ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST
MINIDOKA RANGER DISTRICT
NOH SHEEP COMPANY
2013

These are your 2013 Annual Operating Instructions which are a part of your Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a) on the Little Piney, Deadline and Buckbrush S&G allotments. You will be responsible for the proper management of livestock in accordance with these Annual Operating Instructions. It is also your responsibility to ensure your herders have a clear understanding of the operating instructions. We recommend that you provide a copy in Spanish if needed. As a reminder, grazing fees will be $0.27 per head month for sheep. These fee's must be paid and received prior to your on-date to validate your grazing permit. . The contents of this years plan reflect the management we jointly agreed to at your Annual meeting. Your 2013 billing and permitted animals will be as follows:

Allotment	Permitted Numbers	Permitted Season of Use	Authorized Numbers	Authorized Season of Use
Deadline S&G*	1200 e/l	6/1 – 10/30		6/1 - 10/30
Little Piney S&G	1000 e/l	6/5 – 10/27	920 ewes 1400 lambs	6/1 – 10/30
Buckbrush S&G	1400 e/l	5/13 – 10/20	950 ewes 1400 lambs	5/13 – 10/20

***Deadline and Little Piney are being managed as one allotment**

Compliance: These Annual Operating Instructions are a part of your Term Grazing Permit, consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Clause 8(a), and you have agreed to their conditions upon signing the Term Grazing Permit. Failure to follow the instructions in the AOI is a violation of your grazing permit. The contents of this years plan reflect the alternative we jointly agreed to at your Annual meeting. Situations may develop during the grazing season which requires changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating or deviating from these instructions.

Notification: The permittee will provide the Minidoka District Ranger with written notification of any changes or deviation he or she wishes to make in these Annual Operating Instructions. This includes changes in animal numbers, class of livestock, period of use (changes in entry or exit dates from unit to unit), or changes in pasture rotation. The Minidoka District Ranger or his staff will verify the response in writing to the permittee. No changes in these instructions will be recognized without this verification.

Travel Management Authorization: This direction serves as guidance for grazing permittees authorization as it relates to the implementation of Travel Management on the Minidoka R.D.

Motor vehicle use off existing roads and trails (cross-country travel) is not authorized for any reason. This means livestock may not be gathered and herded cross-country with motorized vehicles. However, cross country travel may be authorized case-by-case on a project specific basis. Only the District Ranger can authorize these activities. Authorization must be obtained in writing in advance of the specific project activity.

Motorized access behind seasonally locked gates is not authorized; permission to access these areas needs to be obtained from the District Ranger prior to entry. Roads and trails that have been physically closed through ripping, barricading, etc. that restrict motor vehicle use are not authorized for your use. In the limited instances where there maybe structural improvements on these roads you will need to obtain permission from the District ranger to access your improvements.

Motor vehicle use is authorized on roads and trails signed closed to the public only for purposes of improvements maintenance. All actives need to be planned in advance during high use periods, such as hunting seasons, to reduce the exposure of these permitted actions to the general public.

Noxious Weed Management: Only hay and straw that has been certified as Noxious Weed Free will be allowed on National Forest System Lands in Idaho. Contact your County Weed Supervisor at (208) 734-9000 for a list of sources if you need to acquire certified forage.

Billing Information: Grazing fees for this season will be $0.27 per head month. Payments are to be made by the DUE DATE shown on your grazing bill. The process takes approximately 10 days from the time you submit your bill until it is processed through the lockbox and notification is received by the district; notice of payments must be received by the district office prior to your on date. If notice has not been received by the district office you may not turn out your livestock onto National Forest Service administered lands. Payments validate your Term Grazing Permit and authorize you to graze permitted livestock.

Buckbrush S&G

Livestock will enter the Forest on May 13 with 950 ewes &1400 lambs beginning on the North Buckbrush Flat (Unit 1) grazing through as follows: Unit 2, Unit 3, Unit 4, Unit 5, Unit 6, Unit 7, Unit 9, Unit 10, Unit 11 and then off of the allotment by October 20 via unit 2 N on the Deadline S&G allotment. (Steer & Magpie Basins will be rested 2012 & 2013) North Buckbrush (Unit 1) will be rested in 2014 and 2015.

