

RIO PUEBLO/MIRANDA ALLOTMENT #404
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2010

The annual meeting for the Rio Pueblo Allotment was held on April 17, 2010, at the District Office in Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were Ernesto Gonzales, Benjamin Cruz, Dorothy Gonzales, Lily Fernandez from the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association. Dorothy's daughter Loretta accompanied her; and Glen D. and Steve L. Romero accompanied Lily Fernandez. Sean Kelly represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed improving drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. Conditions for this year appear positive as seen so far this winter. The full permitted numbers could be grazed this year and any non-use will be considered personal convenience non-use. This is the 4th year of personal convenience Non-use.

Table 1- Permitted and Authorized use for Grazing.

| 1. Permittee | Number and Kind | Authorized Number and Kind |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Rio Pueblo Grazing Association | 117 cow/calf-155 cow/calf | 115 cow/calf |
| Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin L. Cruz | (30-40 cow/calf) | (40 cow/calf, 2 bull) |
| Abran E. Fernandez Estate | (29-39 cow/calf) | (0 cow/calf) |
| Mr. & Mrs. Ernesto A. Gonzales | (25-33 cow/calf) | (33 cow/calf) |
| Dorothy K. Gonzales | (25-34 cow/calf) | (34 cow/calf) |
| Floyd J. Romero | (8-9 cow/calf) | (4 cow/calf, 1 steer and 1 bull) |

2. Season of Use

06/01 - 09/30 (122 days)

Table 2-Pasture Rotation

| <u>3. Pasture Rotation</u> | <u>Planned</u> | | <u>Actual use</u> | <u>utilization %</u> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pasture | Estimated Dates | Estimated Time | | |
| McGaffey | 06/01 – 06/30 | 30 days | | |
| Vallecitos | 07/01 – 07/31 | 31 days | | |
| Telephone | 08/01 - 08/31 | 31 days | | |
| Amole | 08/31 – 09/30 | 30 days | | |
| Middle and Ranchos allot. | rest | 0 days | | |
| La Junta (Benjie) | 09/15 – 09/30 | 0 days | | |

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Rio Pueblo allotment which means that the season of use, numbers grazed and rotation schedules may be adjusted throughout the grazing season based on resource conditions. Range improvements, ie. Fences will be maintained prior to moving to a different pasture.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, pasture division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattleguards, and other range structural improvements must be maintained prior to the permittees going on to the allotment.

5. Other Items of Discussion

The 2009 grazing season went well overall. Permittees took a voluntary 51% reduction and grazed only 58 head. Production of forage was good. Forage utilization, was estimated in key areas and use was acceptable in all units.

There was a discussion again this year on the application of the rules for personal convenience non-use. This will be the fourth year of partial personal convenience non-use by the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association. Permittees will be stocking to within 90% of the low end of their range of permitted numbers. It is the intent of the Forest Service range program to allocate resources to entities who intend to use them.

A new cattleguard was installed in 2006 between the Olla Ranchos allotment and the La Cueva unit along FR 442. Permittees will need to attach the fence to the wing posts.

Several times in 2009 Rio Pueblo cattle got into the Mica Mine property of the Picuris Pueblo. The Picuris have completed extensive seeding for reclamation and they were very disappointed. Sean Kelly put Simon Cade from Picuris in contact with Floyd Romero, who responded by removing the cattle. Cade told Kelly that the Pueblo would be pursuing reimbursement, but Kelly heard nothing more after contacting Floyd Romero.

Utilization guidelines for 2010 are 40% of available annual forage in key use areas and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Forage utilization will be measured in key use areas within the allotment.

The grazing fee this year is \$1.35 per head month for cattle.

Permittees and FS will look at range together to determine range readiness and on-date.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. A decision is expected to be signed by the Forest Supervisor during this grazing season. If permittees need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required maintenance on fences and other range improvements, checking that gates are closed, checking on cattle health and location, and placing salt and mineral supplements; the Forest Service should be able to accommodate with a written letter issued to the permittees.

Grazing instructions for 2010 are the same as in 2009.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2010:

1. Reconstruction of McGaffey trick tank. Needs new trough and possibly pipeline from storage tank to trough.
2. Fence reconstruction between the Middle and La Cueva units.
3. Reconstruction of spring developments; Tio Maes, Indian Creek, and Apache Spring

The Borrego timber sale may proceed this summer in the Telephone pasture.

Forest Service would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management (either season or numbers) so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittee.