

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS GRAZING CAMPAIGN

The Multiple-Use Conflict Resolution Act

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Federal public lands grazing is an environmentally damaging fiscal boondoggle that not only fails taxpayers, but fails to provide security for ranchers dependent on public lands. The Multiple-Use Conflict Resolution Act (MUCRA, H.R. 3166) is a socially just, environmentally imperative, fiscally prudent, and permanent solution to public lands grazing problems.

Environmental Problems with Federal Public Lands Grazing

- Grazing damages entire landscapes and is a major source of non-point water pollution.
- Domestic livestock displace native species. Grazing is listed as a contributing factor in the decline of 22% of all species listed on the federal threatened and endangered species list.

Fiscal Problems with Federal Public Lands Grazing

- The direct and indirect costs to taxpayers (about \$200 million annually) of managing Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management grazing permits and leases greatly exceeds the revenue generated from grazing fees (less than \$16 million annually).

Problems for Federal Public Lands Ranchers

- Public lands ranching is at best a marginal economic pursuit. Most public lands ranches have a negative to 3% nominal return on investment, which fails even to keep pace with inflation.
- The average acre of private lands pasture in the East is 82 times more productive than the average acre of Bureau of Land Management grazing lands in the West.
- Drought has increased hardships for ranchers, forcing many to reduce or eliminate their herds. Even if the drought were to end now, many ranchers could not afford a new herd to resume grazing on public lands and would stand to lose their grazing permits and the market value they once held.
- Many permittees are approaching retirement age and have children who are unable or unwilling to come back and take over the family ranch.
- Conflicts with other uses of federal public lands (endangered species recovery, wildlife habitat, protection of water quality/quantity, recreation and others) are making public lands livestock grazing more problematic.

Multiple-Use Conflict Resolution Act: A Mutually Beneficial Solution to Federal Public Lands Grazing Problems

- MUCRA would allow any federal grazing permittee or lessee who wishes to voluntarily waive his/her permit or lease in exchange for compensation. The associated grazing allotment would subsequently be closed to livestock grazing and the conflicts thereon would be eliminated.
- MUCRA is a voluntary, non-regulatory, market-based solution to public lands grazing conflicts.
- MUCRA is mutually beneficial to the interests of ranchers, environmentalists and taxpayers:
 - Ranchers would be able to cut their losses, restructure their operations on private lands (without federal overseers), retire or start a new business.
 - Retiring permits/leases and closing the associated grazing allotments to grazing will reduce the pressure on sensitive lands, water resources and wildlife, and the accompanying political and legal strife over grazing conflicts.
 - Retiring permits/leases will greatly reduce the cost of federal public lands management, saving as much as \$200 million annually.

Documentation for the above-mentioned facts and complete information on MUCRA is available at www.publiclandsranching.org and www.permitbuyout.net.