2013 Bighorn Sheep Management Guides

1) The permittee will notify the Minidoka Ranger District prior to trucking onto the National Forest.

2) The permittee will notify the Minidoka Ranger District of all Bighorn sheep sightings as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

3) The permittee will notify the Minidoka Ranger District of all stray domestic sheep within 24 hours of discovery. When strays are found they will be removed from the allotment or returned to the band. The District will be notified of location where strays are found and action taken by the permittee.

4) Herders will count marker sheep daily to assure that no small groups of sheep have separated from the main band.

5) If herders observe bighorn sheep in close proximity (less than 1 mile) they will haze the bighorn out of the area and if necessary adjust the trailing or grazing route to minimize the possibility of direct contact with domestic sheep.

6) The permittee will provide binoculars to the herders to improve their ability to spot bighorn sheep.

Deadline S&G and Little Piney S&G

NOTE: Deadline and Little Piney will be grazed as a single Allotment again as we have for the past several grazing seasons. As we have discussed previously, we will look at preparing a map with your help with the thought of combining both the Deadline and Little Piney allotments. These two allotments will be managed as one allotment until such time that you increase your bands to three.

Livestock will enter the Forest on June 1 with 920 ewes & 1400 lambs and the band will rotate (2012 & 2013) through the allotment units through the off date of October 30 as follows: 1S, Trail Upper A1, B1, A1, 2S, Trail B1, B2 (ship lambs), A2, and out through 1S. Rest B3 & 1N.

Pasture rotations listed above are tentative as to days and dates and is our best estimate of equalizing the grazing on the unit. How soon the maximum allowable use level is reached depends on the number of animals, weather, and ability to use suitable range, herding, and other permittee practices. It will be your responsibility to see that livestock are moved throughout the unit before maximum allowed use is reached. Rotation/removal of livestock will be required if allowable use levels are met before the planned rotation/removal date. You are encouraged to have the livestock moved within 5 days at the end of any rotation time frame. The permittee is responsible to manage his/her livestock not to exceed the allowable use levels.

ALLOWABLE USE: Allowable use is the degree of grazing specified for a particular area and/or plant(s). The use level stated below is the maximum utilization allowed on desirable grass and sedges for the planned season of use for cattle unless modified for adaptive management. These use levels are the same ones contained in part three of the Term Grazing Permit associated with this AOI.

Sawtooth National Forest Utilization Standards

Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of growing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to direction in FSM 1922.5.

MONITORING: Utilization will be monitored by the permittee and by forest personnel. We welcome your participation in these monitoring activities. Key areas are defined as relatively small areas that serve as monitoring and evaluation sites. These areas guide the general management of the entire area of which it is a part, and will reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over the range. For the most part, key areas are the riparian areas and non-riparian drainage bottoms on all other units. You must be aware when these key areas have been used to the allowable intensity level, or if high impact or concentration areas exceed an acceptable size, you will need to move the cattle to the next unit or off the allotment.

Monitoring on the Allotments during the 2012 grazing season indicates that there were no observations of or interactions with Bighorn Sheep, either during trailing on/off the forest or during the grazing season.

SHEEP INSTRUCTIONS:

1. All sheep over six months of age will be considered as a permitted animal.

2. Dates for rotation are to be considered approximate, actual dates will be determined by utilization levels. When utilization levels are reached for a particular unit, or the allotment as a whole, the sheep will be removed.

