

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2012

SOUTHSIDE S&C&H ALLOTMENT
AND
LONG POINT S&C&H ALLOTMENT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
BIGHORN BASIN RESOURCE AREA
WORLAND FIELD OFFICE

AND

MEDICINE WHEEL/PAINTROCK DISTRICTS
BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

/s/ David Hogan

7/25/2012

District Ranger

Date

Assistant Area Manager
Resource Use and Authorization, BLM

Date

Permittee

Date

SOUTH SIDE S&C&H ALLOTMENT
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

A. Before Entering the Allotment

1. Review all clauses of your term grazing permit and the information contained within the Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). Be sure to ask questions if any portion of your grazing permit or the AOI is not clearly understood.
2. The current year's grazing fees will be paid before the opening date of the grazing season.
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 opening date for the allotment is tentatively scheduled for June 4th. 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. Permitted numbers and Pasture Rotation

1. Permitted Numbers

Permittee	Permitted #	Permitted Date on-off	Permitted AUMs	2012 Authorized #/Season
Greg Flitner	Variable	4/30-11/07	690 AMs C/c FS	140 Yearlings 6/1-7/15
			771 AMs C/c BLM	140 Yearlings 10/02-11/04
				200 C/c 6/6-7/15
				500 C/c 10/02-11/04

The Forest Service billing will be based on 47% of the Head Months on National Forest Lands and 53% on BLM lands.

2. Planned Pasture Rotation (2012)

Unit	2012	2011	2010
Chimney Rock	9	rest	
Lower Reserve (South)	1	rest	
Horse Mountain	8	1	
Lake Ridge pvt*	5	2	
Shell Creek C&H	Used between East and West Snowshoe		
East Snowshoe	7	3	
West Snowshoe	6	4	
Kershner/Rock Bedground/Long Point			
Dry Fork	4	5	
McNay	3	6	
Lower Reserve (North)	1	rest	
Upper Reserve	2	rest	

*17 C/c are permitted under private land permit.

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 these guidelines at the time livestock leave a pasture. On upland range sites percent use by weight will be the methodology used to determine if meeting guidelines as stated in your Term Grazing Permit #40001. Robel pole data will be collected and used for future reference based on Bighorn National Forest Vegetation Grazing Guidelines 2007 Edition.

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 Upland Sites	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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*Sites dominated by sagebrush, timothy, and smooth brome, or above 9200 feet elevation are considered not applicable to VOR at this time.

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.

Key areas on this allotment are either associated with water developments or bedgrounds. Most wetlands around water developments have been fenced to exclude livestock. Two sites on the Horse Mountain Pasture and on one the Snowshoe Pasture have not yet been fenced. Sheep bed grounds are confined to ridge tops within each pasture and are considered key areas.

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. No new projects planned for 2012 grazing season. Work with BLM in the future to evaluate extensions to pipeline on to BLM portions of the allotment.

H. 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.)

