



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Tonto Basin
Ranger
District

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File Code: 2210

Date: December 12, 2022

George Allan and Linda Ewing
Tonto Basin Allotment
P.O. Box 336
Tonto Basin, AZ 85553

Dear George and Linda:

The following are your 2023 annual operating instructions (AOI) for the Tonto Basin grazing allotment. These instructions have been developed from collaboration with you and in consideration of Forest Service Handbook 2209.13, Tonto National Forest Plan, associated National Environmental Policy Act analysis, Allotment Management Plan, and available information describing range conditions.

Authorized Use

The following table describes authorized livestock numbers per grazing unit, anticipated use dates, and proposed monitoring dates. Please request a change in this schedule well in advance of the proposed dates. Please, maintain and submit records that indicate your compliance to permitted use.

Grazing Unit	Dates of Use	Tentative Monitoring Date	Authorized Livestock	Rationale/Comments
Mud Springs Oak Creek	Current-January 31 st 2023	February 7 th	230 Cows 20 Bulls 193 Yearlings	
Cline Mesa Bouquet	February 1 st May 31 st	June 7 th	230 Cows 20 Bulls 193 Yearlings	Yearlings will be removed by May 31 st
Methodist Lake	June 1 st September 30 th	October 9 th	230 Cows 20 Bulls	
Mud Springs Oak Creek	October 1 st Next AOI	Next AOI	230 Cow 20 Bulls	

Monitoring:

Upland utilization is measured at the end of the growing season in key areas for key forage species. This information, along with vegetation condition, forage plant production and vigor, soil and watershed condition, will be used to make informed management recommendations concerning pasture moves and stocking rates.

Riparian utilization in key reaches is measured during growing season to verify residual vegetation is present for streambank protection during flow events.



Grazing intensity will be evaluated during the growing season to make necessary changes needed for plant development and recovery.

Vegetative Use Guidelines:

Grazing will be managed so conservative use levels are achieved over the long-term in pasture key areas. It is your responsibility as permittee to take action so that livestock grazing does not exceed vegetative use thresholds. Please arrange for an allotment inspection if seasonal vegetative use of available forage approaches these thresholds.

Vegetation	Use Threshold
Upland herbaceous species	30-40% of current year's growth
Upland browse species	50% of current year's growth
Riparian herbaceous species	Limited to 40% of plant species biomass and maintain 6-8 inches of stubble height on deergrass
Riparian woody species	Limited to 50% of leaders browsed on upper 1/3 of plants up to 6 feet tall
Streambanks (if applicable)	Limited to less than 20% alteration of alterable streambanks
Mexican Spotted Owl PAC's (where applicable)	20% optimum-40% maximum
Annual Grasses	50% of current year's growth

Range Improvement Maintenance:

All range improvements must be maintained to Forest Service standards before cattle will be allowed to enter the units. You must receive verbal concurrence for each project before work can begin except routine maintenance (e.g. cleaning dirt tanks, maintaining fence, restoring pipe). It is your responsibility to be aware of and comply with fire restriction.

The following table describes 2023 proposed and authorized range improvement projects.

Pasture	Location	Description of Work	Clearances Needed
Lake Pasture	Shipping Corrals	Proposed Construction of new fence off Shipping corrals to create a holding pasture	Need archeological and Biological Clearances
Bathtub Pasture	Lower Oak Creek and Greenback	Construct new Riparian Fence	Need archeological
Cline Pasture	Twin Buttes	Proposed 2 new trough locations off existing pipeline	Need archeological and Biological Clearances

Salting:

In most cases, salt must be located no closer than ¼ mile from streams, rivers, riparian areas, trails, and known archaeological sites.

Supplements and Attractants

Protein blocks, nutritional supplement, and other attractant may be authorized.

Supplemental Feeding:

No supplemental feeding is authorized.

Weeds

Invasive plants threaten ecosystem health and grazing resources. Please assist us in preventing the introduction and spread of invasive plants.

If you have any questions, please contact Eric Hoskins, Rangeland Management Specialist, at (602) 225-5332.

Sincerely,

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[Redacted Signature]

JEREMY PLAIN
District Ranger

CC: Eric Hoskins
Crystal Martinez
Ina Yazzie