

Glenwood Ranger District

Gila National Forest

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2014

Pueblo Creek Allotment #310

Prepared By:

District Range Staff

Date: _____

Approved By:

DEBBIE C CRESS /s/
District Ranger

Date: -----1/8/14---

Annual Operating Instructions

I. INTRODUCTION

Kendall Brown, Allen Graves (Forest Service), and Jerry Jump (permittee) met on January 08, 2014, to discuss management of the Pueblo Creek Allotment for the upcoming grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions are the result of that discussion.

Authorized Livestock Numbers

Allotment	Number and class of livestock	Dates
Pueblo Creek	180 cattle (cow/calf herd)	03/01 – 02/28
	7 horses	03/01 – 02/28

Jerry estimates about 18-20 head of wild cattle (mostly bulls) remain on the allotment. Jerry reports removing 2 wild bulls last fall (2013). Removal of the remainder of these cattle is a high priority for 2014.

Pueblo Creek Allotment Pasture Rotation Schedule

Class of Livestock	Dates	Pasture
Cow/Calf	03/01 – 04/30	Bear Canyon
Cow/calf	05/01 – 07/30	Black Bull, Chimney Rock
Cow/Calf	08/01 – 10/30	Cottonwood
Cow/Calf	11/01 – 11/15	Pueblo Holding
Cow/Calf	11/16 – 02/28	Bear Canyon
Heifers*	03/01 – 04/30	Bear Canyon
Heifers*	04/01 – 06/30	Home
Heifers*	07/01 – 11/15	Indian Hill or Hinkle Park
	Rest	Johnson Canyon
Horses	03/01 – 06/31	Highway
Horses	09/01 – 02/28	Home

*44 replacement heifers. From 07/01 to 11/15 these heifers will be in Indian Hill pasture dependent on approval after a Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessment is performed and Pueblo Creek found to be in Proper Functioning Condition. If PFC is not performed or it is determined that Pueblo Creek is not properly functioning, then these heifers will be put into Hinkle Park pasture.

Horses can remain in pasture until allowable use is reached. Once allowable use is reached horses will be moved to another pasture or off the allotment as appropriate.

All pasture schedule dates include a 15 day grace period before and after the scheduled date to allow time to gather and move livestock into the correct pastures. The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. The District Ranger must be notified 5 days prior to the time livestock enter or leave the Forest if the placing on or removal of livestock is not planned in the above schedule, and more than 10 head are being moved.

Credit/Refund applications will not be processed unless District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time of removal of stock.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

The permittee is responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is the permittee's responsibility to move livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. The permittee is responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event that livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, it will be required to find, gather, and return animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

The following are priorities for completion this year.

- Reconstruct and/or maintain of the Pueblo Trap fence. Contact Kendall Brown or Allen Graves for material and permit modification.
- Reconstruct fence #5085. Approximately 1.5 miles of fence. See permit mod #01-13.
- Heavy maintenance Dangerous Park Corral #5156.
- Continue maintenance on pasture fences and report progress to District.

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District may allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers; dates of entering and leaving pastures, shipping dates and cattle losses (grown stock and calves). This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal prior to or at the time the livestock are taken off the allotment. **You will be required to provide your Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.**

A \$25 administrative fee will be charged for any additional bills for collection that are sent to you due to either late payment or for split billing on seasonal allotments. This fee will be collected to pay for the cost associated with issuing an additional bill for collection. There is no administrative fee for the normal "split billing" on yearlong allotments.

You must write the bill number on your check prior to submitting it to the lockbox to insure that your payment is credited to your account.

5. Short Age Calf Policy: Any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31 need to be paid for starting January 1.

6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of energy supplements on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplements is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved.
- b. Feeding of hay on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be **certified weed free** hay and you must provide the proper documentation.
- c. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks or molasses licks on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.
- d. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use. To aid in the gathering and moving of livestock salt may be placed near water or in corrals within one week of scheduled move date. Notify District personnel when you are doing this.

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

This allotment has recently undergone environmental analysis and has sufficient NEPA and a current Allotment Management Plan (AMP). At this time management direction is provided in this AOI which implements the AMP and the 2013 Memorandum of Understanding.

VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

You indicated that you are in favor of Fire Use on your allotment as long as there is another allotment to move your cattle to. Your concerns will be considered when deciding to place a fire into the Fire Use category. The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to this AOI to accommodate fire management.

