Keeping Cattle and People at Home on the Range: Positive Livestock-Recreation Interactions

Elkhorn Slough Coastal Training Program
September 29th, 2015

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Central Coast Rangeland Coalition
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Today’s Overview

• Literature Review
  – Methods
  – History of grazing in California
  – Public lands management goals
  – Why are there cows in the park?
  – Potential outcomes of recreation and grazing

• Interview Data
  – Methods, Results

• How can we facilitate positive interactions?
Today’s Overview

• Literature Review
  – Methods
  – History of grazing in California
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  – Why are there cows in the park?
  – Potential outcomes of recreation and grazing

• Interview Data
  – Methods, Results

• Or, decrease negative interactions?
“Livestock-recreation interactions”

Encounters between

*livestock (or the effects of livestock)*

and

*recreationists (or the effects of recreation)*

*includes animals under the control of recreationists*
Methods

Literature Review

- scientific articles

DOI 10.1007/s00267-013-0216-4

Using Social Media to Discover Public Values, Interests, and Perceptions about Cattle Grazing on Park Lands

Sheila J. Barry
Methods

Literature Review
• scientific articles
• newspapers
Methods

Literature Review
• scientific articles
• newspapers
• newsletters

LOW STRESS CATTLE HANDLING

Fact Sheet
No. 16
March 2002
Methods

Literature Review
• scientific articles
• newspapers
• newsletters
• bulletins and reports

Outdoor Recreation Participation
in the United States—Projections to 2060
A Technical Document Supporting
the Forest Service 2010 RPA Assessment

J.M. Bowker, Ashley E. Askew, H. Ken Cordell,
Carter J. Betz, Stanley J. Zarnoch, and Lynne Seymour

Refs: 4
Methods

Literature Review
• scientific articles
• newspapers
• newsletters
• bulletins and reports
• books

Refs: 5
Methods

Literature Review
- scientific articles
- newspapers
- newsletters
- bulletins and reports
- books

Interviews
- ranchers

Photo Credits: NRCS (top); Vinee Tong, KQED (bottom)
Methods

Literature Review
• scientific articles
• newspapers
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• bulletins and reports
• books

Interviews
• ranchers
• consultants

Photo Credit: Holistic Management International
Methods

Literature Review
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Interviews
• ranchers
• consultants
• public lands managers

Photo Credit: VenturaCountyTrails.org
Methods

Literature Review
- scientific articles
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Interviews
- ranchers
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Products
- workshops and discussions
Methods

Literature Review
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Products
• workshops and discussions
• two journal articles
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• outreach article (CCRC, Rangeland Roundup)
Grazing in the West: An evolving approach

• Intensive use, extractive, production focused
Grazing in the West: An evolving approach

- Intensive use, extractive, production focused
- “Preservation” via grazing removal

Photo Credits left to right: eatkamloops.org; bushfiresmillpark; Josh Edelson

Refs: 6-7
Grazing in the West: An evolving approach

• Intensive use, extractive, production focused
• “Preservation” via grazing removal

• Working landscapes for **multiple benefits**
  – Sustainable multiple use
  – Economically viable
  – Protect from development
  – Support local communities
  – Reduce fire risk
  – Enhance ecosystem services

Refs: 6-8
Trends in Recreation & Grazing

• More people, more recreation\(^4\)
  – 7% more recreationists; 30% more recreation days
  – “Nature viewing” increases by 100 million visitors
• Rancher Challenges
  – No increase in livestock numbers\(^9\)
  – Liability / risk\(^10\)
  – Long-term drought, climate change\(^9,11\)
  – Grasslands at risk for development\(^9\)
• Keep graziers on the land
  – Private lands \(\rightarrow\) public lands ownership\(^9,11\)
  – Barriers to public lands’ grazing\(^10\)
• Recreation + grazing public lands
  \(\Rightarrow\) increasing potential for conflict\(^9\)

Public lands’ grazing linked to protection of open spaces and ecosystem services\(^12\)

Refs: 4, 9-12  Background Photo Credit: Merced County Events
Are public lands only for public uses?

