ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2012

Black Range Ranger District
Gila National Forest

Turkey Run Allotment #228

Reviewed By: /s/ Matt Schneberger Date: 01/25/2012
Permittee

Approved By: /s/ Larry D. Cosper Date: 01/25/2012
District Ranger

BLACK RANGE RANGER DISTRICT

2012 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Turkey Run Allotment

I. INTRODUCTION

These Annual Operating Instructions document your discussion with Shane Shannon on January 25, 2012 at the Black Range Ranger District Office.

Permitted Use:

Permittee	Numbers	Season
Rafter Spear Ranch Partnership.	94 cattle, cow/calf	03/01-2/28

Authorized Use for 2012:

Permittee	Numbers	Season
Rafter Spear Ranch Partnership.	94 cattle, cow/calf	03/01-2/28

Pasture Rotations*:*

Pasture	Number	On Date	Off Date
Winter	94	03/01	04/30
Turkey Run	64	05/01	06/30
Stiver	30	05/01	09/30
Breeding	64	07/01	09/30
Shipping and Holding	69	10/01	10/31
Winter	25	10/01	02/29
Winter	69	11/01	02/29
Round Mtn	Rested		
Wildcow	Rested		

This pasture rotation schedule will depend on range readiness, available water, weather conditions and permittee needs. Changes to the grazing rotation must be approved by the Forest Officer in advance. An "**amended**" AOI must be developed to reflect the approved changes.

The off-date for a pasture is the date when the livestock are to be fully out of the unit, or in the case of the last pasture, fully off of National Forest System lands. We recognize that moves cannot usually be accomplished in one day. It is your responsibility to begin early movement of livestock to ensure that pastures are clean by the dates specified.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required

to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in a functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify the Range Staff at the Black Range Ranger District to schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available.

Range improvements are planned for the Turkey Run Allotment during the 2012 grazing season.

- Drinker and pipeline from Cox Trick Tank
- Saucer Tank needs renovated – If not full of water may get to it in 2010.
- Turkey Run Road needs assessment for realignment out of creek bottom – Matt to write proposal and submit to District Ranger.
- Wire Spring Drinker replacement – Needs to bury pipeline and add powder river drinker
- Consolation Spring Drinker replacement – needs spring box and pipeline and drinker powder river.
- Continued maintenance of water developments, windmills, and corrals as needed to successfully facilitate the grazing operation.

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify this office so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. You may apply for a "**Free Use**" post and stay permit for the maintenance of fences and corrals on the allotment. Maintenance to standard is required even if you have taken **"nonuse".**

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Black Range District may allow naturally ignited fires to burns on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting you contribution to the permit modification

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers; dates of entering and leaving pastures, shipping dates and cattle losses (grown stock and calves). This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal, prior to, or at the time, the livestock are taken off the allotment. **You**

will be required to provide your Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

A $25 administrative fee will be charged for any additional bills for collection that are sent to you due to either late payment or for split billing on seasonal allotments. This fee will be collected to pay for the cost associated with issuing an additional bill for collection. There is no administrative fee for the normal "split billing" on yearlong allotments.

It is necessary for you to write the bill number on your check prior to submitting it to the lockbox. This is necessary to insure that your payment is credited to your account.

5. Short Age Calf Policy: Any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31 need to be paid for starting January 1.

6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:
Salt should be placed in such a way as to distribute livestock use throughout the area. Place salt well away (>¼ mile) from any water sources, or key areas that traditionally receive heavy use such as roads, parks, and riparian areas. Place salt in areas of light use to draw cattle to those areas such as oak thickets or under the aspen, spruce or pine. Salt locations must be moved every year and do not place more than one block in a location. The best distribution can be obtained by scattering one-half block chunks in areas of light use. Salt or supplement will not be placed near areas where such placement is liable to result in conflicts with other Forest users. Pick-up your salt after livestock are rotated to the next pasture.

Any hay, straw, or supplemental feed used in association with your grazing permit must be certified and tagged as free of noxious weeds and/or noxious weed seeds.

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS
These Instructions implement the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) decision for the Turkey Run Allotment dated September 25, 2007.

VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED
The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to this AOI to accommodate fire management.

VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS
Keep track of conditions on your allotment. Make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing. If stock water does not recharge or forage conditions are not favorable, adjustments may be necessary to the rotation plan.

Wildlife and Fish
There is protected and restricted Mexican Spotted Owl habitat on the Turkey Run Allotment, however, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines there are no restrictions regarding the Mexican Spotted Owl as long as utilization levels are adhered to.

Stock tanks must be surveyed for possible aquatic habitat before earth-disturbing maintenance is authorized.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Chiricahua leopard frog as a threatened species in 2002. We have completed grazing consultation on your allotment regarding the effects of livestock grazing on the Chiricahua leopard frog. We determined that livestock grazing may have an affect but not adversely affect the Chiricahua leopard frog. As a result of this determination, there were no changes required of your grazing permit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with this determination. Therefore, consultation has been completed. A copy of this consultation is on file with your local Ranger District.

Heritage and Cultural
You must obtain permission from this office, before conducting earth- disturbing activities on the National Forest. The Forest Service will arrange inspections of project areas and will prepare appropriate environmental and cultural documents before earth-disturbing activities proceed. These activities include road/earthen tank maintenance, as well as construction/reconstruction of trails, roads, earthen tanks, etc. Do not conduct any earth-disturbing activities on the Forest without written clearance from this office.

VIII. UTILIZATION MONITORING OF KEY AREAS
Monitoring Schedule for 2012 (Current Management)

Allowable Use: (Standards by Pasture and Key Area)

Pasture	Key Area	Key Species	Allowable Use	
			Upland	Riparian
All	Grassland Openings	Bluegrass & native bunchgrass	30-40%	
All	Riparian Areas	Woody riparian species		Not to exceed 25%
All	During “growing season”	All riparian grass & sedge		35%
All	During “dormant season”	All riparian grass & sedge		40%

If allowable use is reached on any key area prior to the scheduled off date, you will need to immediately move your livestock to the next unit or off National Forest if that unit is the last in the rotation. This will usually necessitate beginning the move one or more days prior to reaching allowable use or the scheduled off date.

Monitoring: The range personnel will conduct allotment inspections each year to ensure compliance with the terms and condition addressed in the Term Grazing Permit, including the Allotment Management Plan and Annual Operating Instructions. The permittee may also schedule inspections at any time.

Pasture	Monitoring Date	Key Areas
Round Mountain Pasture		1/4 mile southeast of the Round Mountain cluster
Turkey Run Pasture		Clusters in Turkey Run and 74 Draw
Winter Pasture		1/4 down Hoyt Creek from confluence of Lower Hoyt Creek & vicinity of mouth of Turkey Draw

The idea of a key area is to find a site that is representative of a larger area in which cattle obtain the majority of their required forage resources. Key area monitoring will avoid areas directly adjacent to permanent water sources, cattle trails, roads, and fence lines.

Upland areas will be monitored for use on perennial grass species.

Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted habitat will be monitored to ensure that current management is providing cover for rodent prey species, the residual biomass that will support prescribed natural and ignited fires that would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Forest, and regeneration of riparian trees.

District personnel will contact the permittees to coordinate site visits to monitor key areas. Permittee participation is encouraged. Forage utilization estimates will be consistent with the Forest Service Range Analysis Handbook methodology, and may also include FS Regional stubble-height standards, as well as other techniques generally accepted in the field of range management.

IX. NEPA AND APPEAL RIGHTS

These Instructions implement the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) decision for the Turkey Run Allotment dated September 25, 2007, and are not eligible for appeal under 36 CFR 251.