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	Permit Number R06073

Beehive and Sheep Springs Allotments Management Plan

Current Permit and NEPA History

The May 15, 2002, Environmental Assessment (EA) and Decision Notice (DN) for the Beehive and Sheep Springs Allotments Management Plan is incorporated by reference into the Special Terms and Conditions.

Subject to the above DN, this portion of Part 3 constitutes the Allotment Management Plan for the Beehive and Sheep Springs Allotments identified in Part 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLOTMENT(S) (See attached Map(s))

The Beehive and Sheep Springs Allotments lies adjacent to each other and are located on the Springerville Ranger District, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, Apache County, Arizona. The allotments are located approximately nine miles west-southwest of Springerville, Arizona. The Beehive Allotment contains approximately 6,383 acres within portions of Township 8N and Ranges 26E and 27E, Gila & Salt River Meridian, Apache County, Arizona (See the attached map). Elevations range from 8,300 to 9,630 feet. The vegetation on the allotment is dominated by mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forests with an Arizona fescue and mountain muhly under-story. Stands of mixed conifer are located on the eastern side of the allotment along a steep escarpment and on the west side of the allotment near the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation boundary. A majority of the allotment uplands are timbered and interspersed with open grassland. Riparian areas are restricted to Carnero Creek, isolated wet meadows, ephemeral streams, sinks and springs. A portion of Carnero Creek is diverted for irrigation water.

The modification of the Beehive Allotment boundary includes an area of the Sheep Springs Allotment north of SR 260, known as North Sheep Springs. The remaining portion of the Sheep Springs Allotment, south of SR 260, will be the new Sheep Springs Allotment. The Sheep Springs Allotment contains approximately 18,635 acres within portions of Township 7N and Ranges 26E and 27E and of Township 8N and Ranges 26E and 27E, G&SRM, Apache County, Arizona (Map 2). Elevations range from 7,880 to 9,790 feet. The allotment is dominated by mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forests in areas of moderate to steep slopes and along an escarpment in the eastern portion of the allotment. The rest of the allotment is predominately open, grassland on relatively flat to undulating terrain. The grassland is interspersed with timbered knolls and forested stringers. There are a significant number of wet meadows, Cienega's, drainages and reservoirs within the allotment. The allotment contains the headwaters of Fish Creek, Rosey Creek, and the middle and lower reaches of Hall and Benny Creeks, all tributaries of the Little Colorado River. Fish Creek is diverted for off-Forest use to Wiltbank Reservoir on the Beehive Allotment. Riparian areas are restricted to the stream corridors, Cienega's, wet meadows and springs.

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- a. Balanced permitted livestock use with allotment capacity (pages 2 and 35 of the EA).
- b. Implement appropriate season of use (page 36 of EA and page 2 of DN).
- c. Promote satisfactory resource conditions to achieve long-term sustainability of ungulate grazing (pages 2, 12 and 35 of the EA).
- d. Establish utilization standards that will provide for the physiological needs of forage and browse plants on portions of the allotments (pages 39 and 83 of the EA and page 3 of the DN)

PERMITTED NUMBERS AND SEASON OF USE

The Allotments will be managed as a combined unit with both sheep herds and cattle herd utilizing a fourteen pasture deferred rotational grazing system.

- Band #1 – 2000 sheep, 1 horse, and 7 burros with a season of use from June 1 to August 18.
- Band #2 – 2000 sheep, 1 horse, and 7 burros with a season of use from June 2 to August 19.
- 400 sheep, truck herd with a season of use from June 1 to September 25.
- 333 cow/calf with a season of use from July 1 - October 31.
- 139 cow/calf with season of use from July 1 – October 31 or 1,055 sheep with a season of use from June 1 to August 19 (converted from the 100 Animal Units derived from Hall, Bull and Benny Creek Pastures of former Greer Allotment).
- Numbers and class of livestock may vary but will be in accordance with the specified season of use and will not exceed 100 animal units.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Allotments will be managed as a combined unit with both sheep bands and cattle herd utilizing a 14-pasture deferred rotational grazing system, which include pastures of the Beehive and Sheep Springs Allotments and the Hall, Bull and Benny Creek Pastures from the former Greer Allotment. However, the cattle herd and the sheep bands would each follow a separate grazing schedule. Most areas of the allotments will alternate cattle use or sheep uses every other year. There are two pastures that will be exceptions to the alternating of sheep and cattle use on successive years: Pole Knoll and Sheep Corral Pastures. Some pastures will only be grazed by sheep because they are mostly timbered and are more suited to sheep grazing with active herding.

There are seven main pastures on the Beehive Allotment: Westside Pasture, Norton Pasture, Beehive Pasture, Rim Pasture, Sheep Corral Pasture, Lower Pasture, and Monaco Pasture. Monaco Trap (not pasture) will primarily be used in the fall for gathering and shipping. **The Norton Reservoir enclosure will not be grazed by livestock.** A conventional drift fence or electric fence will be used to supplement a natural barrier in the Lower Pasture creating two units, Rim and Lower.

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There are four main pastures on the Sheep Springs Allotment plus three additional pasture transferred from the old Greer allotment: Geneva Pasture, Pole Knoll Pasture, Ski Hill Pasture, White Mountain Reservoir Pasture, Bull Pasture, Hall Pasture and Benny Creek Pasture. Sheep Corral Trap, a gathering and holding trap with shipping corrals located near the junction of FR 117 and FR 117C, will be used as needed.

The Hall Pasture (mostly timbered) would be split into the Hall and Benny Creek Pastures with fencing prior to use by cattle in order to reduce pasture size, improve livestock distribution and better manage the riparian areas within the pastures. If sheep are grazed in these pastures, the fence construction to split the pastures will not be required, because sheep will be herded daily.

Cattle will be trucked to either of the permittee's two private land parcels located adjacent to and within the allotment boundary or to the livestock handling facilities at Monaco Trap or Sheep Corral on the Forest. The process would be reversed in the fall with the cattle being gathered off the last pasture in the grazing rotation, sorted and shipped from the permittee's private land, Monaco Trap or Sheep Corral.

Sheep will be either trucked or trailed to the Allotments. Trucking the sheep would be in a manner similar to the cattle trucking described above. Trailing to and from the allotment across the district will be accomplished over a one to two-day period, in both the summer and fall, on a route reviewed by the Springerville Ranger District.

The Range Study Enclosure (T8N, R27E, NW¼, Sec. 31) will also remain a livestock exclusion area and will not be grazed.

The opportunity to rest a pasture is an option and would be evaluated annually. Stocking rates and /or the length of the season of use would be adjusted to reflect the amount of forage in the rested pasture and actual use levels.

Implementation of best management practices (BMPs) that applies to the activities of the allotments (Appendix C of the EA, page 87 and 88). The following includes some specific activities or improvements on the Allotments:

1. Prescribed fire will be done when the conditions are right.
2. Seeding projects should be implemented in areas where residual seed source is limiting or in areas where eroding upland and riparian areas are contributing directly to sedimentation in stream channels.
3. Planned grazing system shall be implemented to maintain or improve plant health and vigor for the purpose of maintaining existing plant health and vigor while properly using the forage available.

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4. Grazing shall be at a level that will maintain sufficient cover to protect the soil or improve the quantity and quality of desirable vegetation.
5. Utilize salt and other animal husbandry practices to improve livestock distribution.
6. Access roads for the maintenance of range improvements shall be engineered to facilitate reasonable control and disposal of water, to control erosion, and make the possible use of topographical features.

STANDARDS AND PRECRIPTIONS

1. Authorization Required. Each year the permittee will file with the District Ranger an application for changes from the use specified in the term grazing permit. It is to be submitted in advance of the desired grazing season. Approval of the application, in whole or in part, will be reflected in the ensuing Bill for Collection.

If fees assessed through the Bill for Collection are not paid by the date specified therein and livestock are placed on the allotment, term permit numbers and/or season of use may be suspended and/or cancelled. In addition, grazing use by livestock during the delinquent period will be assessed at the "unauthorized use rate" minus regular fees if already paid and applicable.

2. Maintenance of Range Improvements. Permittee maintenance assignments are shown on page(s) 5-6 of this permit and are further identified on the map which accompanies this permit.

3. Livestock grazed in excess of the numbers, outside of the period use, or of a class or kind not authorized in the current Bill for Collection. When the annual application is approved, in whole or in part, livestock grazed in excess of authorized numbers must be removed from National Forest System Lands. Grazing use by livestock in excess of that authorized in the current Bill for Collection is cause for cancellation and/or suspension of the permit in whole or part and must be assessed at the "unauthorized use rate".

