

PROSPECT/CEDAR C&H ALLOTMENT & WILEY CREEK C&H

2012 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

A. Before Entering the Allotment

1. Review all clauses of your term grazing permit and the information contained within these Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). Be sure to contact your Rangeland Management Specialist 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 placing livestock on the National Forest.
3. Review Section G. - Maintenance of Improvements, and complete the necessary maintenance of assigned range improvements as described in that section.

B. Entering the Allotment

The turn on date for the allotment is tentatively scheduled for **July 6th**. 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:

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Authorized Livestock Numbers</u>	<u>Authorized Season of Use</u>
RG Ranch	258 Pairs	7/6 – 10/05
	272 Yrlngs	7/6 – 10/05
	10 Bulls	7/6 – 09/01
	2 Horses	7/6 – 10/05

<u>Pasture Sequence</u>	<u>Pasture Name</u>
<i>1.</i>	<i>Finger Creek</i>
<i>2.</i>	<i>Spring Creek</i>
<i>3.</i>	<i>Grouse Creek</i>
<i>4.</i>	<i>Wiley Sundown</i>
<i>5.</i>	<i>Cedar (rest for prescribed fire)</i>
<i>6.</i>	<i>*Prospect (rest for prescribed fire)</i>
<i>7.</i>	<i>North Prospect (rest for prescribed fire)</i>

***The herd will be unloaded at the corrals in Prospect Pasture and allowed to drift for 1 day into Finger Creek Pasture. All cattle are expected to be in Finger Creek Pasture the day following turn out from the corrals. Prospect Pasture may be used lightly in the fall as cattle are gathered and shipped out.**

This planned pasture rotation outlines the pasture sequence we have discussed for the 2012 grazing season. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the Tongue Allotment Management Plan (AMP), and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) provides the flexibility to use adaptive management practices (e.g. use of temporary electric fence, plan for two grazing periods in one or more pastures, etc.) to help meet the allowable use and Grazing Response Index requirements described in Sections D and E below. The ROD applies to the Prospect-Cedar Creek C&H allotment and the Spring Creek pasture. It is encouraged that you consider management adjustments for your allotments that would make meeting these standards easier for your operation. To assure your management meets the intent of the ROD and does not negatively affect other resources, all proposed changes must be discussed with and approved by your Rangeland Management Specialist prior to implementation on the ground.

With the Spring Creek pasture being incorporated into the Wiley Creek C&H allotment, the direction in the Tongue EIS decision will be superseded by the FEIS for Livestock Grazing and Vegetation Management on 5 Project Areas (Big 6). The Spring Creek pasture will use guidelines, monitoring protocols, etc. set forth in the Beaver Creek decision; however it will continue to be rested at least one year in every 4 per the Tongue EIS.

D. Allowable Use Guidelines for Prospect Cedar Creek C&H Allotment:

The following allowable use guidelines will apply to all areas of the Prospect-Cedar C&H 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 except suitable for water vole habitat.	A. 5" inch stubble height on wide leaved carex species remaining if livestock leave pasture prior to August 1st.* B. 7" inch stubble height on wide leaved carex species remaining if livestock leave pasture after August 1st.*
Willows	Maximum of 35% use of current years leaders by livestock.

3. Aspen Range Sites

Herbaceous vegetation within all aspen stands	A. 5" inch stubble height for all grasses and sedges when livestock leave a pasture*
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* All stubble height guidelines stated for riparian and aspen range sites 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 or portions of leaves trampled in the mud, lying on the ground or in water, protected by willows or otherwise unavailable to livestock are not to be included in the measurements. Transect measurements may also record the average length of all leaves available for grazing from each selected plant. If the average leaf method is used, all minimum guidelines shown in tables above will be adjusted downward 1”.

4. Pastures Grazed Twice

Pastures may be used twice during the grazing season if prior approval has been granted (see Section C above). If a pasture is used twice in one season, the first entry must be 7 days or less and the pasture must be deferred a minimum of 40 days between entries.

