MIDDLE FORK NORTH and MIDDLE FORK SOUTH S&G ALLOTMENTS

2014 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Emmett Ranger District
Boise National Forest

INTRODUCTION

The Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) provide direction for livestock management and how it will be conducted on Middle Fork North S&G and Middle Fork South S&G allotments during the 2014 grazing season.

Allotment	Permittee	Permit Number
Middle Fork North S&G	Frank Shirts, Jr.	00263
Middle Fork South S&G	Frank Shirts, Jr.	00263

Permitted Use				
Permittee	**Allotment**	**No. of Livestock**	**Livestock Class**	**Permitted Season**
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. N.	950	Ewe/Lamb	6/6 – 10/5
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	950	Ewe/Lamb	6/6 – 10/5
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. N.	7	Pack/Saddle	6/6 – 10/5
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	7	Pack/Saddle	6/6 – 10/5

Authorized Use for the 2014 Grazing Season				
Permittee	**Allotment**	**No. of Livestock**	**Livestock Class**	**Authorized Season**
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	940(Nestor)	Ewe/Lamb	6/6 – 8/25
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	940(Ramone)	Ewe/Lamb	6/6 – 8/25
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	7	Pack/Saddle	6/6 – 8/25
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. S.	7	Pack/Saddle	6/6 – 8/25
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. N.	1700(Ramone)	Bucking	8/26 – 10/5
Frank Shirts Jr.	Middle Fk. N.	7	Pack/Saddle	8/26 – 10/5

Band Identification:
Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments:
Sheep Band

Band #1 Nestor—Lightning Creek to East Fork Clear Creek– 940 head Ewe/Lambs (Ewe/Lamb Band)

Permitted livestock brands: (if paint brands are used)

Frank Shirts

Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments:
Pack Stock

Band #1 – 7 head of horses and mules

Band Identification:
Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments:
Sheep Band

Band #2 Ramone—Payette River to East Fork Clear Creek– 940 head of Ewe/Lambs (Ewe/Lamb Band)

Permitted livestock brands: (if paint brands are used)

Frank Shirts

Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments
Pack Stock

Band #2 – 7 horses and mules

Band Identification:
Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments
Sheep Band

Band #1 & #2 Combined (Ramone) – 1700 Ewes and Bucks (Bucking Band)

Middle Fork North and South Sheep Allotments
Pack Stock

Bands #1 and #2 – 7 head of horses and mules

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a).

Procedures For Modifying AOI. Situations may develop during the grazing season which require 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 changes or deviating from these instructions.

All hay, straw, and mulch products used on the Boise National Forest must be certified as weed free or weed seed free by a qualified inspector of the State of Idaho or neighboring states which have weed-free feed or crop certification programs (Region Special Order Number: 04-00-097).

BILLING

FEES – The grazing fee for sheep is $0.27 per head month. The fee for pack and saddle stock is $1.35 per head month.

PAYMENT - Confirmation of payment through the "lock box" process is required and must be received before livestock can enter any National Forest System lands. In order to meet this requirement, bills need to be paid on approximately April 15 of each year.

REFUNDS – If permitted livestock are required to leave the allotment early due to excess utilization, drought or other reasons as determined by the Forest Officer, a refund may be requested. A written request for refund must be submitted to the District Ranger if this situation occurs.

LIVESTOCK ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE FOREST STANDARDS AND GUIDES

COMMUNICATION – The Range Specialist or Range Technician is the Ranger's Representative for the Emmett Ranger District. Notify the Range Specialist or Technician at least five days in advance of the date, time and place where each band will enter the allotment. The livestock will be counted when being placed on the allotment. The Rancher's Representative must communicate with the Ranger's Representative on a regular basis, and keep the Forest Service informed of sheep numbers, routes, locations, shipping dates, grazing and predatory problems.

MANAGEMENT – High intensity, low duration once over lightly grazing. Livestock management will emphasize moving sheep in a timely manner: (1) Do not graze or use any area more than once per year. (2) Bedgrounds are to be used only 1 night and camps are to be moved every 3 to 4 days to facilitate the proper movement of the band. (3) Do not "noon," "shade," "bed," or graze sheep and pack stock within 100 yards of riparian areas. (4) After watering the livestock, remove them from the riparian area. (5) Streams, lakes, ponds, rivers or any area within the influence of water must be left with at least a 4-inch stubble height for grasses. Herders should know what is ahead. Practice open or loose herding and minimize the use of herding dogs to decrease soil displacement.

