



File Code: 2210/2230

Date: April 29, 2014

Wade Stephens
Flying S. Ranch
P.O. Box 3
Lonetree, WY 82936

Dear Wade,

This letter references the annual meeting held in Manila, Utah on April 15, 2014 with you and Aaron Zobell concerning your grazing on the Commissary Park Allotment. It will serve as your 2014 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) and will become part of your permit as provided for in Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a) of your Term Grazing Permit.

Situations may develop during the grazing season which you feel may require changes to these instructions. If you believe this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact us and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

Only livestock branded according to the Certificate of Registration which you have provided us will be allowed to graze on the allotment. Confirmation of payment by the Forest Service must be received before your livestock will be allowed to graze on National Forest lands. Livestock will be tagged with the same colored ear tags as last grazing season prior to being placed on the allotment.

Table 1.0 Commissary Park – Proposed Grazing Schedule, Numbers, & Utilization Benchmarks

Numbers (kind/class)	Unit	Date ¹	Utilization Benchmark ²
120 cattle -cow/calf	East	July 6 – August 10	≤50% of key forage species ≥ 4" RSH of graminoids along the greenline
120 cattle -cow/calf	West	August 11 – September 15	≤50% of key forage species ≥ 4" RSH of graminoids along the greenline

¹Dates are estimates and may vary based upon range readiness, drought, any utilization benchmark being reached prior to the proposed move date, and/or other factors. ²Utilization will be monitored at key areas of the allotment. Key areas are those areas most preferred by livestock, are typically grazed first, and receive the most concentrated use (e.g. Middle Fork of Sheep Creek and other streams; parks including Commissary Park & Willow Park, etc.); RSH = residual stubble height.

Coordinate with us prior to bringing your livestock onto National Forest lands to ensure range readiness has occurred and to allow for any changed condition such as drought. After coordinating with us and making any necessary adjustments to table 1.0, your livestock will trail up Birch Creek to the East unit via F.S. road 221. Livestock will graze the East unit until any utilization benchmark has been reached or until the scheduled date arrives to move livestock into the West unit, whichever occurs first. Livestock will be removed from National Forest lands when any utilization benchmark has been met in the West unit or by September 15th, whichever occurs first. Every effort must be taken to completely remove livestock off of National Forest lands by the scheduled off date. For example, if it requires three days of riding to gather your livestock, then you should start riding three days prior to your scheduled off date.

Equal utilization of the range is the objective. This requires riding and salting be properly conducted throughout the entire grazing season. Rotate your salting areas during the grazing season and from year to year. Place your salt in good forage producing areas where livestock do not go by preference. Do not place your salt next to water, roads, trails, or in open meadows including Willow Park, Commissary Park



(including the old salt ground in Commissary Park) and other parks in the allotment. Livestock need to be kept in their appropriate units, properly distributed within those units, and moved from unit to unit as needed. Continue to pay particular attention to keeping your livestock off of the Spirit Lake road and away from the Spirit Lake lodge. It is your responsibility to ensure utilization benchmarks are not exceeded.

Willow Park may continue to be used for gathering livestock at the end of the grazing season as long as this does not result in any utilization benchmark being exceeded and overall utilization of the park continues to be light to moderate at spots. This will require overnighing livestock at Willow Park only when absolutely necessary when bringing livestock onto the allotment and keeping livestock out of the park until it is time to gather livestock in preparation for the trip home.

Maintenance of all your improvements listed in Part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit and associated AMP will be completed at least one week prior to the proposed on date to the standards listed in your permit. This allows time for the inspection of your improvements and any potential concerns to be addressed before your livestock enter the allotment. *If your maintenance responsibilities have not been completed to the standards listed in your permit, your livestock will not be allowed to enter National Forest lands.* All labor and materials needed for maintenance are your responsibility. Any ATV use in the administration of your allotment is limited to existing roads unless permission is otherwise obtained. Maintenance items and other related items specifically discussed included the following:

- Beaver Dam Park Exclosure (#019201): Similar to your other maintenance responsibilities continue to maintain this improvement to standard at least 1 week prior to your proposed on date. This would include replacing logs as they fail as well as jacking up portions of the fence so that the minimum height of the fence is 40". These same activities should also occur during the grazing season as needed. Material used to replace logs will have at least a 6" minimum diameter. Beetle-killed trees may continue to be used as material for maintenance of this fence.
- Forest Service Maintenance of Trails #1022 and #1022A: These trails are scheduled to be logged out in 2014 by contract with emphasis on logging out these trails occurring by July 1st. Any trail maintenance not completed by July 1st and required to bring your livestock onto the allotment will need to be completed by you. When conducting trail maintenance only clear the original trail leaving braided sections of trails not cleared. Any trail work completed from Willow Park to Commissary Park will result in a trail width of ≤ 40 ". This is critical in preventing unauthorized ATV use in the area.
- Various gates including the gate adjacent to F.S. road 001 between the Hickerson Park and Commissary Park Allotments have been left open by other users of the forest resulting in livestock being in areas other than authorized in previous years. To address this concern, we placed a "close the gate sign" adjacent to F.S. road 001 at the Hickerson Park/Commissary Park allotment boundary. This gate and others will need to be checked periodically during the grazing season and closed as needed. Should the "close the gate sign" be removed on F.S. road 001 at the Hickerson Park/ Commissary Park allotment boundary or you need other "close the gate signs", contact us and we will provide you with more signs.
- Wire Gate and Sign on F.S. Trail 1022: A wire gate with a "close the gate sign" has been placed on F.S. trail 1022 between Willow and Commissary parks in an area with heavy and down timber. You indicated the gate and sign continue to be useful in reducing drift into Willow Park. Similar to your other maintenance responsibilities, maintenance of this gate and sign will need to occur at least one week prior to your proposed on date. Your permit will be modified to include this maintenance responsibility at a later date.

