

 **Forest Service**  
**Pacific Southwest Region 5**

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NATIONAL FOREST GRAZING  
ALLOTMENTS AND STATUS OF  
RANGELANDS  
TOM FROLLI

CA BOF- RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY MARCH 8, 2016  
SACRAMENTO, CA

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**Forest Service Range Program Update**

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- Overview on Status of Grazing on NFS Lands
- Active, Vacant and Closed Grazing Allotments
- Funding for Rangeland Improvements/Restoration
- Process when proposing restoration partnerships
- Process used to minimize impacts to grazing permittees during restoration or habitat enhancement efforts
- Policy on grazing post-fire



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**Overview of R5 Grazing Program**

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- 16 of 17 National Forests have grazing programs.
- 20,802,641 NFS land acres in California.
- 7,683,502 NFS land acres in Active Allotments
- There are 348 permittees on 486 active allotments authorized 297,480 AUMs.
- There are about 50 range and other resource specialists working in grazing administration (27 RM Specialists).

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**Summary of USFS Rangeland Conditions**

- Overall, these results show positive trends in range condition in meadows. Especially considering the last 10 years have been dry.
- *At least 69%* of key meadow sites are in satisfactory condition.
- The percentage of sites in satisfactory condition will be higher when we rate dry meadow sites separately from wet and moist meadow sites.
- These scores likely reflects the general condition of meadows across the FS lands where grazing is occurring.

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**Status of Active, Vacant and Closed Allotments**

There are a total of 742 grazing allotments in R5:

- 486 Active Allotments @ 66%.
- 210 Vacant Allotments @ 28%
- 45 Closed Allotments @ 6%

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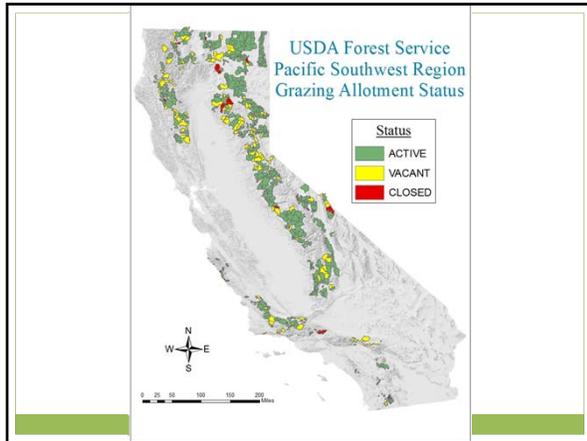
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### Reasons given for vacant status

Permit was terminated due to sale of base property or non-compliance and not waived to another qualified applicant

- NEPA required to reauthorize grazing and issue new permit.
- Allotment is no longer capable or suitable for grazing.
  - ✦ **Lack of water or forage due to encroachment of brush or timber**
  - ✦ **Conflicts with other resources that preclude grazing i.e. T&E or other special status species, etc.**
- Other reasons include: increased human conflict (housing development, traffic), loss of infrastructure (fences, corrals, cabins), high elevation/short season, too small to be viable, private in holdings no longer owned by livestock operator.

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### Summary of Viable Vacant Allotments

A 2012 questionnaire of rangeland specialists responsible for grazing administration provided the following collective opinion on 210 vacant allotments:

- 145 of 210 vacants (69%) have potential for partial or full reactivation; including use as forage reserves or mergers with adjoining active allotments.
- 65 of 210 (31%) vacants are recommended for closure.

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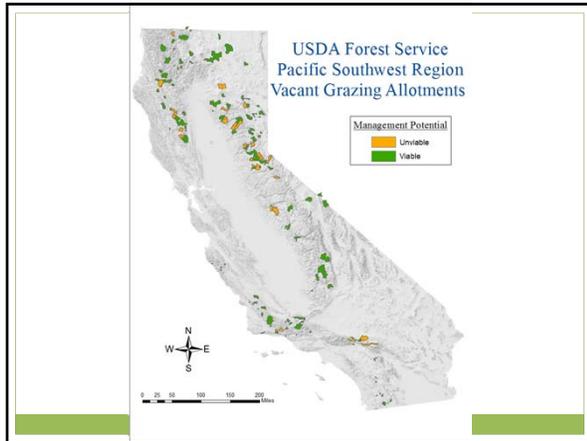
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### Grazing Allotment NEPA Status 2015

- 322 of 486 Actives (66%) are NEPA sufficient.
- 164 of 486 Actives (34%) are not NEPA sufficient.
- 37 of 210 Vacants (18%) are NEPA sufficient.
- 173 of 210 Vacants (82%) are not NEPA sufficient.

