

**DOUGLAS RANGER DISTRICT
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION (AOI)
Geronimo Allotment
2025 Grazing Year**

This letter will serve as your annual operating instructions for the **2025** 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	Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs	
Geronimo	3/1/2025	3/31/2025	31	0							
Geronimo	11/2/2025	2/28/2026	119	177					692	692	
									Total	692	692

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	Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs	
Geronimo	3/1/2025	3/31/2025	31	177					238	180	
									Total	238	180

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	# Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Off Forest		3/1/2025	11/5/2025								
Cottonwood		11/6/2025	1/20/2026	76		177				442	442
Estes		1/21/2026	2/28/2026	39		177				227	227
Grey cells are calculated fields									Applied For	669	669
White cells are editable									Permitted	972	972
NOTES:									Non-Use	238	180

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.

You are permitted for 177 head for 5.5 months any time between 11/01 – 07/15, not to exceed 980 AUMs. Please be sure to not exceed the permitted number of livestock.

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.

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.



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 are considered occupied habitat by the New Mexican Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake.

As always, please take the following precautions during your use of this allotment this season:

- Do not intentionally kill, disturb, or harass any New Mexican Ridge-nosed Rattlesnakes - it is a violation of the Endangered Species Act and could result in prosecution. All ranch personnel should be advised that care be exercised when operating vehicles (particularly during morning and late afternoon hours) or ground disturbing equipment in this area for range improvements to avoid killing or injuring snakes.
- Any New Mexican Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake inadvertently killed or found dead should be reported to the Douglas Ranger District, with photos (preferred).

Please learn the following information about the New Mexican Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake. This information will assist ranch personnel identify these snakes and assist with ranch management as it relates to this species.

STATUS: Listed as Threatened (43 *FR* 34479, August 4, 1978) with critical habitat (Animas Mountains, NM).

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: In the Peloncillo Mountains, this species is found among rocks, bunchgrass, and leaf litter in canyons associated with pine-oak and pine-fir belts at 5,000-6,200 feet elevation.

BEHAVIOR: Shy and secretive, often quick to seek cover if encountered. Rattling sound is faint, particularly when sheltering under cover. Often surface-active during mornings and late afternoons; less active during the heat of the day. While venomous, due to its small size, this species does not pose a risk to humans in most situations provided it is not intentionally harassed or manipulated. As a last resort, it may defensively strike if it feels threatened.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS: Although this is not a complete list, the following actions should be taken to avoid harming, harassing, or killing New Mexican Ridge-nosed Rattlesnakes:

- Limit ground disturbance to the smallest area needed
- Pay particular attention to the potential for snakes crossing roads and drive at speeds slow enough to observe crossing snakes and avoid striking them
- Do not disturb rock or wood piles
- Avoid cutting slopes
- Leave the snake where it is found

NEW MEXICAN RIDGE-NOSED RATTLESNAKE
(Crotalus willardi obscurus)



Light morph.



Dark morph.

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.

Previous Year Improvement Accomplishments				
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
	Fence	2024	Eastern boundary fence (Geronimo/Maverick fence) rebuild. This is a Forest Service funded and contracted project	
Current Year Improvement Schedule				
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
	Water System/138009	2025	Will install a new trough at McDonald Trick Tank	
	Water System/138003	2025	Clean out Gravel Pit Tank	
	Water System/138002	2025	Clean out state line 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,

Acting District Ranger