



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Sawtooth National Forest
Ketchum Ranger District

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File Code: 2210

Date: May 24, 2012

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2012 Annual Operating Instructions

For Faulkner Land and Livestock Co.; Sawtooth Sheep

Sheep and Goat Allotments

Administered by

The Ketchum Ranger District

Sawtooth National Forest

Permit # 3010, 3031

**Prepared and recommended by: Bill Whitaker, Range Management
Technician**

Approved by: /s/ Kurt J Nelson May 24, 2012
District Ranger Date



Annual Operating Instructions 2012

INTRODUCTION

Permittee: Faulkner Land and Livestock Co.; Sawtooth Sheep Inc.

Allotments Included: Baker Cr. S&G; Lake Cr. S&G; East Fork Wood River S&G

Permitted Numbers and Seasons:

Numbers	Season	Allotment	Head Months (HM)
Variable numbers and season. Not to exceed 4181 head months (HM). Lamb band not to exceed 2500 total animals; dry band not to exceed 1400 total animals	06/12- 09/25	Baker Creek S&G	4181
2000 yearlings (8359 HM)	06/12-10/15	Lake Cr. S&G	8359
2000 yearlings not to exceed 3400 HM Variable numbers and season not to exceed 2000 yearlings or 1143 ewes with lambs or 3400 HM	07/01- 09/30 6/16-09/30	East Fork Wood River S&G	3400

Authorized Season of Use and Numbers for 2012

Band #3 - Baker Creek Allotment (Herder and Camp Tender: Dorteo and Clementario)

Numbers	Season	Allotment	Head months
1000 ewes/lambs	6/15-08/05	Baker Cr.	1710
950 ewe	08/06 (ship Newman Corral, cull 35)	Baker Cr.	31
450 ewe (add to #5 on 8/13)	08/07-08/13	Baker Cr.	104
500 ewe (K/S driveway to combine with Lake	08/07-08/09	K/S driveway to Lake Cr.	49

Cr.)			
5 horse	6/15-8/8	Baker Cr.	9

Band #5 - Band from Fairfield Ranger District shipping Newman Corrals (Herder and Camp tender: Simone and ?)

Numbers	Season	Allotment	Head Months
900 ewes/lambs	08/05-08/12	Baker Cr.	237
900 ewe dry band	08/13 (ship Newman corral, cull 35)	Baker Cr., Newman corrals	26
1315 ewes (combined dry band from #3, 450 ewes and #5, 865 ewes)	08/14-08/17	Ketchum/Stanley driveway to Smiley Cr.	173
2 horses, 3 mules	06/15-08/17	Baker Cr.	10

Band #4, Lake Creek Allotment (Herder: Zenobio)

Numbers	Season	Allotment	Head Months
990 ewes/lambs	06/20-08/08	Lake Cr.	1627
940 ewe	08/09(ship, cull 50)	Lake Cr.	31
1440 ewes	08/10-08/12	Lake Cr.	142
1440 ewes (trail to East Fork Allotment)	08/13-08/15	Ketchum Driveway to East Fk.	142
2 horse	6/20-08/15	Lake Cr.	74

Band #4 (#5&4 combined), East Fork Allotment (Herder: Zenobio)

Numbers	Season	Allotment	Head Months
1440 ewes	08/16-09/30	East Fork	2178
2 Horse	08/16-09/30	East Fork	3

BILLING

Confirmation of payment of fees through the Lock Box in San Francisco must be received prior to livestock entering the allotment. For the purpose of accountability please contact either Bill Whitaker or Robert Garcia 5 days prior to entering the allotments.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Emphasis will be placed upon once-over light use while grazing the bands on the allotments. Carefully review with your herders the **Terms and Conditions** section of this document which contains specific management standards, guidelines, conditions, and practices found in the 2003 Sawtooth National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) as well as your Term Grazing Permit.

Reminder: All livestock feed or straw brought on to the Forest is to be certified noxious weed free.

Specific instructions or management actions, such as routing, or areas to avoid will be found in the sections of this AOI specific to the allotment and the band that uses it.

Baker Creek Sheep Allotment

Allotment inspections indicate that soil and vegetation recovery following the 2007 Castle Rock Fire was sufficient to allow grazing to resume over the allotment with the following exceptions:

Although aspen stands and riparian areas that burned during the Castle Rock fire have recovered to the degree identified to allow grazing in the recovery plan developed for the Castle Rock fire they may still be vulnerable to damage by sheep if not carefully managed. Aspen stands that burned may be grazed by the band however use should be very light or avoided if possible. Avoid any concentrations of sheep grazing within individual aspen stands that burned or other practices such as bedding.

