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Comanche Creek Watershed Restoration Project:  
Restoring Habitat for the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout, Part 2  
October 2007 Report

(August - September 2007)

**Updated information is provided in blue text.**

*Task 1: NMED will develop a JPA with the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District to allow the transfer of funds for implementing the tasks described below.*

*Schedule: July 1 – September 2004*

**COMPLETED:** Please see December 2004 Quarterly Report.

*Task 1A: The Quivira Coalition will update the EPA approved PQAP on file for Comanche Creek.*

**COMPLETED:** Please see September 2005 Quarterly Report Appendix A.

*Task 2: Obtain 404/401 permits for work in Comanche Creek and tributaries.*

A 404 permit for work on the lower reach of Comanche Creek was submitted by Ron Thibedeau of the USFS, Questa Ranger District and has been approved by the Corp of Engineer's office. The State 401 permit for the middle reach has also been approved.

Information pertaining to a permit for Vane installation along the middle reach of Comanche Creek was submitted to the Questa Ranger District. The 404/401 permit application was then submitted to the Corps of Engineers by the Forest Service. Please see **Appendix A of the December 2005 Quarterly Report** for Vane Installation 404/401 data. **Questa Ranger District now has the 404/401 permit for the middle reach on file at the district office.**

**A 404/401 Middle Reach completion report will be sent to George Long at the Questa Ranger District once final mapping is completed in November.**

*Task 3: Inventory roads within the Comanche Creek sub-watershed south of the confluence of Comanche Creek & La Belle creeks up to Costilla Pass and throughout the Valle Vidal in order to assess their contribution to erosion and sediment loads in Comanche Creek. Specific locations for installing BMPs will be identified and mapped.*

**COMPLETED:** Please see September 2005 Quarterly Report Appendix B.

As per December 2006 Working Group Meeting: Task 3. Due to time, priorities and limited funds, the inventory of roads within the Valle Vidal Valley will not be completed and no BMPs will be installed on this section of the Valle Vidal.

*Task 4: Install structures (BMPs) such as waterbars, rolling dips, rolling out-slopes, and culverts along selected reaches of roads identified during the roads inventory of Task 3 in order to reduce erosion and sediment deposits into Comanche Creek from USFS roads.*

**The archeological survey was completed in May and July of 2007. The report is being processed and will be submitted to the NM State Historic Preservation Office when completed. Approval should be finalized by the time implementation of Task 4 begins in July of 2008.**

*Task 5: Outreach to the Valle Vidal Grazing Association (VVGA) and the RCCLA in coordination with the Carson National Forest-Questa Ranger District staff to discuss managed grazing strategies for wildlife and domestic livestock through various venues such as workshops, round table discussions, on the land observation and publications.*

No events or dates have been scheduled at this time. Joe Torres, the president of the VVGA was contacted and encouraged to attend, or send a representative, an on-site land health/grazing discussion with Kirk Gadzia and George Long on September 8, 2006 during the re-take of photo monitoring points on the upland transects. No VVGA representative attended.

As per the December 2006 Working Group Meeting Notes: Task 5: This task currently has \$2,925 federal dollars towards an outreach event to the Valle Vidal Grazing Association. After a lengthy discussion about the difficulties the QC has had in creating a dialogue with the grazing association and other issues, it was decided that it may best serve this grant to not complete this task and have the funds moved into Task 4. Craig Conley will explore the possibility of supporting an expanded Range Rider program with the Valle Vidal Grazing Association permittees and if there is no positive response by February 1, 2007 we would request an amendment to move these funds into Task 4.

The Valle Vidal Grazing Association turned down the offer of support for a range rider and this Task was removed from the Workplan in the 2nd Amendment.

*Task 6: Create Geographic Information System (GIS) maps showing areas of highest ecological and erosion risk for the section of Comanche Creek from Little Costilla to Gold Creek and an updated map of the lower section of Comanche Creek showing meander and installation points of restoration structures. These maps will create a record for long term use in follow-up monitoring and will serve as a navigation aid during the project and afterward, as sites are relocated for long-term monitoring.*

This task will be on-going (to update maps) throughout the grant as structures are installed. Please see Appendix C of the September 2005 Quarterly Report for the complete June 2005 Assessment Report and Maps along with notes and maps for High Priority Exlosures and Structures. Maps of completed lower and middle reach structures can be found in Appendix A of the September 2006 Quarterly Report. These maps utilized the new color DOQQ's from 2005.

**Collection of data for mapping the Comanche Creek Project is on going. An updated map that includes work completed during the 2007 season will be completed in November, 2007.**

*Task 7: Hold between 5 & 8 workshops/workdays over 3 years on riparian restoration and erosion control techniques along Comanche Creek and its tributaries. It is intended that several of these workshop/workdays will be exclusively for Soil and Water Conservation District personnel from around the state to learn these innovative techniques that they can then apply in their watersheds.*

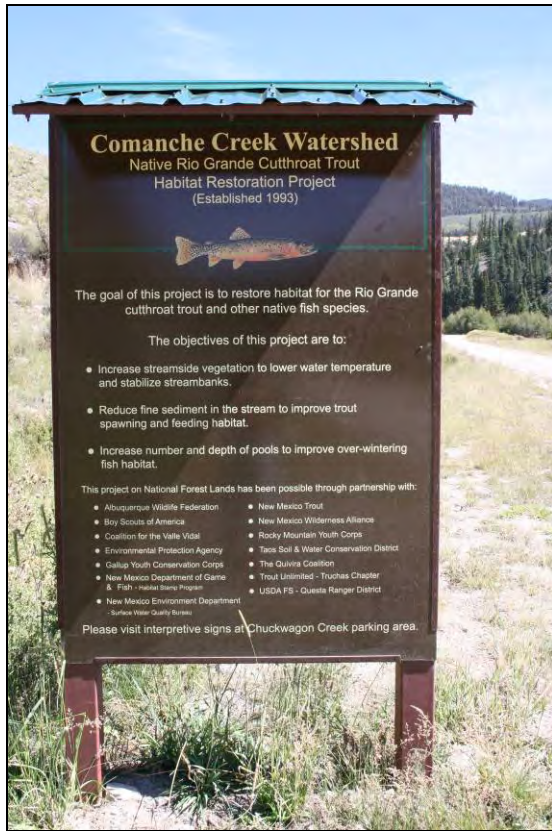
- ✚ On September 16, 2005 in collaboration with the Soil and Water Conservation District, The Quivira Coalition held a Comanche Creek Project tour led by Bill Zeedyk. Invitation letter, photos, sign-in sheet and completed questionnaires can be found in [Appendix B of the December 2005 Quarterly Report](#).
- ✚ A Volunteer Work Weekend led by Steve Carson of Rangeland Hands and Craig Sponholtz of Dryland Solutions, was held September 17-18, 2005 to repair Elk-

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Enclosures along the lower reach of Comanche Creek. Photos and sign-in sheet can be found in [Appendix C of the December 2005 Quarterly Report](#).