Biological Diversity and Ecosystem Health
- Wildland-urban fire hazards
- Noxious weeds

Social and Cultural Services
- Accident-free visitor experiences
- Outdoor recreational opportunities
- Environmental education

Park Infrastructure
- Marijuana eradications
- Facilities and critical infrastructure

Working landscapes
- Sustainable livestock grazing
- Maximize revenue potential from leases

Refs: 13-15

Background
Photo Credit: coolhorsetrails.com
Positive Impacts of Grazing*

• Plants and ungulates co-evolved → some native plants adapted to grazing\textsuperscript{16-18}

Some native grasses that tolerate, or benefit from, well-managed grazing

California Oat Grass, \textit{Danthonia californica}
California brome, \textit{Bromus carinatus}
Blue wildrye, \textit{Elymus glaucus}
Red fescue, \textit{Festuca rubra}
Tufted hairgrass, \textit{Deschampsia cespitosa}
Meadow barley, \textit{Hordeum brachyantherum}

Ref: 16-18

Photo Credits (Public domain): a:c, e – Matt Lavin; d – James K. Lindsey; f – Kristian Peters
Positive Impacts of Grazing

Plants and ungulates co-evolved → some native plants adapted to grazing\textsuperscript{16-18}

Weed management

– Mediterranean weeds abundant\textsuperscript{19-20}
  • Dominant, unpleasant to navigate\textsuperscript{21}
  • Stickers / seeds may hurt animals\textsuperscript{22-23}
  • Native floral abundance and diversity suffers\textsuperscript{21}
  • Trophic cascades\textsuperscript{22-23}
Positive Impacts of Grazing

Photo Credits: a – Eddie B. Horvath; b – Shawna L. Bautista; c – UCANR; d:e – UC Regents (J.M. DiTomaso); f – Bert & Celeste Wilson; g – Kevin Cole
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– Fire hazard risks\(^{24-25}\)

Refs: 16-25

Photo Credits: left – cbsnews.com, 2014 California Wildfires; right – sfgate.com, California Wildfire
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  – Fire hazard risks\textsuperscript{24-25}
  – Landscape aesthetics\textsuperscript{20,26}
    • Golden hills of California?
    • Partly due to annual invasion
    • Woody encroachment

Refs: 16-26
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• Alternative to repeated burns\textsuperscript{26-27}, mowing\textsuperscript{27,29}, herbicide\textsuperscript{28}, tillage\textsuperscript{27,29}, tarping\textsuperscript{29}, hired goats\textsuperscript{30-31}

Refs: 16-31
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- Educational opportunities\textsuperscript{32-33}

Refs: 16-33
Negative Impacts of Grazing*

• Potential ecological impacts
  – Often attributed to grazing\textsuperscript{34-36}

\textbf{Photo Credits:} a – Tom Choma; b – Greg Schneider; c – AIZON; d – Mike Hudak

Refs: 34-36
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• Potential ecological impacts
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  – Perceived? Must monitor.\textsuperscript{37}

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Photo Credits: Greg Schneider

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- Logistic\textsuperscript{36-37}
  - Fencing

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Photo Credits: left - Greg Schneider; right – mandhanawires.com
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  – Movement of animals
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• Logistic
  – Fencing
  – Movement of animals
  – Animal presence

• Impacts on recreationists and pets37
  – Spooked horses, dogs, or people

Photo Credit: Ron Atkinson

Refs: 34-37
Negative Impacts of Grazing*

Real or perceived? 37

Photo Credit: IntelliHub

Ref: 37
Positive Impacts of Recreation*

- Enjoyment of natural open spaces

Photo Credit: County of Sonoma
Positive Impacts of Recreation*

- Enjoyment of natural open spaces
- Wildlife and floral habitat

Stock pond for California Tiger Salamander
Photo Credit: Alameda County RCD

Coastal prairie wildflowers
Photo Credit: J. Coleman
Positive Impacts of Recreation*

