



File Code: 2210/2230

Date: June 6, 2013

John Sutphin Jr.
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PO Box 226
Lamar, CO 81025

Dear John,

This document serves as your 2013 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotments. This AOI is part of your Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, section 8(a).

I. AUTHORIZED LIVESTOCK NUMBERS/PERIOD OF USE/APPROVED NON-USE

Your 2013 Authorized Use Request has been approved and you are authorized the following Livestock Numbers and Periods of Use:

440 Cattle (cow/calf/bull)	3/1/13-5/10/13 – Hackberry Allotment
654 Cattle (cow/calf/bull)	5/11/13-11/30/13 – Pivot Rock Allotment
440 Cattle (cow/calf/bull)	12/1/13-2/28/14 – Hackberry Allotment
10 Horses	3/1/13-2/28/14

II. GRAZING SCHEDULE

The Annual number of livestock and dates are considered approximate. The actual dates and numbers may change due to many variables. Annual stocking levels (annual authorized livestock numbers and dates) are determined based on current and expected forage production; livestock numbers can and should be adjusted if conditions change, either up or down; but not in excess of the permitted numbers.

Although it was not discussed at our spring meeting there is a need to conduct two AOI meetings each year, this will provide a more accurate number of livestock and use period dates. The grazing schedule addressed in this AOI is from March 1, 2013 to the fall when the calves are shipped, this will help in determining the dates and numbers of the remaining livestock for the remainder of the grazing year.

The following pasture moves and dates are an approximate grazing sequence for the March 2013 through the fall grazing season:



Winter Range

Hackberry

Pasture Name	Planned Grazing Period	Livestock Number
Pipeline	March	450
Jim's 2	April	450
Mesquite Springs	May	450

Transition/Summer Range

Pivot Rock

Pasture Name	Planned Grazing Period	Livestock Numbers
Sandrock	5/11 – 5/14	250
Calloway	5/15 – 5/29	450
Toms Creek	5/30 – 6/29	600
West Bed Bug	6/30 – 7/07	600
Potato/Huffer	7/08 – 8/02	600
Miller	8/03 – 8/23	600
Clear Lake/Dry Lake	8/24 – 9/13	600
Bald	9/14 – 10/4	600
Neck	10/05 – 10/20	600
Shipping	10/21 – 10/26	600

It was determined in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Decision Notice (DN) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Hackberry/Pivot Rock Range Allotment signed on February 18, 2010 that the Teepee Pasture will not support livestock grazing, so it will be deferred for a minimum of 10 years due to unsatisfactory soil conditions.

The determination was also made that the Kehl Pasture will also be deferred until desired vegetation and soil conditions in the headwater meadow/riparian areas are achieved. At the time of the EA there were 17 miles of riparian streams and reaches that needed improvement towards Proper Functioning Condition (PFC). Also, the woody vegetation condition throughout the allotment was poor and in need of improvement. The primary stressor in these important areas is over utilization by wild ungulates, principally elk. No timeframe was given for this pasture.

Pasture Grazing Period:

To protect and enhance woody riparian vegetation, pastures with riparian areas (Management Area (MA) 12, perennial and intermittent streams, springs and seeps) that are grazed during the critical growth period (March 1 to April 30) will not be grazed during the critical growth period the following year. Pastures that have these types of riparian areas include: Basin, Bull Run, Doren, Hackberry Spring, Pambo, Phroney, and Lower, Middle and Upper Towel.

When livestock enclosure fences are constructed at spring/seeps (as identified in the improvements section, #1 and #2), alternate year livestock deferment during the critical growth period will no longer be necessary.

Pasture	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Teepee	No grazing								
Kehl	No grazing								

III. GRAZING STRATEGY

The length of the actual grazing period in each pasture will be determined by the allowable use established for the pasture; however, the actual use period will not exceed 30 days per pasture.

Annual authorized livestock numbers will be based on existing conditions, available water and forage, and predicted forage production for the year. Adjustments to the annual authorized livestock numbers (increase or decrease; increases will not exceed permitted livestock number) may occur during the grazing year, based on conditions and/or range inspections.

Generally pastures will be grazed only once during the grazing year. However, if the need arises to provide rest (or deferment) for other pastures, a pasture may be used twice provided there has been sufficient vegetation growth/regrowth and grazing is managed within the intensity and utilization guidelines.

Cattle are to be shipped between Hackberry and Pivot Rock Allotments, avoiding the Fossil Creek Allotment and occupied Chiricahua leopard frog habitat.

DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

Drought is an inevitable occurrence in the southwestern United States. Both the Forest Service and grazing permittees must plan for drought as a normal part of management. During periods of drought, the following management actions may be necessary:

- Stocking levels may need to be reduced. Reductions may be necessary prior to the permitted season of use and/or during the permitted season of use.
- Season of use may need to be shortened. Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, a reduced grazing season may be necessary.
- Pasture use periods may need to be shortened. Pastures will not be re-grazed during the same grazing season and this may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
- Utilization and/or seasonal utilization (grazing intensity) standards may need to be reduced. Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, reduced utilization standards will likely result in shortened pasture use periods and may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
- Lack of livestock water, or poor distribution of livestock water, may result in reduced pasture/allotment use periods. Depending on forage conditions, this effect may be mitigated by hauling water to temporary livestock watering facilities.

IV. ALLOWABLE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

Hackberry Allotment: A management guideline of conservative use (30 to 40%) for forage utilization as measured at the end of the growing season will be employed to maintain or improve rangeland vegetation and long term soil productivity. Within riparian areas (MA 12 – Riparian and Open Water), utilization will not exceed 20% on woody vegetation. Annual reductions in the grazing intensity guideline may be made based on resource conditions.

Pivot Rock Allotment: Generally, a moderate grazing intensity (40 to 50%) will be managed for the late spring and early summer will be managed when sufficient opportunity exists for plant growth. During the late summer and fall, grazing intensity will be managed at conservative levels, 30 to 40% for the remainder of the year, when the potential for plant regrowth is limited. Annual reductions in the grazing intensity guideline may be made based on resource conditions.

Guidelines common to both Allotments: A management guideline of conservative use, (30 to 40% forage utilization as measured at the end of the growing season) will be employed to maintain or improve rangeland vegetation and long term soil productivity. Within riparian areas (MA 12 – Riparian and Open Water), allowable use will not exceed 20% on the woody vegetation. Annual reductions in the allowable use guideline may be made based on resource conditions.

V. RESOURCE MONITORING

Adaptive Management:

If monitoring indicates that desired conditions are not being achieved, management will be modified in cooperation with the permittee.

Forage Utilization

Forage production assessments will be made to determine stocking levels for the grazing season and will also be used during the grazing season to determine if adjustments in the stocking levels would be made. Utilization measurements will be taken in key areas which reflect grazing effects within an entire pasture. Utilizations measurements can indicate the need for management changes prior to this need being identified through long term monitoring. Utilization data would not be used alone, but would be used along with climate and condition/trend data, to determine stocking levels and pasture rotations for future years.

If monitoring shows that the utilization guideline was exceeded in a pasture, the grazing schedule and/or livestock numbers would be adjusted for the following year. If utilization is exceeded after these adjustments are made, then changes would be made to the grazing management system.

The livestock grazing system incorporates best management practices (BMPs) specific to grazing practices and constitutes compliance with Arizona State and Federal Water Quality Standards. Arizona Department of Water Quality (ADEQ) will continue to monitor water quality in the area.

Monitoring of plant abundance, ground cover, species diversity, and estimates of overall soil condition will indicate whether or not management practices are effectively meeting management goals. Trends toward improvements in species abundance and diversity as well as ground cover would indicate that management practices are effectively improving soil condition and by inference, maintaining or improving downstream water quality and complying with water quality standards. Conversely, decreases in plant abundance and species diversity may indicate that management practices are not effective and need to be changed. Environmental factors, especially precipitation, will be considered when evaluating monitoring results.

Permittee Monitoring

Monitoring on your allotments will occur in October this year. The location of key areas for forage utilization monitoring, key vegetation species, and the specific application to your allotment should be discussed with your Rangeland Management Specialist. Your participation in utilization monitoring is encouraged.

You are encouraged to monitor and document the following items on the enclosed Actual Use Form during the 2013 grazing year: 1) Actual Grazing Period, and 2) Actual Livestock Numbers.

It is very important that the Actual Use form is submitted twice to your Rangeland Management Specialist 15 days after shipping and by 3/15 of the following year.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Monitoring:

Monitor and maintain fences along Verde River to minimize impacts to Wild and Scenic Outstanding, Remarkable Values (ORVs). There is only one authorized emergency watering access point along the Verde where livestock have access to the river and that is at Gospel Hollow on the Hackberry Allotment.

Heritage Resources Monitoring:

The District will periodically monitor known archaeological sites to ensure they have been avoided.

