2010 Annual Operating Instructions

# Tensleep Canyon C&H Allotment

and

# Antelope Pasture, Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment

Powder River Ranger District

Bighorn National Forest

District Ranger _____ Date _____

Permittee _____ Date _____

TENSLEEP CANYON C&H ALLOTMENT
Year 2010 Annual Operating Instructions

Permitted and Authorized for 2010:

| Tensleep Canyon C&H Allotment Permittee | LS Kind | LS Class | Permitted Use | | | **Requested Use for 2010** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | LS # | From | Use To | LS # | From | Use To |
| Carter Livestock Inc. | Cattle | Mature | 175 | 07/01 | 09/30 | Refer to Grazing Application | | |
| **Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment Permittee** | **LS Kind** | **LS Class** | **Permitted Use** | | | **Requested Use for 2010** | | |
| | | | LS # | From | Use To | **LS #** | **From** | **Use To** |
| Carter Livestock Inc. | Cattle | Mature | 102 | 06/23 | 10/08 | Resource Protection Non-Use | | |

- Before Entering the Allotment

I suggest that you review your term grazing permit and the following Annual Operating Instructions, and ask questions if any portion is not clearly understood.

Year 2010 grazing fees are $1.35/head month, and must be paid before livestock can be turned onto the Forest. Let Scott or Silas know the date and number of livestock entering the National Forest and, upon request, provide for having stock counted.

2010 Planned Rotation:

| Pasture | 2008 | 2009 | **2010** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Dry Tensleep C&H** | | | |
| Antelope Pasture | Early use | Late use | **Early use** |
| **Tensleep Canyon C&H** | Late use | Early use | **Late use** |
| Willow Unit North | 2 | 1 | **2** |
| Willow Unit South | 3 | 2 | **3** |
| Above the Highway | 2 | 2 | **2** |
| Below the Highway | 1 | 1 | **1** |
| South Rim | Late use | Late use | **Late use** |

- Entering the Allotment

The turn on date for Tensleep Canyon C&H Allotment is tentatively authorized for July 1. Complete resource protection non-use has been granted for the Antelope Pasture of Dry Tensleep C&H Allotment in order to facilitate prescribed burning this fall. Plan to turn livestock onto the allotment on or after these dates unless you feel that forage is not ready to be grazed, or unless you have been notified that delays are necessary to allow for further plant development. The actual date livestock may be turned onto the allotment depends on range readiness. The value of animal months lost due to a delay for forage development may be credited against next year's fees, if requested by the end of the calendar year.

Indicators to determine range readiness are soil and vegetation conditions. Rangeland is generally ready for grazing when soil has become firm after winter and early spring precipitation, and when plants have reached a stage of growth at which grazing may begin under a specific management plan without long-lasting damage. This occurs when grasses are headed out, forbs are in full bloom, and shrubs are leaved out. Livestock should not be turned on until all portions of the first pasture of a rotation are determined to be "ready", and subsequent pastures in a rotation will be "range ready" when their scheduled grazing use is to occur.

- Resource Guidelines

Resource guidelines are described in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines, and in the Bighorn Forest Plan. The allowable use guidelines for utilization of the current year's forage are listed in the following tables. These guidelines are applicable at the time the livestock leave the unit and include use by both livestock and wildlife. Tensleep Canyon and Dry Tensleep C&H Allotments are managed under "Rotation" grazing

strategies, and existing rangeland condition is considered "satisfactory". Existing rangeland condition determinations may be revised as trend assessments are conducted.

| Maximum allowable use guidelines (percent utilization by weight of forage species) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Type Of Management | *Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Growing Season Long | 30 | 10 |
| Fall and Winter | 45 | 15 |
| Rotation | **45** | 35 |
| Deferred Rotation | 50 | 40 |
| Rest Rotation | 50 | 40 |

| Riparian Vegetation Residue Guidelines | | |
|---|---|---|
| Season Of Use | Existing Rangeland Condition | |
| | *Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| Early Use Pasture<br>Livestock leave pasture prior to 08/01 | **5 inches** | 5 inches |
| Summer & Fall Use Pasture<br>Livestock leave pasture after 08/01 | **5 inches** | 7 inches |
| *Satisfactory is defined here as meeting or moving toward desired vegetative condition and unsatisfactory is defined as not meeting desired vegetative condition or undetermined. Vegetation residue guidelines are expressed in terms of the inches of stubble height to be left, measuring longest leaf of designated Carex species, after livestock use. In this case, all wide leaved sedges have been designated, subject to update. | | |