3. Utilization by livestock of key browse species will not exceed 20% on deer winter range.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: These lands are owned by the United States Government and managed by the USDA Forest Service for the benefit of all the citizens. Grazing of livestock is an important use of the lands, but campers, hunters, fisherman, woodcutters and others are equally important. Some people do not like the conflict of livestock grazing on the government lands at all and want them removed. As the person responsible for the day to day management of the sheep, your actions are very important in keeping good relations with the public and following those instructions so sheep may continue to graze here as they have for many years. You will encounter other Forest users. Please treat them with courtesy and friendliness. Remember that many people are afraid of dogs. They are particularly uncomfortable with people who carry firearms, and may not understand that your rifle serves the purpose of protecting the sheep from predators.

Your conduct with these people will have a direct impact upon how they view sheep grazing on the Forest. At the same time, you should be aware that many people have never seen bands of sheep or their herders and are delighted to see them. They often want to take pictures or learn more about the sheep and the herders.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS: Improvements will be inspected and maintained to Forest Service standards before livestock enter the allotment. Livestock may be held off the allotment if assigned maintenance is not completed. Allotment management fences and water developments must be maintained prior to your livestock entering the grazing unit. Allotment boundary fences must be maintained prior to the entry dates of adjoining allotments. Permittees in non-use status are still responsible for their proportionate share of maintenance.

Scheduled improvements for 2013
Little Piney Spring trough.

Beginning in the 2008 grazing season, grazing permittees will be responsible for maintaining exclosures across their allotments in addition to their regular scheduled maintenance. The initial maintenance will be preformed by the Forest Service to bring the exclosure to standard and will then be maintained by the permittee for the remainder of the grazing season. It will be your responsibility to keep livestock out of the exclosures and maintain the fences in good condition until the end of your season. The exclosures are as follows: The Buckbrush Flat guzzler located on the Buckbrush Allotment - Please see the attached allotment map for reference.

PREDATOR CONTROL: Use of guard dogs is recommended. Predator losses are reduced with the use of guard animals.

LIVESTOCK DISTRIBUTION: It is agreed that proper salting techniques be used such as placing salt in areas of low natural concentration by the livestock, at least ¼ mile away from water and should not be placed within 100 feet of roads and trails and on ridges accessible to livestock. Salt must not be placed in shaded areas, in meadows or in areas of heavy utilization. Riding will be done to scatter cattle to avoid livestock concentration.

HERDING: The key to proper management of this sheep range is annual once-over grazing, with the exception of designated sheep driveways, travel routes, or where specifically authorized. We realize that sheep will cross certain areas twice as they move to and from corrals, between certain units as well as entering and exiting the allotment. In an effort to minimize soil disturbance and erosion, keep concentrated bands of sheep off steep slopes. If steep hill slopes cannot be avoided, contour across the slope in a loose manner, rather than moving the animals in a tight group directly downhill. Make an effort to graze, rather than trail to water.

HORSES: Care should be used around camping areas so that the herder's horses don't over graze these areas. This may require supplemental feed if you plan to stay in one camp location for any length of time. It is preferred that the herder not have more than two horses at any one time.

CAMPING: The herder is to see that the camp areas are kept clean. All garbage is to be hauled off the Forest. Forest policy is "Pack it in/Pack it out".

FIRE: At no time is a campfire to be left unattended. Campfires must be dead out before leaving camp. If the grazing season turns out to be hot and dry, campfires may be disallowed. Each camp should have a water bucket, a good shovel, and an axe at all times.

RECORDS AND REPORTS: The permittee is required to keep good records concerning movement of livestock to accurately furnish such information to the Forest Service. Actual use reports will be supplied to the Forest Service at the end of the grazing season. All livestock must be counted before they enter the allotment unless the count is waived by the Forest Officer in charge. The Permittee will notify the Minidoka Ranger District at least five (5) days before the sheep are turned onto the allotment. This will allow district personnel the opportunity to count the livestock if we so desire.

Failure to provide these dates will negate the possibility of any future adjustments in season, any credits or refunds and could be considered a violation of your Term Grazing Permit.

OWNERSHIP - Livestock grazed under term permit must be owned by the term permit holder with brand(s) authorized by the permit. Ownership requirements are important and could result in permit action if they are violated. The permittee should review ownership requirements in part II of the Term Grazing Permit or discuss any questions with the Forest Officer.

ANNUAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS: All permitted livestock found outside the permitted season or permitted area are considered excess use livestock. When excess livestock are identified as belonging to a permittee; the permittee will be billed at the unauthorized use rate and permit action may be taken. Dead livestock on National Forest Lands within 300 feet of a live spring, stream, recreation trail or roadway will be promptly disposed of.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Observance, documentation, and reporting of additional uses on the allotment provides valuable information with regard to overall allotment management. These uses could include: unauthorized livestock use, excess use by other permittees, , wildlife, mining related activities, recreation, etc.

OTHER: Observance, documentation, and reporting of additional uses on the allotment provides valuable information with regard to overall allotment management. These uses could include: unauthorized livestock use, excess use by other permittees, wild horses, wildlife, mining related activities, recreation, etc.

If you have any questions or suggestions to improve the management of the allotment, please feel free to contact us. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Sid J. Lopez at (208) 737-3273 or stop by his office at 2647 Kimberly Road E. in Twin Falls.

Approved by: Scott Donnenge 4/16/13

District Ranger Date

The following has been submitted by the Noh Sheep Company as voluntary management action since the 2009 grazing season on the Sawtooth National Forest:

NOH SHEEP COMPANY COMMITMENTS TO BIG HORN SEPARATION

While Noh Sheep Company recognizes that in over 20 years since the introduction of big horn sheep in the Cottonwood Canyon/Dry Creek area there has been no known or suspected contact between big horns and domestic sheep on the National Forest, we nevertheless commit for the 2011 grazing season to a variety of management strategies which should continue to insure there will be no disease transmissible contact, and no adverse impacts upon current Forest uses and practices on other parts of the Forest and related to our private lands which could come about as a result of big horn-domestic sheep management decisions.

We will sign and adopt the Strategy for Managing Separation between Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep and Goats in the South Hills, developed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Department of Agriculture and permittees, which is in conformance with the 2008, Interim Strategy for Managing Separation Between Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep in Idaho, adopted by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission.

Since the introductions, there have been no observations of big horns on the west side of Rock Creek canyon. Both the highway and the creek, especially during high water, appear to be barriers to big horn migration.

At the request of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, grazing management in the north Buck Brush area, was altered to spring use only with a 2-year rotation, to foster production of mule deer. This is also the area which is closest to the big horn, core area. Consequently, the north Buck Brush area is grazed for only 10 days to two weeks from the opening date of the allotment, May 13, to early June. It was grazed in 1992-93, again in 1996-97, and is scheduled for grazing in 2010-2011. In alternate years, this band of sheep rotates to the west side of Rock Creek, at Third Fork.

Noh Sheep Company has voluntarily foregone grazing since the 1980's on the east side of Rock Creek Road, to the top of the canyon, from Third Fork to the Forest boundary. We will continue to do so.

This band of sheep is loaded onto trucks on the Berger Resource Conservation Area, south of Filer, Idaho, at daylight, following overnight off feed and water in corrals. Lambs are counted, and all lambs and ewes which are not healthy are removed from the band the pervious afternoon. The sheep are unloaded, with guard dogs, before noon, at the sheep bridge on the east side of Rock Creek, near the Forest Boundary.

A netting wire fence encloses the sheep and trucks in the east side, next to the highway. Dense willows and a barbed wire fence enclose the north side. The south side is unfenced, but abuts dense shrubs, birch trees and a heavily used, undeveloped campground. The trucks are parked in the roadway during unloading. The sheep cross the bridge to the west side of Rock Creek immediately after unloading and the camp wagon remains on the east side, within 60 ft. of the bridge. The bridge could easily be closed with a small, temporary gate. Within two days, the sheep are on the open bench land on Buck Brush Flat, high above the canyon floor and the creek. The camp remains at the bridge for 5 to 10 days, until snow melt allows for moving it via the ski area, to the top of Deadline Ridge, and north to Buck Brush Flat. In most years, this is high water time for Rock Creek, and this should act as a barrier for big horns. Domestic sheep are unable to cross the rushing stream. Thus, there is little opportunity for big horns to come into the domestic sheep during this brief period. We will continue to pick up the garbage and trash which accumulates from recreation use in the unloading area. The unloading of the sheep at the bridge, as well as at Third Fork, in rotation years, attracts an increasing amount of interested people, especially families with children. Many photographs are taken, and they are welcomed.

We will insure that our herders are instructed in Spanish, as well as English in separation procedures, and identification of big horns. Normally there is cell phone service from the top of the canyon and herders are there every morning and evening, as well as most of the day.

Our breeding season is planned to commence around the first week of October, in the higher portions of the Forest, well south of the big horn area. Rams are rotated in the bands every 5-8 days. This reduces the likelihood that domestic rams will leave the bands and wander into big horn territory. Additionally, rams are paint branded extensively over their entire bodies, and are counted two to three times per day by the herder.

However, we will be diligent during this period, especially towards the end of our breeding season, to insure that rams do not stray, or are quickly captured. We will notify the identified parties if rams are missing.

All ewes are identified with an ear tag, color coded by age and bearing our name and phone number.

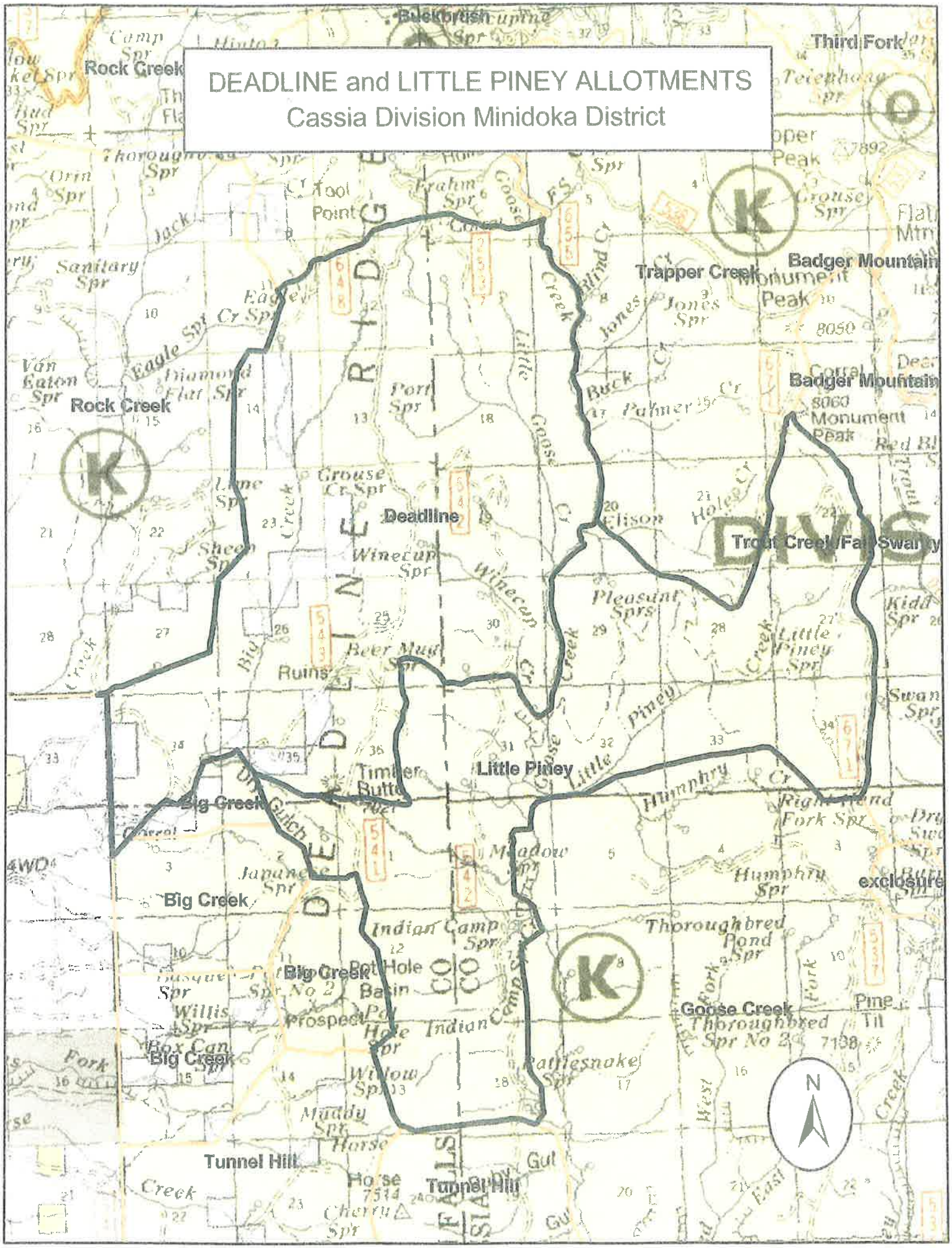
Since the early 1970's, sheep permittees on the Forest have taken the lead, with the cooperation of the University of Idaho, the Twin Falls Canal Company and state, federal and local agencies, in developing and funding a costly control program for biting black flies (Simulium vittatum), in the Twin Falls Canal Company system below Murtaugh Lake. Black Flies have a major impact upon all forms of use on this portion of the Sawtooth National Forest.

