

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS CEBOLLA/SAN ANTONIO ALLOTMENT 2003

This documents our meeting of March 26, 2003.

I. AUTHORIZATION

For the 2003 grazing season, applications for the following may be approved:

Permittee	Numbers*	Kind/Class	Dates
Aragon	85 to 93	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 09/30/2003
Lucero	30 to 32	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 09/30/2003
Montoya	67 to 73	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 10/31/2003
Trujillo	20 to 21	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 10/31/2003

* The lower number within this range of numbers is the estimated carrying capacity as of April 1, 2003 that includes unofficial precipitation data for March. The higher number within this range of numbers is based on the assumption that April precipitation will be at or near the 80-year historical average that is equal to approximately 1 inch. These numbers also reflect the additional 15% reduction imposed to compensate for overuse in two pastures.

Non-use for resource protection (drought) is being granted as follows:

Aragon -	63 to 55	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 09/30/2003
Lucero -	20 to 18	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 09/30/2003
Montoya -	49 to 43	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 10/31/2003
Trujillo -	13 to 12	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2003 – 10/31/2003

2002 grazing season Actual Use:

Aragon -	128	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2002 – 07/14/2002
Aragon -	89	Adult Cattle (c/c)	07/15/2002 – 08/15/2002 (drought reduction)
Aragon -	63	Adult Cattle (c/c)	08/16/2002 – 09/30/2002 (cattle moved to VC)
Lucero -	40	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2002 – 07/14/2002
Lucero -	32	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2002 – 09/30/2002 (drought reduction)
Montoya -	116	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2002 – 07/14/2002
Montoya -	70	Adult Cattle (c/c)	07/15/2002 – 10/31/2002 (drought reduction)
Trujillo -	33	Adult Cattle (c/c)	06/01/2002 – 07/14/2002
Trujillo -	18	Adult Cattle (c/c)	07/15/2002 – 10/31/2002 (drought reduction)

The authorized livestock numbers and grazing periods are no guarantee that they will stay on a pasture for the full grazing period or the allotment for the full season. Below average forage production may require that cattle will be removed from the allotment earlier than expected.

This decision will be made in cooperation with you and based on the utilization for key species and key areas as outlined in these Annual Operating Instructions.

The rotation plan (Table 2) is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances such as lack of water and forage in the pastures. The Forest Service or the permittee can initiate changes of pastures outside of the above rotation plan in coordination with this office. The permittee or this office must submit a written justification before change is made.

Table 2. Authorized grazing rotation.		
Numbers of Cattle	Pasture	Grazing Period**
85 to 93 c/c Aragon	Calaveras	6/1-6/30
	Cebolla Riparian*	REST
117 to 126 c/c Lucero/Montoya/Trujillo	Mushroom	6/1-7/20
85 to 93 c/c Aragon	Barley	7/1-7/20
202 to 219 c/c Aragon/Lucero/Montoya/Trujillo	Barley	7/21-8/30
202 to 219 c/c Aragon/Lucero/Montoya/Trujillo	Road	8/31-9/30
	San Antonio Riparian*	REST
67 to 73 c/c Montoya	126	10/1-10/31
20 to 21 c/c Trujillo	Horseshoe	10/1-10/31

*Riparian Pastures—Cattle will be allowed to drift through riparian pastures in route to other pastures. Every attempt will be made to keep these pastures clean of livestock.

**Every attempt should be made to clean pastures of all cattle by the off date. Pasture off dates are the dates that at least 85% of the cattle will be moved to the next scheduled pasture. One half of the remaining cattle will be moved within the next 7 days, and no more than 5% of the cattle should remain in a given pasture 14 days after the off date.

II. UTILIZATION/MONITORING

The proper utilization of forage is a critical factor in livestock management on the Cebolla/San Antonio Allotment. We will be checking levels of use to insure that forage utilization is within recommended levels during the grazing season. Key areas and key species (Table 3) will be monitored within the allotment.

Table 3. Key areas and key species for the San Diego Allotment		
Site #	Pasture/Key Area Location	Key Grass Species
1	Cebolla/Road Fork	Kentucky Bluegrass
2	Barley/North Fork Barley	Kentucky Bluegrass, Mountain Muhly
3	Road/Road	Timber Oatgrass, Arizona Fescue
4	San Antonio/Baca	Kentucky Bluegrass
5	Mushroom/Cave	Mountain Muhly, Kentucky Bluegrass
6	Calaveras/Lower Calaveras	Timber Oatgrass, Arizona Fescue
7	126/Upper 126	Mountain Muhly, Kentucky Bluegrass
8	Horseshoe/Horseshoe	Mountain Muhly, Kentucky Bluegrass

Both the Forest Service and the permittee are responsible for monitoring forage use and stubble height on the allotment to ensure that proper use levels are not exceeded. We are primarily concerned with use levels in canyon bottoms where cattle tend to concentrate use on palatable feed. We have identified key areas to be monitored on this allotment (map available upon

request from this office). Maximum allowable use is set for a conservative grazing intensity of less than 40% for the Cebolla/San Antonio Allotment. Please refer to the Table 4 below for descriptors to aid in determining forage use levels.

