



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service Peaks
Ranger District

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File Code: 2230

Date: 5/15/03

Morrison Ranch
c/o Glen Morrison
P O Box 2347
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

Dear Glen:

This is your 2003 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Windmill Allotment. These Annual Instructions are a part of your term grazing permit as indicated in Part Two. In addition, this letter is to document actions that need to be taken this year to keep the Forest Service and this allotment in compliance with previous commitments from environmental assessments, allotment management plans and guidelines and recommendations for rare wildlife and plant species, including those that are threatened or endangered.

Allotment Area Description

The Windmill Allotment consists of 248,792 acres. These acres lie within three Ranger Districts of the Coconino National Forest and include some Arizona State Trust Lands. This Allotment has the following plant community types: ponderosa pine (103,256 acres), pinyon pine-juniper (27,941 acres), mountain meadows (3,745 acres), transitional type between ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper (7,281 acres), chaparral (6,498 acres), desert grassland (87,526 acres), desert shrub (11,635 acres) and riparian (910 acres).

Mormon Lake Ranger District - Munds Pocket/Foxboro Division of the Summer Range

The Mormon Lake Ranger District portion of the Windmill Allotment consists of 52,302 acres. This area is called the Munds Pocket/Foxboro Division and is grazed in summer. The division extends north to south from James Canyon to the Coconino County line. The northern portion is referred to as Munds Pocket and the southern portion as Foxboro. The division extends east to west from the rim of Oak Creek Canyon to Fain Mountain, Casner Park and Pinewood and has two distinct cattle management areas. The Foxboro cattle herds consist of purebred Hereford cows, calves and bulls. The Munds Pocket cattle herd consists of replacement heifers and bulls.

Peaks Ranger District - Mill Park Division of the Summer Range

The Peaks Ranger District portion of the Windmill Allotment consists of 66,648 acres. This area is called the Mill Park Division and is also grazed in summer. The division extends north to south from the southern portions of Rogers Lake into the Sycamore Canyon and Red Rock-Secret Mountain Wilderness Areas. The western boundary is near Mooney Mountain and the

eastern boundary follows Highway 89 south to the rim of Oak Creek Canyon. The northern portions of this division contain 9,467 acres of Arizona State trust lands. These lands are interspersed with Coconino National Forest lands in a checkerboard configuration. The Mill Park cattle consist of crossbred cows, calves and bulls. This group of cattle is also known as the commercial herd.

Sedona Ranger District - Winter Division

The Sedona Ranger District portion of the Windmill Allotment consists of 129,842 acres. This area is called the Winter Division and is grazed during the winter season. The division extends north to south from the Peaks Ranger District boundary to the Beaver Creek Ranger District boundary. The area's eastern boundary meets Secret Mountain, Lost Mountain, Bear Mountain, the Boynton Canyon Range Allotment, the Sedona Range Allotment, the western portion of Munds Mountain, the western rim of Horse Mesa and Jacks Point. The western boundary meets Sycamore Canyon and the Verde River. The southwestern portions of the Winter Division contain 8,023 acres of Arizona state trust lands. These lands lie approximately four miles northeast of Cottonwood, Arizona and are bisected by Highway 89A. The Foxboro herds graze the southern portion of this division from Jacks Canyon to House Mountain. The Munds Pocket herd grazes the central portion of this division in the D.K-Malpais-Strip pasture area. The Mill Park herd grazes the southwestern portion of this division in Cornville-Sheepshead pasture area.

The allotment contains the following Land Management Plan Management Areas:

- MA 1-Wilderness
- MA 2-Verde Wild and Scenic River
- MA 3-Ponderosa Pine and Mixed Conifer
- MA 4-Ponderosa Pine on greater than 40%
- MA 5-Aspen
- MA 6-Unsuitable Timber Land
- MA 7-Pinyon Juniper on less than 40% slopes
- MA 8-Pinyon Juniper on greater than 40% slopes
- MA 9-Mountain Grassland
- MA 10-Transition Grassland
- MA 11-Verde Valley
- MA 12-Riparian
- MA 14-Oak Creek Canyon

The Windmill Allotment occurs in four 5th code watersheds. The following table is a summary of number of total acres within each 5th code watershed and acres of the allotment, which occur within each watershed on the Coconino National Forest.