- ✚ A 1 day project tour with Bill Zeedyk is scheduled for Friday, July 8<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with two days of volunteer work on Saturday-Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
  - This volunteer work weekend was re-scheduled for September 9-10, 2006 with the Santa Clara Pueblo Fire Crew. Twelve members of the crew along with Craig Sponholtz of Dryland Solutions and Deborah Myrin of The Quivira Coalition constructed 25 vanes and repaired the large enclosure along the middle reach of Comanche Creek.
  
- ✚ A two-day workshop with Bill Zeedyk and Steve Carson in partnership with the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation is scheduled for Saturday-Sunday, July 15-16, 2006.
  - Due to the closure of Carson National Forest from June 26<sup>th</sup> through July 7<sup>th</sup>, the one day project tour was cancelled and the volunteer work weekend was moved to August 26-27. Thirty-seven volunteers from the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation, New Mexico Trout, Trout Unlimited-Truchas Chapter, the USFS, The Quivira Coalition, and various participants from the general public helped repair, re-build or build 12 elk-enclosures and 3 post vanes along the lower & middle reaches of Comanche Creek.
  
- ✚ A three-day educational and work weekend lead by Bill Zeedyk with logistical support from Rangeland Hands, Inc. and Dryland Solutions, Inc. was held July 22-29, 2007. Sixty-nine volunteers, 5 Quivira Staff and 4 dedicated riparian restoration specialists installed 24 post vanes along the middle reach of Comanche Creek. Maintenance was completed on several structures built during previous years. Volunteers were from the Sierra Club, Taos Soil and Water Conservation District, NM Trout, Trout Unlimited – Truchas chapter, Boy Scouts of America and the general public.
  
- ❖ During the afternoon of Friday, July 27, Bill Zeedyk led a tour of the Holman Wetmeadow Restoration project.

The Comanche Creek Educational Signs at the confluence of Costilla Creek and Comanche Creek and at the Chuckwagon parking area were re-created and then installed during the July 2007 workshop.



Six educational posters were created to use during workshop project tours. Many of the photos used are from the Comanche Creek Project area and from the East side of the Valle Vidal. Please see Appendix A.

*Task 8: Install vanes along Comanche Creek and erosion control structures along designated tributaries of Comanche Creek.*

- ✚ Work completed in 2005 can be found in the [September 2005 Quarterly Report, Appendix E](#). There are ~ 300 vane posts remaining at Shuree lodge to be used during the 2006 work season.
- ✚ A YCC crew from Gallup will be helping with vane installation July 11-15 and July 18-22, 2006. Steve Carson of Rangeland Hands and Craig Sponholtz of Dryland Solutions will manage and oversee this part of the project.
  - Due to the closure of Carson National Forest from June 26<sup>th</sup> through July 7<sup>th</sup>, these two work weeks were re-scheduled for July 17-28<sup>th</sup>. The Gallup, NM YCC managed through Connections, Inc. provided 2 crew leaders and 7 youth crew members. Along with subcontractors Steve Carson of [Rangeland Hands](#), Craig Sponholtz of [Dryland Solutions](#), and Deborah Myrin of [The Quivira Coalition](#), 91 structures were installed along the lower and middle reaches of Comanche Creek. A map of the completed structures can be found in Appendix A and a treatment/structure list in Appendix B.
  - There are currently 374 cedar posts remaining in the supply stack at Shuree Lodge.
  - There are 29 post vanes (22 treatment sites) remaining to be installed on the middle reach in 2007 (12 above the large enclosure and 17 below.)
  - It is estimated that 76 more cedar posts will be needed to complete the middle reach vanes at an approximate cost of \$600.00 for the posts.

From July 23-26, Bill Zeedyk, Tamara Gadzia, Steve Carson and two volunteer college interns, walked both reaches of the creek to assess the function and state of previously installed vanes. During this assessment, vanes for installation during the workshop were prioritized, each treatment site was re-evaluated and sites for additional vanes and those needing repair or re-built were documented. All data was recorded in an excel spreadsheet.

Of the 29 post vanes uncompleted from 2006, an additional 41 post vanes would need to be installed to refine the treatment of bank erosion along Comanche Creek. 24 of those post vanes were installed during the open workshop July 27-29, 2007.

Even though this grant runs through December 2008, the ability to install structures on the 404/401 permit ends March of 2008. To take advantage of the next high water flow on the creek, it was decided that if enough volunteers could be mobilized, another workshop would be organized for September 21-23, 2007. Five groups of six volunteers would be needed to install the remaining 33 vanes on the middle reach of Comanche Creek. Thirteen of these vanes were not completed as part of the July workshop and part of the original assessment of the middle reach. The Quivira Coalition, from its Land and Water Fund will provide financial support for contractual expenses and partial funding for material expenses. This grant will provide funding for Quivira Coalition staff to organize and implement the workshop and partial funding for the 600 cedar posts needed to complete this project.

**During the September 19-23 Vane installation workshop, over 4.5 days:**

- 5 participants trimmed 418 juniper posts,
- 12 participants installed 18 new post vanes, and
- Reconstructed 6 previously installed post vanes,
- Using 388 posts and plenty of gathered rock.

Supplies remaining at Shuree: 123 long trimmed, 127 short posts trimmed and ~ 212 uncut posts.

It is estimated that 341 posts will be needed to complete middle reach vanes and repairs in 2008. We still need to gather post data for Middle Reach Vanes – 01, 02, 03, 04, 04b, 05, 06, 07, 08A, 09, 09b, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18b, 19, 20A, 20B, 21, 21b, 22, 22b, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32 60, 52, 61, 71, 71b, 72 and 72b.

To date, 103 vanes have been installed along the middle reach, 10 structures are left to complete (Vane # 04b, 18b, 21b, 22b, 45b, 47b, 48b, 59b, 73, and 74) and 36 structures need some form of maintenance. 96 vanes on 404 Action No. 2005 00799 404/401 permit. Seven additional vanes not originally listed on the permit were installed and another 10 are needed to adequately protect eroding banks.

*Task 9: Install, repair, and maintain mini-exclosures to promote the growth of riparian vegetation along designated reaches of Comanche Creek and its tributaries from Costilla Creek to Gold Creek, by protecting them from elk.*

Please see the September 2005 Quarterly Report Appendix F for photos of repaired or completed structures through August 2005.

