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**Date:** February 14, 2023

This document serves as your 2023 Annual Operating Instructions for the Tule Allotment.

**I. AUTHORIZED LIVESTOCK NUMBERS/PERIOD OF USE**

Your 2023 Authorized Use Request has been approved and you are authorized the following Livestock Numbers and Periods of Use:

20 Horses (Adult or Yearlings)	February 1, 2023 to December 18, 2023
300 Cattle (Cow/ Calf)	May 15, 2023 to December 18, 2023

The 2023 authorized livestock numbers and the authorized period of use were determined based on past stocking rates and allotment inspections the past seasons on the Tule Allotment.

Any changes to the 2023 authorized livestock numbers will require that you file an additional Authorize Use Request. Be advised that the Forest Service will need a minimum of 45 days to assess resource conditions and process a supplemental grazing bill for additional livestock. Please contact your Rangeland Management Specialist prior to making any decisions regarding increased livestock numbers.

**II. GRAZING SCHEDULE**

The following is the planned grazing sequence for the summer 2023 grazing period. The pasture move dates shown are an estimate and may need to be amended based on actual conditions.



Pasture	Planned Graze Period
May	02/01 – 05/31 (20 horses)
May	05/15 – 05/31 (300 cow/calf)
Tule/Lee	06/01 – 08/31 (10 horses & 300 cow/calf)
White horse Trap	06/01 – 08/31 (10 horses)
White Horse Pasture	09/01 – 10/01 (20 horses & 300 cow/calf)
Sycamore	10/02- 11/15 (20 horses & 300 cow/calf)
Pocket/Wagner	11/16 – 12/18 (20 horses & 300 cow/calf)

\* Pine pasture rested for the 2023 grazing season

Changes from the grazing schedule will be made only with Forest Service approval. The planned use period in a pasture may be shortened or lengthened depending on forage availability and utilization in key areas. Livestock pasture moves will be completed within a ten (10) day period and livestock will be actively herded from one pasture to another. It is imperative that once a pasture move occurs, the livestock remain within the designated pasture. For various reasons (i.e. pasture gates left open, cattleguards not maintained, cut fences, etc.), cattle may stray from the designated pasture. Preventing livestock from grazing adjacent allotments or your allotment's rested pastures is your responsibility.

### III. DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

Drought is an inevitable occurrence in the southwestern United States. Both the Forest Service and grazing permittees must plan for drought as a normal part of management. During periods of drought, the following management actions may be necessary:

1. **Stocking levels may need to be reduced.** Reductions may be necessary prior to the permitted season of use and/or during the permitted season of use.
2. **Season of use may need to be shortened.** Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, a reduced grazing season may be necessary.
3. **Pasture use periods may need to be shortened.** Pastures will not be re-grazed during the same grazing season and this may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
4. **Utilization and/or seasonal utilization (grazing intensity) standards may need to be reduced.** Depending on the severity of the drought and the stocking level, reduced utilization standards will likely result in shortened pasture use periods and may ultimately result in an early exit from the allotment.
5. **Lack of livestock water, or poor distribution of livestock water, may result in reduced pasture/allotment use periods.** Depending on forage conditions, this effect may be mitigated by hauling water to temporary livestock watering facilities.

6. **Allotment Management Plan direction for pastures requiring rest or deferment will be followed.** Livestock use of planned rested pastures due to drought will not be authorized

#### **IV. GRAZING STRATEGY**

Graze livestock in a rest-rotation grazing system for the grazing period. The management of livestock pasture moves in this allotment will continue to be based upon seasonal utilization guidelines and allowable forage utilization standards.

#### **V. ALLOWABLE UTILIZATION STANDARDS**

##### Upland and Non-Riparian Areas

Utilization is defined as the proportion or degree of current year's forage production by weight that is consumed or destroyed by animals. It is a comparison of the amount of herbage left with the amount of herbage produced during the year. Utilization will be measured at the end of growing season when the total annual production can be accounted for and the effects of grazing in the whole management unit can be assessed.

The maximum allowable level of utilization on herbaceous and non-riparian woody vegetation will be 40% in all key area grasslands and 20% in the upland. This allowable use level is the utilization level permitted by both livestock and wildlife. The allowable use is 30% within the May pasture.

#### **VI. SEASONAL UTILIZATION**

Seasonal utilization is defined as the amount of herbage removed through grazing or trampling during the grazing period. Seasonal utilization will be measured at the end of each pasture's livestock grazing period. The seasonal utilization guideline will be the primary factor in determining when livestock need to move to the next pasture; but other factors such as climatic conditions, opportunity for plant growth, and previous year's utilization level will also be considered. Annual reductions in the seasonal utilization guideline may be made based on resource conditions.

