

**2008 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR THE  
BEAR CREEK C&H ALLOTMENT**

These Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the **Bear Creek C&H Allotment** for the 2008 grazing season. This plan was developed with participation of the livestock permittees at the Annual Operating Instruction meeting held at the Council Ranger District Office on March 18 and 27, 2008. This plan is made part of the Term Grazing Permit as specified in Part 2, Number 8 (a) of the permit.

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. It is necessary to contact the Forest Service if there are any changes or additions to these instructions through out the grazing season. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions which apply to these Annual Operating Instructions.

Grazing fees of \$ 1.35/HM must be paid before livestock are authorized to enter the National Forest. Payment must be made to: USDA Forest Service, P.O. Box 894183, Los Angeles, California 90189-4183. The Council District Office must receive confirmation from the Citibank Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

**PERMITTED USE:**

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Livestock Numbers</u>	<u>Season</u>
Lori Quilliam	100 cow/calf pairs*	7/12 – 10/1
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company	879 cow/calf pairs**	6/1 – 11/30
	308 cow/calf pairs**	6/15 – 10/9

\* permit includes Bear Creek, Steves Creek & Wildhorse/Crooked River allotments

\*\* permit includes Bear Creek & Lick Creek allotments

**AUTHORIZED USE:**

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Livestock Numbers</u>	<u>Season</u>
Lori Quilliam	90 c/c Upper Bear	7/12 – 8/15
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company	450 c/c Lower Bear	6/2 – 7/15

**GRAZING SCHEDULE:**

**Quilliam:** Trail onto the allotment from Steve's Creek predominantly using the area between Bessie Gulch and Huntley Gulch.

**Rocky Comfort Cattle Company:** Use of the Lower Bear Unit in conjunction with the Upper West Lick Creek Unit. You are not authorized to move through or graze Steve's Creek Allotment.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO SEASON OF USE AND LIVESTOCK NUMBERS:**

The District Ranger may modify the season of use and livestock numbers permitted on any given year. The season of use is especially dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation) which influences annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify term grazing permitted use is further described in Part 2, Section 8 (b) & (c) of your permit.

Turnout will not occur prior to range readiness. Range readiness is measured by soil moisture and plant growth. Soils may be damp, but not saturated, and should be firm to avoid excessive compaction due to livestock. Grass species must be a minimum of 6 inches in height and out of the boot stage. Arrowleaf balsamroot should be in bloom or past bloom. All animals must be off the allotment by August 15, 2008.

These dates are tentative and may vary according to range conditions and utilization levels.

Notify the Forest Service at least 3 days before you turn onto the allotment.

**Actual Use:** The permittee is **required** to complete an "actual use" form which is enclosed and includes a record of livestock losses and the permittee's maintenance costs. The form accompanying this plan is for convenience. Any format that provides the information requested is acceptable.

**Extensions:** Any requests for extension must be made two weeks before the off date. If forage is determined by the Forest Service to be available, an extension may be granted. Grazing fees for the extended time must be paid prior to the beginning of the extension.

**Credits:** All requests for refunds or credits for unused portion of grazing fees for Forest System Lands must be received in the Council Ranger District office by March 1 following the grazing season.

**GRAZING PRESCRIPTION AND LIVESTOCK ROTATIONS:**

The following are specific utilization standards and guidelines from the July 2003 Forest Plan. Utilization percentages are by weight and are the maximum allowed.

RAST01 - Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the growing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to direction in FSM 1922.5.

- a) Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use or retain a minimum 4 inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.
- b) Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use. Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

In cattle allotments where riparian area restoration is an objective (Upper Bear Creek), grazing systems should be designed to incorporate the following parameters where appropriate (RAGU02):

- a. Provide residual vegetative cover (at least 6 inches of hydric vegetation) either through regrowth or rest treatments for at least 75 percent of the years in a rotation cycle.
- b. Reduce the duration of riparian area grazing periods where needed. Grazing period reduction may be especially needed in the fall where riparian deciduous woody species are an important riparian vegetation component.
- c. Design grazing periods to take advantage of favorable seasonal livestock dispersal behavior (examples: spring use of uplands, due to wet riparian conditions, late fall upland use, due to cold temperatures, poor dispersal during “hot” season).
- d. Incorporate sufficient growing season rest to provide good vigor, physiological needs, and regeneration of all riparian plants.
- e. Where deciduous trees and shrubs are important in the composition, modify the frequency of grazing periods, reduce the grazing duration, or reduce grazing intensity to levels that provide for recovery/maintenance of healthy diverse trees and shrubs.

Part of good cattle management is riding to assure proper cattle distribution. In particular we want to insure that the stream banks and meadows aren't over used. These riparian areas are considered key areas and will be monitored. When an area has reached maximum allowable use levels cattle will be removed from that area. Keeping cattle off select areas and in areas of lesser use serves to prolong the time cattle can expect to stay in an area.

When an area reaches allowable use levels the cattle will be moved and kept from returning to that area. If cattle are in the final area of the rotation sequence and utilization standards are reached, then they will have to be removed from the allotment.

Livestock in units outside the season of use or on an allotment other than the one permitted, is a violation of the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.

### **Salting**

Salting is restricted to the following:

- No less than ¼ mile from water, and not be placed in meadow bottoms.
- Placed at a minimum distance of 100 yards from roads and out of sight from roads, if possible.
- Should be moved yearly unless present salt ground is located in a rocky area where no vegetation grows.
- Unconsumed salt will be removed from the site.
- ¼ mile from timber plantations with trees less than 15 feet tall. If this can't be accomplished, the District Range and Reforestation personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations.
- Recommend use of containers and rocky areas.

### **MAINTENANCE OF RANGE IMPROVEMENTS:**

All range improvements must be maintained prior to turning livestock into the unit scheduled for use. If an existing range improvement has been properly maintained but requires reconstruction, a cooperative effort can be made between the Forest Service and permittee to reconstruct the development, depending on material availability. Those projects to which the permittee contributes normally receive higher priority for funding by the Forest Service.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. If you are aware of spring developments that require reconstruction or extensive maintenance, please discuss this with your Rangeland Management Specialist.

### **MONITORING OF THE ANNUAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING ACTIVITY:**

We are requiring you to report actual use information for each unit grazed because we are required to report this grazing use to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). If you have any questions completing the form, please call Maura at 208-253-0100. **These forms need to be returned no later than November 1, 2008.**

### **SPECIAL MANAGEMENT**

There is one known population of Northern Idaho Ground Squirrels located within the Bear Creek Allotment in the Huckleberry area. This site must be avoided. Mitigation of livestock grazing effects includes avoiding grazing or trailing through these areas, as well as no salting within ¼ mile of this site. All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) or Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs) are not authorized off roads near NIDGS sites. These sites will be shown to your rider to prevent any accidental use of the areas. No timber thinning or prescribed burning to improve habitat for the NIDGS is scheduled this year at this site.

In the event a designated mitigation measure fails to protect a species listed under the Endangered Species Act, a change in the authorized grazing activity will occur. If proper utilization levels are reached, then livestock will be moved to the next grazing area or off the forest. If livestock grazing does not comply with the terms and conditions of these Annual Operating Instructions, then the Forest Service policy and procedures dealing with administrative permit actions will be followed.