- o During the August 26-27 work weekend, 10 exclosures on the lower reach and 2 exclosures on the middle reach were either repaired or re-built along Comanche Creek. The lower reach treatments have been completed. We appreciate the volunteers continued dedication and hard work on this restoration project.
- o During the September 9-10 Santa Clara Fire Crew Volunteer work weekend, the middle reach large exclosure was repaired to prevent cattle from grazing the segment of Comanche Creek that runs through the exclosure.
- o Supplies remaining for exclosures at Shuree Lodge include 98 treated posts, 3 deadmen, 11 5ft T-posts, 120 6ft. T-posts, 21 8 ft. T-posts, 14 partial rolls of fencing wire, 1 new roll of smooth wire and 1 partial roll of smooth wire.
- o The large exclosure is not included as part of the data summary below. This exclosure, when completely fixed, will exclude cattle, but the entrance gate is still low enough to allow elk to graze inside. In July, the YCC crew did build a small exclosure inside the large exclosure around a high priority meander that is close to being cut off.

From the Sept. 2006 Report – this data will be updated after the Sept. 2007 work weekend.

<b>Lower Reach</b>	<b>Middle Reach</b>
Completed Treatment Sites: 68	Completed Treatment Sites: 31
Number of in-stream structures: 64	Number of in-stream structures: 63
Number of exclosures: 46	Number of exclosures: 3
Total Channel Length: 21,237 ft.	Total Channel Length: 13,947 ft.
Total Length of Treatments 7,823 ft.	Total Length of Treatments 3,727 ft.
Total Area of Exclosures 169,721 Sq. ft.	Total Area of Exclosures 21,363 Sq. ft

From the December 2006 Working Group Meeting Notes: Tasks 7, 8 and 9. It is estimated that ~\$25,000 would be needed to complete these three restoration and maintenance tasks. There is currently only \$10,873.05 remaining between these three tasks.

- Tasks for the 2007 season
- Review and maintenance of installed structures and exclosures
- Complete vanes on middle reach, approximately 29

Complete existing middle reach exclosures  
 Fix or remove large exclosure  
 Plant willow cuttings in exclosures  
 Plant willow cuttings behind vanes  
 Map and photograph completed treatments  
 Create a cut-off channel on one meander that is cutting into FS road 1950 in the large exclosure (this project will be completed with another grant, hopefully in 2008)  
 A 404 would be needed for this; data available in the 2005 assessment report

#### Time Frame

July 22-29<sup>th</sup> 2007

- July 23-26 – Gallup YCC – Vanes and exclosures; Craig Sponholtz, QC Staff member, Steve Carson, Bill Zeedyk, (due to financial considerations, the Gallup YCC did not participate in the July 27-29 workshop)
- July 26 – Treatment review for repair, additions and changes; prep for volunteer groups - Craig Sponholtz, QC Staff member, Steve Carson, Bill Zeedyk, (this was completed July 23-26)
- July 27 – Sierra Club Service Group (12) – Vanes, exclosures, willows; up-lands photo monitoring - Craig Sponholtz, QC Staff member, Steve Carson, Bill Zeedyk, (Sierra Club Activist group provided volunteer assistance July 26-28, 2007)
- July 28 & 29 – NMT, TU, Amigos Bravos, Coalition for VV, QC volunteers, Santa Clara Fire Crew - Craig Sponholtz, QC Staff member, Steve Carson, Bill Zeedyk

**Notes – Willow Planting on Lower Reach of Comanche Creek – May 19, 2007:** All willows were planted on the outside banks of meanders. Willows were planted on both sides of the creek on the straight areas inside the exclosures. Willows were planted in high erosion outside banks in between the exclosures. Planted willows in Exclosures 15 through 43 (from Chuckwagon to original exclosures). Planted willows at Rock Plug above Exclosure 32. Willows were also planted between Exclosures 34 & 35 and between 35 & 36.

Due to time and weather conditions, only the first 26 exclosures were assessed for damage, elk utilization and willow survival, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Notes were taken on each exclosure. Elk were entering and exiting some exclosures to the level of the water crossing or not having tall enough T-posts on the creek side of the fences. Survival of willows was dependent on the number of cuttings planted in each hole and where on the bank they were planted. If they were planted too low or too high on the bank, survival was low. Overall, the willow planting was a success and the exclosures are doing their job. No maintenance was completed during the July workshop, but New Mexico Trout and Trout Unlimited-Truchas Chapter will follow-up on getting the maintenance completed by the end of the 2008 season.

*Task 10: Monitor results of riparian and upland restoration measures. Water quality will be monitored by NMED.*

- ✚ The 2004 Uplands Quantitative Monitoring report comparing data collected in 2001 with that collected in 2004 was completed October 30, 2005 and is available for review on the Comanche Creek Website: [www.comanchecreek.org](http://www.comanchecreek.org). Riparian Monitoring was completed in June and August, 2005 by Contractor Steve Vrooman, volunteers Deborah Myrin and Nancy Carson, and by NMED Grant Supervisor, Abe Franklin. A draft report can be found in [Appendix D](#) of the [December 2005 Quarterly Report](#).

- ✚ Photo points of upland transects and installed Best Management Practices (BMPs) took place September 14-19, 2005. A short report comparing 2001 and 2004 upland transect photos and Springwagon drainage erosion issues can be found in [Appendix E of the December 2005 Quarterly Report](#).
- ✚ Photo documentation of channel conditions, installed vanes and elk-exlosures will take place after installation of structures.
  - Photos of various upland and instream treatments were taken during the August 26-27 workshops. Also, photos were taken of each treatment after installation during the July, August and September workdays. Representative photos can be found in Appendix C.
- ✚ Photo points of upland transects will be re-taken September 9-12, 2006.
  - Photo points of upland transects were re-taken September 7-8, 2006 by Tamara Gadzia of The Quivira Coalition and Kirk Gadzia of Resource Management Services. The weather was cool and rainy. George Long of the USFS Questa Ranger District accompanied them in the Valle Vidal for transects 9 &10 and on the La Belle drainage for transect #11. During this time Kirk and George discussed the visual condition of the rangeland in this area and the need to review the current grazing plan for the VVGA cattle.
  - Photos can be found in Appendix D.(September 2006 Report)
  - During the re-take of the 33 photo monitoring points, cattle were observed within all 4 pastures. The 4 pastures on the west side of the Valle Vidal include La Cueva (north western boundary), Comanche Pasture (below La Cueva), La Belle (southwest boundary) and Vidal Pasture (southeast boundary).
  - Cattle in the Comanche Pasture were located on the Middle Reach of the creek and inside the large enclosure, which had a broken section on the north side that was allow entrance for cattle and elk. On Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>, the Santa Clara Fire crew volunteers and Deborah Myrin chased the herd out of the large enclosure and then the north side was repaired. There is still a section on the south side that needs to be repaired.
  - Cattle were also seen in the La Cueva Pasture along Costilla Creek which was due to be rested this year.
  - George Long will provide The Quivira Coalition with the 2006 Pasture Rotation Grazing Plan for the West side of the Valle Vidal and the number of cattle grazing during the 2006 west side season of August through October.
  - Kirk Gadzia, Resource Management consultant, feels the current rotation system is probably adequate for the number of livestock and area to be grazed, but following the plan seems to be an issue due to the expansive landscape and number and qualification of range riders.
  - The following are estimated pasture sizes and approximate acre size of those pastures utilized by cattle.
    - La Cueva pasture size ~28,147 acres with ~ 10,124 acres utilized
    - Comanche pasture size ~6,487 acres with ~ 3,706 acres utilized
    - La Belle pasture size ~4,101 acres with ~ 1,855 acres utilized
    - Vidal pasture size ~ 6,463 acres with ~ 3,909 acres utilized
      - In the Westside 4 pasture rotation system there are 45,198 acres of pasture with ~19,594 usable by domestic livestock.

