

Annual Operating Instructions

Turkey Run Allotment

Black Range Ranger District, Gila National Forest

2004 grazing season

1. PASTURE USE SCHEDULE

We have approved your application to graze 94 head of cattle on the Turkey Run Allotment. Total cattle numbers for the Turkey Run Allotment are not to exceed 94 head. The following is the grazing rotation schedule for the Turkey Run Allotment which we developed at our February 26, 2004 annual validation meeting:

<i>PASTURE</i>	<i>ON</i>	<i>OFF</i>	<i>NUMBER</i>
Turkey Run	03/01/04	03/31/04	4 bulls
Round Mountain	03/01/04	03/31/04	3 bulls
Winter	03/01/04	03/31/04	78
Turkey Run	04/01/04	07/14/04	44
Round Mountain	04/01/04	07/14/04	41
Breeding	07/15/04	10/15/04	44
Stiver	07/15/04	10/15/04	41
Wild Cow	05/15/04	10/15/04	9 yearlings
Shipping & Holding	10/15/04	12/01/04	94
Winter	10/15/04	12/01/04	94
Horse	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 rotated into the next pasture or off the Forest. Cattle are to be completely removed from a pasture by the off date. Due to the rugged terrain of the Turkey Run Allotment, I will allow you two weeks prior to the off date to begin moving cattle into the next pasture. If two weeks are not adequate, you must request additional time from this office. Please notify this office when you begin to move cattle and when a pasture rotation is complete.

2. UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The following utilization standards will be applied on the Turkey Run Allotment:

- Riparian areas are not to exceed 25% of current year's growth on woody riparian species.
- 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 as riparian areas and transect cluster locations. In addition to the cluster sites, we have identified other upland sites which are listed below. In addition to these key areas, Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted habitat will be monitored.

- Round Mountain pasture –Vicinity of the Round Mountain cluster.
- Turkey Run pasture –Clusters in Turkey Run and 74 Draw
- Winter pasture –Lower Hoyt creek and the vicinity of the mouth of Turkey Draw

The idea of a key area is to find a site that is representative of a larger area in which cattle obtain the majority of their required forage resources. 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 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, and may also include FS Regional stubble-height standards, as well as other techniques generally accepted in the field of range management.

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.

The Forest Service will provide 200 fence posts and the sacrete necessary for the Wildcow fence realignment.

We will also provide the materials for the Cox Trick-Tank, along with a portable welder. We hope to have this completed by the end of the monsoon season to catch some rainwater for use this winter. Forest Service personnel will work with you in accomplishing the construction of this trick-tank as our schedules allow. We will also

need to conduct a Biological Assessment & Evaluation and initiate a Permit Modification for this project.

You informed us that you may have a Boy Scout group come in and clean out the Sox Rock Header. We will need to conduct a Biological Evaluation before any work begins, and will let you know when that happens.

You have expressed a need for a storage tank at 74 Draw Well. We have some steel panels at the Beaverhead Workstation that you thought you could make work for this. Let us know when you want to go look at the panels and we will coordinate to have someone meet you at Beaverhead.

At the annual validation meeting we discussed the need to connect the storage tanks to the drinker at the Panda Trick Tank and ask that you do that as soon as possible.

As our budget allows, we will try and provide you with materials to construct a waterlot at the LookOut Mountain trick tank. This project will also require a Permit Modification.

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.
- The Chiricahua leopard frog was listed as a threatened species in 2002 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We have completed grazing consultation on your allotment regarding the effects of livestock grazing on the Chiricahua leopard frog. We determined that livestock grazing will either have no effect or will not adversely effect the Chiricahua leopard frog. As a result of this determination, there were no changes required of your grazing permit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with this determination. Therefore, consultation has been completed. A copy of this consultation is on file with your local Ranger District.

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.

On yearlong ranges, calves under six months of age on January 1st are not counted against the authorized numbers until March 31st. By April 1st, these calves must be removed from the Forest or counted against the authorized numbers.

The Lookout Mountain Trick-Tank was constructed with wildlife funding; therefore, the valves to the drinking troughs must remain open to provide water for wildlife.

The Annual Operating Instructions are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 1, Section 3. 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 Turkey Run 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 Tammy Randall Parker, District Ranger, Black Range Ranger District at 1804 Date Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 89701.

We appreciate your cooperation in the management of the Turkey Run Allotment. If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please contact Ron Mortensen, Rangeland Management Specialist, or myself at (505)894-6677. Thank you.

Sincerely,

TAMMY RANDALL PARKER
District Ranger