



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern Region 3
Carson National Forest
El Rito Ranger District

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2014

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS (AOIS)

SALVADOR COMPLEX ALLOTMENT # 00203

**CARSON NATIONAL FOREST
EL RITO RANGER DISTRICT**

/s/ Diana M. Trujillo

7/7/2014

District Ranger

Date

Annual Operating Instructions

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Operating Instructions are in reference to the discussion you had with Estevan Gallegos on April 11, 2014. The authorized eartag color is “yellow” for the permitted cattle. The permitted sheep are authorized painted “green”. The authorized use for the 2014 Grazing Season on the Salvador Complex Allotment is as follows:

Table 1 - Permittee Information and Season of Use

Permittee Name	Permitted		Authorized		Remarks Includes a reduction in numbers
	#	Season	#	Season	
J & R Partnership	305 c/c	6/16 – 10/15	72 c/c	6/16 – 10/15	
J & R Partnership	329 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	350 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	
Dolores & Ty Montoya	750 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	0 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	<i>Non-use</i>
Total	305 c/c 1079 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	72 c/c 350 e/l	6/16 – 10/15	

A range readiness inspection was scheduled for **June 2, 2014** to determine whether range vegetation and soils will be ready for grazing.

All livestock must be scheduled for counting prior to entering the Salvador Complex Allotment. The El Rito range personnel must be notified 5 days prior to the time livestock enter or leave the Forest.

Nonuse applies only to animal numbers. Nonuse of a term permit must be requested in written form for all of the permitted numbers (*Total Nonuse*), or part of the permitted numbers (*Partial Nonuse*).

If a permittee elects to request partial or total nonuse, he/she is still responsible for maintenance of assigned range improvements.

A credit/refund application must be submitted within a week after placing livestock late on the allotment or removing livestock early. A credit/refund is not automatic but must be requested in writing by the permittee(s) and approved by the District Ranger.

ROTATION SCHEDULE

Eventually a four pasture deferred rotation grazing season will be implemented when interior fences are in place. Until such time, season long grazing system for cattle and rotational grazing for the sheep will be conducted. Initial distribution of your livestock is tentatively planned as follows (actual dates will be based on range readiness):

Table 2 - Rotation Schedule for Cattle Herd

Season Long Grazing	6/16 - 10/16
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Table 3 - Rotation Schedule for Sheep Band

Salvador to ER Creek	6/16 – 6/30
Lower Chacon to ER Creek	7/01 – 7/15
15 Springs & Bonita Canyon	7/16 – 7/31
Upper Arriba (Jarosita)	8/01 – 8/15
Canjilon Meadows	8/16 – 9/15
Lower Chacon/Canjilon Creek	9/16 – 9/30
Abra	10/01 – 10/16

FORAGE UTILIZATION/STUBBLE HEIGHT GUIDELINES

Forage utilization will be measured in key areas. A key grazing area is a portion of rangeland selected because of its location, grazing or browsing value, or use to serve as a monitoring and evaluation point for range condition, trend, or degree of grazing use. Key areas reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over the rangeland and guides the general management of the entire area of which it is a part.

Proper utilization of forage is a critical factor in livestock management on the Salvador Complex Allotment. Monitoring will be conducted using Vegetative Utilization Monitoring. Permittees are invited and encouraged to accompany Forest Service range staff in the field while range condition evaluations are being made.

Utilization guidelines for the Jarosita allotment are light to conservative or 21-40% use of grazable forage. Utilization will be measured at the end of the growing season in the key areas.

Riparian stubble heights will be maintained at four inches throughout the grazing season. When riparian areas have been grazed down to a four inch stubble height cattle will be rotated to the next pasture or moved home early.

Table 3 – Forage Utilization/ Stubble Height Guidelines

Pasture Name	Key Forage Species	Stubble Height	Utilization Guideline
Arriba/Salvador/Abra/Felipito	AZ/Thurber Fescue	6 – 8”	21 – 40 %
	Parry’s Oatgrass	6 – 8”	21 – 40 %
	Timber Oatgrass	4 – 6”	21 – 40 %
	Kentucky Bluegrass	4 – 6”	21 – 40 %
	Carex	4 –6”	21 – 40 %

Riparian Areas	Kentucky Bluegrass	4 – 6”	21 – 40 %
	Sedges	4 – 6”	21 – 40 %

MONITORING RESULTS FROM 2013

Table 4. Monitoring Results

Pasture	Species Monitored	Actual Stubble Height	Actual Utilization
Abra	Arizona Fescue	11.0”	13%
Abra	Thurber Fescue	20.0”	13%
Abra	Kentucky Bluegrass	6.0”	

At the end of the 2013 grazing season, utilizations were met in key grazing areas on key species that were monitored in the Abra pasture. Due to climatic factors in late fall of 2013, FS range staff were unable to access any other part of the allotment. It will be important in the 2014 grazing season monitoring be conducted on schedule and that the cattle be distributed evenly to prevent over grazing in these key areas. See monitoring section below for scheduled monitoring dates.

MONITORING

Monitoring will be conducted in key areas using a combination of monitoring techniques including, but not limited to, paired cages, photo points, Rapid Assessment Method, and permittee monitoring. The intent of monitoring in key grazing areas is to maintain good to excellent range conditions in key areas while accommodating the needs of wildlife. It is the responsibility of the permittee to ensure proper distribution of livestock to achieve a light to conservative grazing intensity of 21-40% by weight of annual available forage in key grazing areas. It will be important in the 2014 grazing season that cattle be rotated on time and distributed evenly to prevent over grazing in these key areas.

Field inspections will be conducted to monitor allowable use, and movement of livestock. Permittees are encouraged and invited to participate in these inspections. The dates scheduled for monitoring are **July 23, August 26**, and “End of Season” monitoring on **October 9, 2014**. Once allowable use is achieved using the above Forage Utilization Guidelines, livestock must be moved into the next scheduled pasture or off the allotment. The length of season depends on the intensity of management and cooperation between permittees on livestock distribution and moving from pasture to pasture. Total removal of all livestock from the pasture/allotment is encouraged.

Both the Forest Service and the permittee are responsible for monitoring use and stubble height on the allotment to manage within specified utilization standards.

If areas within a pasture or the pasture as a whole begin to approach the identified stubble heights, then the remaining key areas will also be monitored and the pasture inspected to determine overall use patterns. This information will be used to determine if cattle need to be re-distributed within the pasture or removed from the pasture.

Monitoring items such as distribution patterns, range readiness, cattle numbers, forage use levels, salting practices, and condition of improvements will be evaluated.

Regular herding and riding practices are the key to achieving proper livestock distribution on the allotment, and to provide for the fullest use of the grazing season. Salt must be placed out of bottoms, away from water, roads, forest system trails, and recreational sites.

Range readiness inspections will determine whether range vegetation and soils are ready for grazing.

IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

The following projects and maintenance concerns were discussed during the annual meeting:

- Concerns about Boundary Fence with Alamosa allotment (Wilson Hill Fence) – will discuss with Alamosa permittees
- Permittee would like fence material to repair and reconstruct fence between Salvador Complex and Canjilon RD
- Permittee mentioned that cattleguards separating allotments are in need of cleaning.
- Concerns about Boundary Fence with San Gabriel allotment—will discuss with San Gabriel Permittee
- Permittee wants to convert laydown fence on Mogote Ridge to a permanent fence
- Permittee wants to inquire about a Recreational fence at Canjilon Lakes

It is important that you inspect and maintain the assigned fences and water developments in the “*entry pasture*” to a good functioning condition prior to the entry date. All other pasture fences and waters must be maintained prior to livestock movement into the next scheduled pasture(s).

In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to standard, you should notify the range personnel so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. An inspection of your allotment prior to the entry date will be made to determine if maintenance is adequate.

If you have a need to cut fence stays or posts while you are maintaining your fences on your allotment, you can get authorization to cut these materials by obtaining a Free Use Permit from the range personnel at the El Rito office.

TRESPASS AND UNAUTHORIZED USE

Notify the El Rito Ranger District of any known violation. Grazing permit holders who put on more livestock than permitted will be served with a notice of non-compliance, charged an

unauthorized grazing fee, and face possible suspension/cancellation of all or part of their permit. Permittees are encouraged to report all trespass to the District range personnel.

DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

The Winter and Spring of 2014 continues to be exceptionally dry for much of New Mexico, likely a forth consecutive year of drought conditions. Climatological information from the New Mexico Drought Task Force, the Western Regional Climate Center and the Natural Resource Conservation Service, along with all of our own personal experiences and observations made it necessary to begin important drought coordination with you. Should drought conditions prevail through this spring and summer, communication between you, the District Ranger, and range staff will become increasingly important. The Carson National Forest is committed to working with you in a joint effort to manage the resources and minimize adverse impacts to your operations. The Forest Service, as well as permittees, will continue to monitor the Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) as addressed in our Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2209.13. The SPI is a unit of measure that compares recent precipitation values for a period of interest with long term historical values to assess moisture conditions in a given area. In the Southwest Region, anytime the SPI reaches a value of minus 1.00 or less for the preceding 12 month period, grazing allotments should be evaluated for existing drought conditions. Management due to drought will be approached in a collaborative manner between district personnel and permittees. Should drought conditions persist through the summer months, early removal of livestock from the grazing allotment could likely be a scenario. It is important that communication between the permittees and district personnel be often to make such decisions.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

