



**File Code:** 2210  
**Date:** 5/20/2008

The following letter will document your meeting Jeff Hunewill and Ingrid Drieling on April 25, 2008 and serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2008 grazing season. The authorized use for the Hunewill Hills C&H, Buckeye C&H, and Eagle Creek C&H allotments will be as follows:

**AUTHORIZED USE:**

<u>ALLOTMENT</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ORDER</u>	<u>NUMBER/CLASS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DAYS</u>
Hunewill Hills	1) Center	1 <sup>st</sup>	120 c/c	05/25	
	2) Hogan	2 <sup>nd</sup>	120 c/c	-	
	3) Cove	3 <sup>rd</sup>	120 c/c	6/23	30
	4) Point	REST			
Buckeye			150 (+80off) c/c	6/22-9/11	82
			45 c/c	7/3-9/11	71
Eagle Creek			150 c/c	7/16-9/15	62

Pattern of use on the Buckeye C&H allotment starts in unit four working up to unit one with 150 head and adding 45 head 11 days later. It will be important to manage cattle distribution to avoid overuse of riparian sites late in the season.

Cattle entering the Buckeye C&H allotment will use the trail on the north side of Buckeye creek. Using this area will reduce risks to the public who use the Buckeye campground.

**ALLOWABLE USE:**

The allowable use standards for the Buckeye C&H and Hunewill Hills C&H, and Eagle Creek C&H are listed below. It is your responsibility to monitor utilization levels and to move your livestock to the next unit planned for use or off the allotment when the standards have been met. If you need assistance determining utilization levels please contact Amy or Ingrid from my office and they will assist you. Cattle removed from a unit after proper use has been reached are not to be allowed to return to the unit. The Forest Service is responsible for monitoring your compliance with allowable use standards.

Riparian sites:



Disturbance of meadow-associated streambanks and natural lake and pond shorelines is not to exceed **20 percent** of the stream reach or **20 percent** of the natural lake or pond shoreline.

In meadows that are in early seral status (an early stage of succession in a plant community or vegetation type, generally characterized by plant species that are adapted to colonizing disturbed areas with a high proportion of bare soil) livestock utilization of grass and grass-like plants must be limited to **30 percent (or minimum six-inch stubble height)**.

In meadows that are in late seral status (fifty percent or more of the relative cover of the herbaceous layer is late seral with high similarity to the potential natural community, a diversity of age classes of hardwood shrubs is present, and regeneration is occurring) livestock utilization of grass and grass-like plants must be limited to a maximum of **40 percent (or minimum four-inch stubble height)**.

In meadows that are **degraded** (such as those in early seral status with a greater than **ten percent** meadow area in **bare soil and active erosion**) **total rest** from grazing is required until they have recovered and have moved to a mid or late seral status.

In riparian areas browsing on mature riparian shrubs (including willow and aspen) is not to exceed **20 percent** of the annual leader growth and is not to exceed more than **20 percent** of individual seedlings.

Livestock grazing will be modified or suspended on meadow ecosystems when it is determined that ecological status is moving in a downward trend.

Upland sites:

55% use of the current year's growth of herbaceous species.

50% use of the current year's growth of shrub species such as bitterbrush.

Because we do not know the ecological condition of every meadow located within the allotment, please err on the side of caution when monitoring utilization on riparian species.

Under intensive grazing systems, such as Eagle Creek C&H, where meadows are receiving a period of rest, utilization levels can be higher than the levels described above if the meadow is maintained in late seral status and meadow associated species are not being impacted. This standard would keep the utilization level at **55% use of key herbaceous** species and **25% key shrub** species. Upland and Aspen communities in Eagle Creek at **45% use of grass** or forb species; **40% use on shrubs**.

## **RANGE IMPROVEMENTS:**

Range improvements listed in part three of your term grazing permit must be maintained prior to livestock entering the allotments. The standards to which the improvements must be maintained are also listed in your grazing permit.

## **GENERAL MANAGEMENT:**

The dates listed in the authorized use section can be varied based on management needs or range readiness and proper use standards. If a change is necessary, please notify Amy or Ingrid soon as you are aware of the need for changes in the planned use schedule. Any extension of use beyond the dates that are authorized must be requested at least one week in advance to allow my staff time to complete utilization inspections.

Invasive weeds are becoming a serious threat to the welfare of our rangelands. Your assistance is needed to identify new outbreaks of weed populations and to prevent the establishment of weeds on the forest. Pay particular attention to areas where stock are concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments, and salting areas. We have implemented a Noxious Weed Free Hay order on our Forest. This will require any hay that is brought onto the National Forest to be certified free from noxious weeds. All livestock entering the National Forest are recommended to be fed **Certified Noxious Weed Free Forage** for at least 2 days prior to entering the Forest.

Cattle that die on the allotments must be moved at least 100 yards away from roads, trails, and water. Salt must be placed at least ¼ mile from water, meadows, and trails used by the public. Buckeye C&H is a long, skinny allotment and this is not always possible. Jeff stated to Amy that they do their best to keep the salt out of view from the public. If terrain does not allow for proper salt placement elsewhere, please contact us and we will work with you to determine suitable locations. All garbage and debris associated with managing cattle under your term permit must be removed from National Forest System lands. If you spot a wildfire on either allotment, please report it immediately to our interagency dispatch center at **(775) 883-5995**.

Reporting forms have been included with this plan for you to record actual use, losses, range improvement maintenance, and other relevant information. *Please return the forms to Amy or Ingrid in my office no later than October 31, 2008.*

The 2008 grazing fee is \$1.35 per head month, the same as last year.

As a reminder, approval of requests for permittee convenience nonuse is not automatic and the authorized officer should discuss the reasons for the nonuse request with the

permittee. Approval of a request for permittee convenience non-use must be in writing by the authorized officer. Full or partial permittee convenience nonuse may be approved by the authorized officer for no more than three consecutive years and not more than four years in any ten year period.

**OTHER:**

Ingrid and Rixey collected and may continue to collect vegetation data for the Sierra Basin Grazing Project during the summer, along with allotment administration. You expressed that you would like copies of the studies done. We will provide these to you once the data compiled and is completed. Ingrid or Rixey will contact you if there are any other studies done on your allotment. We appreciate your desired to be involved in this process and encourage continued involvement.

Also discussed in the meeting was the need for approximately 1/4mile of fencing supplies. Ingrid will be in contact with you if those supplies are available this year. If supplies are not available the need for your supplies will be put into next years budget.

After the completion of the Range NEPA for the Bridgeport allotments we will begin to work on other projects that would require environmental input such as the spring, troughs and pipelines talked about for development in Eagle Creek and near the Pack Station meadow.

If you have any questions or comments regarding management of these three allotments, please call Ingrid Drieling (760) 932-5808 or Amy Baumer at (760) 932-5852. Thank you for your continued interest in improving the resources on National Forest lands.

Sincerely,

CHERYL F. PROBERT  
District Ranger  
Encl: