

RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
Website: www.bof.fire.ca.gov
(916) 653-8007



**RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES and STATE LANDS GRAZING LICENSES AND
LAND MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE INAUGURAL
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, January 5, 2022, 10:00 AM

Teleconference

Roll Call:

RMAC Members Present

Chair Marc Horney
Vice Chair Rich Ross
Bart Cremers
Billie Roney
Katie Delbar, ex officio member

RMAC Members Absent

Taylor Hagata
Andréé Soares
Don Watson
Sheryl Landrum
Lance Criley

RMAC Staff

Deniele Cade, Licensing Analyst
Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist

Department Staff

None

The Board's mission is to lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands, and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the State.

Items are numbered by their corresponding Item Number on the agenda and documented below in order of their introduction during the meeting.

1) Call to Order, Webinar Format, and Roll Call – Dr. Kristina Wolf, Board Staff

2) Chairman’s Report – Dr. Marc Horney, Chair

Chair Horney has been involved in some conversations with the Tahoe National Forest in regards to difficulties recruiting range management specialists about getting high school students more training in range management.

3) Approval of November 2021 meeting minutes – Kristina Wolf, Board staff

A quorum was not present to approve the meeting minutes, so action was not taken on this agenda item, and it will be agendized at the next meeting.

4) Discussion, ranking, and recommendations for appointment of nominated candidates to RMAC open seats – Members Billie Roney and Bart Cremers, RMAC Membership panel

Members Roney and Cremers formed a team to receive the review all completed applications for the four open seats on the RMAC. The applicants, and the open seats, are as follows:

Seat Type	Number of Open Seats	Applicants
Public Seat	1	Paul Starrs Keith Geunther
Rangeland Organization	2	Cole Bush, <i>California Wool Growers Association</i> Stephanie Larson, <i>U.C. Cooperative Extension (UCCE)</i>
California Resource Conservation District	1	Joel Kramer

Member Cremers was concerned that UCCE does not represent owners of rangeland, they advise owners of rangeland. This concern was discussed and it was determined that UCCE adequately fulfilled the role of representing rangeland landowners ('rangeland organization') in a manner that fit the open seat type.

A discussion of the nominated applicants ensued, primarily around the one open public seat for which there were two applicants. All applicants for which there was only one open seat will be recommended to fill those seats. The RMAC will forward the recommendation to fill the one open public seat with Paul Starrs.

It was determined that a vote was not required to forward the RMAC appointment recommendations to the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection (Board). The recommendations for appointments to the four open seats will be sent to the Board for official appointments to be made at the January 19th Board meeting.

5) Organization of the Subcommittee on State Lands Grazing Licenses and Land Management, and inaugural meeting thereof to commence upon adjournment of RMAC business using the same webinar link – Kristina Wolf, Board staff

Dr. Wolf provided a brief summary of the impetus for forming the subcommittee on State Lands Grazing Licenses and Land Management (SLGLLM). The first meeting of the SLGLLM commenced at the end of RMAC business at this meeting (see agenda Item #9). The subcommittee is comprised of:

- Lance Criley: *RMAC, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) United States Forest Service*
- Jeanette Griffin: *California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)*
- Richard M. Ross: *RMAC, legal counsel*
- Kevin Conway: *Jackson State Demonstration Forest*
- Tony Psihopaidas: *State Department of General Services*
- Lawrence Ford: *LD Ford Rangeland Conservation Science, Certified Range Manager*
- Bart Cremers: *CA Farm Bureau*
- Tracy Kay Schohr: *U.C. Cooperative Extension*
- Katie Delbar: *USDA Farm Service Agency*

All meetings of the SLGLLM will be publicly noticed and conducted in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act.

6) Update on RMAC Letters to State Agencies and Solicitation of Annual Priorities, and Discussion of Annual Priorities – Kristina Wolf, Board Staff

Dr. Wolf summarized the correspondence with the four advised state agencies (i.e., the Board, CNRA, CalEPA, and CDFW); no responses were received from the four agencies. **Chair Horney suggested that another round of letters be sent out before the next RMAC meeting**, and if no communications have been received by then, the RMAC could bring this up to the Board for further guidance. Dr. Wolf also suggested that Chair Horney bring this up during his update at the January Board meeting.

Member Jeanette Griffin indicated that CDFW has some topics that it may suggest RMAC should prioritize, and if the RMAC has any particular topics on which RMAC could use more guidance, it can contact Member Griffin.

Dr. Wolf will also seek alternative contacts for the four agencies to see if there are other contacts that might be more responsive to the letters.

Vice Chair Rich Ross suggested that AB 1346: Air pollution be discussed as well at a future meeting.

7) Discussion of AB-252 Department of Conservation: Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program – Dr. Pelayo Alvarez, Audubon California

Dr. Alvarez summarized this program in which alternative land uses are investigated for degraded lands coming out of agriculture (e.g., cropland), and potentially being converted back to use as rangelands. Activities under this program could include replantation, outreach and education and training, and research and monitoring

projects. This could be an opportunity to expand access to more grazing land for ranchers, as well as providing benefits such as groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and agricultural productivity. Member Roney indicated that mines may also represent a land use that could qualify under this program.

A discussion regarding the potential agency and individual opportunities via this program thus ensued, and members and the public were encouraged to read the program draft and provide comment and feedback.

The public comment period for the CA Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program is open until January 31st: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/grant-programs/Pages/Multibenefit-Land-Repurposing-Program.aspx>

Workshops at which public comments could also be provided are being conducted as well on January 18th and 20th, and more information can be found at the above website.

8) Updates from Partner Organizations & Public Forum

Legislative Updates:

- Dr. Alvarez stated that Audubon will be working with Senator Laird's office to re-introduce SB-322: Grazing land: California Conservation Ranching Incentive Program (2021-2022) to create an incentive program for rangeland owners.

Other Announcements:

- Paul Starrs noted that the California Oak Symposium will be happening March 20th–24th, 2022
- The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition Summit will be January 24th; it is planned for in person in Stockton, but the final determination about the location versus being virtual will be made on January 17th and posted on the website.

Next meeting:

- Future meetings after January 31st are planned to occur in person, but this will be contingent on potential extension of the executive order regarding virtual meetings.
- Last year we aimed to meet 8 times, and had 7 RMAC meetings. In 2022 the RMAC will aim for six meetings. Meetings will not be scheduled for Wednesdays in this first quarter. The next meeting will occur on March 8th at 12:30 PM.

9) Subcommittee on State Grazing Licenses and Land Management (convening virtually upon adjournment of RMAC)

The subcommittee convened immediately following the RMAC meeting. It was clarified that any one not on the committee could participate as a public member on the webinar.

Roll Call:

SLGLLM Members Present

Jeanette Griffin

Rich Ross
Kevin Conway
Larry Ford
Bart Cremers
Tracy Schohr
Katie Delbar

SLGLLM Members Absent

Lance Criley
Tony Psihopaidas

Staff

Deniele Cade, Licensing Analyst
Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist

a. Committee Name and Purpose

Dr. Wolf reviewed the purpose of the subcommittee, which is to develop a template grazing license, a template land management plan, and a guidance book to help users navigate the bidding, planning, development, implementation, and monitoring process for a grazing contract on state land. The committee name was discussed and retained as the “State Lands Grazing License and Land Management” subcommittee.

The pros and cons of developing these to encompass state, as well as private and federal lands, were discussed. It was decided that the initial focus of the subcommittee will be to develop these products for state lands, and where possible, considerations for other land ownership types would be included. These products are not intended to replace any documents or processes that are already in place and working efficiently and effectively. The idea is not to reinvent the wheel, but to build on good examples of programs that are working well (e.g., CDFW), and to bring those components together into one packet streamlined for grazing on state-managed lands. Future endeavors may include extension to other land types.

The license will cover the legal language, responsibilities, and liabilities, while the management plan will focus on ground-level actions and considerations. The guidebook will cover considerations for navigating the bidding process (i.e., Request for Proposals), and will include navigation for both the license and land management plan processes and components.

c. Tasks, Deliverables, and Timeline (note, items discussed out of order from agenda, and are introduced here chronologically as discussed, with the lettering/numbering retained as shown on the publicly noticed agenda)

All members will share examples of draft or existing licenses, management plans, and templates, and other related guidance via email to Dr. Wolf. Dr. Wolf will compile these documents on a shared Google Drive to temporarily facilitate document transfer and editing; all referenced documents are also being tracked and saved on the Board’s internal server.

b. Rules of engagement

All business of this subcommittee must be conducted publicly and in an open forum, publicly noticed with an agenda at least 10 business days in advance. General rules of thumb for guiding communication were discussed to facilitate compliance with the Bagley Keene Open Meetings Act, and all committee members can send any questions regarding this to Dr. Wolf and she will work with the Board's legal counsel to ensure compliance with the Act, which allows for transparency and public engagement. This applies to all communications among committee members, including written and verbal communication. For this subcommittee a quorum would be 5 members.

c. Initial Assignments and Next Steps

It was determined that meetings should occur approximately every three weeks. The next meeting of the SLGLLM subcommittee will be January 26th, 11 AM–1 PM. The goal is to have a product for review by June 2022, which was originally proposed to the Board as the month in which draft materials would be provided to the Board for its review.

All reference materials (e.g., grazing license and management plan examples, templates, guidance documents, etc.) should be provided to Dr. Wolf by committee members by no later than January 19th, and Dr. Wolf will load all documents into the shared drive. Committee members will have the following week to review those documents before the meeting the following week. At the next meeting the committee will determine next action steps and draft deliverables.

Member Larry Ford requested that Dr. Wolf look into potential Board funding sources that could possibly cover the costs of a formal survey of grazing licenses, land management plans, and other related elements and topics. That is beyond the scope of this committee, but could be a complimentary endeavor.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 12:50 PM.