Forage use levels should be monitored periodically by the permittee to aid in determining when livestock should be moved between pastures. **Permittee inspection summary sheets (attached) are provided for your convenience in order to record any of your observations throughout the season. You are highly encouraged to record your allotment visits to aid in documenting allotment conditions.** Forest Service personnel will attempt to visit at least one key area within each grazed pasture during the second half of the scheduled grazing period. If areas within a pasture or the pasture as a whole begin to approach the identified stubble heights (Table 4), actions will need to be taken to limit additional forage use. If use within that key area is approaching allowable stubble heights (in red) 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 are to be re-distributed within the pasture or removed from the pasture.

Table 4. Qualitative characteristics of grazing intensity categories used to characterize New Mexico rangelands (Holechek & Galt, 6/00, Rangelands).		
Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity
Light to non-use	0-30	Only choice plants (key species) and areas show use. There is no use of poor forage plants
Conservative	31-40	Choice forage plants (key species) have abundant seed stalks; Areas more than a mile from water show little use: About one third to one half primary forage plants show grazing on key areas.
Moderate	41-50	Most of accessible range show use; Key areas show patchy appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants (key species) showing use; Grazing is noticeable 1-1½ miles from water
Heavy	51-60	Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas: Palatable shrubs show hedging: Key areas show a lack of seed stalks: Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1½ miles from water
Severe	61+	Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no stubble ht.): Shrubs are severely hedged; There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage; Areas over 1½ miles from water lack stubble height.

Table 5. Grazing intensity guide for mountain grassland rangeland in New Mexico (Holechek & Galt, 6/00, Rangelands).						
Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Stubble Height Indicators of Grazing Intensity				
		Arizona Fescue	Western Wheatgrass	Bluegrass	Mountain Muhly	Timber Oatgrass*
	---(%)---	-----Inches-----				
Light to none-use	0-30	8+	7+	5+	5+	8+
Conservative	31-40	6-7	4-5	4-5	4-5	6-7
Moderate	41-50	5-6	3-4	3-4	3-4	5-6
Heavy	51-60	4-5	2-3	2-3	2-3	4-5
Severe	61+	<4	<2	<2	<2	<4

*Determined by personal observation.

The Forest Service may or may not 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, and condition of improvements will be evaluated. The range readiness inspection will determine whether range vegetation and soils are ready for grazing.

III. 2002 Monitoring Results

In grazing year 2002, utilization of the Cebolla/San Antonio allotment exceeded the 40% utilization standard on two of five key areas. As discussed, to compensate for this over-use we are going to delay entry into the two pastures that over-utilization occurred until 7/01/2003. In order to accommodate this an additional 15% reduction will be necessary beyond the reduction for drought.

IV. DEVELOPMENT WORK

In order to further develop the allotment, the Forest Service and the permittee have cooperatively agreed to complete the following projects. In general, Range Betterment Funds (derived from the grazing fees) can be used for approximately one-half of the cost of any project. Please be aware that it usually will be necessary to plan projects with at least one year lead time to allow required documentation and to obtain the necessary funding and clearances. Project work agreed to under Cooperative Improvement Modifications are to be completed within established time frames and to the standards attached to and made a part of the agreement unless otherwise modified by the Forest Officer.

1. Projects for this year:

Cebolla fence line

2. Future FY projects:

Calaveras Cross Fences

Mushroom Cross Fence

3-5 Mushroom, Road and Calaveras Water Developments

V. SPECIAL MITIGATION MEASURES FOR CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Seasonal restrictions (March 1-August 15) on construction activities apply in known breeding areas for threatened and endangered species. Any new construction or reconstruction activities will need to be coordinated with this office. **This does not apply to routine maintenance of existing range improvements.**

VI. MAINTENANCE OF IMPROVEMENTS

Maintenance of improvements i.e. (fences, springs, tanks, wells) should be complete and in satisfactory condition prior to entry date to the specific pasture. Please refer to your permit map for your responsibilities. **If your maintenance responsibilities do not meet satisfactory condition you will not be permitted to turn out or your entry date may be delayed.**

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL

This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90 (copy available upon request). In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).

A notice of appeal must be filed with Leonard Atencio, Forest Supervisor, Santa Fe National Forest, at 1474 Rodeo Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with John F. Peterson, District Ranger, Jemez Ranger District, P. O. Box 150, Jemez Springs, NM 87025.

I will appreciate if you contact me and together we try to resolve disagreements before you file any Notice of Appeal. I value your experience and knowledge of the allotment. If we cannot reach an agreement, you may exercise your appeal rights. This will insure that we both understand the reasons for each others position regarding any issues. I look forward to working with you this season. I am confident that together we will work effectively to manage the range resources in a manner that reflects good stewardship for the land and cattle alike.

/s/ John F. Peterson

JOHN F. PETERSON

District Ranger

04/02/2003

DATE

