

**SIERRA VISTA RANGER DISTRICT
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION (AOI)
Mescal Allotment
2023 - 2024 Grazing Year**

I. AUTHORIZED USE: The following numbers and classes of livestock are authorized to graze on the Mescal Allotment:

KIND	CLASS	NUMBER	AUMs	AUTHORIZED SEASON OF USE
Cattle	Cow/calf	500	3,000	11/01/2023 – 05/01/2024
	Total	500	3,000	

Non-use is approved as follows:

KIND	CLASS	NUMBER	AUMs	DATES OF NON-USE
Cattle	Cow/Calf	300	1,800	11/01/2023 – 05/01/2024
	Total	300	1,800	

Notes: Non-use is granted for Resource Protection due to drought. The permittee has been running reduced numbers over the last couple of years due to excessive drought and they work to improve water distribution across the allotment.

II. ROTATION SCHEDULE:

The cattle will first be placed in Mine Canyon. Cattle will utilize these areas until forage utilization reaches guidelines or livestock water diminishes. Livestock will then be moved to Cottonwood and Copper Sands. In the later part of the grazing season cattle will be re-located to French Joe and Dry Canyons. The cattle will be moved off of the allotment in the spring as they near calving and/or allowable utilization levels in key grazing areas have been reached. 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.

III. ALLOWABLE USE STANDARDS AND SUPPLEMENTS:

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. 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.

You are authorized to use a bulk liquid supplement for increased livestock distribution and animal nutrition. The supplement shall be moved when forage utilization reaches 45% within the general area of the supplement. The supplement shall be placed appropriately, on good feed, at least ¼ mile from water and out of livestock concentration areas. All materials and equipment associated with the bulk supplement shall be removed from the forest at the end of the grazing season.

IV. 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.

V. 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.

Improvement Schedule				
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
	Mine Canyon Trick Tank - 318029, Dry Canyon Trick Tankl -318022	TBD	Reconstruction of trick tank. Project entails the replacement of the trick tank apron and runoff collection pipe and repair of the storage. The apron material will be provided by the FS and labor will be provided by the permittee. Working to obtain additional funding, possibly through EQIP.	TBD
	SW Whetstones Water System off of Copper Sands Well	March 2024	Complete installation/connectivity of new SW Whetstone Water System. All work will be done in conjunction with the Coal Mine Allotment Permittee. If this system cannot be up and running by March 31, 2024, please coordinate with the District Office to work out the timeline or need for additional materials.	In Progress

VII. 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.

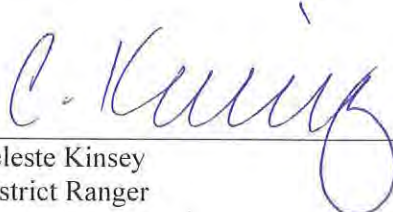
VIII. PROTECTION:

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.

In 2021, the Forest consulted with the US Fish & Wildlife Service about on-going grazing activities and the impacts they may have on threatened and endangered species. You have been provided a copy of the Biological Opinion (BO). Please pay particular attention to the sections pertaining to the species on your allotment. If you need new copies, please contact this office. Please pay particular attention to the terms and conditions and conservation recommendations for each species.

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Celeste Kinsey
District Ranger

_____ Date 9/21/2023