- Recreational opportunities
- Psychological benefits of being in nature
- Health benefits of physical activity
- Increase connection to natural world

Photo Credits: a - ForestWander.com; b:c – Public domain; d USFWS
Negative Impacts of Recreation*

- Trail damage

Photo Credits: left – Phil Riggan; right – Jim Bell

Reviewed in Ref: 39
Negative Impacts of Recreation*

- Trail damage
- Damage to infrastructure, sabotage

Reviewed in Ref: 39

Photo Credit: besllcorners
Negative Impacts of Recreation*

• Trail damage
• Damage to infrastructure, sabotage
• Vandalism and crime

Photo Credits: left – Anne Berleant; right – Inside Bay Area News

Reviewed in Ref: 39
Negative Impacts of Recreation*

- Trail damage
- Damage to infrastructure, sabotage
- Vandalism and crime
- Introduction of weedy plant species

Reviewed in Ref: 39

Photo Credits: left – USDA; right – NPS
Negative Impacts of Recreation*

- Trail damage
- Damage to infrastructure, sabotage
- Vandalism and crime
- Introduction of weedy plant species
- Trash
Objectives

Literature Review – Interviews – Surveys

• Can livestock grazing and public recreation coexist on public lands?

• What are potential downsides to concurrent recreation and grazing?

• What are potential benefits to concurrent recreation and grazing?

• How to facilitate positive relationships?
Interview Results

• n = 15, contact me if interested!
• Clicker Survey data
• 13 questions (similar to clicker survey)
  – Compatibility of recreation and grazing
  – Types of recreation
  – Barriers to grazing on public lands
  – Trade-offs
  – Positive interactions
Are livestock grazing and recreation compatible on public lands?

• Yes – 100%
  – Enjoyment of livestock
  – Public education re: managed grazing as a tool
  – Ecosystem services

• Caveats
  – Problematic public disconnect to natural world
  – Poor management could have negative ecological effects

Rancher
“How to make interactions positive? PLAN for it!”
Are livestock grazing and recreation compatible on public lands?

**Rancher**

“You have to do everything you can to reduce liability and conflict. If you don’t understand that, you shouldn’t be on public ground. You are there as a *PRIVILEGE*... Anything and everything you do has to reduce or eliminate conflict, and this is what it is about on public ground…”

**Rancher**

“[Cattle grazing on public lands] may not be easy, but the whole key is that the cattle owner and the land agency need to work together... very little *COMMUNICATION* is often the problem.”
What types of recreational activities have you observed on grazed lands?

Percentage of land managers observing recreational activities on grazed lands in the Central Coast of California, based on phone, in-person, and email interviews.

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<th>Activity</th>
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* Most common problematic interactions with livestock
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* Most common problematic interactions with livestock
** Most common ≠ most problematic all the time

Are outcomes generally negative then?
Have outcomes been generally positive, negative, mixed, or neutral?

- **Positive – 70%**
  - Enjoyed public interaction; public enjoyed livestock
  - *Plan* for it

- **Negative – 15%**
  - Too much work and stress; too little return
  - Sabotage, economic losses
  - Openly hostile recreationists (rare)

- **Depends – 15%**
  - Context- or region-specific

---

*East Bay Regional Parks District*

18 (reported) incidents / 4 years

0.000225%
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Sunol Regional Wilderness
A few out of millions is an “unacceptable risk”
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Have outcomes been generally positive, negative, mixed, or neutral?

