

2015 WILLOW CREEK ALLOTMENT - OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST - FAIRFIELD RANGER DISTRICT

| PERMITTEES | Permitted Numbers | Permitted Head Months | Permitted Season of Use | Authorized Numbers/HMs | Authorized Season of Use |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wolf Springs Ranch c/o Dave Coates | 112 c/c | 523 HMs | 6/1 – 10/20 | 87 c/c 366HMs | 6/15-10/20 |
| Willow Creek LLC c/o Linda Miller | 282 c/c | 1317 HMs | 6/1 – 10/20 | 223 c/c 938HMs | 6/15-10/20 |
| Toone Ranches c/o Mark & Nancy Toone | 225 c/c | 1050 HMs | 6/1 – 10/20 | 225 c/c 1,050HMs | 6/15-10/15 |
| Total C/C & HMs | 619 c/c | 2890 HMs | 142 days | 535 c/c 2354HMs | 128 days |
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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 discussion at your April 29, 2015 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.

Change Request Procedure:

The permittee will provide the Fairfield District Ranger with notification of any proposed changes to these Annual Operating Instructions. This could include changes in animal number, season of use, length of stay, class of livestock, or a change in pasture rotation. The Fairfield District Ranger or his staff will document and consider the request. If approved, the FS will provide confirmation of the change. You must acquire this authorization and confirmation before initiating a change.

Noxious Weed Management:

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

Monitoring:

We will continue gathering stubble height and utilization data at riparian and upland DMA locations this summer. Permittees need to watch these areas closely because it is your responsibility to move livestock to meet the required stubble height standards.

Issues Needing Resolution:

All water developments must be maintained to FS specifications before cattle are allowed entry into each pasture. Photo documentation and a completed maintenance checklist for each trough is required to verify completed maintenance.

If you have unauthorized cattle grazing on the Willow Creek or Little Smoky sheep allotments this needs to be reported to the Forest Service. This problem needs to be kept under control by making multiple observations and removing problem cows when they are first discovered. We would like you to report this problem when it occurs and also document it in your year-end-report.

The fence that separates your Beef Pasture from the Wardrop Allotment Beef Pasture needs to be put up by Sept 16. Whichever permittee is scheduled to graze cattle last in the Beef pasture has the responsibility for letting this fence down unless a different arrangement is made and the Forest Service is aware of it.

Billing Information:

Grazing fees for this season will be \$1.69 per head month. Payments are to be made by the due date displayed 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 by the district office you cannot turn out your livestock onto National Forest lands. Payment validates your Term Grazing Permit and authorizes you to graze during the 2015 season.

Beaver Creek Fire:

This wildfire covered a major portion of this allotment. Fencing must be constructed in the Pocket to restrict cattle from the burned area prior to spring grazing. Grazing in the following pastures will be deferred to the fall to allow for vegetative recovery and soil stability: Cherry/Nebraska and Wine/Devil's Dive (burned areas).

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

The following is a schedule for distributing your cattle across the Willow Creek Allotment.

2014 ROTATION SCHEDULE

| Unit Name | First | Second | Third | Fourth | Fifth |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|------------------|
| Coates (C) #s | Pocket* | Little Smokey | Liberal | Beef | Wine/Devils Dive |
| Toone (T) #s | Wine/Devil's Dive (unburned portion) | Little Smokey | Liberal | Sorting | Cherry/Nebraska |

*Grazed if fencing is constructed in time

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 season. This will depend on residual stubble heights and overall grazing impacts, especially within riparian areas.

Permittees are responsible to manage their livestock in a way that does not impair or degrade the condition of the range, especially riparian areas. The maximum allowable use level will be influenced by the number of animals, length of stay, weather, amount of herding, and appropriate 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 the pasture if you feel the 4" riparian utilization standard is getting close. Bring this concern to our attention if you desire assistance. We ask that you give us adequate notice to respond to your request.

STANDARDS & GUIDES

ALLOWABLE USE – Allowable use is the degree of grazing 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 forest personnel. 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 meet the allowable use level. **It will be your responsibility to monitor livestock use and move cattle to meet end of growing season standards.** The end of growing season is considered to be when authorized cattle are totally removed from the allotment around 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 to achieve specific vegetative management objectives may occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to the direction in Forest Service Manual 1922.5

- A) **Upland Vegetative Cover Types:** Early season pastures, 1st & 2nd entry = 40% use. (leave about 3.5 inches)
After seed ripe conditions or late season pastures = 50% use. (leave about 3.0 inches)
- B) **Riparian Areas:** Retain 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.

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 after each pasture has been maintained.**

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

Motorized Travel Management (MTM):

The following exemptions and rules apply to your grazing permit. A flagrant permittee motorized use violation will be treated as a violation of the Term Grazing Permit. Motorized access to water troughs or fences will not be granted exemption from the MTM rules unless specifically authorized within this AOI. **Authorization is granted if access is needed to reconstruct or replace water troughs.** If a route is not exempted, travel management rules associated with the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) will prevail.

General Exclusions:

1. Unless otherwise specified, all machine constructed roads that exhibit cut and fill slopes will remain open for permittee use even if they are closed to the public. This exclusion does not include the constructed roads that have been recently reclaimed by the Forest Service.

2. If permittee exempted travel causes resource concerns or indirect travel impacts occur because other motorized users are following an undesirable on-the-ground precedent set by a permittee or permittee representative, then an exemption may be cancelled to resolve this potential resource concern.

Exemptions:

Cherry/Nebraska Pasture:

- That portion of the road ending at the salt ground up North Cherry Creek. This is the road access that goes through the Claude Ballard property.
- The jeep road leading up to but not crossing Nebraska Creek.

Wine Devils Dive Pasture:

- The lower entrance to elk meadow if and after it is hard enough to travel across.
- The trail leading south from the Ditto Flat Road to the 10th Ave E. sign. The permittee is not exempt beyond this intersection. Motorized crossing of Wine Creek is not authorized.

Little Smoky Pasture:

- Starting July 1, the trail from the Ditto Rd taking off at the Gathering Field fence corner to the double tire troughs within the gathering field, then crossing Sheep Creek heading west to the rubber tire trough LS-19, then continuing westerly along the old sheep driveway fenceline trail, then east (upstream) of the old dredge tailings ending at the gate just east of the Ditto Flat Road ford that crosses Little Smoky Creek.
- The trail heading north off of the Sawmill Creek Rd to the salt drop where the jeep trail splits.
- The route leading to the upper Stovepipe fence that heads west from the Little Smoky Rd is exempt only to where it ends at the lower salt ground. The steep portion of the jeep trail beyond this point is not exempt to motorized access. All of the old logging roads that are accessed near the Pine Creek/Little Smoky confluence.

Liberal Pasture:

- The old trail heading south from the Ditto gate toward the high waterhole LB-14 adjacent to the Dive/Liberal fenceline, but only as far as the salt ground before leaving Ditto Flat.
- The trail leading from the Ditto Rd/gathering field northern most fence corner downstream to the double tire troughs LB-4 & 5 adjacent to Sheep Creek.
- All old logging roads in the Liberal Pasture (upper White Rag) including the route leading to the Beef pasture fence separating the Willow & Wardrop allotments.
- The ¼ mile ATV trail leading west from the Liberal road to the double trough LB-7 which is south of the Liberal Creek Road.

The above routes are open to ATV or motorcycle use only for the purpose of maintaining fences or water developments and distributing salt or other supplements. They are not open to full sized motorized vehicles or for the purpose of herding cattle with ATVs.

Motorized access to satellite rider camps will be exempt as long as the camp location has been authorized. Any changes or exceptions to the above language must be approved by the District Ranger.

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.

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.

Permittees must notify the Fairfield Ranger District before cattle enter each pasture and that all developments have been maintained prior each pasture entry. Failure to provide this information could have consequences that affect your TGP. Not providing on and off dates is considered permit non-compliance. We need at least 5 day notice before cattle are placed on the allotment. This will allow us the opportunity to count if we so desire.

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 authorized sheep grazing, predator problems, noxious weed sighting, 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 may be billed for them at the unauthorized use rate and permit non-compliance action can 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) 764-3202 or stop by the district office in Fairfield.

ACTUAL USE SUMMARY

| | Cherry/Neb | Pocket | Wine/D.Dive | Liberal | Little Smoky | Beef Pasture |
|-----------------------|------------|--------|-------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| DATES/NUMBERS ENTERED | | | | | | |
| DATES/NUMBERS EXITED | | | | | | |

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

2015 WILLOW CREEK C&H AOI

REVIEWED
BY:

Mark Toone

5/27/2015

Permittee _____
Date

Permittee _____
Date

Permittee _____
Date

APPROVED
BY:

Mike Dettori

6/5/2015

District Ranger _____
Date