

**SKALKAHO  
GRAZING ALLOTMENT  
2010 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION**

**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 Daryl & Sherri Lee**

| <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> |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Skalkaho         | Term          | Cow/calf     | 1.32          | 45                     | 06/01          | 09/30           | 238           |

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

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

**A)** 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 the current pattern of cool spring temperatures. Plan for the possibility of a delay in turn on of a week or more should the pattern continue. We will apprise you

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

**C)** 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. The Newton – Brennan Gulch uplands fall within the winter range zone.

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 impact focus on riparian areas and streams for a variety of reasons.

**D)** Keep units free of cattle after the off date.

**E)** Keep cattle out of Coffee Gulch until they come back down the mountain in September. The area will be used as a catch pasture only at the end of the season.

**F)** Use in Newton-Brennan pasture will be kept to a minimum.

**G)** Please notify the Forest Service when you find trespass cattle on the allotment, namely north of Buckhorn Saddle in the Gird Creek area. We are documenting all sightings.

**H)** Notify Forest Service law enforcement, Kayla Jaquith at 821-4251, of any keggers and off road ATV and motorcycle use within the allotment.

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

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>                        |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| Newton/Brennen | Rest           | Cow/calf     | Minimal use    | ***                                    |
| McCartney/Gird | 70             | Cow/calf     | 06/07          | 09/14                                  |
| Coffee*        | 70             | Cow/calf     | 09/15          | Gather drift off of this unit promptly |

\* Keep utilization on this unit minimal – incidental

Dates are tentative depending upon how permittee distributes cattle, proper use, water availability and climatic conditions. Cattle may have to leave the Forest earlier than planned if utilization levels are met before the scheduled off date. Although spring has been cool and wet, low snow pack this past winter could cause conditions to dry out quickly when summer heat hits. Therefore, it may be necessary to pull cattle off the allotment early.

## **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)** Range improvements must be maintained prior to turn on.

#### **4) NOXIOUS WEEDS**

Spotted knapweed is found throughout the allotment. Roadsides were treated in recent years and will continue as needed. Leafy Spurge is found scattered in some drainages throughout the allotment and has also been treated over the last several years. Treatments will continue for as long as necessary. Houndstongue is also found in the lower drainages of the allotment and has been treated in Coffee Gulch. It will continue to be treated over the next several years.

Nearly 1,000 acres were treated with herbicide by aerial application for spotted knapweed control in the Newton-Brennan-Coffee Pastures in 2008. Additional ground based treatments of less than 100 acres occurred in lower Coffee Gulch and west of Tenderfoot Gulch in 2009. In 2010, a joint aerial application project may occur on several hundred backlog acres in upper Coffee Gulch and the southwest portion of the Gird Pasture. We will coordinate with you on these treatments.

#### **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.

#### **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 for removal 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.

All burning requires prior approval by the District Ranger.

## **8) CONTACT**

**Gil Gale**  
Range Program Leader  
or  
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Rangeland Management Specialist

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