

**TRAMPAS ALLOTMENT #401
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District**

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2014

The annual meeting for the Trampas Allotment was held on March 7, 2014, at the Camino Real District office in Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were Jake Lopez and Lisa, Edward Lopez, Patsy Chavez, Mrs. Richard Maestas, Max Cordova, Leonard Romero, Tommy Martinez, Jose Sandoval, Eddie Randy Tafoya and Joleen McTeigue from the Trampas Grazing Association. Melvin Herrera and Tamara Malone represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Trampas Grazing Association.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed anticipated drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. The Southwest Region is experiencing continued drought, so any non-use by the association would be considered resource protection non-use. Forest Service and Permittees remain optimistic about grazing within the range of permitted numbers this year. The 2009 Environmental Assessment of grazing on the allotment took drought into consideration and included new guidelines to improve and maintain conditions.

Table 1-Permitted and Authorized kind and number

1. Permittee	Permitted Number and kind	Authorized Number and kind
Trampas Grazing Association	70 cow/calf, 3 bulls to 124 cow/calf, 6 bulls	69 cow/calf, 5 bulls
Raymond M. Chavez Estate	(7 cow/calf)	(9 cow/calf)
Melvin Cordova	(4 cow/calf)	(6 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Frutoza, Jake, & Edward Lopez	(25 cow/calf)	(18 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Tommy Martinez	(10 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Jose F. Martinez	(9 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Viola Sanchez McTeigue Estate	(7 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Leonard L. Romero	(11 cow/calf)	(13 cow/calf, 1bull)
Orlando Sanchez, Jr.	(12 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Mr & Mrs. Jose D. Sandoval	(9 cow/calf)	(11 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Eddie Randy Tafoya	(9 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Irene Velarde Valdez	(4 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Elias Estevan Velarde	(7 cow/calf)	(9 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Mrs. Richard Maestas	(10 cow/calf)	(3 cow/calf)

2. Season of Use

05/1 - 9/15 (138 days) or 05/16 – 9/30 depending on range readiness. Crested wheatgrass production for adequate grazing capacity will dictate the on date, provided the ground is dry enough to handle the vehicle and cattle traffic on the pastures.

Table 2-Pasture Rotation

3. Pasture Rotation				
Pasture	Estimated Dates	Estimated Time	Actual Use	Utilization%
Lower Entrañas #4 & possibly Entranas (Rio Chiquito allotment)	05/16 – 05/25	10 days		
Lower Entrañas #3 and Canada Abeyta	05/26 – 06/5	10 days		
Lower Entrañas #2	06/06 – 06/15	10 days		
Lower Entrañas #1	06/16 – 06/25	10 days		
Trampas River	06/26 – 09/30	97 days		
Canada Ancha (Max Cordova)	05/15-09/30	138 days		

Canada Abeyta will be used in conjunction with Lower Entrañas #3, and rotation dates are flexible depending on resource conditions through the grazing season. Max Cordova will graze his livestock between private land and the Canada Abeyta and Canada Ancha of the allotment.

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Trampas allotment which means that the season of use, numbers grazed, and rotation schedules may be adjusted throughout the grazing season based on resource conditions. Range improvements, i.e. fences, will be maintained prior to moving to a different pasture.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, pasture division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattleguards, and other range structural improvements must be maintained for the entry pasture and each subsequent pasture prior to permittees moving to the next pasture. The range improvements for the Lower Entrañas # 4 pasture will be inspected at the same time as Range Readiness. Permittees will not be allowed on the allotment until the improvements in the Lower Entranas # 4 and Entranas in Rio Chiquito allotment are maintained and inspected.

5. Other Items Discussed

The 2013 grazing season went fair after a rough start in the pastures west of the highway. Permittees also had to haul water early on in the season. Permittees went on with less than full permitted numbers and there was excellent cooperation between permittees and the District. The number of livestock grazed last season (97c/c 5 bulls), allowed for grazing within the allowable use levels for most of the allotment. There was below average production throughout the allotment due to drought conditions. Distribution of livestock was good last season. Permittees did a good job of maintenance of range improvements.

The season of use, utilization guidelines, and herbaceous cover height guidelines from the 2009 environmental assessment were again in effect last year. The Crested wheatgrass range was ready by 5/1/2013 and the cattle were allowed on the Forest early but things dried up soon forcing permittees to take livestock home on May 18 before being able to go back in on the Trampas River pasture on June 5th.

The guidelines from the 2009 environmental assessment are described below and may apply more this year in light of the continued severe drought.