Allowable Use Guidelines for Wiley Sundown, Spring Creek and Finger Creek pastures

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	5" stubble height for all grasses and sedges when livestock leave a pasture*
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Livestock must be moved to the next pasture or off the National Forest if in the last pasture when further use will exceed one or more of the allowable use guidelines shown above. It is your responsibility to manage your livestock within each pasture to assure use does not exceed any of the above guidelines. This will require constant monitoring of the vegetation by you and/or your allotment rider and not just simply waiting for estimated calendar dates to determine the proper use period for each pasture. This is critical every grazing season and less than normal forage production because of dry weather is no excuse for grazing beyond the stated guidelines. It is imperative you take whatever steps are necessary (use of riders, move salt weekly, reduction in total numbers, shorten length of grazing periods in pastures, etc.) to manage your livestock to assure all guidelines are met throughout each pasture.

It is also important to note the allowable use guidelines shown above apply to all suitable range (riparian and uplands) 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. Livestock also tend to graze these areas repeatedly, grazing the same individual plants again and again as any re-growth becomes available. As a result, these areas will typically reach the utilization guidelines before any other area of the pasture. If utilization in these key areas does not exceed allowable use guidelines, then use in the rest of the pasture will most likely not exceed guidelines either. It remains your responsibility, however, to keep a watchful eye on all the suitable range in your allotment because changes in management activities or other circumstances may cause the distribution patterns to change from previous years.

E. Monitoring

An integral part of the ROD for the Tongue AMP is the use of adaptive management. Adaptive management requires a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation into our management approach and modifies future management based upon the results. Our best chance for success will be for permittees and Forest Service to cooperatively work together to read transects, interpret the data, and discuss any annual or long-term adjustments that may be necessary to meet the intent of the ROD.

The annual monitoring required will primarily use a combination of the following three protocols:

1. Carex Stubble Height: Stubble height measurements will be taken using paced transects in all key areas with riparian range sites. The number of transects you need to read will depend on the size of the area and the variances of use levels within the area. One transect may be sufficient in narrow riparian areas where use does not vary across the entire area. Two or more may be necessary in larger riparian areas or if you detect utilization varies significantly within

3 feet of the waters edge compared to the remainder of the area. Each transect will consist of 50 measurements with a recommended 10 feet between each measurement. Transects to determine the actual use must be read within 7 days after livestock leave each pasture. Photos of the transect and its general location are not required but would be helpful to substantiate your documentation.

2. Robel Pole: Visual obstruction readings (VOR) using a modified robel pole will be used to measure the remaining standing crop in all key areas with upland range sites on both sedimentary and granitic soils below 9200 feet (excludes sites dominated by timothy, smooth brome or dense sagebrush): A minimum of four paced transects will be read in each key area. Each transect will consist of 20 stations with each station a minimum of 10 meters (approximately 33 feet) apart. At each station, four VORs (one in each cardinal direction) are recorded. Transects to determine the actual use must be read within 7 days after livestock leave each pasture. Photos of the transect and its general location are not required but would be helpful to substantiate your documentation.
3. Grazing Response Index (GRI): GRI ratings will be determined for key areas within each pasture. Upland and riparian range sites, occurring in the same or separate key areas, will be rated independently of one another. Determining these ratings will take a cooperative effort throughout the grazing season and it is important that you keep accurate records of the actual numbers of cattle and dates livestock graze in each pasture. Comparisons of your own and Forest Service use data (stubble height and robel pole measurements) and observations of vegetative conditions to determine how much opportunity desirable plants had to grow prior to or following grazing must be done while there is still time to meet on the ground should there be differences in the data or ratings. In similar fashion to the allowable use guidelines, the ROD for the Tongue AMP requires livestock to be managed to consistently (4 out of every 5 years) provide a neutral to positive GRI rating for each pasture. I encourage you, therefore, to give your rangeland conservationist a call at anytime during the grazing season to compare data and/or to discuss GRI ratings for your pastures.

Monitoring within pastures of the Tongue AMP area may be done to ensure allowable use guidelines are consistently met and for gathering information for the GRI ratings. You, however, remain responsible to manage your livestock to assure these guidelines are met and neutral to positive GRI ratings are achieved. It is strongly encouraged you to keep close watch of the growth cycle of the desirable forage plants to be able to adjust the length of grazing periods in each pasture as necessary and to complete spot checks of all key areas on a regular basis to assure actual use remains within the guidelines stated above. Enclosed are copies of the data forms to assist you with your monitoring. Any forms and/or photos submitted to the district office will be placed in the allotment monitoring folder.

