



United States  
Department  
of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Cave Creek  
Ranger  
District

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File Code: 2210

Date: December 17, 2016

(b) (6)

JH Cattle Company, LLC

(b) (6)

Dear (b) (6)

Thank you for meeting with Jeff Sturla on December 17, 2015 to develop your 2016 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). During the meeting, you discussed with Jeff the number of livestock you wish to run on Copper Creek for the 2016 grazing year. You have steadily been increasing your numbers since first grazing on Copper Creek. This increase in numbers is in response to your management, staying within your authorized utilization guidelines, and the allotment meeting the desired conditions.

Jeff discussed with you your current NEPA timeline. We have been working closely with you as we have developed the proposed action and alternatives for the Horseshoe and Copper EA and I appreciate the efforts you have made with development of the proposed new CRMP. We expect to release a draft of the EA in the next coming months and to have it finalized later this year. We will continue to keep you updated with its progress as we move forward.

You have indicated that you plan to do the following maintenance on Copper Creek improvements next year:

- o Install a solar pump at Rugged windmill and replace the column pipe
- o Change out the solar pump in Cornstalk well with a larger, higher output pump
- o Clean Trail, Spring, and Hidden Tank

Please keep the District informed of your progress on these improvements. There are a limited number of solar pumps available at the District so please get in touch with Jeff Sturla should you need one for your projects.

Jeff informed you that you need to update the District with a new State of Arizona brand certificate. The current livestock brand certificate we have on file is in your name. Forest Service policy requires that it must be in the name of your LLC, as is listed as the authorized name on your grazing permit. Please let us know once you have completed this update and send copies to the District office.

Attached is your 2016 AOI for the Copper Creek grazing allotment. If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Sturla at (480) 595-3331.

Sincerely,

*Jason Scow*

JASON M. SCOW  
Acting District Ranger

cc: Chandler K Mundy



## 2016 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)

**Allotment:** Copper Creek

**Permittee:** JH Cattle Company, LLC

**Permit Number:** 12186

**Permitted Use:**

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
JH Cattle Company, LLC	270 Cow / Calf	Temporary	1/01-12/31
JH Cattle Company, LLC	15 Bulls	Temporary	1/01-12/31

1. **Authorization:** Authorized to graze the following in 2016:

Permittee	Numbers	Type	Season
JH Cattle Company, LLC	270 Cow/Calf	Temporary	3/01-12/31
JH Cattle Company, LLC	14 Bull	Temporary	3/01-12/31

2. **Management:** Copper Creek 2016 Pasture Rotation:

Grazing Pasture	Dates of Use	Authorized Livestock	Comments
Cornstalk	March. 1 – May 14	270 Cow/calf 14 Bulls	
Granite Mesa	May 15– Aug. 15	270 Cow/calf 14 Bulls	
Brooklyn	Aug 16– Oct. 31	270 Cow/calf 14 Bulls	
Perry	Nov. 1- Dec. 31	270 Cow/calf 14 Bulls	

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 of the Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) 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 the District has 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 to the following years AOI 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 1997 Horseshoe/Copper Creek Allotments Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or the Forest Plan.

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

Per Part 2, clause 7(c) of your Temporary 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. Advanced planning is also needed for authorized stock tank cleaning so surveys can be scheduled accordingly if any are necessary. 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 2016 authorized range improvement projects.

Pasture	Location	Description of Work
Granite-Mesa Butte	Rugged Windmill	Install solar pump and replace column pipe
Cornstalk	Cornstalk Well	Change out the existing solar pump with a larger, higher output pump
Granite-Mesa Butte	Trail Tank	Clean tank
Cornstalk	Spring Tank	Clean tank
Cornstalk	Hidden Tank	Clean tank

**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 Copper Creek Allotment Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)** are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, Section 7(a). The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the August 1997 Decision Notice for the Copper Creek Allotment, the July 1997 Copper Creek Coordinated Resource Management Plan and in the Tonto National Forest Plan. It also complies with the Endangered Species Act on-going grazing consultation for the Copper Creek Allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the annual operating instructions.