A light to conservative seasonal utilization guideline of up to 40% will be used within grassland areas of grazed pastures on the allotment and a light use of up to 20% will be used in the uplands of grazed pastures on the allotment.

#### **VII. RESOURCE MONITORING**

##### Forage Utilization

Forage utilization within each pasture will be monitored and the allowable utilization standards (section V) and the seasonal utilization guidelines (section VI) will be enforced. This may result in earlier pasture moves than indicated in the Grazing Schedule (section II).

Forage utilization monitoring will occur at locations within pastures using the “key area” concept. Key areas are defined as “...a portion of range, which because of its location, grazing or browsing value, and/or use, serve as an indicative sample of range conditions, trend, or degree of use seasonally. A key area guides the general management of the entire area of which it is a part.” Key areas will generally have the following characteristics: they will be approximately 20 to 500 acres in size; they will be located on productive soils with slopes less than 15%; they will have a plant community that is representative of the larger area; and they will generally be located 0.25 to 1.0 miles away from livestock water sources.

Forage utilization monitoring and its specific application to your allotment should be discussed with your Rangeland Management Specialist. Producer participation in utilization monitoring is encouraged.

#### Producer Monitoring

The producer will monitor and document the following items on the enclosed Actual Use and Forage Utilization Monitoring Form: 1) Actual Grazing Period; 2) Actual Livestock Numbers; and 3) Average Utilization of all forage species at two different time periods: Just prior to livestock entering the pasture, and immediately after livestock leave the pasture. **It is very important that this monitoring be completed during the time frames specified, and that the Forage Utilization Monitoring Form is submitted to your Rangeland Management Specialist at the end of the 2023 grazing period.**

### **VIII. MITIGATION MEASURES FOR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES**

The following mitigation measures are required for threatened and endangered species on the summer portion of the Tule allotment.

#### Mexican Spotted Owl

Livestock grazing or livestock management activities will occur within Protected Activity Centers (PACs), but no human disturbance or construction activities associated with the livestock grazing operation will occur in PACs during the breeding season (March 1 through August 31).

Continue to monitor grazing use by cattle and wildlife in the ponderosa pine/gamble oak vegetation type and specifically within PACs. Utilization will not exceed 20% in the PAC's or restricted habitat.

In addition to the Salting and Protein Block practices identified in Section IX, the following additional guidelines are required within Mexican spotted owl habitat:

1. Do not place salt, mineral block, or supplements within riparian areas, mountain meadows, or non-riparian drainages in ponderosa pine.

2. Do not place salt, mineral block, or supplements within spotted owl PACs. Follow best management practices associated with watershed protection. Livestock distribution techniques such as salting and herding should be used.

## **IX. RANGE IMPROVEMENTS**

You must contact your Rangeland Management Specialist at least 60 days prior for work to begin to obtain necessary clearances and a letter of authorization.

### Construction of New Structural Range Improvements

There are no new structural range improvements scheduled for your allotment this year.

### Removal of Structural Range Improvements

There are no structural range improvements scheduled for removal this year.

### Existing Structural Range Improvements

Structural range improvements assigned to you for maintenance are listed in your Term Grazing Permit and are also identified on the allotment map. These improvements are to be fully maintained annually to comply with permit requirements (Part 2, Section 8i). Any maintenance you perform must conform to the standards specified by your District Rangeland Management Specialist. The grazing permittee is responsible for all maintenance materials, supplies and equipment necessary to properly maintain all range structural improvements.

Dirt tank cleaning has been identified as a maintenance need this year. Please work with your Rangeland Management Specialist to identify tanks that need to be cleaned. Archaeology clearances and approval will need to be completed prior to initiating any work.

## **X. SALTING, SUPPLEMENTING AND MINERAL BLOCK PRACTICES**

Salting and mineral block for livestock is allowed (to strategically manage livestock distribution and forage use) as follows:

1. Place supplements on previously disturbed areas (i.e., borrow pits) or natural bedrock outcrops when possible (supplement sites).
2. Locate supplement sites 0.25 mile or more from waters and key areas except where prior written permission has been obtained from the District Ranger.
3. Locate supplement sites where forage is abundant and utilized less than average.
4. Limit supplement types to non-energy feeds such as salt, protein, and mineral blocks.

### **Supplementing with hay:**

This practice may be approved for use on all Kaibab National Forest allotments provided the following criteria are being met:

1. A deficiency supplement during sustained unusual heavy snow/ice events. This criterion is a Best Management Practice (BMP).
2. Only certified weed-free hay may be authorized to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. This criterion is a BMP.
3. Supplemental feeding will not be used in place of forage if forage runs low within a pasture. This criterion is a BMP.
4. This practice will only be allowed for a specific location and time under the authority of the District Ranger (FSM 2200 Range Management Chapter\_Zero Code-2204.3 Item 2).

