



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Red Rock
Ranger District

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File Code: 2230

Date: August 27, 2025

Brett Blum
V Bar V Ranch Agricultural Research Station
4005 North Forest Road 618
Rimrock, AZ 86335

Dear Mr. Arnold,

This document serves as your 2025 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Walker Basin Allotment. This AOI is part of your Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 2, section 8(a).

I. AUTHORIZED LIVESTOCK NUMBERS/PERIOD OF USE/APPROVED NON-USE

Your 2025 Authorized Use Request has been approved, and you are authorized the following Livestock Numbers and Periods of Use:

125 Cow/calf	06/01 - 02/28/2026
4 Bulls	06/01 - 02/28/2026

II. GRAZING SCHEDULE

The following is the planned grazing sequence for the 2025 grazing year. The pasture move dates shown are an estimate and may need to be amended based on actual conditions.

Pasture Name	Planned Grazing Period	Livestock Numbers
Walker Basin Headquarters	6/01- 8/31	121 cow/calf pair
Mahan Private	8/31 - 9/1	121 cow/calf pair
Mahan Park	9/2 - 9/20	121 cow/calf pair
Willow	9/21 - 10/1	121 cow/calf pair
Steer	10/2 - 10/16	121 cow/calf pair
Summer Heifer	10/17 - 10/29	121 cow/calf pair
East Snake Ridge	10/30 - 11/10	121 cow/calf pair
Middle Snake Ridge	11/11- 11/23	121 cow/calf pair
West Snake Ridge	Trail Thru	121 cow/calf pair
Sugar Loaf	11/27 - 12/11	121 cow/calf pair
Twin Buttes	12/12 - 12/24	121 cow/calf pair
Cedar Flats E	12/25 - 1/8/2026	121 cow/calf pair
Cedar Flats B	1/9 - 1/23/2026	121 cow/calf pair
Shipping Lane 2	1/24 - 2/7/2026	121 cow/calf pair
Shipping Lane 1	2/8 - 2/22/2026	121 cow/calf pair
HQ Shipping	2/23 - 2/28/2026	121 cow/calf pair
Bull Herd		
Underpass/ Mahan private	9/1- 11/01/2026	4 bulls



Gypsum/ Lower HQ	11/01- 2/28/2026	4 bulls
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2025 Rested Upper Country Pastures: Harris Park, Cedar Flats F, C, & A, Walker Basin, Horse Knoll, Banfield, Pine, Wildcat, Big Hill

Changes to 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 five (5) 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.

Increases in the 2025 authorized livestock numbers will require that you file an additional Authorized 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.

Preventing livestock from grazing adjacent allotments, your allotment's rested pasture, or re-grazing previously used pastures is the permittee's 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

The management of livestock pasture moves will be based on both a plant forage phenology scheme of management and proper allowable grazing use. Pasture rotations would be planned at the onset of spring but may be modified later in response to environmental changes, such as drought or a wet season.

Livestock pasture moves will be completed within a five (5) day period, where feasible, and livestock will be actively herded from one pasture to the other. Once a pasture move occurs, cattle are not authorized to graze outside the newly occupied pasture. In the event cattle escape the assigned pasture (i.e. pasture gates left open, cattle guards become filled, cut fences, etc.), the permittee will return the cattle to the correct pasture in a timely manner. Preventing livestock from grazing adjacent allotments, your allotment's rested pastures, or from re-grazing previously used pastures is the permittees responsibility.

Permitted livestock (cow/calf/heifer/bull) will be run together as a single herd until the bulls are removed from the cow herd while utilizing a deferred rotation. Gates are to be left open at water-lots when cattle leave a pasture if not used by the neighboring pasture.

V. ALLOWABLE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

Grazing Intensity

Grazing intensity is defined as the amount of herbage removed through grazing or trampling during the grazing period. Grazing intensity would be managed to allow for the physiological needs of plants, as a result, the planned use period indicated in the Grazing Schedule (section II) in a pasture may be lengthened or shortened depending on forage intensity in key areas.

Forage Utilization

Utilization is defined as the proportion or degree of current year's forage production that is consumed or destroyed by animals (including insects). It is a comparison of the amount of herbage left compared with the amount of herbage produced during the year. Utilization is measured at the end of the growing season when the total annual production can be accounted for and the effects of grazing in the whole management unit can be assessed. This allowable use level includes both livestock and wildlife. If use levels in key areas exceed the maximum allowable use before livestock enter a pasture, the pasture will not be used.

Upland areas

A maximum allowable intensity/utilization level in upland areas is 40% on key species.

