



File Code: 2230/2210

Date: May 19, 2015

Preston Cutler, Manager
Cutler Ranches
H.C. 67 Box 2064
Challis, Idaho 83226

Dear Preston,

This letter serves as your 2015 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Squaw Creek C & H allotment, and should be considered as an extension of Term Grazing Permit #30029. Prior approval by the District Ranger is required to amend or change these instructions.

Permitted Use

| Permittee | No. and Class | Permit Type | Season of Use | Head Months |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Running T LLC | 237 cow/calf | Term | 06/16 – 09/30 | 834 |
| | 60 cow/calf | | 07/16 – 09/30 | 152 |
| East Fork Ranches LLC | 236 cow/calf | Term | 06/16 – 09/30 | 830 |
| Cutler | 142 cow/calf | Term | 07/16 – 09/30 | 359 |

As a result of continued non-compliance during the grazing seasons of 2011, 2012, and 2014, you are under suspension of 20 percent of your permitted numbers on your term grazing permit for the 2015 and 2016 grazing seasons within the Squaw Creek Allotment. It is critical to meet all grazing standards and follow this AOI.

Special Instructions for 2015

I am hereby directing you to have U. S. Forest Service ear tags on your livestock prior to them entering Forest Service lands on the Garden Creek Allotment.

Authorized Use for 2015

| Permittees | No. and Class | Permit Type | Season of Use | Head Months |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| East Fork Ranches LLC | 189 cow/calf | Term | 06/16 – 09/30 | 665 |
| Running T LLC | 190 cow/calf | Term | 06/16 – 09/30 | 668 |
| | 60 cow/calf | | 07/16 – 09/30 | 152 |
| Cutler | 114 cow/calf | Term | 07/16 – 09/30 | 289 |



Pasture Rotation

The on-dates listed above are only a guide. Actual turn out will be when range readiness occurs. Moving off the allotment must occur before forage utilization standards have been met, and no later than the scheduled off-date.

| Unit | Number | On-Date | Off-Date |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| Trealor Creek | 379 ^A | 06/16 | 07/07 |
| Upper Squaw | 379 | 07/08 | 08/31 |
| Kinnikinic Creek | 379 | 09/01 | 09/30 |
| Julliette | 379 | 07/16 | 08/22 |
| Happy Hollow | 174 ^B | 08/23 | 09/30 |
| Lower Squaw Creek | Rest | | |
| Riparian Pasture (No Grazing) | 0 | No Grazing | No Grazing |

^A Livestock will not graze on the west side in the Upper Squaw Creek Unit after August 15 to protect spawning bull trout and their redds. ESA consultation direction is that livestock may cross Martin Creek only before August 15.

^A East Fork Ranches' 189 cow/calf pairs and Running T's 190 cow/calf pairs will graze in the Upper Squaw Creek, Trealor Creek and Kinnikinic units.

^B Cutler's 114 cow/calf pairs and Running T's 60 cow/calf pairs will be grazing only in the Happy Hollow and Juliette Units.

Grazing on the allotment will not occur before June 16 and the actual turnout date will provide for range readiness. Moves from unit to unit must be completed so as to not exceed utilization standards and no later than the scheduled off-date.

Squaw Creek

Entry: Livestock will enter the allotment from the BLM to the Trealor Unit either by established roads or upland trail.

Unit Movement: Livestock will be trailed from the Trealor Unit to the Upper Squaw Creek Unit using established roads or trails. The duration of the move is 1 day for the main herd with up to 3 separate days moving the remainder, each time with a rider and progressively smaller numbers.

The East Fork ranches will trail livestock to the Kinnikinic Unit.

Exit: Livestock will be trailed to the Kinnikinic units to BLM lands and then to the permittees' home ranches.

Bayhorse Subdivision of Squaw Creek Allotment

Entry: Permittee's cow/calf pairs will be trailed to the Juliette Unit from their respective BLM lands. The two permittees will trail livestock from the Juliette Unit to the Happy Hollow Unit. The duration of each move is 1 day.

Exit: Permittee's cow/calf pairs will trail livestock home from the Juliette Unit down the Bayhorse road to BLM lands and then to permittees' home ranches. Trailing is active through the Juliette Unit, with the duration of each move being 1 day.