Rancher

“Overwhelmingly it has been a positive relationship between me, the cattle, and the enjoyment of the visiting public. But it takes only a couple of negative encounters to leave a bad lasting impression with me.”
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

- Engaged recreationists
  - Answer Q’s
  - Demonstrate safe interactions
  - Make allies
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

• Engaged recreationists
• Participated in workshops, tours, seminars
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

- Engaged recreationists
- Participated in workshops, tours, seminars
- Stockmanship
  - Training and habituation
  - Breeding for temperament, culling
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

- Engaged recreationists
- Participated in workshops, tours, seminars
- Stockmanship
- **Avoidance strategies**
  - Avoid high traffic days or areas
  - Change locations during breeding and calving seasons
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

- Engaged recreationists
- Participated in workshops, tours, seminars
- Stockmanship
- Avoidance strategies
- **Signage**
  - Where are livestock
  - How to interact
  - Who to call if emergency
  - What *is* an emergency?
  - Why graze?
How do you currently encourage positive interactions?

92% actively encouraged positive interactions

- Engaged recreationists
- Participated in workshops, tours, seminars
- Stockmanship
- Avoidance strategies
- Signage
- Websites, social media, articles
- Provide other services in parks
How will you encourage positive interactions in the future?

62% planned *new* actions to facilitate positive interactions

- Assist recreationists in navigating trails and fencing
  - Curated trails
  - Improved signage
  - Use of temporary fencing

- Signage
  - Maps
  - Benefits of livestock grazing
  - Dog-walking
  - Safe livestock interactions

- Public events or meetings
- Stockmanship courses
- Avoidance strategies
What barriers limit or prohibit grazing on public lands?

100% felt there were significant barriers for them, or for graziers in general

Barriers to grazing on public lands: Percentage of respondents that cited either personally experienced or general barriers to livestock grazing on public lands based on interviews.

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<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic constraints</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabotage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased liability and risk</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of grazing leases</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative ecological impacts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreationist interference</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor grazier attitudes limiting availability</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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<td>Public / agency misunderstanding of grazing impacts</td>
<td>90</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative ecological impacts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreationist interference</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor grazier attitudes limiting availability</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public / agency misunderstanding of grazing impacts</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences might be due to 1) not all respondents grazed on public lands; 2) those who have grazed on public lands have more experience now; 3) good individual management, as compared to all ranchers; 4) “grass is always greener…” perceptions
What barriers limit or prohibit grazing on public lands?

**Rancher**

“Often I feel that the agency people *THINK* I am just throwing my cattle out on the land, and am getting paid to do nothing. That is *not* the case; as a rancher you work hard to create your own profit.”

**Lands Manager (agency)**

“I had about a miles worth of fence cut due to people angry with cattle grazing… these are *PUBLIC INDIVIDUALS* doing what they feel is best for them, and not considering others. This happened over a period of years, and for two years [the park] quit grazing and hired someone to be part of a management plan process and create a grazing plan. Currently everything is fine though. After they removed the grazing for two years, it took 6-7 years to knock back the thatch and bring back flowers, and many of our wildflower populations have not recovered since this. The grazing removal had very obvious and clear ramifications.”
What are downsides to grazing on public lands?

100% acknowledged potential downsides

Percentage of *all* respondents, and of graziers specifically (with the difference between the two), that cited negative impacts of livestock grazing on public lands, based on interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Impact Category</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Graziers</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logistical constraints</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic constraints</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabotage</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of grazing leases</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative ecological impacts</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<td>-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public / agency misunderstanding of grazing</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>Impacts on aesthetics</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of grazier privacy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
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Rancher

“I’ve been doing it for 15-20 years. It takes a completely different mindset than from operating on private ground, so if you don’t get your head around that, it can drive you absolutely insane.”
What are positive outcomes of grazing on public lands?

100% acknowledged potential positive outcomes

Percentage of all respondents, and of graziers specifically (with the difference between the two), that cited positive impacts of livestock grazing on public lands, based on interviews.

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<td>Positive aesthetic changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social &amp; cultural benefits*</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational opportunities</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>16</td>
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* Includes a reduction in vandalism and illegal marijuana-growing operations due to more eyes on the land.
What are positive outcomes of grazing on public lands?

