

## Annual Operating Instructions

Corduroy Allotment  
Black Range Ranger District, Gila National Forest  
2003 grazing season

### 1. PASTURE USE SCHEDULE

We have approved your application to graze 810 head of yearling cattle Corduroy Allotment for the 2003 grazing season. At our annual validation meeting on February 27, 2003, we developed the following grazing rotation schedule:

<i>PASTURE</i>	<i>ON</i>	<i>OFF</i>	<i>NUMBER</i>
Corduroy, Black Mountain, Bull, & South Pastures	04/15/03	09/30/03	476
Burnt Cabin Pasture	04/15/03	09/30/03	80
	10/01/03	10/15/03	810
Inman & Cox Pastures	04/15/03	09/30/03	254
Taylor Pasture	Rested	Rested	Rested

The schedule above is an estimate, and may be modified at any time during the grazing season if the utilization levels, identified below, are met, if water availability is inadequate, or for other resource management reason. If allowable use levels are met early in the scheduled pasture, cattle will be required to leave the Forest.

Cattle are to be completely removed from a pasture by the **OFF** date. Please notify this office at least five days prior to your cattle being shipped off the Forest.

### 2. UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The following utilization standards will be applied on the Corduroy Allotment:

- Riparian areas are not to exceed 25% of current year's growth on woody riparian species, by leader.
- Upland sites grazed during the growing season are not to exceed 35% of current year's growth of perennial grasses.
- Upland sites grazed during the dormant season are not to exceed 40% of current year's growth of perennial grasses.

### **3. KEY AREA MONITORING**

At our annual validation meeting, key areas for monitoring were identified and are listed below.

- Black Mountain Pasture – South ridgeline of Bell Canyon.
- Indian Pasture – Indian Cieniga, and the confluence of Corduroy and Doagy Canyons.
- Burnt Cabin Pasture – Burnt Cabin Flat.
- Inman Pasture – Vicinity of the junction of FDR's 226 & 226A.
- Cox Pasture – ½ way between Inman Cieniga and Alexander Tank.

In addition to these key areas, Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted habitat will be monitored.

The idea of a key area is find a site that is representative of a larger area in which cattle spend the majority of their time. Key area monitoring will avoid areas directly adjacent to permanent water sources, cattle trails, roads, and fence lines.

- Riparian areas will be monitored for use on riparian woody species' current year's leaders.
- Upland areas will be monitored for use on perennial grass species.
- Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted habitat will be monitored to ensure that current management is providing for cover for rodent prey species, the residual biomass that will support prescribed natural and ignited fires that would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Forest, and regeneration of riparian trees.

District personnel will contact the permittees to coordinate site visits to monitor key areas. Permittee participation is encouraged. Forage utilization estimates will be consistent with the Forest Service Range Analysis Handbook methodology.

### **4. RANGE IMPROVEMENTS**

**Range improvements must be maintained to standard before cattle are allowed into a pasture.** It is the permittee's responsibility to ensure that range improvements remain functional. This includes boundary fences in pastures not currently being grazed. Routine maintenance of existing improvements does not require written clearance, however, construction/reconstruction of new improvements must be authorized in writing from this office.

You have identified a pipeline spur off the Bell Canyon pipeline as a priority project for this year. Forest Service personnel will visit the site with you to determine the feasibility

of this project. If the project is deemed feasible, we can provide pipe and a trough with associated fittings.

At your request, we will try to get portions of Kline Mountain reseeded this summer. The most suitable season for this project is early fall, after the monsoon season, and prior to the first snowfall. The Forest Service will provide the plant seed and seeders. We will try to provide Forest Service personnel to participate in the actual spreading of the seed.

You have also asked us to look at the possibility of installing a trick-tank near the Ridge Road North and fence reconstruction along the Corduroy/Black Mountain allotment boundary. Funding for the trick-tank will likely have to be budgeted in fiscal year 2004 (Oct 1, 2003). We will have a better idea of our fence material inventory after we issue materials of other projects sometime this summer. If we can provide material for the fence reconstruction, we will provide fencing materials.

Keep in mind that all new improvement construction and reconstruction will require archaeological clearances as well as permit modifications. These will be initiated in the planning phases of these project proposals.

#### **5. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

The following restrictions will be implemented so that management remains in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. The instructions below relate to threatened, endangered, and proposed to be listed species as well as range/watershed conditions.

- No salt or mineral block may be placed in protected and restricted Mexican spotted owl habitat from February 1 to August 31, and no concentrations of livestock (i.e., corral use, traps, or large gatherings of livestock).
- Stock tanks must be surveyed for possible aquatic habitat before earth-disturbing maintenance is authorized.

#### **6. OTHER INSTRUCTIONS**

The permittee must obtain permission from the District Ranger, before conducting earth-disturbing activities on the National Forest. The Forest Service will arrange inspections of project areas and will prepare appropriate environmental and cultural documents before earth-disturbing activities proceed. These activities include road/earthen tank maintenance, as well as construction/reconstruction of trails, roads, earthen tanks, etc.

**Do not conduct any earth-disturbing activities on the Forest without written clearance from this office.**

Salt must be located at least ¼ mile from water, and preferably on ridges and/or areas of low use. Do not place salt blocks in the same location as the previous year, and locate blocks on hard ground not susceptible to erosion. Supplemental feeding, other than mineral or supplement block, is not authorized on the National Forest.

Accurate records of your operation will aid in planning and determining the effectiveness of the grazing system. Please maintain reasonably accurate records of cattle numbers throughout the grazing season. We will need shipping tickets of cattle entering and leaving the Corduroy Allotment.

The Annual Operating Instructions are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Pat 3, Section 8. These instructions comply with the standards and guidelines found in the forest Plan, including the 1996 Forest Plan Amendment. They also comply with the Endangered Species Act found in the Biological Assessment for the Corduroy Allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the Annual Operating Instructions.

**This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90 (see enclosed copy of 36 CFR 251 regulations). In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).**

**A notice of appeal must be filed with Marcia Andre, Forest Supervisor, Gila National Forest, at 3005 E. Camino Del Bosque, Silver City, NM 88061, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with Maria T. Garcia, District Ranger, Black Range Ranger District at 1804 Date Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 89701.**

We appreciate your cooperation in the management of the Corduroy Allotment. If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please contact Jeff Rivera, Rangeland Management Specialist (505)894-6677. Thank you.

Sincerely,

MARIA T. GARCIA  
District Ranger