You indicated drift of your livestock through Hickerson Park and down the Birch Creek road, and drift of other permittee livestock from Hickerson Park down the Birch Creek road until the desired time was not a concern last grazing season. However, this has been problematic in previous grazing seasons. As such, please continue to work on ensuring your livestock do not drift off of the Commissary Park Allotment and onto the Hickerson Park Allotment before it is time to remove your livestock from National Forest lands, as this is considered excess use and is a violation of the terms and conditions of your permit. Particular attention should be placed on ensuring fence #001069 is adequately maintained with gates remaining closed on this fence. Should you find your livestock are drifting around this fence, schedule a trip with us to review the area and determine appropriate actions that may be taken to remedy the situation. You also indicated drift of livestock from the Sheep Creek Park Allotment into the Willow Park area of the Commissary Park Allotment was not a concern last year. Please continue to monitor this area. Should you find cattle from adjacent allotments including the Sheep Creek Park Allotment drift into the area, promptly notify us so that appropriate action may be taken.

A detailed review of various range improvements starting in 2012 and continuing to the present time indicates that while many permittees are maintaining range improvements to standard in some cases these improvements are not being maintained to standard. As such I encourage all permittees to review their Term Grazing Permits – Part 3 Maintenance Standards for Structural Improvements to aid in ensuring any maintenance completed is completed to standard. Items of particular concern as they relate to these field visits are briefly summarized below. These items have been discussed in detail in previous annual permittee meetings and were again an item of discussion during the current year's permittee meeting.

- H-braces and other Braces: Broken and rotting posts and horizontal/diagonal cross braces will be replaced as a part of annual maintenance. Wire strands will be stapled to and/or otherwise attached (i.e. wire loops) to all posts.
- Use of Trees as Posts and/or Braces including H-braces at Bends and/or Turns: Trees will not be used as posts, or braces including h-braces at any bend and/or turn. At areas where trees are currently used in place of posts, or braces including h-braces at these settings, h-braces will be constructed when these trees fall over and/or otherwise fail.
- Use of Trees as Posts and/or Braces including H-braces at Straight Sections: Use of trees at these areas is discouraged. However, trees of a large diameter may be used when stays of at least two inches in diameter are placed around the tree to prevent girdling of the tree. The number of stays required to prevent girdling of the tree will vary but as a rule of thumb five to six stays should be used. *In no case should trees be used at any bends and/or turns no minor the bend or turn.* In this case and as previously discussed h-braces will need to be used.
- End to End Maintenance: Fences will be maintained from *end to end* to Forest Service specifications and standards.
- Ponds: Freeboard (distance between spillway and to of fill) should be at least 3' minimum. This will aid in preventing headcutting of the dam or spillway and failure of the pond. Ponds to be periodically cleaned out with any material placed on the spillway being tightly packed. Widths of spillways should be adequate to prevent failure of the spillway and allow for compaction of the spillway (i.e. 3-4 ft. at a minimum).

Previous permittee meetings included a brief discussion of the 2012 New Year letter and the increased expectation in permittee performance regarding concerns discussed in this letter. These same expectations are in place for the 2014 grazing season. Items emphasized at the permittee meeting and within this letter included: 1) following the direction of the officer in charge; 2) ensuring range improvements are maintained by dates prescribed in term grazing permits and/or AOIs to the standards listed in term grazing permits; and 3) following protocol described in the New Year's letter regarding the initial move of livestock from one unit to the next and the handling of any potential drift into a unit after the initial removal of livestock from that unit.

The control of noxious weeds on National Forest lands continues to be a high priority. Please let us know of any new noxious weed infestations so we can keep them from becoming established. Of highest concern would be new invaders such as Dyer's woad or spotted knapweed.

Keep track of the dates, numbers and any other facts that may be pertinent to your grazing on the allotment this year and let us know as they occur. Note these items on the Grazing Use Record form attached below and return them to us by December 31, 2014.

Thank you for your efforts in the management of this allotment. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at 435-781-5279.

Sincerely,

ROWDY MUIR
District Ranger

Enclosures (1)
2014 Grazing Use Record