5 th Code Watershed (Acres)	Allotment (Acres)	% Of Allotment Within Watershed
Sycamore Canyon (103,894)	27,948	26
Oak Creek Canyon (298,114)	158,360	53
Dry Beaver Creek (127,043)	34,606	27

Camp Verde (42,105)	27,935	51
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The following is a list of Best Management Practices (BMP's) developed for the 1998 Environmental Impact Statement.

PLANNED GRAZING SYSTEMS - Grazing systems are alternately rested and grazed in a planned sequence. See each alternative for specifics on how this practice is adopted.

PROPER GRAZING USE - Grazing at an intensity that will maintain enough cover to protect the soils and maintain or improve the quantity and quality of desired vegetation. See each alternative for specifics on how this practice is adopted.

STREAM BANK PROTECTION - Stabilizing and protecting stream banks against scour and erosion through vegetative and structural rehabilitation means. Livestock grazing will not be allowed in Oak Creek, Sycamore Creek, Verde River, Spring Creek, and Sheepshead Spring. Above the rim, ungulate grazing will be restricted or eliminated at T-six spring, Fain Spring, and Willard Spring.

TROUGH OR TANK - To provide watering facilities for animals at selected locations. See Table 1 for new tank construction, pipeline construction, and water lot development. These improvements are intended to increase distribution of livestock and wildlife.

FENCING - Fencing is intended to improve livestock and wildlife management, control access, to prevent soil loss, and to improve water quality. See table 1 for a list of fencing improvements.

Site-specific practices for the Windmill Allotment include the following:

In all the dry meadows, progress towards improved soil conditions by one of more of the following: reducing graze periods, relocating or removing stock tanks, building waterlot fences around tanks, splitting pastures and obliterating or re-routing roads in meadows.

Reduce graze periods to less than or equal to 20 days during fast plant growth as much as possible. Fast forage growth is usually mid-July thru August and mid-March to mid-May with flexibility for when rains arrive. This will reduce regrazing of forage regrowth, which is better for plant health and vigor.

Incorporate yearlong rest from cattle into every pasture wherever possible in the summer range rotations. This yearlong rest from cattle improves overall forage health by allowing more plants to reach maturity and reproduce.

Increase variability of pasture deferment, i.e. different season of use each year of the rotation.

The summer cattle range is not used before the cool season species have finished their fast forage growth (June 1st or later) to allow these plants to reach maturity.

In riparian areas below the Mogollon Rim reduce time of cattle grazing or exclude from cattle grazing. Riparian areas identified are, portion of Oak Creek, Dry Creek, Sheepshead Creek and Jacks Canyon.

Riparian grazed by cattle above the Rim will receive reduced graze periods by cattle and varied season of use. Several of these areas will be fenced and excluded from cattle grazing. Riparian areas identified are: T-6 Spring, Willard Spring, Fain Spring and a portion of Rogers Lake.

Sweep cattle out of riparian areas above and below the Mooney Trail after moving them along the trail between summer and winter ranges.

Move cattle between pastures and summer and winter ranges according to each area's readiness for grazing.

Ensure that the permittee complies with the terms and conditions of the allotment permit.

Your term grazing permit information along with your 2003 grazing schedule is listed below:

Mill Park Herd

<u>Permittee Name</u>	<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Permitted No.</u>
Morrison Ranch	Term	Yearlong	515 cows/calves&bulls
	State Land	Yearlong	<u>160</u> cows/calves&bulls
Total			675

Mill Park (continued).

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Use Dates</u>	<u>Total Days</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Buck Ridge	-6/4		382
W. Barney	6/5-6/14	10	382
E. Barney	6/15-7/20	35	382
Lockwood	7/21-8/6	16	382
Fry Park	8/7-8/27	20	382
Mill Park	8/28-9/16	20	382
Rogers Lake	9/17-10/4	18	382
Metz Holding	10/5-10/10	5	382
Harding	Yearlong Rest		

Foxboro Herd

<u>Permittee Name</u>	<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Permitted No.</u>
Morrison Ranch	Term	Yearlong	250 cows/calves

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Use Dates</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Arts Tank	5/29-8/30	16 Bulls
Highway Camp	Yearlong Rest	

T-6/Little T-6	Yearlong Rest
Luke Mountain	Yearlong Rest
Rocky Park Holding	Yearlong Rest
Skeleton Holding	Yearlong Rest
Jacks Point	Yearlong Rest