A travel management decision for the Canjilon, El Rito, and Tres Piedras Ranger Districts of the Carson National Forest was made on December 2, 2010. These districts now have a designated road system with no cross country motorized travel. The travel management rule requires each National Forest System unit shall:

- designate those roads, trails, and area open to motor vehicle use by vehicle class and, if appropriate, by time of year (36 CFR 212.51).
- Identify designated roads, trails, and areas on a motor vehicle use map (MVUM) (36 CFR 212.56).
- Prohibit motor vehicle use inconsistent with the designations on the motor vehicle use map, once published (36 CFR 261.13).
- Maintain in place current rules and authorities until designation is complete.

Criteria for evaluating and designating routes (36 CFR 212.55) are largely derived from Executive Order 11644.

USFS Travel Management Plan was discussed at the April 11th meeting. 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. The Forest Service is in a two year educational process for vehicle use, however, permittees are encouraged to come in and get letters of authorization from the District for off-road access for specific area and time needed.

**ACTUAL USE INFORMATION
SALVADOR COMPLEX ALLOTMENT
2014 GRAZING SEASON**

Attachment 1

Pasture	Planned Livestock Number & Class	Planned Use		Actual Use		Remarks
		Date on	Date Off	Date on	Date Off	
Salvador to ER Creek	350 e/l	6/16	6/30			
Lower Chacon to ER Creek	350 e/l	7/01	7/15			
15 Springs & Bonita Canyon	350 e/l	7/16	7/31			
Upper Arriba (Jarosita)	350 e/l	8/01	8/15			
Canjilon Meadows	350 e/l	8/16	9/15			
Lower Chacon/Canjilon Creek	350 e/l	9/16	9/30			
Abra	350 e/l	10/01	10/16			
All Pastures	72c/c	06/16	10/16			Season-long- grazing

Number of Head counted on: _____.

Number of head lost: _____.

Additional Comments:

Table 4

Livestock Class	Poisonous Plants	Predators	Other	Total Losses

UTILIZATION INFORMATION
SALVADOR COMPLEX ALLOTMENT
2014 GRAZING SEASON

Attachment 2

Pasture	Head Months (HMs)	Animal Unit Months	Allowable Utilization (percent)	Date Monitored	Observed Utilization
Salvador to ER Creek					
Lower Chacon to ER Creek					
15 Springs & Bonita Canyon					
Upper Arriba (Jarosita)					
Canjilon Meadows					
Lower Chacon/Canjilon Creek					
Abra					

Appendix

Grazing Permittee Instructions for Cattle Operators on El Rito Ranger District

1. Review the term grazing permit and become familiar with the terms and conditions prior to the grazing season.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Livestock found on other unauthorized allotments or in areas without prior authorization will result in the issuance of a Notice of Noncompliance that may impact your term permit.
5. 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 on the Range

1. 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.
2. 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 weight) in pasture key areas, and within the overall pasture's pattern of use.
3. 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.
4. 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

1. 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 tanks and other sources of water in order to improve the livestock distribution within the pasture. Salt must be placed to minimize damage to vegetation and soil, within the tree line instead of in the middle of openings, in drainages/riparian or near roadways. Regular salt ground sites must not be established.

Range Improvement Projects

2. Range Improvement Projects assigned in your Term Grazing Permit require 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.
3. 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 may or may not furnish materials or cost-share for maintenance projects.
4. 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.
5. 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

1. 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.
2. All temporary camps and corrals made or used by permittees or their riders will be cleaned up (left in a sanitary condition) and all materials/trash will be removed from the sites. Temporary camp/corral locations should be discussed with the FS prior to setting up the camp.
3. Riders will be permitted 4 horses or mules per rider for work within the allotment. No untrained horses, colts or other unrideable stock will be allowed.
4. Please notify the District Ranger with any observations of stray livestock on the National Forest Lands (regardless of the time of year).
5. Move any dead animals to rest no closer than 300 feet from water or roadways.

Report wildfires to: El Rito Ranger Station at (575) 581-4554 or Carson Dispatch at (575) 758-6208 or (575) 758-6209.

If you have any questions, please contact the El Rito Ranger District office.