

**HUNTER CREEK C&H - ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST - FAIRFIELD RANGER DISTRICT  
Grazing Year 2015**

PERMITTEES	Permitted Numbers	Permitted Head Months*	Permitted Season of Use	Authorized Head Months	Authorized Season of Use
Roger Nielson	84 c/c	340	6/15 – 10/15	340	6/15 – 10/15
<b>TOTAL FOR 2015</b>				340	6/15 – 10/15

HMs are the product of variable numbers and seasons of use

**COMPLIANCE:**

These Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are considered part of your Term Grazing Permit, Part 2, Clause 8(a), and you have agreed to carry out its provisions and other instructions upon signing the Term Grazing Permit. Consequently, failure to follow this AOI is a violation of your term grazing permit. The contents of this year’s AOI reflect our 4/29/2015 discussion at the annual meeting. Situations may develop during the grazing season requiring changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the Range Management Specialist to obtain approval before initiating the change.

**NOTIFICATION:** The permittee will provide the Fairfield District Ranger with written notification of any proposed changes to these Annual Operating Instructions. 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. The Fairfield District Ranger or his staff will document and consider the request. If approved, the FS will provide written verification of the changes to the permittee. No changes in these instructions will be recognized without this verification.

**NOXIOUS WEED MANAGEMENT:** According to Idaho law, hay and straw transported onto National Forest land must be certified **Noxious Weed Free**.

**2014 GRAZING SEASON REVIEW**

**Utilization Review:**

Stubble height and utilization levels on all Designated Monitoring Areas within the allotment were in compliance with the FS standards.

**Management Effectiveness Review:**

The management of cattle across the allotment in 2014 was acceptable despite issues not related to livestock operations outside of your control. Livestock appeared to be well distributed throughout the pastures.

**Monitoring:**

We will continue gathering stubble height data at DMA locations this summer. We will also continue to observe utilization levels on uplands. It is the permittee’s responsibility to move livestock to the next pasture to meet Forest Plan end of season stubble height and other utilization standards.

**BILLING INFORMATION:**

Grazing fees for this season will be \$1.69 per head month. Payments are to be made by the due date shown on your grazing bill. The process takes approximately 10 days from the time you submit your bill until it is processed and verified through **Lockbox**. Notice of payment must be received by the district office prior to your entry. If notice has not been received you cannot turn out your livestock onto National Forest land. Payment validates your Term Grazing Permit and authorizes you to graze during the 2014 season.

**LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT**

The following is the pasture sequence and schedule for distributing your cattle on the Hunter Creek Allotment.

**2014 ROTATION SCHEDULE**

Order of Use	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Unit Name	West Hunter	Hunter Riparian	East Hunter
Stay Limitation	July 13- August 23	August 24 (15 days)	September 8- October 5

\*Actual cattle numbers may vary, but when totaled will not exceed the maximum 340 permitted head months.

1. All bulls or livestock over six months of age are considered permitted animals. Livestock will be permitted on the allotment only for the season and numbers listed on the Bill for Collection and only after payment has been received.
2. Planned use may be adjusted by the Forest Service according to range readiness, drought, high fire danger, or due to the availability of forage and water. The length of stay for units may be negotiable but no longer than your permitted HMs or season. The length of stay mainly depends on residual stubble heights and overall grazing impacts, especially within riparian areas.

The maximum allowable use level will be influenced by the number of animals, length of stay, weather, amount of herding, and other permittee management practices. It is your responsibility to move livestock from one unit to the next before maximum allowed use is reached. We would be willing to help you determine the proper time to exit a pasture if you feel the upland utilization standard is getting close. Just present this concern to us so we may offer our assistance. We ask that you give us adequate notice to respond to your request. Permittees are responsible to manage their livestock in a way that does not impair or degrade the condition of the range, especially within riparian areas.

## STANDARDS & GUIDES

**ALLOWABLE USE** – Allowable use is the degree of grazing use specified for a particular area or plant species. Refer to the use level stated below. It is the maximum utilization allowed on key upland grasses (40-50% or about 3” left) such as Idaho fescue or bluebunch wheatgrass and key riparian sedges (45% or about 4” left) such as Nebraska sedge. These use levels are the same ones contained in Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit.

**MONITORING** – Utilization must be monitored by the permittee and by the Forest Service. We welcome your participation in our monitoring activities. Monitoring of key areas will be used to determine the maximum allowable livestock use on the allotment. Key areas are defined as relatively small areas representative of use that serve as evaluation sites. These areas guide the general management of the entire pasture and will reflect the overall acceptability of your grazing management.

You must remain aware of when these key areas have been fully grazed to the allowable use level. **It will be your responsibility to monitor livestock use and move cattle to meet the end of growing season standards.** End of growing season is considered mid October.

