

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2010

SHELL BASIN C&H ALLOTMENT

MEDICINE WHEEL/PAINROCK DISTRICTS

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

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District Ranger

Date

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Permittee

Date

SHELL BASIN C&H ALLOTMENT  
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

**A. Before Entering the Allotment**

1. Review all clauses of your term grazing permit and the information contained within this Annual Operating Instructions. Be sure to ask questions if any portion of your grazing permit or these operating instructions is not clearly understood.
2. The current year's grazing fees will be paid before the opening date of the grazing season.
3. Where applicable, regulations for ear tagging (for counting purposes) will be adhered to. All ear tags will be readable and consecutively numbered, with no duplicate numbers. The permittee will inform the Forest Officer administering the grazing permit of the date and number of livestock entering the National Forest and will provide for having the animals counted by a Forest Officer prior to or as the animals enter the allotment.

**B. Entering the Allotment**

1. The opening date for the allotment is tentatively scheduled for July 11th. The actual date livestock may enter the allotment will depend on range readiness. Unless notified by a Forest Officer that a delay will be necessary to allow for further forage development, you may plan to place livestock on the allotment on the entry date shown on your 2010 Bill for Collection. The grazing fee must be paid prior to livestock turnout.

**C. Permitted Numbers and Pasture Rotation**

1. Permitted Numbers

Permittee	Permitted #	Date on-off	Permitted AUMs	Actual Numbers/AUMs
John Mercer, Inc.	300 cattle 7 horses	7/11-9/20 2.3671 Months	604 AMs 9 AMs	300 cow/calf

2. Planned Pasture Rotation (2010)

Unit	on-off date	No. Cattle	No. Days
Shell Creek	7/11-9/20	100 cattle	
Moraine Creek	7/11-9/20	200 cattle	

Moraine Creek Rotation (North side to South side)  
Shell Creek Rotation (South side to North side)

**D. Allowable Use Guidelines**

The actual turn on date will be dependent upon range readiness and moves between pastures will be dependent upon **forage utilization**. The stubble height guidelines contained in the Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines document will be followed. The allowable use guidelines for utilization of the current year's growth by livestock and wildlife combined during the grazing season will be as follows:

Upland Range Sites-----	A. Maximum of 40% of current year's growth in first used pastures. (Prior to August 1). B. Maximum of 50% of current year's growth in all other pastures. (After August 1).
Riparian Range Sites-----	A. Average 5" inch (using longest leaf length measure) stubble height on wide leaved carex species remaining if livestock leave a pasture prior to August 1.* B. Average 7" inch (using longest leaf length measure) stubble height on wide leaf carex species remaining if livestock leave a pasture after August 1.*
Aspen and Cottonwood Stands	A. Average 4" inch stubble height of all grass species within boundaries of aspen or cottonwood stands when livestock leave the pasture.
Willow	No more than 30 percent use on terminal buds

\*All stubble height guidelines stated above are the minimum required when transect measurements record the longest leaf length of all leaves readily available for livestock grazing for each plant measured. Leaves tramped in the mud, protected by willows, or otherwise unavailable to be grazed are not included in the measurements.

Livestock should be moved to the next pasture or off the National Forest, if in the last pasture, when further use will exceed the stated allowable use. It is your responsibility to manage your livestock within each pasture to assure these guidelines are not exceeded. This will require frequent monitoring of the vegetation by you and /or your allotment rider and not making pasture moves based on calendar dates.

It is important to note that the allowable use guidelines shown above apply to all suitable range within the allotment. To assist you with your responsibilities of monitoring the actual use, all monitoring measurements will be done using a key area concept. The key areas are generally those areas livestock have the tendency to graze first when placed in a pasture. In most cases, the key area will include both riparian and upland range sites. It is very important to keep close watch on all range sites within the key area and plan livestock moves when use is nearing the guideline on either the upland or riparian sites.

Permittee collection and submission of carex stubble height data is voluntary but requested by this office. Permittee monitoring program is designed to give permittees a trigger point to help determine when livestock should be removed from a pasture. You are still responsible to

manage your livestock to assure that allowable use guidelines are met in all areas of the allotment. I strongly encourage you to continue to complete stubble height monitoring in all key areas with riparian plant communities, to assure actual use does not go beyond the guidelines stated above. I have enclosed copies of the data forms for your use should you decide to continue your monitoring. Any forms voluntarily submitted to our office will be placed in the allotment monitoring folder.

