SMITH PRAIRIE C&H ALLOTMENT
2009 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Boise National Forest
Mountain Home Ranger District

INTRODUCTION

The following information is direction on how livestock management is to be conducted on the Smith Prairie Cattle & Horse (C&H) Allotment for the 2009 grazing season. The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are part of your Term grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a), and you are responsible for compliance with this direction.

Situations may develop during the grazing season that could require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact Tina Ruffing or Cindy Lancaster, district range staff, and obtain approval before initiating or deviating from your AOI. Failure to obtain prior approval could result in permit action.

The following table displays the permitted numbers and seasons of use for the Smith Prairie Allotment:

Permittee Name	Permitted Number and Class	Permitted Season of Use	Permitted Brands
L.G. Davison & Sons	55 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	G LRC ◁ LHC
Elmer Ireland	21 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	JK LRC
George or Rick Russell	26 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	B RHC

For the 2009 grazing season, you are authorized to graze the Smith Prairie Allotment as follows:

Permittee Name	Authorized Number and Class	Authorized Season of Use	Authorized Brands
L.G. Davison & Sons	55 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	G LRC ◁ LHC
Elmer Ireland	21 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	JK LRC
George or Rick Russell	26 cow/calf	5/01-10/15	B RHC

Some flexibility will be allowed for weather conditions, range readiness and livestock needs. The period of use is also subject to compliance with Forest Plan standards and guidelines and Implementation Monitoring requirements as discussed below. Please review carefully the standards and guides listed.

BILLING INFORMATION

The grazing fee for the 2009 grazing season is $1.35 per head month for cattle. You will be billed based on the authorized use listed above. Confirmation of payment through the National Finance Center is required and must be received before livestock can enter National Forest System lands. In order to meet this requirement, please ensure that bills for collection are paid by the due date indicated.

If permitted livestock are required to leave an allotment early because utilization standards have been reached, drought conditions persist or other reasons as determined by the Forest Officer, a

credit/refund may be requested. **This request must be submitted in writing to the District Ranger by December 31, 2009.**

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Livestock may enter the Lower Bench Unit no sooner than May 1. Cattle will remain in this unit for four to six weeks, or until utilization levels are met. Livestock will then be moved to the Gooseneck Unit where they will remain for four to six weeks. After proper use is achieved in the Gooseneck Unit, livestock will be moved to the Strawberry Creek Unit where they will remain until approximately mid-September. The Lava Creek Unit will be used last. The Smith Creek Unit will be rested this year.

STANDARDS AND GUIDES

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, including reductions in Head Months or permitted area. I deleted a sentence here.

The following standards and guidelines apply to the Smith Prairie Allotment:

- Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown below at the end of the 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 FSM 1922.5.
  - Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use or retain a minimum 4-inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.
  - Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions or late season pastures – 50 percent use. (RAST01, p. III-45)
- Livestock salting is prohibited in Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs). Place salt no closer that ¼ mile from water and not within 100 feet of roads. Move salt from areas where utilization standards have been met. (RAST04, p. III-45)
- All livestock water developments must provide access and escape to and from water for all types of wildlife. (RAST09, p. III-45)
- Bulls must test negative for Trichomoniasis before entering National Forest System lands.
- Only certified weed-free hay and mulch are allowed on National Forest System lands.

Because they are early season units, upland utilization levels in the Lower Bench and Gooseneck Units of the Smith Prairie allotment are 40%.

IMPROVEMENTS

Your Term Grazing Permit contains a complete list of range improvements associated with the Smith Prairie Allotment. Please note that all range improvements must be maintained to a proper functioning condition before livestock are placed on each allotment. Failure to do so is a violation of your term grazing permit and is subject to permit action. Non-functioning range improvements need to be brought to standard, or arrangements made with district range personnel to have them removed. Abandonment of improvements is not acceptable – if developments are not functioning and are no longer needed, they must be removed. In the event improvements cannot be practically maintained to standard, you should notify this office so we can identify them for reconstruction as funds become available.

Cattleguards are no longer considered part of your annual maintenance. It is still your responsibility to inspect cattleguards annually and inform the Forest Service of known problems or maintenance needs on them within your allotment boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to, wing or grate repair or replacement, brush removal, and cleaning.

RIDER OR PERMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

Off dates for these allotments are considered approximate and will depend on utilization levels. To prevent over-utilization, a concerted effort should be made to distribute cattle over the entire allotment and to effectively graze all suitable areas in that unit. Permitted numbers are based on the premise that active management will occur to effect adequate livestock distribution. Cattle need to be moved before meeting riparian and upland grazing standards. If cattle are allowed to concentrate in riparian areas and water developments without being distributed to unused areas of the allotment, the grazing capacity of the allotment is diminished to those areas only.

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

REQUIRED REPORTING

Enclosed is a Year-end Grazing Report for you to record actual use data and range improvement maintenance for the 2009 grazing season for the Smith Prairie Allotment. You need to record the date and number of cattle turned onto the allotment, the number and date cattle are removed from each unit, and estimate the time and cost of management actions, including livestock herding and improvement maintenance, associated with each 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 Forest Service's Mountain Home Ranger District office no later than December 31, 2009.**

INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

Range personnel may require you to delay your entry date on the Smith Prairie Allotment based on range readiness inspections that they have completed. You will be notified as soon as possible if your turn-on date is delayed.

Range personnel may conduct utilization monitoring and improvement inspections periodically on your allotments.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

The Idaho Fish and Game is responsible for wolf management in our area. Michael Lucid is the Regional Biologist in charge of wolf management and can be reached at (208) 465-8465, ext. 315. Wildlife Services should be contacted first as soon as you suspect a wolf depredation has occurred. The Fish and Wildlife Services contact for this area is Jered Hedelius and he can be reached at (208) 681-8756 or (208) 934-4354 (Central District Office). Please contact Jered if you encounter predator problems on your allotment this summer.

OTHER

Any carcass or animal remains will be moved at least 100 yards from live water, trails or roads. Animal carcasses in highly visible areas need to be relocated to more remote areas.

The Forest Service's Motor Vehicle Use Rule is in place on the Mountain Home Ranger District. 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 off of designated routes within your allotments for livestock management purposes only, including salting and herding of livestock, maintenance of range improvements, and forage utilization inspections.

[redacted]	4-20-09
Permittee	Date

Larry Briggs	4-22-09
District Ranger	Date