



File Code: 2210

Date: 3/26/2008

The following letter will document your meeting with Amy Baumer, Ingrid Drieling and Rixey Jenkins on March 24, 2008 and will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2008 grazing season on the Lost Cannon C&H and Slinkard C&H allotments. Marilyn Summers and Bobbie Chessani represented Swauger Ranch, Inc.

AUTHORIZED USE:

<u>ALLOTMENT</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CLASS</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>SEASON</u>	<u>DAYS</u>
Lost Cannon C&H	One	c/c	140	7/16	
	Two	c/c	140	to	
	Three	c/c	140	9/12	77
Slinkard C&H - Year 1		c/c	50	5/1-8/30	122

Slinkard C&H is operated under a three year rest-rotation grazing system. Because of the 2002 Lost Cannon Fire, the Slinkard allotment was grazed during its scheduled rest years. This year the rotation will be started over at Year 1. Cattle will graze the Seeding (Upland Pasture) first and then will be moved to the Riparian Pasture. The scheduled use may be changed with prior approval due to range readiness or other conditions. One-week notice is required for approval to allow time for range inspections.

ALLOWABLE USE:

The allowable use levels listed below for the Lost Cannon C&H and Slinkard C&H allotments must be followed. You are responsible for determining when allowable use has been reached and to move your stock to the next planned unit of use or off the allotment after the last unit has been grazed. If you need any assistance determining utilization levels, please contact Rixey and he will assist you. 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. The Forest Service is responsible for monitoring your compliance with the allowable use levels. You are encouraged to accompany us on field inspections to determine use levels.

Standards and guidelines applicable to your allotment(s) include the following:

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.

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

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

Pesticide application to livestock is prohibited within riparian conservation areas and critical aquatic refuges.

Under intensive grazing systems, 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.

Upland Areas: 65% use on crested wheatgrass, 45% use on all other species

Streambanks: 20% streambank disturbance on Lost Cannon. 20% streambank disturbance on Slinkard Creek. This standard may remain in effect until water from upper Slinkard creek connects above ground with lower Slinkard creek. If this occurs, the streambank disturbance standard will be reduced by 10%.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS:

Range improvements listed in the Allotment Management Plans for Slinkard and Lost Cannon Allotments must be maintained before livestock enter the National Forest. The maintenance standards listed in part three of your grazing permit must be followed when maintaining improvements. I have included a form for you to record the maintenance you complete on range improvements on the Lost Cannon C&H and Slinkard C&H allotments. Please complete and return the forms by November 1, 2008.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT:

Encourage an even distribution of grazing use by cattle through herding and salt placement. Place salt at least ¼ mile from water, roads and trails used by the public. If terrain does not allow proper placement of salt, please contact Rixey and he will work with you to determine a suitable location.

Haul dead livestock at least 100 yards away from water and roads and trails used by the public. All garbage and debris associated with managing your cattle on National Forest must be removed and disposed of properly.

Actual use forms for the Lost Cannon C&H and Slinkard C&H allotments have been included with these instructions. Please complete these forms and return them along with the range improvement maintenance forms by November 1, 2008. We would like to thank you for turning in your Actual Use and Improvement Maintenance forms from last season.

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.

Payment of your grazing bill is due five days prior to your earliest turnout date to allow time for processing. As a reminder the Forest Service is required to give permittees a minimum of 30 days to pay you grazing fees. The Forest Service is requesting that permittees schedule their AOI meeting a minimum of 35 days prior to their earliest on date to provide adequate time to plan for the upcoming grazing season. Thank you for meeting this requirement for the 2008 season.

Grazing fees are the same as last year. The fee is \$1.35 per head month.

If you spot a wildfire on the National Forest, report it immediately to the Interagency Dispatch Center in Minden, NV at **(775) 883-5995**.

OTHER:

We discussed the Marine's training activities for the summer. In July and August, the Marine Base will be conducting training that could involve about 1000 Marines.

We discussed several range improvement issues. Marilyn brought up the need for a new water trough on the Slinkard allotment. We can purchase a trough for you this fiscal year. We will let you know when it is available.

The electric fence on Slinkard C&H will not hold a charge. Rixey will look through the files and get back to you on what the fence is for and where to go from here. Please contact Rixey later this spring for a field visit to this fence.

There is a large tree down across the trail near the boundary of Unit 2 and Unit 3 on the Lost Cannon allotment. We will try to secure a crew to remove it this summer, but I cannot guarantee this will happen.

Rixey will administer your permit. Please use him as your primary contact at (760) 932-5850.

Sincerely,

CHERYL F. PROBERT
District Ranger

Encl: Actual Use and Maintenance forms