100% acknowledged potential positive outcomes

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Manager and Consultant

“When you plan for both [cattle grazing and recreation are] compatible, and you can use both as EDUCATIONAL and OUTREACH opportunities for the rancher and recreationists.”
Facilitating positive interactions
Facilitating positive interactions

- As recreation increases, interactions increase
- All respondents amenable to (or already doing) a variety of practices to improve interactions

- More than half of respondents
  - Personal webpages
  - Community tours
  - Signage to improve interactions
  - Condition / select livestock
  - Graze in highly visible or public settings
  - Outreach events / workshops

Background Photo Credit: UCANR
Facilitating positive interactions

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  - Personal webpages
  - Community tours
  - Signage → need more and better!
  - Condition / select livestock
  - Graze in highly visible or public settings
  - Outreach events / workshops → the “WHY”
What can public land agencies do?

• **Signage**

---

**YOU ARE ENTERING A CATTLE GRAZING AREA**

Cattle are an important tool to maintain our grasslands

- Protect yourself, your pets and the livestock. Do not let your pets chase or harass livestock.
- If cattle are blocking the trail approach them slowly, speak normally and allow them to move away.
- Don’t attempt to touch livestock. Do not get between the mother cow and young calves.
- If you encounter a cow that is acting in a threatening manner or appears to be injured, sick or dead, please note the location, the color of the animal, the ear tag number, and report it to the park staff.

**PARK OFFICE**

For Emergencies call 911
or Public Safety Dispatch: (510) 881-1833

For more information on grazing in the parks, please visit our website: www.ebparks.org/about/stewardship/grazing

---

Sign Credit: East Bay Regional Park District
What can public land agencies do?

• Signage*
What can public land agencies do?

- **Signage**

Photo Credit: Troy Bishopp
What can public land agencies do?

- Signage*
- Pamphlets / Factsheets

UNDERSTANDING WORKING RANGELANDS
The Benefits of Grazing – Livestock Grazing: A Conservation Tool on California’s Annual Grasslands

Looking out across the grasslands of California’s Mediterranean climate zone, most of the plants you see are non-native annuals brought here from Europe and Asia. These include grasses, such as wild oats (Avena spp.) and soft chess (Bromus hordeaceus mollis) as well as forbs such as filarees (Erodium spp.) and black mustard (Brassica nigra). When left unmanaged, these non-native grasses and forbs can grow profusely in normal and above-normal precipitation years, degrading habitat conditions for some native plants and animals and increasing the risks of wildfire and pest plant infestations. California’s Mediterranean-type grasslands are recognized among the world’s “hot spots” of native biodiversity, despite being generally dominated by non-native species (Bartolome et al. 2014). An appreciation of this paradox and how it came to be can help conservation biologists, environmental regulators, agency managers, recreationists, and ranchers communicate more clearly about how to best manage California rangelands for the purposes of conservation.
What can public land agencies do?

- Signage*
- Pamphlets / Factsheets
- Articles

---

**Taking Grazing to the Next Level**

*Rancher benefits from Bay area managed lands*

by Tracy Schenck, director of rangeland conservation, California Cattlemen’s Association

For nearly a half-century, Fields Livestock, Castro Valley, has been grazing the same land in one of the most populated regions in the nation, California’s Bay Area. When East Bay Regional Park District (District), based in Oakland, acquired the rolling hills studded with oak trees, abundant with wildlife and home to a diversity of plants, they continued the management practices that had been on the land, grazing.

In 1961, the District acquired the Sunol Regional Wilderness park (Park), that same year, Fields’ began the grazing the 4,700-acre site.

With a rich history originating in 1934, the District today spans more than 100,000 acres with 65 parks, including 1,100 miles of trails. The nation’s largest regional park district began with the foresight of local leaders seeking to preserve watershed lands in region. With a strong grassroots campaign, the District was created with a 71 percent approval rating at the polls. What’s even more impressive is that this ballot measure passed in the height of the Great Depression.

With California’s legacy in environmental conservation, it is not surprising that voters created the first regional park district in the nation. This vision of local leaders sought to balance recreational opportunities and natural resources, uncommon for the time.

