

2011 Annual Operating Instructions
 Round Valley Cattle Allotment
 New Meadows Ranger District, Payette National Forest

The Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the Round Valley Cattle allotment for the 2011 grazing season. These instructions were developed with the participation of the permittee on April 25, 2011. The following participated in development of this year's plan:

1. Ernie Robinson Permittee
2. Amy Baumer Range Specialist
3. Kim Pierson New Meadows District Ranger
4. Brian McMorris Range Specialist

<u>PERMITTEE</u>	<u>PERMITTED NUMBERS / SEASON</u>	<u>2011 AUTHORIZED NUMBERS / SEASON</u>
Ernie Robinson	110 cow/calf 6/15-9/30 (Not to exceed 221 AUMs)	110 cow/calf 8/15-9/30

All cattle on the Round Valley C&H allotment should be branded with the **41** brand.

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing season which requires 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. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions that apply to these operating instructions.

The permittee shall notify the District Ranger five (5) days prior to the date and location of entry of livestock onto National Forest system lands. An "on" count may be done at this time. We will notify if we will be there to count you on upon your five day notification.

Grazing fee of \$1.35/head month must be paid before livestock are authorized to go on the National Forest. This bill is due five (5) days prior to your earliest turnout date. The New Meadows District Office must receive confirmation from Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO SEASON OF USE AND LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

The grazing prescriptions are designed to meet the resource needs of the soils and vegetation. Fisheries biologists have completed Biological Assessments on this grazing activity for Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout (species listed under the Endangered Species Act). Any known and/or potential effects of livestock grazing on the fish species have been mitigated.

The District Ranger may modify the season of use and livestock numbers authorized on any given year. The season of use is dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation and temperature) which influences annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify permitted grazing use is further described in Part 2, Section 8 (c) of your permit.

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

Livestock Rotations

As allowable use grazing criteria are reached, livestock are to be moved to the next grazing unit or off the Forest.

Cow/calf pairs will be trucked/trailed to the South Unit on private land in Mud Creek. The South Unit will be grazed approximately June 15 through August 15. Cattle will then start moving to the North Unit approximately August 15. Contact the Forest Service when you begin to move your cattle to the North Unit. The North Unit will be grazed until allowable use is met or September 30 (whichever comes first).

If livestock are found dead on the allotment you will be responsible to move the carcasses 100 yards away from recreation trails, roads, or live water.

Salting and riding will be used to minimize use in the head of Trail Creek and other riparian areas.

This allotment is made up of two grazing Units. The South Unit is primarily Private Lands with some State Land intermixed. The North Unit has National Forest, private and Bureau of Land Management Lands.

Allowable Use/Mitigation Measures

The following allowable use criteria and mitigation measures are to be followed for all grazing activities. There will be Forest Service personal monitoring these standards throughout the grazing season along with any long term vegetation monitoring that may be collected this grazing season.

Allowable forage use criteria is 30% use in riparian areas or 4 inch stubble height on hydric greenline species. Allowable forage use on uplands is 40%. All cattle will be moved off the National Forest portion of the allotment once allowable use is reached on the Forest land.

Salt placement is required to be at least ¼ mile from water. If this can't be accomplished, the New Meadows District range personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations. All salt blocks shall be removed when livestock have been moved out of a unit or off National Forest.

MAINTENANCE OF RANGE 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 funding. The permittee is required to provide the materials and labor during routine maintenance.

The Forest Service and permittee will continue to look at potential spring sites to develop within the fuels reduction area around the Circle C Subdivision this summer. This will depend on water right laws, funding and time in order to develop them. They would provide water for livestock away from small tributary streams. All water developments which utilize a storage tank must have a wildlife escape ramp installed.

MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING ACTIVITY

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed. If you have any questions about completing the form, please call the Range Department at the Forest Service at (208) 347-0300. We request the forms be returned no later than the AOI meeting for the 2012 grazing season.

MULTIPLE USE REQUIREMENTS

There is an electric fence installed on the south side (NE 1/4, sec. 4, T20N, R1E) of the Circle C subdivision. This fence is maintained by the District Fisheries Biologist. Please contact the New Meadows District if you see livestock within the enclosure.

You will need to ride the Quarter Round Plantation and disperse any congregation of livestock. There was a map provided at last years AOI meeting of this area.

The culvert will be replaced on Yellow Jacket Creek this summer. The Huckleberry Road will be used as a detour while this is being done. The date for this has not been set at this time.

A Collation Project could begin planning this year.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT

In the event a designated mitigation measure fails to protect a species listed under the Endangered Species Act, a change in authorized grazing activity will occur. If proper use grazing levels are reached then livestock are to be moved to the next grazing unit or off of the allotment. If livestock grazing does not comply with the terms and conditions of these Annual

Operating Instructions, then Forest Service policy and procedures regarding administrative permit actions will be followed.

Invasive weeds are becoming a serious threat to the welfare of our rangelands. Your assistance is needed to identify new outbreaks of weed populations and to prevent the establishment of weeds on the forest. Pay particular attention to areas where stock are concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments, and salting areas. The Payette National Forest is part of Region 4 of the Forest Service. Region 4 has a requirement that any hay that is brought onto the National Forest to be certified free from noxious weeds. All livestock entering the National Forest are recommended to be fed **Certified Noxious Weed Free Forage** for at least 2 days prior to entering the Forest.

You are responsible for ensuring that your rider is informed and understands the standards, guidelines, and other management direction in this plan.

Coordination with Potlatch, State Lands, and the BLM will be ongoing throughout the season to assure proper use on all lands. It is important to keep gates to private land closed. We appreciate your continued communication concerning grazing within the North Unit.

Please review the AOI for consistency with our discussion at the annual meeting, and sign and return it to me. If I do not receive a signed copy from you within two weeks, this AOI will serve as the final copy approved by the District Ranger.

Kim Pierson
New Meadows District Ranger

Date

Ernie Robinson
Permittee

Date