

Summary of RMAC “Roadblocks to Grazing” at CRCC Summit Jan 12, 2017

Priorities/First Steps:

- Put together map of lands that we know of (mostly public: state, county, regional parks) that could benefit from grazing
 - Identify ungrazed acreage and ownership
 - prioritize based on location, fire threat, current conditions
 - Goal of what % we want grazed
 - Consider ownerships where there is a higher likelihood of making change
 - Connect bureaucracies to show how a similar landscape nearby under different management is working
 - Approach agencies with plan. Plan needs to outlast staff
- Put together grazing plan with goals
 - Boilerplate standards
 - Minimize monitoring to minimize costs
 - Look at NRCS grazing management plans
- Put together tour of grazed and ungrazed areas
 - Need diverse group – agencies, ranchers, UC, soil scientists, legislators
 - Location Ideas:
 - Hollister Hills SVRA (grazed) and Henry Coe state park (ungrazed) are close to each other
 - East Bay parks might manage grazed state land next to ungrazed Mt. Diablo
 - Cowboy Camp off highway 16 in Yolo county hasn’t been grazed for a long time
 - Tour close to Sacramento might be good to consider to get agency and capitol audience
- Create a definition of healthy rangelands/what we want rangelands to be and how they perform
 - What are the ecological functions we want, what do they look like, what are the strategies to achieve them?
 - What ecological functions do the state/agencies want to see on rangelands
 - We probably have the same goals (clean water, healthy soil, etc.)
 - May be same goal for livestock, wildlife, open space, etc.
 - What are indicators to look for on how rangelands are functioning that anyone can go out and see
 - Look at NRCS Rangeland Health Indicators
 - Ungrazed properties may not be meeting those functions/goals, and people may not realize it, may not know how to tell, may not care

Additional comments:

- Grazing is not currently a part of policy of many state agencies
 - Need to change policy
 - Agencies might not realize that there is a problem or anything is wrong
 - Need the decision makers to realize there is a problem
 - Show how grazing could be beneficial
 - How do we involve agencies in the discussion?
 - Look at when management plans come up for review and provide input

- Putting together a grazing program on a property requires a budget and a lot of staff time to put together bids, meet with grazers, do monitoring, etc.
- RCDs contract with some agencies to do land/lease management
- Ways to increase support of grazing
 - Educate public on benefits of grazing
 - Public can put pressure on agencies
 - Take the idea of benefits of grazing to recreation symposiums, Association of Parks, city and county associations
 - Homeowners with houses next to ungrazed rangelands in threat of burning up in fire could be good allies
- Need to look at the good examples of state properties that are grazed and how or why certain ones are grazed
- Santa Lucia Conservancy and Hollister Hills both removed grazing and later brought it back because people didn't like it ungrazed
- Some State Parks that area grazed
 - Bidwell Park in Chico
 - Pacheco Pass – James Bartolome might have grazing monitoring data from this park
 - Fort Ross
 - OHV Parks (ex. Hollister Hills – Point Blue has monitoring data)
 - Grazing is mandated on these due to fire hazard
 - These parks have more money to pay staff to manage/monitor grazing program
- Need to get more people in staff positions that have more grazing experience
- Work with CRM panel to offer associate certification for more individuals with different backgrounds and offer classes through extensions
- More counties need rangeland specialists

Options for Next Steps:

- Decide if we think we can achieve results and want to continue working on this or if the problem is deeper rooted than we can affect
- Start working on map of ungrazed lands in the state and identify key areas that could benefit from grazing and prioritize based on benefit and likelihood of success
- Start working on management plan/grazing plan template that could be adapted to wide range of properties
- Start planning tour of grazed and ungrazed properties with key invitees
- Start working on defining healthy rangelands and how they look, how they perform, and how to achieve that