



File Code: 2230

Date: April 26, 1999

(b) (6)

Dear (b) (6)

This letter will serve as the 1999 Annual Permittee Plan (AOP) for the Buckhorn Livestock Grazing Allotment. The allotment's term permitted grazing numbers are for 250 head of cattle yearlong. Your 1999 grazing application, dated January 27, 1999, has been approved. Consequently your permitted livestock numbers for the March 1, 1999 to July 30, 1999 are as follows:

Permitted Livestock

Cattle (yearlings) 45 head, and
Nonuse (Permittee Preference) 205 head.

Grazing Schedule

Your yearling cattle were not purchased until late March and did not enter the allotment until April 1, consequently your permitted livestock are scheduled to graze the allotment's pastures during the 1999 grazing season in the following sequence of moves:

Yearling Herd Rotation

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Graze Period</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Livestock Numbers</u>
Headquarters	April 1 to May 5	35	45;
Wickiup	May 6 to June 10	40	45;
Headquarters	June 11 to June 15	5	45;
Brushy	June 16 to July 31	46	45;
Private Land Summer Hq's.	August 1 to Shipping	TBA	45;

The following list of pastures within the allotment will have complete rest from permitted livestock during the 1999 grazing season:

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Pasture Name</u>
Bald Hill	Cedar Mountain	North Oak
Goswick Lake	Boulder	Maxwell North
Painted Tank	Buckhorn	Chilson Mesa
Willow Valley	Clover	Research
Poor Farm	South Oak	South Maxwell
Dukey	Wolfhole.	

These rested pastures are synchronized with five other adjacent allotments which are also resting their summer range northern pastures while grazing the southern sequence of pastures.



During the next two grazing seasons Bull Pen and Clear Creek Pastures will be closed to grazing for the protection of threatened and endangered wildlife species and habitats within West Clear Creek. A new ten year allotment management plan (NEPA environmental assessment document) for Buckhorn Allotment will be initiated in November 1999 with anticipated completion of January 2001. This environmental assessment will evaluate the grazing management of the entire allotment and specifically address the suitability of livestock grazing within these two pastures.

Grazing Strategy

In a typical grazing season where the nonuse is not prevalent, as in this year, the allotment's normal grazing strategy is described in the following paragraphs. This year, as in the past several years, permitted numbers have been so few that the standard graze periods have been extended somewhat, without noticeable affects to the allotment's multi-resources values, uses and activities.

Continue to graze livestock in an intensive rest half/graze-half management strategy on alternate years in the allotment's mid to high elevation summer ranges, with the lower winter ranges managed in an intensive deferred-rest rotation. Permitted livestock (cow/calf/heifer/bull) will be run together as a single herd. Round-up and shipping of stock to market will occur annually in the fall, generally in late September to mid October.

The management of livestock pasture moves will continue to be based upon a plant forage phenology scheme of management. Winter range pastures grazed during the winter dormancy period will not exceed a time period of approximately 30 days. In contrast, the allotment's summer range pastures that are grazed during the forage's active growing seasons the livestock graze period per pasture is shortened to periods of approximately 10 to 20 days.

Pasture moves will be completed with a five (5) day period. Due to the relatively small size of the allotment's pastures, gathering and movement of your permitted livestock should be completed during this five (5) day period. And it is imperative that once pasture moves occur, the livestock remain within the designated pasture. For various reasons, (i.e.. pasture gates are left open, cattleguards are not maintained, fences are cut, etc.), cattle may stray from pasture to pasture. Prevention of stray livestock is the permittee's responsibility; whereby preventing grazing of adjacent allotments, grazing of your allotment's rested pastures, or regrazing of previously used pastures. Prevention of stray livestock protects the rangeland resources and the well-being of your stock.

Grazing Mitigation Measures

The following was taken from mitigation measures determined in the resolution of the Region's "On-going Grazing" Law Suit 1998-1999, which dictates livestock grazing mitigation measures that are specific actions required for maintenance and improvement of Mexican spotted owl habitats within the Buckhorn Allotment. Forest Service personnel will field-check your compliance of these mitigation requirements.

1. Specific livestock salting techniques to be followed, to avoid livestock concentrations within or immediately adjacent to Mexican spotted owl protected activity centers are:

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Salting Technique</u>
Brushy.....	No salting pasture.

2. No salt will be placed in mountain meadows or riparian areas or within 0.25 miles of riparian areas or mountain meadows. Salt will not be placed in non-riparian drainages in the ponderosa pine (MA3) areas, unless it is being used for a watershed restoration project.