The Quivira Coalition has received a 3 year grant (January 2007-December 2009) from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to:

1. address the impacts of overgrazing and to add protections to sensitive areas (riparian)
2. develop and implement a professional herder training program that will educate potential herders on low-stress livestock management techniques and basic range management field skills, and
3. provide on-going technical and financial assistance to three grazing associations to use herders for five months during the summer grazing season for three consecutive years.

The Quivira Coalition would like to extend an offer to the VVGA to participate in this low-stress livestock herding program.

As per the December 2006 Working Group Meeting notes: Task 10: Upland and Riparian Monitoring is currently scheduled for September 4-10<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Kirk and Tamara Gadzia will re-read the 33 upland transects, take photo monitoring points and write a comparative report for 2001-2007 collected data. Final photos of up-land treatments will also be re-taken at this time. Steve Vrooman will re-read riparian transects and collect geomorphology data for lower and middle reach sites. Art Vollmer will also re-collect his data from the middle reach. Estimated cost is **\$10,000**. Total remaining in this task is \$9,582.66.

**Kirk and Tamara Gadzia re-read upland monitoring transects September 2-6, 2007. Data analysis is in progress and a report will be available by the next quarterly report. Below is a summary report of observation taken during the uplands monitoring.**

*“The goal of this report is to initiate a discussion with the Forest Service and other stakeholders on continuing issues related to the management and protection of sensitive resources within the Valle Vidal. In short, the extensive restoration work on Comanche Creek to restore native Rio Grande Cutthroat trout habitat is compromised by livestock management practices in upland sites. We believe this management has exacerbated the contribution of sediment and other contaminants into Comanche Creek. As this report presents, there appear to be a number of discrepancies between the livestock management guidance provided in the AOI (Appendix A) and the actual management on the ground. Furthermore, the AOI does not appear to provide sufficient guidance to permittees to manage livestock in a manner consistent with the protection of other resources such as sensitive riparian and wet meadow areas. The AOI for the Valle Vidal allotment reads like any other AOI. As such, it fails to recognize the unique character and importance placed on the management of this unique area not to mention the extensive amount of time and money (state and federal) that has gone into its restoration. In other words, we do not believe the standard of practice for other allotments is the appropriate standard for grazing in the Valle Vidal. We do not believe cattle grazing and maintenance of the special qualities of the Valle Vidal are incompatible. We do believe, however, that the current AOI and the livestock management program fail to provide the safeguards necessary to protect this valuable resource.” -- Craig Conley, Associate Director, The Quivira Coalition.*

This report documents upland and wetland areas around Monitoring Plots within the Comanche Creek Watershed (originally established in 2001), by Kirk and Tamara Gadzia. Data for these plots were collected in October 2001 and September 2004 using the Jornada line intercept and canopy gap intercept methods. All data collected September 2-6, 2007 will be compiled and compared with data from 2001 and 2004 readings.

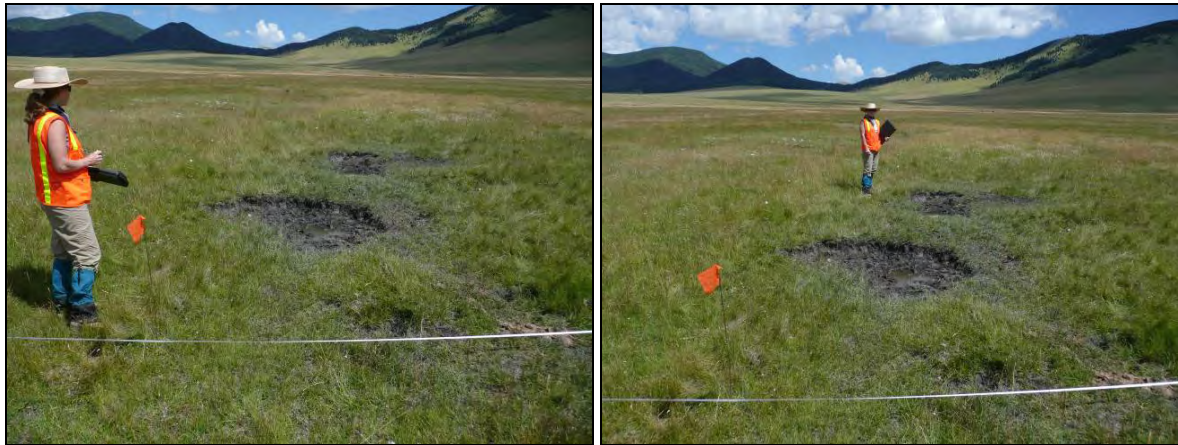
Overall, upland sites appear to be in good shape and are on an upward trend with minimal bare ground and plenty of forage. The condition of wetland areas is mixed as is described below. Sites within the Comanche Creek floodplain and along Vidal Creek were heavily vegetated with a variety of wetland species. The Springwagon Creek wet meadow continues to deteriorate due to current grazing management practices.

The following observations were made during the most recent monitoring trip to the Valle Vidal between September 2nd and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007. A number of drainages had historic down cutting due to a multitude of factors including culvert placement and utilization by domestic livestock. These impacts are largely confined to small areas or hotspots which were identified in a previous report (December 2005 Quarterly Report) submitted and discussed with Questa Ranger district personnel. Unfortunately, documentation of these hotspots has not resulted in changes in management that would lead to their restoration.

**Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Drove up to the confluence of Comanche and La Belle Creeks. UTM coordinates for 16 headcuts were collected. These headcuts originated in an old 2 track road and are still active with clumps of newly dislodged soil seen at the face of the headcuts. This has been a wet year for the Valle Vidal and it is expected that these head cuts will continue to move up the wet meadow. This area does not show signs of heavy utilization, despite the fact that there is a stock pond above these headcuts. If time and resources were available, this location would probably respond to headcut control treatments.

The Clayton Camp road had heavy use this summer and with almost daily rains, it has become muddy, rutted and with many potholes. The gate between La Belle and Vidal pastures was open as was the gate into Clayton Camp. We left them as we found them. Cows were seen along Clayton camp road in both the Vidal and Labelle pastures and within the Valle Vidal. We parked at Clayton Camp and hiked up Vidal Creek to plot # UCC-9. Much of the fence along Vidal Creek is in need of repair.

Vidal Creek has and continues to be incised but it does not appear to have changed much over the past six years. The wet meadow at the top of this drainage shows signs of less hummocking and expansion of wetland species. This may be due to the herding capabilities of the cattle themselves. A black bull did an amazing job of rounding up the cows, calves and heifers and moving them out of the Vidal Creek wet meadow and into the grasslands of the Valle Vidal. According to the 2007 AOI cattle were not due to be in this pasture until October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 i.e., they were a month early! On transect line #2, a developing headcut was observed between the 42 and 45 meter mark (photos # P1010450 and P1010451).



Developing headcuts at the top of Vidal Creek.

**Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>:** We parked just south of the Holman wet meadow restoration project and crossed the upper drainage of Holman Creek through lush wetland vegetation, crossed over 2 ridges and over a pasture fence. The pasture fence lines do not seem to match the USFS pasture map. This fence, which probably separates La Cueva from the Comanche pasture, seems to be in pretty good shape. Cattle were seen on the west side of this fence (La Cueva Pasture?). There is a well established cattle, elk, human trail that leads down into the upper left fork reach of Springwagon creek just south of our monitoring sites. This trail is steep and was muddy from heavy use and rain. As we dropped into the Springwagon Creek meadow,

we immediately noticed heavy trampling in the area. We walked up the headcut channelized wet meadow (photos P1010487 – 496).

During the 2001 assessment, two monitoring plots were established in this drainage; one on the west side of the wet meadow and one within the wet meadow itself. In 2002, this area was a productive wet meadow with sheet flow but with some channelization at the lower reach of the drainage.

The “visual” livestock management strategy for the Comanche Creek watershed over the past 6 years seems to have been...keep the cows out of Comanche Creek. Unfortunately it appears this objective has been met at the expense of side drainages such as Springwagon Creek. Cattle appear to be pushed into these areas and encouraged to stay at the top of drainages through the use of salt blocks. Whatever efforts have been applied to move cattle out of these areas does not appear to be working.

During the 2004 Monitoring, this wet meadow showed channelization through the upper reach of the wet meadow and heavy utilization by cattle. In spite of having previously identified these areas as sensitive, conditions have certainly not improved and have actually deteriorated as shown in the photos below.



Heavy trampling in Springwagon Creek.



Headcut at the top of Springwagon Creek.





Signs of recent heavy livestock use in Springwagon Creek.



These headcuts were documented and mapped in 2005 and were noted in the 2005 Uplands Quantitative Monitoring report ([www.quiviracoalition.org](http://www.quiviracoalition.org)). This wet meadow is and was considered a sensitive area with consistent heavy use by livestock with substantial damage to the wet meadow. A report with photos and maps were given to range Biologist George Long and District Ranger Ron Thibedeau. We were surprised to see the remains of 3 salt blocks at our plot # MCC-4 center and 5 Meter "sacrifice" zone (photos P1010497-499). Not only does this compromise our monitoring efforts, it demonstrates a complete disconnect between the restoration and monitoring program and the grazing program.



Salt block locations in Springwagon Creek drainage.

Cattle were scattered throughout the area and one roaming bull (photos P1010494 and 500).



Cattle observed in Springwagon

The headcuts extend up to the large area of aspens (photos P1010502 and P1010503).



As we hiked down the meadow following the abandoned road we saw the remains of 2 more salt blocks (photos P1010507 and P1010508).



Additional salt block locations in Springwagon.

We headed back up the hill and over the ridge ending at a pasture gate. We crossed back down through Holman creek and observed a ~2 foot headcut. The area did not show heavy utilization, but cattle were in the vicinity. The area is well vegetated, so it wasn't evident if

the headcut was migrating, but there was a “waterfall” sound. This headcut is easily accessible from FS Road 1950 and could benefit from a headcut control treatment.



Headcut in Holman Creek

At 10:45 am we arrived back at the La Belle Parking area and watched the Range Rider move about 20 head of cattle off the uplands near the intersection of 1950 and the La Belle FS road down to the cattle guard at Little Costilla (P1010524).



Cattle being moved in La Belle

In the afternoon we headed back up to just west of the Chuckwagon Creek parking area where we noticed cattle at several locations along Comanche Creek, including at the confluence of Fernandez Canyon (photo P1010519 and P1010520).



Cattle along Comanche Creek and confluence of Comanche and Fernandez Canyon

**Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>:** Both cattle and elk droppings were observed inside the large elk enclosure.

Observations made over the few days of monitoring point to two major concerns. First, contrary to the direction given in the AOI, cattle are not “pushed out of heavy use areas” nor are they “confined to one pasture at a time.” Cattle were observed Sept. 2-6<sup>th</sup> in the Vidal, La Belle, Comanche, and La Cueva pastures on the west side and McCrystal on the east side of the Valle Vidal. Cattle were observed on the East Side near McCrystal campground on September 6<sup>th</sup> – 2.5 months after they were to be moved. This observation conflicts with the AOI that states, “The pasture in which the livestock are leaving should be cleaned out 7 days after the scheduled date for moving.” The direction of the AOI is neither being met nor enforced.

Second, the AOI does not seem to provide adequate guidance to permittees in meeting management needs. The most glaring weakness is the distribution and salt plan. Specifically the plan states “Salt must be placed out of bottoms, away from water, roads, forest system trails, and recreational sites in an effort to distribute animals throughout each pasture and encourage animals to roam throughout.”

Surprisingly, no specific areas are identified to avoid. We are not aware that there was any discussion of this issue in the annual AOI meeting with permittees. This begs a number of questions such as, who made the decision (and was it approved by the FS) to use salt blocks in an identified, documented sensitive, heavily used wet meadow of Springwagon Creek? Was the impact to the wet meadow considered? Considering the amount of moisture this summer, how much of the salt in block ends up in Springwagon Creek and then eventually in Comanche Creek? How does salinity affect the Rio Grande Cutthroat trout? Were other areas of the uplands considered for block placement? Were salt troughs considered to keep the blocks off the ground? Also, the Valle Vidal grazing plan has always been touted as a rest/rotation plan with one pasture being rested every year. According to the 2007 AOI no pasture was scheduled for rest this year.

