

RIO PUEBLO/MIRANDA ALLOTMENT #404
Carson National Forest
Camino Real Ranger District

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS 2013

The annual meeting for the Rio Pueblo Allotment was held on February 11, 2013, at the District Office in Peñasco, New Mexico. Attending were Benjamin Cruz, Anthony Gonzales, Richard and Dana Scott, Floyd Romero and Danny Martinez from the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association. Tammy Malone, Melvin Herrera, and Reuben Velasquez represented the Forest Service.

These annual operating instructions are hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit for the Rio Pueblo Grazing Association.

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. Conditions for this year appear questionable as seen so far this winter. We can expect that the low end of the range of permitted numbers could be grazed this year, but any non-use below that will be considered resource protection non-use.

Table 1- Permitted and Authorized use for Grazing.

1. Permittee	Number and Kind	Authorized Number and Kind
Rio Pueblo Grazing Association	117 cow/calf-155 cow/calf	117 cow/calf
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin L. Cruz	(73-96 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Floyd J. Romero	(3 cow/calf)	(0 cow/calf)
Anthony P. Gonzales	(18-25 cow/calf)	(46 cow/calf, 2 bull)
Richard Jr. and Dana Scott	(18-25 cow/calf)	(50 cow/calf, 1 bull)
Danny Martinez	(5-6 cow/calf)	(16 cow/calf, 2 bull)

2. Season of Use

06/01 - 09/30 (122 days)

Table 2-Pasture Rotation

3. Pasture Rotation	Planned		Actual use	utilization %
Pasture	Estimated Dates	Estimated Time		
McGaffey	06/01 – 06/20	20 days		
Vallecitos	06/21 – 07/15	25 days		
Telephone	07/16 - 08/10	26 days		
Middle and Ranchos allot.	08/11 – 09/05	26 days		
Amole	09/06 – 09/30	25 days		
La Junta	rest	0 days		

Adaptive management will continue to be applied to the management of the Rio Pueblo 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, ie. fences will be maintained prior to moving to a different pasture.

4. Maintenance of Improvements

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

5. Other Items of Discussion

The 2012 grazing season was a challenge for permittees due to new cows grazing on the allotment. Some cattle grazed on the Telephone pasture all season long. Other cattle kept grazing in the area burned by the the recent Osha Fire and getting onto the highway. Overall key areas throughout the allotment were within the utilization guidelines.

Forest Service discussed the newly acquired 1700 acres of Grant property. This area will need to be incorporated into the Carson NF and so nothing can be done with it at this time.

Extra herding attention needs to be given to the meadows that get high use by cattle. Better distribution across the pastures can reduce the concentrated utilization.

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

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

Permittees and the Forest Service will look at range together to determine range readiness and the actual on-date.

Permittees and the Forest Service discussed the group shelter construction in Amole Canyon, which has stalled but is expected to resume eventually. The area has been fenced off.

The Forest Service discussed ongoing efforts with the Travel Management Rule. A decision is expected to be signed by the Forest Supervisor sometime soon. If permittees 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; the 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.

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

The Osha Fire of 2011 burned up about a quarter mile of the highway 518 right of way fence. It had been in disrepair for years but was not important since the timbered slopes above did not attract cattle use. Natural regeneration and intentional restoration seeding has attracted cattle to the area now and livestock have gotten out onto the highway. Forest Service will discuss with NM DOT the possibility of working together to install a new fence. Other issues along highway right of way also need to be discussed with the state, in particular the water gap in Amole.

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.

Priority for Range Betterment work for 2013:

1. Reconstruction of McGaffey trick tank. Storage tank was found to be leaking and will need some work to make it functional.
2. Storage tank on trick tank which is north of Forest Road 114.
3. Reconstruction of several spring developments; Tio Maes, Indian Creek, and Apache Spring
4. Pursue with NMDOT the possibility of a water gap in the HWY 518 ROW near Amole.

The Borrego timber sale is expected to be finalized this year in the Telephone pasture. Fuelwood projects will continue to take place within the area though.

Permittees requested a map of range improvements, namely spring developments that they may work on in the near future.

Forest Service would like at least 2 weeks notice prior to any proposed change in management (either season or numbers) so that they can go look at the allotment with the permittee.

/s/ Tamara S. Malone
District Ranger

5/29/2013
Date