4. Livestock Counting. The permittee will notify the District Ranger at least 5 days before livestock enter the Springerville Ranger District. If requested by the District Ranger, the permittee will present the livestock for counting prior to entry, and at any time thereafter during the permitted season. The District Ranger may round up and hold for counting all permittee-owned livestock on the allotment.

5. Range Improvements - Water. The permittee has certain improvements assigned for maintenance on page(s) 5-6 in this permit. These improvements are on National Forest System lands within the allotment. The improvements include both stock tanks and springs. Issuance of this grazing permit and the permittee's acceptance of the permit does not convey ownership of a water right to the permittee(s) but allows the use of a portion of it within terms of the appropriation. The Forest has filed for water

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rights on these waters with the State of Arizona. Grazing domestic livestock may not be possible without these water rights. The Forest will retain ownership of the water rights for current and future grazing permittees as well as for wildlife and recreation consumptive needs. Ownership of the water rights will assure that the use of the water will be appurtenant to the land and will be available for both current and future grazing permittees.

6. Range Readiness. Livestock will not be permitted to graze until vegetation and soil conditions are satisfactory. Readiness checks will be made in advance of the scheduled entry date. They will be conducted on designated key forage species in key areas, being done with the permittee whenever possible.

7. Allowable Forage Use, hereafter called grazing utilization standard, is based on the amount and kind of forage on the allotment, plant's needs, and range condition and trend. Forage utilization will be based on the monitoring of key areas as outlined in the EA, pages 42, 43 and 47 and in the DN, page 3. The grazing utilization standards for each pasture are as followed:

Monaco Pasture - 30%	Geneva Pasture - 35%
Lower Pasture - 30%	Ski Hill Pasture - 30%
Rim Pasture - 30%	Pole Knoll Pasture - 35%
Sheep Corral Pasture - 35%	Bull Pasture - 35%
Beehive Pasture - 35%	Hall Pasture - 25%
Norton Pasture - 40% in upland	Benny Creek Pasture - 25%
Westside Pasture - 35%	Sheep Corral Trap - 40%
White Mountain Reservoir Pasture - 35%	Monaco Trap - 35%

When the Sheep Springs Allotment is used as a single pasture the allowable use is 35% in key areas.

A utilization level of 15% in early spring and 25% will be applied to herbaceous species in key riparian areas rated in unsatisfactory condition and 35% to key riparian areas rated in satisfactory condition during the grazing season.

Grazing utilization monitoring will be completed at the midpoint and after livestock have been removed. The monitoring will occur on key species (as identified in Table H1 in appendix H. of the EA) in key areas shown on Map H1 in Appendix H. of the EA).

Sheep grazing and watering will be prohibited in riparian areas associated with perennial streams during the period of June 1 to July 1.

For all livestock pasture rotations will be made when allowable use standards are met on key areas of the pasture unit or when the schedule rotation exit date has been reached.

8. Mitigation Measures. The fenced enclosures around Norton Reservoir, Luke Spring, and Sheep Springs will not be grazed to protect waterfowl/ wetland areas and riparian habitat.

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The lower portion of the Pole Knoll Pasture is within two miles of an active Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (SWWF) nest in the nearby town of Greer. Herding will be used to prevent sheep from grazing within two miles of the SWWF nest site (T7N, R27E, Sec. 2, 3, 10 G&SRM, Apache Co, Arizona) during the critical period from April 1 to July 31.

9. Sheep Driveways. Special instructions for the sheep driveways will be provided in the Annual Operating Instruction (AOI) each year. The affected Districts within the Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto National Forests will provide written instructions to the Springerville Ranger District, which will be included in the AOI.

10. Range Developments. To fully implement the selected alternative, structural developments will be constructed that will improve the distribution of livestock and reduce forage use in key areas. Existing range developments throughout the allotment will be reconstructed as necessary.

Full implementation of watershed projects and road closures will be completed in 2005. These projects include fence construction, construction of erosion control structures and road closure and rehabilitation (EA, pages 49 through 51, and DN, page 5).

