

**WEST MOUNTAIN SOUTH
CATTLE AND HORSE ALLOTMENT**
2015 Annual Operating Instructions
Cascade Ranger District
Boise National Forest

INTRODUCTION

The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) provide direction for livestock management and how it will be conducted on the West Mountain South Cattle and Horse allotment during the 2015 grazing season.

Allotment	Permittee	Permit Number
West Mountain South C&H	L&J Land and Livestock LLC	00278

Permitted Use				
Permittee	Allotment	No. of Livestock	Livestock Class	Permitted Season
L&J Land and Livestock LLC	West Mountain South C&H	182	Cow/Calf	7/10 – 10/10

Authorized Use				
Permittee	Allotment	No. of Livestock	Livestock Class	Authorized Season
L&J Land and Livestock LLC	West Mountain South C&H	167	Cow/Calf	7/10 – 10/10

Non-Use				
Permittee	Allotment	No. of Livestock	Resource Protection	Personal Convenience
L&J Land and Livestock LLC	West Mountain South C&H			

Permitted Livestock Brands:

L&J Land and Livestock LLC

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing season which require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the North Zone Rangeland Management Specialist or the Cascade District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

All hay, straw, and mulch products used on the Boise National Forest must be certified as weed-free or weed/seed-free by a qualified inspector of the State of Idaho or neighboring states which have weed-free feed or crop certification programs (Region Special Order Number: 04-00-097).

PREVIOUS YEAR GRAZING RESULTS

1. Actual Use – 2014
 - a. West Mountain South C&H allotment
 - (1) Numbers – 165 cattle
 - (2) Season – 8/20 – 10/10
 - (3) Actual Use – 372 animal months

2015 GRAZING SCHEDULE

West Mountain South C&H Allotment

<u>Cattle Numbers</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Pasture</u>
167	7/10 – 10/10	Brush Creek Unit
0	Rest	Fawn Creek Unit

The cattle will be trailed between the adjacent private land and the West Mountain South C&H allotment. The cattle will enter the Brush Creek Unit on July 10, 2015.

Cattle movement or drift back into the Fawn Creek Unit (rest pasture) will not be allowed as it is very important to rest this pasture in the two-pasture rest-rotation grazing system on this allotment.

Cattle will be removed from a pasture when allowable use of 45 percent in the riparian areas is reached; or when 4-inch stubble height of hydric species is retained; or when allowable use of 50 percent in the non-riparian areas is reached.

BILLING

Grazing fees for cattle are \$1.69 per head month.

There are now three ways that you can pay your bill, (1) through the Lock Box system by sending a check to the address on the bill; (2) by paying online at the web address on the bill; or (3) paying at the District Office. Please allow adequate time for your payment to be received, processed and for the Ranger District Office to receive payment notification. A minimum of 5 days should be allowed for this process. Livestock may not be placed on the allotment until after the District Ranger has received notification that the grazing fees have been paid. Placing or allowing livestock onto National Forest System lands prior to payment of grazing fees is violation of your term grazing permit and may result in the assessment of unauthorized use fees and the suspension or cancellation of your permit.

If permitted livestock are required to leave the allotment early due to utilization standards being met or other reasons as determined by the Forest Officer, a refund may be requested. A written request for refund must be submitted to the District Ranger if this situation occurs.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

The West Mountain South C&H allotment will be managed as described in this AOI and the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Boise National Forest (Forest Plan).

Compliance with the following standards will be emphasized; this is imperative. Familiarize yourself with this AOI and Forest Management direction. If you need more information about allotment management, contact the North Zone Rangeland Management Specialist or the Cascade District Ranger.

The North Zone Range Specialist or Technician must be notified at least 5 days in advance and given the date, time, and place where livestock will enter the allotment to allow for counting livestock on the allotment.

Range Readiness: Spring moisture and temperature conditions may affect the time when livestock are allowed to turn out on the allotments. The Forest Service will notify you at least 2 weeks in advance of your scheduled turnout date if this occurs.

Utilization: It is the responsibility of the permittee to periodically monitor and document utilization during the grazing season. If utilization limits are reached prior to the scheduled off dates, livestock will be removed from the allotment early. The Forest Service will conduct end-of-season monitoring to determine if grazing use standards have been met.

Streambank utilization will be measured along the "greenline" in riparian areas and should not exceed the Forest Plan standard of no more than 45 percent in riparian areas. In the flats or meadows adjoining these riparian areas and/or upland areas, we will adhere to the Forest Plan Standard of no more than 50 percent utilization for these areas.

Upland grazing use should not exceed the Forest Plan standard of no more than 50 percent end-of-season use on upland areas. The Forest Service will periodically check the permittee's utilization monitoring to ensure good land stewardship and perform documentation. At times, the permittees and the Forest Service will jointly inspect range conditions. It is your responsibility to remove livestock from the allotment area as soon as the utilization standard (50 percent) has been met.

Noxious Weeds: Work on noxious weed control will continue this year. These weeds are a continual, and in some places, an increasing problem. Your help is needed. If you find any populations of noxious weeds, please let the Cascade Ranger District know so arrangements can be made to start work on their control.

Salt Placement: Salting will be one tool for achieving good livestock distribution. Salt will be placed in containers and moved occasionally during allotment use to discourage concentrations of cattle for a long period of time. Salt will be removed from the allotment when the livestock have completed grazing the unit. Salt will not be allowed in riparian conservation areas and must be placed away from any streams and riparian areas. Salting will be done where low use is observed. Historic salting locations will be avoided during the grazing season. There will be no salting within one-quarter mile water and 100 feet from roads where possible.