When conducting stubble height monitoring, I recommend you read enough transects to obtain a representative sample of the residual leaf length of the dominant sedges. The number of transects you need to read will depend on the size of the area and the variances of use levels. One transect may be sufficient in a narrow riparian area where use does not vary. Two or more may be necessary in a larger riparian area if you detect utilization varies significantly within 3 feet of the water's edge, compared to the remainder of the area. Photos of the transect and its general location are not required but would be helpful to substantiate your documentation. The Forest Service will also be conducting spot checks and transect measurements of key areas throughout the grazing season to verify guidelines are being met.

#### **E. Key Areas**

Key areas serve as monitoring and evaluation points for the degree of grazing use. Properly selected key areas give an indication of the overall acceptability of current grazing management to meet all resource objectives. Following is a list of key areas for each pasture. These areas may be moved or redefined in future years if monitoring results indicate a change is necessary.

1. The area in the southwest corner of the allotment from the Wilderness boundary on Shell Creek down stream to the gauging station then south to the Boulder Basin Road.
2. The riparian area and adjacent uplands in the bowl north of the High Trail on Porcupine Creek.
3. The riparian area from the diversion ditch on Buckley Creek to where the Boulder Basin road crosses Buckley Creek.
4. Mail Creek riparian and the riparian area along the drainage containing the Buckskin Ed Mine.
5. The lower meadow on Moraine Creek.

#### **F. Maintenance of Improvements**

Part 2, Clause 8(i) of your term grazing permit states "... the permittee will maintain all range improvements, whether private or Government owned, that are assigned for maintenance 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. The maintenance of each improvement 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. The minimum maintenance required will be as follows:

Springs All tanks are to be level, completely surrounded by dry ground and easily accessible by both cows and calves. The 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 tanks without any water spilling in the immediate vicinity (20-30 ft.) of the tank. Livestock barriers over tanks must be sturdy and all poles and planks must be in good condition and nailed/bolted in place.

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.

Buck and Pole 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 nailed to bucks and all broken or rotting poles and bucks are to be replaced.

**G. Planned Range Improvement Projects:**

No range improvements are scheduled for the 2010 season.

**H. General**

1. The attached allotment use form should be completed at the end of the grazing season and returned to this office no later than October 30.
2. The permittees and their employees will do all in their power to prevent and suppress fires on or in the vicinity of the National Forest and to report promptly all fires that they may discover which they cannot suppress.
3. All livestock carcasses are to be moved at least 100 feet from the high water line of streams and lakes, springs, and out of view of roads, trails, recreation sites, and areas of concentrated public use.
4. Horses to be used on the allotment and kept in the horse pastures will be charged at the same rate as cattle. These horses will be broke and usable, for use in the management of this allotment. Application for horse use will be made each year prior to the beginning of the grazing season.

## **I. Salting Practices:**

Salt can be used as a management tool to help you achieve proper utilization. The following are guidelines that should be used when placing salt on your allotment:

1. Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
2. Salt should be placed between water developments and at least 1/4 mile from water if at all possible. Salting near water just encourages cattle to stay nearby and should seldom be practiced.
3. Salt away from small parks, trails, roads and areas of concentrated public use. Salt should be placed in areas of rock outcrops, mature timber (other than aspen), or areas of dense sagebrush where the general public will not easily see it. Do not salt in aspen stands.
4. Change your salt location at least every year and preferably, every time salt is placed within a pasture. Moving salt blocks 50-100 feet can prevent an area from becoming abused from salt placement year after year.
5. Remove salt from an area when proper use is reached. (Note: If you cannot prevent livestock from continuing to utilize the area, it will be necessary to move to the next pasture.)

ACTUAL USE RECORD 2010

MEDWHEEL/PAINTROCK

**SHELL BASIN  
ALLOTMENT**

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

ACTUAL USE

Pasture	Number of cattle	Date on pasture	Date off

Losses: Numbers by age class and possible cause (Poison, natural or predator).

Allotment Operating Cost:

Labor costs:

- Rider \_\_\_\_\_ Transportation Cost
- Improvement Maintenance                      Horse maintenance
- Water
- Fence
- Other
- Improvement Construction
- Water
- Fence
- Other
- Salt

Permittee signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR NOTES YOU WISH TO PLACE IN THE PERMANENT ALLOTMENT FILE.