

Copper Basin C&H Allotment 2013 Annual Operating Instructions

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

Approved By: /s/ Diane L. Weaver 6/3/2013
Diane L. Weaver Date
District Ranger

Prepared By: /s/ Joshua L. Edwards 4/30/2013
Joshua L. Edwards Date
Rangeland Management Specialist

Accepted By: _____
Bret Zollinger Date
Permittee

6X Ranch LLC. Date
Permittee

Carol Donahue Date
Permittee

/s/ Mark Schue 5/10/2013
No Tellum Creek Ranch, LLC Date
Permittee

/s/ Scott McAfee 5/2/2013
Scott McAfee Date
Permittee

/s/ Bart Wojciechowski _____
Scott & Tina McAfee Date
President, Copper Basin Grazing Association

2013 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

COPPER BASIN ALLOTMENT

SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

Below is your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Copper Basin Allotment. This AOI addresses Forest Service administered lands within the Copper Basin Allotment and reflects information discussed during the meeting on April 4, 2013. Please review your Term Grazing Permit for general and special terms for: range and livestock management, grazing utilization, range improvement maintenance, salting, and forest plan standards and guidelines. Actual on-dates and off-dates are dependant on range readiness and when allowable use standards are met. 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 or other unexpected circumstances.

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Term</u>	Permitted Cattle Authorized		<u>Season</u>	<u>Brand</u>
		<u>Non-Use</u>	<u>2013</u>		
Terrence Donahue	503		503	7/1-10/15	
Scott McAfee	350		350	7/1-10/15	
Bart/Tina	187		187	6/6-10/15	
Wojciechowski	50		50	7/1-10/15	
Parsons Creek	100		100	6/6-10/15	
	275		275	7/1-10/15	
Bret Zollinger	188		188	6/6-10/15	
	50		50	7/1-10/15	
6 X Ranch	704		200	6/6-10/15	
			87	7/1-10/15	
			385	7/5-10/15	
No Tellum Cr Ranch	410		410	6/6-10/15	
Total	2817		2785		

<u>Grazing Unit Rotation</u>	<u>Estimated Days</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Mine Hill	25	6/6-6/30	Early Cows
Navarre	15	7/1-7/15	Early Cows
Lehman Canyon(late)	10	7/1-7/10	Late Cows
Sugarloaf	7	7/16-7/22	Early Cows
Trail Lower Coyote	2T	7/23-7/24	Early Cows Trail
Horse Wallow/Little Lake Creek	18	7/11-7/28	Herd Together
Lower Riparian*	4	7/29-8/1	
Potholes/Basin Flats	21	8/2-8/22	
Little Canyons/Anderson/Swamps	24	8/23-9/15	
Cabin/Mine Canyon/Upper Riparian	12	9/16-9/27	
Corral	9	9/28-10/6	
Coyote	7	10/7-10/13	
Hamilton	2	10/14-10/15	
High Canyons	Rest		
Lehman Basin	Rest		

* small units to be used this year

These dates are an estimate and may vary \pm 2-5 days under normal circumstances. Moves will be authorized by Rangeland Manager based on resource conditions.

Overlap in unit use is expected, cattle may be in up to 3 units at once while trailing and placing livestock in the units designated with the *. When the other units are used there are to be cattle in no more than 2 units. There are a number of units in this allotment that are small and using them with the entire herd at one time would increase the potential for resource damage. Managing the herd in these smaller units with a lead, middle and rear group of cattle has proved to be the most effective way to graze and is recommended in the management plan. Movements will be based on move triggers (**discussed below in Allowable Use Standard**). This will be done with the understanding that the end of season indicators must be met. Small numbers of livestock that are left behind or in units not authorized at such time can cause severe resource damage, so immediate removal of such livestock is expected.

Modifications to the grazing unit rotation and estimated days of use must be requested by the permittee in advance and approved by the Forest Service. The Forest Service may initiate modifications in consultation with the permittees when changes to scheduled use are needed due to unexpected deficiencies in range conditions such as but not limited to: predatory issues, forage production, soil moisture, precipitation, insect damage, fire, hail or plant growth/recovery during drought condition.

A Notice of Non-Compliance was issued to the permittees on the Copper Basin Allotment this year for **failure to follow management instructions**.

The following actions and timeframes for accomplishment are required of you to remedy the non-compliance:

1. In 2012 and 2013, all livestock are to be kept in the schedule pasture according to the AOI or direction from myself or a rangeland management specialist as adjustments are made throughout the season.
2. Cattle are to be kept away from the high lakes in the Broad Canyon area.
3. Permittees will assist range riders in checking that units ahead and behind the schedule are clean.