Riparian areas that burned should only be used for watering the band with the band widely distributed. Avoid any concentrations of sheep in burned riparian areas. Once the band has been watered it should be moved and nooned well away from the riparian area. We will continue monitoring grazing use in these recovery areas to insure impacts are not unacceptable.

The grazing rotation on the Baker Creek allotment shall be as follows:

A ewe/lamb band of 1000 ewes (Band #3) will enter the allotment at Adams Gulch on June 15. The band will trail across the Adams Gulch drainage and use the lower portions of the Adams Gulch and Fox Creek Units first (Hulen Meadows area north to Oregon Gulch, excluding Adams Gulch). **The Adams Gulch drainage is to be used only for trailing in order to access other portions of the allotment.** When the band trails across Adams Gulch the herder will route the sheep such that they access the Hulen Meadows area by following the Forest boundary just east of the Adams Gulch trailhead. Grazing northerly, the band will use the lower slopes above

Hulen Meadows, Fox Creek, and the Chocolate Gulch drainages to Oregon Gulch. When the band reaches the Oregon Gulch drainage it will cross Oregon Gulch near the trailhead and trail through the old Oregon Gulch Cattle and Horse Allotment. The trailing route through this allotment should be well above the Oregon Gulch riparian area. After trailing through the old cattle allotment, the band will then graze up Oregon Gulch to the East Fork of Baker Creek. The band will use the upper portions of the East Fork of Baker Creek drainage, including portions of the South Fork and Alden Gulch, headwaters of Kendall Gulch and the Easley Gulch drainages. The band will graze down the East Fork drainage to ship at the Newman Creek corrals on approximately August 6. After shipping, from approximately August 7 thru August 9, 500 dry ewes will be trailed to the Lake Creek allotment via the Ketchum Driveway to combine with the Lake Creek dry band on August 10 forming a 1440 head ewe band. This band will begin trailing to the East Fork allotment via the Ketchum Driveway on August 13. When the dry ewes trail to the Lake Creek allotment they may use the area south of Highway 75 between Baker Creek and the North Fork of Wood River in lieu of the driveway.

After shipping (August 6) 450 ewes will remain on the Baker Creek allotment and graze the Newman and Buccal drainages until approximately 8/13 when it will combine with band #5 (Fairfield trail band).

On August 5, 900 ewes with lambs (Band #5) will enter the Baker Creek allotment from Big Peak on the Fairfield Ranger District. The band will graze/trail down Baker Cr. and reach the corrals at Newman Creek to ship on 08/12. It will ship the following day (8/13), and a combined dry band (band #3 and #5) will be formed of 1315 dry ewes and will use the Ketchum/Stanley Driveway and trail to the Smiley Creek allotment from 8/14-8/17.

- **We realize that it may not be entirely possible to avoid crossing areas that have been previously grazed when moving the bands about the allotment. You are authorized to trail across areas that were previously grazed in order to access unused portions of the allotment. Time spent trailing across previously used areas will be limited as much as possible. Careful planning and routing the sheep should be used to minimize this practice.**
- **Continue to avoid the spring area in Oregon Gulch that inspections have indicated is not meeting resource objectives (reference the attached map).**
- **Please have your herder avoid the “hollyhock area” in the Fox Creek drainage as we discussed at this year’s spring meeting. The area is identified on the AOI map.**
- **As we discussed during this year’s AOI meeting excessive soil movement was observed on steep south facing aspects immediately above the system trail in the Fox Creek drainage (reference attached map). Please work with my range staff to develop ways in which to avoid this area or reduce trailing effects.**
- **As discussed this spring heavy impacts associated with watering the Fairfield trail band were observed on Baker Creek at the mouth of Lost Shirt Gulch last year**

(reference map). Please avoid or use this area very lightly when the band trails to the corrals at Newman Creek.

- **The trough in Alden Gulch is due for replacement. Please coordinate with my range staff so that a new trough can be installed.**
- **The Adams Gulch drainage is closed to grazing. Limited trailing across this drainage is authorized at the beginning of the season as described in this AOI.**
- **The areas in the immediate vicinity of the summer home areas in the Newman Creek and Baker Creek drainages are closed to grazing.**
- **Please reference the allotment map for closures in the Baker Creek drainage. You are authorized one day for band #5 to trail across the closed area in the headwaters of the Baker Creek drainage.**
- **When shipping at the Newman Creek corral, the sheep are to be trailed immediately into the corral. They are to be held in the corral until all sorting is complete. The dry band will be trailed well away from the corral area (1/4 mile) before watering or grazing.**

