



**File Code:** 2230  
**Date:** November 8, 2017

(b) (6)  
Grazing Permittee

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The Following are your 2018 annual operating instructions (AOI) for the Cartwright grazing allotment. These instructions have been developed from collaboration with you and in consideration of Forest Service Handbook 2209.13, Tonto National Forest Plan, associated National Environmental Policy Act analysis, Allotment Management Plan and available information describing range conditions.

### 2017 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)

**Allotment:** Cartwright  
**Permittee:** Schmidt Ranch LLC.  
**Permit Numbers:** 350

**Permitted Use:**

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Schmidt Ranch LLC.	350 Cow / Calf	Term	1/1-12/31
Schmidt Ranch LLC.	350 Yearlings	Term	1/1-5/31

1. **Authorization:** Authorized to graze the following in 2017:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
Schmidt Ranch LLC.	160 Yearlings	Term	11/17-2/28

2. **Management:** Cartwright 2017 Pasture Rotation:

Grazing Pasture	Dates of Use	Authorized Livestock	Comments
Qien Sabe	Nov. 17, 2017 - Feb. 28, 2018	160 Yearlings, 10 horses	If for any reason, cattle can't stay for the rest of the grazing year, the herd will be split between the other two pastures for the remainder



Horse		80 yearlings, 10 horses	
Mule		80 yearlings, 10 horses	

The above table describes authorized livestock numbers per grazing pasture and anticipated use dates. Numbers of livestock or rotation may be adjusted if the utilization standards or other management objectives within the Allotment Management Plan (AMP) are not being achieved. If you identify the need to differ from this management system, please contact this office at least two weeks in advance so that District personnel have time to conduct monitoring and assess your request.

### 3. Utilization Standards and Monitoring:

Riparian vegetation can be monitored any time the cattle are in the pasture to ensure that there is residual vegetation present for streambank protection during flow events.

Upland utilization is measured at the end of the growing season in key areas for key forage species. This information, along with vegetation condition, forage plant production and vigor, soil and watershed condition, will be used to make informed management recommendations concerning pasture moves and stocking rates.

If utilization levels within portions of a scheduled pasture approach allowable use, you are required to move livestock into areas with less use. If cattle cannot be effectively managed away from areas that have met allowable use, or if utilization objectives are met throughout the pasture prior to scheduled rotation, contact District personnel. Cattle will be moved into the next available pasture within the annual rotation. In the event that forage utilization objectives are met in all available pastures, livestock will be removed from the allotment. Management adjustments will be made in future AOI's to avoid recurring situations. It is your responsibility as permittee to take action so that livestock grazing does not exceed vegetative use thresholds.

Vegetation	*Utilization Standards
Upland herbaceous species	30-40% of current year's growth
Riparian emergent species	Maintain 6-8 inches of stubble height
Riparian herbaceous species	Limited to 40% of plant species biomass on deergrass
Riparian woody species	Limited to 40% of leaders browsed on upper 1/3 of plants up to 6 feet tall
Streambanks	Limited to less than 20% alteration of alterable streambanks

\*Utilization standards are tiered to the 1984 Blackjack Allotment Management Plan and/or the Forest Plan.

**4. Forage Growth and Water Availability:**

Per Part 2, clause 8(c) of your Term Grazing Permit, if forage growth and water availability are not adequate during all or portions of the 2016 grazing season, total or partial livestock removal from the allotment may be necessary.

**5. Salt and Supplement Policy:**

Supplemental feeding of livestock is allowed (to strategically manage livestock distribution and forage use) as follows:

- a) Place supplements on previously disturbed areas (i.e., borrow pits) or natural bedrock outcrops when possible (supplement sites).
- b) Locate supplement sites 0.25 mile or more from waters and key areas except where prior written permission has been obtained from the District Ranger.
- c) Locate supplement sites where forage is abundant and utilized less than average.
- d) Limit supplement types to non-energy feeds such as salt, protein and mineral blocks.
- e) Use products that prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Feeding of hay on National Forest System Lands is prohibited.

**6. Range Improvements:**

Advance planning is needed for any range improvement reconstruction or replacement, including fences and water systems to evaluate the need for any additional surveys. General maintenance or repairs are excluded. Advance planning is also needed for authorized stock tank cleaning so surveys can be scheduled accordingly. Please contact the District in advance if you are proposing any of this type of work to inquire about the availability of materials, necessary clearances and for a permit modification.

Please protect natural springs and areas with riparian vegetation. Drainage bottoms, creeks, and springs, where water is available, are most susceptible to livestock concentrations.

The following table describes 2017 authorized range improvement projects.

Pasture	Location	Description of Work
Bronco	24 road riparian enclosure fence	Fence to be constructed along the 24 road from the cattle guard at the Cartwright Ranch south to tie in with the exiting riparian enclosure and install a cattle guard at that location

You are currently authorized to clean dirt stock tanks on the Cartwright Allotment pending clearance from the range specialist and archaeologist when necessary. You have clearance to clean the Butterfly tank in the Gray's Gulch pasture and bentonite the Skunk and Round tanks in the Quien Sabe pasture. Coordinate with Keenan Bender if there are more tanks that you would like to clean. Please notify him two weeks prior to the planned start date of work.

To address resource concerns, the following mitigation measures must be followed when

cleaning earthen stock tanks:

- Maintenance will be conducted using backhoes with rubber tires or bulldozers no larger than a Caterpillar D7.
- Bentonite may be worked into soils of the dirt tanks in order to bind soil for increased tank effectiveness. The Forest Service may have bentonite available upon request. All dirt tank work will be confined within the existing tank basin. No additional ground disturbance will be authorized outside the existing basins, earthen dams or designated travel paths of the equipment to the tanks.
- **Cleaning bar ditches is not authorized.** Bar ditches will be evaluated on a case by case basis upon request.
- You may not drop the blade on your equipment until your machine is within the existing tank except to push an occasional boulder or tree out of your path.
- Confine all activities to existing disturbance from previous construction and existing vehicular travel ways. If the previous access or cat trails are not apparent, contact our office so we may clear a route free of cultural resources. Please leave no evidence of your route to the tank and do not improve the route to the tank. If you are unable to do so, please contact the district.

This is a one-time authorization to access these tanks cross country for maintenance. You are not authorized to access the tanks via motorized means once the maintenance has been completed. Illegal cross country travel is a concern on the District. I want to discourage any interpretation of the access routes to the tanks as authorized roads for the public.

**7. Invasive Plants:**

Invasive plants threaten ecosystem health and grazing resources. Please assist us in preventing the introduction and spread of invasive plants. If you see a plant you do not recognize, please document it and submit it to the District for identification.

- 8. The Cartwright Allotment Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)** are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 3, Section 6. The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009 Cartwright Allotment Management Plan and in the Tonto National Forest Plan. It also complies with the Endangered Species Act on-going grazing consultation for the Cartwright Allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the annual operating instructions.

Sincerely,



MICAH GRONDIN  
District Ranger