

Gila National Forest
Silver City Ranger District

READING MOUNTAIN ALLOTMENT #713
SPAR CANYON ALLOTMENT #727

Annual Operating Instructions
2023



I. PERMITTED USE:

READING MTN.: 275 - cow/calf – Oct. - April
SPAR CANYON: 75 – cow/calf - yearlong

II. AUTHORIZATION:

READING MOUNTAIN

Number and Kind	AUM type	Dates	Location
50 cattle	cow/calf	10/01/23 - 02/28/24	Rockhouse & Mesa Pastures
50 Cattle	Cow/calf	10/01/23 – 02/28/24	Slickrock Pasture

SPAR CANYON

Number and Kind	AUM type	Dates	Location
0 cattle	cow/calf	03/01/22 - 02/28/23	Spar canyon

- i. The schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water.
- ii. Flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and/ or range conditions. If the deviation of rotation is greater than 15 days please notify the District Ranger of the proposed change for approval and amendment of your AOI.

Approved By: /s/ Signature Date: 1/26/2023
District Ranger

Agreed to by: /s/ Permittee
Permittee

III. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible. Failure to maintain control of your livestock could lead to *adverse* action against your Term Grazing Permit.

IV. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit should be maintained and kept in a functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify this office so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available.

The following improvements will be constructed/reconstructed this grazing season:

Spar Canyon:

- install spring box
- fence off Perry and Seep Spring
- look into improving both corrals and building 1 ½ miles of fence #8001
- try to get 1 ½ miles of fence across Brock Canyon contracted out

You are authorized as the permittee on the this Allotment to cut and utilize various tree species for fence posts, to maintain fences, corrals or other improvements on National Forest System lands within the allotment. This authorization allows cutting 50 line and corner posts, 80 poles and 1000 stays. Line posts are no larger than 6.5 feet in length and have a 5-inch top diameter. Corner posts are no larger than 8 feet in length and have a 7-inch top diameter. Poles are limited to trees less than 9 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH). Stays may be cut from limbs from trees cut for posts or poles, sapling-size trees, down snags, or snags that have been designated by a Forest officer to be cut. You are authorized to use this material under 36 CFR 223.2(a), Free Administrative Use. This authorization is valid for the current calendar year.

The following Instructions must be followed when cutting any posts, poles or stays under this authorization:

1. Stumps should be no higher than 12 inches above the ground.
2. Slash should be lopped to within 24 inches of the ground and scattered.
3. Cutting and removal of posts, poles or stays should not be done when the soil moisture conditions would permit ruts to be cut.
4. No posts, poles, stays or by-products from them will be sold or used anywhere but on National Forest land within your allotment to maintain the range improvements assigned in your 10-year Term Permit.
5. All posts, poles or stays will be cut within your allotment unless another specific area is designated for cutting by the District Ranger.

V. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire - branding and warming fires should be used with good judgement - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Silver City District is planning to allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records - please keep track of materials used, and the days and dollars spent on maintenance of improvements. It is also necessary to keep track of cattle numbers, dates of entering and leaving different pastures, shipping dates, and cattle losses (both grown stock and calves).
3. Heavy Equipment Use - written permission from the District Ranger will be required for any heavy equipment use on the National Forest. Examples of this are cleaning out stock tanks, road maintenance, etc.
4. Short Age Calf Policy - any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31, need to be paid for starting January 1.
5. Predator Control - The private use of predator control devices or programs on National Forest land must be approved by the District Ranger prior to being carried out.
6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding - the following practices will be adhered to:
 - a. Feeding of energy supplements on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplements is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved.
 - b. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements on National Forest land will be permitted if a detailed plan is approved, or if carried out in conjunction with salting.
 - c. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed in natural concentrations areas, which receive heavy grazing use.

VI. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS and/ or MODIFICATIONS

If forage and/or water availability becomes an issue on your allotment this you may be required to change your management and/or possibly remove your livestock from the National Forest lands. It is imperative to keep track of conditions on your allotment from year to year and make plans to reduce or totally remove your livestock if it looks like vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing during the drought period.

In order to insure proper utilization of forage key areas will need to be monitored in the pastures that are scheduled to be grazed this year Actual use will not exceed 31% – 40% at the end of the growing season in key areas. Key areas locations are the uplands at Parker 3-step transect clusters, Bull Spring and Dorsey Canyon of Reading Mountain and Continue current conservative grazing intensity guidelines that include wildlife use. The forage utilization guideline will be conservative use, which is defined by Holechek, et al, 1999 as having an average utilization of 31- 40 percent as measured at the end of the growing season. In order to meet the resource objectives for the allotment it will be necessary to monitor grazing intensity levels, forage conditions and water availability while livestock are present in each pasture. When there are indications that livestock are concentrating in any part of a pasture or on special sensitive areas, action will be taken to reduce the potential impacts by moving the livestock to other portions of the pasture or to another pasture on the Spar Canyon allotment. If, during the year, you feel that the utilization level is approaching the allowable use level, you will need to take some action to stop grazing the area.

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact Elizabeth Toney at the Silver City Ranger District. Change requests should be made in advance so that field inspections (if necessary) can be conducted. Failure to follow the direction provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to *adverse* action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).