

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2012

LITTLE HORN C&H ALLOTMENT

MEDICINE WHEEL/PAINTROCK RANGER DISTRICT

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

/s/ David Hogan
District Ranger

6/18/2012
Date

Permittee

Date

Permittee

Date

LITTLE HORN C&H ALLOTMENT
2012 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

A. Before Entering the Allotment

1. Review all clauses of your term grazing permit and the information contained within this Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). Be sure to ask questions if any portion of your grazing permit or these operating instructions is not clearly understood.
2. The current year's grazing fees must be paid prior to livestock entering the National Forest.
3. Where applicable, regulations for ear tagging (for counting purposes) will be adhered to. All ear tags will be readable and consecutively numbered, with no duplicate numbers. The permittee will inform the Forest Officer administering the grazing permit of the date and number of livestock entering the National Forest and will provide for having the animals counted by a Forest Officer prior to or as the animals enter the allotment.

B. Entering the Allotment

1. The turn on date for the allotment is tentatively scheduled for **July 1st** for **Crosby**, **July 1st** for **Kerns**, and **July 1st** for **Holding**. The actual date livestock may enter the allotment will depend on range readiness. Unless notified by a Forest Officer that a delay will be necessary to allow for further forage development, you may plan to place livestock on the allotment on the entry date shown on your 2012 Bill for Collection.

C. Authorized Numbers and Pasture Rotation

1. Authorized Numbers

Permittee	Authorized #	Authorized Date On-Off
Brett & Desiree Crosby	272 Yearlings 4 Horses	7/1-9/30 7/1-9/30
Sunlight Ranch Company	221 Cow/calf 2 Horses	7/6-9/30 7/6-9/30
Dana Kerns	175 Yearlings 225 Mature 100 Mature 40 Horses	7/03-9/13 7/03-10/02 7/16-10/02 7/03-10/02

2. Planned Pasture Rotation 2012

The rotation below is based on Crosby and Holding running separately on the Little Horn C&H allotment on a trial basis at their request. The ability to manage the allotment under two separate grazing systems was established by the completion of the FEIS for Livestock Grazing and Vegetation Management on 5 Project Areas (Big6).

A. Crosby:

Pasture Sequence	Pasture	Authorized On-Off Dates
	<i>Horse/Trail</i>	07-01
	<i>West Burnt</i>	

NOTE: **Crosby has been authorized on a trial basis in 2012 to combine their herd with Wyoming Gulch C&H. The herds will be unloaded at the Wyoming Gulch corrals and pushed down into the Horse and Trail pastures. All of Littlehorn will be used early following the rotation above and Wyoming Gulch will be used late. Numbers have been adjusted to represent the later off date of the Wyoming Gulch C&H allotment and maintain current permitted AMs. Crosby is authorized to stay until this later date, 09/30, or until use is met.

B. Holding:

Pasture Sequence	Pasture	Authorized On-Off Dates
<i>1.</i>	<i>Lower Little Horn</i>	07-06
<i>2.</i>	<i>Wagon Box</i>	
<i>3.</i>	<i>Willow</i>	
<i>4.</i>	<i>Lower Little Horn</i>	09-30

C. Kerns

Pasture Sequence	Pasture	Allotment	Authorized On-Off Dates
<i>1</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Lower Dry Fork</i>	07-03
<i>2</i>	<i>Double Springs</i>	<i>Lower Dry Fork</i>	
<i>3</i>	<i>Bear Trap</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	
<i>4</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	
<i>5</i>	<i>Lick Creek</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	
<i>6</i>	<i>East Burnt</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	
<i>7</i>	<i>Parks</i>	<i>Lake Creek</i>	10-02

Kern's will trail the main herd into the Lower Dry Fork allotment around July 1st. They will take the rest (about 150 pair) up the Little Horn trail about July 16th and use the Lower pasture of the Lower Dry Fork allotment before joining the main herd in Double Springs pasture. In the fall, the first bunch (yearlings) will be trailed off mid September through East Burnt and the Parks with a few days spent in these pastures. The second bunch (pairs) will be trailed off around October 2nd.

D. Allowable Use/Herbage Left Guidelines

The allowable use/herbage left guidelines are designed to ensure that short-term effects of livestock grazing activities are within established parameters intended to provide for the long term health and sustainability of rangeland resources. The two general approaches used to measure actual use to determine if the guidelines were met are residual herbage left and utilization.

Residual herbage left methods: This is expressed as the amount of herbage left after livestock grazing and includes methods such as stubble height and visual obstruction methods (Robel pole).

Utilization methods: This is expressed as the amount of forage removed by grazing or trampling and includes methods such as paired plots and ocular estimates.

The following allowable use/herbage left guidelines will apply to all areas of your allotment. Total use by livestock and wildlife combined must not exceed any of these guidelines at the time livestock leave a pasture.