Predator Problems: If during the grazing season, you are having problems with predators notify, Wildlife Services. Through a memorandum of Understanding between Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Forest Service, Wildlife Services is responsible for the control of predators. They will provide control services, technical expertise, recommendation of control methods, and reporting livestock as well as predator losses to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and the Forest Service. You are allowed to protect your livestock from the immediate threat of predators. All other predator control must be conducted through the proper channels, as described above.

Wolves

Questions you may have concerning what can or cannot be done under current wolf management direction should be directed to Todd Grimm, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services in Boise, Idaho (208-378-5077); or local Wildlife Services contacts. Permittees should continue working with their local Wildlife

Services representative on depredation issues. Steve Duke from USFWS Recovery Branch can be contacted at (208-378-5345).

Motorized Use

The Forest Service's Motor Vehicle Use Travel Management Rule is in place on the Cascade Ranger District, which prohibits off-road travel. Public motorized, wheeled vehicle use is prohibited on all NFS lands except on routes that are designated on the current year's Motorized Vehicle Use Map. This AOI authorizes you and your employees to use wheeled motor vehicles on other system routes for administrative use within your allotments for livestock management purposes. This administrative use includes salting and herding of livestock, maintenance of range improvements, and forage utilization inspections. Use of heavy equipment, such as bulldozers or backhoes is **not** included in this authorization. Use of heavy equipment will need to be requested through and approved by the District Ranger on a case-by-case basis.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

All range improvements listed and assigned to you in the term grazing permit must be maintained to a good functioning condition before livestock enter the pasture.

Road and trail maintenance for improving livestock distribution and trailing within the West Mountain South Cattle and Horse Allotment will be allowed consistent with letters written on 6/19/2006 and 9/9/2008. These two letters out lined the actions that could take place on the ground and where they could take place within the allotment.

LIVESTOCK DISTRIBUTION

It is very important to continue clearing trails for good livestock distribution.

The area to the south of the Snowbank Mountain road and to the west of Blue Lake will be grazed in conjunction with the Brush Creek Unit.

The area around Blue Lake is closed to livestock grazing.

Do not encourage use along the Snowbank Mountain road as there is no fence or natural boundary to preclude use from both grazing units.

ALLOTMENT MONITORING

The proposed monitoring on the allotment for the 2015 grazing season will be as follows:

1. Inspection compliance monitoring
2. Utilization monitoring
3. In-season stubble height monitoring
4. End-of-season stubble height monitoring
5. Grazing Response Index (GRI)

Close monitoring of utilization levels and diligent removal of livestock when they are reached is critical to ensure compliance with end-of-season utilization standards. Failure to meet these standards may result in the modification of grazing management following the adaptive management strategy.

Permittee monitoring of utilization levels is not mandatory, but is highly advised since the permittees will be held accountable to meet end-of-season compliance monitoring.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

1. In cooperation with the State of Idaho, all feed, hay or straw brought to the allotment must be certified weed-free.
2. Report any known invasive plants in your grazing areas.
3. Report areas you have accidentally over-used so the Forest Service is aware of a critical situation before the public makes us aware of it. This will keep the Forest Service up to date and provide the opportunity to resolve the problem as necessary. In addition, it will reflect more positively on you as a good land manager.
4. It is recommended that the permittees use GPS units to record the location of each utilization monitoring site they inspect during the grazing season.

REQUIRED REPORTING

Enclosed are yearend grazing reports for you to record actual use data and range improvement maintenance for the 2015 grazing season for the West Mountain South C&H allotment. You need to record the date and number of cattle turned onto each allotment, the number and date cattle are removed from the allotment, and estimate the time and cost of management actions including livestock herding and improvement maintenance associated with the allotment. Accurate records of these dates, maintenance work, and range improvement needs should be kept and returned to our office at the end of the grazing season. The Forest Service uses these records to help allocate Range Betterment Funds. These funds are used to purchase materials for improvements. This report should be returned to the Cascade Ranger District no later than December 1, 2015.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOREST PLAN

The West Mountain South C&H Allotment will be managed to achieve the Desired Future Condition as described in the revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Boise National Forest. All permitted actions including grazing will comply with standards shown in the revised Forest Plan.

Utilization Standards from the revised Forest Plan are as follows:

Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the grazing 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 FSM 1922.5.

1. Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use of hydric greenline species.
2. Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use.
Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

INSPECTIONS

Periodic inspections for compliance to the grazing permit and the annual operating instructions will be made by the Forest Service. Allotment inspections and unit examinations will be conducted during the grazing season to meet the utilization standards set forth in these instructions. Permittee participation in these activities is always encouraged.

These Annual Operating Instructions for the West Mountain South C&H allotment are consistent with Forest Plan management direction. If you have questions or the need to alter this plan during the grazing season, notify the North Zone Rangeland Management Specialist at 208-365-7010 or the Cascade District Ranger at 208-382-7400.

Signatures:

Mary Laurel
District Ranger

5/29/15
Date

I understand that these Annual Operating Instructions are part of my term grazing permit and I agree to manage my livestock grazing operations consistent with this direction and the terms and conditions stipulated in my term grazing permit.

Permittee(s) signature