Moves between pastures are dependent upon forage utilization levels and other resource objectives being met for a pasture. When it is determined that further use and impacts in a pasture will exceed allowable use levels, livestock are required to be moved to the next pasture in the scheduled rotation, or off National Forest if they are already in the last pasture. It is your responsibility to see that livestock are managed to best utilize available forage while assuring guidelines are not exceeded. Since precipitation, forage production levels, and other factors change from year to year and livestock utilization patterns vary, this will require monitoring by you and/or your rider throughout the season.

Livestock use beyond allowable guidelines could result in an administrative action in subsequent years, such as an adjustment to the season of use, in order to allow plants a chance to recover and restore root reserves.

- Monitoring

The primary emphasis for monitoring should be placed on measuring stubble height in riparian areas, and estimating percent by weight of forage removed on upland sites, as described above. If issues are raised indicating the need to monitor aspen, stream banks, or willows, we prefer to jointly determine appropriate protocols and locations. Permittees are no longer required to submit annual stubble height data; however, it is strongly recommended that you continue monitoring. Any monitoring data you collect and submit will be maintained in permanent files.

To facilitate monitoring actual use, and to avoid the need to measure utilization on all suitable range, monitoring will be done using a key area concept. "Key" areas are generally those areas of a pasture which livestock have the tendency to go to and graze first. If utilization in these "key areas" does not exceed allowable utilization standards, then use in the rest of the unit will most likely not exceed standards either. This is not to imply that standards need only be met in "key areas". Allowable use standards apply to all suitable range on the allotment. Key areas may be revised as needed.

I encourage you to contact Scott or Silas should you have any questions, want assistance with measurements, or need monitoring forms. In order to assure your results accurately reflect livestock use, all measurements should be completed within 7 days of the time livestock are removed from the pasture. Be sure to record the date measurements are taken, and the name of the data collector(s). Photos of the transect showing its general location and actual forage remaining will support your numerical documentation. The Forest Service will conduct spot checks throughout the grazing season, and I encourage your participation.

- Key Areas

Key areas serve as a monitoring and evaluation point for the degree of grazing use occurring in each pasture. Properly selected key areas give an indication of the overall acceptability of current grazing management to meet all resource objectives.

| *Pasture* | *Key Area Location* |
|---|---|
| Ten Sleep Canyon C&H Allotment | |
| | Riparian area along both forks of Dry Tensleep Creek: Sections 1 & 12 T48N, R87W. |
| | NWNW Section 18, T48N, R86W: Riparian Area around ponds. |
| | NENE Section 12, T48N, R87W. |
| Dry Ten Sleep C&H Allotment | |
| Unit #4, Antelope | NESW Section 36 T49N, R87W<br>NESW Section 35 T49N, R87W<br>SWSW Section 36 T49N, R87W<br>SESE Section 36 T49N, R87W: about 150 yards north of the Dry Tensleep/Tensleep Canyon Allotment Boundary Fence |

I encourage you to keep thorough notes while taking measurements and making observations during the grazing season. Should your data indicate changes might be needed in key area locations, contact Scott or Silas to discuss adjustments.

- Maintenance of Improvements

Term grazing permits state that permittees will maintain assigned range improvements to standards of repair, orderliness, and safety acceptable to the Forest Service. A complete list of the improvements and designated maintenance responsibility is included in Part 3 of your term grazing permit. Maintenance must be completed prior to the time livestock enter the pasture in which the improvement is located each year, or in the case of allotment boundary fences, prior to livestock entering the pasture on either side of the fence. Materials from abandoned range improvements or maintenance activities must be removed from the Forest. The minimum maintenance standard for improvements is as follows:

Wire Fences: Fences are to be in an upright, vertical position with all broken wires repaired, wires tight and properly spaced, and all corner posts, braces, line posts, steel posts, stays, loops, staples, etc. replaced as needed. Gates are to be tight enough to prevent sagging but must be able to be easily opened and closed by the general public. Any 'let-down' fences for which you are responsible should be let down after grazing use, for the winter.

