather update (SPI and temperature)

Soil moisture depth

Water availability

Reading paired annual production/utilization cages with supporting photos and documentation,

Rapid Assessment Method, Cover/Frequency, Parker 3-Step, Grazing Response Index, Ocular Estimate

Method by Class, Ocular Utilization Estimate by Weight, Photo Point, and Range Trend Plot.

Key site map of the Allotment

Key forage list showing community type, species list and stubble height

Range readiness stubble ht. /utilization guidelines

Grazing season monitoring stubble ht. / utilization guidelines

End of season stubble ht. /utilization guidelines

Range readiness documentation

Watershed health indicators

Utilization Guidelines

Within each pasture, grazing utilization would occur at 20% to 40% of the annual available forage (not to exceed 40%) and would be assessed at the end of the growing season. Utilization guidelines in the riparian areas includes: leaving 4 inches of stubble height of the annual available forage when livestock

exit the pasture. When proper use levels are reached within the pasture, livestock will be moved to the next scheduled pasture unless other management considerations require livestock removal before proper use levels are reached.

Key Forage Species

Pastures	Key Forage Species	Stubble Height
Hopewell	Arizona fescue	6"
La Manga/Gavilan	Kentucky bluegrass	4"
Broke Off	Thurber fescue	8"
Riparian	Kentucky bluegrass	4"
	Carex	4"

Total removal of all livestock from the pasture/allotment is required. A 3 day period will be allowed to remove stray(s) permitted livestock from the pasture/allotment. Regular herding and riding management practices are important to achieve proper livestock distribution on the allotment, and to provide for the optimal duration of the grazing period. Salting practices are also described in the cattle operator instructions at the end of this AOI.

AOI Objectives

- Rotate pastures to vary the cool and warm growing season rest and allow the opportunity for cool and warm season growth.
- Minimize the time spent in pastures to less than 40 days in order to improve forage vigor. Monitor all the pastures grazing duration in order to improve forage vigor.
- Maintain or improve the riparian green zone forage.
- Improve livestock distribution when initially entering the pasture by moving small groups throughout the pasture, to various salt locations with rider representation from all the permittees. Also, herd/move livestock within the authorized pasture every few days to improve livestock distribution.
- As Jawbone allotment permittees, you are authorized to drive (in your work truck vehicle) off the Forest Service developed roads further than 300 ft. during the performance of your maintenance responsibilities. Aspen fence stays may be removed from allotment areas adjacent to the maintained pasture fences. In addition, ATV transport of materials is allowed. During conditions (moist soil) when your vehicle tires will cause increasing soil surface disturbance and greater negative impacts, you are not authorized to drive beyond or off the established Forest Service roads or trails. This authorization will expire on 10/30/14 or may change to an earlier expiration date depending on Forest conditions, fire restrictions, seasonal closures or limited accessibility.

2008 Decision Notice

I have reviewed the Carson National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (hereafter referred to as “forest plan”) and the “Livestock Grazing Management on the Jawbone Allotment Environmental Assessment”. This decision and the environmental assessment considered the best available science. The project record demonstrates a thorough review of relevant scientific information. Based on my review and the examination of the alternatives, I have decided to implement alternative 3, which allows for livestock conversion. This alternative also includes an

adaptive management plan (table 1). My decision will authorize grazing management on the allotment as follows (see figure 2 and table 1):

- With no requests for conversion of livestock, there will be 330 cow/calf from June 16 to September 30 (107 days). There will be two sheep permits: (1) 720 ewe/lamb from July 1st to September 30 (92 days) and, (2) 556 ewe/lamb from July 1 to September 15 (77 days).
- With a total conversion from sheep to cattle, there will be 486 cow/calf from June 16 to September 30 (107 days).
- With a total conversion of cattle to sheep, there will be 4,086 ewe/lambs from July 1 to September 30 (77 days).
- On an annual basis, numbers may be adjusted to respond to resource conditions.
- Grazing will occur through a deferred or rest rotational system to allow for cool season grass production in alternating seasons.
- The Gavilan area acreage will become part of the La Manga pasture.
- A conservative grazing intensity with an allowable utilization range of 20 to 40 percent, depending on the vegetation type and current range conditions will be used.
- To improve riparian area management, riparian areas will be identified by pasture, a pattern of use map will be established to document ungulate use and the annual operating instructions (AOI) will include salting for cattle/sheep at least ½ mile from key watering points. Management actions such as moving livestock out of riparian areas, reducing livestock numbers and salting will become part of the AOI and allotment management plan.

