

**DOUGLAS RANGER DISTRICT  
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST  
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION (AOI)  
Geronimo Allotment  
2024 Grazing Year**

This letter will serve as your annual operating instructions for the **2024** grazing season for the **Geronimo** allotment.

**I. AUTHORIZED USE/ROTATION SCHEDULE:** The annual validation for your term grazing permit has been approved for the following numbers and season:

**Authorized Use**

Allotment	Date On	Date Off	Days	# of Cows	Dry Cows	Bulls	Yring	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Geronimo	3/1/2024	3/31/2024	31	65					66	66
Geronimo	11/2/2024	2/28/2025	119	177					692	692
<b>Total</b>									<b>759</b>	<b>759</b>

Note: Number exceeds permitted number (177) but is within permitted AUMs (shorter time)

**Non-Use**

Allotment	Date On	Date Off	Days	# of Cows	Dry Cows	Bulls	Yring	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Geronimo	3/1/2024	3/31/2024	31	112					151	114
<b>Total</b>									<b>151</b>	<b>114</b>

Reason: Resource Protection number may vary based on the availability of water.

**Proposed Rotation**

Pasture	Acres in Pasture	Date On	Date Off	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yring	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Sycamore		3/1/2024	3/31/2024	31		65				66	66
Off Forest		4/1/2024	11/5/2024								
Cottonwood		11/6/2024	1/20/2025	76		177				442	442
Estes		1/21/2025	2/28/2025	39		177				227	227
Grey cells are calculated fields									<b>Applied For</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>735</b>
White cells are editable									<b>Permitted</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>972</b>
<b>NOTES:</b>									<b>Non-Use</b>		
It is understood that the cows proposed to be in the Sycamore pasture is a maximum estimate, as cattle are periodically removed from the allotment during the months of February and March, with all cattle removed by 3/31.											

Due to the ongoing drought we all are experiencing in this region, changes to various types of management are needed in most cases. Please keep the natural resource conditions in the forefront of your mind when making management decisions that affect your allotment, and please keep the range staff here at the Douglas District well informed of any deviation from your proposed plan.

Please keep in mind fall rotation is dependent on rain during the monsoon season and may need to be drastically changed to prevent resource damage from occurring.

This rotation schedule is dependent on climatic conditions and the availability of water. If unfavorable climatic conditions occur a change in rotation will be discussed with Douglas Range personnel and may be adjusted following the summer rains.



You are permitted for 177 head for 5.5 months any time between 11/01 – 07/15, not to exceed 980 AUMs. This year you requested, and have been authorized, to go on Forest for a shorter amount of time with a slightly higher number than what you are permitted for.

Pasture rotation is designed to incorporate growing season rest or deferment to allow for grazed plant recovery. Pastures grazed during the summer growing season (July – September) will not be grazed during the growing season the following year.

Actual dates may vary dependent upon climatic conditions, when utilization levels are reached, and time required to remove cattle.

Please be sure to not exceed the permitted number of livestock.

If you should need to deviate from this rotation schedule by more than two weeks, please notify this office in advance. Livestock remaining in pastures beyond the specified rotation date, that are allowed to drift between pastures, or grazing in rested pastures may be considered a violation of your Term Grazing Permit.

## **II. ALLOWABLE USE STANDARDS:**

Utilization in all pastures is not to exceed 45% in the key areas. Please refer to your key area map. Herding and salting will be used to ensure allowable use is not exceeded. If allowable use is in danger of being exceeded, the cattle should be removed from that pasture until the range recovers. Salt and supplement will be placed appropriately, on good feed, at least ¼ mile from water and out of livestock concentration areas and more than 200 feet from roads. Salt and supplement locations should be rotated so as not to degrade a particular site. Salt blocks may be removed by the District if found near water, over-utilized areas, or roads. Blocks should be placed on hard ground not susceptible to erosion.

## **III. MONITORING:**

The permittee will record actual use as it occurs, including livestock numbers and dates permitted livestock are in a pasture. This information will be reported at the next annual operating instruction meeting. Common implementation monitoring includes forage production, forage utilization, photo points, condition of improvements, actual use and precipitation data.

## **IV. NEW MEXICO RIDGENOSE RATTLESNAKE:**

Portions of this allotment is considered critical habitat for the New Mexico ridgenose rattlesnake. As always, please take the following precautions during your use of this allotment this season:

- Intentionally killing, disturbing, or harassing any threatened or endangered species, including the New Mexico ridgenose rattlesnake, is a violation of the Endangered Species Act and could result in prosecution. All personnel should be advised that care should be exercised when operating vehicles or equipment in this area and in the process of maintaining or constructing ground disturbing range improvements (fences and water lines, for example) to avoid killing or injuring snakes.
- Any rattlesnake that you inadvertently kill or find dead should be reported to the Douglas Ranger District so that it can be identified and reported to the appropriate authorities if necessary.