Annual Use Indicators

| Unit | Annual Use Indicators | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Average Greenline Stubble Height (<i>Carex</i> spp.) | % Bank Alteration | % Woody Browse (willow, alder, aspen) | % Upland Utilization |
| Lower Squaw Creek | ≥ 6 inches | ≤10 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |
| Trealor Creek | ≥6 inches | ≤20 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |
| Upper Squaw Creek | ≥6 inches | ≤20 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |
| Kinnikinic Creek | ≥6 inches | ≤20 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |
| Happy Hollow | ≥4 inches | ≤20 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |
| Juliette | ≥6 inches | ≤20 | <30 ^A or 50 ^B | <50 |

^ASingle-stemmed species such as aspen ^BMulti-stemmed species such as willow and alder

Permittee's Management Responsibilities

1. Three days prior to initial cattle turn-out, please inform the authorized officer in charge.
2. It is your responsibility to insure livestock are moved before utilization levels are exceeded. You must notify the Rangeland Management Specialist of this move.
3. Riding and herding are necessary to properly distribute livestock. You must provide a rider throughout the grazing season to maintain proper distribution of cattle, reduce use in riparian areas, and prevent concentrated use by livestock that could result in portions of the pasture becoming over-utilized.
4. *Use of riparian areas needs to be carefully monitored by you to know when it is time to move livestock to the next unit and to avoid exceeding standards. Do not rely on range personnel to monitor use.*
5. Salt should be placed on accessible range at least ¼ to ½ mile from permanently located watering places, riparian zones, meadows, and other areas where cattle naturally congregate. Placement should be in upland areas where additional forage utilization is desired. Salting areas should be moved annually to avoid permanent damage around salting grounds. Do not use the same salting grounds year after year.
6. With multiple-uses on the forest, gates are often left open and cattle stray into the wrong

pasture. We realize this is a problem and an inconvenience. However, it is still your responsibility to keep your animals in the proper unit. Cattle found in the wrong units or allotments should be returned immediately to the correct pasture. Routine checks need to be made by you and/or your rider. Notification to your Range Management Specialist of the issues must be made immediately

7. Any carcass or animals remains will be moved at least 100 yards from water, trails, and roads within 24 hours of notification by the Rangeland Management Specialist.
8. Under Special Order # 04-00-097 all hay, straw, or mulch brought onto the forest for the feeding of horses must be Certified Weed Free.
9. I am requesting that you be a pro-active partner in the prevention and inventory of noxious weeds on your allotment and adjacent National Forest System lands. All equipment which is used off of open roads on federal lands (for range improvement maintenance, or other management activities) should be cleaned and free of noxious weeds and their seeds prior to coming onto National Forest System lands. Please share your knowledge of known noxious weed infestations with your Range Management Specialist.
10. Any motorized travel on routes not designated in the Salmon-Challis National Forest Travel Plan must have District Ranger written authorization in advance. Please see enclosed
11. *The move-off date is the date you must have all cattle off the allotment, not the day to start moving cattle off the allotment.*

Biological Opinion (BO) REQUIREMENTS Pertinent to the 2015 Grazing Season

1. Upper Squaw Creek Unit will be used August 10 through 20 primarily to move livestock to the east side of the unit to access the next units in the rotation. Livestock will cross Martin Creek once before August 15 to get to the east side of the unit.
2. Herd management in the Upper Squaw Creek Unit will focus on active riding to keep livestock out of the Martin Creek drainage to protect spawning bull trout and their redds. Martin Creek is the only known occupied bull trout spawning habitat in the allotment.
3. The Riparian Pasture Unit will not be grazed to protect fish habitat and steelhead redds. Livestock are kept out of this unit by a combination of natural barriers, existing fences, and your diligence.
4. The on-date is dependent on range readiness to reduce bank alteration and impacts to vegetation along the greenline.
5. All units' annual use indicators are to ensure livestock impacts to woody species are limited, ensure livestock impacts to forage species are limited, improve riparian vegetation, and limit livestock impacts on bank stability.
6. Lower Squaw Creek Unit will have a less than 10% bank alteration annual indicator due

to bank stability less than the 90% Riparian Management Objective (RMO) at the monitoring site.