A particular ridge on the east side of Scriver Creek has been heavily used as a bedground, avoid this area.

CLOSED AREAS – The Silver Creek recreation area, the spring area at Silver Creek lookout, and Eggers Creek Research Natural Area are closed to grazing.

UTILIZATION – If utilization limits are reached prior to the scheduled off dates, sheep will be removed from the allotment early. In addition, it is expected that trailing off the allotments will begin early enough to satisfy the off-forest dates in October.

STREAMBANK UTILIZATION - Will be measured along the "greenline" in riparian areas. The standard of measurement for riparian areas will be maximum use 45 percent, 4 inches stubble height of hydric greenline species remaining after livestock are removed from riparian areas. A safe, easy way to visualize this is "Graze half, and leave half of the grasses. To prevent exceeding these standards, it is important to begin moving livestock slightly before this limit is reached. In the flats or meadows adjoining riparian areas and/or uplands areas, we will adhere to the Forest Plan standard of 40 percent utilization for early season and 50 percent for late season pasture use.

UPLAND INSPECTIONS AND UTILIZATION MONITORING – It is the responsibility of the permittee to periodically monitor and document utilization (stubble height) as shown on the attached Monitoring Plan. Monitoring of upper elevations (40-50 percent utilization) will need to be jointly initiated to prevent overuse of the vegetation. The Forest Service will periodically check the permittee's utilization monitoring to ensure good land stewardship and perform documentation. At times, the Permittee and the Forest Service will jointly inspect range conditions.

STREAMBANK MONITORING PLAN
Objectives/Concerns

A. Objectives – Maximum resource use for **"Riparian Areas of Concern"** must be 45 percent or less utilization. Locate and monitor grazing use of riparian resources and events occurring to them. The reasons would be: (1) to prevent resource loss in riparian areas, (2) to allow opportunities to improve management of riparian areas, (3) to comply with current management direction, (4) to prevent loss of bull trout habitat, and (5) to show change in riparian conditions over time.

B. Concerns – **Riparian areas within the Middle Fork Payette, Upper Middle Fork, and Bull Creek are designated "Riparian Areas of Concern."** These are all bull trout watersheds with special management/mitigation measures. Allotments and their riparian areas within these watersheds are generally in good to excellent condition, showing slow upward trend. Areas having greatest potential for resource loss, and the most potential for criticism are open, flat riparian areas next to roads or trails, like Scriver Creek and Bull Creek. The Forest Service and permittee will conduct livestock utilization, streambank stability, and riparian recovery monitoring in these areas.

C. Areas of Concern – Middle Fork North and Middle Fork South S&G Allotments

Middle Fork North S&G Allotment
a) Bull Creek
b) Bridge Creek

Middle Fork South S&G Allotment
a) Scriver Creek
b) Powderhouse Gulch

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS – The Permittee is responsible for annual maintenance of all range improvements listed in Part 3 of your TERM GRAZING PERMIT. All listed range improvements

must be maintained for functionality, and a neat, clean appearance. The Forest Service shall provide all necessary materials for construction or reconstruction of range improvements. You must provide all incidental materials and labor for normal maintenance. Anything above normal maintenance should be discussed with the Ranger's Representative.

SALTING - The placement of salt is to be used as a management tool in helping to minimize livestock use in riparian areas, tree plantations, and to distribute the livestock. Do not place salt next to roads, trails, and tree plantations or water. Salt must be placed in containers to prevent leaching and trampling of salt grounds. When salting, attempt to use the correct amount so that all salt is consumed by the livestock that same day. This helps eliminate damage to the soil caused by wildlife use of leftover.

RANGE READINESS – Heavy snows or a prolonged cool spring could result in delays in range readiness. This could require later than scheduled turnout dates. Light snows or unseasonably warm springs could result in an opportunity to begin the grazing season early. The Forest Service will notify you at least 2 weeks in advance of your scheduled turnout date.

