

File Code: 2230  
Date: March 18, 2016

Peter Oddonetto  
341 South Hill Street  
Globe, Arizona 85501

Hand delivered  
3/18/2016

Dear Peter,

This is an update to Haystack Butte Allotment Management Plan and Term Grazing Permit 12-133 will remain in compliance with Forest Plan, Regulation, and Policy. A trial increase, based on e-mail and proposed action received March 11, 2016 will be authorized under terms and conditions outlined below, including those listed in May 11, 2015 modification letter.

#### Existing Conditions

Allotment has been improved upon with cross fencing, water projects, spring developments, and stock tank maintenance, now consisting of 11 pastures and well distributed water sources. Based on utilization, trend and production collected from Reading the Range data over eight years, conditions have improved to propose a trial increase.

#### Time Frame

Increased authorized numbers will be approved through March 1, 2021. Regional Forest Handbook 2209.13, 16.16 indicates trial increases normally do not exceed 1-2 years, consecutively. This period of time is not sufficient to properly stock and monitor allotment conditions with our varied southwest climatic conditions, upon why trial is extended to five years. A gradual increase in numbers will occur at scheduled meetings as resource and economic conditions warrant. As trial period time frame is ending, an environmental document will be started to fully analyze increased livestock numbers and monitoring data.

#### Goals and Objectives

Trial increase purpose is to maintain a viable and ecologically sustainable operation while managing objectives, outlined below, in previous modification and in Tonto Forest Plan.

- Indicators of vegetative trend
  - Change in vigor of desirable key species;
  - Amount and type of recruitment of young desirable key species;
  - Amount and type of undesirable species such as noxious or invasive species;
  - Amount and level of current and historical hedging on desirable browse species.
- Indicators of soil trend
  - Amount of active rills, gullies, alluvial deposits, terracing, above what is common for site;
  - Soil remnants held by roots and plant bases, such as pedestalling.

### Authorized Numbers

Term Grazing Permit will not be re-issued for purposes of increasing numbers related to trial modification until an environmental decision is executed.

*Table 1: Current vs. Increased numbers with average Animal Unit Months calculated.*

Current Term Grazing Permit	Increased Authorized Numbers
184 cow/calf @ 1.32 AUMs	250 cow/calf @ 1.32 AUMs 25 bulls @ 1.5 AUMs
52 yearlings @ 0.7 AUMs	220 yearlings @ 0.7 AUMs
10 horses @ 1.5 AUMs	10 horses @ 1.5 AUMs

According to Regional Forest Handbook 2209.13, 16.1, cattle yearling class conversions will be based on weight of animal and its associated conversion rate. Yearlings were calculated at 80% of cow/calf numbers and will remain progeny of herd on allotment.

### Grazing Management

- Cattle will be drifted, not trailed, whenever possible. For example, livestock will be moved in small numbers rather than large groups all at once to reduce resource impacts
- All livestock moved to next scheduled pastures will occur within two weeks.
- Ensure all improvements, as listed in term grazing permit, are functioning prior to entry into scheduled pasture. All troughs will remain functional/full year round.
- Herd livestock to new areas to alleviate grazing pressure.

### Monitoring

The following monitoring activities will be carried out by permittee, Forest Service or cooperatively during grazing year. All monitoring results will be shared with group at spring and winter meetings.

Forage production, wildlife monitoring, repeat photography, dry weight rank, fetch, year end and seasonal utilization, riparian utilization soils evaluations, trend data, climate forecasting and other data as needed or as protocol changes will be collected during grazing year. Compliance to ensure livestock are in correct pastures and improvement status may occur while collecting other data. Long term monitoring will occur in established key areas, but compliance and seasonal collection may occur at representative site of pasture, allotment, soil or vegetative types.

This will be combined during yearly meetings along with accurate stocking rates, actual livestock move dates to determine level of success for past year and identify changes for upcoming year. As science and technology evolve and new data becomes available, implementation of trial increase may change over time. Any changes will be approved by Forest Official in either yearly instructions or follow-up letter.

### Administrative Actions

To ensure smooth transition to increasing livestock numbers, a spring and winter meeting schedule will be made. Each meeting will focus specific actions to keep everyone up to date on allotment goals and objectives.

Spring meeting will generally be held in April to capture potential livestock numbers to be sold at local livestock sale, or number of livestock retained to carryover. Permittee will provide accurate stocking records since last meeting. As a group, evaluate data, range readiness, and forecast upcoming climatic conditions to determine if feasible to increase or decrease livestock numbers, season of use, and livestock class. Winter meetings should generally be held in November and capture all of spring meeting information and also prepare an annual operating instructions and sign Bill Of Collection. If other circumstances appear that is not outlined here, other meetings may be called by any of the parties.

Certain events may trigger a response and would be documented through a followup modification or in annual operating instructions, approved by Forest Officer. Other actions, not shown below, may develop through scheduled meetings and can be utilized if meets Forest Plan and other goals and objectives.

- If:
  - Annual indicators of grazing trends indicate downward movement; or
  - Annual indicators are showing positive trends;
  - A climate, fire, flood or other event impacts resources;
  - Livestock practices may affect recovery of threatened, endangered or proposed species and/or their habitat;
- Then:
  - Change time spent in pasture;
  - Assess pasture readiness;
  - Rest pasture for at least one grazing season;
  - Decrease/Increase livestock numbers based on findings;
  - Extend/shorten length of time in pastures;
  - Turn off water, temporarily, to move livestock;
  - Proposed livestock facilities or cross fencing that benefit recovery of threatened, endangered or proposed wildlife and/or habitat;
  - New improvements, or modification of existing improvements may be needed to facilitate further positive livestock management. If new improvements are needed, further analysis will be required.

If for any reason this modification becomes invalid, a letter will be sent out nulling this letter.

If you have any further questions, please contact A. Jamie Wages.

Sincerely,



KELLY JARDINE  
District Ranger