

What did you learn from the presentation that will help Santa Teresa County Park be successful?

Central Coast Rangeland Coalition 2011 Spring Membership Meeting

*“Grazing Public Lands for Conservation Planning and Improving Cooperation
between Public Agencies and Ranchers”*

April 21, 2011 meeting, IBM Almaden Research Center

Compiled by Don Rocha, Natural Resource Program Supervisor, Santa Clara County Parks

Summary of Responses from Break-Out Groups (What did you learn from the presentation that will help Santa Teresa County Park be successful?" and "How did you feel about it?").

Dark bullets are responses by participants; light bullets are answers from Parks.

- What I learned at the meeting was monitoring and how agencies were going to monitor the Grazing Plan.
- An additional consideration that should be made is that some people are less vocal in the community and they enjoy seeing cattle on the landscape providing bucolic rural landscape experience and feeling of escape from urban grind. Cattle are a focal point in landscape photography.
- Can the County fencing policy be changed? Has this been considered?
 - As mentioned in the meeting, electric fencing has been used in parks under restricted conditions.
- I think the Santa Teresa County Park Grazing Management Plan will be successful as it balances ecological need, practical operations and outreach.
- I work for a non-profit and since I know there is a science-based plan with outreach component, feel like I can help.
- Using the neighbors to help with fencing can be a useful tool.
- Learned that when given sufficient information and a sound approach to addressing the multitude of issues/constraints, that a feasible grazing plan can be developed and implemented. Learned that grazing is not only compatible, but also beneficial and important to natural resource management.
- The information, scientific approach and flexibility of the plan is what will help make this plan successful
- Learned the public participation & thoroughness of the planning effort.

What did you learn from the presentation that will help Santa Teresa County Park be successful?

- Learned that balancing recreation and grazing can make both the park managers and the public happy and meet their goals and objectives.
- Concern about the length of time to complete analysis and adopt the plan.
- Cattle good help. A lot of questions about flexibility of plan and management. It seems to be very complex and highly expensive.
- Learned about some of the major issues that should be clarified in the plan. I was impressed with the County's challenges to manage all its parks.
- I learned the goals driving the development of the plan are driven largely by laws and regulations
- No distinction between tool of grazing and animal impact and their various effects.
- This makes planning in soundest way difficult
- Want to know the monitoring parameters that will be used specifically in a management decisions.
- Having an adjacent livestock operator that will be able to use Santa Teresa County Park lands to incorporate into their operation seems like a great way for grazing program to be successful.
- Need to address the neighbors/public concerns
- Learned that issues around grazing and managing public lands are complex and involve multiple issues and stakeholders. What was most important is communicating in the written plan forum with very clear goals. All of this is informed by detailed resource analysis and legwork. Cooperation of stakeholders and neighbors is critical. One concern is that I did not hear profitability addressed. Will this eventually benefit both public and grazer?
- Identify all stakeholders needs and concerns and try to address.
- Work with ranchers in the area.
- A comprehensive plan is good. Mapping/GIS is a helpful tool. Developing a plan for a small area that meets a variety of habitat, species, and public, rancher needs.
- What are the recreational uses-what about dogs?
 - Dogs are allowed on park lands on a 6-foot leash and under control.
- Good water access will be good for controlling animal movement. Impressive plan with monitoring component.
- See a challenge of getting the public to recognize that grazing is valuable.
- The cooperative effort will lead to improved habitat, return of wildflowers and healthy environment.
- Grazing is needed, but infrastructure is too fixed and expensive.
- Grazing on serpentine grasslands can be a primary tool for bringing back the host plants of species of concerns. Goldfields like cattle.
- A lot of effort has been devoted to planning. I learned that some input was gotten from ranchers-it should be of value. There are great opportunities to prove the value of grazing.
- There was a lot of thoughtfulness in planning to meet the complex ecological needs/recreational needs of the park. I really liked the idea of dividing the fields in "habitat" and "auxiliary" fields. This allows for an easy way for a land manger to meet the sensitive needs of the "habitat" areas.

What did you learn from the presentation that will help Santa Teresa County Park be successful?

- Thought about multi-use on the facility from grazing and recreational perspectives will prevent some future conflicts. An outreach / educational arm of this project will help the public understand what is going on. Also will help them understand funding for this in this economic climate. Considering all the opinions will hopefully justify the money.
- Planning process is extensive, shouldn't have surprises or delays.
- The use of neighboring ranchers and having auxiliary pastures will help keep management planning more flexible.
- Consider opportunity to educate as well as inspire public about benefits/importance/reasons for grazing.
- Learned a lot about how planning has to take place in order to reintroduce cattle. The separate pastures are an important aspect to a successful grazing program it may be difficult for the ranchers, but it is a necessity due to public, geology, and water.
- Learned that during the planning phase, the team focused on defining goals and performance standard rather than special tactics and practices. This seems to be a wise decision progress can get bogged down in specifics.
- There are goals established and written down to guide the communications. No plan can be managed without goals.
- A science-based approach to resource management at SCC Parks using grazing as a management tool can be a model for land management elsewhere in existing parks.
- Learned there has been emphasis on collaboration with the operator who implements the plan. Our suggestion is to continue to have this collaboration for cost effective decision-making. Train cattlemen to monitor.
- We need more efficient ways to reintroduce livestock. Cost/benefit. Are you creating 'hotspots' where recreation and livestock will more likely run into conflict because of small pastures?
- Awareness of how the relationships will lead towards desired condition.
- Seasonally timed grazing should be further examined. Extensive fencing infrastructure projects should be further evaluated, and rotating supplementation sites could significantly aid livestock distribution.
- Can they use herder dogs to contain cattle in desired areas and out of restricted areas?
 - Parks allows the use of herder dogs.
- Learned that this study is necessary to educate everyone involved what it takes to maintain grasslands.
- I would like to know more about the performance standards.
- A 1992 plan for grazing is still satisfactory nearly 20 years later.
- Learned that different management techniques that incorporate land management and recreational activities, while enhancing aesthetic values. Cooperation and partnerships are keys to success. Feel hopeful about the situation.

What did you learn from the presentation that will help Santa Teresa County Park be successful?

- Learned that there are significant opportunities for grazing to contribute to meeting the management goals of the park. I was left with questions related to the feasibility of eventually implementing the plan. Sounds like public education (RE: benefits of grazing) and fund raising will be in the works.
- Seemed as if they have not considered sheep as a management tool. In general, sheep operations require far less infrastructure and far more flexibility than cattle operations.
- Learned a significant amount of time has been devoted to evaluating public interaction with grazing in the park. I still wonder if grazing in a heavily used park will be politically palatable.
- Help keep weeds down or keep invasive plants down so future generations can see what the area looked like.
- I was left with more questions than answers. Dogs, why no electric fences? Where is the money going to come from for infrastructure?
- Important to have lessee who's willing to cooperate (not just neighbors, open to innovations). Plans do not have to be so complex in other places. It takes a long time to do planning and development of infrastructure. Important to bring together all groups. Interesting to see what issues go into a plan. Complex plan.