The mission of the District is to provide recreational opportunities, preserving the natural beauty of the land and protect wildlife habitat. The same values that the visionary leaders sought when the District was formed more than 70 years ago, today is achieved with managed grazing.

As David Amme, the District’s wildland vegetation program manager recalled, “The District has been grazing for a long time, and there have been situations where the grazing program was questioned. There are strong reasons and objectives to the grazing on the land, including preventing brush encroachment and encouraging wildlife habitat.”

The District has leases with ranchers in the region, providing forage to cattle, sheep and goats, while promoting healthy natural resources and diverse ecosystems. Nearly one-half of the District parks located in Contra Costa and Alameda counties are grazed.

**Russ Fields**, owner of Fields Livestock, controls invasive species, reduces fire fuel loads, promotes native plants and creates habitat preferred by common species, and species of special concern on public land through cattle grazing.

The lease Fields has with the District is one of a handful of year-long grazing leases on public ground. Annually, he is responsible for meeting goals and objectives set forth by the District on the site.

On the Park, there is Residual Dry Matter (RDM) monitoring objectives that have to be met. In addition, you can find grazing exclosures on the Park, which serve as long term controls to demonstrate the benefits of managed grazing on the site.

“During the last 30 years,” he reflects Amme. “In response, the District has created a Wildland Management Policies document and taken up more extensive research on monitoring species composition and trends in collaboration with a

Continued on page 76
What can public land agencies do?

- Signage*
- Pamphlets / Factsheets
- Articles
- Online
  - Social Media
    - Facebook
What can public land agencies do?
What can public land agencies do?

- Signage*
- Pamphlets / Factsheets
- Articles
- Online
  - Social Media
    - Facebook
    - Twitter
What can public land agencies do?

CA State Parks
@CASateParks

Official California State Parks Twitter feed. RTs & follows are not endorsement. Contact media@parks.ca.gov

California
parks.ca.gov
 Joined May 2008

233 Photos and videos

TIKTS 4,142 FOLLOWING 678 FOLLOWERS 20.9K FAVORITES 5,977 LIST 5

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Sign up

Search Twitter

Have an account? Log in →

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Sign up now to get your own personalized timeline!

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@CaliforniaCFW
@VisitCalifornia
@VisitCA
@CalParks
@calparks
@YosemiteNPS
@YosemiteNPS
@NationalParkService
@NationalParkService

Trends

#SOPD Debate
#StandWithAhmed
iOS 9
#TheNewBrooklynBridge
What can public land agencies do?

- Signage
- Pamphlets / Factsheets
- Articles
- Online
  - Social Media
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    - Twitter
    - Blogs
  - Websites

Ref: 37
Grazing

Grazing animals have been a part of the ecosystem of this region for many thousands of years. The flora of the East Bay evolved under the influence of prehistoric herbivores, large herds of deer, elk, antelope, and other grazing animals.

Today, visitors to the East Bay Regional Parks may encounter cattle, sheep or goats grazing on the grasslands. The Park District has over 40 years of experience using grazing as a resource tool. Our program is conducted under a highly regulated license based upon accepted principles of range management.

Livestock grazing utilizing cattle, sheep and goats is used as a vegetation management tool to maintain and improve habitat conditions for resident plants and animals and to prevent wildfires. Ongoing research indicates that moderately grazed areas generally display a greater diversity and density of plant and animal life.

Approximately 5,000 cattle, 1,000 sheep and 1,000 goats are spread out over about half of the District's 65 parks. Most of the grazing takes place during the spring and early summer.

- Benefits of Grazing Animals
- What You Can Do to Help
- Safety Tips for Hiking Near Grazing Animals
- Parks With Grazing

Download: Grazing License (Sample Template) [pdf]

2015 Goat Grazing Activities

Visitors to the East Bay Regional Parks may encounter cattle, sheep or goats grazing on the grasslands. The District uses grazing animals as a practical and economic resource management tool. Grazing helps reduce fire hazards by controlling the amount and distribution of grasses and other potential fuel. Around urban settings, goats are often used in conjunction with human work crews and prescribed burns to create fuel breaks—a proactive effort to manage future wildfires.