You expressed concern over the ability of single pastures (namely Johnson canyon, Hinkle Park, and Cottonwood) to carry full permitted numbers due to lack of water during the continuing drought. You believe that forage is not a limiting factor, but a numbers of water points and amount at each point may not be adequate for full permitted numbers to be restricted to single pasture use. As you continue to reconstruct and maintain structural improvements, and therefore have the ability to increase your herd to permitted numbers, we will explore options of using more than one pasture at a time, if necessary.

VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

You are continuing to remove wild cattle from the Pueblo Creek Allotment. You believe that there may still be up to 18-20 head of wild, untagged cattle remaining on the allotment. However, it is becoming more difficult to find any wild cattle and remove them. I appreciate your continued efforts to clean out the wild cows.

VIII. Utilization Monitoring of Key Areas Monitoring Schedule

Pasture	Key Area	Date	Allowable Use
Cottonwood	P1n, C7n	11/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Black Bull, Chimney Rock	To be determined based on observed livestock distribution	08/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Johnson, Hinkle	To be determined based on observed livestock distribution	11/15	Conservative 31 – 40%
Bear Canyon	C2s, P2s, P3s, P6s	05/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Home	C3n	07/01	Conservative 31 – 40%
Highway	Entire pasture	07/01	Conservative 31 – 40%

When monitoring of grazing utilization occurs it will be targeted within 2 weeks before or after above scheduled dates. Monitoring for forage utilization will occur after the summer growing season.

Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of use within a pasture (utilization mapping). Verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described and mapped in the following utilization categories.

Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity
Light to no-use	< 30%	Only choice plants and areas show use. There is no use of poor forage plants.
Conservative	31-40%	Choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks. Areas more than a mile from water show little use. About on third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas.
Moderate	41-50%	Most of accessible range shows use. Key areas show patch appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants showing use. Grazing is noticeable in zone 1-1.5 miles from water.
Heavy	51-60%	Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas. Palatable shrubs show hedging. Key areas show a lack of seed stalks. Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1.5 miles from water.
Severe	61 +%	Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no stubble height). Shrubs are severely hedged. There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage. Areas over 1.5 miles from water lack stubble height.

Holechek, J.L. and D. Galt. 2000. Grazing Intensity Guidelines. Rangelands 22(3), pg 11-14.

If the utilization guideline for the pasture is exceeded on 30% or more of the pasture in any year, livestock will be immediately removed from the pasture. Within a pasture, areas found to exceed allowable use will become key areas for monitoring the following year. The AOI for the next year will be adjusted to correct livestock management practices (distribution, number, timing, salt and water availability, etc.) that may have led to the overuse.

In the event that 30 percent or more of the pasture exceeds the set allowable use in a grazing year, that area will be required to be less than or equal to allowable use the next year. If that same area, or a substantial portion of the same area, exceeds allowable use in two consecutive grazing years the entire pasture will be rested for one calendar year and stocking will be adjusted to balance with forage supplies. If the same area of a pasture exceeds allowable use in two years out of five, the stocking rate and management plan will be adjusted to balance with forage supply.

Monitoring of utilization for woody riparian will be conducted in the areas below and concurrently with the associated pasture. (See table below)

Pasture	Reach description	Allowable Use
Bear Canyon	Pueblo Creek within the Bear Canyon Pasture	Woody riparian not to exceed 25% of stems in a reach heavily hedged.
Black Bull	Pueblo Creek within the Black Bull Pasture	
Bear Canyon	West Fork of Pueblo Creek within the Bear Canyon Pasture	
Bear Canyon	Chimney Rock Canyon within the Bear Canyon Pasture	
Highway	Saliz Creek within the Highway Pasture	
Cottonwood	Cottonwood Canyon within the Cottonwood Pasture	
Bear Canyon	Bear Canyon	
Bear Canyon	Tige Canyon	
Indian Hill	Pueblo Creek within the Indian Hill Pasture (Five years of rest. When riparian area is properly functioning an interdisciplinary team will determine time of use and number of cattle)	Woody riparian 0%. Herbaceous riparian 0%.
Hinkle Park	Sheep Basin Wet Meadow (Two years of rest. When in upward range condition trend and properly functioning condition, interdisciplinary team will determine time of use and number of cattle.)	Woody riparian 0%. Herbaceous riparian 0%.

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District to obtain approval of change(s). Advanced notice of change is requested so that field inspections can be conducted. Verbal approval of changes will be followed with a letter documenting the change. Failure to follow the instructions provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).

Open and positive communications dealing with these or any other concerns is encouraged. Feel free to contact Kendall Brown or Allen Graves if you have any questions or problems. We will be happy to discuss allotment management, conditions on your allotment, or any other concerns you may have.