Please take note of the following information on the New Mexico ridgenose rattlesnake. This information will assist you and your employees in identifying these snakes and will provide more detailed management considerations related to this species.

## NEW MEXICO RIDGENOSE RATTLESNAKE

*(Crotalus willardi obscurus)*



**STATUS:** Threatened (43 FR 34479, August 4, 1978) with critical habitat.

**DESCRIPTION:** Small (12-24 inches long), secretive, grayish-brown rattlesnake with a distinct ridge on the end of its snout. The upper surface has obscure, irregularly spaced white cross bars edged with brown in a dull pattern.

**HABITAT:** Found among rocks, bunchgrass and leaf litter in steep rocky canyons in the pine-oak and pine-fir belts at 5,600-9,000 feet elevation.

Although this is not a complete list, the following actions should be taken to avoid harming, harassing, or killing New Mexico Ridgenose Rattlesnake:

- Limiting disturbances to the smallest area needed
- Not moving rock or wood piles
- Not cutting slopes
- Leaving the snake where it is found.

## V. REFUNDS AND CREDIT OF GRAZING FEES PAID (FSM 2238.11g)

Refunds will only be approved where the term grazing permit has been waived, the waiver of term grazing permit has been confirmed by the authorized officer, and a new permit issued to a qualified applicant indicated on the waiver of term grazing permit (FS-2200-12), or if a current permittee has applied for, and the authorized officer has approved, nonuse for which grazing fees have previously been paid.

Grazing fee credits will be approved when late entry or early removal of livestock is requested by the permittee for legitimate reasons and/or when delayed entry or early removal of livestock is requested by the authorized officer for reasons of resource protection. Credit for grazing fees will not be approved merely for the convenience of the permittee after the bill for collection is issued.

## VI. RANGE IMPROVEMENT CONSTRUCTION / MAINTENANCE:

The Forest Service may spot check range improvements before the entry date to ensure improvements are in a satisfactory condition. Livestock will not be allowed to enter pastures if assigned improvements are not maintained to proper standards. Livestock will not be allowed to enter pastures if fences will not keep livestock where they are placed.

All troughs should have water when livestock are not present and be equipped so that small animals can safely enter and exit.

New range improvements and all ground disturbing activities will not be initiated until proper archeological clearances have been obtained. When improvements are completed, the permittee will inform District Range personnel to schedule an inspection. Before using machinery to clean any pond, the permittee is required to give the District Office at least 30 days advance notice so that the tank can be inspected for threatened or endangered species. All work involving the use of heavy equipment will be accomplished only after prior approval by the District Ranger. Improvement schedule is dependent upon funding.

<b>Previous Year Improvement Accomplishments</b>				
<b>Permit Mod #</b>	<b>Improvement Type / ID #</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Description/Comments</b>	<b>Status Done /Date</b>
	Fence	2022	Continued fence maintenance	Ongoing
	Weather Station	2023	Placing weather station in Cottonwood Basin	Done
	Water System/Trick Tank Trough	2023	Patched trough	Done

<b>Current Year Improvement Schedule</b>				
<b>Permit Mod #</b>	<b>Improvement Type / ID #</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Description/Comments</b>	<b>Status Done /Date</b>
	Fence	2024	Eastern boundary fence (Geronimo/Maverick fence) rebuild. This is a Forest Service funded and contracted project	
	Water System/138009	2024	Will install a new trough at McDonald Trick Tank	

**VII. PROTECTION:**

The permittee, his agents and employees, when acting within the scope of their employment, and his contractors and subcontractors will protect the land and property of the United States, waived private land and other land under jurisdiction of the Forest Service covered by and used in conjunction with this permit. During periods of high fire danger, branding fires will be allowed by permit only. Please report all fires to the Tucson Interagency Fire Coordination Center at 1-800-549-0661.

**IX. PERMIT CONDITIONS:**

This Annual Operating Instruction is hereby made a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, Section 8(a). It complies with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan. Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions specified in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of your Term Grazing Permit may result in suspension or cancellation, in whole or in part, after written notice. This is found in Part 1, Section 3, of your permit.

Management direction applies as specified in the September 27, 2019, Amended Biological Assessment for Coronado National Forest Livestock Grazing Program and the September 30, 2021, Biological Opinion on Ongoing Grazing on the Coronado National Forest.

Keep a copy of these Annual Operating Instruction for your personal files. Thank you.

Sincerely,

DOUG RUPPEL  
District Ranger