



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern Region 3
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

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File Code: 2230

Date: May 1, 2012

Black Lakes Grazing Association
c/o Luis Garcia, President
PO Box 1356
Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico 87557

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Your **2012 Annual Operating Instructions for the Black Lakes Allotment** are attached. Please review your grazing permit and become familiar with permit requirements before the grazing season.

Place priorities for maintenance on water developments and fences. All existing water developments should be functional prior to livestock entering the allotment. All assigned allotment fences must be maintained prior to livestock entering the allotment and during the grazing season.

As discussed, we need to stay in touch. We need to discuss what management works and what changes need to be made to accommodate changing range conditions.

Thank you beforehand for helping the community by promptly reporting forest fires to the Carson NF Dispatch at 758-6208 and the Camino Real RD at the number listed above.

If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please do not hesitate to contact Melvin Herrera or Sean Kelly at this office.

Sincerely,

TAMARA S. MALONE
District Ranger

Enclosures
Copy to each Association Member



April 18, 2012

BLACK LAKES ALLOTMENT #450
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2012

The annual meeting for the Black Lakes Allotment was held on April 13, 2012, at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Taos, New Mexico. The Black Lakes Livestock Association was represented by Steve Vigil, Richard Tafoya, Robert Trujillo, Pat Vigil, Adam Lindenfelser and Luis Garcia. Melvin Herrera and Sean Kelly represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Black Lakes Livestock Association.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed possible drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. The Southwest Region is experiencing continued drought, so any non-use this grazing season will be considered resource protection non-use. The mountainous Black Lakes Allotment is less affected and is classified as being in moderate drought at the time of the meeting. Forest Service and permittees remain optimistic about grazing this year.

Table 1- Permittee, Permitted and Authorized number and kind.

1. Permittee	Permitted Number and Kind	Authorized number and kind
Black Lakes Livestock Association	210 cow/calf 11 bulls	80 cow/calf 4 bulls
Taos Group – Cristobal N. Cisneros	7 cow/calf	7 cow/calf
Fidel T. Garcia	3 cow/calf	0 cow/calf
Luis R. Garcia	24 cow/calf	30 cow/calf 2 bulls
Genoveva Martinez	6 cow/calf	0 cow/calf
Black Lakes Group – Richard M. Tafoya	16 cow/calf	20 cow/calf 1 bulls
Michael Trujillo	15 cow/calf	3 cow/calf
Edmundo L. Vigil estate	45 cow/calf	20 cow/calf 1 bulls
South Group – Robert A. Trujillo	62 cow/calf	0 cow/calf 0 bulls
Alfonso F. Vigil	32 cow/calf	0cow/calf 0 bull

Table 2 - Season of use

2. Season of Use	
06/16-09/30	(107 days)

Table 3 - Pasture Rotation

3. Pasture Rotation				
Pasture	Estimated Dates	Estimated Time	Actual use	Utilization%
Osha (Black Lakes)	07/01 - 09/30	92 days		
South (Black Lakes group)	06/16 - 09/30	107 days		
West (Taos)	06/16 - 09/30	107 days		

Black lakes group will start off in the South pasture and then move over to the Osha unit. The Taos group will start in the West pasture then open the gates into the Osha unit around mid July. Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Black Lakes allotment which means that the season of use, numbers grazed and rotation schedules may be adjusted throughout the grazing season based on resource conditions.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattleguards, and other range structural improvements must be maintained prior to the permittees going on to the allotment. Range improvements for the entry pastures will be inspected during the Range Readiness visit.

5. Other Items of Discussion

The 2011 grazing season went well with areas grazed within allowable use guidelines. Permittees took a reduction in numbers (57 percent) as resource protection nonuse. Permittees did a good job in keeping livestock distributed throughout the allotment.

Permittees reported 500-1000 elk together some days last season. They are concerned about the elk use on their salt and elk damage to fences. Forest Service also observed high elk numbers on 7/25/2012 during the fire danger forest closure.

Permittees also reported unauthorized use by about 10 steers for 1 ½ months in 2011. Steers were from private land several miles away in Black Lake. Owners were notified and steers were removed late last season.

The Camino Real District and permittees will monitor key use areas throughout the allotment.

Utilization guidelines for 2012 are 40% of available annual forage in key use areas and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Forage utilization will be measured in key use areas.

The grazing fee this year is \$1.35 per head month for cattle.

The Forest Service has been informed by the State Livestock Inspector that Trichomoniasis (Trich) testing is required for bulls that graze on public lands in New Mexico.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. A decision is expected by the end of the season. If permittees need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required improvement maintenance and other duties such as checking that gates are closed, checking cattle distribution, monitoring, and placing of salt; the Forest Service should be able to accommodate with a written letter issued to the permittees.

An environmental review for the Black Lakes allotment is scheduled for 2013, and monitoring will continue this year. Permittees should begin considering any suggestions they wish to add to the process.

Riparian restoration will continue for an area in Osha Pass.

The Grazing Instructions for 2012 are the same as in 2011. Salt away from roads and streams; use herding, salt, fences, and water sources to disperse cattle across the pastures to use the available forage; avoid overuse in key areas.

Permittees and FS will look at range conditions together to determine range readiness and on-date.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2012:

1. A gate is needed in the big meadow on the Bull canyon /Black lakes boundary.
2. A new post is needed at the allotment gate at Valle Largo.
3. The cattleguard at F.R. 76 needs cleaning.
4. The cattleguard at Tienditas needs cleaning and preferably replacement.
6. Lay down fence along Flechado allotment border from gate to top of ridge.
7. East-west division fence needs reconstruction (1 mile)
8. South boundary fence is down and/or missing (1/2 mile)
9. New trough and spring box at Trujillo spring.
10. New trough below Corner Park along the South Boundary trail.

11. Maintenance on stock tanks in Osha.

Permittees mentioned that private land boundary fences and uncontrolled ATV use are major concerns. This leads to fences being damaged and cut. There is a gate near the El Bordo Rustic Retreat where a hiking stile is needed. Another hiking stile is needed for the Elliot Barker trail #1, at Valle Largo.

The thinning project has resulted in damaged fences along the Angel Fire boundary. This needs to be addressed in future thinning projects.

Copies of the 2003 Raish and McSweeney research paper were handed out to permittees. Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects of Livestock Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests: A pilot Study.

The Camino Real District will continue to provide replacement tags as needed.

Forest Service would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management (either season or numbers) so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittee.