

Glenwood Ranger District

Gila National Forest

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2009

CEDAR BREAKS #404

Prepared By: _____
District Range Staff

Date: _____

Approved By: _____
District Ranger

Date: _____

I. INTRODUCTION

I met with you on December 19, 2008 to discuss management of the Cedar Breaks Allotment during the 2008 grazing year and to plan grazing management during the upcoming 2009 grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions implement the 2002 Decision and are the result of those discussions.

Please note that I have accepted your suggested rotation schedule with the exception of use of the River Pasture.

If you wish to request changes in these instructions, particularly to the rotation schedule, you must make the request no less than 5 business days prior to the proposed effective date for the change. All changes to the Annual Operating Instructions must be approved, in writing, by the District Ranger prior to implementation.

The authorized stocking for the 2008 grazing season on the Cedar Breaks Allotment is as follows:

Term Permitted Livestock Numbers

Number and Class of Livestock	Dates
108 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01 – 02/28
10 Horses-Saddle	03/01 – 02/28

Cedar Breaks Allotment Annual Authorization for 2008

Number and Class of Livestock Authorized	Dates Authorized
108 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01/2009 – 02/28/2010
10 Horses-Saddle	03/01/2009 – 02/28/2010

Cedar Breaks Allotment Rotation Schedule for 2008

Class of Livestock	Dates	Pasture
Cow/Calf	01/1/2009 – 04/01/2009	West CCC
Cow/Calf	04/2/2009 – 05/15/09	East CCC
Cow/Calf	5/16/09 – 06/30/09	North Cedar Breaks
Cow/Calf	7/1/09 – 9/1/09	South Cedar Breaks/Alma Flat/Mineral Creek
Cow/Calf	9/2/09 – 10/15/09	East CCC
Cow/Calf	10/16/09 – 4/1/10	West CCC
Horses/Bulls	03/1/2009 – 02/28/2010	Community
Horses/Cattle	Holding/Doctoring	Highway 180
Horses/Cattle	03/01/08-06/30/08	River (if water available)
Cow/Calf	In conjunction with private land in pasture	Wiley Morgan

Note: No cattle or horses are allowed in the San Francisco River.

The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. The District Ranger must be notified 5 days prior to the time livestock enter or leave the Forest if the placing on or removal of livestock is not planned in the above schedule, and more than 10 head are being moved. Credit/Refund applications will not be processed unless District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time of removal of stock.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to

move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify this office so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. You may apply for a free use post and stay permit for the maintenance of fences and corrals on your allotment.

Fence #000771, Mineral Creek Pasture fence is still in need of maintenance. You stated that this fence has not been maintained for some time. You wish to abandon the fence because it is not useful to you. **At a minimum, the portion on the south side of Alma Flat is required maintenance so that when the Alma Flat fence is completed Alma Flat will be a separate pasture.** I will evaluate the remainder of the fence to determine if abandonment is appropriate. If materials are needed for reconstruction, contact Allen Graves

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District is planning to allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to complete Permit Modifications, you must provide the District with an accounting of materials used and the days and dollars spent on your part to complete the permit modification. This information provides evidence of your contribution to range developments.

In order to verify actual use and as part of monitoring specified in your Term Permit, it is important to document livestock numbers, dates of entering and leaving pastures and the allotment, shipping dates, and cattle losses (both grown stock and calves). Copies of shipping tickets, sales records, and other written records are required to support your documentation.

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Written permission from the District Ranger will be required for any heavy equipment use on the National Forest. Examples of this are cleaning out stock tanks, road maintenance, etc.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal prior to or at the time the livestock are taken off the allotment. **I will process your request for credit from "12/24/2008 until the animals are replaced on forest grounds" after you have informed me that you have placed stock back on the allotment.** You will be required to provide your Social Security or tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

A \$25 administrative fee will be charged for any additional bills for collection that are sent to you due to either late payment or for split billing on seasonal allotments. This fee will be collected to pay for the cost associated with issuing an additional bill for collection. There is no administrative fee for the normal "split billing" on yearlong allotments.

