

2010

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS (AOI'S)

NUTRIAS ALLOTMENT #00114

Tony, Kathy and Christina Esquibel

CARSON NATIONAL FOREST
CANJILON RANGER DISTRICT

/s/Craig L Newman for
John P Moore III,
District Ranger

3/15/2010
Date

Annual Operating Instructions

AUTHORIZATION

You are permitted to graze 110 head of cattle for the grazing season of 7/01 to 10/30, you are authorized to graze the following in 2010:

Table 1 - Permitted & Authorized Use

<i>Number of Cattle Permitted</i>	<i>Number of Cattle Authorized</i>	<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Grazing Period</i>
110	110	Minita	07/01 – 08/16
110	110	Pelada	08/17 – 09/27
110	110	Lomita	09/28 – 10/30
		Banco	REST

Dry conditions may cause utilization rates to be reached sooner than the planned dates. Please ensure that you help in moving the cattle. It's critical that utilization rates are maintained as a part of drought management. Movement decisions will be made in cooperation with you and based on the utilization of key forage species and key areas as outlined in the Annual Operating Instructions.

You must continue salting practices to draw the cattle away from the meadows. It is in your best interest to fully distribute your cattle throughout the entire range. We monitor at the key areas and if these areas are fully used then you will be moving your cattle ahead of schedule and perhaps headed home sooner than your ending or off date you should also move your salt blocks often to reduce impacts to salt grounds.

The rotation schedule described above can be changed by the District Ranger when circumstances such as lack of water or overuse occur within the pasture. You may propose changes of pastures outside of the above rotation schedule in coordination with this office. A written justification should be submitted by the permittee ten days prior to proposed change date to this office before a proposal to change the approved rotation schedule will be acted upon by the District Ranger. The decision made by the District Ranger will be based upon the condition of the range, recommendations of the range staff, and the needs of the permittee.

If you decide to move your cattle off of the grazing allotment early or put on reduced numbers resulting in less head months grazed than the amount paid for, you may want to apply for a credit/refund of unused grazing fees. In order to do so, you will need to apply in writing for the credit within two weeks of incurring the credit/refund or by November 1, 2010, whichever comes first. This keeps the numbers accurate and allows for Ranger approval and more accurate accounting of grazing fees the following season.

All cattle should be moved off the allotment by the last day of the grazing season. The last day of the grazing season is not the day to open gates and allow cattle to drift home. Anticipate moves in advance and plan accordingly. We understand that a few cows will be hard to catch. We ask that you make a concerted effort and let us know if you have any cows left on the grazing allotment after the end of the grazing season.

ALLOWABLE USE

The scheduled rotation, grazing season, and livestock numbers are indicated in Section I of this Annual Operating Instructions. Adjustments in numbers, rotation schedule, or season of use will be made if allowable use standards are exceeded. To achieve the desired allowable use, it is important to have proper livestock distribution. The maximum allowable use is:

Ponderosa pine, aspen, and mixed conifer 20 - 40%

2010 Allotment Objectives

1. Authorized reductions in time and numbers of livestock may influence flexibility of livestock management in the deferred grazing system.
2. Management goal is to improve consistent communication/documentation of actual use to USFS. USFS is requesting record of actual use, are to be submitted to the USFS at the end of the 2010 grazing season,.
3. Maintain or improve current range condition of the Nutrias grazing allotment by fence maintenance, herding, riding, salting and good stewardship practices.
4. It is highly recommended that the 2010 rotation schedule follow a one herd deferred grazing system.
5. Nutrias permittees will allow only the numbers, kind and class of livestock on the allotment during the period specified in Part 1 hereof or the annual Bill for Collection, including any modifications made as provided for in Section 8 (c). Part 3 item 4. Permittees will notify the District Ranger at least 5 days before livestock enter National Forest Service lands.

