

**2011 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
FOR THE
EAST PINE/RUSH CREEK C&H ALLOTMENT**

INTRODUCTION

These Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the **East Pine/Rush Creek C&H Allotment** for the 2011 grazing season. This plan was developed with participation of the livestock permittees at the Annual Operating Instruction meetings held at the Cambridge Community Library on April 19, 2011. The interdisciplinary resource personnel and livestock permittees who participated in development of this plan were Permittees Justin and Russell Mink, Charles Edwards, and Ron Ford and Rangeland Management Specialists Andy Bumgarner and Jennifer McMorris.

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. It is necessary to contact the Forest Service if there are any changes or additions to these instructions through out the grazing season. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions which apply to these Annual Operating Instructions.

Permitted Use			
Permittee	Allotment	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Charles Edwards	East Pine/Rush Creek	170 cow/calf pairs	6/16-10/15
Ford Ranches	East Pine/Rush Creek	321 cow/calf pairs	6/16-10/15
Mink Land & Livestock	East Pine/Rush Creek	148 cow/calf pairs	6/16-10/15

2011 Authorized Use			
Permittee	Allotment	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Charles Edwards	East Pine/Rush Creek	170 cow/calf pairs	6/18-10/15
Ford Ranches	East Pine/Rush Creek	321 cow/calf pairs & 13 cow/calf pairs on State	6/18-10/15
Mink Land & Livestock	East Pine/Rush Creek	148 cow/calf pairs	6/21-10/13

Permitted Livestock Brands

Permitted Pack & Saddle Stock

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of the Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3, and Part 2, item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing seasons which require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions. The season of use is especially dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation) which influences annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify term grazing permitted use is further described in Part 2, Section 8 (b) & (c) of your permit.

Refer to your term grazing permit, part 2 (general terms and conditions) and part 3 (special terms and conditions) for a list of general and specific management practices required by the permittee.

All livestock feed or straw brought on to the forest is required to be certified weed free.

PREVIOUS YEAR GRAZING RESULTS

2010 Grazing Rotation			
Permittee	Unit	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Mink Land & Livestock	East Pine	148 cow/calf pairs	6/16-8/1
Ford Ranches	Middle	504cow/calf pairs	6/16-8/1
	Rush Creek	Rest	Rest
All	Cuddy Mountain	652 cow/calf pairs	8/2-10/15

BILLING

Grazing fees of \$ 1.35/HM must be paid before livestock are authorized to enter the National Forest. Payment must be made to: USDA Forest Service, c/o Citibank, P.O. Box 301550, Los Angeles, California 90030-1550. The Council District Office must receive confirmation from the Citibank Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

2011 Grazing Rotation			
Permittee	Unit	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Mink Land & Livestock	East Pine	148 cow/calf pairs	6/21-8/1
Ford Ranches	Rush Creek	209 cow/calf pairs 125 cow/calf pairs	6/18-8/1 6/26-8/1
Charles Edwards	Middle	170 cow/calf pairs	6/18-8/1
All	Cuddy Mountain	652 cow/calf pairs	8/2-10/15

The season of use dates are tentative and may vary according to range conditions and utilization levels within the pastures. Pastures move dates will vary and may be shortened or extended as conditions warrant.

Edwards: Turn out location will be Mud Flat.

Mink Land & Livestock: Turn out location will be Boot Heel.

Ford Ranch: Turnout location will be Grizzly Creek/Cow Creek.

The Middle and Rush Creek Pastures will be deferred until after seed ripe every other year. Approximately one half of the East Pine Pasture is deferred every other year by alternating turnout locations. There may be some incidental drift through the deferred pasture throughout the season because there are no pasture division fences only natural barriers. The deferred unit will be kept clean of cattle as much as possible. Cattle are kept in the designated pastures by salting and riding. Cattle will be allowed to drift and will be driven home through the deferred pasture at the end of the grazing season as they come down from the Cuddy Mountain Unit (Buck Park area) and trail off the allotment. No cattle will be driven to the unit that is scheduled for deferment until fall when cattle are being trailed home. Monitor Seid Creek for summer drift and remove cattle that congregate there. If you have cattle that continue to come down and will not stay in the higher elevations take them home.

Due to the unusually late spring and high amounts of snow this winter turnout will be delayed and the grazing rotation will be changed to accommodate seasonal range conditions. Minks will turn out in the East Pine Pasture, Edwards will turn out into the Middle Pasture and Fords will turn out into the Rush Creek Pasture. Around 8/1 all cattle will be moved into the Cuddy Mountain Pasture. During the close of the grazing season cattle will be allowed to drift and will be pushed down through the Middle Pasture to be taken home. This is a onetime deviation from the grazing schedule due to the unusual spring conditions.

