



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Tonto Basin  
Ranger  
District

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File Code: 2210

Date: December 27, 2022

James and Shalena Weidenbener  
Del Shay Allotment  
(b)(6)  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142

Dear James and Shalena,

The following are your 2023 annual operating instructions (AOI) for the Del Shay 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
Horse Canyon	January 1 <sup>st</sup> 2023 March 15 <sup>th</sup>	March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	117 Cows 10 Bulls 35 Yearlings	
Bull	March 15 <sup>th</sup> April 30 <sup>th</sup>	May 8 <sup>th</sup>	117 Cows 10 Bulls 35 Yearlings 4 Horses	Yearlings will be removed by May 31. Horses will be on and off in this pasture when in use during the year.
Windmill	May 1 <sup>st</sup> July 15 <sup>th</sup>	July 24 <sup>th</sup>	117 Cows 10 Bulls	
Gun	July 15 <sup>th</sup> September 15 <sup>th</sup>	September 22 <sup>nd</sup>	117 Cows 10 Bulls	
Bootlegger	September 16 <sup>th</sup> November 30 <sup>th</sup>	December 7 <sup>th</sup>	117 Cows 10 Bulls	
Windmill	December 1 <sup>st</sup> December 31 <sup>st</sup>	Next AOI	117 Cows 10 Bulls	

#### 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 2023 proposed range improvement projects.

Pasture	Location	Description of Work	Clearances Needed
Horse Canyon	Bathtub	Build corral for sorting and branding	Archeological and Biological Clearance required.
Horse Canyon	Del Shay Water System Pipeline	Install trough between Bathtub and Rattlesnake	None. Project Authorized previously but needs installed.

**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, Rangeland Management Specialist, at (602) 225-5332.

Sincerely,



JEREMY PLAIN  
District Ranger

CC: Eric Hoskins  
Crystal Martinez  
Ina Yazzie