

**EAST FERNANDEZ ALLOTMENT #457**

Carson National Forest  
Camino Real Ranger District

**ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2011**

The annual meeting for the East Fernandez Allotment was held on April 1, 2011, at the office of Jose Mondragon in Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico. The Permittees attending were Larry and Jose Mondragon. Melvin Herrera and Sean Kelly represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permits on the East Fernandez Allotment.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed possible drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. The Southwest Region is experiencing Moderate to Extreme drought, so any non-use this grazing season will be considered resource protection non-use. The mountainous E. Fernandez Allotment is less affected and is classified as being in moderate drought at the time of the meeting. Forest Service and Permittees remain optimistic about grazing this year.

**Table 1- Permittee, Permitted and Authorized number and kind.**

<b>1. Permittee</b>	<b>Permitted Number and Kind</b>	<b>Authorized Number and Kind</b>
Jose M. Mondragon	6 cow/calf	11 cow/calf
Larry E. Mondragon	7 cow/calf, 1 bull	8 cow/calf, 1 bull

**Table 2 - Season of Use**

<b>2. Season of Use</b>	
06/20 - 09/30	(102 days)

**Table 3 - Pasture Rotation**

<b>3. Pasture Rotation</b>				
<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Estimated Dates</b>	<b>Estimated Time</b>	<b>Actual use</b>	<b>Utilization %</b>
East Fernandez	06/20 - 09/30	102 days		

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the East Fernandez 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, i.e. fences, will be maintained prior to moving to a different part of the pasture.

#### **4. Maintenance of Improvements**

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, 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 2010 grazing season went well and use was within the guidelines. Forage production was good and vigor of plants looked good throughout the allotment. Distribution of livestock throughout the allotment was good. Maintenance of range improvements was acceptable.

Utilization guidelines for 2011 are 40% of available annual forage in key use areas and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Forage utilization will be monitored in key forage areas. Permittees are responsible for monitoring the allotment, and ensuring adequate distribution.

Grazing Instructions for 2011 are the same as in 2010. Salt away from roads and streams; use herding, salt, fences, and water sources to disperse cattle across the pastures to use the available forage; avoid overuse in key areas.

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 by the end of the season. If permittees need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required improvement maintenance and other duties such as checking that gates are closed, checking cattle distribution, monitoring, and placing of salt; the Forest Service should be able to accommodate with a written letter issued to the permittees.

The Camino Real District will provide tags to permittees as needed.

The East Fernandez Allotment is scheduled to undergo NEPA analysis in 2012, and monitoring will begin this year for that effort. Permittees should begin considering any suggestions they wish to add to the process.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2011:

1. Gathering corral near Valle Escondido. Permittees have a real need for this corral and it may also benefit the permittee on Tienditas. This will be considered when the allotment comes up for NEPA in the next several years.
2. Water developments on East side; earthtanks near La Chosa, new drinker at Tecolote spring, and repairs at Mascarenas spring.
3. Fence to keep cattle out of Valle Escondido and cattleguard.

Water development on the allotment is an important concern to the permittees. FS can provide a green Powder River water trough to replace the drinker at Tecolote spring. The permittee said they will need Forest Service help to get a new drinker to Mascarenas spring.

Forest Service will be working on trails around Garcia Park this year.

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.

