

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS GRAZING CAMPAIGN

Economic Benefits of the Multiple-Use Conflict Resolution Act

An increasing number of federal grazing permittees/lessees are falling on tough times. Public lands grazing rules have changed. Conflicts with other multiple uses are increasing. Markets are evolving. Efficiencies and improvements in private lands grazing and feedlots are inherently more productive than public lands operations. Many permittees/lessees have children who are unwilling or unable to come back to run the family ranch.

The economic value of federal grazing permits and leases is diminishing due to these many factors. A generous voluntary grazing permit/lease buyout program would allow federal grazing permittees/lessees to finally recover their stranded investments in public lands grazing.

The Multiple-Use Conflict Resolution Act (MUCRA; H.R. 3166) proposes a generous, one-time payment for federal grazing permittees/lessees who waive their permits/leases back to the government. At \$175 per animal unit month, the payments would be sufficient for most ranchers to:

- convert their ranch to an exclusively private lands operation
- retire, without having to sell or subdivide their ranch base property
- payoff the bank
- convert their ranch to another business (hunting/fishing lodge/guide service; birding outpost; bed-and-breakfast; dude ranch, etc.)
- start a new business
- leave a cash legacy for loved ones

The key point is that with a MUCRA compensation program, federal grazing permittees/lessees would have many more choices for their grazing operations than are currently available.

As permittees/lessees opt for buyout and invest their federal compensation in new economic opportunities, their communities will benefit from the new income, increased taxes and new jobs. As studies have shown, and as permittees/lessees will discover, there is more economic value in non-consumptive uses of federal public lands (hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, guiding, camping, horseback riding) than livestock grazing.

MUCRA would be nothing less than a recapitalization of part of the rural American West that the new, modern global economy has left behind.