CARCASSES - When sheep, saddle or pack animal carcasses are located near campgrounds, roads or water reasonable and appropriate action must be taken to remove any carcasses. The permittee will contact the District Ranger's Representative to discuss the problem and determine what action would be appropriate. Although the Forest Service recognizes that disposal of carcasses is not always feasible in many situations, there are a number of reasonable options available for the disposal of single or multiple carcasses.

FOREST ROADS and TRAILS - Forest roads and trails used for trailing of sheep and saddle stock must be cleared and restored to their original condition immediately after use.

GARBAGE – All garbage generated by the present herder, or previous herders must be cleaned up by the camptender for the ranch foreman to haul away. All garbage will be hauled by the Ranch Foreman to a county waste disposal facility. Any garbage left on the permitee's allotment reflects on his and the Forest Service's ability and interest in being a good land steward.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION –

1. In cooperation with the State of Idaho, all feed, hay, or straw brought to the allotments must be certified weed-free.
2. Report any known invasive plants in your grazing areas.
3. Report areas you have accidentally over-used so the Forest Service is aware of a critical situation before an unhappy public makes us aware of it. This will keep the Forest Service up to date and provide the opportunity to repair the damage if necessary. In addition, it will reflect more positively on you as a good land manager.
4. It is recommended that the permittee use GPS units to record each camp or utilization monitoring site area during the grazing season.

REQUIRED REPORTING – Enclosed are year-end grazing reports for you to record actual use data and range improvement maintenance for the 2014 grazing season for the Middle Fork North and Middle Fork South S&G Allotments. You need to record the date and number of sheep turned onto each allotment, the number and date sheep are removed from the allotment, and estimate the time and cost of management actions including livestock herding and improvement maintenance associated with the allotment. Accurate records of these dates,

maintenance work, and range improvement needs should be kept and returned to our office at the end of the grazing season. The Forest Service uses these records to help allocate Range Betterment Funds. These funds are used to purchase materials for improvements. This report should be returned to the Emmett Ranger District no later than December 1, 2014.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOREST PLAN - The Middle Fork North and Middle Fork South S&G Allotments will be managed to achieve the Desired Future Conditions as described in the revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Boise National Forest. All permitted actions including grazing will comply with standards shown in the revised Boise National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Utilization Standards from the revised Forest Plan are as follows:

Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the grazing 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.

1. Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use of hydric greenline species.

2. Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use. Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

FIRE – Never leave campfires unattended. To meet Forest Service requirements, wood smoke, from camp stoves must be filtered through a spark arrestor screen with 3/8 inch or smaller mesh. Employees must be kept informed of the current fire situation and the permittee's fire prevention responsibility. The Forest Service will advise the permittee when special fire restriction orders become effective.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 2014 GRAZING SEASON

AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN

PLANTATIONS

Avoid grazing in the Lightning Plantation off of the 668C road, the Rattlesnake Plantation off of the 671 road, and the Granite Creek Plantation off of the 668B. Please see attached maps, Appendix 1.

BULL TROUT SPAWNING AREAS

Avoid all known bull trout spawning/early rearing areas after August 15th. Trailing, watering, grazing, and bedding of livestock within these areas after August 15th is prohibited. Please see attached, Appendix 2.

WOLVES

If you suspect a wolf depredation has occurred on your livestock, USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services (Wildlife Services) should be contacted as soon as possible. The local Wildlife Services contact for this area is Greg Jones. He can be reached at 541-212-6260. In the event that you cannot reach Greg, Todd Grimm at the Boise District Office should be contacted at 208-373-1630.

Permittees should continue working with their local Wildlife Services representative on depredation issues. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is responsible for wolf management in Idaho. The wolf biologist for Idaho Fish and Game is Jennifer Struthers. Any questions you may have regarding wolf management should be directed to her and she can be reached at (208-465-8465 x350).

In cooperation with other government agencies the Forest Service requires the following procedures be implemented each grazing season so that camp tenders are required to:

1) Keep camp meat in coolers and not hung.
2) Burn, burry, or pack out food leftovers, bones, garbage etc. including food not consumed by dogs accompanying the herders.
3) On the occasion of sheep, saddle or pack stock carcasses you must take reasonable and appropriate action to dispose of them where they will not serve as an attractant to predators. The permittee will contact the District Ranger's Representative to discuss the problem and determine what action would be appropriate.

