

**Bighorn National Forest
Powder River Ranger District**

2015

Annual Operating Instructions

For

South Canyon C&H Allotment

Recommended By: _____ Date: _____
Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted By: _____ Date: _____
Permittee

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
District Ranger

As Permittee, my signature on these Annual Operating Instructions certifies that there is no change to my permitted livestock or base property ownership as described in my grazing permit.

Upon signature by the District Ranger, these Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit number 1880A.

Any changes or deviation from the direction outlined in the Annual Operating Instructions will need to be requested in advance to the Powder River Ranger District. This includes changes in animal numbers, class of livestock, period of use (changes in entry or exit dates from unit to unit), or changes in pasture rotation. No changes in these instructions will be recognized without verbal or written confirmation from the Powder River Ranger District.

SOUTH CANYON C&H ALLOTMENT
Year 2015 Annual Operating Instructions

Permitted and Authorized Use for 2015:

South Canyon C&H	LS Kind	LS Class	Permitted			Authorized		
			LS #	From	To	LS#	From	To
Lazy Bighorn LLC	Cattle	Mature	465	07/01	10/01	365	06/25	10/01
	Horse	Mature	5	07/01	10/01	5	07/01	10/01
	Cattle	Mature				50	07/01	10/01
	Cattle	Yearling				50	07/01	10/01

*Plan to bring 365 head on 5 days early to graze cheatgrass in Sand draw pasture. With the substitution of 50 yearlings, Authorized AUMs remains the same as Permitted at 1,877 AUMs.

Before Entering the Allotment

I suggest that you review your term grazing permit, Allotment Management Plan, and Annual Operating Instructions prior to turning onto the allotment, and ask questions if any portion is not clearly understood.

Year 2015 grazing fees are \$1.69/head month, and must be paid before livestock can be turned onto the Forest. Let Kerri or Thad know the actual date and number of livestock entering the National Forest and, upon request, provide for having stock counted.

The rotation for year 2015 is as follows:

Pasture	2014	2015	Repeat Sequence
Sand Draw	1 - Trail thru	1	Entire Herd
Childs Creek	2 - Trail thru	2 - Trail thru	
Trails	3	3 - Trail thru**	
Beef	4 - Trail thru	4	
Simmons Park	Early	Late	Sub-group 1
Leigh Creek	Late	Early	Sub-group 2
Pasture Park Area	Early	Late	Sub-group 3
Roundup Grounds	7	5	
Prospect	6	6	
Canyon Creek (including Gold Mine Road)	5	7	
Beef	8 - Trail thru	8 - Trail thru	Entire Herd
Trails	9	9	
Childs Creek	10 - Trail thru	10 - Trail thru	
Sand Draw	11 - Trail thru	11 - Trail thru	

*Trailing through the "Strip", a part of Monument C&H allotment, should be completed in no more than one day's time.
**Allowed to spend an extra day in Trails pasture when trailing through in order for cows and calves to mother-up.

Entering the Allotment

The turn on date for South Canyon C&H Allotment is tentatively authorized for June 25, but is dependent upon range readiness as discussed in the revised South Canyon C&H Allotment Management Plan (AMP). If livestock are delayed, the value of animal months may be credited against next year's fees, if requested by the end of the calendar year.

Resource Guidelines

Resource guidelines are described in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines, the Bighorn Forest Plan, and in your revised AMP. The allowable use guidelines for utilization of the current year's forage are listed in the following tables. These guidelines are applicable at the time the livestock leave the unit and include use by both livestock and wildlife. South Canyon C&H Allotment is managed under a "Rotation" grazing strategy, and

existing rangeland condition is considered “satisfactory”. Existing rangeland condition determinations may be revised as trend assessments are conducted.

Uplands (percent utilization by weight of forage species)		
Type Of Management	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Rotation	45	35

Riparian Vegetation Residue Guidelines		
Season Of Use	Existing Rangeland Condition	
	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Early Use Pasture; Livestock leave pasture prior to 08/01	5 inches	5 inches
Summer & Fall Use Pasture; Livestock leave pasture after 08/01	5 inches	7 inches
*Satisfactory is defined here as meeting or moving toward desired vegetative condition and unsatisfactory is defined as not meeting desired vegetative condition or undetermined. Vegetation residue guidelines are expressed in terms of the inches of stubble height to be left, measuring longest leaf of designated Carex species, after livestock use. In this case, all wide leaved sedges have been designated, subject to update		

Your rotational grazing strategy and pasture move triggers are described in your revised AMP. Note that livestock use beyond allowable guidelines could result in an administrative action in subsequent years, such as an adjustment to the season of use, in order to allow plants a chance to recover and restore root reserves.