In summary, our observations in early September concern us deeply. We reiterate that grazing and management of the riparian and wet meadow resources in the Valle Vidal are not incompatible, but clearly some changes are in order. While some of these impacted wet meadows may or may not lend themselves to restoration considering the distance from usable roads and on-site resources such as rock or timber, most areas would lend themselves to recovery if current livestock grazing practices were improved.

#### Geomorphology Surveys:

On September 7, 8, 21, and 22, Art Vollmer and Abe Franklin collected geomorphology survey data on Comanche Creek. They were joined by Ryan Weiss on 9/7, 9/8, and 9/22, Greg Miller on 9/7, and George Long on 9/8.

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During this time, they re-surveyed all known previously surveyed areas on Comanche Creek. These surveys included four Rosgen level II reaches and nine cross sections originally surveyed by John Pittenger in 2001.

Two of the Rosgen level II surveys were originally conducted in 2000 by Larry Smolka and other staff of the Surface Water Quality Bureau, and two were originally surveyed in 2005 by Abe Franklin, Steve Vrooman, Debra Myrin, and Nansy Carson. The two surveys dating from 2005 included ten supplemental cross sections intended to characterize evolution of three point bars. Each Rosgen level II survey included a longitudinal profile at least 600 feet long, at least one cross section, and a pebble count to characterize the streambed material.

Abe Franklin plans to organize all of these data before the Comanche Creek working group meeting planned for this fall, and to analyze them soon after. Ryan Weiss is planning to use the geomorphology data along with fish population data collected over the past several years for his master's degree project.

Riparian Vegetation Monitoring:

Riparian vegetation monitoring will be repeated in the fall of 2008.

*Task 11: Invoices, quarterly and final reporting to document the results of the project.*

- The December 2004 Quarterly Report has been submitted
- The December 2004 through May 2005 Report has been submitted
- The September 2005 Quarterly Report has been submitted
- The December 2005 Quarterly Report has been submitted
- The March 2006 Quarterly Report has been submitted
- The September 2006 Quarterly Report has been submitted.
- The August 2007 Quarterly Report has been submitted.
- **The October 2007 Quarterly Report has been submitted**
- **9 Invoices have been submitted and payment received with invoice #8 & #9 pending.**

## Invoice #9 – 10-09-07

Federal	Expenditures		Cash	
	Budget	Current	Cumulative	Remaining
Personnel	\$31,140.00	\$5,437.50	\$30,462.21	\$677.79
Supplies	\$17,000.00	\$3,488.77	\$17,000.00	\$0.00
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contractual	\$84,925.00	\$2,176.00	\$80,504.14	\$4,420.86
Other	\$9,010.00	\$0.00	\$3,098.55	\$5,911.45
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>\$142,075.00</b>	<b>\$11,102.27</b>	<b>\$131,064.90</b>	<b>\$11,010.10</b>

Non-Federal Match	Expenditures		Cash Match	
	Budget	Current	Cumulative	Remaining
Personnel	\$5,900.00	\$0.00	\$3,825.17	\$2,074.83
Supplies	\$8,000.00	\$823.19	\$6,780.92	\$1,219.08
Travel	\$7,000.00	\$1,022.94	\$5,492.30	\$1,507.70
Contractual	\$0.00	\$4,140.59	\$7,215.80	-\$7,215.80
Other	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$255.13	\$244.87
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>\$21,400.00</b>	<b>\$5,986.72</b>	<b>\$23,569.32</b>	<b>-\$2,169.32</b>

Non-Federal Match	Expenditures		In-Kind Match	
	Budget	Current	Cumulative	Remaining
Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00	-\$400.00
Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$85.00	-\$85.00
Travel	\$27,100.00	\$0.00	\$28,926.22	-\$1,826.22
Contractual	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,291.76	\$12,708.24
Other	\$33,660.00	\$2,400.00	\$43,150.50	-\$9,490.50
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>\$75,760.00</b>	<b>\$2,400.00</b>	<b>\$74,853.48</b>	<b>\$906.52</b>

<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$239,235.00</b>	<b>\$19,488.99</b>	<b>\$229,487.70</b>	<b>\$9,747.30</b>
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# APPENDIX A

**2007**

**Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)**

**Valle Vidal Allotment #00720**

**Carson National Forest**

**Questa Ranger District**

**STEVE TAPIA**  
Acting for District Ranger

**APRIL 24, 2007**  
Date

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# Annual Operating Instructions

## Introduction

This Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) is in reference to the discussion you had with Steve Tapia, Michael Casados, and Alyssa Radcliff on March 14, 2007. The authorized use for the 2007 grazing season on the Valle Vidal Allotment is as follows:

**Table 1 –Permittee Information and Season of Use**

Permittee Name	Permitted # Season		Authorized # Season		Remarks
Valle Vidal Grazing Association c/o Jose Torres, President	864 c/c	6/1-10/15	<b>6/1</b>	<b>10/15</b>	Will enter with an estimated 532 head and the other 332 will enter on June 21 or so.
Jose Torres	332 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Manuel & Marina Archuleta Revocable Trust	24 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Juan Cisneros	33 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Robert or Billie Abercrombie	48 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Gregorio Marrujo Estate	6 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Moeller, LLC c/o Dennis Moeller	83 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Lawrence Ortega	41 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Ruben Sandoval	28 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Reynolds Ranch	138 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Luciano Sandoval Estate c/o Luciano P. Sandoval	11 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Aquino "Jerry" Gallegos	36 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Antonio Valdez	62 c/c	6/1-10/15			
Elias & Sarah Hurtado	22 c/c	6/1-10/15			

## Management of Livestock

It is the responsibility of the grazing permittee on this allotment upon entering the National Forest Lands to ensure proper distribution of livestock. Livestock will be pushed out of heavy use areas, and encouraged to utilize areas with light or no use. All livestock will be confined to one pasture at a time. Animals will be moved to the next use pasture when the desired level of use is reached.

All livestock must be scheduled to be counted prior to entering Valle Vidal Allotment. The Questa Ranger District must be notified 5 days prior to time livestock enter or leave the Forest. Nonuse applies only to animal numbers. Nonuse is approval to graze less than 90% of the permitted livestock during the permitted grazing season. Nonuse of a term permit must be requested in written form for all the permitted grazing season (Total Nonuse), or part of the permitted numbers (Partial Nonuse). Verbal applications will not be accepted. If a permittee elects to request "total nonuse" or "partial nonuse" he/she is still responsible for maintenance of assigned range improvements and association fees.

