



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-La Sal
National Forest

Moab/Monticello Ranger District
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File Code: 2210/2230

Date: May 17, 2012

The Nature Conservancy
c/o Barry Baker
PO Box 1329
Moab, Utah 84532

**CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN
RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Dear Mr. Baker:

This letter will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Cottonwood C&H Allotment for the 2012 grazing season. This AOI is made part of your Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, item 8(a). A failure to follow these instructions is a violation of your permit. The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan. **Please read your instructions thoroughly.**

AUTHORIZED USE FOR 2012

Allotment	Numbers	Kind	Class	Season	Permittee	Non-use	
						Resource protection	Personal convenience
Cottonwood	411	Cattle	Cow/Calf	06/09 to 10/15	The Nature Conservancy		
Cottonwood	5	Horse	Mature	06/16 to 09/15	The Nature Conservancy		

GRAZING SYSTEM AND SCHEDULE

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Mormon Pasture (Indian Creek Herd)	200	Cattle	06/09 – 06/19 (trail through)
Brush Hole and Big Flat (Beef Basin Herd)	211	Cattle	6/20 – 06/30 (trail through)
Davis Pocket (Indian Creek Herd)	200	Cattle	06/20 – 07/20
Davis Pocket (Beef Basin Herd)	211	Cattle	07/01 – 07/20
Big Flat	411	Cattle	07/16 – 08/21
Round Mtn (transition pasture)*	411	Cattle	08/16 – 09/08
Chippean	411	Cattle	08/21 – 09/15
Maverick	411	Cattle	09/07 – 09/30
Mormon Pasture	411	Cattle	09/15 – 10/15

*Not all 411 will be in the pasture for the full 24 days. The pasture is being used to gather off of Big Flat and moving into Chippean.



Permitted pack and saddle stock authorized on the allotment for livestock management will not exceed four head. This is separate from the 5 head that is on your permit and you are billed for.

Your allotment should be inspected for range readiness to determine forage growth and fence and water improvement conditions. **The pasture move dates shown above are an estimate, and may change on the basis of actual range conditions.** 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.

PROPER GRAZING-USE INDICATORS

Utilization standards are tools used in achieving or moving towards desired rangeland conditions. Utilization standards are not the desired conditions or management objectives themselves, they are indicators. Desired conditions and objectives are discussed in the 1986 Forest Plan and/or the Allotment Management Plan.

Desired goals in the 1986 Forest Plan include:

- Bring livestock obligation in line with rangeland carrying capacity
- Maintain upward or stable trends in vegetation and soil condition.

Management Objectives in the 1979 Cottonwood AMP include:

- Achieve a good to excellent range condition in an upward trend so as to provide for a maximum sustained yield of forage.
- Increase desirable species composition, forage production and ground cover on suitable range.

The 1990 Forest Plan Amendment for Range Proper-Use Criteria states proper use as ranging from 40-65% use of upland key species depending on the grazing system applied and from 30-60% use of riparian key species depending season of use. This amendment kept the existing provision that proper use criteria are to be established on an allotment by allotment basis and as given in the AMP and AOIs.

For the Cottonwood allotment proper use criteria in 2012 are:

<u>Upland Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Spring/Summer	45-50%
Fall	55-60%
<u>Riparian Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Spring (Early and rapid growth)	50-60%
Summer (Moderate growth)	45-50%
Fall (Slow growth)	30-40% or 4-5 inches stubble or regrowth

There is a difference between where percentage utilized is applied and where stubble height is applied to determine proper use in riparian areas. Percent utilized is used for plant species that are within the larger riparian area (the area that is influenced by the stream and the water table) but not along the greenline. The greenline is the first perennial vegetation on or near the stream's edge that is at least one foot wide. Stubble height measurements are used to determine proper use along the greenline. The plant species considered are typically water loving species (hydric species) such as sedges.

It is your responsibility as the permittee to recognize when proper use has been reached and promptly move all cattle as necessary. If you need some assistance, or methods and tools for determining proper use, please contact Tina Marian.

When proper use has been reached in the unit being grazed, your cattle are to be herded to the next scheduled unit. **When proper use is reached in the last unit grazed, all cattle are to be removed from the allotment, even if this date is prior to the end of your grazing season.** Cattle found on the Allotment before or after the permitted grazing season will be billed at the unauthorized use rate and permit non-compliance actions will be initiated.

You should be aware that Forest Service policy provides that “an authorized officer may require the permittee to monitor and report information on compliance with the grazing permit, allotment management plan and annual operation instructions as a term and condition of your permit.”