Download: 2015 Goat Grazing Schedule [pdf]

Download: Final Report for EBRPD 2009 Field Season, Grassland Monitoring Project—Year 8 (January 26, 2011) [pdf]
What can public land agencies do?

- Meet the Rancher days – BBQ lunch, Q&A, prizes

Photo Credit: Gaby Davis Foundation
What can public land agencies do?

- **Meet the Rancher days**
  - BBQ lunch, Q&A, prizes

- **Nature Days**
  - Wildflower and wildlife walks
What can public land agencies do?

- **Work Days**
  - Trail maintenance, vegetation management, restoration projects

Photo Credit: Gaby Davis Foundation

Ref: 37
What can public land agencies do?

- Public participation in visioning processes
  - What does the public want or need?

Figure Credit: Crandall Arambula

Ref: 37
What can public land agencies do?

Focus on Education
What can managers do to help?

• One-on-one with recreationists
  – Initiate conversations, answer questions
  – Wave and smile
  – Open gates for recreationists

• Communicate
  – graziers / agencies to encourage appropriate interactions
  – law enforcement to triage emergency calls

• Meet-the-rancher days in conjunction with public lands agencies, speak at workshops

PUT A FACE ON THE GRAZIER
What can managers do to help?

• One-on-one with recreationists
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  – Wave and smile
  – Open gates for recreationists

• Communicate
  – graziers / agencies to encourage appropriate interactions
  – law enforcement to triage emergency calls

• Meet-the-rancher days in conjunction with public lands agencies, speak at workshops

• Signage
  – maintain signage
  – contribute to development of signage, pamphlets, and online educational materials for visiting recreationists
What can/do managers do to help?
What can/do managers do to help?

- Perform other ecological services
  - Plant trees
  - Pick up trash
  - Fix fences
  - Maintain water for dogs, horses, and wildlife
  - Keep gates in easy working order

- Choose the best stock for public lands
  - Animals with proven dispositions
  - Sound stockmanship
  - Remove aggressive, sick, or injured animals

- Reduce interactions during potentially higher risk periods
  - Bulls far away during breeding
  - Livestock away from high recreation areas when calving
  - Plan around peak recreational periods
What can/do managers do to help?

Time + Money

INVESTMENTS

➤ Conflict Reduction
➤ Continued Public Lease Availability
➤ Added-Value, Marketing
➤ Long-term Economic Stability
What can visitors do?

- *Read* all signs and check online
- *Leave gates as you find them*
- Report maintenance needs
- Ask questions
- Do not interact directly with animals
Learn how livestock behave
Learn how livestock behave

• Walk towards you
  – Curiosity ≠ Aggression
• Paw or root through your belongings
• May become frightened or feel threatened
  – unfamiliar objects
  – fast-moving vehicles or bikes
  – off-leash dogs
  – running or yelling
  – dogs/people near their young

Refs: 3, 37
**Aggression in cattle is rare**

- Usually occurs only if an animal...
  - is very ill
  - feels threatened
  - chased or harassed
  - backed into a corner or singled out
- Flight is almost always their first choice
  - Give them a way out!

---

**Pacheco State Park visitor**

“The park is used as grazing land and during the first few miles we had several close cattle encounters, including a little guy who tried to **BLUFF CHARGE** me – more cute than terrifying. Other wildlife was minimal, except for the trio of coyotes spotted in the first mile, a few circling hawks, and curious ground squirrels. Wildflowers were blooming, and I was especially happy to see some beautiful hillsides covered in poppies.”

