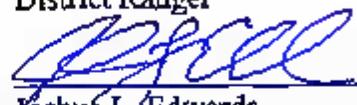
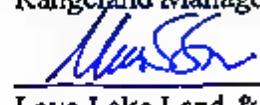


North Fork/Park Creek S&G Allotments 2011 Annual Operating Instructions

Salmon-Challis National Forest
Lost River Ranger District
Mackay, Idaho

Approved By:  5/18/11
Diane L. Weaver Date
District Ranger

Prepared By:  5/18/11
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Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted By:  6/7/11
Lava Lake Land & Livestock Date
Permittee

**2011 Annual Operating Instructions
North Fork and Park Creek S&G Allotments
Salmon-Challis National Forest**

Below is your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the North Fork allotment. Please review your Term Grazing Permit for grazing utilization, range improvement maintenance, and salting standards. Actual on-dates and off-dates are dependant on range readiness and when allowable use standards are met. These instructions reflect information discussed at the May 18, 2011 meeting at the Lava Lake Ranch near Carey. The Forest Service may approve changes to the grazing rotation in consultation with the permittees to address range condition situations that may occur due to weather related circumstances.

Permitted Sheep Authorized on North Fork/Park Creek

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Head Months</u>
Lava Lakes Land & Livestock	North Fork	1252	7/1 – 10/1*	3252
	Park Creek	1000	7/1 – 10/1*	1775

* This permit is a variable season not to exceed the permitted number of head months.

<u>Grazing Strategy</u>	<u>Livestock #'s</u>		<u>Estimated Day</u>	
Park Creek	1200	Dry Ewes	4	8/6-8/9
Trail to North Fork	1200	Dry Ewes	2	8/10-8/11
North Fork	1200	Dry Ewes	26	8/12-9/6
Trail to Park Creek	1200	Dry Ewes	2	9/7
Park Creek	1200	Dry Ewes	9	9/8-9/16

Allowable Use Standard: End of season 4-inch stubble height on hydric sedges & grasses is required along the greenline of riparian areas. Upland grass utilization should not exceed 50% of current annual production at end of season. A patchy or uneven use pattern along the greenline will usually result in stubble height standard being met.

While adequate re-growth may occur under average growing season conditions, the opposite may be true during below average conditions. Special attention should be made to drier weather conditions. It is recommended a stubble height trigger above 4 inches be used in drier conditions to plan sheep moves. Allowable use on shrubs is 50% of available new leader growth. This needs to be monitored due to preferences of sheep.

Sheep bed-grounds may only be used for one night. When there is wolf activity in the area and fladry is used to minimize predation, bed grounds may be used for more than one night. When this situation occurs bed ground site selection needs to be discussed with the Range Management Specialist. Move salt locations each year to avoid creating a permanent salt lick in any one location. Once the allowable use standard in any particular area is reached all your sheep must be moved to the next area of the allotment. Sheep are allowed to graze one time once-over-lightly. Once allowable use is achieved in key areas sheep must be moved regardless of how much feed is left. Sheep use on ranges already grazed is not authorized. When proper use in the last area scheduled for use is achieved, sheep must be removed from the allotment.

Riparian areas with greenlines dominated by Kentucky bluegrass and tufted hairgrass should also receive special attention to achieve end of season stubble height. Greenlines dominated by these plants have less bank stability than greenlines dominated by deep-rooted plants. Greenlines dominated by these plants are in a lower state of ecological condition and should be managed to increase the amount of stable hydric sedges, grasses, and shrubs where appropriate.

Other factors should be considered for planning sheep moves between areas. These include upland erosion in the form of rills and gullies, bedding ground trampling, and excessive "shading" in aspen clones. Please be mindful of these and other ecological concerns when using the forest and keep sheep moving accordingly.

Special attention needs to be focused on meadows along the North Fork. Sheep cannot be allowed to stay for long periods of time in any one location in the riparian areas. The band needs to be moved frequently from one area to the next to prevent heavy use of riparian areas. When in the vicinity of the sheep camp in the head of the North Fork, sheep need to be bedded above the road and away from the dry meadows adjacent to the riparian area.

The aspen stand improvement project in the area between Slide Canyon and Hunter Creek on the north side of the North Fork called the Slide/Hunter Aspen Project is about 95% complete. There are still some slash piles to burn in the fall of 2011 and a small amount of broadcast burning to be done in the spring of 2012. The sheep will need to be actively herded away from the areas that were burned in 2010 for this project. A field visit will be done in the spring of 2012 to assess if adequate recovery has occurred on those sites. Mechanically treated units within the project area will be allowed use but aspen stands within the area will be avoided to allow for the sprouting of new suckers to establish. A map has been provided for you to understand where these areas are located. The Forest Service will inform you of when the burned areas are available for grazing. There is concern with the conifers encroaching on the stands and the Slide/Hunter Aspen Project will help to manage these concerns. Ensure that browse use on aspen and willows does not exceed 50% browse use of new leader growth.

Trailing: When trailing to your allotment call the Forest Service Range staff and let them know when you start and when you are finished trailing. When trailing through other allotments do it in a timely manner of 1-4 days.

Designated Monitoring Areas(DMA's): DMA's are used to monitor representative riparian areas within a grazing unit. DMA monitoring establishes a record of utilization trend, a location for observation to plan livestock moves, a location to record whether end of season stubble height standards are met, a location to evaluate whether management impacts are effective or need to be modified. Permittee monitoring, documentation and photos are encouraged before entering and when leaving each unit.

Bighorn Sheep: This season we will implement the 2011 Strategy for Managing Separation between Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep on Allotments Grazed by Lava Lake Land & Livestock, LLC and Muldoon Grazing Association, Inc. Follow the communication and response plan in the strategy.

Cleaning Grazing Units: Livestock need to begin moving from a unit prior to the stubble height standard being met to ensure allowable use standards are met. This is especially important during drought conditions. In most cases 7 days should be adequate. Permittees should be prepared to assist herders in checking that the unit cleaned stays clean. Herders should keep permittees informed of problems regarding lost or separated sheep in accordance with the 2011 Strategy for Managing Separation between Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep.

Fence & Water Improvements: Please refer to Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit. Allotment boundary fences should be checked prior to sheep entering the allotment, interior fences should be checked at this time or before sheep enter a new unit. Existing improvements should be maintained each year before requesting new improvements.

Weed Free Hay: In accordance with State Law, please ensure that range riders bring hay that is certified and tagged noxious weed free.

Gray Wolf: The North Fork and Park Creek S&G Allotments are areas of known wolf activity. Any knowledge of wolf activity on the allotment needs to be exchanged between the permittees and the Forest Service.

Grazing Fees: The grazing fees for the 2011 season are \$0.27/head month. Your grazing fee payment will need to be received prior to turning livestock out on the National Forest. Receipt of payment could take up to a week from the date payment is sent.

Actual Use Report: An Actual Use Report will be mailed to you shortly before sheep leave the allotment. This form is to be completed and returned to the Lost River Ranger District two weeks after you have removed livestock from your allotment. Each permittee will need to provide an individual report with dates when their sheep entered and left the allotment. Please add specific information regarding when and where the sheep were counted.

This information is used for the purpose of evaluating and analyzing: grazing allotment and grazing unit use, compliance with annual operating instructions, and planning next season's grazing management strategy

Applications for refunds/credits for unused portions of your allotment must be requested and filed separately. Please contact our office if you need an application for refund/credit.

Questions and assistance regarding these instructions should be directed to Josh Edwards at 588-3400.