Due to overuse in the Leigh Creek pasture in 2014, upland utilization guideline of 45% use needs to be met in 2015 to allow for resource recovery and to prevent administrative action. To help with management specifically in Leigh Creek pasture, the Round-Up Divide fence (505-619) will start to be converted from electric to permanent fence.

Monitoring

Monitoring of forage use levels and other livestock impacts should occur throughout the grazing season, with management adjustments made as needed. If issues are raised indicating the need to monitor aspen, stream banks, or willows, we will work with you to determine transect locations and establish transects on the ground. Any data you collect and submit will be maintained in USFS permanent record.

To facilitate monitoring actual use, and to avoid the need to measure utilization on all Suitable rangeland, monitoring will be done using a key area concept. Key areas are listed and described in your revised AMP. Note that allowable use guidelines apply to all Suitable rangeland on the allotment, and that key areas may be revised as needed. The Forest Service will conduct spot checks throughout the grazing season, and I encourage your participation.

The Forest Service plans to work with the permittee to conduct pre and post-grazing monitoring in the Leigh Creek Pasture to evaluate the amount of utilization occurring from elk and other wildlife in the area.

Maintenance of Improvements

Term grazing permits state that permittees will maintain assigned range improvements to standards of repair, orderliness, and safety acceptable to the Forest Service. A complete list of the improvements and designated maintenance responsibility is included in Part 3 of term grazing permits, with maintenance standards described in your revised AMP.

Planned Improvement Projects for 2015:

Improvement #	Improvement Name	Project Description
505014D	Canyon Creek Cow Camp Horse Pasture	Project has been completed in 2013. USFS to certify.
505110	Child’s Creek Pipeline (Rye Spg)	Replace pipeline to feed Sand Draw tanks from Child’s Creek.
505110B-1	Rye Spring Pipeline Tank 3	Non-functional and needs removed.

505110B-2	Rye Spring Pipeline Tank 4	Non-functional and needs removed.
505120A	Sand Draw Butte tank	Needs replaced; 10' fiberglass
505130A	Upper Trails Tank North	Continue to remove material from the site in 2014.
505131A	Pasture Park Tank	Needs replaced; 10' fiberglass
505619	Round-Up Divide Fence	If FS can provide material, will start converting to permanent

Grazing permit modifications for cooperative range improvements (form FS-2200-113) must be completed prior to expenditure of Forest Service funds for project work. As materials for these projects become available, these activities can be coordinated through Kerri or Thad. The permittees and Forest Service should identify range improvements that are in need of major repair and ensure that such repairs are completed to standard during the 2015 grazing season.

Wolves

On Sept. 23, 2014 the US District Court for the District of Columbia vacated the USFWS wolf delisting rule under the endangered species act. The court reinstated federal protections for Wyoming wolves that were in place prior to the 2012 delisting therefore wolves are again listed under the ESA as a nonessential experimental population in all of Wyoming. Take of wolves may be authorized only by the non-essential rules or by permit issued under section 10 of the ESA. You must contact US Fish and Wildlife Service for any wolf related predation or harassment of livestock. You can contact Rod Krischke with Wildlife Services at (307) 261-5336. Please inform the Rangeland Management Specialist of any wolf activity on your allotment as well.

Other

Permittee is authorized to spray Tall Larkspur in Leigh Creek pasture. The permittee is required to use only herbicide approved by the EPA and must use according to label directions. Forest Service recommends not spraying if wind speed is greater than 15 mph, especially if spraying near Leigh creek or any water body. It is also recommended to spot spray, with a broadleaf herbicide, versus broadcast to limit disturbance of native, desirable forbs.

Salting and additional management practices are described in your term grazing permit as well as in your revised AMP.

Documentation on the enclosed Annual Use Report is required, and will help us to plan livestock use in the future. Return the completed form to the Powder River Ranger District Office by December 31, 2015.