Refs: 3, 37
Warning Signs

- Dropping head to the ground
- Shaking head
- Bellowing

Signs of Aggression:

- quick, erratic movements
- raised tail/flicking tail
- pawing the ground
- turning sideways
- raised ears
- snorting
IF you feel threatened
IF you feel threatened

• Turn sideways
• Move away slowly
• Keep calm
• Speak in soft voice
• **DO NOT RUN**
Dog walking

Photo Credit: Theresa Cramer
Dog walking

• Dogs are not allowed off-leash

ALL DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH
Dog walking

• Dogs are not allowed off-leash
  – protect wildlife

Photo Credit: Satyendra Kumar Tiwari

Ref: 3
Dog walking

- Dogs are not allowed off-leash
  - protect wildlife
  - keep children and other visitors safe

Don’t let this happen to you!

Ref: 3
Dogs are not allowed off-leash
  – protect wildlife
  – keep children and other visitors safe
  – prevent dog fights

• Keep dogs on leash, maintaining control at all times

• Most dogs do not know how to interact safely with livestock
  – only trained dogs employed by managers should herd

• Do not encourage dogs to chase or bark at other animals

• Report off-leash dogs and harassment of animals to park staff or rancher

Ref: 3
Photo Credit: guardmypet.com
Dog walking

• Dogs are not allowed off-leash
  – protect wildlife
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  – prevent dog fights
  – protect from injury and prevent chasing other animals

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Dog walking

Don't worry, I'm a trained professional
Dog walking

Photo Credit: Brett Little
Dog walking

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Horses, bikes, and ATVs

Photo Credit: Tanya Koob
Horses, bikes, and ATVs

• If you encounter livestock, ride slowly around them
• Test-ride horses around livestock beforehand
• Move away from livestock as far as possible
  • also applies to horseback riders, dogs, and children
  • all can move unpredictably

Ref: 3

Photo Credit: Albert Herring
Cows and Calves
Cows and Calves

- Most injuries occur during calving season
- Do not walk directly at mama cows
- Give them a wide berth
- Avoid startling
- Want to protect their young

Ref: 3
Cows and Calves

Don’t try this at home (or in the parks)
If you encounter animals in a large group...

- Go *around* them, NOT through them
- Give them space
- Move slowly, calm voice
- No sudden movements
- If you have an animal
  - Secure dog leash
  - Dismount horse, maintain control
If you encounter animals in a large group...

- Go *around* them, NOT through them
- Give them space
- Move slowly, calm voice
- No sudden movements
- If you have an animal
  - Secure dog leash
  - Dismount horse, maintain control

On the flip side (graziers)
- Can be frustrating
- Risk of scattering
- Keep calm & regather

Photo Credit: Alex Proimos
If you see a calf alone…

• Do not approach
• If bawling loudly, *clearly* in severe distress / injured, call 911
• Notable structures
• Waypoints
• Description of animal
• Eartag number
Trade-offs: Net Outcomes?

- Manure, flies
- Inconvenience
- Negative impact on ecosystems (if poor management)
- Very rare injuries, fear
- Disagreement on principle
- Management barriers
- Effects of sabotage & recreational interference
- Barriers to entry

- Wildfire risk reduction
- Native wildflowers
- Targeted wildlife habitat management (T&E)
- Weed management
- Educational opportunities
- Cost-effective
- Generates income
- Financial benefits to local economies
- Tradition, cultural & social benefits
- Protection from wildland development
- Potential to use existing infrastructure
- Grazier actions that “add value” to recreation
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Weights
It’s not simple addition and will vary by region!
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Weights
It’s not simple addition and will vary by region!

Consultant
“Grazing is not only compatible [with recreation], it is mandatory [for grassland management].”
Managing for the **outlier** while **basing policy on the average** and **managing for trade-offs**

**DON’T LOSE SIGHT OF THE AVERAGE**

[Costs and benefits balance diagram]
Acknowledgements

• Funding by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
• Central Coast Rangeland Coalition
• Roger Baldwin
• Sheila Barry
• Grey Hayes
• Larry Ford
• Interviewees
• Attendees here today!
References

10. Land Manager and Grazier Interviews, unpublished results, Kristina Wolf, 2015
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