Improved grazing management for plant structure and composition through monitoring activities

**Montana Clarification**
This enhancement requires that someone with the qualifications outlined in the “Enhancement Description” conducts a rangeland inventory, sets up at least 3 permanent range monitoring sites in key areas, and provides the producer with management recommendations. The consultant or NRCS will use that information to work with the producer to develop a planned grazing rotation and contingency plan in accordance the Montana Prescribed Grazing (528) Standard, Specification, and Job Sheet.

Grazing management must be implemented under this enhancement for a minimum of 3 years in order to address the identified resource concern(s). If necessary, the first contracted year can be used to obtain the services and receive the products of the qualified range consultant (or equivalent), then, the following 3 years can be contracted for the implementation of the grazing rotation and monitoring.

Current NRCS employees do not qualify as “non-affiliated consultants” regardless of their experience or education.

**Montana Criteria and Required Documentation:**
- The consultant or range professional will conduct a range inventory to determine carrying capacity of the ranch, range health and trend, identify key grazing areas, identify areas of that are at risk of degradation (sensitive), and compile recommendations for management.
- The consultant or range professional will select and set up at least 3 permanent monitoring sites that are potentially at risk of degradation. The consultant will assess rangeland health using Range Health Assessment protocol at these sites.
- The consultant or NRCS will work with the producer(s) to outline their goals and develop a planned grazing rotation that meets Montana NRCS Prescribed Grazing (528) Standards and Specifications. As per the Montana Prescribed Grazing (528) Specification, the grazing plan will include contingency and monitoring plans.

**Documentation Requirements:**
- Producer/Ranch Objectives
- Rangeland Inventory from qualified consultant, professional, or TSP that includes:
  - Structural improvements and existing resource conditions and concerns
  - Rangeland Health Assessments and determinations of Range Trend (MT-ECS-2)
  - Ecological Site Descriptions or Range Health Reference Sheets
Enhancement E528133Z3

Grazing Land Inventory Summary Sheet (MT CPA-18A or equivalent)
- Forage, Roughage, and Livestock Balance Sheet (MT-CPA-18B, or equivalent)
- Riparian Assessment (Environmental Technical Note, MT-2), if applicable.
- Map of key grazing areas and sensitive areas
- All other data and photographs collected by the qualified consultant, professional, or TSP on the property
- Recommendations for management

- A planned prescribed grazing rotation that meets Montana NRCS Prescribed Grazing (528) Standards and Specifications.
- Planned Forage, Roughage, and Livestock Balance Sheet (MT-CPA-18B) if different than existing.
- Contingency Plan
- Monitoring Plan, the monitoring plan must include:
  - Rangeland Monitoring Worksheet (MT-ECS-118)
  - Planned Utilization Levels at Key Areas (MT-ECS-414 or equivalent)
  - At least 3 permanent monitoring sites in areas at risk for degradation in which Range Health Assessments have been conducted and their associated Monitoring Study Location and Documentation Worksheet (MT-ECS-118A or equivalent).
- Grazing Records that show that the applied grazing management met Montana Prescribed Grazing (528) Standards and Specifications and accommodated the criteria outlined in the enhancement.
- Monitoring Data collected from the installed site(s) as per the Monitoring Plan, and, if apparent, how the monitoring data will or was used to adjust the grazing plan in order to meet the identified objectives.

**Montana Specifications and References:**
NRCS [Montana Standard, Specification, and Job Sheet 528](at: Montana, County, Section IV, Conservation Practices folder, Prescribed Grazing folder).

Montana Soil Survey or [Web Soil Survey](Ecological Site Descriptions) and/or Range Health Reference Sheets (if available) or Consult the NRCS Area Rangeland Management Specialist if an Ecological Site Description is not available.

[Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health](Technical Reference 1734)

The following Range and Pasture forms on MT NRCS website:
- Rangeland Inventory Worksheet Trend (MT-ECS-2)
- Grazing Land Inventory Summary Sheet (MT CPA-18A)
• Forage, Roughage, and Livestock Balance Worksheet (MT-ECS-18B)
• Rangeland Monitoring Worksheet (MT-ECS-118)
• Proper Grazing Use (MT-ECS-414)
• Monitoring Study Location and Documentation Worksheet (MT-ECS-118A)
• Rangeland Utilization Estimates (MT-ESC-119)

Consultant or Professional Conservation Planning and Monitoring Service Provider options (non-extensive):

• Certified Rangeland Management Consultants
• Certified Professional in Range Science
• NRCS Technical Service Provider approved for CPA 110
• Certified Forage and Grassland Professional
• Non-affiliated consultant with a bachelor or higher level degree in range science or other closely related field with minimum of 5 years’ experience in rangeland conservation planning.

NRCS Riparian Assessment Method (Environmental Tech Note MT-2-Revision 1)

Montana NRCS WHEG (Biology Technical Note MT-19)

Incompatible Enhancements
All other 528 Associated Enhancements

Applicable Amount
Applies to grazed rangeland

I acknowledge that I have read and understand all that is required for the implementation of this CSP Enhancement Activity.

_________________________________  ____________________________
Contract participant                          Date