Lake Creek Sheep Allotment

Lamb band #4 consisting of 990 ewes will enter the Lake Cr. allotment via the Ketchum/ Stanley Driveway on 06/20. This band will use the Eagle Creek Unit first this year. This is the first year of a two year deferment cycle on this allotment. The band will enter the allotment from the driveway and access Eagle Creek through Taylor Gulch. The Taylor Gulch drainage will be used primarily as an access route from the Lake Creek drainage to the Eagle Creek drainage. The band may water one time in Taylor Gulch below the end of the road to the mouth of Taylor Gulch. Beyond the end of the road the band will remain high well above the upper portions of the Taylor Gulch riparian area. Please note sufficient area should be skipped in the lower portions of the Lake Creek drainage by this band to provide sufficient un-grazed area for the combined dry band (#3 and #4) to use prior to trailing to the East Fork allotment. After the Eagle Creek drainage is grazed to standard the band will cross into the upper portions of the Lake Creek drainage. The band will graze down Lake Creek in preparation for shipping on August 9. On approximately 8/10 the Lake Creek band (940 ewes) will combine with 500 ewes from the Baker Creek allotment forming a 1440 head dry band and leave the Forest (8/13-8/15) trailing to the East Fork allotment via the Ketchum Driveway.

- **The aspen stands just below the Lake Creek pond will be avoided, as heavy bedding and use have greatly impacted ground cover and regeneration. The remaining stands along the north facing toe slopes in Lake Creek should be used very lightly.**

- **As discussed previously in this AOI, Taylor Gulch will be primarily used as a route between the Eagle Creek and Lake Creek drainages. The drainage bottoms and riparian areas will be avoided upstream from the end of the road in Taylor Gulch.**
- **The south facing aspects above the corrals in Lake Creek should be avoided. This is not only to reduce impacts on the steep harsh aspects but to reduce the potential of spreading DalmationToadflax which heavily infests this area.**
- **Plan on looking at potential trough locations in the lower portions of Lake Creek associated with the Lake Creek pipeline with my range staff this year.**

East Fork Sheep Allotment

On approximately 8/16 a 1440-head dry band from the Lake Cr. allotment will enter the East Fork allotment at Hook Draw. After grazing Hook Draw to standard the band will trail back down the Cove Creek road to enter the East Fork allotment below Spring Canyon. The band will then graze easterly using the side drainages away from the main East Fork of the Big Wood River. Much of the area immediately adjacent to the East Fork of Wood River should be left for the band as it grazes back down the drainage preparing to leave the allotment. The band will leave the allotment on 9/30.

- **The band should be well dispersed as it grazes through each side canyon and passage will be once over. Plan the routes accordingly to best utilize the upland forage while minimizing impacts to the narrow riparian corridors.**
- **The trough in the canyon above the BLM should be inspected for functionality, and then used one time.**
- **Big and Little Basin in the Hyndman drainage will continue to be excluded from grazing use.**
- **When entering the allotment at Hook Draw the band will water on the private property you have leased rather than at the spring on the BLM at the mouth of Driveway Gulch.**

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). **Procedures for modifying this AOI:** 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.

REPORTING

The permittee is required to provide timely and complete actual use information to the Forest Officer in charge upon request. Use of calendars, maps, or actual use forms provided will be utilized to record dates for turning out, shipping, leaving the allotment, as well as location and number of days of use of each camp and or prominent drainage (those identified on maps).

We need to know dates of entry into each new allotment or major drainage, noteworthy change in sheep numbers, occupied camp or band locations with dates of occupancy, periods of use within specific drainages, and maintenance of range facilities. Please notify us of significant losses, from predators or poisonous plants, herding problems (logistical or due to unforeseen circumstances), conflicts with other Forest users, and any other grazing related information you feel is worth reporting. Weekly reporting for trail information updates will suffice as actual use reporting with the addition of any notable changes in numbers of mature sheep.

INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

Inspections will be made within each allotment to monitor grazing use and insure compliance with the direction set forth within the AOI. Standard monitoring will include visual inspections, photo points, and rapid assessments to estimate use and ground cover. Monitoring as identified in the Baker Creek Allotment Management Plan will continue. This will include spring and stream implementation monitoring in Baker Creek and the East Fk. of Baker Creek and aspen effectiveness monitoring.

2012 SEASON GRAZING RESULTS

Baker Creek Allotment - Overall grazing standards were met the herder did a good job moving through the allotment and posting guard dog signs as they went. Areas needing more attention in Fox Creek and on Baker Creek at the mouth of Lost Shirt Gulch have been identified in the routing instructions for the Baker Creek allotment.