Munds-Pocket Herd

<u>Permittee Name</u>	<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Permitted No.</u>
Morrison Ranch	Term	Yearlong	250 cows/calves&bulls

<u>Pasture Name</u>	<u>Use Dates</u>	<u>Total Days</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Ritter	5/29-7/2	35	155
Crazy Park	7/3-8/5	32	155
N. Geronimo	8/6-8/30	30	155
Mud Lake	8/31-9/30	30	155
Holding	10/1-10/5	5	155
Blowout	9/1-10/10	40	16 bulls

The pasture move dates shown above are an estimate, and may need to be changed on the basis of actual range conditions. Please monitor actual conditions closely, and notify the Forest Service promptly if it appears that livestock will need to be moved sooner or later than estimated above. Grazing dates will be adjusted for this year's soil and vegetation readiness. Field checks in key forage areas such as meadows and riparian areas will be made prior to scheduled entry dates. Dates may be adjusted only with prior approval of the Forest Officer.

To facilitate livestock moves, gates may be opened two days prior to the scheduled move date only when moving into an adjacent pasture. Gates must be closed and grazed pasture entirely cleaned of livestock no later than five days following the scheduled move date. Grazed pastures must be kept clean of livestock following the pasture move.

Salt or mineral supplement locations should be rotated annually and avoid areas where cattle concentrations could cause excessive vegetation trampling, soil loss or disturbance to sensitive species or habitats. These areas would include habitats that support Mexican spotted owls, northern goshawks, rare plants, riparian vegetation, meadows or locations closer than 1/4 mile from a water source. The enclosed map shows the general location of these areas that are not obvious on the ground. This map does not include all obvious sensitive areas like all meadows, riparian areas or water sources.

No prairie dog control (i.e., poisoning or shooting) is allowed in association with this permit.

Monitoring will be conducted in partnership with the permittee on a regular basis during the grazing season and will be used to develop next years Annual Operating Instructions that states when livestock are to be moved and how grazing patterns are to be changed during the grazing season. It is important this year for you to help us with monitoring of your grazing permit. With present and future downsizing in the Forest range program your assistance in monitoring will

become increasingly more important. This monitoring generally includes compliance with your annual operating, livestock utilization and overall range condition and trends.

Utilization monitoring will be conducted throughout the year in every livestock grazed pasture following the protocol set up in the attached worksheet. In addition, key site and key species monitoring, to further conform to the Coconino Forest Plan, will be conducted at the following sites on the Allotment:

Mill Park Herd

<u>Management Area</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Key Species</u>
ponderosa pine/oak	East Barney	Buckhead Point	squirreltail, fescue
ponderosa pine/oak	West Barney	539 Road	squirreltail, fescue

Munds-Pocket Herd

<u>Management Area</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Key Species</u>
ponderosa pine/oak	Ritter	Ritter Butte	squirreltail, fescue

Foxboro Herd

<u>Management Area</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Key Species</u>
ponderosa pine/oak	Luke Mtn.	239 Road	squirreltail, fescue

The allowable level of utilization on herbaceous and woody vegetation is 50% on this allotment because of the intensive grazing management system in place. Livestock utilization of woody vegetation in riparian areas may not exceed 20%. This will ensure proper protection and management of resources on this allotment.

Adjustments in numbers, rotation schedule or season of use will be made if allowable use standards are exceeded. The option to return livestock to a pasture that has received adequate plant regrowth will be considered if all resource objections can be met. To achieve the desired allowable use, it is important to have proper livestock distribution.

Range improvements scheduled for this year will be as many cattleguards as are available.

Before any of these improvements can be put in place, archeological and biological clearances will be completed.

Refer to the attached map for the areas that are excluded from cattle grazing during the 2003-grazing season. All fences must be maintained to ensure cattle stay out of these areas. You must monitor these areas to ensure cattle do not enter them. If cattle enter these sites immediate action must be taken to remove them.

AOI's are appealable and subject to review under 36 CFR 251.

If you have any questions, please call Matt Atencio, Katherine Sanchez or Mike Hannemann, at 526-0866 at the Peaks District Office.

Sincerely,

Gene Waldrip
District Ranger

Date

I have read and agree to these operating instructions.

Mike Hughs for Glen Morrison