## **XI. PORTABLE WATER HAULING**

Temporary sites for portable haul water may be needed and should be used as necessary to assist in livestock distribution. The following requirements will apply to portable haul water locations:

1. Coordinate with the District Rangeland Management Specialist to identify portable water haul locations for individual pastures prior to the grazing period.
2. To aid in livestock distribution, the portable water haul locations should generally be in areas of light forage utilization.
3. Portable water hauls will not be located in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
4. Portable water haul locations will be moved when the desired forage utilization levels have been reached.
5. Portable haul water storage tanks and troughs will be removed when livestock leave the pasture.

## **XII. FIRE**

Please use caution during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles must be equipped with an axe, shovel, and water bucket. All open camp and branding fires require a ten-foot fire ring cleared down to mineral soil.

During periods of critical fire danger the Forest Supervisor may declare a Red Flag Alert or issue other special orders. Under these conditions, the building or use of fires, the use of power saws, heave equipment, ATVs and other motorized equipment may be prohibited on Forest Service land. All Federal, State and Local fire restrictions and regulations must be observed.

Report all fires to the Williams Ranger District Office at (928) 635-5600 or to the Kaibab National Forest Supervisors Office at (928) 635-8200.

Cooperation in the reporting, prevention, and suppression of fires will be expected as specified in Part 2, section 10 of your Term Grazing Permit.

### **XIII. MOTOR VEHICLE USE/RESTRICTIONS**

On July 9, 2010, the Kaibab National Forest began implementation of the Travel Management Rule. The Travel Management Rule requires the designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use and these routes are identified on the Motor Vehicle Use Map. Implementation of the Travel Management Rule requires active management of all motorized use, including use related to permitted grazing activities. Motorized travel off the designated road system, including off-road access, by grazing permit holders will be based on the need to carry out required management practices necessary to comply with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit. Examples of required management practices include but are not limited to: the repair and maintenance of structural range improvements; transport and placement of mineral and protein supplement; herding of livestock; and tending to sick or injured animals. Legitimate motorized use off the designated road system, including off-road access, for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit will be authorized as follows:

1. **For motorized use with ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles, and full-size pickup or smaller vehicles (curb weight less than 8,000 pounds):** Grazing permittee must obtain a grazing allotment specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which is necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.
2. **For motorized use with larger vehicles (curb weight greater than 8,000 pounds or larger than a full-size pickup) or any heavy equipment:** Grazing permittee must obtain a site-specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit. Motorized vehicle use off the designated road system will be limited to only that use which is necessary for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.
3. To request site specific Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit, the grazing permittee must provide their Rangeland Management Specialist with the project details a minimum of 30 days prior to the proposed starting date for the permit.

4. A copy of the approved Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit must be with the vehicle operator while operating the vehicle off the designated road system.
5. A Permit Placard must be attached to all permitted vehicles while operating off the designated road system.
6. Off-Highway vehicles (ATVs, UTVs, and motorcycles) used for conducting activities required under the Term Grazing Permit must be licensed and permitted in accordance with Arizona State law.
7. The Motor Vehicle Use Map for the Kaibab National Forest identifies certain roads as “Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only”. These roads are open only to motor vehicles licensed under State law for general operation on all public roads within the state. Grazing permittees operating motor vehicles on these roads must comply with the legal requirements. Operating a motor vehicle off the designated road system to avoid the legal requirements of “Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only” is not permitted.
8. Grazing permittees will utilize motorized vehicles off the designated road system in a manner that will not result in damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, wildlife, heritage, or other forest resources.
9. Failure to comply with the conditions of the Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit may result in the immediate cancellation of the Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit and may result in the issuance of a Notice of Non-Compliance for violation of the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit
10. Grazing permittees that do not obtain a Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit are required to operate motorized vehicles only on the designated road system. Operating a motorized vehicle off the designated road system without a valid Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit will result in the immediate issuance of a Notice of Non-Compliance for violating the terms and conditions of your Term Grazing Permit (Part 2, Section 8a). A Notice of Non-Compliance may result in Term Grazing Permit suspension or cancellation proceedings.

**XIV. Permittee Review**

On February 13, 2023; Shai Schendel had a meeting with permittee to develop and discuss the 2023 Annual Operating Instructions for the Tule Allotment. You and the ranch manager have reviewed and agreed with these instructions.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rangeland Management Specialist Shai Schendel at (928) 635-5623 or [shai.schendel@usda.gov](mailto:shai.schendel@usda.gov).

Sincerely,

*/s/ Debra Mollet*  
DEBRA MOLLET  
District Ranger