### **Sawtooth National Forest Utilization Standards**

Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of growing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to direction in Forest Service Manual 1922.5

#### **Upland Vegetative Cover Types:**

Early season pasture, 1<sup>st</sup> entry = 40% use. (leave about 3.5 inches)

After seed ripe conditions or late season pasture = 50% use. (leave about 3.0 inches)

**Riparian Areas:** Retain at a minimum 4 inches of stubble height for greenline species (sedges). Once in the last pasture, if allowable use occurs prior to the end of your authorized season, cattle must be removed from the allotment.

#### **Allotment Specific Riparian Sites**

Sedge communities

4-inch stubble height

**STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS:** See Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit for a list of structural range developments. The permittee will inspect and maintain each development according to the Term Grazing Permit specifications. This is required before livestock enter or are placed into the next pasture. Livestock may be held off or may be required to leave the allotment if assigned maintenance has not been completed. Allotment boundary fences must be maintained prior to the entry dates of adjoining allotments. Permittees in non-use status are still responsible for their proportionate share of maintenance. It is the responsibility of the permittee to notify the Forest Service prior to livestock entry and after developments in each pasture have been maintained.

**Note: When you maintain your water developments make sure the wildlife escape ramps are present and functional. Please contact us if you need replacement ramps.**

**Motorized Access to Improvements:** Unless the FS has decommissioned a particular road segment, all constructed mining and logging roads with cut and fill slopes will remain open to permittee motorized travel.

Motorized Closure Exemptions are:

- 1) The main ridgeline road heading north off of the Moores Flat road within the W. Hunter pasture.
- 2) The main ridgeline road heading north off of the Hawk Gulch road within the E. Hunter pasture.
- 3) Additional exemptions may be applied upon a case by case basis if approved by the District Ranger.

### **RIDER or PERMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS**

**LIVESTOCK DISTRIBUTION** – Proper salting techniques need to be practiced. Place salt in open areas of low natural livestock concentration at least ¼ mile away from water, and on high ground such as ridges or saddles that are accessible and used as livestock travelways. Do not place salt and supplements on system roads, trails or in meadows. Riding must be done to disperse cattle within each pasture.

**OWNERSHIP** – Permitted cattle must be owned and marked with a brand registered to the permittee. The brand must also be identified on the TGP application.

### **WOLF PRECAUTIONS**

We recommend that you work with IDF&G and Wildlife Services to implement other effective preventative actions to reduce the risk of wolf depredation.

Questions about what can or cannot be done in reference to defending flocks, harassing wolves, or shooting wolves should be directed to the Region 3/4 Fish and Game wolf biologist Jennifer Struthers at (208 989-8902); USDA APHIS Wildlife Services in Boise, Idaho (208 373-1630). The trapper for this area is **Sam Kocherhans (681-8792)**. Continue to work with your normal Wildlife Services representative on depredation issues.

**REQUIRED REPORTING** – The permittee is required to keep accurate records concerning movement of livestock and to furnish such information to the Forest Service. Mid-season actual use reporting must be within a week of moving cattle from one pasture to the other. End-of-season actual use reports must be supplied to the Forest Service no later than the last day of October. Death loss records are desirable because they assist in identifying areas where plant or animal control may be needed in the future. The Permittee must notify the Fairfield Ranger District at least five (5) days before cattle enter the allotment. This will allow district personnel the opportunity to count the livestock if we so desire. Failure to provide on and off dates will be

considered permit non-compliance and will also negate the possibility of a 2015 request to adjust your numbers or season of use, or to receive a credit or refund for unused head months.

**OTHER** – Observing, documenting, and reporting other uses that occur on the allotment provide valuable information regarding overall management. These uses could include: unauthorized livestock use, mining related activities, recreation conflicts, conflicts with trailing sheep grazing, predator problems, noxious weed discovery, and unusual wildlife sightings (e.g. wolverines, lynx, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, moose, etc.)

**ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS**

Livestock that are discovered before or after their permitted season or not within their permitted area are considered excess use livestock. When excess use livestock are identified as belonging to a permittee, the permittee can be billed for them at the unauthorized use rate and permit non-compliance action may also be initiated.

Dead livestock must be removed or disposed of on National Forest Lands if they are within 300 feet of flowing water or system trails or roads.

If you have any questions or suggestion to improve the management of the allotment, please feel free to contact Renee Kehler at (208) 764-3474 or stop by the district office in Fairfield.

**ACTUAL USE SUMMARY**

	West Hunter	Hunter Riparian	East Hunter
DATES/NUMBERS ENTERED			
DATES/NUMBERS EXITED			

**Remarks: (maintenance, cattle losses, weed infestations, and unforeseen problems)**

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HUNTER CREEK AOI

REVIEWED BY:

Rober Nielson

4/30/2015

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Permittee

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Date

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APPROVED BY:

Mike Dettori

4/30/2015

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District Ranger

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Date