They are surely a major stress factor, when uncontrolled, for bighorn sheep. During 2008, voters in Twin falls County voted to establish a vector control district to fund and manage the black fly control efforts, as well as other serious pests. The program is now managed and funded by The Vector Control District, but for many years was funded entirely by sheep permittees. Noh Sheep Company will continue to actively advocate and support this important effort. We will continue to cooperate with and support research efforts which may advance the much needed knowledge for effective big horn and domestic sheep management.

Noh Sheep Co. will continue to allow unrestricted access to our private lands within and adjacent to the Forest in the Big Creek drainage, including over 2 miles of Big and Jack Creeks, key tributaries of Shoshone and Salmon Falls Creeks. These lands from the Forest boundary upstream contain major springs which comprise a substantial portion of Big Creek flows in the fall months, especially in years of low precipitation, as well as one of the major, long term, active beaver colonies on the Forest.

Noh Sheep Company wishes to cooperate with the Federal agencies, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Idaho Department of Agriculture and the public to improve multiple use resource management, and continue to provide wool for some 5,000 wool shirts and the total, quality protein requirements for some 5,000 individuals, mostly with natural, renewable grazing resources, each year.

Laird Noh, President
Noh Sheep Company


DEADLINE and LITTLE PINEY ALLOTMENTS
Cassia Division Minidoka District
Rock Creek
Third Fork
Badger Mountain
Trapper Creek
Monument Peak
Badger Mountain
Rock Creek
Deadline
Trout Creek/Fall Swamp
Little Piney
Big Creek
Big Creek
Big Creek
Goose Creek
Tunnel Hill
Tunnel Hill
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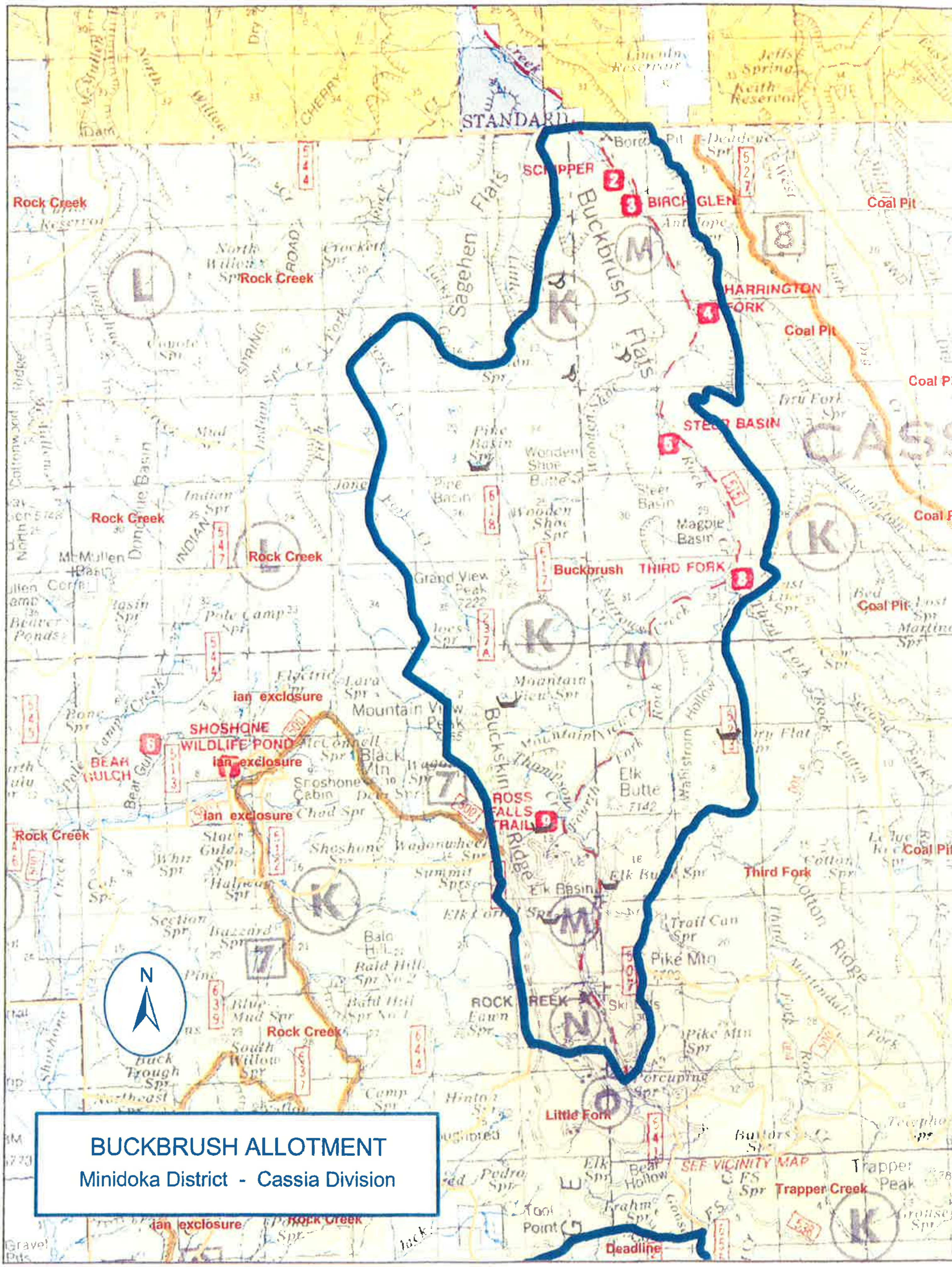
BUCKBRUSH ALLOTMENT
Minidoka District - Cassia Division
N
STANDARD
SCHIPPER
BIRCH GLEN
HARRINGTON FORK
STEER BASIN
THIRD FORK
Buckbrush
SHOSHONE WILDLIFE POND
BEAR GULCH
ROSS FALLS TRAIL
ian exclosure
Rock Creek
Coal Pit
Third Fork
Little Fork
Trapper Creek
Deadline
SEE VICINITY MAP
Buckbrush Flats
Sagehen Flats
Buckskin Ridge
Grand View Peak
Mountain View Peak
Elk Butte
Elk Basin
Pike Mtn
Magpie Basin
Steer Basin
Shoshone Cabin
Black Mtn
Bald Hill
Trapper Peak
Cotton Ridge