I am enclosing, as Appendix A and B, additional grazing mitigation measures for the Peregrine falcon and Mexican spotted owl. Please review these attachments and understand what actions are required by you on your allotment for management compliance. Appendix A, is titled **"Mitigation for the Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon on Grazing Allotments for Annual Operating Plans."** Appendix B, is titled **" Mitigation for Buckhorn, Walker and Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotments for the Mexican Spotted Owl for the 1998 AOP's."**

Resource Monitoring

In compliance with Amendment 11 of the Coconino National Forest's Land Management Plan, (LMP), forage utilization monitoring cages are to installed on each grazing allotment. Where possible, the cages are to located within the following four Management Areas (MA's) and they include: MA 12 (riparian); MA 5 (aspen); MA 9 (mountain meadow) and MA 3 (ponderosa pine/oak). MA 5 (aspen) does not exist on this allotment, consequently, cages will be installed in the following areas for monitoring:

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Management Area</u>	<u>Legal Description</u>
Brushy	3 (Pine/Oak)	T14N, R9E, Section 21, NE1/4NE1/4.

These forage monitoring cages will be installed in representative "key area" locations on productive soils, 0 to 15% slopes, approximately 20 to 500 acres in size, and minimum of 0.25 to 1.0 miles away from livestock water sources. The cages will monitor forage utilization on designated "key species" in "key areas" during three crucial periods of the grazing season: immediately before livestock entry; immediately after the livestock graze; and lastly at the end of the forage growing season. Reference the end of the attached Appendix B, for monitoring cage locations and monitoring data record area.

This monitoring will be completed by the ranch personnel with some instruction and review from the District's Range staff Officers. Appendix C, Forage Utilization spreadsheet, will be completed by the grazing permittee during this 1999 grazing season. The spreadsheet, identifies: individual pasture; pasture graze period; actual use livestock numbers; stage of plant growth, (fast, slow, dormant); average utilization of all forage species by pasture before livestock entry, following livestock graze and end of growing season; and identification of the pasture's "key species" and average grazing utilization percentage within the pasture's "key area(s)". The permittee will document the individual pasture's forage utilization percentage estimates by five categories of use; no use, light, moderate, heavy and extreme.

The monitoring of forage utilization by livestock and wildlife ungulates in the above management areas will provide an assessment of the grazing management, permitted livestock numbers, wildlife big-game ungulate numbers and distribution. If upward utilization trends are observed, the District will coordinate with the grazing permittee and/or the Arizona Game and Fish Department to bring use within LMP guidelines to promote and improve range and watershed conditions.

Most of the allotment's riparian and open water areas have been fenced to control livestock grazing use and management. However, these very important and diverse areas will still be closely monitored by the District Range Staff and the permittee to insure proper allowable use met and where necessary grazing is restricted. To comply with the Forest Land Management Plan, the District will coordinate with you to improve and maintain riparian vegetative communities by promoting three age classes of woody vegetation. A 20% or less utilization of woody species is acceptable if all three classes of riparian vegetation are present. But only 5% use is allowed in riparian areas if the mid-age class is absent.

Continue to implement and monitor grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.

Range Improvements

No new range improvements are scheduled for this grazing season

"Permittee Maintenance Responsibilities of Range Improvements" have been identified in red color on the permit maps of your term grazing permit. These improvements are to be fully maintained annually as a minimum, to comply with permit requirements. Please notify the District Range Staff Officer, a minimum of 30 days prior any maintenance of improvements where heavy-duty equipment is required, i.e. maintenance of earthen-dam stock tanks.

Permit Compliance

This 1999 Annual Operating Plan is a part of the Term Grazing Permit, as provided for in Part 2, section 8(a). If you fail to comply with any of the terms and conditions of specified in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of your Term Grazing permit, the Forest Service may suspend or cancel your permit, in part or in whole, after written notice to you. This is found within Part 1, Section 3, of your Term Grazing Permit. This annual operation plan is in compliance with the standards and guidelines found within the Coconino National Forest's Land Management Plan.

Wildland Fire Prevention

Caution must be used during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles must be equipped with an axe, shovel, and water bucket. Any internal combustion engine tools and equipment require inspection by qualified Forest fire personnel prior to use on National Forest Lands. All open camp and branding fires require a ten foot fire ring cleared down to mineral soils. All state and local fire restrictions and regulations must be observed. Report all fires to the Ranger District Offices at; Beaver Creek/Sedona (520/282-4119), Happy Jack (520/354-2216), Blue Ridge (520/477-2255) and the Flagstaff Zone Dispatch Office at (520/526-0600).