The earlier grazing season of 5/1 - 9/15 will not be in effect this year so the earliest on date will be 5/15. Range readiness will depend on the roads drying up adequately and sufficient production of Crested Wheatgrass and other forage, which would be about 6 inches average height.

Within riparian areas: strive to maintain an average 6 inch herbaceous cover height throughout the grazing season and 35% end of season utilization.

Within upland meadows, strive to maintain an average 4" herbaceous cover height throughout the grazing season to provide cover for wildlife prey base and sensitive species (voles etc). Monitoring should trigger movement of livestock seasonally and will be taken into consideration for planning next year's grazing season. **Within non-revegetation, non-riparian areas:** strive to achieve an average 40% end of season utilization to maintain/improve the vigor of the plants.

Within Crested Wheatgrass revegetation stands west of the highway, utilization guidelines are up to 60% use.

Movement of livestock to meet these guidelines may be within a pasture to other key areas, or to the next scheduled pasture depending on pasture conditions.

Basic grazing instructions for 2014 are the same as in 2013. Salt away from roads and streams; use herding, salt, fences, and water sources to disperse cattle across the pastures to use the available forage; avoid overuse in key areas. Permittees should use no more than 5 days to clean out the pastures after the move date.

Forage utilization and herbaceous cover heights will be measured in key areas.

Permittees should continue monitoring their allotment in key use areas. In the past the herbaceous cover height of less than four inches in the key area below the Tafoya ranch is partly due to unauthorized grazing. The Forest Service will monitor for that and requests timely reports of unpermitted cattle in the area from permittees.

Forest Service will meet with NM DOT to discuss continuing maintenance of highway right of way fences.

The grazing fee this year is \$1.35 per head month for cattle.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. The decision has been signed and is immediately. Permittees are encouraged to stay on roads which are open to the public as much as possible. Permittees stated that they need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required maintenance on fences and other range improvements, checking that gates are closed, checking on cattle health and location, and placing salt and mineral supplements. Forest Service requested that permittees stay on established roads and routes only. The District Ranger requested that ATV's and other motorized vehicles not be driven across open meadows or other locations currently free of system roads or

routes (existing two tracks recognized on the ground, but not a Forest Service system road). Trips should be minimized as well as, liberal use by others not necessary for essential range management business.

There are some programs offered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) that may provide assistance to permittees to help alleviate hardships brought on by the drought. Permittees also talked about applying for equip funds with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to help fund range improvements such as fencing and possible water sources.

The Carson NF will be undergoing Forest Plan revision and so permittees are encouraged to get involved in the process. This process may take up to several years to complete and there will be several opportunities for permittees.

Permittees and FS will look at range together to determine range readiness and on-date. Maintenance of assigned range improvements will also be inspected.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2014:

1. Construction of gathering corral at the intersection of S.R. 76 and F.R. 155. The Forest Service has recycled field fence for this which it has provided.
2. Spring development at Turkey plot needs new pipeline and trough.
3. Identify and develop new water source between Canada de Los Alamos and La Joya.
4. Wing corral will be repaired in cooperation with Rio Chiquito permittees.
5. Road to Trick tank #2 needs work on drainage. Permittees may work on this after Forest Service does archaeological clearance. Road also needs daylighting which may be done by permittees.
6. Trick tank construction in Canada Ancha pasture.
7. Construct a trick tank on the Canada Abeyta pasture.
8. Install a cattle guard at the bottom of section 11 on the road coming into Canada Abeyta pasture from Truchas. Only effective if private land fence is maintained.

Permittees mentioned that the new liner installed in trick tank number 5 needs maintenance to keep it in place. They also mentioned elk getting in there and so possibly building the fence taller to exclude the elk.

The fence along the Trampas River boundary will be maintained as needed between the Trampas and Rio Chiquito associations to prevent cattle from mixing.

The Camino Real Ranger District will provide tags to permittees as needed.

Permittees decided not to have members of the Rio Chiquito association utilize the Canada Ancha area, as requested last year. This area has been utilized by Presciliano Sandoval and Joyce Sandoval as they have water on private land and there is no water on the pasture. Max Cordova said he could use this pasture with access and water from his private land. Eventually when the proposed trick tank is constructed in the pasture, other Trampas association members will be able to use that pasture. Permittees also requested that consideration be made on being able to utilize part of the Rio Chiquito allotment (Entranas Pasture) as they did last year. This will be determined prior to the grazing season and discussed with permittees at the Rio Chiquito meeting.

The Camino Real Ranger District would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management (either season or numbers) so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittee.

/s/ Tamara S. Malone 4/30/2014
District Ranger Date