A credit/refund is not automatic, but must be requested in writing by the permittee(s) and approved by the District Ranger. Refer to Attachment 1 for documentation of any annual operating instruction adjustments.

## Rotation Schedule

Initial distribution of your livestock is tentatively planned as follows (actual dates will be based on range readiness). There will be no livestock on the Valle Vidal Allotment until such time as range conditions improve. Range conditions will be monitored by the grazing permittees and district range personnel to determine when stocking can be authorized.

All livestock will be confined to one pasture at a time. Livestock will be moved to the next use pasture when the desired level or use is reached. All livestock will be handled as one herd and the gates to the next scheduled pasture may be opened a few days prior to the scheduled move.

The pasture in which the livestock are leaving should be cleaned out 7 days after the scheduled date for moving. Livestock are permitted only in those pastures in which they are scheduled to be in at that time. Livestock will use only on pasture at any time. Refer to Attachment 2 for actual use information.

Table 2 – Season of Use (June 1 to October 15)

Pasture	Livestock Numbers	Days Planned	Dates
<b>McCrystal Eastside</b>	532 head	20 days of use	June 1 to June 20
<b>Whiteman Vega Eastside</b>	864 head	20 days of use	June 21 to July 11
<b>North Ponil (includes Lookout Canyon) Eastside</b>	864 head	20 days of use	July 12 to July 31
<b>Beatty Lakes Eastside</b>	864 head	20 days of use	Aug. 1 to Aug. 20
<b>La Cueva Westside</b>	864 head	15 days of use	Aug. 21 to Sept. 4
<b>Comanche Westside</b>	864 head	10 days of use	Sept. 5 to Sept 14
<b>La Belle Westside</b>	864 head	15 days of use	Sept 15 to Oct. 1
<b>Valle Westside</b>	864 head	14 days of use	Oct 2 to Oct 15

The range readiness inspection(s) will determine the exact date livestock can be moved onto the allotment, and which pasture will be grazed first. (Refer to Attachment 3 & 3-A, Range Readiness Report form FS 6200 28a (5/84) which needs to be completed to document current conditions on the allotment.) Each permittee is encouraged to participate in this decision.

## Forage Utilization Standards

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Desired Conditions: Forage utilization will be measured in key areas. Key areas will be the only areas used to determine forage utilization by all ungulates. A forage utilization condition of 20 to 40 percent average of native key forage species within each key area is desired.

Maintaining riparian stubble heights of 3 inches or more during the entire growing season on sedges is desired.

Monitor for these standards through key species utilization in key areas and within riparian areas. Key species within the key areas have been identified, and these are what the forage utilization standard will be applied to. The following are the key forage species by vegetation type found.

**Table 3 - Key forage species by vegetation type.**

Location	Key Grass Species
Pinon Juniper/ Sagebrush	Western Wheatgrass Blue Grama Black Grama Galleta Crested Wheatgrass
Ponderosa Pine	Arizona Fescue Kentucky Bluegrass Mountain Muhly
Mixed Conifer	Arizona/Thurber Fescue Kentucky Bluegrass Oat Grasses
Mountain Meadow	Arizona/Thurber Fescue Kentucky Bluegrass Oat Grasses
Riparian	Red Top Kentucky Bluegrass Sedges

Distribution and Salt Plans: Herding and riding practices are encouraged to achieving proper livestock distribution on the allotment, and to provide the fullest use of the grazing season. Salt must be placed out of bottoms, away from water, roads, forest system trails, and recreational sites in an effort to distribute animals throughout each pasture and encourage animals to roam throughout. Proper salt placement and monitoring is important in achieving proper distribution. Salt should be placed in areas of historical light use. No permanent salt grounds will be established, once salt is used up, another suitable area will be found for salt, and livestock should be shown where the new salt grounds are. Any salt improperly placed will be picked up by the Ranger, and can be claimed at the district office.

Unauthorized use (trespass) will be subject to Forest Service Regulations. Violations will be handled through the Questa District Office and permitted owners are encouraged to participate or report any such violations.

All grazing Bill for Collections must be paid before placing any permitted livestock onto the National Forest lands.

## Monitoring

Both the Forest Service and the permittee are responsible for monitoring use and stubble height on the allotment to manage within specified utilization standards.

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If areas within a pasture or the pasture as a whole begin to approach the identified stubble heights, then the remaining key areas will also be monitored and the pasture inspected to determine overall use patterns.

Monitoring items such as distribution patterns, range readiness, cattle numbers, forage use levels, salting practices, and condition of improvement will be evaluated. A District Range Inspection Report will be completed to document what was seen while out on the allotment every time Forest Service range personnel visit the allotment. Refer to Attachment 4, "Range Inspection Report".

Ocular Utilization estimates are done on the allotment using the Ocular Estimate Method, and Key Browse Species. Refer to Attachment 5, "R3-2200-OEB" for this form to be completed. These are done by Forest Service range personnel to document any information gathered during an allotment visit.

Range personnel will also take photographs of key areas, retake any established photo points, read old study plots and/or transects, and conduct utilization/production studies when these are scheduled.

Monitoring by allotment permittees is very important. Visiting and/or having conversations with the permittees about the allotment's forage conditions can be discussed through in person dialogue or by telephone conversations.

Monitoring and compliance inspections are done on range improvements within the allotment and document in our allotment inspections reports. Range improvements information is kept track of in the IWEB DATABASE SYSTEM.

Allotment inspections and monitoring is done on horseback within each of the pastures in the allotment. Permittees and Forest Service conduct these inspections together.

### **Range Improvements**

It is important that you inspect and maintain the assigned allotment boundary fences, interior pasture division fences, stock tanks, springs, cattle guards and other structural improvements prior to livestock entering the allotment or pasture. Range improvements in the "entry pasture" must be in good functioning condition prior to the June 1st entry date. All other pasture fences and waters must be maintained prior to livestock movement into the next scheduled pasture(s).

In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to standard, you should notify the range personnel so we can schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. An inspection of your allotment prior to the entry date will be made to determine if maintenance is adequate.

