ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2014 Grazing Season
(3/01/2014-2/28/2015)

Reserve Ranger District
Gila National Forest

Dark Canyon Allotment

Agreed To By: /s/ Donaciano Aragon Date: 12/17/2013
Donaciano Aragon, *Permittee*

Approved By: /s/ John D. Pierson Date: 1/06/2014
John D. Pierson, *District Ranger*

2014 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)

Allotment: Dark Canyon
Permittees: Donaciano Aragon
Permit Numbers: 61378

Permitted Use:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Donaciano Aragon	70 Cow/Calf	Term	5/01-10/31

1. **Authorization:** Authorized to graze the following in 2014:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Donaciano Aragon	70 Cow/Calf	Term	5/01-10/31

Per the 6/27/2007 Dark Canyon Decision Memo and 8/15/2007 Allotment Management Plan, during years of adequate forage production, the district may authorize extensions if requested, allowing grazing of an additional 185 AUMs for up to two months.

Counting Livestock: The standard for counting livestock on an allotment is as follows:

a. All cattle six (6) months of age or older **at the time of entering** the National Forest **and all weaned** animals regardless of age will be counted against the permitted numbers on the allotment and charged for at the current rate.

Nonuse: Application for credit or refund must be made in "**writing**" and "**in advance**" by the permittee to the District Ranger using Form FS-2200-1 (Refund, Credit, or Transfer Application). When it is not possible to be timely in getting to the Ranger District Office, the permittee may phone in a request for refund or credit. The permittee will then complete Form FS-2200-1 (Refund, Credit, or Transfer Application) at the next visit to the Reserve Ranger District Office. **Note**: Credit or refund applications will not be processed unless value is $100.00 or more and District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time livestock are removed from NFS Lands.

Bovine Trichinosis: Virgin bulls not exposed to breeding are exempt from testing if under 12 months of age. As of 2/26/10, bulls 12 months of age and older are required to have a negative trich test within 30 days prior to entry. **A signed affidavit from the owner for the virgin status of bulls 12 TO 24 months of age is no longer applicable.** Non-virgin Breeding age Bulls must be tested negative prior to import into New Mexico. Non-virgin Breeding age Bulls sold within the state of New Mexico must be tested negative within 30 days prior to change of ownership. Please contact the New Mexico Livestock Board for more details.

2. **Management**: Dark Canyon 2014 Pasture Rotation:

Pasture	Time Frame
North	5/1-7/31 (all cattle)
South	8/1-10/31(all cattle)

Please notify us of cattle movements onto and off of the allotment, as well as refinements that may be needed to enhance the management system. If you identify the need to differ from this management system by more than by more than 15 days, please contact this office at least two weeks in advance so that the district has time to conduct monitoring and assess your request.

If you are going to request an extension, please make the request at least three weeks prior to the date your livestock are scheduled to be removed from the allotment so that the District Personnel can schedule monitoring and assess your request.

3. **Utilization Standards and Monitoring:**
Per the 6/27/2007 Dark Canyon Decision Memo, the maximum allowable use level set for the Dark Canyon allotment is 30-40%. Monitoring will be conducted within two weeks before or after livestock leave a scheduled pasture. If utilization levels within portions of a scheduled pasture approach allowable use, you are required to move livestock out of those areas and into areas with light use. If cattle cannot be effectively managed away from areas within the pasture that have met allowable use or if utilization objectives are met throughout the pasture prior to scheduled rotation, contact District Personnel. Cattle will be moved into the next available pasture within the annual rotation. In the event that forage utilization objectives are met in all available pastures, livestock will be removed from the allotment. Management adjustments will be made to the following years Annual Operating Instructions to avoid recurring situations. The following dates have been tentatively scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are highly encouraged and invited to participate in monitoring with District personnel and/or on your own.

Pasture	Monitoring date
North	9/04/2014
South	11/04/2015

4. **Forage Growth and Water Availability:**
Per Part 2, clause 8(c) of your Term Grazing Permit, if forage growth and water availability are not adequate during all or portions of the 2014 grazing season, total or partial livestock removal from the allotment may be necessary.

5. **Grazing Restriction:**
The Dark Canyon Allotment includes a Mexican Spotted Owl Protected Activity Center (PAC). In this PAC the following activities are restricted during the breeding season of the Owl (March 1-August 31): livestock concentrations or trailing, fence construction, and livestock salting. Routine maintenance of range improvements are allowed.

6. **Salt and Supplement Policy**

   Provide for supplemental feeding of livestock (to strategically manage livestock distribution and forage use) as follows:

   a) Place supplements on previously disturbed areas (i.e., borrow pits) or natural bedrock outcrops when possible (supplement sites).

   b) Locate supplement sites 0.25 mile or more from waters and key areas except where prior written permission has been obtained from District Ranger.

   c) Locate supplement sites where forage is abundant and utilized less than average.

   d) Limit supplement types to non energy feeds such as salt, protein and mineral blocks.

   e) Use products that prevent the spread of noxious weeds, no feeding of hay on National Forest System Lands.

7. **Range Improvements:**
   All assigned range developments identified in your Term Grazing Permit must be maintained to a functional status.

   Advance planning is needed for any range improvement reconstruction or replacement, including fences and water systems to evaluate the need for any additional surveys. General maintenance/repair is excluded. Advance planning is also needed for authorized stock tank cleaning so surveys can be scheduled accordingly. Please contact the District in advance if you are proposing any of this type of work.

   Please protect natural springs and areas with riparian type vegetation. Drainage bottoms, creeks, springs, and cienegas, where water is available, are most susceptible to livestock concentrations.

   The following range improvements were discussed and planned for this grazing season:

   Fences:
   1. Aragon – A general fence inspection/repair of fences will be done annually prior to placing cattle on the forest.

8. **The Dark Canyon Annual Operating Plan/Instructions (AOI)** are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 3, Section 8. The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the 6/21/2007 Dark Canyon Allotment Decision Memo, the 8/15/2007 Allotment Management Plan and in the Gila National Forest Plan. It also complies with the Endangered Species Act on-going grazing consultation for the Dark Canyon Allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the annual operating instructions.