Permittee Management Concerns (Also refer to the Project Section)

- Permittees observe increase in Elk use in Jawbone allotment
- La Manga: Excess use by Tio Grande
- Hopewell: Permittees are concerned of the Grant crossing permits in Hopewell pasture when the private land owners can drive to their own corrals instead of crossing through USFS.
- Hopewell: Permittees are concerned of unrecorded private use of Jawbone/Hopewell corral. In 2013, USFS took action by coordinating crossing permit recipients for corral use.
- Hopewell: Permittees are concerned about the Jawbone/Hopewell corral maintenance scheduling with USFS adjacent private landowners. In 2013 corral capacity was estimated to be 200 c/c.
- Hopewell Permittees are concerned about the lack of pens in the Jawbone/Hopewell corral for sorting the additional cattle from the conversion of sheep to cattle permit and the private landowners.

Annual Authorized Use Request Form

Credits from previous year, if applicable, would apply to the current bill with authorized livestock numbers being determined at the 6-9-14 Range Readiness. The 2012 sheep credit will be applied to 2014 bill if authorized. The final livestock numbers and entry date would be determined after range readiness inspections.

Range Improvements Projects and Maintenance

Rang improvements projects maintenance labor/costs are the responsibilities of the permittee. Term permit assigned projects such as, allotment boundary fences, pasture boundary fences, cattle guards, earthen dam stock tanks, pit tanks, and other structural improvements must be maintained prior to permittee entry onto the allotment. When allotments are in non-use the permittees are still required to maintain their assigned improvements.

2014 Project Priority:

The following are improvements which require special attention during the current grazing season.

- Jawbone Tio Grande –La Manga/Tecolote boundary fence continued maintenance.
- Hopewell: Putting up signs on the corral informing users of prior permission for use of the corral –like Apache
- Hopewell: USFS considering the issuance of crossing permits only to landowners directly adjacent to Hopewell pasture.
- Hopewell: Construction of another pen on the corral to accommodate the conversion of sheep permit to cattle, (consider modification of internal fence of corral to create one or two more pens).
- Hopewell/Jawbone corral shoot floor repair
- Broke Off: clean out and repair of Negro tank
- Gavilan Cattle guard at the concession stand—or keep the gate locked on the unauthorized road. This is the boundary between Tusas and Jawbone. Replace gate with one that automatically shuts.

Projects Completed:

La Manga: 3 H-braces installed on the Tio Grande/La Manga fence—supplies for 2 H braces are at the site.	Completed 2013
La Manga: Heavy maintenance on the Tio Grande/La Manga boundary fence. 6’ T posts will be installed to improve the short fence and address Tio Grande cattle getting into La Manga.	Partially completed in 2013
La Manga: metal gate installation at the Tio Grande La Manga unauthorized road, continental divide trail.	2013-Completed
15’ Gate on FR 1893 into La Manga	2013-Completed
Heavy maintenance on Hopewell corral	2010-Completed
Heavy maintenance on Tusas/Gavilan boundary fence	2004-Completed

Future Projects

Broke Off: Clean out and repair of Negro tank	Discussed
Hopewell: Putting up signs on the corral informing users of prior permission for use of the corral –like Apache.	Discussed
Hopewell: Construction of another pen on the corral to accommodate the conversion of sheep	Discussed

permit to cattle, (consider modification of internal fence of corral to create one or two more pens).	
Hopewell/Jawbone corral shoot floor repair	Discussed
Gavilan Cattle guard at the concession stand	Discussed

Excess Use and Unauthorized Use

Permittees are encouraged to notify the Tres Piedras Ranger District of any known violation by permittees (excess use) or non-permittees (unauthorized use). Grazing permit holders who graze more livestock than authorized will receive a Notice of Non-Compliance, charged an excess use grazing fee, and the term permit may be suspended or cancelled in whole or part.

National Environmental Policy Act Status for Grazing Permit Issuance

Direction for management on the allotment is being documented in this AOI and is in conformance with the allotment management plan (AMP). An environmental assessment was completed in 9-30-2008 and an AMP was prepared in 5-16-2012. Open and positive communication is encouraged. Please contact the range personnel if you have any questions or wish to discuss allotment management objectives, or Forest Plan standards and guidelines.

Travel Management

The District Travel Management Map is available for the public at the District Office. The travel management rule requires each Ranger District to designate those roads trails and areas open to motor vehicle use. Range permittee guidelines will be developed and will be included in the AOI in the future. A second travel management meeting was held in Tres Piedras on March 21, 2007 (The first travel management meeting was held in Tres Piedras July 11, 2006). Attendees provided comments to the USFS regarding roads or trails that should remain open or closed: and access routes to range improvements that are needed within the allotment. Scoping letter (dated February 2, 2009) was mailed to the public.

