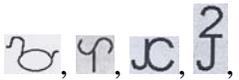


2012 Annual Operating Instructions  
Meadows Valley C&H Allotment  
New Meadows Ranger District  
Payette National Forest

These Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the Meadows Valley Cattle Allotment for the 2012 grazing season. These instructions were developed with the participation of the livestock permittees on April 18, 2012. Those in attendance were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
1. <u>Rod and Darla Johnson</u>	<u>Permittee</u>
2. <u>Stan Branstetter</u>	<u>Permittee</u>
3. <u>Everett Osborn</u>	<u>Permittee</u>
4. <u>Neil Osborn</u>	<u>Permittee</u>
5. <u>Amy Baumer</u>	<u>Range Specialist</u>
6. <u>Brian McMorris</u>	<u>Range Specialist</u>
7. <u>Kim Pierson</u>	<u>New Meadows District Ranger</u>

<u>PERMITTEE</u>	<u>PERMITTED NUMBERS / SEASON</u>	<u>2012 AUTHORIZED NUMBERS / SEASON</u>
Osborn Ranch	343 cow/calf 6/1- 9/30	310 cow/calf 6/1 – 9/30
(Private land permit)	15 cow/calf 6/1- 9/30	15 cow/calf 6/1 – 9/30
Rod & Darla Johnson	341 cow/calf 6/1- 9/30	310 cow/calf 6/1 – 9/30
Stan & Mary Branstetter	44 cow/calf 6/1- 9/30	44 cow/calf 6/1 – 9/30

All cattle on the Meadows Valley C&H allotment should be branded with the ,  or  brands.

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.

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 season of use and livestock numbers permitted on any given year may be adjusted by the District Ranger. The season of use is dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation and temperature) which influence 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 and Allowable Use/Mitigation Measures**

As allowable use grazing criteria and mitigation measures are reached, livestock are moved to the next grazing Unit or off the allotment.

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. There was a 40% use recorded at the Goose Creek MIM Site on 9/8/2011 (mid-season). Then on 10/11/2011 it was recorded as 32% use (end of growing season). All other monitoring met allowable use standards.

**2012 Grazing Rotation**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Prescription</u>	<u>Allowable Use/Mitigation Measures</u>
Meadows Slope Unit	Turnout 6/1 or at Range readiness	40% allowable use on upland vegetation. 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 30% use in riparian areas.
Ecks Flat Unit	Turnout 6/1 or at Range readiness	(Same as Meadows Slope Unit)

Goose Lake Unit	Use after flowering	40% allowable use on upland vegetation. 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 40% allowable use in riparian areas that drain into Goose Lake and in all other riparian areas 30% allowable use
Corral Creek Unit	Last	40% allowable use on upland vegetation. 4" stubble height on hydric greenline species or 30% use in riparian areas.

**Meadows Slope/Ecks Flat Units**

Cattle will be turned out in two areas. Osborn Ranch will turn out their cattle in the Ecks Flat Unit. Branstetter and Johnson will turnout in the Meadows Slope Unit. Monitoring of these units will occur several weeks after turn-out. Once allowable use is reached livestock will be moved into the Goose Lake Unit.

**Goose Lake Unit**

This unit will be monitored after the livestock enter the unit. The permittees will move their livestock to the Corral Creek Unit once allowable use is met.

**Corral Creek Unit**

This unit will be monitored after the livestock enter the unit. Once allowable use is reached (or September 30, whichever is sooner), livestock will be removed from the allotment.

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.

Salt placement is required to be at least ¼ mile from a riparian plant community, should be located ¼ mile from timber plantations until the trees have grown to a size that reduces their susceptibility to damage from livestock, and 100 feet off roads, where possible. 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.

**Livestock Trailing Instructions/Livestock Shipping Instructions**

Livestock are trailed onto the allotment from adjacent private land or trucked to the first grazing Unit. All livestock are trailed off of the allotment onto adjacent private lands through the Meadows Slope Unit.

**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.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. If you are aware of spring developments that need reconstruction or extensive maintenance, please discuss this with the Forest Service. All water developments which utilize a storage tank must have a wildlife escape ramp installed and maintained.

The Rock Flat water development and water gap was completed last fall. This will need to be modified into a permit. The Bear Creek water development was not able to be developed due to resource concerns from other specialists.

The Forest Service and permittee will continue to monitor the Brundage Reservoir drift fence and evaluate if cows can get through the blow down or not. A micro burst went through the area in the fall of 2009.

The permitties will be allowed to go off trail to salt and maintain range improvements. When salting they will be allowed 2 times (once to put it out and once to gather unused salt). When working on range improvements they will be allowed 4 times throughout the year to put up, maintain, and take down. If more times are needed to drive off road you will need to notify the District Ranger, and they will make a decision on a case by case bases.

### **MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING ACTIVITY**

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed. Forms may be completed by each individual permittee or one form can be completed by the group. However, a form should be completed for each unit grazed by livestock. 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 2013 AOI meeting.

### **MULTIPLE USE REQUIREMENTS**

All plantation grazing must be coordinated with the Forest Service prior to grazing the plantations. The plantation fence above Last Chance was pulled out in 2008. You will need to make sure cattle do not hang out in this area.

The Meadows Slope 5 (Martin Creek to Six Mile) project has completed the road work and will be logged this year. This project is scheduled for completion December 2012. This is in the Meadows Slope Unit. A map was provided at the AOI meeting in 2010.

Meadows Slope 1 (Last Chance to 3 Mile) will start logging roughly in June/July. There is no road work just logging. A map was provide in 2010.

The Meadows Slope 4 will probably be sold June /July, and Rocky Bear project probably sold September. Logging, thinning, and road work could possibly start in 2012. There is no

prescribed burning planned at this time. A map of both projects was provided at the AOI meeting.

Meadows Slope Fire Reduction Project could have burning (pile and broadcast) and thinning this year. This would be on the Brundage S&G Allotment next to the Meadows Valley Allotment.

The Brundage Bear Basin project will hopefully be signed this spring. The prep and sale could happen this winter or 2013 spring. A small part of this project boundary is on this allotment. Map provided at AOI meeting.

The Brundage VMP project is on the east side of the Goose Lake Road but on the west side of Brundage Mountain. There is a little left to be logged around Goose Creek Overlook (Clough Point). Osborns will need to coordinate with the Forest Service when they trail up the Goose Lake Road to help mitigate any log truck traffic that might occur. This project is on the Brundage S&G Allotment, but there will be increased truck traffic on the Goose Lake Road.

There may be work on stream crossings on the Twin Lakes/Granite Mountain trail this year.

There was a fence constructed around the stream channel by the Association Corrals in 2010. We will be looking into putting a water tank in and out of the corrals to help keep cattle out of the fenced off area.

The Duck Lake Trail will have the old log culvert pulled out this year.

If there is damage to Forest System trails by the permittees' livestock the permittees will need to repair it or pay for it to be repaired.

There could be another Rendezvous in the Association Meadow around August 4 or 11.

There will be road work done in the Ecks Flat area this year. This could happen while livestock are in the area, but currently there is no time set when they will be working in there.

There could possibly be a race from West Face Parking lot going up onto the allotment. The route hasn't been designated or a permit issued at this time. You will be notified if and when this occurs.

A Collation Project has begun planning this year. Currently it does not include this allotment. It is west of Hwy 95.

### **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.

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.

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

*/s/ Kim Pierson*  
Kim Pierson  
New Meadows District Ranger

5-17-2012  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Osborn Ranch Inc.  
Permittee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rodney and Darla Johnson  
Permittee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stanley and Mary Branstetter  
Permittee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date