**Table 4 – Range, Watershed, or Permittee Improvement Projects.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Kind &amp; Number</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Valle Vidal and RCCLA ABF</b>	<b>Allotment boundary fence (ABF)</b>	<b>West Side</b>	<b>Completed in 2006</b>	<b>Monitor and check for maintenance in 2007</b>
<b>Water Sources</b>	<b>Existing water</b>	<b>Allotment</b>	<b>On-going</b>	<b>Identify and GPS all existing water</b>

	<b>sources</b>	<b>wide</b>		<b>sources within the allotment boundaries for future planning. F.S. &amp; permittees to work together on this.</b>
<b>Rincon Windmill</b>	<b>1 existing windmill</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding is available.</b>
<b>Middle Windmill</b>	<b>Recon stocktanks</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding becomes available.</b>
<b>Medcalf Windmill</b>	<b>Recon stocktanks</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding becomes available.</b>
<b>Lookout Windmill</b>	<b>Recon stocktanks</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding becomes available.</b>
<b>Trap Windmill</b>	<b>Recon stocktanks</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding becomes available.</b>
<b>Betty Lakes</b>	<b>Recon stocktanks</b>	<b>East Side</b>	<b>Identified for repair and/or total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with Jose T. on 8/28/03 about this needing reconstruction and will proceed to repair when funding becomes available.</b>
<b>Fence(s)</b>	<b>Boundary, Interior fence(s)</b>	<b>Allotment wide</b>	<b>Identify fence(s) needing total reconstruction</b>	<b>Per conversation with permittees to help identify those fence(s) either boundary or interior for to get these done when funding becomes available. Identify on GIS map.</b>

## **Fence Maintenance**

It is important that you inspect and maintain the assigned fences and water developments in the “entry pasture” to a good functioning condition prior to the **June 1<sup>st</sup> entry date**. All other pastures fences and water developments must be maintained prior to livestock movement in to the next schedule pasture(s).

In the event these improvements can not be brought up to standard, you should notify the range personnel. An inspection of your allotment prior to the entry date will be made to determine if maintenance is adequate.

If you have a need to cut fence stays or posts while you are maintaining your fences on your allotment, you can get authorization to cut these materials by obtaining a Free Use Permit from the range personnel at the Questa Ranger District.

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## Allotment Status

At the present time direction for management on the allotment is being documented in the Annual Operating Instructions. According to the new Forest Plan Implementation this allotment is scheduled for environmental analysis, NEPA process in the year **2008**. Production-utilization studies and vegetative data gathering is planned for **2007**.

Open and positive communication is encouraged. Feel free to contact the range personnel if you have any questions or problems. They will be happy to discuss allotment management, on the ground status, Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and possible changes in allotment management.

## Special Instructions

**COUNTING:** All livestock belonging to each permittee must be branded (cows/calves & bulls) with permittee of record's individual personal brand(s). **Mandatory testing for any bull entering the National Forest will be required by permittees on the Carson National Forest. "Compliance with NM Statewide Regulations, NMAC 21.30.6 Bovine Trichomoniasis, effective June 17, 2005 hereby becomes a term and condition of the USFS grazing permit"**

Cattle would be inspected and counted @ the Ring Ranch corrals as livestock are unloaded. Actual cattle numbers placed on the Valle Vidal Allotment by permittee will be obtained from the Association President after all livestock have been placed by the Association.

## Appeal Statement

This Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) is hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit. The annual operating instructions (AOI) give specific direction in the management of this grazing unit. The permitted owners using this allotment are encouraged to provide input in order to bring about proper and continued wise use of these renewable natural resources. Any diversion from this plan may put the Term Grazing Permit in jeopardy. If a change is needed, approval from the District is required.

If you have any questions concerning this plan please let the District Ranger know. Enjoy the use of your National Forest and the grazing unit assigned to you this season.

This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90. In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).

A notice of appeal must be filed with the Forest Supervisor, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta, Taos, New Mexico 87571, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice

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Attachment 2: Actual Use Information

Table 6

Pasture	Planned Livestock Number & Class	Planned Use Date On	Planned Use Date Off	Actual Use Date On	Actual Use Date Off
McCrystal	532 head of c/c Less 332 of Jose T's	June 1	June 20		
Whiteman Vega	864 head of c/c	June 21	July 11		
North Ponil (Includes Look-Out Canyon)	864 head of c/c	July 12	July 31		
Beatty Lakes	864 head of c/c	Aug. 1	Aug. 20		
La Cueva	864 head of c/c	Aug. 21	Sept. 4		
Comanche	864 head of c/c	Sept. 5	Sept. 14		
La Belle	864 head of c/c	Sept. 15	Oct. 1		
Valle	864 head of c/c	Oct. 2	Oct. 15		

Number of Livestock (Head) counted on \_\_\_\_\_.

Number of Livestock (Head) lost \_\_\_\_\_.

Report of Livestock Losses

Livestock Class	Poisonous Plants	Predators	Other	Total Losses

**Attachment 3: Range Readiness Report**

Allotment: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant development of major forage species.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Soil moisture status.

Range Ready? \_\_\_\_\_

Are the fences cow-proof and properly maintained?

Are other range improvements (stock tanks, trick tanks, pipelines, windmills, etc) maintained to permit standards?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment 3-A Title 2200 Range Management

2221.3 – Range Readiness Standards. The following standards will be used on the Santa Fe National Forest and are applicable on the Carson National Forest for determining range readiness:

### Grasses

- Kentucky Bluegrass (Popr) - Panicles fully open
- Mutton Bluegrass (Pofe) - Plants maturing
- Western Wheatgrass (Agsm) - Six inches or more in height
- Junegrass (kocr) - Plants heading out
- Timber Oatgrass (DANT) - In full bloom
- Mountain Muhly (Mumo) - Headed out
- Arizona Fescue (Fear) - 8” or more in height, heading out

### Grasslike

- Carex spp. (CARE) - Seed Formed

### Forbs

- Yarrow (Acla) - Heads evident
- Lupine (LUPI) - Flower buds evident
- Dandelion (TARA) - Most plants seed disseminated
- Low Larkspur (DELP) - Full bloom
- Golden Pea (Thpi) - Full bloom

### Browse

- Mountain Mahogany (CERC) - Fully leaved
- Serviceberry (Amut) - Fruit forming
- Aspen (Potr) - Fully leaved – deep green
- Ribes (RIBE) - Flowering 50% or more
- Snowberry (SYMP) - Flower buds evident

Use a combination of species and plants rather than a single plant or species as a guide to range readiness. Apply these standards to representative range areas. These standards have primary application under season-long and simple deferred-rotation grazing systems involving only two pastures.

**Attachment 4: Questa Ranger District**

YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

RANGE INSPECTION REPORT \_\_\_\_\_ ALLOTMENT

Forage condition in \_\_\_\_\_ unit(s). Photo taken Y or N.

Soil Moisture Conditions on the Allotment.

Overall Range Conditions (Dry or Moist Soil Conditions).

Water Availability on the Allotment.

Deterioration Range Conditions on the Allotment (soil compaction occurring).

Livestock Location (area).

Riparian Conditions (livestock present)

Did permittee attend? Yes or No \_\_\_\_\_.

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