1. Upland Range Sites

Idaho fescue vegetation type site on sedimentary soils below 9,200 feet elevation.	Visual Obstruction Reading (VOR) of 5 or more bands for all applicable sites. (readings of 4 bands or more acceptable).
Idaho fescue vegetation type site on granitic soils below 9,200 feet elevation.	Visual Obstruction Reading (VOR) of 5 or more bands for all applicable sites.
All Other Sites (such as sites dominated by sagebrush, timothy and smooth brome, or above 9200 feet elevation)	A. Maximum of 40% by weight in all pastures used prior to August 1 st . B. Maximum of 50% by weight in pastures used after August 1 st .

2. Riparian Range Sites

Herbaceous vegetation on all sites.	A. Average 5" inch stubble height on wide leaf carex species remaining if livestock leave a pasture prior to August 1.* B. Average 7" inch stubble height on wide leaf carex species remaining if livestock leave a pasture after August 1.*
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3. Aspen Range Sites

Herbaceous vegetation within all aspen and cottonwood stands	A. 5" stubble height for all grasses and sedges when livestock leave a pasture*
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*All stubble height guidelines stated above are the minimum required when transect measurements record the longest leaf length of all leaves readily available for livestock grazing for each plant measured. Leaves tramped in the mud, protected by willows, or otherwise unavailable to be grazed are not included in the measurements.

Livestock should be moved to the next pasture or off the National Forest, if in the last pasture, when further use will exceed the stated allowable use. It is your responsibility to manage your livestock within each pasture to assure these guidelines are not exceeded. This will require frequent monitoring of the vegetation by you and /or your allotment rider and not making pasture moves based on calendar dates.

It is important to note that the allowable use guidelines shown above apply to all suitable range within the allotment. To assist you with your responsibilities of monitoring the actual use, all monitoring measurements will be done using a key area concept. The key areas are generally those areas livestock have the tendency to graze first when placed in a pasture. In most cases, the key areas will include both riparian and upland range sites. It is very important to keep close watch on all range sites within the key area and plan livestock moves when use is nearing the guideline on either the upland or riparian sites.

Permittee collection and submission of carex stubble height data is voluntary, but requested by this office. The permittee monitoring program was designed to give permittees a trigger point to help determine when livestock should be removed from a pasture. You are still responsible to manage your livestock to assure that allowable use guidelines are met in all areas of the allotment. I strongly encourage you to continue to complete stubble height monitoring in all key areas with riparian plant communities, to assure actual use does not go beyond the guidelines stated above. I have enclosed copies of the data forms for your use should you decide to continue your monitoring. Any forms voluntarily submitted to our office will be placed in the allotment monitoring folder.

When conducting stubble height monitoring, I recommend you read enough transects to obtain a representative sample of the residual leaf length of the dominant sedges. The number of transects you need to read will depend on the size of the area and the variances of use levels. One transect may be sufficient in a narrow riparian area where use does not vary. Two or more may be necessary in a larger riparian area if you detect utilization varies significantly within 3 feet of the water's edge, compared to the remainder of the area. Photos of the transect and its general location are not required but would be helpful to substantiate your documentation. The Forest Service will also be conducting spot checks and transect measurements of key areas throughout the grazing season to verify guidelines are being met.

E. Key Areas

Key areas serve as monitoring and evaluation points for the degree of grazing use.

Properly selected key areas give an indication of the overall acceptability of current grazing management to meet all resource objectives. Following is a list of key areas for each pasture. These areas may be moved or redefined in future years if monitoring results indicate a change is necessary.

Wagon Box Pasture: 300 yards on either side of Wagon Box Creek from Boundary Rock Fence upstream to include both the North and South Forks 1/4 mile above where they join.

Willow Pasture: 1) 300 yards on either side of Wagon Box Creek from Boundary Rock Fence downstream to Trail Fence in SE1/4 Section 30, 2) the SE1/4SW1/4 of Section 25 (South of Wagon Box Creek), and 3) 300 yards on either side of Duncom Creek from the Willow Basin Division Fence downstream to Wagon Box Creek in Section 30.

Trail Pasture: 1) 300 yards on either side of Wagon Box Creek from Trail Fence downstream to Little Horn Canyon Drift Fence, 2) the area south of Wagon Box Creek in the SE1/4SE1/4 Section 30, SW1/4SW1/4 Section 29, NE1/4NE1/4 Section 31, and NW1/4NW1/4 Section 32.

West Burnt: 1) The ridge running north from Burnt Mountain Stockpond for 1/2 mile in T56N, R91W, Section 2, and 2) the two drainages running easterly into the Little Bighorn River including the area between the two drainages and west of the river (T56N, R91W, Section 1).

Lower Little Horn: 1) Sagebrush Flat NW1/4 Section 28.

****NOTE:** In the Wagon Box pasture the area in the immediate vicinity of the "All American Park" will be considered a sensitive area due to the variety of uses in this park. This will mean that moves will not be based solely on utilization levels in this area alone, however it does not mean that utilization can be ignored. The area needs to continue to be managed as other riparian areas. The legal location of this area is NW 1/4 SW 1/4 Section 26 T57N R91W, which would be the park immediately upstream from where the North and South Forks of Wagon Box join.