These actions are required for the entire 2013 grazing season. **Failure to comply with these actions within the prescribed timeframes may result in the initiation of permit suspension or cancellation procedures.**

The Allotment Management Team process, described in the Association by-laws, will be used this year in addressing issues on the allotment. The team will be made up of Brett Zollinger, Scott McAfee, and Seth Teichert. The Forest Service and the Association will have meetings at a minimum of one per month, prior to significant moves to ensure agreement on the management of the allotment.

The NRCS Idaho Water Supply Outlook currently shows the Big Lost River basin at 105% of average and the Bear Canyon SNOTEL site shows 96% of average for the 2013 water year. For a recent reference we were at 132% at this time last year. All indications show that cumulative drought impacts could persist or worsen this year. Forage production is dependent on growing season (April through September) temperatures and precipitation. If the growing season turns out to have low precipitation that provides for low forage production the Forest Service expects that cattle may need to be moved more quickly through units and removed prior to October 15.

Allowable Use Standard: End of season 4-inch stubble height on hydric sedges & grasses is required along the greenline of riparian areas. A patchy or uneven use pattern along the greenline will usually result in stubble height indicator being met. While adequate regrowth 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 and less than 50% browse use be used to plan cattle moves. Woody Browse use of riparian shrubs will not exceed 50% of new leader production.

The drier mesic meadows adjacent to streams and springs should be watched to ensure that 50% use is not exceeded. These meadows are of concern across the district and more focus is going to be put on use levels in these areas. While all adjacent meadows should be looked at, the drier meadows have less chance of regrowth and therefore are of highest concern. The upland annual use level of 50% should be used to manage the dry

meadows and your rangeland management specialist will work with you to determine when a desired use level has been met, so that everyone understands what the meadows should look like after livestock use.

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 those dominated by deep-rooted plants and are sometimes in a lower state of ecological condition. They should be managed to increase the amount of stable hydric sedges, grasses, and shrubs where appropriate.

It is required to have a full time rider and frequent help from association members to assist with riding duties throughout the season. The extra riding is important in maintaining and achieving acceptable resource conditions and control of livestock. Factors that should be considered for planning cattle moves between units include prevention of stream bank trampling, increase in rate of stubble height removal, changes in grazing preference from grasses and grass-like plants to young willows and other shrubs, large groups of cattle congregating in fence corners, at gates, or riparian areas for long periods of time. Cattle should be removed from a unit prior to resource issues occurring regardless of scheduled dates. And if the date is met the livestock need to move to the next unit.

Regularly check the high mountain lakes in the High Canyons unit to ensure that no use is occurring from permitted livestock or those from neighboring allotments.

Designated Monitoring Areas(DMA's): DMA's are used to monitor representative riparian areas within a grazing unit which establishes a record of utilization and trend. The information from the DMA is also used to plan cattle moves, determine if end of season indicators are met, and to evaluate whether current management is effective or needs to be modified. Permittee monitoring, documentation and photos are encouraged before entering and when leaving each unit.

Cleaning Grazing Units: Livestock need to begin moving from a unit prior to the stubble height or woody browse indicators being met to ensure allowable use standards are met. This is especially important during drought conditions. In most cases 7 days should be adequate to clean a unit. Permittees should be prepared to assist range riders in checking that the unit cleaned stays clean. Range riders should keep permittees informed of problems cleaning grazed units. Bulls should be kept with the main herd or removed from the allotment when they disrupt herd management. Frequent back-riding indicates there is a herd management problem. It is also the permittee's responsibility to correct problems caused by drift from other units.

Permittees should notify the Forest Service when unauthorized livestock use from adjacent allotments occurs.

Fence & Water Improvements: Please refer to Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit. Allotment boundary fences should be maintained prior to cattle entering the allotment, interior fences should also be maintained prior to cattle entering a new unit. Existing improvements should be maintained each year before requesting new improvements. The Swamps pipeline should be reconstructed to at least two troughs and replace one more trough in the Basin Flats. The temporary electric fence around the aspen stand in Charcoal Creek and Willow Springs will be used again this year and need to be kept clean of livestock.

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 Copper Basin Allotment is an area 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 2013 season are \$1.35/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 2 weeks from the date payment is sent.

Actual Use Report: An Actual Use Report will be mailed to you shortly before cattle 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. The Association President will need to provide a consolidated report with the

numbers and dates when cattle entered the allotment, moved from unit to unit, when cattle were removed from the allotment. Each permittee will need to provide an individual report with dates when their cattle entered and left the allotment. 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 credits for unused portions of your allotment must be requested and filed separately. Please contact our office if you need an application for credit.

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