To insure that payment is credited to your account, you must write the bill number on your check prior to submitting it to the lockbox.

5. Short Age Calf Policy: Any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31 need to be paid for starting January 1.

6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of energy supplements on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplements is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved.
- b. Feeding of hay on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown. You have requested to use hay as an attractant for your cattle. Please work with Allen Graves to develop a specific plan for use of hay. You may use either certified weed free hay or hay grown on your private land in Alma.
- c. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks, or molasses lick tubs on National Forest land will be permitted if a detailed plan is approved, or if carried out in conjunction with salting.
- d. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile of water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use. To facilitate gathering, you may place salts in corrals **only** during the week before scheduled pasture move dates.
- e. No salting within the following areas of special management concern:
 - Alma Flat Pasture
 - The southeast corner of Community Pasture (the south half of the west half of the northwest ¼ of Section 28, Township 10 South, Range 20 West)
 - Keller Canyon within West CCC Pasture
 - The easy country along the fence in the northeast side of West CCC pasture (West ½ of the Southwest ¼ of Section 25, Township 10 South, Range 21 West)

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

The Cedar Breaks Allotment has been analyzed through the 2002 NEPA analysis process. The resulting Decision Notice meets Forest Plan standards and guidelines. This decision along with the terms of your Ten-Year Term Permit and these Annual Operating Instructions provide direction for management on this allotment.

The terms and conditions of Part Three of your Term Grazing Permit as modified by a letter of instruction dated May 22, 2006, constitute your allotment management plan. The following range developments remain to be completed to implement the 2002 Decision.

- West CCC pipeline reconstruction. You reported that you have completed the pipeline reconstruction from the well to the steel rim tank and tested the pipeline. This permit modification will be closed. Please forward an accounting of your costs and time for completion of the project.
- West CCC pipeline extension to the north part of the pasture. According to you, this pipeline was laid out but never hooked up or finished because it would not work. You stated that the windmill on the source well on private land will not pump water sufficient to charge the additional line. You also contend that this pipeline is unnecessary and could not be charged in winter when the pasture is used because it will freeze. You are willing to build a stock tank to the east of Juniper Tank. You are not willing to consider installation of a pipeline. I agreed to take another look at this development and decide whether construction is necessary.
- Alma Flat Pasture fence reconstruction. I have evaluated potential alternate locations for this fence to determine if another alignment would meet the intent of the decision. No other alignment would provide the necessary control of livestock use in Alma Flat but retain access to water (Alma Flat Well) for both Cedar Breaks and Alma Flat pastures. This project is scheduled for completion by June 30, 2009 I expect you to complete this project as scheduled. Materials are on hand for this fence.. You may obtain a free use permit for posts and stays for this fence.
- Alma Flat corral reconstruction. This is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2010.

VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

Other items discussed during the annual validation meeting are presented below.

- Proposed projects that were not included in the 2002 Decision Notice.
 - You have a Permit Modification for the Wiley Morgan brush removal and road modification. You have completed the work. Please supply an accounting of your costs for this project so that I may close the permit modification.
 - I reviewed the draft modified proposed action for re-channeling of the San Francisco River with you during our meeting. I will continue to work on the Environmental Assessment as time permits. Once the new draft is ready, I will schedule a meeting with all involved parties to discuss the alternatives.
 - In 2008, you requested permission to re-align the fence that parallels (on the north side) the irrigation ditch in the Community Pasture to a location on the south side of the irrigation ditch access road. You agreed to bear the entire cost of this fence realignment. Cultural Resource clearance has been completed. I approve relocation of this fence as long as it is located within six feet of the south shoulder of the road and does not include significant amounts of riparian habitat or river floodplain within the Community Pasture. Please contact me to arrange for flagging of the fence line location and to obtain a permit modification.
 - You have requested permission to extend a pipeline from private land (Wiley Morgan) to supply water in River Pasture and to re-align fences to improve livestock management. I will review this proposal on the ground with you.

VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Keep track of conditions on your allotment and make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing. The forecast for the upcoming spring is dry and warm. If dry conditions continue through the summer growing season, a reduction in livestock numbers may be necessary. If livestock numbers are reduced, restocking of allotments to full numbers will not take place until forage plants regain vigor.

There are four areas of special management concern. These are listed below and marked on the enclosed map. Do not place salt or supplements within these areas

- Alma Flat Pasture in South Cedar Breaks. Shut off water at the well once grazing intensity levels have been achieved to encourage stock to move to other areas of the pasture.
- Southeast corner of the Community Pasture. As long as water is available in Section 20 tank or the Ditch Tank, do not provide water in this area.
- Keller Canyon and the easy country along the northeast fence in West CCC pasture. If water and forage are available on the south portion of the pasture and/or around Juniper Tank, do not provide livestock water from the pipeline.

VIII. PERMIT MODIFICATIONS

Permit modifications completed this grazing year:

- 07-01 Reconstruction of river fence washed out by flood.
- 07-03 North Cedar Breaks Pipeline Reconstruction
- 07-05 Reconstruction of river fence

Permit modifications currently issued:

- 07-02 CCC pipeline reconstruction from well to steel rim tank. I will close this modification as soon as you have supplied an accounting of your costs for this project.
- 07-04 Clear mesquite from road to Wiley Morgan pasture and push juniper and mesquite on portion of Forest in Wiley Morgan pasture. I understand you completed the work. I will complete the modification when I have received your accounting of your costs.

Range developments specified in the environmental analysis, as modified by the letter of instruction May 22, 2006, are high priority developments. Other range developments will be considered when the high priority developments have been completed and inspected.

IX. STUBBLE HEIGHT MONITORING OF KEY AREAS

You will be notified when monitoring is to be conducted on your allotment in order for you to be involved. This monitoring will be used to develop the grazing strategy for next year's Annual Operating Instructions. Monitoring will follow the protocol specified in the 2002 Decision.

Monitoring will consist of minimum stubble height measurements in key areas, or photo of the key area when key species growth is clearly greater than the minimum stubble height. Stubble heights are to be at least 1.2+ inches on "sod bound" Blue grama and 2.5+ inches on the "bunchgrass" Blue grama sites. Monitoring will be conducted shortly after cattle have been moved from the pasture. Other monitoring may be needed for any requested changes in the rotation schedule.

Stubble height measurements (monitoring) will be taken on the current year's growth of key species. The measured stubble height lengths will be averaged for each key plant species measured. The interval for measurement will be every other pace, with measurements taken on the closest key plant species.

An allowable use of 20% is assigned to woody obligate riparian plant species located in Keller Canyon. The measurement of woody riparian species will be conducted using the grazed/ungrazed plant method. The San Francisco River is excluded from livestock grazing.

If, during the year, you feel that the utilization level is approaching the minimum stubble height, you will need to take some action to stop grazing the area. There are many actions that can be taken, such as pasture moves, locating your livestock on different waters, etc. We will work with you in order to insure that any actions you may take are appropriate and do not compound the problem.

At a minimum, forest personnel will monitor key areas within two weeks before or after livestock leave a pasture. The percent grazing use and/or stubble height will be documented at that time. The following dates have been scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are strongly encouraged to participate in monitoring.

If any one key area in a pasture being grazed by livestock is below minimum stubble heights, livestock will be moved to another area of the pasture where stubble heights are greater than the minimum. In the event all remaining key areas in the grazed pasture are at minimum stubble heights, livestock will be required to move to the next scheduled pasture. The option to return livestock to a pasture that has received adequate plant re-growth will be considered if all resource objectives can be met.

Open and positive communications concerning all AOI content is encouraged. Feel free to contact Allen Graves or me if you have any questions or concerns