7. The annual use indicators will dictate when livestock are moved between units or off the allotment. These indicators are designed to help us meet our long-term riparian resource objectives for riparian vegetation and bank stability, particularly in designated critical habitat and potential spawning areas. The annual use indicators will be monitored by Forest Service personnel though the primary responsibility in meeting these indicators rests with you.
8. Permittees will continue to salt at least ¼ mile away from creeks to reduce potential impacts on spawning areas and designated critical habitat.
9. Permittees will continue to distribute livestock away from streams and associated riparian areas by frequent riding to aid in meeting the annual use indicators.
10. Fences and water developments have been placed to reduce livestock use on streams and their associated riparian areas and with their maintenance, will continue to reduce potential impacts on spawning areas and designated critical habitat.
11. Unit moves will be made utilizing uplands and roads to the extent feasible.

Range Improvements

Squaw Creek

All fences need to be fully functional prior to livestock turnout in 2015. Per our meeting this spring, maintenance needs to be completed on the following developments:

1. The log worm fence which serves as the boundary with Garden Creek is planned for continual reconstruction in 2015. This work will need to be completed prior to turnout in the Upper Squaw Creek Unit and the Willow Patch Unit on the Garden Creek Allotment. All permittees agreed to collectively work together to repair and replace the Garden Creek worm boundary fence. Each permittee agreed to provide two individuals, for a minimum of three days, to assist with repairs and replacement prior to turnout on July 8, 2015. Please contact the Range Management Specialist at least a week prior to commencing work.

No ground disturbing activities or new construction should be conducted on the Forest by you, or any of your personnel, without approval from the District Ranger. Materials for replacement and heavy maintenance may be provided by the Forest Service as funding allows. Provision of materials for normal yearly maintenance is your responsibility.

All annual maintenance on assigned improvements must be completed per your Term Grazing Permit. They should be kept to a standard of repair which is functional, safe, and acceptable to the Forest Service. Improvements are listed in your Term Grazing Permit and are shown on the allotment map. Failure to complete necessary maintenance may result in the initiation of permit

Other Considerations

If you are in need of a cow camp, the range staff will work with you to schedule a time to identify potential locations and mitigation measures to avoid impacts to riparian areas, aspen stands, and other areas sensitive to concentrated livestock use.

Range inspections will occur several times during the grazing season to check implementation of this AOI. You are invited to participate in inspections conducted on the Allotment. We will try to contact you a few days in advance to let you know when we will be looking at your Allotment.

Enclosed is a Year-End Grazing Report for you to record Actual Use data for 2015 and range improvement needs for future grazing seasons. Please record the date and number of cattle turned onto the allotment, the dates cattle are moved to and from each pasture, and the date cattle are removed off the allotment. Accurate records of these dates, maintenance work completed, and future range improvement needs should be returned to our office by December 1, 2015. Please note on the second page our request for your priority reconstruction needs. These reports are also requested annually by United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, so your timeliness and diligence in accurately completing the forms is appreciated. The Forest Service will also use your report to help allocate Range Betterment Funds, which are used to purchase materials for improvement reconstruction.

If you have any questions regarding these Annual Operating Instructions, please call Barry Dopp, Range Management Specialist, at (208) 879- 4100. We are looking forward to working with you on the allotment this grazing season.

Sincerely,

/S/ KATHERINE L WOOD

KATHERINE L. WOOD

District Ranger

Enclosure
Vehicle Use Permit
Annual Use Bill

**Salmon-Challis National Forest
Challis-Yankee Fork & Middle Fork Ranger Districts**

Please fill out this report and return one copy to the District Ranger by: December 1, 2015.

Allotment Name: Squaw Creek

Permittee: Culter Ranches

Actual Number Grazed:

Cows _____ Calves _____ Bulls _____ Horses _____ Ewes _____ Lambs _____

| Unit | Number | Date In | Date Out |
|------|--------|---------|----------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| Losses | Number | Value | Causes of Losses |
|--------|--------|-------|------------------|
| Cow | | | |
| Calves | | | |
| Bulls | | | |
| Horses | | | |

Calf Weights: On _____ Off _____

Maintenance of Range Improvements:

Permittee Costs for Material \$ _____

Permittee Man Hours Invested _____ @\$_____ per hour

Herding: Days Spent by Permittee _____ @\$_____ per day

 Days Spent by Rider _____ @\$_____ per day

Salting: Amount Placed _____ \$_____ per unit

Other Costs:

In an effort to better serve your needs, we are implementing this portion of the annual use report to identify any structural range improvement that is priority for reconstruction. This will help us make plans to authorize money for out-years; we are anticipating a five year schedule.

Range Improvements in Priority Need for Reconstruction

