

LUNA-CHACON ALLOTMENT # 406
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2013

The annual meeting for the Luna Chacon Allotment was held on March 1, 2013, at the Camino Real District office in Penasco, New Mexico. Attending were Martin Romero, Herman, Elizabeth and Megan Romero, Benjamin Cruz, Robert and Janet Garcia, Martin Duran, and Ross Torres from the Luna Chacon Grazing Association. Melvin Herrera and Tamara Malone represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit on the Luna-Chacon Allotment.

The Camino Real Ranger District and the permittees discussed forecasted drought conditions, current snow depth and water content on the allotment and the outlook on predicted weather patterns for this coming grazing season. The Southwest Region is experiencing continued drought, so any non-use this grazing season will be considered resource protection non-use. Forest Service and Permittees remain optimistic about grazing within the range of permitted numbers this year. The 2009 Environmental Assessment of grazing on the allotment took drought into consideration and included management changes and several range improvements to improve and maintain conditions.

Table 1 - Permittee, Permitted and Authorized Number and Kind.

1. Permittee	Permitted Number and Kind	Authorized Number and Kind
Luna Chacon Grazing Assoc.	230 to 288cow/calf & 14 bulls	230 cow/calf 14 bulls
Chacon Group (135 to 169)		
John Abeyta	20 cow/calf	16 cow/calf
Martin M. Romero	21 cow/calf	17 cow/calf
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin L. Cruz	32 cow/calf	25 cow/calf
Ernesto E. Gonzales	7 cow/calf	6 cow/calf
John Paul Vigil	5 cow/calf	4 cow/calf
Emilie Vigil & J. Lorenzo Vigil	4 cow/calf	3 cow/calf
Herman & Elizabeth Romero	43 cow/calf	34 cow/calf
Manuel Romero	11 cow/calf	9 cow/calf
Benancio Trujillo	26 cow/calf	21 cow/calf
Luna Group (95 to 119)		
Martin and Lucille Duran	33 cow/calf	31 cow/calf
Robert or Janet Garcia	26 cow/calf	25 cow/calf
Lorraine Hurtado	13 cow/calf	13 cow/calf
Andres Martinez	16 cow/calf	0 cow/calf
Ross & Emily Torres	31 cow/calf	26 cow/calf

Table 2 - Season of Use

2. Season of Use	
06/01 - 9/30	(122 days)

Table 3 - Pasture estimated time and actual use and utilization.

3. Pasture Rotation Pasture	Estimated Dates	Estimated Time	Actual Use	Utilization %
<i>Chacon</i>				
Romero Lake	06/01 – 06/15	15 days		
Sardinas	06/16 – 07/25	40 days		
La Presa	07/26 – 09/15	52 days		
Romero Lake	09/16 – 09/30	15 days		
<i>Luna</i>				
Bull Canyon	REST			
Lower Luna	06/01 - 06/20	20 days		
Upper Luna	06/21 - 09/20	92 days		
Lower Luna	09/21 – 09/30	10 days		

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Luna/Chacon allotment which means that the season of use, numbers grazed and rotation schedules may be adjusted throughout the grazing season based on resource conditions. Range improvements, i.e. fences, will be maintained prior to entry into each pasture.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

The entire cost of improvements maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattleguards, and other range structural improvements must be maintained prior to the permittees going on to a particular pasture. Range improvements for the Romero Lake and Lower Luna Pastures will be inspected at the same time as Range Readiness.

5. Other Items of Discussion

The 2012 grazing season went well overall on Luna and Chacon units with use being within the utilization guidelines. This was due to good production of forage on the allotment. Maintenance of improvements was adequate throughout the allotment. Livestock were well distributed throughout the allotment all season.

Permittees reported that there were several cattle from the Angostura allotment in the Romero Lake pasture late in the season. Fences are constantly being cut by the public getting fuelwood and other forest products. This division fence will have to be constantly maintained when Angostura cattle are in the Agua Sarca/Loring pasture.

Some materials for the Secure Rural School projects that were delivered to the allotment were stolen as observed late last season. These were fence posts and wire. Other materials such as the trough and storage

tanks for two of the projects were still there. Permittees will need to work on these projects this upcoming season. Two days of heavy equipment work by the Forest Service C&M crew are anticipated.

Riparian restoration completed by the Forest Service in a portion of Valle De Los Romeros, and the Duran to Policarpio was discussed. Permittees were concerned of the trails closed to get from the Romero Lake to Valle de Los Romeros and how that will affect their ability to manage their livestock in this pasture. Wildlife biologist George Long came in to talk to permittees about the project and its intent. He discussed a fence that was installed in Valle de Los Romero's was for studying vegetation in the area. Some talk also ensued on maybe just opening the main road and gating it or some other options to facilitate permittee concerns.

The cattleguard type bridge at Policarpio is being filled up with flowing sediment. Permittees suggested that the fence from that bridge to the Upper La Junta campground could be redesigned and tied into the mountain. Some permittees talked about cleaning this cattleguard but it was decided not to as it would impinge their ability to move cows.

The fence around the Larkspur pasture gets cut often by ATV users, permittees suggested narrow cattle guards that they could build and install themselves. They asked for any specifications FS might have on this.

Utilization guidelines for 2013 are 40% in key forage areas of annual available forage and 4 inches stubble height in riparian zones. Forage utilization will be measured in key forage areas.

The grazing fee this year is \$1.35 per head month for cattle.

Permittees and the Camino Real Ranger District will look at range together to determine range readiness and specific on-date.

The Forest Service contacted the State Livestock Inspector, who confirmed that Trich testing is required for bulls that graze on public lands in New Mexico.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. A decision is expected to be signed by the Forest Supervisor in the very near future. Permittees stated that they need to use ATV's and motor vehicles for performing their required maintenance on fences and other range improvements, checking that gates are closed, checking on cattle health and location, and placing salt and mineral supplements. Forest Service should be able to accommodate with a written letter issued to the permittees on a case by case basis under short-term authorization.

Permittees again complained about the condition of FR76 from the Black Lake side. This road is in bad disrepair and makes it difficult for permittees to travel on it with their trailers and horses to check on the allotment. This road was inspected by the forest engineer last year and will be considered for some maintenance. FR17 also is in bad shape and the FS has applied for some Secure Rural Schools money to do some maintenance on it as well.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2013:

1. Complete drift fence between the Upper Luna and La Presa pastures in the area of Forest Road 76 where the cattleguard was relocated. The fence was completed last year but needs some wire to better tie the fence to the braces as discussed at the meeting.
2. Construct the proposed Trick tank in the Bull pasture at the head of Maria's canyon.

3. Repair/reconstruct an old spring development at the top of the Bull pasture, including the spring head protection fence, which is currently in disrepair.
4. Construct the proposed Trick tank in the Lower Luna pasture between east and west Luna drainages.
5. Install a drinker in Upper Luna pasture away from the small drainage in Section 5 to maintain vegetative diversity, acceptable soil compaction levels, and better riparian function by concentrating the use away from the drainage.
6. Convert the Larkspur enclosure fence to a lay down fence.
7. A cattleguard is needed on the Larkspur Fence (priority) and at the gate on the fence between Sardinias and La Presa units. These cattleguards could be smaller cattleguards to allow only ATV traffic.
8. Install a four foot cattle guard, for passage by ATVs, on the road in section 33 where the gate is constantly left open. This is close to the point where the Bull/ Luna fence meets the Olla Ranchos allotment boundary.
9. Construct a drift fence at the bottom of the meadow in the Frijoles annex.

The Camino Real Ranger District will provide replacement tags as needed.

The Grazing Instructions for 2013 are the same as in 2012. Salt away from roads and streams; use herding, salt, fences, and water sources to disperse cattle across the pastures to use the available forage; avoid overuse in key areas.

The Camino Real Ranger District would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittee.

/s/ Tamara S. Malone
District Ranger

5/29/2013
Date