VI. MITIGATION MEASURES FOR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Attached are two (2) grazing mitigation documents that address grazing mitigation measures for the Mexican spotted owl and the Chiricahua leopard frog. Please review and familiarize yourself with these required grazing measures; Forest Service personnel will field check your compliance with these mitigation requirements.

Certain water bodies are deemed important for wildlife use. It is important that a sufficient amount of water be left for wildlife after livestock have been removed from the grazing unit, on the Hackberry Allotment these water bodies are: Big Willow Spring, Keg Spring, Cedar Spring, Grapevine Spring, Doren's Defeat Spring, Hackberry Spring, Wet Prong Spring, Towel Creek Perennial Pool, Partnership Tank, Phroneys Spring and Pipeline Drinker. And,

for Pivot Rock Allotments the bodies of water are: Fuller Tank, Dry Lake Tank, Miller Canyon, Lee Johnson Spring and various natural springs in the Huffer and Toms Creek Pastures.

There will be only one authorized emergency watering access point to the Verde River and that will be at Gospel Hollow on the Hackberry Allotment.

The following livestock grazing mitigation measures are specific actions required for maintenance and improvement of special status species habitat within the Hackberry/Pivot Rock allotment:

Little Colorado spinedace

A journey level fisheries biologist must conduct surveys on East Clear Creek for Little Colorado spinedace prior to livestock crossing at the two designated points. The first crossing is between the Clear Creek and Miller pastures and is scheduled for August 17, 2012. Please contact your Rangeland Management Specialist at least 3 weeks before you plan to cross East Clear Creek so that these surveys can be completed in a timely manner.

VII. **RANGE IMPROVEMENTS**

Structural Range Improvements

New Fence projects will be implemented only with prior approval and after a successful completion/clearance of both biological and archeological surveys from Forest Service personnel. The Red Rock Ranger District has a **fence standard** sheet that is attached.

Improvements for 2013:

Miller Fence

Range Improvement Maintenance

Range improvements assigned to you for maintenance have been identified in red on the permit maps of your term grazing permit. These improvements are to be fully maintained annually to comply with permit requirements (Part 2, section 8i). Any maintenance you perform must conform to the standards specified by your District Rangeland Management Specialist. The grazing permittee is responsible for all maintenance materials, supplies and equipment necessary to properly maintain all range structural improvements. The Forest will replace range structural improvement materials and/or supplies at the end of the improvement's life; when maintenance and repair is no longer feasible to keep the improvement properly maintained and functioning. **Please note that you must notify the District Rangeland Management specialist at least 60 days prior to beginning any maintenance work that requires the use of heavy equipment (ex. Maintenance of earthen stock tanks). Please also note the updated leopard frog mitigation (for tank cleaning) letter toward the end of this document.**

VIII. **SALTING AND PROTEIN BLOCK PRACTICES**

Proper salt and protein block location can be a good tool to aid in livestock distribution and they will be used in a manner to spread livestock utilization throughout the pasture. A detailed description of the Coconino National Forest Salting and Supplemental Feeding policy can be found in Part 3 of your term grazing permit; however, the following guidelines are provided as a general reference:

1. In general, salt and protein blocks should not be placed within ¼ mile of water, roads, or trails.
2. Salt and protein blocks will not be placed in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
3. No more than three blocks (50 lb. blocks) of salt/protein will be placed at any location at any one time.
4. Salt/protein will not be placed at the same location twice during the same grazing season.
5. The use of portable salt/protein block containers is encouraged but not mandatory.

Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon Mitigation

<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Mitigation for salting</i>
Potato North	Salt at tanks only, but not within 1/2 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Potato South	Salt at tanks only, but not within 1/2 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Bald 1	No salt
Bald 3	No salt
Bald 4	No salt east of 136A or 136B roads
West Bedbug	Salt only east of Cart Cabin Tank
Kehl	No salt in T12N, R10E, Sections 4, 9, and 33
Toms	No salt in T13N, R9E, Section 28
Sandrock	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Miller	No salt in T12N, R10E, Section 33
Clear Creek	Salt only at tanks
Twenty-Seven Mile	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Horse Pasture	Salt on private land only

IX. PORTABLE WATER HAULING

Temporary sites for hauling portable water may be needed and should be used as necessary to assist in livestock distribution. The following requirements will apply to portable water locations:

Archeological and Biological Clearances must be completed prior to placing portable waters.

1. Coordinate with the District Rangeland Management Specialist to identify portable water haul locations for individual pastures prior to the grazing period.