We also recommend that you work with IDF&G and Wildlife Services to implement other effective preventative actions to reduce the risk of depredation.

These Annual Operating Instructions for Shirt's Sheep Company's Term Grazing Permit are consistent with the Boise National Forest Plan. If you need further clarification of any portion of these Instructions, or need to alter this plan to fit your grazing season, notify the Range Specialist at 365 - 7010. We appreciate your cooperation, and look forward to a good season.

Signatures:

Richard E. Newton

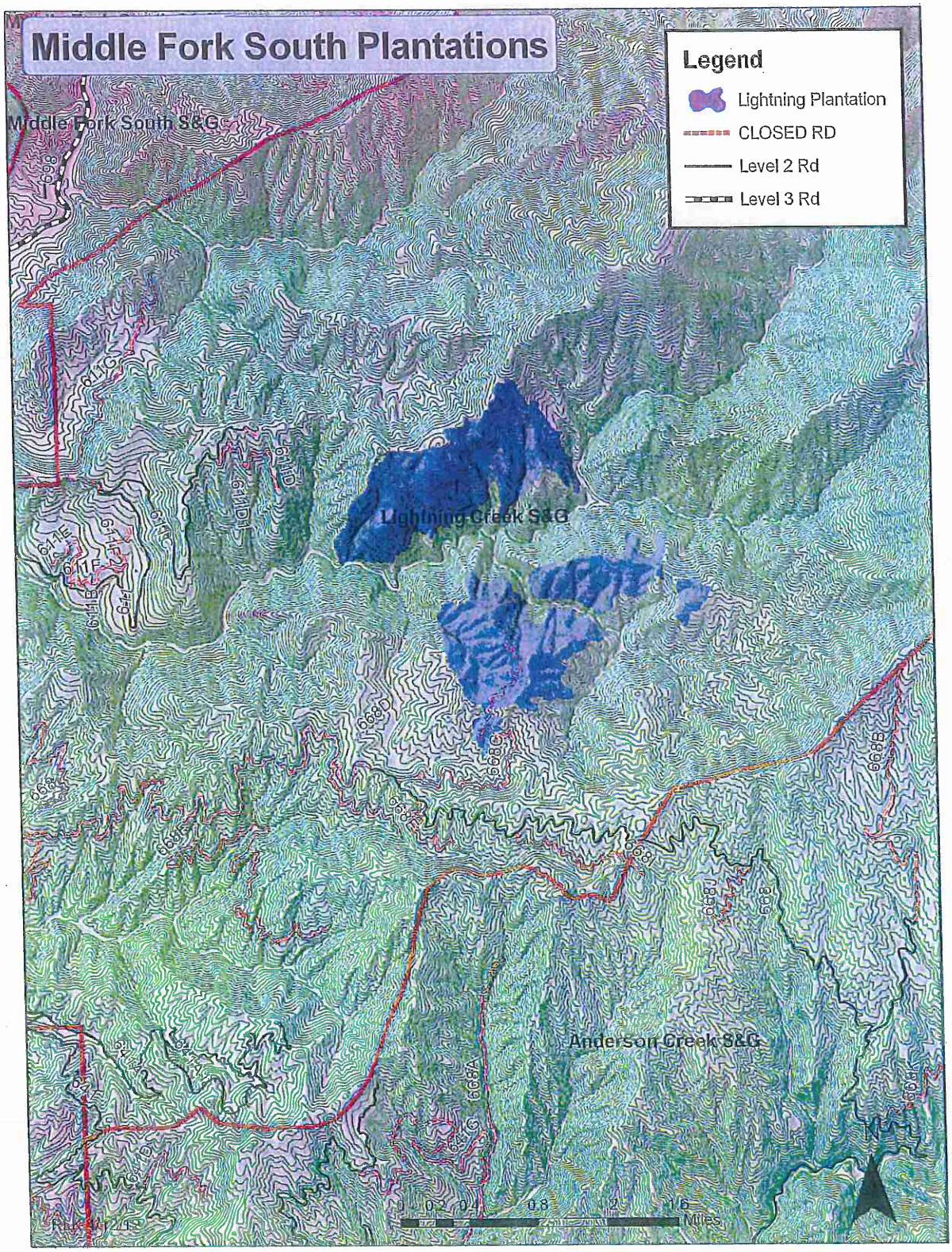
District Ranger

4/9/2014

