

File Code: 2230
Date: March 18, 2016

Griffin Cattle Ranch
ATTN: John Griffin or Therese Hicks
P.O. Box 1224
Globe, Arizona 85502

Dear John or Therese,

This trial increase letter to update Sedow Allotment Management Plan and Term Grazing Permit 12-743 will remain in compliance with Forest Plan, Regulation, and Policy. A trial increase, based on e-mail and proposed action received March 9, 2016 will be authorized under terms and conditions outlined below, including those listed in March 2, 2015 modification letter.

Existing Conditions

Based on utilization, long term trend, and production data collected from Reading the Range from 2006 to 2015, conditions have improved to propose a trial increase.

Time Frame

Increased authorized numbers will be approved through March 1, 2021. Regional Forest Handbook 2209.13, 16.16 indicates trial increases normally do not exceed 1-2 years, consecutively. This period of time is not sufficient to properly stock and monitor allotment conditions with our varied southwest climatic conditions, upon why trial is extended to five years. As trial period time frame is ending, an environmental document will be started to fully analyze increased livestock numbers and monitoring data.

Goals and Objectives

Trial increase goal is to maintain a viable and ecologically sustainable operation while managing objectives, outlined below, in previous modification and in Tonto Forest Plan.

- Indicators of vegetative trend
 - Change in vigor of desirable key species;
 - Amount and type of recruitment of young desirable key species;
 - Amount and type of undesirable species such as noxious or invasive species;
 - Amount and level of current and historical hedging on desirable browse species.
- Indicators of soil trend
 - Amount of active rills, gullies, alluvial deposits, terracing, above what is common for site;
 - Soil remnants held by roots and plant bases, such as pedestalling.



Authorized Numbers

Term Grazing Permit will not be re-issued for purposes of increasing numbers related to trial modification until an environmental decision is executed.

Table 1: Current vs. Increased numbers with average Animal Unit Months calculated.

Current Term Grazing Permit	Increased Authorized Numbers
528 cow/calf @ 1.32 AUMs	725 cow/calf @ 1.32 AUMs
198 yearlings @ 0.7 AUMs	580 yearlings @ 0.7 AUMs
8 horses @ 1.5 AUMs	15 horses @ 1.5 AUMs

According to Regional Forest Handbook 2209.13, 16.1, cattle yearling class conversions will be based on weight of animal and its associated conversion rate. Yearlings were calculated at 80% of cow/calf numbers and will remain progeny of herd on allotment.

Grazing Management

- Cattle will be drifted, not trailed, whenever possible. For example, livestock will be moved in small numbers rather than large groups all at once to reduce resource impacts
- All livestock moved to next scheduled pastures will occur within two weeks.
- Ensure all improvements are functioning prior to entry into scheduled pasture. All troughs will remain functional/full year round.
- Herd livestock to new areas to alleviate grazing pressure.

Monitoring

Following activities will be carried out by permittee, Forest Service or cooperatively during grazing year. All monitoring results will be shared with group at spring and winter meetings.

Forage production, wildlife monitoring, repeat photography, dry weight rank, fetch, year end and seasonal utilization, riparian utilization soils evaluations, trend data, climate forecasting and other data as needed or as protocol changes will be collected during grazing year. Compliance to ensure livestock are in correct pastures and improvement status may occur while collecting other data. Long term monitoring will occur in established key areas, but compliance and seasonal collection may occur at representative site of pasture, allotment, soil or vegetative types.

This will be combined during yearly meetings along with accurate stocking rates, actual livestock move dates to determine level of success for past year and identity changes for upcoming year. As science and technology evolve and new data becomes available, implementation of trial increase may change over time. Any changes will be approved by Forest Official in either yearly instructions or follow-up letter.

Administrative Actions

To ensure smooth transition to increasing livestock numbers, a spring and winter meeting schedule will be made. Each meeting will focus specific actions to keep everyone up to date on allotment goals and objectives.

Spring meeting will generally be held in April to capture potential livestock numbers to be sold at local livestock sale, or number of livestock retained to carryover. Permittee will provide accurate stocking records since last meeting. As a group, evaluate data, range readiness, and forecast upcoming climatic conditions to determine if feasible to increase or decrease livestock numbers, season of use, and livestock class. Winter meetings should generally be held in November and capture all of spring meeting information and also prepare an annual operating instructions and sign Bill Of Collection. If other circumstances appear that is not outlined here, other meetings may be called by any of the parties.

Certain events may trigger a response and would be documented through a followup modification or in annual operating instructions, approved by Forest Officer. Other actions, not shown below, may develop through scheduled meetings and can be utilized if meets Forest Plan and other goals and objectives.

- If:
 - Annual indicators of grazing goals and objectives are not being met;
 - A climate, fire, flood or other event impacts resources;
- Then:
 - Change time spent in pasture.
 - Assess pasture readiness
 - Rest pasture for at least one grazing season
 - Decrease/Increase livestock numbers based on findings
 - Extend/shorten length of time in pastures
 - Turn off water, temporarily, to move livestock
 - New improvements may be needed to facilitate positive livestock management. If needed, further analysis will be required.

Term grazing permit, expiring prior to completion of trial increase, and will be re-issued under current terms and conditions. This modification will remain valid under subsequent permit. If for any reason this modification becomes invalid, a letter will be sent out cancelling this modification.

If you have any further questions, please contact A. Jamie Wages.

Sincerely,



KELLY JARDINE
District Ranger