F. Maintenance of Improvements

Part 2, Clause 8(i) of your term grazing permit states "... the permittee will maintain all range improvements, whether private or Government owned, that are assigned for maintenance to standards of repair, orderliness, and safety acceptable to the Forest Service". A complete list of the improvements and designated maintenance responsibility is included in Part 3 of your term grazing permit. The maintenance of each improvement must be completed prior to the time livestock enter the pasture in which the improvement is located each year, or in the case of allotment boundary fences prior to livestock entering the pasture on either side of the fence. The minimum maintenance required will be as follows:

Springs All tanks are to be level, completely surrounded by dry ground and easily accessible by both cows and calves. The inlet and overflow pipes are to be free of crimps or breaks, completely buried or otherwise protected from livestock and capable of delivering water to and away from tanks without any water spilling in the immediate vicinity (20-30 ft.) of the tank. Livestock barriers over tanks must be sturdy and all poles and planks must be in good condition and nailed/bolted in place.

Wire Fences: Fences are to be in an upright, vertical position with all broken wires repaired, wires tight and properly spaced and all corner posts, braces, line posts, steel posts, stays, loops, staples, etc. replaced as needed. Gates are to be tight enough to prevent sagging but must be able to be easily opened and closed by the general public.

Buck and Pole Fences: Fences must be in an upright, serviceable position. Bucks that are spreading and lowering the overall height of the fence must be stabilized with a bottom brace or replaced. All poles must be nailed to bucks and all broken or rotting poles and bucks are to be replaced.

G. Planned Range Improvement Projects:

1. Replace roof on cow camp as time permits. Permittee to supply materials and labor. Fuller had the lead.
2. FS to look at hazard trees around cow camp.
3. Trail Drift Fence #308-22. Look at relocation and availability of materials on site in 2012.
4. #308-19 Boundary Rock Fence will have fiberglass posts installed, permittee has material.

*FS will plan to get to this allotment and reevaluate priorities with new permittee, based on differences in operation.

H. Neighboring Allotment Rotation:

The rotations for the neighboring allotments are being provided to give you an idea of when livestock may be adjacent to any allotment boundary fences you are responsible for maintaining.

Allotment/Pastures

Medicine Mountain C&H 6/26-10/10	
1.	Five Springs
2.	Lower Porcupine
3.	Elk/Railroad Springs
4.	Upper Porcupine
5	South Medicine

Devil's Canyon C&H 7/01-10/09	
1.	Cookstove/Steel Granary
2.	Reservation Hole
3.	Lodge Grass Basin/Lodge Grass Canyon
4.	Lodge Grass/Cindy
5.	Bucking Mule/Tepee

Red Springs C&H 7/01-10/05	
1.	Face
2.	Red Springs Flat
3.	Cub Creek, West Bend
4.	Mann Creek
4.	Deer Basin, Crater Ridge
5.	Face

Wyoming Gulch C&H 7/06-9/30	
1.	Half Ounce (Little Horn Meadows)
2.	Bald Mountain/Rooster Hill

I. General:

1. The attached allotment use form should be completed at the end of the grazing season and returned to this office no later than October 30.
2. The permittees and their employees will do all in their power to prevent and suppress fires on or in the vicinity of the National Forest and to report promptly all fires that they may discover which they cannot suppress.
3. All livestock carcasses are to be moved at least 100 feet from the high water line of streams and lakes, springs, and out of view of roads, trails, recreation sites, and areas of concentrated public use
4. Horses to be used on the allotment and kept in the horse pastures will be charged at the same rate as cattle. These horses will be broke and usable, for use in the management of this allotment. Application for horse use will be made each year prior to the beginning of

the grazing season.

5. Please take all action to avoid the introduction and spread of noxious weed species. Report any findings of infected weed areas to your Forest Officer upon discovery.

J. Salting Practices:

Salt can be used as a management tool to help you achieve proper utilization. The following are guidelines that should be used when placing salt on your allotment.

1. Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
2. Salt should be placed between water developments and at least 1/4 mile from water if at all possible. Salting near water just encourages cattle to stay nearby and should seldom be practiced.
3. Salt away from small parks, trails, roads and areas of concentrated public use. Salt should be placed in areas of rock outcrops, mature timber (other than aspen), or areas of dense sagebrush where the general public will not easily see it. Do not salt in aspen stands.
4. Change your salt location at least every year and preferably, every time salt is placed within a pasture. Moving salt blocks 50-100 feet can prevent an area from becoming abused from salt placement year after year.
5. Remove salt from an area when proper use is reached. (Note: If you cannot prevent livestock from continuing to utilize the area, it will be necessary to move to the next pasture.)

ACTUAL USE RECORD 2012

MEDWHEEL/PAINTROCK
RANGER DISTRICT

**LITTLE HORN C&H
ALLOTMENT**

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

ACTUAL USE

Pasture	Number of cattle	Date on pasture	Date off

Losses: Numbers by age class and possible cause (Poison, natural or predator).

Allotment Operating Cost:

Labor costs:

Rider _____

Improvement Maintenance _____

 Water _____

 Fence _____

 Other _____

Improvement Construction _____

 Water _____

 Fence _____

 Other _____

Salt _____

Transportation Cost _____

Horse maintenance _____

Permittee signature: _____ Date _____

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR NOTES YOU WISH TO PLACE IN THE PERMANENT ALLOTMENT FILE.