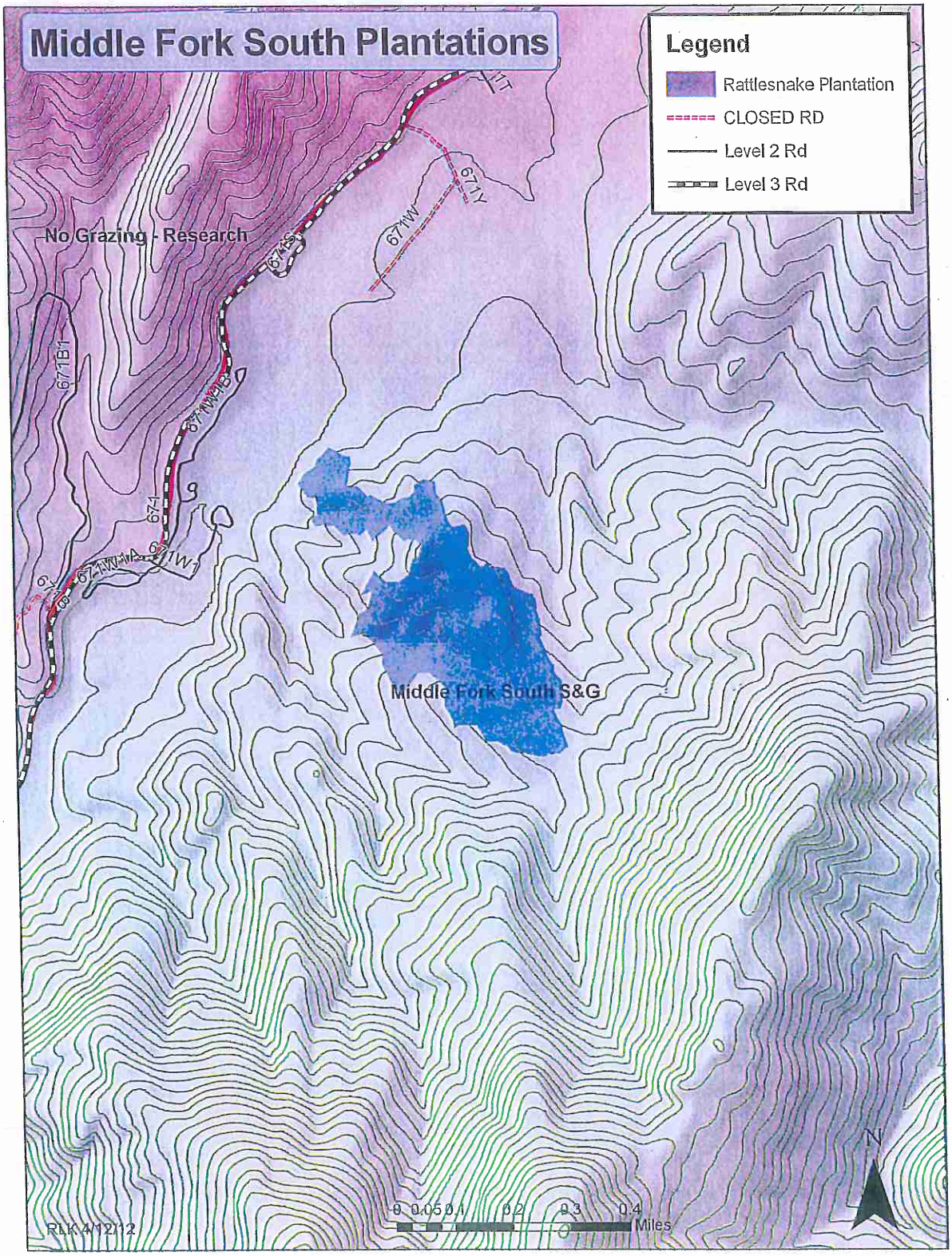
Date

Date

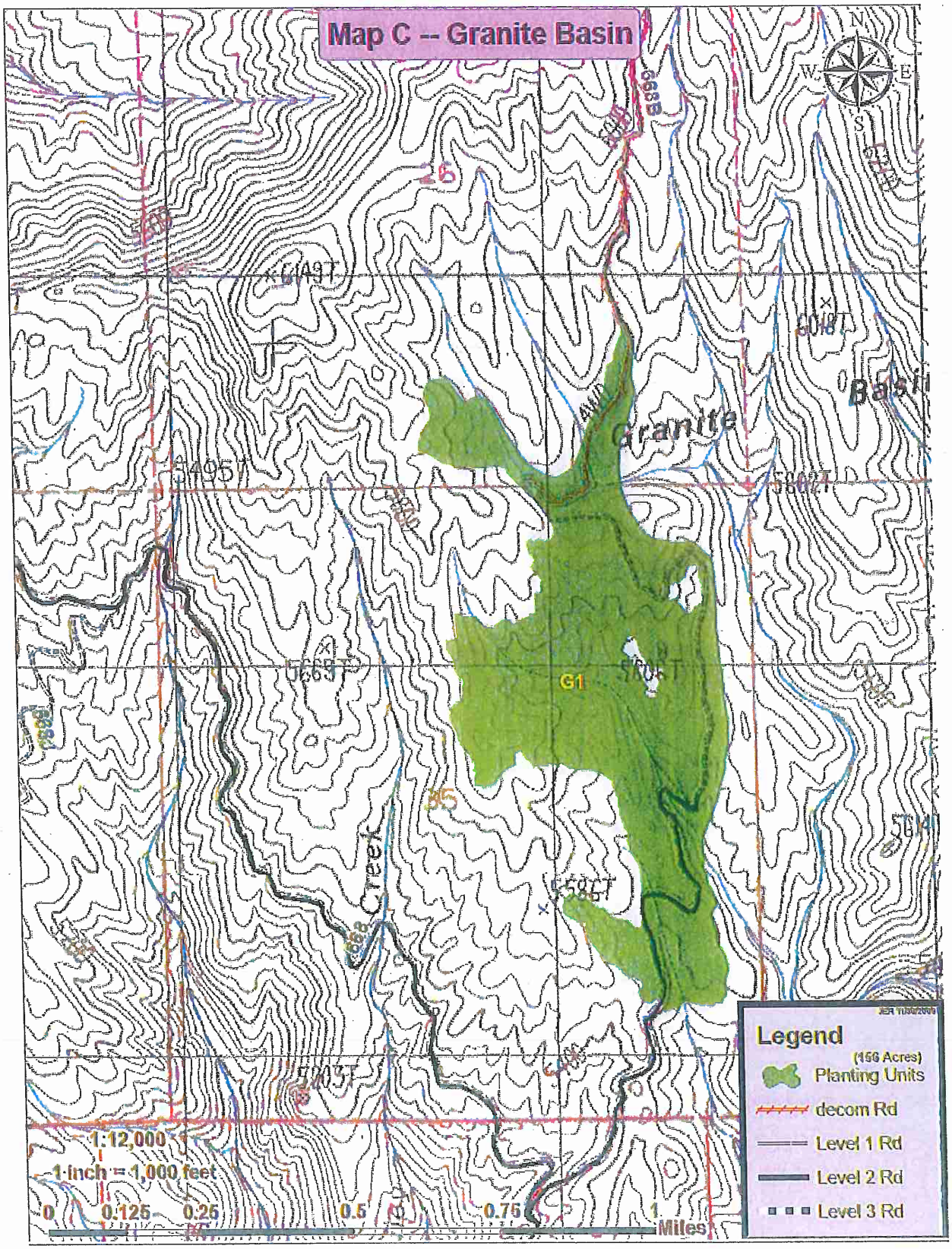
Appendix 1-1, Lightning Plantation


Middle Fork South Plantations
Legend
Lightning Plantation
CLOSED RD
Level 2 Rd
Level 3 Rd
Middle Fork South S&G
Lightning Creek S&G
Anderson Creek S&G
0.2
0.4
0.8
1.2
1.6
Miles

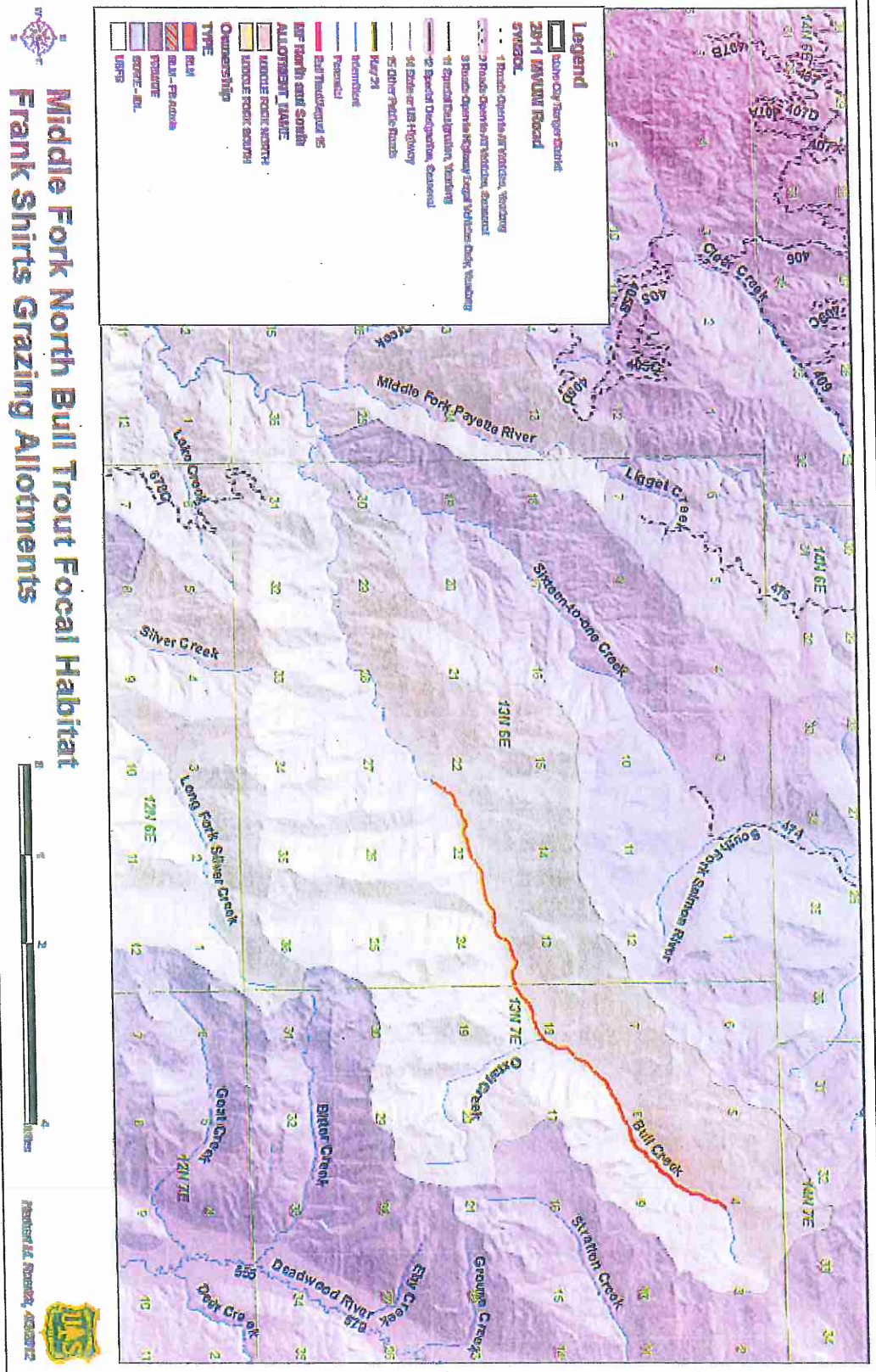
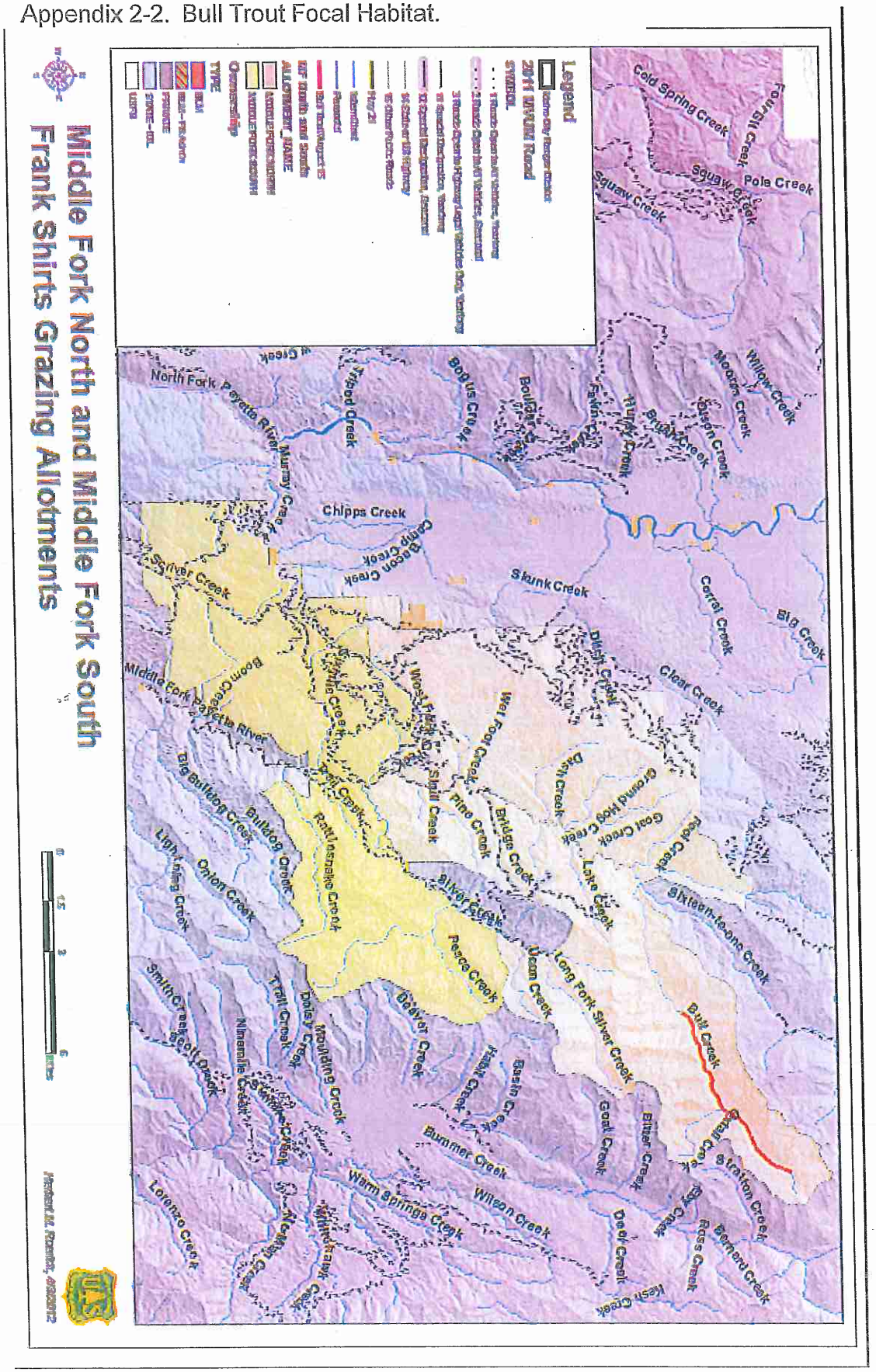
Appendix 1-2, RattlesnakePlantation



Appendix 1-3. Granite Basin Plantation



Appendix 2-1. Bull Trout Focal Habitat.



Appendix 2-2. Bull Trout Focal Habitat.