COOPERATION

Once again this year we will work in partnership with Blaine County, the Idaho Department of Fish & Game and the Defenders of Wildlife (Susanne Stone 208-424-9385) in fostering a non-lethal approach to preventing sheep and wolf mortality. Emphasis will be on the Ketchum Ranger District, the Sawtooth National recreation Area, and other areas within Blaine County south of Galena Summit. Coordination will be important. Adjustments can be made to routing or bedding as the need arises, to head off problems. Meetings will be scheduled as necessary to assess how things are going or prevent potential problems.

Questions about what can or cannot be done in reference to defending flocks, harassing wolves, or shooting wolves should be directed to Jerome Hansen at the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) Regional Office in Jerome, Idaho (208-324-4359) or John Rachel at the fish and Game office in Boise Idaho (208-334-3700): Todd Grimm, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services in

Boise, Idaho (208-378-5077); or local Wildlife Service's contacts. Permittee's should continue working with their local Wildlife Services representative on depredation issues.

In order to reduce the potential for depredation, the Forest Service recommends that the following procedures be implemented each grazing season:

Keep camp meat in coolers, and not hung.

Burn, bury, or pack out food leftovers, bones, garbage etc. including food not consumed by dogs accompanying the herders.

Bury or remove sheep and saddle stock carcasses from the area where they will not serve as an attractant to predators. The intent of this recommendation is not to require removal of carcasses from the allotment, but to remove them out of areas currently being grazed of areas soon to be grazed.

Work with IDF&G and Wildlife Services in implementing other effective preventative actions to reduce the risk of depredation.

Contact the range staff at the Ketchum Ranger District (208-622-5371) for local Wildlife Service's contact information.

The Forest Service recognizes that Faulkner Land and Livestock and Sawtooth Sheep and the Idaho Department of Fish & Game have developed a "Best Management Practice for Separation between Domestic Sheep and Bighorn Sheep" agreement because of the potential for conflict between wild sheep and domestics. In addition to BMP's agreed to in that agreement, we also require the herders conduct regular sightings throughout the day for bighorn sheep. We also require that the herder make the appropriate contact with the Forest Service or Idaho Department of Fish & Game when a bighorn sheep sighting is reported on or within a minimum of one mile of the sheep bands while the sheep are grazing on the Baker Creek, Lake Creek or East Fork allotments or the Ketchum/Stanley driveway. .

We will continue to update the weekly recreation trail report regarding the location of sheep bands. This along with signing informing the public that sheep are in the area has proven successful in preventing conflicts with recreational use of the trails. We will be contacting you on a weekly basis while the bands are on the Ketchum Ranger District to provide us with updated information.

The potential of conflicts between grazing, such as guard dogs and the general public recreating on the district is especially high on the Baker Creek and Lake Creek allotments due to the proximity of several high use recreation trails, roads, and busy trailheads. The herder will need to be especially attentive with the sheep and guard dogs to reduce conflicts while in these areas, especially if in close proximity to system trails or roads. The trailheads and major trails will be posted informing the public that sheep are in the area.

DROUGHT

Drought conditions will be monitored as the season progresses. Grazing will be managed on an allotment by allotment basis focusing on water availability and soil disturbance. A water truck and temporary troughs may be needed as the season progresses to insure better distribution.

Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines and Grazing Permit Terms and Conditions for Sheep Grazing

Following are the Terms and Conditions applicable to sheep grazing that must be followed while grazing on the Ketchum Ranger District.

These permit terms and conditions are needed to move toward or to achieve the desired conditions, goals, and objectives for vegetation, wildlife, fish, riparian, soil and water resources described by the Sawtooth Forest Land & Resource Management Plan. Other than *Guidelines*, the following Terms & Conditions are binding limitations placed on management actions. *Guidelines* represent preferred or advisable courses of action that are generally expected to be carried out.

Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines:

- Only one night/one time use of bed grounds is allowed. (standard)
- Only open or or loose sheep herding will be practiced except where site-specific vegetation management (e.g., noxious weed control or reforestation) is needed. (standard)
- Only annual once-over sheep grazing will be allowed, with the exception of designated sheep sheep driveways, travel routes, or where specifically authorized. (standard)
- Livestock salting will be prohibited in RCA's (riparian conservation areas). Sheep will be salted only at bed grounds. Salt will be placed in containers and moved with the sheep. Tarps and hollowed logs meet the criterea for salting in containers. (standard)
- Only certified noxious weed-free hay, straw, or feed is allowed on National Forest Systems lands. (standard)
- Earth-disturbing equipment used on National Forest System lands- such as cats, graders, and front-loaders-shall be cleaned to remove all visible plant parts, dirt, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds. Cleaning shall occur prior to entry onto the project area and again upon leaving the project area, if the project area has noxious weed infestations. (standard)
- New, reconstructed, or replaced livestock water developments must provide access and escape to and from water for all types of wildlife. (standard, refrence part Three of the Term Grazing Permit under maintenance of structural range improvments)
- On all lands outside of designated travelways, motorized use shall be prohibited unless otherwise authorized. (standard)
- Damage to or loss of Forest System trails from timber harvest, livestock grazing, road construction, mining, special uses, and prescribed fire activities should be repaired or mitigated by the appropriate party. (guideline)
- Sheep should be routed to avoid slopes with loose soil conditions, active gullies, and snowbank areas that have low productivity, soil puddling, and compaction conditions.

(guideline, generally site specific in the AOI)

SHEEP HERDING:

1. The permittee or herd manager will provide sufficient riders or herders to obtain proper distribution, protection, and management of sheep on the allotment as required by the Rangeland Project Decision (RPD)/Allotment Management Plan (AMP) and/or the Annual Operating Instructions (AOI).
2. Do not allow sheep to be shaded or bedded within 100 yards of all streams. If this is not reasonable due to topography ensure that the sheep are as far back as possible from the streambank.
3. Graze no closer than 200 yards from all lakes or ponds specified as closed to sheep grazing in Part 3 or your Term Grazing Permit. This may not apply on all allotments. Check Part 3 on your Term Grazing Permit.
4. Do not bed sheep within 200 yards of designated campgrounds, trails, trail heads, or maintained roads.
5. Graze rather than trail to water, and water at different locations each time.
6. The permittee is required to provide a copy of the Annual Operating Instructions to each herder, and to ensure each herder understands the written contents.

OTHER

7. Permittees are responsible for cleaning or repairing system roads and trails damaged by sheep to the condition existing prior to trailing. Immediate action is required. (standard)
8. All predator control will be in accordance with the approved Predator Control Plan and Federal and State laws and regulations.
9. Promptly remove or bury any sheep that have died within 100 yards or in sight of administrative sites, system roads or trails, corrals or sources of water.
10. Before and after shipping, sheep will not be allowed to graze, shade, or bed within one-quarter mile of the corral. Exception: After leaving the corral, the sheep will be allowed to water one time before departing the immediate area.
11. Control guard dogs when other Forest users or pets are near by.

SHEEP CAMPS

12. Each camp will be kept clean. All litter and unburned material from fire pits will be hauled away and disposed of off-Forest. Human waste must be buried if it is within 150 feet from water. The use of detergent in streams is prohibited.

13. Only existing herder camps are approved for use. New camp locations must be approved by a Forest Service officer.
14. Camps will be kept in primitive condition. No improvements will be allowed. If a new fire pit is constructed, dismantled it and restore the area before moving your camp.
15. Herder camp use will not exceed 5 days per location unless prior permission is obtained from a Forest officer. Camps should be located to avoid conflict with other Forest users
16. At camp, pack and saddle stock will be high-lined, picketed or hobbled. Tying pack or saddle stock to trees at camp is prohibited.
17. Holding pens, corrals, or mangers used for riding stock will be cleaned up when camp is moved.

FIRE

18. Employees must be kept informed of the current fire danger, situation, and the permittee's fire prevention responsibility. The Forest Service will advise the permittee when special fire restrictions become effective.
19. Exhaust from camp stoves must be filtered through a spark arrestor screen with 3/8 inch (or smaller) mesh.
20. Never leave campfires unattended.
21. Possession of an adequate shovel and bucket for fire control is required at camps.

WOLF Guidelines

22. The permittee will be contacted immediately when the district becomes aware of wolves in an area. Possible re-routing of the band may be agreed on between the permittee and the District Ranger.
23. At camp, meat will be kept in containers to avoid attracting wolves.
24. Food wastes will be burned, buried, or packed out with other camp refuse.
25. Preventive measures should be coordinated with Idaho Fish and Game.
26. Only bed sheep down for one night per bed ground under normal circumstances. 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. Bed ground site selection needs to be discussed with the Range Management Specialist in this situation.

IMPROVEMENTS

27. The permittee is responsible for the maintenance of structural range improvements as delineated on Part 3 of your Term grazing Permit. These improvements will be maintained prior to placing sheep on the allotment. Please refer to your permit for the specific maintenance standards for structural range improvements.

Enclosures: Allotment Maps, Spanish Standards and Guidelines, Spanish Annual Operating Instructions