



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Mogollon Rim
Ranger District

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File Code: 2230

Date: August 19, 2003

Robert Randall
P.O. Box 96
Pine, AZ 85544

Dear Mr. Randall:

This letter comprises your 2003 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). This letter will also document your use of Willow Valley Allotment in 2002.

In 2002, you applied for and were billed for 70 head of cattle and 3 horses from June 1 to October 31. Partial nonuse was approved for resource protection. You turned out 70 head of cattle and 3 horses on Willow Valley from May 20 to July 24. Due to the severe drought situation, these cattle were removed from the Willow Valley Allotment and moved to the Walnut Canyon Allotment on the Mormon Lake Ranger District. On October 1, the cattle returned to the Willow Valley Allotment, and moved off the allotment on October 31.

In 2003, you applied for and were billed for 80 head of cattle and 3 horses. Partial Nonuse is approved for resource protection. You will follow the schedule below in 2003.

<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Dates of Use</i>
Antelope ("A" in AMP)	May 19 – June 25
D7 ("C" in AMP)	June 26 – August 2
Mud Lake ("B" in AMP)	August 3– September 2
Deer ("D" in AMP)	September 3 – October 3
Randall	October 4 – October 19

You will not be able to use the V-V pasture (Walker Basin Allotment) just north of the Randall Pasture in 2003. The horses will be grazed on the private land in Willow Valley and the adjoining Randall Pasture.

Exact move dates will be dependent on early forage conditions and on the pattern and amount of summer rains. Thank you for your cooperation as we recover from the severe drought of 2002.

Any changes in the grazing schedule will need prior approval by the District Ranger. If you see a need to modify the grazing schedule, please notify this office at least 10 working days before the planned date of moving.

The Riparian pasture will be rested in 2003. It will be necessary to maintain the fences this year to prevent cattle from using the Riparian pasture.



To monitor forage utilization, we (FS and permittee) installed cages in riparian, mountain grassland, and Ponderosa pine key areas in the spring of 1998. The cages were placed in key areas on productive soils, on level to intermediate slopes, and where possible 1/4 to 1 mile from water. The cages will be used to determine forage production on the key areas and as a base line to determine utilization on other areas of the allotment. The key areas are identified in the Forest Plan as MA 3, 9, and 12.

You will be required to document actual grazing dates for each pasture and to monitor, under Forest Service direction, forage utilization in each pasture (before and after livestock use, and at the end of the growing season). A copy of the monitoring form is attached. It is important that these forms be returned to the Forest Service at the end of the grazing season.

The enclosure *Mitigation for the Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon on Grazing Allotments for Annual Operating Plans* has been made a part of the AOI, and must be adhered to in the locations specified in the following table during the breeding season (March 1 to August 31).

Salt and/or mineral supplements will be used to help distribute livestock. All salt and mineral supplements will be placed at least 1/4 mile away from water unless agreed to in writing by the District Ranger.

Mitigation For Mexican Spotted Owls and Peregrine Falcons. No activities (such as gathering, salting, etc.) allowed in: (as specified in the Mitigation enclosure)

Pasture	Mitigation
Antelope (A)	<i>No activities allowed (as specified in the mitigation enclosure) within 1/4 mile of Antelope Draw, from Antelope Draw Tank west to the pasture boundary</i>
D7 (C)	<i>No activities allowed (as specified in the mitigation enclosure) within 1/4 mile of Antelope Draw</i>
Mud Lake (B)	<i>No activities allowed (as specified in the mitigation enclosure) south of an east-west line from the southern boundary of Clear Creek Pine Unit #1 west to the pasture boundary</i>

The attached document *Mitigation for Chiricahua Leopard Frogs* is part of the 2003 AOI for the Willow Valley Allotment. You are expected to follow this mitigation during your time on the allotment.

We will contact you if we have the materials available to replace the electric fence dividing the allotment down the middle on a north-south line. You will provide the labor to construct the

fence, if we can provide the material. All range improvements assigned to you on the Willow Valley allotment should be maintained in good working condition.

Any maintenance or improvement work on the allotment should be coordinated with the District Range Staff so that the appropriate clearances can be completed prior to actually starting the project.

Caution needs to be used during any activities that could potentially start a fire. All ranch vehicles need to be equipped with the following: Water bucket, shovel, and axe. All open camp and branding fires will require a fire ring down to mineral soil cleared at least 10 feet in diameter.

All internal combustion engine equipped tools and equipment require an inspection prior to use on National Forest lands. All state and local fire regulations and restrictions will be observed. Report any fires to the Mogollon Rim Ranger District at 477-2255, or 354-2216, or the Coconino National Forest fire dispatcher at 527-0600.

The Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit, as provided in Part 2, Section 8(a). If you fail to comply with any of the terms and conditions specified in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of your Term Grazing Permit, we may suspend or cancel your permit, in whole or in part, after written notice. This is found in Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit. The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the LMP.

The Annual Operating Instructions have been reviewed by District Wildlife biologists and found to be consistent with the Endangered Species Act, as amended, and with all conditions agreed to in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Annual Operating Instructions are appealable and subject to review under 36 CFR 251.82 (a) (3) Grazing and livestock permits issued under 36 CFR part 222, subpart A. Appealable decisions apply to written decisions of Forest Service line officers related to issuance, denial, or administration of written instructions to occupy and use National Forest System lands.

If you have any questions, please contact Jerry Gonzales at (354-2216).

Sincerely,
/Larry G. Sears/

LARRY G. SEARS
District Ranger

cc: Rodger Zanotto, S.O.