2. To aid in livestock distribution, the portable water haul locations should generally be in areas of light forage utilization.
3. Generally, portable water haul locations will not be located at sites used in previous years.
4. Portable water hauls will not be located in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
5. Portable water haul locations will be moved when the desired forage utilization levels have been reached.
6. Portable haul water storage tanks and troughs will be removed when livestock leave the pasture.
7. Water hauling vehicles (water tenders) will follow the Travel Management Rules (found below under XI. MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS).

There will be only one authorized emergency watering access point to the Verde River and that will be at Gospel Hollow on the Hackberry Allotment.

X. FIRE

Please use caution during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. **All ranch vehicles must be equipped with an axe, shovel, and water bucket.** All open camp and branding fires require a ten foot fire ring cleared down to mineral soil.

During periods of critical fire danger the Forest Supervisor may declare a Red Flag Alert or issue other special orders. Under these conditions, the building or use of fires, the use of power saws, heavy equipment, ATV's and other motorized equipment may be prohibited on Forest Service land. All Federal, State and Local fire restrictions and regulations must be observed.

Report all fires to the Ranger District Offices at: Red Rock (928-282-4119), The Happy Jack Fire Crews at 928-477-5037 (Jeff Thumm), 928-477-5031 (Robert Auza), or 928-477-5033 (Jeff Thumm, acting FMO), Mogollon Rim (928-477-2255); or to the Coconino National Forest Fire Dispatch Office (night - 928-526-0600, day - 928-527-3552). Another contact number is 911.

Cooperation in the reporting, prevention, and suppression of fires will be expected as specified in Part 2, section 10 of your Term Grazing Permit.

XI. MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS

On May 1, 2012, the Coconino National Forest began implementation of the Travel Management Rule. The Travel Management Rule requires the designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use and these routes are identified on the Motor Vehicle Use Map.

Implementation of the Travel Management Rule requires active management of all motorized use, including use related to permitted grazing activities. Motorized travel off the designated road system, including off-road access, by grazing permit holders will be based on the need to carry out required management practices necessary to comply with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit. Examples of required management practices include, but are not

limited to: the repair and maintenance of structural range improvements; transport and placement of mineral and protein supplement; herding of livestock; and tending to sick or injured animals. Legitimate motorized use off the designated road system, including off-road access, for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit will be authorized as follows:

1. **For motorized use with ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles, and full-size pickup or smaller vehicles (curb weight less than 8,000 pounds):** Grazing permittee must obtain a grazing allotment specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which absolutely necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.
2. **For motorized use with larger vehicles (curb weight greater than 8,000 pounds or larger than a full-size pickup) or any heavy equipment:** Grazing permittee must obtain a site specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which absolutely necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.

To request site specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit, the grazing permittee must provide their Rangeland Management Specialist with the project details a minimum of 30 days prior to the proposed starting date for the permit.

3. A copy of the approved Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit must be with the vehicle operator while operating the vehicle off the designated road system.
4. A Permit Placard must be attached to all permitted vehicles while operating off the designated road system.
5. Off-Highway vehicles (ATVs, UTVs, and motorcycles) used for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit must be licensed and permitted in accordance with Arizona State law.
6. The Motor Vehicle Use Map for the Coconino National Forest identifies certain roads as "Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only". These roads are open only to motor vehicles licensed under State law for general operation on all public roads within the state. Grazing permittees operating motor vehicles on these roads must comply with the legal requirements. Operating a motor vehicle off the designated road system to avoid the legal requirements of "Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only" is not permitted.
7. Grazing permittees will utilize motorized vehicles off the designated road system in a manner that will not result in damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, wildlife, heritage, or other forest resources.
8. Failure to comply with the conditions of the Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit may result in the immediate cancellation of the Restricted Road,

Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit and the issuance of a Notice of Non-Compliance for violation of the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit.

Grazing permittees that do not obtain a Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit are required to operate motorized vehicles only on the designated road system. Operating a motorized vehicle off the designated road system without a valid Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit will result in the immediate issuance of a Notice of Non-Compliance for violating the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit (Part 2, Section 8a). A Notice of Non-Compliance may result in Term Grazing Permit suspension or cancellation proceedings.

X. APPEAL RIGHTS

Annual Operating Instructions are subject to appeal and review under 36 CFR 251.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss anything further, please contact Kathleen Sevy at (928) 203-7537.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda L. Wadleigh". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

LINDA L. WADLEIGH
Mogollon Rim District Ranger

Enclosures