



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E528T

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Grazing to Reduce Wildfire Risks on Forests

Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Forest; Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 year

Enhancement Description

Managing the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals for the purpose of balancing forage with maintaining ecological site condition and while reducing the risk of wildfire hazard on Western conifer forested ecological sites.

Criteria

- Must follow a written prescribed grazing plan for matching the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and/or browsing demand.
- Develop or update a forest management plan in consultation with a forester or Natural Resources professional to include grazing as part of the wildfire hazard reduction strategy.
- This enhancement can only be applied to forest stands where the trees are already properly spaced to meet the requirements of wildfire hazard risk reduction. See NRCS State stand density guidance.
- Grazing can be used as maintenance after an initial treatment of understory fuels or as the initial treatment when fine fuels are the dominating ground fuel load.

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- This enhancement will be applied to forested ecological sites which have had their historical wildfire return intervals and fire regimes disrupted.
- Removal of herbage will be in accordance with site production limitations, rate of plant growth, the physiological needs of forage plants, and the nutritional needs of the animals.
- Deferment (non-grazing period less than one year) and/or rest (non-grazing period equal or greater than one year) will be planned for critical periods of plant needs (such as post-planting or renovation, severe drought, etc.).
- Manage grazing and/or browsing animals to maintain adequate cover on sensitive areas (such as riparian areas, wetlands, habitats of concern, karst areas, etc.)
- Manage livestock movements based on rate of plant growth, available forage, and allowable utilization target. Develop and follow contingency plans to deal with episodic disturbance events.
- An approach to grazing management will target the identified level of fine fuel removal
 - while compensating the physiological needs of key forage species with post treatment deferrals and timing of repeat treatments.
- Plant functional groups providing structure and composition will be identified in the objectives of the prescribed grazing plan.
- Plan the intensity, frequency, timing and duration of grazing and/or browsing to treat understory vegetation to maintain and protect targeted native plant health and desired composition but also treat fuel loading during the fire season.
- Pruning the lower tree branches and treating the current slash on the ground is compatible with the both wildfire hazard reduction and grazing efficiency. To conduct these activities see the Conservation Practice Standards for 660 Tree and Shrub Pruning and 384 Woody residue treatment

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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

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Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, obtain a written grazing plan (NRCS can provide assistance as needed). Plan must include:
 - Clear goals and objectives of the plan, including identification of any specie(s) of concern and the plant functional groups providing forage.
 - Contingency plan for events that trigger adverse results.
 - Forage/Animal Balance.
 - A grazing plan narrative describing the basis for when livestock movement or rotation will occur, including deferment plans.
 - Contingency plans for forage shortfalls.
 - Monitoring locations, key species, and monitoring techniques.
 - Map identifying all grazing units including the targeted forest stands, water sources, and any riparian area or watershed drainage locations improved or maintained by this management.
- Prior to implementation, obtain or update the Forest Management Plan that identifies the stands who's trees have been (or will be prior to implementing this enhancement)properly spaced for wildfire hazard reduction to include grazing as part of their wildfire hazard reduction strategy.
- During implementation, keep the following documentation:
 - Livestock herd management records with seasonally important phenological stages of plant growth relative to species of concern.
 - Annually complete a forage utilization worksheet, such as NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (Code 528) job sheet.
 - Grazing intensity records for all key grazing areas that accommodate the criteria.
- During implementation, consult with NRCS to adjust and adapt the grazing plan to current conditions to verify the changes meet enhancement criteria. Changes to the grazing plan will be documented in writing.

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- After implementation, make all records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement
- After implementation, complete an assessment of the site with NRCS to determine effectiveness of the prescribed grazing plan for wildfire hazard reduction.

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical additional assistance to the participant as requested.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (Code 528) as it relates to implementing this enhancement, including any state approved job sheets or work sheets.
- Prior to implementation, assist the participant with development or update of a grazing plan and Forest Management Plan, if requested. If NRCS does not assist with plan development or update, the plan(s) will be reviewed by NRCS for approval prior to implementation to confirm the written objectives meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, explain the functionality of this enhancement with Enhancement E666E, if sequentially applicable.
- During implementation, as requested, assist the participant with adapting the grazing strategy and plan to current conditions.
- After implementation, review grazing plan, records, and documentation to verify the enhancement was implemented to meet the criteria.
- After implementation, complete an assessment of the site with the participant to determine effectiveness of the prescribed grazing plan for wildfire hazard reduction

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NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

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Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date





WASHINGTON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

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Additional Criteria for Washington

Forest Management Plans will meet the definition of acceptable forest management plans as defined in WA IN 190-380.

References for Washington Conservation Practice 528 (Prescribed Grazing) Enhancements

To meet criteria for the Prescribed Grazing Enhancements utilize one or more of the below references or Technical Notes:

- A list of **Certified Range Management Consultants** can be found on the Society for Range Management’s website under the Education Tab. <http://rangelands.org/>
- **Prescribed Grazing Practice Standard 528 and Fuel Break 383** can be found in FOTG Section 4, Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Prescribed Grazing (AC) (528) folder, <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA/documents>
- **National Range and Pasture Handbook**. Location: eDirectives,Handbooks,Title 190 – Ecological Sciences,Part 645 National Range and Pasture Handbook.
- **Ecological Site Descriptions and Forage Suitability Groups** can be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide** <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA/documents> in Section 2. For planning unit ecological sites and forage suitability groups see bullet below.
- **Soils, Ecological Sites and Forage Suitability Groups** for planning unit can be found by using the **Web Soil Survey** <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>
- **Prescribed Grazing (528) Design Worksheet/s**. This document has several usefull worksheets for developing grazing plans. It can be found in the **NRCS Field Office**



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Technical Guide Section 4 Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Prescribed Grazing (528) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA/documents>

- **WA NRCS Forestry Technical Note 10 Stand Density Guidance**, Table 2 for stand density guidance when grazing forests and reducing wildfire hazards. WA NRCS's e-FOTG Section 1
- Washington State's Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) is **Biology Technical Note 14 Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG)**. It can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide
- Other **Prescribed Grazing (528) documents** (e.g. *Utilization Monitoring Worksheets, Implementation Requirements, IR's, Planning Guides, etc.*) can also be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)** , in Section 4 Practice Standards and Supporting Documents /Prescribed Grazing (528) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA/documents>
- **Herbaceous Stubble Height as a Warning of Impending Cattle Grazing Damage to Riparian Areas**. Hall, Frederick C.; Bryant, Larry. 1995 Gen. Tech. Rep. PNW-GTR-362. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. 9 p. <https://www.treearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/3062>
- Use the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) **Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database** to identify priority wildlife and habitat in your area. <http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/phs/> in SectionI/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details>
- **Pasture and Grazing Management in the Northwest** PNW 614. 2010. Glenn E. Shewmaker, Mylen Bohle. <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw614>