F. Key Areas:

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

North Prospect Pasture:

1. Open parks and wetlands adjacent to Fence #318 (boundary between Prospect/Cedar and Bull Creek S&G) in Sections 6 & 7, T54N, R88W and Section 12 & 13, T54N, R89W.
2. The open parks in the area adjacent to Fence #264 in southwest corner of pasture (area commonly known as Big Springs).

Prospect Pasture:

1. An area of upland and riparian range sites extending 400 yards on either side of the full length of Prospect Creek.

Cedar Pasture:

1. The open parks adjacent to Reservoir #60 (SW Sec 14 and SE Sec 15, T54N, R89W).
2. The open parks adjacent to the intermittent head water drainages of Cedar Creek (Section 22, T54N, R89W).

Finger Creek:

- 1) 300 yards either side of Three Springs Creek from buck and pole fence located in SE1/4 Section 8 upstream approximately 1.5 miles to include main drainage in SW1/4 Section 5,
- 2) 300 yards either side of Finger Creek beginning in the vicinity of Finger Creek Pond #3 extending downstream approximately .75 miles to SE1/4 of Section 6, and
- 3) an area within a 300 yard radius extending in all directions from Finger Creek Pond#2.

Wiley Sundown:

- 1) An area within 300 yards on either side of Wiley Creek beginning at lower Wiley Creek Water Development (NE1/4 Section 9) and extending downstream approximately 2.0 miles to buck and pole fence near Three Springs and
- 2) the basin within 300 yards on either side of Sundown Creek in SE1/4 Section 15.

Spring Creek:

- 1) An area extending 300 yards on either side of Spring Creek beginning in the NW1/4 Section 32, T55N, R89W to the lower stocktanks at Crazy Weed Spring, and
- 2) the open parks within 300 yards on either side of the West Fork of Spring Creek within S1/2 Section 25 and W1/2 Section 36, T55N, R90W.

G. 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 initial 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. For many improvements, maintenance will be on going and will require additional attention after livestock enter the pasture. 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.

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.

Granite Creek C&H Pasture Sequence		
	Unit	
1	Upper Granite	Up against Prospect Pasture and estimated to be turned out July 8th
1	Tomb	Up against Cedar Pasture
2	Middle	Up against Cedar Pasture
3	Lower Granite	

I. Range Improvement Projects

1. Reconstruction of the Three Springs Fence #57-10. RG Ranch is responsible for labor and removal of old materials from Forest lands. Estimated ½ mile of 3 wire high tensil electric fence. Work began in 2011, and supplies provided with the exception of a gate.
2. Fence #58-06 shall be extended approximately 100 yards using barb wire and steel. The original fence has been destroyed by the Bone Creek Fire. FS and permittees to meet and discuss possible option for this project.
3. Bed Springs Water Development #73-08 may need new headbox, or rebuilt. FS and permittees will look at in 2012.

I. General

1. Grouse Creek C&H will continue to be authorized for use on an annual basis as a 4th pasture. Due to proposed prescribed burning on neighboring allotments a need may arise for the allotment to be used by adjacent permittees in future years.
2. Per the Big 6 FEIS Grouse Creek will be rested a minimum 2 out of 10 years.
3. Per the Tongue EIS Spring Creek will be rested at least 1 year in every 4.
4. Additional allotment strategies are outlined in Appendix B, page 54 of the Big 6 FEIS.
5. 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.
6. 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. If you spot a wildfire please report it to Cody Dispatch Center at 1-800-295-9954.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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:

The proper use of salt can be used as a good 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. Salting near water just encourages cattle to stay nearby.
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.

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 actual use in the nearby vicinity is approaching the allowable use standard. Livestock must be moved to the next pasture when proper use is reached.

If you feel your management situation requires changes in these guidelines please contact Shawn Heinert (Range Management Specialist for the Tongue RD) at 307-548-5305, Nick Padilla (Range Management Specialist for Med Wheel Paintrock RD) at 307-548-6541, or Justin Reimer (Range Technician for Med Wheel Paintrock RD) at 307-548-5306 to discuss.

ACTUAL USE RECORD - 2012

TONGUE R.D.

PROSPECT/CEDAR
ALLOTMENT

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

ACTUAL USE

Pasture	Number of Cattle	Date on Pasture	Date off Pasture

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

ACTUAL USE RECORD 2012

MEDWHEEL/PAINTROCK

**WILEY CREEK
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.