Table 1. Beehive/Sheep Springs Allotments planned range developments – construction and reconstruction

LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION RESPONSIBILITY	WHEN	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
Range Improvements for Udall Allotment.			
Install two 14-ft. cattle guards on roads to White Mountain Reservoir from FR 112.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding Permits	USFS
Install two 4-ft. walk-through gates on the Rails-to-Trails hiking trail. See EA.	USFS material and permittee labor	As funding permits	USFS
Construct 0.4 miles of new fence in Section 28, T8N, R27E to create Lower and Rim Pastures.	USFS material and permittee labor	As funding Permits	Permittee
Remove 0.5 miles of unnecessary fence on the east side of the permittee's private property along FR 118, in Sections 15 and 16, T8N, R27 E.	Permittee labor	Complete by GY 2005	Permittee
Construct 6.5 miles of new electric fence to create the Ski Hill, Geneva and White Mountain Pastures from the old Sheep Springs Pasture.	USFS materials and permittee labor	Implemented	Permittee

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Table 1. Beehive/Sheep Springs Allotments planned range developments – construction and reconstruction

LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION RESPONSIBILITY	WHEN	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
Clean 8 existing earthen stock tanks.	Permittee equipment and labor	Complete by GY 2005	Permittee
Reconstruct 1.4 miles of conventional fence around Norton Reservoir	USFS materials and labor	Completed	AZG&F
Construct 1.25 miles of fence along the Wilderness Boundary to remove livestock drift into the Mtn. Baldy Wilderness.	USFS materials and permittee labor	As funding permits	Permittee
Construct four erosion control structures in the headcuts in the SW¼ Section 20, T8N, R27E. Norton Pasture.	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Construct three erosion control structures in the headcuts at Cheese Spring in the NW¼ of the NW¼ Section 27, T8N, R27E.	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Construct a French drain and elevate the road bed where a road crosses the drainage located in the NW¼ of the SE¼, Section 17, T8N, R28E.	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Install a spreader culvert where the railroad grade intercepts the headwaters of Fish Creek in the NE¼ of Section 6, T7N, R27E.	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Remove culvert at old road crossing of Fish Creek in the NW¼ of Section 31, T8N, R27E	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Construct 0.3 miles (1,600 ft.) of two-rail pole fence across the base of Pole Knoll on the west side to maintain a road closure there.	USFS materials and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.79 miles of road south of White Mountain Reservoir in Section 17, T7N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.96 miles of road northwest of White Mountain Reservoir in Sections 17 and 18, T7N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS

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Table 1. Beehive/Sheep Springs Allotments planned range developments – construction and reconstruction

LOCATION	CONSTRUCTION RESPONSIBILITY	WHEN	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
Close and rehabilitate approximately 1.2 miles of road on the south side of Pole Knoll (2 segments) in Section 5, T7N, R27E and Section 32, T8N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.16 miles of road at Cheese Spring in the NW¼ of the NW¼ of Section 27, T8N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.63 miles of road in Benny Creek in the W1/2 of Section 2, T7N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.28 miles of road in Section 30, T8N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.27 miles of road west of Sunnyside Reservoir in Section 30, T8N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.98 miles of road in Sections 18 and 19, T8N, R27E.	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.26 miles of road in the NW¼ of Section 19, T8N, R27E	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS
Close and rehabilitate approximately 0.36 miles of road in the NE¼ of Section 4, T8N, R27E	USFS equipment and labor	As funding permits	USFS

Cattleguard installation will involve roadside soil disturbance, water out-letting and drainage. Livestock fencing will be accomplished without crossing streams by vehicles or heavy equipment. Fencing materials will be delivered to the site during the dry periods. Actual fence construction will avoid impacts to the stream and stream banks.

Earthen tank cleaning, watershed structures and road closures will be scheduled for dry periods to reduce vehicle and heavy equipment impacts. Dry period timing will typically be in the month of June or in the fall. Earthen tank cleaning will be conducted in periods of low storage to facilitate cleaning and will involve removal of sediment, which will be used to face the dam, and spillway cleaning and /or reconstruction to establish level spillway grade. Rock /wire and loose rock checks for watershed projects will be conducted during the dry period with ingress and egress to the project site limited to actual construction. Specification standards will be provided by the Springerville Ranger District.

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Road obliteration and closures will involve ripping the roadbed, reseeding, and vehicle barrier placement in the form of gates, earthen berms or rock obstacles. Proposed road closures will be in compliance with current Roads Analysis Procedures in accordance with Miscellaneous Report FS-643, USDA Forest Service, 1999, Roads Analysis: Informing Decisions about Managing the National Forest Transportation System, Washington, D.C., U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service 222 p. All of the proposed projects are related in that they are designed to improve overall watershed and riparian conditions.

Permittee Review

"I have reviewed the provisions of the term grazing permit, the standards and guidelines, and management required by the Forest Management Plan applicable to the allotment and the Allotment Management Plan with the grazing Permittee."

Rangeland Management Specialist

Date

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