To facilitate livestock moves, gates may be opened a few days prior to the scheduled move date only when moving into an adjacent pasture. Gates must be closed and the grazed pasture entirely cleaned of livestock no later than five days following the scheduled move date. Grazed pastures must be kept clean of livestock following the pasture move.

IMPROVEMENTS

As discussed during your 2012 AOI meeting, the Hop Creek Gap fence you were assigned was not accessible due to a badly washed out trail, however you did complete the North Long Point fence as agreed. **The two springs on Starvation point that were assigned last year need to be inspected and verified that they are meeting standards before you will be allowed to enter the allotment this year.**

As discussed during your 2012 AOI meeting:

FENCE AGREEMENT: For 2012, you have agreed to heavy maintenance on the fence listed as #52052-Big Flat fence, which is located in the Poison Canyon area as approximately shown in the map below.

SPRING AGREEMENTS: For 2012, you have agreed to heavy maintenance on two spring developments in the Davis Pocket pasture. The permit refers to these springs as the Davis Pocket Spring (#54092) and the Horse Mtn. Spring #2 (#54082) as shown on the map attached.

When you complete your fence and spring agreements you must fill out and sign the Improvement Agreement Form (pink) that is found in your folder. I suggest that you provide photographs of before and after conditions to assist in documenting compliance with maintenance requirements. I also encourage you to contact Tina when you complete your maintenance so she can schedule a timely inspection.

If you fail to bring the above agreed improvements up to standard by **October 15th, 2012** you will not be allowed to stock the allotment in 2013 until the agreement is fulfilled.

Range improvements are essential in ensuring that livestock are well distributed and that Forest standards and guides are met.

- Improvements are to be maintained to standard prior to livestock entering the pasture and that failure to do so is a violation of their permit and action will be taken when violations are documented.
- If improvements have not been maintained, then develop a schedule to bring them up to standard.
- Until all improvements are functional it is not appropriate to authorize full numbers or season of use, unless assurances can be made that utilization standards will not be exceeded.

The maintenance of all structural improvements listed under part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit, Special Terms and Conditions: *Construction and Maintenance of Structural Improvements* is a requirement and should be completed prior to your entry into each pasture. The allotment permittee or permittees are responsible for the maintenance of all structural range improvements on this allotment. For allotments managed by an Association or Herd Manager specific maintenance responsibilities may be assigned to individual permittees by the Association President or Herd Manager.

If you wish to use forest products (trees and oak brush) from the National Forest to maintain your fences/spring exclosures on your allotment, you must receive authorization from either the Moab or Monticello Office prior to cutting.

NEPA and PLANNED PROJECTS

The Cottonwood Allotment is scheduled to have an environmental analysis completed in 2014. Forest Service staff will be collecting data on the allotment this year and next in preparation for the analysis. You are invited and encouraged to participate in data collection and monitoring activities.

There is also current planning and preparation for a vegetation treatment on Maverick Point. You may contact Greg Montgomery (435-636-3348) for further details on this project.

MISCELLANEOUS

Refer to Special Terms and Conditions in Part 3 of Term Grazing Permit for specific instructions pertaining to maintenance standards for range stock water developments, range fences, corrals, and herding standards.

All permitted livestock must be branded with your registered brand as documented in your Term Permit before they enter the National Forest.

Place salt blocks away from water, roads, meadows and other open areas so as to draw livestock into areas that receive light utilization. When livestock leave a pasture move the salt out of the pasture as well.

You will furnish sufficient riders or herders to achieve proper distribution of livestock.

Certified Weed Free Hay must be used if you do any supplemental feeding of horses on the allotment while gathering or moving cattle.

If you find the need to use mechanical clearing (tractors, bulldozers etc.) of fence lines or to clean ponds or other water improvements, you must have proper archeological clearance and permission from the District Ranger.

Enclosed in your AOI folder you will find an Actual Use Record sheet. As your 2012 grazing season progresses, please fill out this form in detail and return it promptly at the end of the grazing season. There are also extra sheets included in the folder where you are encouraged to document management on your allotment.

PAYMENT OF FEES

The permittee will not allow owned or controlled livestock to be on Forest Service-administered lands unless the fees specified in the Bill for Collection are paid and confirmation of payment through the "lock box" process is received prior to livestock entering NFS lands.

I am looking forward to working with you this summer. Please call Tina Marian (435-636-3368) if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL DIEM
District Ranger

Cc: Matt Redd