Appeal Rights

Grazing permittees have appeal rights. This 1999 Annual Operating Plan is appealable and subject to review under 36 CFR251.82(a)(3), grazing and livestock term permits issued under 36 CFR pat 222, subpart A. Appealable decisions apply to written decisions of Forest Service line officers related to issuance, denial, or administration of written instructions to comply and use National Forest System lands.

Jack, I believe this plan covers all the topics discussed during your grazing application meeting with Jerry Bradley on January 27, 1999, and the subsequent phone calls with Jerry. If you have questions or comments regarding this plan, please feel free to call Jerry Bradley at the Beaver Creek Ranger Station, telephone number 520/567-7621.

Sincerely

KEN ANDERSON
District Ranger

JACK WILLS
Grazing Permittee

Enclosures

cc: Rodger Zanotto, S.O.,
cc: Jerry Gonzales, Long Valley, and
cc: John Stephenson, Blue Ridge.

Mitigation for the Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon On Grazing Allotments for Annual Operating Plans

The following mitigation measures would apply for Buck Springs, Bar-T-Bar, Willow Valley, Baker Lake/Calf Pen, Apache-Maid, Beaver Creek, Lost Eden, Fossil Creek, Buckhorn, 13 Mile Rock, Walker Basin, and Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotments.

The purpose of the mitigation measures is to improve and protect habitat for prey species such as birds and small mammals in sensitive areas, and to protect nesting birds from disturbance associated with gathering or construction activities. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Follow these guidelines to meet the intent of the grazing guidelines listed in the Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan :

A. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas (MA12), meadows (MA9), pine/oak types (MA3), and aspen (MA5). If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, the Forest Service will work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.

B. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.

C. Continue to restore good conditions to degraded riparian communities by maintaining or promoting three age classes in woody vegetation. If the mid-age class is absent, 5% utilization or less is required to promote three structural stages. If all three classes are present, utilization of 20% or less of woody vegetation is acceptable.

2. To reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species forage and cover, follow these guidelines for placing salt, mineral blocks or food supplements.

A. Do not place these items in riparian areas, mountain meadows, or non riparian drainages in ponderosa pine unless being used for a watershed restoration project.

B. Do not place these items in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine falcon nesting areas. The attached map shows areas (shown as mitigation) where salt, supplemental feeding, or mineral blocks should not occur.

C. Rotate salt and mineral supplement sites regularly.

3. To eliminate potentially disturbing activities in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine nesting areas during their breeding season, do not allow the following types of activities in areas displayed in red on the map between March 1 and August 31 without prior consultation with the district Range Staff.

A. Spring branding or fall gathering.

- B. Construction activities such as; new construction of fences, corrals, or buildings, or cleaning or construction of tanks.

Additional Mitigation for Buckhorn, 13 Mile Rock, Walker Allotments, Apache Maid, and Beaver Creek Allotments.

These allotments run in an east/west direction. On an ecosystem level, wildlife habitat conditions can be improved by coordination between adjacent allotments to provide alternating bands of rested pastures across the landscape. Each allotment should coordinate with the allotments directly to the north and south, so that all allotments are grazing northern pastures during the same year, or southern pastures during the same year.

For example, 13 Mile will coordinate with the Buckhorn allotment, and when 13 Mile is grazing pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Clover Creek, the Buckhorn allotment will rest pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Willow Creek. The 13 Mile allotment will rest its pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Clover Creek, when Buckhorn grazes pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Willow Creek. In order to implement this system, rest Tom's pasture every other year. This year, Buckhorn will change its plan to coordinate with this allotment management plan.

Buckhorn will coordinate with the 13 Mile allotment and Walker Basin. When 13 Mile is grazing north pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Clover Creek, the Buckhorn allotment will rest its southern pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek. The 13 Mile allotment will rest its pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Clover Creek, when Buckhorn grazes pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Willow Creek. Buckhorn will graze its northern pastures at the same time Walker Basin grazes its northern pastures.

Walker Basin will coordinate with the Buckhorn and Beaver Creek allotments.

Apache Maid will coordinate with Beaver Creek.

Beaver Creek will coordinate with Apache Maid and Walker Basin.

Mitigation for Buckhorn, 13 Mile Rock,
Walker, and Hackberry/Pivot Rock
Allotments
for the Mexican Spotted Owl
for the 1998 AOP's

Recommended Mitigation for 13 Mile Rock

1. Follow the Grazing guidelines listed in the MSO Recovery Plan :

A. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas, meadows and oak types. If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.

B. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.

C. Continue to restore good conditions to degraded riparian communities by maintaining or promoting three age classes in woody vegetation. If the mid-age class is absent, 5% utilization or less is required to promote three structural stages. If all three classes are present, utilization of 20% or less of woody vegetation is acceptable.

2. To reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species forage and cover, follow the following guidelines for placing salt and mineral blocks.

A. Do not place salt in riparian areas and mountain meadows. Do not place salt in non riparian drainages in ponderosa pine (MA3) unless being used for a watershed restoration project.

B. To avoid placing salt in PAC's, use the following guidelines in these pastures.

<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Mitigation for Salting</i>
Meadow Canyon N.	No salt
Tule North	Salt only within .25 miles of 142B Road
Wilbur North	Salt only at Wilbur and Bueno Tanks
Toms	Salt only at Pothole, Idas, Back, Dead Tanks
Meadow Canyon South	Salt south of Section 5 Tank only
Wilbur South	No salt within .2 miles Wilbur Canyon or tributaries

3. On an ecosystem level, to improve overall wildlife habitat conditions, adjacent allotments will coordinate if possible to provide alternating bands of rested pastures across the landscape. Coordinate with the allotments directly to the north and south, so that all three allotments are grazing northern pastures at the same time, or southern pastures at the same time.

For example, coordinate with the Buckhorn allotment, and when 13 Mile is grazing pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Clover Creek, the Buckhorn allotment will rest pastures adjacent to West Clear Creek and Willow Creek. The 13 Mile allotment will rest its pastures adjacent to

Recommended Mitigation for Hackberry Pivot Rock

1. Follow the Grazing guidelines listed in the MSO Recovery Plan :

A. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas, meadows and oak types. If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.

B. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.

C. Continue to restore good conditions to degraded riparian communities by maintaining or promoting three age classes in woody vegetation. If the mid-age class is absent, 5% utilization or less is required to promote three structural stages. If all three classes are present, utilization of 20% or less of woody vegetation is acceptable.

2. Do not place salt in riparian areas and mountain meadows. Do not place salt in non riparian drainages in ponderosa pine (MA3) unless being used for a watershed restoration project.

To avoid placing salt in PAC's, use the following guidelines in these pastures.

<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Mitigation for Salting</i>
Potato North	Salt at tanks only, but not within .5 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Potato South	Salt at tanks only, but not within .5 miles of Potato Lake Draw
Bald 1	No salt
Bald 3	No salt
Bald 4	No salt east of 136A or 136B roads
West Bedbug	Salt only east of Cart Cabin Tank
Kehl	No salt in T12N, R10E, Sections 4, 9, and 33
Toms	No salt in T13N, R9E, Section 28
Sandrock	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Miller	No salt in T12N, R10E, Section 33
Clear Creek	Salt only at tanks
Twenty-Seven Mile	No salt within 1/8 mile of Horsetank Wash
Horse Pasture	Salt in private land only

Recommended Mitigation for Walker

1. Follow the Grazing guidelines listed in the MSO Recovery Plan :

A. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas, meadows and oak types. If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.

B. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.

Recommended Mitigation for Hackberry Pivot Rock

1. Do not place salt blocks in the south half of the Kehl pasture to reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species forage and cover near the Webber eyrie.

Recommended Mitigation for Walker

1. On an ecosystem level, to improve overall wildlife habitat conditions, adjacent allotments will coordinate if possible to provide alternating bands of rested pastures across the landscape. Coordinate with the allotments directly to the north and south, so that all three allotments are grazing northern pastures at the same time, or southern pastures at the same time.

Pasture Name	LMP Mgmt Area	Graze Period	Livestock Numbers	* Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area
YEARLING HERD ROTATION									
HEADQUARTERS	11	4/1-5/5	45	S	L	M	L		
WICKIUP	11	5/6-6/10	45	F	L	L	L		
HEADQUARTERS	11	6/11-6/15	45	S	L	L	L		
BRUSHY	3	6/16-7/31	45	S/F	L	M	M		
LMP AMMENDMENT NO. 11, KEY AREA MONITOR. CAGES									
BRUSHY	3	6/16-7/31	45	S/F	L	M	M	Kocr	35

* D = Dormant S = Slow Growth F = Fast Grow

** N = No use (0-10%) L = Light Use (11-25%) M = Moderate Use (26-50%) H = Heavy Use (51-70%) E =Extreme Use (71+%)