

Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) 2014 Priorities

Priority 1: Public Lands Grazing

1. Increase opportunities
 - a. Stay aware of and comment on Public Agency Land Management Plans under development. Support incorporation of grazing in these plans as appropriate.
 - b. Research existing policies and provide feedback to improve effectiveness (maximize public benefits while minimizing negative environmental impacts)
 - c. Meet with stakeholders to find out what has been done, what needs to be done, what are the hold ups, and how RMAC can help
 - d. Provide expertise in management plans, leases, pilot projects, information on grazing, etc.
 - e. Develop and distribute sample grazing leases with sample scoring criteria to include local rancher, history in business of grazing and/ or with leases, qualitative criteria for monitoring grazing, etc. Help create flexibility in leases and dates, encourage longer term leases and to use more criteria than just price/ revenue
2. Reduce fire hazard
 - a. Support grazing proposal within VTP EIR
3. Work with State Agencies to encourage adoption, refinement, and consistent use of appropriate monitoring practices for tracking post-fire recovery, grazing land quality and productivity, grazing impacts, brush encroachment, and wildlife habitat quality.

Ongoing Issues

Drought

An overall priority of the Range Management Advisory Committee is to monitor current drought conditions and, understanding that these conditions are not only short-term challenges but also persistent, recurring features of Mediterranean climates, evaluate range management decisions made by state agencies in terms of how they impact long-term drought resiliency on public and private rangelands in the state.

1. Impact on fire hazard
2. Impact on forage
 - a. Letter to BOF
3. Long term impact on rangelands
 - a. Provide drought management guidelines for rangelands if there is a need and nobody else is addressing this issue.

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Communication and Collaboration

Establish contacts in, and coordination with, the following agencies, with the expectation that RMAC will have better opportunity to provide feedback/input into agency initiatives and policies which impact rangeland resources managed or monitored by state agencies, and public/private users of those resources.

1. Board of Forestry
 - a. Threats to rangeland health
 - b. Impending regulations
2. Resources Agency
 - a. Be notified when DFW, State Parks, or Dept. of Conservation are considering rangeland issues.
 - b. Provide memos to Agency with update, issues under consideration, etc., from RMAC
3. State Parks
 - a. Comment letters or oral testimony to CA State Park and Recreation Committee when approving Unit General Plans regarding benefits of grazing as a management tool.
4. Cal Pac SRM
 - a. Review CRM licensing requirements to make sure they are consistent with statute
 - b. Meet with licensing/testing committee to clarify/streamline requirements
5. Interested Public
 - a. Review, collaborate and communicate statewide rangeland issues pertaining to rangeland health, grazing, water quality, Veg Mgmt Programs VTP EIR and the Strategic Fire Plan (to include herbivory)
 - b. Host an informative and educational meeting with agencies and interested stakeholders. Include UCCE, Rangeland Coalition, CCA, Farm Bureau, etc.

GRAP

1. Stay engaged in process
 - a. Meet with GRAP staff
 - i. Identify the specific objectives of the proposed action
 - ii. Clarify the envisioned process
 - iii. Establish a relationship allowing RMAC to have an advisory function to the GRAP team through the process of developing and implementing the program.
 - b. Encourage advocacy groups to participate in process
 - c. Submit comment letter as appropriate
2. Explore opportunities for improving management and monitoring of rangeland water quality impacts on private lands, and document trends in those impacts.

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Rangeland Conversion

1. Williamson Act subvention funding
 - a. White paper detailing benefits of rangeland to state.

Vegetation Treatment Plan

1. Increase access and availability of treatments to ranchers.
 - a. Educate ranchers, especially those on periphery of WUI, about programs to reduce fire hazard on rangelands.
2. Educate VMP Foresters about prescribed grazing as a tool for achieving VTP objectives
 - a. Aid in developing prescribed grazing practices

Other

- 1) Provide feedback to the Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) 2015 update
- 2) Continue to help refine the Strategic Fire Plan (latest iteration, 2010)
- 3) Provide feedback on the 2015 SRA Review (and subsequent reviews)
- 4) Provide feedback on the Department's use of SRA Fee

Mission of RMAC

The mission of RMAC is to be an advocate to public agencies promoting scientifically and economically sound policies that affect the sustainability of California rangeland resources.