



**CARIBOU-TARGHEE NATIONAL FOREST
PALISADES RANGER DISTRICT
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO**

2011

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

FALL CREEK C&H ALLOTMENT

CONTACT US PRIOR TO STOCKING THE ALLOTMENT

PERMIT INFORMATION

The permitted season of use begins **June 6th** and ends **October 10th**.

Permits read as follows:

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Permitted Number</u>
Jason Sharp	70 head
Jess Croft & Sons	170 head
Kym Ferguson	136 head
Mike Ferguson or Jason Ferguson	135 head
Quarter Circle O	273 head
Quarter Circle O (Private)	<u>29</u> head cow/calf or 40 yearlings
Total	813 head

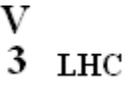
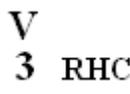
The Quarter Circle O has a permit for seven horses that are to be used for the management of the allotment. Limit the number of pack and saddle stock kept on the allotment to 7 head.

All cattle must be your owned livestock and branded with your registered brands that are listed in your Term Grazing permits.

The following brands are permitted on the allotment:

Jason Sharp;  RRC

Jess Croft & Sons;  LHC or  LHC or  LHC

Kym Ferguson;  LHC or  RHC

Mike or Jason Ferguson  LRC

Quarter Circle O;  LHC

GRAZING SCHEDULE

Due to the planned prescribed fire in the Camp Creek Unit. We will modify the schedule that is in the Allotment Management Plan. We will need to use this modified schedule for two years following the fire as well. The schedule for 2011 is:

Divide the herd at the start of the season and place half of the herd on the Gibson Unit and the other half on the Fourth of July Unit.

<u>Sequence</u>	<u>Units</u>
Graze 1 st	Gibson Creek and Fourth of July
Graze 2 nd	June Creek and Basin
Rest	Camp Creek

When Cattle are grazing the Gibson unit an electric fence will be installed along Fall Creek Road to restrict cattle from grazing June Creek bottom. One week prior to the cattle being moved from the Gibson unit the electric fence will be removed and the cattle allowed to graze the fenced area for that week.

It is likely that the June Creek Unit will reach proper use in the late summer before the end of the permitted season. Cattle from the June Creek unit can be moved to the Basin Unit at that time if adequate forage remains in the Basin Unit.

The riparian pasture on Fall Creek has been divided to create two pastures. The **upper pasture** is scheduled to be used in 2010 and the lower pasture is to be rested. Use the upper pasture while cattle are in the Basin Unit. When proper use is met in the riparian pasture the cattle will be moved out and the gates closed.

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT

The Allotment was well managed last season. The grazing plan rotation was followed as it was described in the 2010 Annual Operating Instructions(AOI). Cattle entered the Basin and Gibson Units first then moved to the Camp Creek and June Creek Units. Once proper use was met on the Camp Creek and June Creek Units cattle were moved back into the Basin Unit for the remainder of the season. Cattle did enter the allotment 8 days late due to range readiness but those days were made up at the end of the season.

Proper Use Criteria

These utilization guidelines apply to native and desirable nonnative vegetation as recorded at the end of the grazing period.

The following rates for forage utilization apply to the total amount of forage utilized. The use rates include wildlife grazing as well as domestic livestock. Once proper use of the forage is met the cattle will be moved to the next unit or off of the allotment.

Upland Forage Utilization

<u>Vegetation type</u>	<u>Percent Utilization</u>
Herbaceous vegetation including grasses	55%
Shrubs	35%

Riparian Forage Utilization and Stubble Height

- A. The 30% utilization levels of current year's growth for key woody plant species.
- B. A four inch (4") stubble height will be applied to key species along the Hydric Greenline (HGL) and a three inch (3") stubble height will be applied to key species in the Aquatic Influence Zones (AIZ).

Herding

Cattle will be moved in a timely fashion so the prescribed use rates are not exceeded. Cattle that tend to congregate or persist to graze riparian areas are to be moved first. These moves need to start before proper use is met. The cattle that are content to graze the uplands and are on good feed will be moved last. When proper use is met on the riparian areas all of the cattle need to be removed from the unit, even those that are staying in the uplands. The rider may need extra help from the permittees to clear all stragglers from a unit which has reached proper use. The unit will be periodically checked to insure all cattle have been moved to the next unit. Round-up in the

fall must start early enough so that all of the cattle are off the allotment at the end of your permitted season.

The capacity study that was completed in 2006 revealed how variable the forage production on this allotment is. The sage grass habitat type that dominates the allotment is highly influenced by soil moisture. Winter and spring moisture is necessary for the initial forage production and timely summer rains are essential to maintain that growth. Plan to leave the allotment when proper use is met. Keep in mind if we have a dry spring and summer the cattle may have to leave the allotment prior to the permitted off date of October 10th.

Salting

Salt will be used as a tool to improve livestock distribution. No salt will be placed within ¼ mile of water, or as far from water as practical. Also salt will not be placed next to roadways or forest system trails. Utilize areas where salt grounds will create the least impact on the land. Move salt blocks often or split the blocks in half to lighten the impact on any one location. Under no circumstance place more than one salt block at one location. Manage your salting late in the season so as little salt as possible is left after the cattle leave the allotment.

Disposal of Dead Livestock

Dead livestock need to be moved at least 100 feet from system roads and trails, and water sources.