359 of 696 active/vacant allotments - NEPA sufficient

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### Forest Service grazing allotment NEPA status and completions through 2015, PSWQ Region 5

Total % Complete (Not dbase):	% Active Complete	% Vacant Complete	Total Allotments	Total w/ NEPA	Total w/o NEPA	Total Active Allotments	Active Allots. w/ NEPA	Active Allots. w/o NEPA	Total Vacant Allotments	Vacant Allots. w/ NEPA	Vacant Allots. w/o NEPA
52%	66%	18%	696	359	337	486	322	164	210	37	173

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### Funds Available for Allotment Improvements and Rangeland Restoration

Authorized Range Management funds in FY2015:

- Range Management NFRG @ \$3,115,457
  - Primarily salary and permit administration, planning and monitoring
  - \$11,000 was assigned to meadow restoration.
- Range Betterment RBRB @ \$275,176
  - FY2015 @ \$129,152. Total account includes carryover from FY2013 and FY2014
  - 57% of the total allocation and carryover were spent in FY2015
- Vegetation and Watershed Restoration NFWW @ \$13,857,184
  - Historically about 5% to 8% has supported range personnel and activities
- There is a need to realign allotment improvements and rangeland restoration with current agency priorities – landscape restoration, resilient ecosystems, climate change.

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### R5 Ecological Restoration Leadership Intents

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/landmanagement/?cid=STELPRDB5308848>

- Goal is to retain/restore ecological resilience of the NFS lands to achieve sustainable ecosystems and ecosystem services.
- Major drivers of change define restoration needs:
  - Climate change and shifting hydrologic patterns
  - Increasingly dense and unhealthy forests
  - Rapidly growing human populations
  - Over-allocated of ecosystem services – especially water
  - Dramatic increase in large scale disturbance events – wildfires, floods, insect and disease outbreaks, invasive species.

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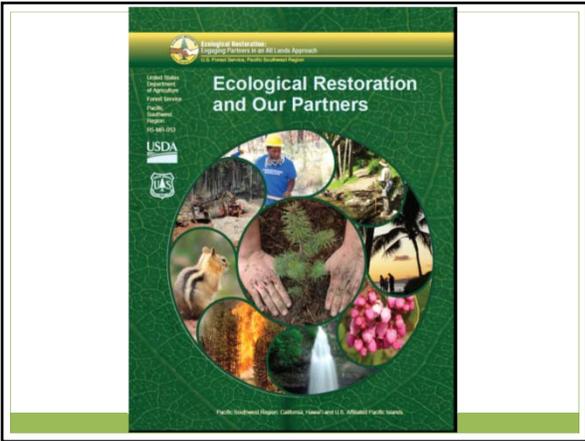
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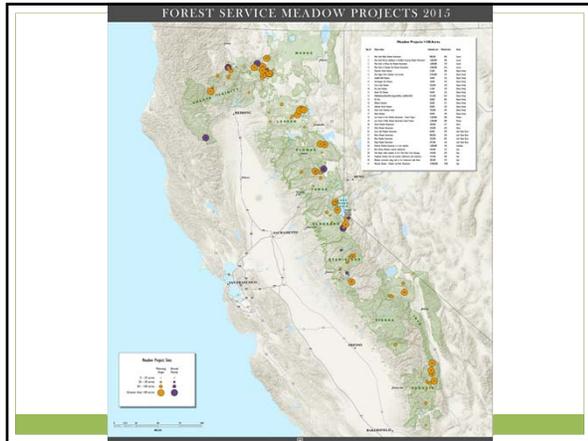
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### Drought and Wildfire in 2015

- Another record dry year throughout the west
- Adaptive changes needed to mitigate impacts to allotments/permittees
- There is a need to design grazing permits that are flexible, adaptive and allow quick response to seasonal change or wild fire
- Need to re-align allotment planning and rangeland restoration with current agency priorities – resilient ecosystems and landscape restoration.

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### 74 Wildfire Incidents on NFS Lands in 2015

- Six Rivers NF – Mad River & Gasquet 67,823 acres
- Klamath NF - Happy Camp Complex – 134,506 acres
- Shasta-Trinity NF – River Complex 77,081 acres
- Sierra NF – Rough Fire 151,623 acres

inciweb.nwcg.gov/




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### Fire Recovery and Restoration

- Salvage logging
- Recovery and Restoration
- Adaptive Grazing Strategies



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### Post Fire Grazing Management

- No National or Regional policy
- Local and site-specific determination
- Collaborative approach (IDT, permittees, Cooperative Extension, etc.)
- Based on best available science and information
- Monitoring and adaptive management

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### Post-fire Recovery Guidelines for Range Readiness

- **Grazing criteria after the fire – when, where, how?**
  - Based on percentages of burn severity areas w/suitable grazing
  - Amount and distribution of moderate to high severity burn
  - Species habitat concerns (TES)
  - Riparian conditions and concerns
  - Municipal water supplies
  - Cumulative watershed effects
  - Consideration for seeded areas or risk of invasive grasses
  - Lighter use standards if grazed soon after burn event
  - Livestock management options (fencing, herding, etc.)

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