

**DOUGLAS RANGER DISTRICT
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION (AOI)**

**Skeleton/Fairchild, Graves, Outlaw Mountain and Deer Creek Allotments
2021 Grazing Year**

This letter will serve as your annual operating instructions for the **2021** grazing season for the **Skeleton/Fairchild, Graves, Outlaw, and Deer Creek** allotments.

I. AUTHORIZED USE and 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	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yrling	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Graves	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	365	14					168	168
Skeleton/Fairchild	3/1/2021	3/15/2021	15	100					49	49
Skeleton/Fairchild	10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	100					496	496
Deer Creek	3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	75					150	150
Deer Creek	10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	75					372	372
Total									1236	1236

Non-Use

Allotment	Date On	Date Off	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yrling	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Outlaw	3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	66					132	132
Outlaw	11/1/2021	2/28/2022	120	66					260	260
Skeleton/Fairchild	3/1/2021	3/15/2021	15	172					85	85
Skeleton/Fairchild	10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	172					854	854
Deer Creek	3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	201					403	403
Deer Creek	10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	201					998	998
Total									478	478

Reason: Range Improvement - Drought & Lack of Available Stock Water

Proposed Rotation

Pasture	Acres in Pasture	Date On	Date Off	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yrling	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Graves Allotment											
Graves		3/1/2021	2/28/2022	365	14					168	168
Skeleton/Fairchild Allotment											
North Skeleton		3/1/2021	3/15/2021	15	100					49	49
Off Forest		3/16/2021	9/30/2021	199							
North/South Skeleton		10/1/2021	10/31/2021	31	100					102	102
Outlaw/Fairchild/South Skeleton		11/1/2021	2/15/2022	107	100					352	352
North Skeleton		2/16/2022	2/28/2022	13	100					43	43
Deer Creek Allotment											
Upper South Dam		3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	14					28	28
Lower South Dam		3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	14					28	28
Woodchopper		3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	10					20	20
Long Canyon		3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	24					48	48
Rainbow		3/1/2021	4/30/2021	61	13					26	26
Off Forest		5/1/2021	9/30/2021	153							
Upper South Dam		10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	14					70	70
Lower South Dam		10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	14					70	70
Woodchopper		10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	10					50	50
Long Canyon		10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	24					119	119
Rainbow		10/1/2021	2/28/2022	151	13					65	65
Applied For									1236	1236	
Permitted									3969	3969	
Non-Use									478	478	

Actual dates of livestock movements will be dependent upon climatic conditions, when utilization levels are reached and time required to remove cattle. The reduced stocking is based on current conditions and lack of forage production due to the drought. If sufficient moisture and consequent forage regrowth occurs, a site visit may be conducted to determine if the remaining number of livestock, up to the full permitted numbers, can be placed on the allotment.

Term Grazing Permits are required to be stocked to 90% of capacity each grazing season, unless either Personal Convenience or Range Improvement Non-Use has been approved. Personal Convenience Non-Use may be taken for no more than 3 years consecutively and not more than 4 years out of any ten year period.

If you should need to deviate from this rotation schedule by more than two weeks, please notify this office in advance. Outlaw and South Skeleton pasture will be used in conjunction with one another from which trailing between these pastures will be permitted. The rotation and the stocking rate in each pasture, will be dependent on both water availability as well as forage availability. 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, unless specifically mentioned in the rotation schedule.

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

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 these allotments are considered critical habitat for the New Mexico ridgenose rattlesnake.

As always, please take the following precautions during your use of these allotments 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. 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.

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
	Water System	2020	Skeleton/Fairchild/Graves water system. Pipeline was installed.	
	Temporary water system	2020	A temporary, above ground pipeline was installed from the existing pipeline in South Skeleton Canyon to Ricky's Tank to provide livestock water there	

Current Year Improvement Schedule				
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
50192-2	Fence	2021	Western Forest Boundary Fence, improvement #'s 131008 (between sec.3&4), 131014, 134005, 133010 (see allotment map)	
131004	Water	2021	Ricky's Tank – 131004. Although this tank received maintenance recently, it is not catching water. You are being authorized to take heavy equipment on the original path to the tank to perform the maintenance. Must contact the range personnel here at the District before conducting this work.	
	Patterson Tank /Water	2021	When heavy equipment is mobilized to Ricky's Tank (see above) you are authorized to clean out Patterson Dam as well. Use caution to not damage the concrete dam.	
	Water	2021	Continue to install the Skeleton/Fairchild/Graves water system originating on private land that will supply water to the ridge between the Skeleton/Fairchild allotment and the Graves allotment. The pipeline has already been installed for this project. The Forest Service will attempt to provide the storage tanks and helicopter to deliver them to the site.	

VI. 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.

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.

Keep this copy of these Annual Operating Instructions for your personal files. Thank you.

Sincerely,



DOUG RUPPEL
District Ranger