ACTUAL USE INFORMATION

Jawbone Allotment

Grazing Season

Pasture	Scheduled Livestock Number & Class	Schedule Use		Actual Use		Remarks
Broke Off						
La Manga/Gavilan						
Hopewell						

Number of Head counted on: _____

Number of head lost:

Additional Comments: _____

Table 1

Livestock Class	Poisonous Plants	Predators	Other	Total Losses



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Appendix

Grazing Permittee Instruction for Cattle Operators on Tres Piedras Ranger District

Review the term grazing permit and become familiar with the terms and conditions prior to the grazing season. Only livestock branded as shown on your application are permitted to enter the national Forest. The Forest Service (FS) and the permittees will agree to the counting locations, date and time. Entering the allotment before your authorized entry date is not allowed until livestock are counted.

A Crossing Permit is required whenever livestock enter the National Forest. Crossing the District to/From a grazing allotment is only allowed within the authorized season.

Livestock found on other unauthorized allotments or in areas without prior authorization will result in the issuance of a Notice of non-compliance that may impact your term permit. The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) pasture rotation dates are tentative. Therefore, you must consult with the District Office two weeks before the AOI tentative scheduled rotation dates for discussion and approval of the actual move dates and any AOI adjustments.

Management

The management objective is to obtain proper use throughout the grazeable portions of the range according to the management requirements of the Carson Forest plan. Obtaining the best distribution of cattle on mountain ranges is made difficult because of their natural tendency to gather in openings, watering sites, drainages, riparian areas, and meadows. Proper use will be determined by the percent of forage used within key area sites. With proper livestock distribution, a uniform pattern of use would occur. Utilization levels would vary between 20% to 40% (percent dry) in pasture key areas, and within the overall pasture's pattern of use.

Riding, herding and good salting practices will help. Frequent movement of salt within slight to light use areas is required to improve the pattern of use. Cattle should be moved to less utilized areas and heavier use should be avoided in the bottoms/meadows/openings that contain more desirable herbage. When proper use levels are reached within each pasture, livestock grazing must end and livestock must exit. An early allotment exit would result in a partial refund/credit of the grazing payment. The grazing of more than one pasture at a time must be approved by the District Ranger. All cattle on the allotment would be handled as one herd. Moves between pastures may be handled as drifting moves where gates to the next successive pasture may be opened 2 days before the agreed scheduled move date. The exit pasture that the cattle are leaving must be cleaned-out within 3 days after the scheduled date for moving.

Salting

Salt must be placed in each pasture prior to cattle entering the pasture. Salt shall be located at least 0.5 miles to 1.0 miles away from streams, springs, earthen dam stock tank and other sources of water in order to improve the livestock distribution within the pastures. Salt must be placed to minimize damage to vegetation and soil, within the tree line instead of in the middle of openings and not in drainages/riparian or near roadways. Regular salt ground sites must not be established.

Range Improvements Projects

Range improvement Projects assigned in your Term Grazing Permit requires annual maintenance that is to be completed prior to placing livestock in the pasture unit. Allotment boundary fences must be maintained before the entry date and interior fences must be maintained before cattle enter the pasture.

Acceptable maintenance means returning the improvement to its original functioning working order and using the equivalent materials. Particular attention, labor and time must be given to gates within the allotment to make certain that they are serviceable and can be opened and closed easily. The FS does not furnish materials or cost-share for maintenance projects.

All lay-down fences should be let-down no later than October 20, or as soon as possible after cattle leave the allotment and adjoining allotments.

Construction of new improvements or reconstruction of existing projects must have the approval of the District ranger. During the AOI meeting and throughout the year suggestions for proposed projects are accepted.

Special Attention Items

Written authorization from the District Ranger is required for vehicle travel in road closure areas. All cross-country travel where allowed must not cause ruts or down-cutting in the soil surface. Cross-country vehicular travel when the ground is wet is prohibited. This written authorization is only for vehicle travel necessary for your livestock operation on your allotment. Prudent use of this authority is asked when and where general public use is concentrated. All permittees are encouraged to stay off roadways closed to vehicular travel during hunting seasons.

All temporary camps and corrals made or used by permittees or the riders will be cleared up (left in a sanitary condition) and all materials/trash will be removed from the sites. Temporary cam/corral locations should be discussed with the FS prior to setting up the camp.

Riders will be permitted 4 horses or mules per rider for work within the allotment. No untrained horses, colts or other untrained stock will be allowed. Ear tags will be provided initially to new permittees on allotments that have tagged. After initial allocation of tags, 10 percent will be provided per grazing season.

Please notify the district Ranger with any observations of stray livestock on the Nation's Forest Lands (regardless of the time of year). Move any dead animals to rest no closer than 300 feet from water or roadways.

Report wildfires to: Tres Piedras Ranger Station at (575) 758-86778 or Carson Dispatch at (575) 758-6208 or (575) 758-6209. If you have any questions, please contact the Tres Piedras Ranger District office.