



## CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

**E528133Z3 - Colorado**

## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### Improved grazing management for plant structure and composition through monitoring activities

**Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Range**

**RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Degraded Plant Condition**

**ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 year**

#### Enhancement Description

Three predominant key grazing areas are evaluated utilizing the Rangeland Health Assessment protocols to determine how well the ecological processes of the site(s) are functioning. Departure from reference categories will be determined, justified, and ratings described for soil and site stability, hydrologic function, and biotic integrity. Utilizing knowledge learned from this as a part of the ranch resource assessment, a qualifying professional, as detailed in the enhancement criteria, will provide recommendations or follow-up evaluations toward mitigating some of the degradation risks that are initially identified.

#### Criteria

- A written plan for matching the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and/or browsing demand will be followed.
- Maintain diversity of rangeland plants to optimize delivery of nutrients to the animals by incorporating the intensity, frequency, timing and duration of grazing and/or browsing needed as determined by a planning process that includes:
  - Clear objectives,



## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- A resource inventory including a forage inventory, structural improvements and existing resource conditions,
  - Grazing plan, and
  - All potential contingency plans.
- Supplemental feed and/or minerals will be balanced with the forage consumption to meet the desired nutritional level for the kind and class of grazing and/or browsing livestock.
  - Secure the services of an experienced, knowledgeable Certified Range Management Consultant, Certified Professional in Range Management, NRCS Technical Service Provider approved for CAP 110, or a non-affiliated consultant with a bachelor or higher level degree in range science or other closely-related plant science discipline and a minimum of five years' experience in rangeland conservation planning, monitoring, and consulting regarding use of rangeland improvement practices to select monitoring sites needed (three are required for this enhancement activity), assess rangeland health at these locations, provide all measured data collected, and assist in determining any areas that are potentially at risk of degradation.
  - Consider site vulnerability as determined by the rangeland health assessment when planning out future monitoring activities toward the goal of assessing range trend and management needs to secure long-term, desirable range trend.



## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### Documentation and Implementation Requirements

#### Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, acquire a Grazing Management Plan with all the following components: (provide plan to NRCS for review and approval)
  - Producer goals, objectives and resource concerns
  - Forage-animal balance sheet
  - Location and condition of structural improvements
  - Grazing plan for livestock movement
  - Watering sites with availability, quantity and quality
  - Contingency plan
  - Forage inventory
  - Monitoring plan
  
- During implementation, secure a Certified Range Management Consultant, Certified Professional in Range Management, NRCS Technical Service Provider approved for CAP 110, or a non-affiliated consultant with a bachelor or higher level degree in range science or other closely-related plant science discipline and a minimum of five years' experience in rangeland conservation planning, monitoring, and consulting regarding use of rangeland improvement practices to:
  - Select 3 monitoring sites to assess rangeland health.
  - Conduct Rangeland Health Assessments on these sites using the Interpreting Indicators for Rangeland Health manual. (Technical Reference 1734-6).
  - Develop a written recommendation identifying strategies for mitigating some of the degradation risks identified during the assessment.
  
- During implementation, identify key grazing areas and key forage species and monitor pastures for grazing utilization.
- During implementation, keep pasture/herd in/out records.
- During implementation, complete NRCS Trend Determination worksheet. Use National Range and Pasture Handbook Exhibit 4-6 or other pre-approved equivalent.
  
- During implementation, complete forage utilization jobsheet at the end of the grazing season for NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (528). Use CO 528 Utilization Worksheet or other pre-approved equivalent.
  
- After implementation, provide the following items for review by NRCS:
  - Range Health Assessment Sheets with all field notes and locations.



# CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Written documentation of range professionals follow up actions and recommendations.
- Records of pasture/herd in/out dates.
- Completed Trend worksheet.
- Completed forage utilization jobsheet.
- Written modifications to grazing managment plan and monitoring plan to address resource concerns identified during the range health assessments.

**NRCS will:**

- As needed, provide technical additional assistance to 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 Trend worksheet and forage utilization jobsheet.
- Prior to implementation, provide Ecological Site Descriptions or Forage Suitability Groups as requested.
- After implementation, review Range Health Assessment Evaluation sheets and written recommendations made by range professional.
- After implementation, verify implementation of the grazing management plan by reviewing grazing/herd in/out records, forage utilization jobsheet, trend worksheet, and changes made to address resource concerns identified during the range health assessments.

**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.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contract Number \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Applied \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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