

**MEDICINE TREE  
GRAZING ALLOTMENT  
2010 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

**BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST  
DARBY RANGER DISTRICT**

## **ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION OBJECTIVES**

The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) are used in addition to your Term Grazing Permit to specify terms and conditions, and management goals for this allotment. It provides specific items such as direction for management of livestock, monitoring and communication procedures to and from district personnel. All requirements of your Term Grazing Permit remain in force, unless specifically noted in the AOI.

### **Grazing Permit for Christopherson Family Limited Partnership**

<b>Allotment</b>	<b>Permit</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Number Allotted</b>	<b>On Date</b>	<b>Off Date</b>	<b>AUM's*</b>
Medicine Tree	Term	Cow/calf	1.32	50	06/01	09/30	264

\* AUM is number allotted x factor x number of months grazed

### **1) GRAZING MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES, ANNUAL STANDARDS AND MANAGEMENT TACTICS**

**A)** The National Environmental Policy Act requires a review of each grazing allotment to allow grazing. An Environmental Assessment was completed on the Medicine Tree Grazing Allotment in 1995.

**B)** The season of use described above is an estimated time period that livestock will be allowed on the allotment. The season of use may be increased or decreased based on weather conditions, allowable use levels, range readiness, or other conditions affecting forage and water availability. Range readiness may be late this year due to heavy snow pack which could mean a late turn on date.

**C)** Please let Diane or Gil know of your plans to move cattle on and off the allotment. Please keep track of your actual use through the season so we may better understand patterns of use and your management efforts. For example, please note if you pull cattle off early. This will also qualify you for a credit on your next year's grazing bill.

**D)** Allowable use is the maximum level of grazing that is authorized to occur on the allotment. Removal or dispersment of cattle will be required if allowable levels are approached before the scheduled off date. Allowable use levels for your allotment are 50% utilization in summer range areas, and 35% in winter range. These standards are one of the important measures we use to determine how well an allotment is managed and whether the grazer is complying with the permit terms and the goals of management.

Diane and Gil are available to help you evaluate, at any time, when you are approaching the allowable use levels in any of the key areas.

The grazeable drainage bottoms are magnets for livestock concentration. Please make a strong effort to prevent over utilization of these sites. Most of our concerns about cattle impacts focus

on riparian areas and streams for a variety of reasons. We will try to establish cages this year on some key sites to help track forage utilization levels.

E) Keep units free of cattle after the off date.

F) Keep cattle out of Benson Gulch

## **2) 2010 SEASON UNIT STOCKING AND ROTATION**

Based on the Annual Application, the following numbers of livestock are authorized for the 2010 season;

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>On Date</b>	<b>Off Date</b>
X-P Pasture	50	Cow/calf	06/01	06/15
Bear Gulch	50	Cow/calf	06/16	08/15
Medicine Tree	50	Cow/calf	08/16	09/30

Dates are tentative depending upon how permittee distributes his cattle, proper use, water availability and climatic conditions.

## **3) ENTERING THE FOREST**

A) The current year's grazing fees will be paid at least 5 days before the on-date of the grazing season or prior to the time livestock enter the National Forest unless prior arrangements have been made in writing.

B) The permittee must notify the Forest Service when entering the Forest and/or moving cattle between pastures or off the Forest.

C) The Forest Service will confirm or adjust the on-date based on range readiness.

D) Improvements must be maintained prior to turn on.

## **4) NOXIOUS WEEDS**

Spotted knapweed is found throughout the allotment as well as some houndstongue. Roadsides treatments have been done in the past and will continue for as long as necessary.

## **5) GENERAL MANAGEMENT**

A) Before entering the allotment, a cattle count may be taken. The Forest Service should be notified in advance of the on-date, in order to be available at the time and date specified by the permittee.

**B)** Salt should be used to draw cattle into areas of low use and removed when areas have received proper use. At the end of the grazing season, all residual salt will be removed from salt grounds and the allotment. Salt only the units or areas where stock should be. Do not salt the whole allotment in advance; salt progressively with stock movement. Please do not place salt in areas where new tree plantations are being established. Salting on ridge tops and benches is recommended. Placement of salt within ¼ mile of live water will be avoided.

**C)** Riding will be necessary to disperse cattle and achieve more uniform use throughout the allotment.

**D)** Any concentrations of cattle in riparian zones shall be moved and dispersed into areas of low use. Cattle utilization in riparian zones will not exceed 35 % on big game winter range. The riparian pastures may be used temporarily as holding pastures while gathering, sorting, or moving.

## **6) RANGE IMPROVEMENTS**

Range improvements will be maintained annually to standards of original construction. Improvements must be maintained before stock reach the respective pastures, otherwise cattle will not be turned on or moved and may be requested removed from the allotment.

**A)** All work done with a dozer, tractor, backhoe, or other earth moving equipment must be approved in advance by the District Ranger.

**B)** Assigned water developments are to be maintained for livestock use during the planned period of use.

## **7) FOREST FIRE CONTROL**

The permittee and any managers are expected to take all reasonable precautions to prevent fires, to make diligent efforts to suppress fires, and to report all fires endangering NFS lands to the Darby Ranger District or the Bitterroot National Forest dispatcher at 363-7134.

All internal combustion engines used on the Forest will be equipped with a serviceable spark arrestor and/or muffler. Caution is also required when using vehicles off developed roads.

An ATV may be used from May 15 through October 15 to maintain fences and water developments as well as check on and move cattle.

A camp trailer may be parked on the grazing allotment during the grazing season so the permittee/herder can keep a close eye on the stock.

All burning requires prior approval by the District Ranger.

## **8) CONTACT**

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Range Program Leader

or

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