



File Code: 2210; 2230
Date: March 2, 2021

(b) (6)

Vaca Ranch LLC
P.O. Box 11350
Bozeman, MT 59719

Dear (b) (6)

Enclosed are your 2021 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) and Grazing Bill for the Blacktail and San Rafael grazing allotments. The due date for your grazing bill is located in the upper right hand corner of the bill, please note that grazing fees this year are \$1.35 per head month.

Should you have any questions, please contact Steve Bluemer at (520) 803-2831.

Sincerely,

CELESTE KINSEY
District Ranger



**SIERRA VISTA RANGER DISTRICT
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION (AOI)
San Rafael & Blacktail Allotments
2021 Grazing Year**

I. AUTHORIZED USE:

A. The following numbers and classes of livestock are authorized to graze on the **San Rafael** Allotment:

KIND	CLASS	NUMBER	AUMs	AUTHORIZED SEASON OF USE
Cattle	Cow/Calf	217	107	03/01/2021 – 03/15/2021
Cattle	Cow/Calf	257	262	03/16/2021 – 04/15/2021
Cattle	Cow/Calf	297	293	04/16/2021 – 05/15/2021
Cattle	Cow/Calf	337	177	05/16/2021 – 05/31/2021
Cattle	Cow/Calf	475	4263	06/01/2021 – 02/28/2022
Cattle	Bull	30	127	05/15/2021 – 09/20/2021
	Total	505	5229	

*Note: Due to drought conditions, permittee reduced herds substantially last fall for both permits and will slowly stock back up as the monsoon season nears. Although authorized numbers are higher than the permitted number for a portion of the year, AUMs fall well below the permitted amount. Furthermore, the ranch has large pastures that are privately owned. Although not annotated in the grazing schedule, these privately-owned pastures will be grazed during portions of the upcoming year.

B. The following numbers and classes of livestock are authorized to graze on the **Blacktail** Allotment:

KIND	CLASS	NUMBER	AUMs	AUTHORIZED SEASON OF USE
Cattle	Cow/Calf	98	541	03/01/2021 – 08/15/2021
Cattle	Cow/Calf	100	450	10/15/2021 – 02/28/2022
Cattle	Bull	8	48	04/15/2021 – 08/15/2021
	Total	138*	1039	

*Note: An additional 30 head will be on the Blacktail Allotment under a Term Private Land Grazing Permit which authorizes 30 head year round.

II. ROTATION SCHEDULE: Actual dates may vary dependent upon climatic conditions, availability of water in springs/dirt tanks, when utilization levels are reached and time required to remove cattle for both the San Rafael and Blacktail allotments.

A. **San Rafael Allotment Rotation:**

Pasture	Proposed Numbers	Proposed Season of Use	Comments (i.e. Use Standard, special concerns or instructions)
North Red Rock	See Comments	03/01/2021 – 04/15/2021 11/16/2021 – 02/28/2022	Livestock numbers are not specified. Cattle will be moved on dates specified or when utilization on key areas reaches 45%, whichever occurs first.
Lower Robinson		04/16/2021 – 06/15/2021	
Middle Robinson		03/01/2021 – 05/15/2021	
Meadow Valley/South Red Rock		03/01/2021 – 05/15/2021	
East Kennedy/Headquarters		05/16/2021 – 09/15/2021	
West Kennedy		Rest	
Dunham		Rest	
Upper Williams		09/16/2021 – 11/15/2021	
Lower Williams		09/16/2021 – 11/15/2021	

B. Blacktail Allotment Rotation:

Pasture	Proposed Numbers	Proposed Season of Use	Comments (i.e. Use Standard, special concerns or instructions)
Menefee	98 + 8	03/01/2021 – 04/30/2021	Cows + Bulls
Toms	98 + 8	05/01/2021 – 06/15/2021	Cows + Bulls
Sundown	98 + 8	06/16/2021 – 08/15/2021	Cows + Bulls
Private – Off Forest	130	08/16/2021 – 10/15/2021	
Sunnyside	130	10/16/2021 – 01/15/2021	
Menefee	130	01/16/2022 – 02/28/2022	

If you should need to deviate from these rotation schedules 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:

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.

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.

To continue to meet Biological Opinion requirements for exclosures across the district, they need to be inspected at a minimum of three times a year. The San Rafael Allotment has the Cott/Silver and Bog Hole exclosures. We are asking you as the permittee to take note of the following topics when you visit the exclosure(s) and report the status of them on the attached Exclosure Monitoring Form.

- Date of Inspection
- Status of Fence (up or down)
- % of Fence Inspected
- Livestock use observed
- Level of livestock use (if observed)
- If livestock use did occur, what is the estimate of how long livestock were in exclosure?

If Livestock use has occurred in an exclosure, please notify the district with specifics of the incident.

V. RANGE IMPROVEMENT CONSTRUCTION / MAINTENANCE:

The Forest Service may spot check range improvements before the entry date to insure 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.

Vehicular access to range improvements listed in the term grazing permit is authorized for routine maintenance. Vehicular access is also approved for the construction of any new improvements not yet listed in the term grazing permit.

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.

Current Year Improvement Schedule			YEAR	2021
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
	Willow Springs Well		If funding allows, this well will be solarized.	
	Parking Lot Well		If funding allows, this well will be solarized.	
Previous Year Improvement Accomplishments			YEAR	2020
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
	E/W Kennedy Fence	Summer 2020	FS supplied 2.5 miles of fence material and ranch replaced fenceline	Done

VI. ROADS:

Vehicular access on established roads can be essential for structural range improvement maintenance, supplement placement and general ranch duties. Any open road to the public (road on Motor Vehicle Use Map- *MVUM*) may be used at any time for any reason. The use of other established roads must be authorized within the Term Grazing Permit or in the Annual Operating Instructions. Cross country may be authorized by written permission from the District Ranger.

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 2002, 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 copies of 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.



 CELESTE KINSEY
 District Ranger



 Date