A maximum allowable intensity/utilization level in impaired soil pastures is 30% of key species include pastures west of Horse Knoll and West Snake Ridge.

Riparian Areas

A maximum allowable utilization level of 20% on key woody species is acceptable if all three classes of riparian vegetation are present. If the mid-age class is absent, the maximum allowable utilization level on key woody species will be limited to 5%.

VI. RESOURCE MONITORING

Forage Utilization

Forage utilization within each pasture will be monitored and the allowable utilization standards (section V) will be enforced. This may result in earlier pasture moves than indicated in the Grazing Schedule (section II). Forage utilization monitoring and its specific application to your allotment should be discussed with your Rangeland Management Specialist. Permittee participation in utilization monitoring is encouraged.

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.

Permittee Monitoring

The permittee will document the following items on the enclosed Actual Use Form during the 2025 grazing year: 1) Actual Grazing Period; 2) Actual Livestock Numbers.

VII. MITIGATION MEASURES FOR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

There are two (2) grazing mitigation documents that include grazing mitigation measures for the Mexican spotted owl and the Chiricahua leopard frog. Please review and familiarize yourself with these required grazing measures; Forest Service personnel will field check your compliance with these mitigation requirements.

VIII. RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Existing Structural Range Improvement/Maintenance

Range improvements assigned to you for maintenance have been identified in red on the permit maps of your term grazing permit. 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.

The Forest may replace range structural improvement materials and/or supplies at the end of the improvement's life; when maintenance and repair is no longer feasible to keep the improvement properly maintained and functioning.

New fence projects will be implemented only with prior approval and after a successful completion /clearance of both biological and archeological surveys from Forest Service personnel.

New fencing will be done to USFS standards and guidelines.

Please note that you must notify the District Rangeland Management Specialist at least 60 days prior to beginning any maintenance work that requires the use of heavy equipment (i.e. maintenance of earthen stock tanks).

Scheduled for Projects/Maintenance:

Project Location	Project
Allotment boundary	Repair fencing
Pasture boundary	Repair fencing
Cedar Flats	Removal of electrical fencing and Implementation of virtual fencing as a redundancy

IX. SALTING AND PROTEIN BLOCK PRACTICES

Proper salt and protein block location can be a good tool to aid in livestock distribution, and they will be used in a manner to spread livestock utilization throughout the pasture. The following guidelines will be used when placing salt and protein blocks:

1. In general, salt and protein blocks should not be placed within ¼ mile of water.
2. Salt and protein blocks will not be placed in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species. If applicable, areas of sensitive plant or animal species will be identified by your Rangeland Management Specialist and included in each year's AOL.
3. No more than three blocks (50 lb. blocks) of salt/protein will be placed at any location at any one time.
4. Salt/protein will not be placed at the same location twice during the same grazing season.
5. The use of portable salt/protein block containers is encouraged but not mandatory.

X. 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. Generally, portable water haul locations will not be located at sites used in previous years.
4. Portable water hauls will not be located in areas of depleted range, erosive soils, or sensitive plant or animal species.
5. Portable water haul locations will be moved when the desired forage utilization levels have been reached.

6. Portable haul water storage tanks and troughs will be removed when livestock leave the pasture.

XI. FIRE

Please use caution during all ranch activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles should be equipped with a firefighting tool (shovel, axe, pulaski, etc.) and water or an ABC dry chemical fire extinguisher. 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, heavy 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 Flagstaff Ranger District Office at (928) 526-0866 or to the Coconino National Forest Supervisors Office at (928) 526-0600.

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

XII. MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS

On May 1, 2012, the Coconino 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.

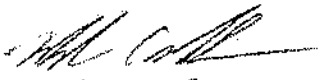
4. A copy of the approved Restricted Road, Trail and Off-Road Administrative Use Permit must be with the vehicle operator while operating the vehicle off the designated road system. A Permit Placard must be attached to all permitted vehicles while operating off the designated road system.
5. Off-Highway 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.
6. The Motor Vehicle Use Map for the Coconino National Forest identifies certain roads as "Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only".
7. 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

XIII. PERMITTEE REVIEW

On August 5th, 2025, Noelle Resignolo met with University of Arizona Staff Ken Johnson, Brett Blum, and Ali Baxter to discuss the 2025 Annual Operating Instructions for the Walker Basin allotment. They have reviewed and agreed with these instructions.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss anything further, contact Range Technician Noelle Resignolo at (928) 203-7517 or email at tara.resignolo@usda.gov.

Sincerely,



acting for

ALEXANDER SCHLUETER
District Ranger

