



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Tonto Basin  
Ranger  
District

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File Code: 2210

Date: January 23, 2020

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Black Mesa Allotment

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Dear (b) (6)

The following are your 2020 annual operating instructions (AOI) for the Black Mesa 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.

**Authorized Use**

The following table describes authorized livestock numbers per grazing unit, anticipated use dates, and proposed monitoring dates. Please request a change in this schedule well in advance of the proposed dates. Please, maintain and submit records that indicate your compliance to permitted use.

Grazing Unit	Dates of Use	Monitoring Date	Authorized Livestock	Rationale/Comments
North and South Black Mesa	December 1 <sup>st</sup> 2019 April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2020	April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	35 Cows	
Chalk	April 1 <sup>st</sup> September 1 <sup>st</sup>	August 28 <sup>th</sup>	35 Cows 3 Bulls	3 Bulls will be added then moved to Zig Zag during next pasture move.
South and North Black Mesa	October 15 <sup>th</sup> Next AOI	December 4 <sup>th</sup>	35 Cows	

**Monitoring:**

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.

Riparian utilization in key reaches is measured during growing season to verify residual vegetation is present for streambank protection during flow events.



Grazing intensity will be evaluated during the growing season to make necessary changes needed for plant development and recovery.

**Vegetative Use Guidelines:**

Grazing will be managed so conservative use levels are achieved over the long-term in pasture key areas. It is your responsibility as permittee to take action so that livestock grazing does not exceed vegetative use thresholds. Please arrange for an allotment inspection if seasonal vegetative use of available forage approaches these thresholds.

<b>Vegetation</b>	<b>Use Threshold</b>
Upland herbaceous species	30-40% of current year's growth
Upland browse species	50% of current year's growth
Riparian herbaceous species	Limited to 40% of plant species biomass and maintain 6-8 inches of stubble height on deergrass
Riparian woody species	Limited to 50% of leaders browsed on upper 1/3 of plants up to 6 feet tall
Streambanks (if applicable)	Limited to less than 20% alteration of alterable streambanks
Mexican Spotted Owl PAC's (where applicable)	20% optimum-40% maximum
Annual Grasses	50% of current year's growth

**Range Improvement Maintenance:**

All range improvements must be maintained to Forest Service standards before cattle will be allowed to enter the units. You must receive verbal concurrence for each project before work can begin except routine maintenance (e.g. cleaning dirt tanks, maintaining fence, restoring pipe). It is your responsibility to be aware of and comply with fire restriction.

The following table describes 2020 proposed range improvement projects.

<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description of Work</b>	<b>Clearances Needed</b>
Chalk Creek	Jose Well	New Water System to multiple pastures	Archeological, Biological and Decision Memo required prior to any work.
Baker	Chalk Creek Well	Replace old burnt pipe	Maintenance none required

Braddock	Off of Highway	Look at constructing road tanks	Archeological, Biological and Decision Memo required prior to any work.
South Willow	Corral to Zig Zag	New Corral and pipeline with troughs	Archeological, Biological and Decision Memo required prior to any work.
Multiple	Multiple	Several other small projects were discussed that need further evaluation	Work with F.S. to review additional requests and further needs.

**Salting:**

In most cases, salt must be located no closer than ¼ mile from streams, rivers, riparian areas, trails, and known archaeological sites.

**Supplements and Attractants**

Protein blocks, nutritional supplement, and other attractant may be authorized.

**Supplemental Feeding:**

No supplemental feeding is authorized.

**Weeds**

Invasive plants threaten ecosystem health and grazing resources. Please assist us in preventing the introduction and spread of invasive plants.

If you have any questions, please contact Eric Hoskins, Range Management Specialist, at (602) 225-5332.

Sincerely,

KELLY L. JARDINE  
District Ranger

CC: Eric Hoskins  
Ina Yazzie