

California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Action Plan – 2025 Update Prescribed Grazing Work Group

In 2021, the California Forest Management Task Force developed California’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan (Action Plan), which represented the collective recommendations and strategies of a broad range of state, federal, local, and tribal governments and private organizations. In 2024, the Task Force is working to update the Action Plan, to be released in 2025. This update will integrate prescribed grazing concepts into the plan, statewide, and regional perspectives. We envision that this will include a summary of the current science regarding prescribed grazing and fuel load reduction, along with key actions for implementing prescribed grazing on federal, state, and private lands throughout the state.

To facilitate the development of this information, we convened a working group of experts and prescribed grazing practitioners from throughout California:

Work Group Members

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KEY ACTIONS (TENTATIVE LIST)

Developing effective prescribed grazing strategies to manage fuel loads across fire-threatened rangeland and forest communities will require local, regional, and statewide partnerships to support science-based stewardship.

Increase the Use of Prescribed Grazing Across All Lands

- Public and private, across boundaries
- Long-term investments necessary
 - Need cost-share options for permanent infrastructure
 - Lengthen lease terms (at least 5 years) and increase cost-share infrastructure for prescribed grazing

Improve Regulatory Efficiency

- Example: CEQA costs and requirements as a major barrier to scaling up state-funded projects
 - CalVTP as a possible solution, but still needs streamlining to address gap
- Draft USFS strategy as an example of moving forward
 - (1) streamline Range NEPA, (2) facilitate fuels reduction/vegetation management using targeted grazing, and (3) provide emergency forage for allotments
- Other State/Federal regulations to prioritize
 - BLM expedited NEPA and draft defensible space permits
- Address insurance challenges/opportunities
 - Prescribed/managed grazing for fuels control as a benefit to reduce insurance costs to landowners
 - Enhance liability insurance options for prescribed grazing operators

Support Workforce Development and Technical Support

- Technical support for complying with regulatory requirements
- Funding for trainings and workforce development (e.g., for herders)
- Training for other professionals (e.g., fire professionals)
- CRM training and support

Expand Monitoring and Applied Research

- Identifying metrics appropriate to the tool and the ecosystem
- Collaborative research needs (draft list pending, need to prioritize)
- Long-term investments necessary

Accelerate Community Engagement and Cross-Boundary Collaborations

- Co-designing programs with managers
- Joint-strategy key points (e.g., integrating Rx fire, Rx grazing)
- Funding for Rx group coordinators
 - Similar to Rx fire proposals