



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Southwestern Region 3  
Carson National Forest  
Camino Real Ranger District

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File Code: 2210/2230

Date: May 1, 2012

Benjamin Cruz  
President  
Rio Pueblo Grazing Association  
PO Box 94  
Holman, NM 87723

Dear

**YOUR 2012 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE RIO PUEBLO 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  
Camino Real District Ranger



cc: all association members

**RIO PUEBLO/MIRANDA ALLOTMENT #404**  
**Carson National Forest**  
**Camino Real Ranger District**

**ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2012**

The annual meeting for the Rio Pueblo Allotment was held on April 10, 2012, at the District Office in Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were Benjamin Cruz, Anthony Gonzales, Richard and Dana Scott, and Danny Martinez from the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association. Tammy Malone, 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 Rio Pueblo Grazing Association.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed forecasted drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. Conditions for this year appear questionable as seen so far this winter. We can expect that the low end of the range of permitted numbers could be grazed this year, but any non-use below that will be considered resource protection non-use.

**Table 1- Permitted and Authorized use for Grazing.**

<b>1. Permittee</b>	<b>Number and Kind</b>	<b>Authorized Number and Kind</b>
Rio Pueblo Grazing Association	117 cow/calf-155 cow/calf	117 cow/calf
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin L. Cruz	(73-96 cow/calf)	(50 cow/calf, 2 bull)
Floyd J. Romero	(7-8 cow/calf)	(2 cow/calf)
Anthony P. Gonzales	(18-25 cow/calf)	(25 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Richard Jr. and Dana Scott	(18-25 cow/calf)	(25 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Danny Martinez	(0-1 cow/calf)	(10 cow/calf, 1 bull)

**2. Season of Use**

**06/01 - 09/30 (122 days)**

**Table 2-Pasture Rotation**

<b>3. Pasture Rotation</b>	<b>Planned</b>		<b>Actual use</b>	<b>utilization %</b>
<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Estimated Dates</b>	<b>Estimated Time</b>		
Telephone	06/01 – 06/25	25 days		
McGaffey	06/26 – 07/15	20 days		
Vallecitos	07/16 - 08/10	26 days		
Amole	08/11 – 09/05	26 days		
Middle and Ranchos allot.	09/06 – 09/30	25 days		
La Junta	rest	0 days		

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Rio Pueblo allotment which means that the season of use, numbers grazed and rotation schedules may be adjusted throughout the

grazing season based on resource conditions. Range improvements, ie. fences will be maintained prior to moving to a different pasture.

#### **4. Maintenance of Improvements**

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, pasture 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 Telephone Pasture will be inspected at the same time as Range Readiness.

#### **5. Other Items of Discussion**

The 2011 grazing season was complicated by the drought and the Osha Fire. Permittees took a 50% reduction from the low end of their permitted range, and grazed only 59 head.

There was significant use by cattle well past the scheduled grazing period for pastures west of HWY 518. The drought and the Osha fire also interfered with the operation of the Grant cattle which came on the Forest often in 2011.

End of season utilization in the Amole pasture was estimated to be 10-50% on 10/4/2011. The area around the Amole Day use area received the heaviest use, but the rest of the pasture was within guidelines. End of season utilization in the Vallecitos and McGaffey pastures was estimated to be 20-60% on 10/31/2011. There was significant sign of elk grazing all season long and that likely contributed to the higher utilization which would have continued after the cattle were removed mid-season.

Extra herding attention needs to be given to the meadows that get high use by cattle. Better distribution across the pastures can reduce the concentrated utilization.

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 within the allotment.

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

Permittees and the Forest Service will look at range together to determine range readiness and the actual on-date.

Permittees and the Forest Service discussed the group shelter construction in Amole Canyon, which has stalled but is expected to resume eventually.

The Mica mine reseeding is still vulnerable and Permittees and Forest Service discussed communicating with the Picuris in an attempt to keep a good relationship. Danny Martinez is familiar with the fence and expressed confidence that the fence can be fixed.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. A decision is expected to be signed by the Forest Supervisor sometime during this grazing season. If permittees need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required maintenance on fences and other range improvements, checking that gates are closed, checking on cattle health and location, and placing salt and mineral supplements; the Forest Service should be able to accommodate with a written letter issued to the permittees.

The Forest Service contacted the State Brand Livestock Inspector, who confirmed that Trichomoniasis (Trich) testing is required for bulls that graze on public lands in New Mexico. Apparently there were bulls from a different Grazing Association that were quarantined last year when they got into the Santa Fe National Forest for failure to have been tested.

The Osha Fire of 2011 burned up about a quarter mile of the highway 518 right of way fence. It had been in disrepair for years but was not important since the timbered slopes above did not attract cattle use. Natural regeneration and intentional restoration seeding may attract cattle to the area now and it is possible that cattle may come down to the burned up fence. The loss was reported with the burned area emergency restoration report (BAER), but with the much larger Las Conchas fire coming right after the Osha fire funds for fence replacement may not be a priority. We will determine if this fence is needed as the year progresses.

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.

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.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2012:

1. Reconstruction of McGaffey trick tank. Needs new trough and possibly pipeline from storage tank to trough.
2. Fence reconstruction between the Middle and La Cueva units.
3. Reconstruction of spring developments; Tio Maes, Indian Creek, and Apache Spring
4. Pursue with NMDOT the possibility of a water gap in the HWY 518 ROW near Amole.

The Borrego timber sale should proceed this summer in the Telephone pasture.

New permittees requested a map of range improvements, and the Forest Service will work on that in the near future.

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.