

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

**Skeleton/Fairchild, Graves, Outlaw Mountain, and Deer Creek Allotments
2024 Grazing Year**

This letter will serve as your annual operating instructions for the **2024** 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	# Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Graves	3/1/2024	2/28/2025	365	14					168	168
Outlaw	3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61	66					132	132
Outlaw	11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120	66					260	260
Skeleton/Fairchild	3/1/2024	3/15/2024	15	272					134	134
Skeleton/Fairchild	10/1/2024	2/28/2025	151	272					1350	1350
Deer Creek	3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61	276					554	554
Deer Creek	11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120	276					1089	1089
Total									3688	3688

Non-Use

Allotment	Date On	Date Off	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Reason:										
Total										

Proposed Rotation

Pasture	Acres in Pasture	Date On	Date Off	# of Days	# of Cows w/calf	Dry Cows	# of Bulls	# Yrlng	Horse	AUMs	HMs
Graves Allotment											
Graves		3/1/2024	2/28/2025	365		14				168	168
Outlaw											
Outlaw		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		66				132	132
Off Forest		5/1/2024	10/31/2024	184							
Outlaw		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		66				260	260
Skeleton/Fairchild Allotment											
North Skeleton		3/1/2024	3/15/2024	15		272				134	134
Off Forest		3/16/2024	9/30/2024	199							
North/South Skeleton		10/1/2024	10/31/2024	31		272				277	277
Outlaw/Fairchild/South Skeleton		11/1/2024	2/15/2025	107		272				957	957
North Skeleton		2/16/2025	2/28/2025	13		272				116	116
Deer Creek Allotment											
Upper South Dam		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		50				100	100
Lower South Dam		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		50				100	100
Woodchopper		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		40				80	80
Long Canyon		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		88				176	176
Rainbow		3/1/2024	4/30/2024	61		48				96	96
Off Forest		5/1/2024	10/31/2024	184							
Upper South Dam		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		50				197	197
Lower South Dam		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		50				197	197
Woodchopper		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		40				158	158
Long Canyon		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		88				347	347
Rainbow		11/1/2024	2/28/2025	120		48				189	189
Applied For									3688	3688	
Permitted									3969	3969	

Actual dates of livestock movements will be dependent upon climatic conditions, when utilization levels are reached, and time required to remove cattle.

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 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.

Please be sure to not exceed the permitted number of livestock.

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 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	2023	General Fence Maintenance	
	Road	2023	Road Maintenance	

Current Year Improvement Schedule				
Permit Mod #	Improvement Type / ID #	Completion Date	Description/Comments	Status Done /Date
50192-2	Fence		Western Forest Boundary Fence, improvement #'s 131008 (between sec.3&4), 131014, 134005, 133010 (see allotment map)	
131004	Water		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		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.	

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