Buck and Pole Fences, and Pole-top Fences: Fences must be in an upright, serviceable position. Bucks that are spreading and lowering the overall height of the fence must be stabilized with a bottom brace or replaced. All poles must be fastened to bucks or posts, and all broken or rotting poles and bucks are to be replaced.

Springs and Stock Tanks: Inlet and overflow pipes are to be free of crimps or breaks, completely buried or otherwise protected from livestock, and capable of delivering water to and away from spring boxes and tanks. Over-flow outlets on stock tanks shall prevent excessive water spill in the immediate vicinity (30 ft) of the tank. Tanks are to be level, completely surrounded by dry soil, gravel, or rock, and easily accessible by both cows and calves. Livestock barriers over tanks must be sturdy and poles and planks must be in good condition and fastened in place.

Reservoirs and Stock Ponds: Any fill material used to create a dam must maintain sufficient vegetative cover to prevent erosion. The emergency spillway, if present, must also maintain sufficient vegetative cover to prevent erosion. Livestock travel routes must be planned such that trailing does not generate additional erosion in and around the reservoir. Erosion damage that does occur will be repaired as soon as is practicable. If ponds are not sealing well, bentonite or other sealers should be used to reduce seepage. Deeper reservoirs reduce evaporation loss over shallow reservoirs; as reservoirs silt in, they should be cleaned.

Stock Pipelines:
Maintain cover over buried pipelines, and maintain backfill around structures. Avoid travel over shallow buried pipelines. Repair any damage to above-ground and on-ground pipelines immediately. Remove all foreign debris that hinders system operation. Drain the system and components soon following periods of use. Maintain erosion protection at outlets. Protect the area adjacent to the trough with gravel or cover. Be sure that any outlet pipe is free and not causing erosion.

2010 Range Improvements:

| Improvement # | Improvement Name | Project Description |
|---|---|---|
| 507-102 | Willow Spring Pipeline and Tank | Pipeline is available for pick up at Hunter Work Center. Exact location to be determined early season with RC. Location of end tank has been established; may consider additional piping to Sleep Hollow Reservoir. |
| 502-097 | Antelope Pipeline | Replace in 2010 if the Forest Service has the funding. |
| 502-106 | Zaybrook Overflow Pipeline | Replace in 2010 if the Forest Service has the funding. Project is supported by both Dry Tensleep Allotment permittees. |

Grazing permit modifications for cooperative range improvements (form FS-2200-113) must be completed prior to expenditure of Forest Service funds for project work. As materials for these projects become available, these activities can be coordinated through Scott or Silas. Contact us for off-road permits, if needed to complete improvement projects.

- Salting Practices

The proper use of salt can be used as a management tool to help achieve proper utilization. The following guidelines must be followed when salting unless you have been given direction by a Forest Officer to do otherwise:

a) Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
b) Salt should be placed between water developments, and at least 1/4 mile from water if possible.
c) Salt away from small parks, trails, Forest Service roads, highways, and areas of concentrated public use. This distance should be at least 300 feet, where feasible.
d) Salt should be placed in rock outcrops, mature timber stands (other than aspen), dense sagebrush, or other sites where salting will avoid harming the vegetation and soil resources.
e) Change your salt location at least every year and preferably every time salt is placed. Moving salt blocks at least 100 feet can prevent an area from becoming abused from salt placement year after year.
f) Remove salt from an area when proper use is reached.
g) If only one salting site is used in a pasture: There should be no more than three blocks or tubs located at the salting site; and the salting site should be moved every 10 days.
h) If more than one salting site is used: There should be no more than two blocks or tubs located at the salting site; the salting sites should be located at least ¼ mile apart, if possible; and the salting sites should be moved every 15 days.

- Other

Any dead livestock shall be moved to a location greater than 200 feet from water and out of view from roads or trails. Much of the allotment is closed to off-road travel. Permittees are required to abide by all Forest road restrictions and closures, as are all users of the public lands. No exceptions will be made without prior written approval. Documentation on the enclosed Annual Use Report is required. Return it to the Powder River Ranger District Office by December 31, 2010.