

From: Ed Struffenegger

Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2005 5:31 PM

To: Craig Ostergaard; Heather Windsor

Subject: Heather, Craig, look at this and discuss together then get with me when I get back on TUES. May 17. Thanx

Sierra Pacific Industries

Martell District - Forestry Division - P. O. Box 132 - Martell, CA 95654

Phone (209) 223-7170

Fax (209) 223-7175

May 15, 2005

Ms. Jane LaBoa
District Ranger

USFS Amador Ranger District
19777 Silver Drive
Pioneer, CA 95666

DRAFT

Dear Jane,

I recently discussed grazing restrictions on the Power Fire with Cindy Podsiadlo from the Supervisors Office. She asked me to document SPI's concerns with regards to these restrictions. The following highlights some pertinent facts associated with this issue:

- SPI actively encourages the use of grazing for the control of competing brush and grass species, and have demonstrated this by our extensive use of grazing allotments over our lands. With regards to the Power Fire, we want cattle to help facilitate the control the brush and competing vegetation which will rapidly reoccupy the site, yet provide for the protection of our newly-planted conifer seedlings which can be susceptible to livestock damage during the first year after planting. Although some seedlings have already been planted on SPI lands in the Power Fire, the majority of the seedlings will be planted in fall of 2005 and/or the spring of 2006.
- Seedling damage is highest when cattle are allowed to congregate in small areas, especially close to water holes, riparian areas, wet meadows, and areas where late-season forage is available. If cattle can be kept from congregating in small areas, the damage to our seedlings should be minimal.
- Seedlings can also be damaged by cattle on steep areas with loose soils, where cattle may have problems with footing.
- SPI may be using herbicides within portions the Power Fire to control some competing vegetation. Although the exact locations, formulation, and timing of these herbicide applications is conjectural at this time, we feel that this issue needs to be brought to the attention of any potential cattle grazers.
- Several logging operations will be conducted to salvage the timber burnt by the fire. Although injury or death to cattle is rare from logging operations, this possibility needs to be brought forward.

Based on these facts, we feel the following would summarize SPI's position regarding the exclusion of cattle grazing on areas burned by the Power Fire:

Cattle grazing should be limited or prohibited altogether during the first year after the burn (i.e., during the spring, summer and fall of 2005). Vegetation needs to sprout or re-seed, and the introduction of cattle during the very early stages after the Fire could prevent this initial growth.

During the fall of 2005, SPI, the Forest Service, and potential grazers should meet in the field to evaluate the re-growth of vegetation, and make a determination of the quality and quantity of available forage, and to evaluate any potential risks to conifer seedlings, soils, and other resources if cattle are re-introduced in 2006.

During the first year of re-introduction, cattle should be deterred from congregating in small areas within the burned areas. Especially sensitive are steep areas, riparian zones, and areas recently planted with conifers. The dispersion and movement of cattle can be accomplished by a variety of means, such as frequent herding and the placement of salt.

I appreciate the willingness of the Forest Service to work with SPI on the cattle grazing issue. I invite you or your staff to continue dialogue with myself on this issue.

Sincerely,

Ed Struffenegger
District Manager,
SPI Martell

Cc: Cindy Podsiadlo, USFS ENF