Notify the Forest Service at least 5 days before you turn onto the allotment of when and where turnout will occur so that a count can be made if desired.

STANDARDS AND GUIDES

The following are specific utilization standards and guidelines from the July 2003 Forest Plan. Utilization percentages are by weight and are the maximum allowed.

RAST01 - Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the growing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to direction in FSM 1922.5.

- a) Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use or retain a minimum 4 inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.
- b) Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use. Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

IMPROVEMENTS

All range improvements must be maintained prior to turning livestock into the unit scheduled for use. If an existing range improvement has been properly maintained but requires reconstruction, a cooperative effort can be made between the Forest Service and permittee to reconstruct the development, depending on material availability. Those projects to which the permittee contributes normally receive higher priority for funding by the Forest Service.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. If you are aware of spring developments that require reconstruction or extensive maintenance, please discuss this with your Rangeland Management Specialist.

The division fence on Cuddy Mountain between the Wildhorse/Crooked River and East Pine/Rush Creek allotments is to be set up by Rocky Comfort Cattle Company and laid down by the East Pine/Rush Creek permittees.

There have been complaints that in past years the East Pine/Rush Creek permittees have cut the bales which hold the let down fence in place. This creates much more work for the Wildhore/Crooked River permittees the following spring when they set the fence up. See to it that your fencing crew does not continue this practice.

The Forest Service received money to rebuild the Rush Creek Bridge which washed out in 2010. The project will include purchasing material to build wings on both sides of the bridge to aid in crossing livestock. It was agreed upon by the Forest Service and the East Pine/Rush Creek Permittees that the permittees would be responsible for building the wings. The Forest Service will provide the materials and the permittees will provide the labor and the equipment if needed to install the wings. This work is scheduled to take place this summer.

For a list of assigned maintenance of structural improvements as well as maintenance standards see part 3 of your term grazing permit.

PERMITTEE/RIDER INSTRUCTIONS

Part of good cattle management is riding to assure proper cattle distribution. In particular we want to insure that the stream banks and meadows aren't over used. These riparian areas are considered key areas and will be monitored. When an area has reached maximum allowable use levels cattle will be removed from that area and kept from returning. Keeping cattle off select areas and in areas of less use serves to prolong the time cattle can expect to stay in an area.

If cattle are in the final area of the rotation sequence and utilization standards are reached, then they will have to be removed from the allotment.

Livestock in units outside the season of use or on an allotment other than the one permitted, is a violation of the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.

Salting

Salting is restricted to the following:

- No less than ¼ mile from water, and not be placed in meadow bottoms. Exceptions to this must be cleared and approved by the District Ranger prior to placing the salt.
- Placed at a minimum distance of 100 yards from open roads and out of sight from roads if possible.
- Should be moved yearly unless present salt ground is located in a rocky area where no vegetation grows.
- Unconsumed salt will be removed from the site.

- ¼ mile from timber plantations with trees less than 15 feet tall. If this can't be accomplished, the District Range and Reforestation personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations.

REQUIRED REPORTING

All requests for refunds or credits for unused portion of grazing fees for Forest System Lands must be received in the Council or Weiser Ranger District office by March 1 following the grazing season.

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed because we are required to report this grazing use to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). This information is also very important when conducting future allotment analysis. Any format is acceptable. If you would like a Forest Service form or have any questions about what information to include in the Actual Use Report, please call Andy at 208-253-0114 or 208-549-4262. **Actual Use needs to be turned in no later than December 1, 2011.**

INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

Turnout will not occur prior to range readiness. Range readiness is measured by soil moisture and plant growth. Soils may be damp but should be firm to avoid excessive compaction due to livestock. Grass species must be a minimum of 6 inches in height. Arrowleaf balsamroot should be in bloom or past bloom.

Allotment/pasture inspections will be performed periodically throughout the grazing season by Forest Service Personnel. Livestock distribution, correct livestock location, numbers and identification, structural improvement maintenance, and utilization levels will be evaluated during these site visits. If you wish to accompany Forest Service Personnel on these inspections please contact the Rangeland Management Specialist.

COORDINATION & COOPERATION

Cooperation with neighboring permittees is encouraged, however if there are problems occurring that cannot be settled let your Rangeland Management Specialist know so that steps can be taken to correct the problems.

Please review the AOI for consistency with our discussion at the annual meeting, if correct sign and return it to Andy.

_____/s/ Gregory S. Lesch_____
GREG LESCH
District Ranger

DATE

Charles Edwards
Permittee

DATE

Mink Land & Livestock
Permittee

DATE

Ford Ranch
Permittee

DATE