MONITORING FORM

Allotment Name: Willow Valley

Year: 2003

Pasture Name	Graze Period Planned	Graze Period Actual	Livestock Numbers	*Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area	LMP Mgmt Area
Antelope	5/19-6/25		80							
D7	6/25 - 8/2		80							
Mud Lake	8/3 - 9/2		80							
Deer	9/3 - 10/3		80							
Randall	10/4 - 10/19		80							

*D = Dormant S = Slow Growth F = Fast Growth

**N = No use (0-10%) L = Light use (11-25%) M = Moderate Use (26-50%)
 H = Heavy Use (51%-70%) E = Extreme Use (71+%)

Key Area Monitoring

Year: 2003

Pasture Name	Graze Period Planned	Graze Period Actual	Livestock Numbers	*Plant Growth	**Before Livestock	**After Livestock	**End of Growing Season	**Key Species	% Use on Key Area	LMP Mgmt Area
D7	6/26 - 8/2		80							MA9
Riparian	N/A		0							MA12
Mud Lake	8/3 - 9/2		80							MA3

MA9 (Mtn Grassland) MA12 (Riparian Meadow) MA3 (Ponderosa pine)

*D = Dormant S = Slow Growth F = Fast Growth

**N = No use (0-10%) L = Light use (11-25%) M = Moderate Use (26-50%)
 H = Heavy Use (51%-70%) E = Extreme Use (71+%)

Mitigation for the Mexican Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon On Grazing Allotments for Annual Operating Plans

The following mitigation measures would apply for Buck Springs, Bar-T-Bar, Willow Valley, Baker Lake/Calf Pen, Apache-Maid, Beaver Creek, Lost Eden, Fossil Creek, Buckhorn, 13 Mile Rock, Walker Basin, and Hackberry/Pivot Rock Allotments.

The purpose of the mitigation measures is to improve and protect habitat for prey species such as birds and small mammals in sensitive areas, and to protect nesting birds from disturbance associated with gathering or construction activities. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Follow these guidelines to meet the intent of the grazing guidelines listed in the Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan :
 - A. Continue to monitor grazing use by livestock and wildlife in "key grazing" areas such as riparian areas (MA12), meadows (MA9), pine/oak types (MA3), and aspen (MA5). If cattle show an increasing utilization trend, then change management strategies to reduce the trend. If wild ungulates show an increasing utilization trend, the Forest Service will work with the Game and Fish Department to reduce this trend.
 - B. Continue to implement and enforce grazing utilization standards to attain good to excellent range conditions in "key areas" over time.
 - C. Continue to restore good conditions to degraded riparian communities by maintaining or promoting three age classes in woody vegetation. If the mid-age class is absent, 5% utilization or less is required to promote three structural stages. If all three classes are present, utilization of 20% or less of woody vegetation is acceptable.
2. To reduce animal concentrations and trampling of vegetation which may impact prey species forage and cover, follow these guidelines for placing salt, mineral blocks or food supplements.
 - A. Do not place these items in riparian areas, mountain meadows, or non riparian drainages in ponderosa pine unless being used for a watershed restoration project.
 - B. Do not place these items in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine falcon nesting areas. The attached map shows areas (shown as mitigation) where salt, supplemental feeding, or mineral blocks should not occur.
 - C. Rotate salt and mineral supplement sites regularly.
3. To eliminate potentially disturbing activities in spotted owl habitat or near peregrine nesting areas during their breeding season, do not allow the following types of activities in areas displayed in red on the map between March 1 and August 31 without prior approval of the Range Staff.
 - A. Spring branding or fall gathering.
 - B. Construction activities such as; new construction of fences, corrals, or buildings, or cleaning or construction of tanks.

Mitigation For Chiricahua Leopard Frogs

Live fish, crayfish, bullfrogs, leopard frogs, salamanders, or other aquatic organisms shall not be moved among livestock tanks or other aquatic sites.

If a site is identified as occupied by Chiricahua leopard frogs, water shall not be hauled to the site from another aquatic site or tank that supports leopard frogs, bullfrogs, crayfish, or fish.

If Chiricahua leopard frogs are found on the allotment, the permittee shall be required to clean any equipment, boots, etc. used at an aquatic site and treat with a 10 percent bleach solution, or allow such equipment, boots, etc. to dry thoroughly, before using the same equipment, boots, etc. at another aquatic site on the allotment.

All ranch hands, construction personnel, and others implementing the proposed action shall be given a copy of these terms and conditions, and informed of the need to comply with them.

At least 60 days prior to maintaining or cleaning out livestock tanks, the permittee shall inform the Coconino of planned activities. The Coconino shall survey the tank for Chiricahua leopard frogs¹ and if frogs are found, shall work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop and implement a plan to minimize take of frogs. Measures to minimize take should include salvage and temporary holding of frogs, limiting disturbance and work areas to the minimum area practicable, leaving stands of emergent vegetation in place, and/or measures to minimize the likelihood of disease transmission. Plans to minimize take shall be approved by the USFWS.

¹ Surveys shall include a night visit to prospective habitat during which all or at least 1,200 feet of the best habitat along creeks and the entire perimeter of tanks are searched for frogs. Surveys shall be carried out with flashlights/headlamps, and a dip net shall be used to sample for tadpoles and frogs concealed in undercut banks or at the base of emergent vegetation. Surveyors shall also listen for the distinctive call of the Chiricahua leopard frog (Davidson 1996) and watch for egg masses. Surveys shall be carried out from April-September when frogs are most active.