Range Improvements

All range improvements must be maintained and in operation prior to cattle entering the unit. We would like to complement you on the improvement work that was accomplished last season. The reconstruction of the boundary fence in the Camp Creek Unit and the reconstruction of the Lightning Basin trough will help you management of the cattle. We have put in for a grant through the resource Advisory Council (RAC) to reconstruct and maintain the ponds on the allotment. If the grant is approved it will be available for the 2012 season. We will discuss what projects beyond your regular maintenance that you would like to complete this season at the spring meeting.

Allotment Monitoring

Permittees are encouraged to join the range specialist during allotment inspections. In an effort to maintain permittee involvement we are scheduling two inspection dates for the Fall Creek Allotment this season. The dates are July 14 and September 14. We will plan to meet at the corral at 9:00 AM on these dates. Be prepared to ride the units as necessary to discuss range management. We are not limited to these dates and changes can be made to get the most permittee involvement possible.

During management of the allotment this summer we would like you to document dates and livestock numbers as you enter and exit the various units. Also stubble height should be recorded as the livestock leave the units and general remarks pertaining to management of the unit. If you have a camera it would be good to take pictures. Photos should be taken of key areas of the unit at the time the livestock enter the unit and then again at the same locations at the time the livestock leave the unit.

COORDINATION & COOPERATION

Motorized Access

The Palisades Ranger District is closed to cross country motorized travel. As a grazing permittee you may be issued a motorized travel permit to allow you to travel cross country by motor vehicle to maintain range improvements (fences and water developments). Have the permit in your possession when traveling cross-country. This permit is good for no more than two trips per week. For situations where extended periods of cross-country travel are needed, such as fence construction, you will be issued a separate permit on a case-by-case basis.

The Caribou Subsection Travel Plan is currently being revised. Some proposals that may affect the management of your allotment include designating an ATV trail through Willow Springs and changing Rash Canyon Road to an ATV trail. No decisions have been made on the revision. If you have concerns on the travel plan submit them to the District Ranger.

Noxious Weeds

The Palisades Ranger District will again have a crew treating weeds on the District this summer. Continue to look for new weed infestations on your allotment. The following weeds are high priorities to control on the Fall Creek Allotment. Spotted Knapweed has been found in the June Creek Unit and the Gibson Unit. Leafy Spurge has been found in one location on the Basin Unit. Black Henbane has been identified near the blue gate and the Peterson Creek cattle guard. Musk thistle is becoming more wide spread throughout the allotment. Yellow toadflax is in the Basin Unit near the riparian pasture fence. You need to become familiar with these weeds and report any new infestations of them to us. Musk thistle can be treated by cutting plants at the root prior to setting seed. Spending a little time treating an infestation that consists only of a few plants may prevent larger infestations from damaging your range in the future.

Any hay or straw entering the National Forest must be certified "Weed Free".

Wolf Management

This allotment was the first on the Palisades Ranger District to experience problems with wolves in recent times. Continue to night pen your dogs and keep the area around cow camp clean so as not to encourage wolves to come into the camp area. You need to comply with the most current rules concerning wolf management. To receive the latest information on wolf management you can contact the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS). A news release with contact information from the USF&WS has been included in your grazing folder. Any problems with wolves will be reported to Wildlife Services as well as Palisades Ranger District as soon as possible.

Fire

All wildfires on the allotment will be evaluated and the appropriate management actions will be taken. Some wildfires will be managed to improve forest and ecosystem health. You will be notified if fires are being managed for resource benefits near your allotment.

Aspen Improvement

The District has a plan to improve the aspen forest type in the upper portions of the Fall Creek and Bear Creek drainages. The project will include the cutting of conifers and stimulation of aspen, to encourage aspen regeneration. This 24,777 acre project includes portions of the Fourth of July, Basin, and Camp Creek Units. The activities may include cutting conifer and aspen,

prescribed fire and root cutting with a tractor or dozer. Areas of the allotment which receive prescribed fire treatments will require rest from livestock grazing for two growing seasons.

Work will began in the Camp Creek Unit of this allotment last summer. Last summer crews fell conifer trees to produce red needled fuel. We will ignite the area this summer.

INFORMATION

In addition to this grazing plan the folder contains: An allotment map, a page of general grazing instructions and an Actual Use Record. Keep the record current with allotment information and return it to us at the end of the grazing season.

This Annual Operating Instruction Document is part of your Term Grazing Permit. If a situation develops that require changes to this plan contact the District Ranger and obtain approval prior initiating changes or deviating from these instructions. If you have any questions about the plan or the allotment in general, contact us. The phone number for the Idaho Falls Office is 523-1412.

This plan has been reviewed by the permittee and the Palisades Ranger District and in combination with the permit and Allotment Management Plan will be the guide for this allotment for the 2011 grazing season.

for Quarter Circle O Ranch

/s/ John R. Ferebauer
Permittee

2/25/2011
Date

/s/ Jestin Croft
Permittee

2/25/2011
Date

/s/ Jason Ferguson
Permittee

2/25/2011
Date

/s/ Jason Sharp
Permittee

2/25/2011
Date

/s/ Kym Ferguson
Permittee

2/25/2011
Date

/s/ Robbert Mickelsen
ROBBERT MICKELSEN
District Ranger

2/25/2011
Date