FORAGE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The proper utilization of forage is a critical factor in livestock management on the Nutrias Allotment. We will be checking levels of use during the grazing season. We will be visiting the allotment to ensure that utilization levels are within recommended levels. This year we may establish photo points and/or measure stubble height within key areas on key grass species to determine utilization. Grazing permittees are invited to accompany Forest Service range staff in the field while these range condition evaluations are being made. Within the Nutrias Allotment the key grass species will be:

Table 2 - Key Forage Species

<i>Pasture Name</i>	<i>Key Forage Species</i>	<i>Utilization Guidelines</i>	<i>Stubble Height</i>
----------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------

All Pastures in Nutrias Allotment	Arizona Fescue	20-40% For all Species	6"-7"
	Thurber Fescue		6"-7"
	Kentucky Bluegrass		2"-4"
	Red Top		4"-6"
	Sedges		3"-5"

MONITORING

Both the Forest Service and the permittee are responsible for monitoring use and stubble height on the allotment to ensure that proper use levels are not exceeded. If areas within a pasture or the pasture as a whole begin to approach the identified stubble heights, actions will be taken to limit additional forage use. We are especially concerned with use levels in riparian areas and canyon bottoms where cattle tend to concentrate use on palatable feed. We have identified key areas to be monitored on this allotment. See the new attached map. The primary grass species on this allotment and approximate stubble heights associated with 20-40% use are as outlined above.

Forage use level should be monitored periodically by permittees to aid in determining when livestock should be moved between pastures. Forest Service personnel will be checking within each grazed pasture during the scheduled grazing period. If use within that key area is approaching allowable stubble heights then the remaining key areas will also be monitored and the pasture inspected to determine overall use patterns. This information will be used to determine if cattle need to be re-distributed within the pasture or moved from the pasture.

The Forest Service may conduct inspections on the grazing allotment during the on-going grazing period as time and personnel availability allows. Monitoring items such as distribution patterns, range readiness, cattle numbers, forage use levels, salting practices, and condition of improvements will be evaluated. The range readiness inspection will determine whether range vegetation and soils are ready for grazing. The permittees are encouraged to participate in these inspections.

Table 3 lists last year's utilization rates. Banco and Lomita pasture had some over use on the Kentucky bluegrass and the Arizona Fescue. The other species were within guidelines. Both of these species are highly palatable and grazing animals will continue to select these species late into the season and some of this over use may be attributed to elk.

Table 3 2009 END OF SEASON MONITORING

Pasture	Date	Species	% Utilization
Banco	10/28/09	Kentucky Bluegrass	42%
		Western Wheatgrass	38%
Lomita	10/28/09	Arizona Fescue	43%
		Timothy	37%

IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of existing range improvements is critical to the proper management of your allotment. In order for rotation schedules to work, all fences must be in good condition. All fences in the pasture you will be using first must be up and functioning and any fences your neighbor is counting on in their first pasture. Then, before you move your cattle to the next pasture, the fences in that pasture must be maintained and in good condition prior to cattle being allowed to enter the pasture. As you know the livestock grazing program has come under the scrutiny of the public. It is important that we demonstrate the ability to manage your livestock. This means that the cattle should be in the pastures scheduled for grazing during the times they are scheduled to be there. We would like for you to emphasize heavy maintenance on the internal fences in between Lomita/Minita and Lomita/Banco Pastures.

SPECIAL MITIGATION MEASURES

In order to conform with Amendment of Forest Plans and the final U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "Biological Opinion for Ongoing Livestock Grazing Activities on Allotments" which determine a No Affect and/or May affect Not Likely to Adversely Affect on your allotment, the following conditions must be met

Forage Utilization

Forage use by grazing animals will be maintained at or above a condition which assures recovery and continued existence of threatened and endangered species. In order to attain this standard, the above site specific key areas and key forage utilization standards have been developed for the Nutrias Allotment.

Mineral Supplements/Salt Blocks

Mineral supplement/Salt block sites will be regularly rotated to reduce trampling and grazing impacts to vegetation. Cutting salt blocks in half before distributing them on the range is an easy way to avoid having to move them, as they get used before they need to be moved.