

Leases that Work for the Land, Landowners, Lessees, and Livestock

-Agenda-

Central Coast Rangeland Coalition Spring 2014 Membership Meeting

April 17, 2014

8:30 – 5:00

Elkhus Ranch, San Mateo County

Learning Objectives

1. Participants increase their understanding of key components of a grazing and stewardship leases and how these components may impact rangeland management and sustainability. Key components to be addressed: Pricing (fixed or bid; AUM or Acre); Lease Terms (perpetual or term); Rent credit or other incentives for stewardship services; tenant role (partner or manager or employee).
2. Participant will increase their understanding of how different landowner/tenant/land steward arrangements through leases (and alternatives to leases) may affect ranching sustainability, landowner-tenant relationships, and conservation outcomes.
 - a. Participants increase their understanding of strategies that provide for adaptation to climate change including drought.
 - b. Landowners increase their understanding of how different strategies influence ranching sustainability and positive conservation outcomes.
 - c. Ranchers (grazing tenants) increase their understanding of lease/alternatives to lease options, positioning them to advocate for terms that include sustainability, improving their competitiveness in leasing or alternative processes.
3. Participants contribute to a survey and group process to find common ground on recommendations for the key elements of those lease/easement arrangements for use in a publication and release as a CCRC "opinion paper" to increase understanding beyond this meeting.

Agenda

8:30 – 9:00 Registration and Coffee

9:00 Program Begins

Orientation & Introductions

Grazing Lease Basics

Elaina Cuzick, Real Property Manager, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

-Break-

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-after break-

What Conservation Theory Tells Us About Effective Grazing Lease Arrangements

Lawrence Ford, LD Ford Rangeland Conservation Science and Univ. of CA, Santa Cruz

Conservation Easements and Other Instruments: A Promising Alternative to Ranchland Leases

Bill Coleman, Earth Assets Group

Small group exercises

12:30 Lunch (provided by Elkhorn Slough Coastal Training)

1:30 Introduction to Turning Point Presentations on Lease Strategies Elements

Sheila Barry

(Turning point uses power point and clickers so the audience can interact with the presentation.)

Group Session #1: Lessee/ Landowner: Roles and Relationships

Bob Neale, Stewardship Director – Sonoma Land Trust

Group activity: Both before and after the session introductory presentation, audience members will select their answers and share their justifications for the following question:

To promote rancher sustainability and positive conservation outcomes what relationship is best?

Answers:

A. Partners i.e. share in the development of a grazing plan and specific decisions about its implementation.

B. Lessee acts as a Manager i.e. the grazing lessee develops and implements the grazing plan based on the landowners goals.

C. Lessee acts as an Employee i.e. the lessee implements management actions as provided by the landowners/ manager

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Group Session #2: Lease Price

Clayton Koopmann, Rangeland Ecologist, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Group activity: Both before and after the session introductory presentation, audience members will select their answers and share their justifications for the following question:

What is the best way to establish a grazing lease price to promote rancher sustainability and positive conservation outcomes?

Answers:

- A. Set price per AUM based on cattle market, adjusted annually
- B. Bid price per AUM based on highest bid and grazing tenant qualifications
- C. Bid price per Acre based on highest bid and grazing tenant qualifications
- D. Set price per Acre based on local rates as published in crop report or other

-Break-

Adding Flexibility for Adaptation to Change

Denise Defreese, Acting Wildlands Vegetation Manager, East Bay Regional Parks District

Group activity: Both before and after the session introductory presentation, audience members will select their answers and share their justifications for the following question:

What strategies are you most comfortable with/ least comfortable with to provide flexibility for adaptation to climate change

Answers:

- A. Grassbanking on the leased site
- B. Grassbanking off site
- C. "Sacrifice Areas" on the leased site
- D. Removing or adding cattle as necessary
- E. Conservative stocking
- F. Feeding areas on site

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Lease Terms

Ryan Nielson, Owner, H&N Enterprises

Group activity: Both before and after the session introductory presentation, audience members will select their answers and share their justifications for the following question:

While it is clear that long-term leases 5 years + are essential for rancher sustainability and positive conservation outcomes, if a lessee is meeting terms how long should they continue on the lease without competition? (Considerations to discuss value of experience versus opportunities for new/young ranchers.)

Answers:

- A. Indefinite options for renewal
- B. 5 years, plus 5 years option for renewal and then open competition
- C. 5 years, plus 5 years option for renewal and then competition with favor to current

Small group exercises

5:00

Program ends