

Grazing Management for Conservation Goals

Lance Criley

Rangeland Management Specialist, Cleveland
National Forest

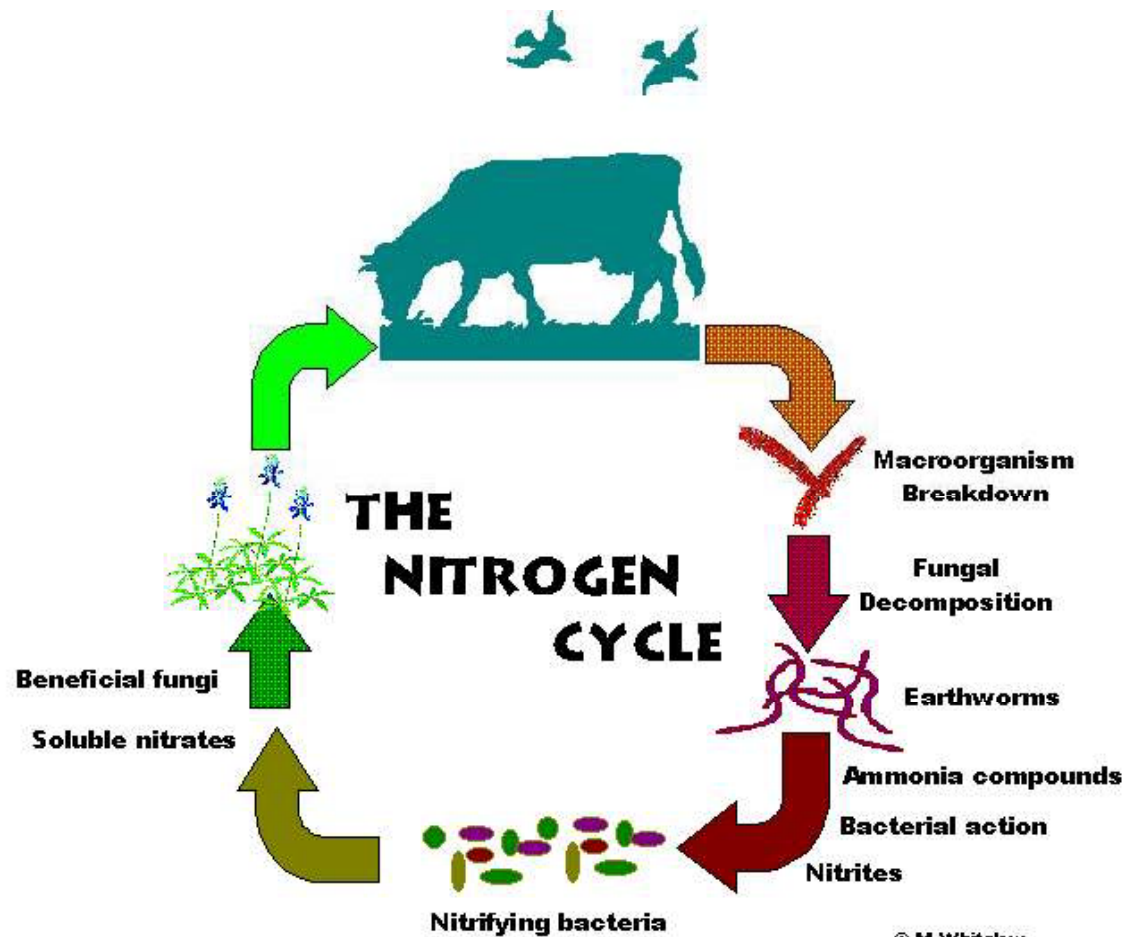
Is grazing good or bad?
Can grazing help me achieve my land management objectives?



THATCH – An unnatural situation.



Powering the nitrogen cycle in rangelands.



© M. Whitelaw

<http://mrskingsbioweb.com/ecology.html>

Grazing can be used to

- Alter species composition of site. Manage for forbs and wildflowers.
- Maintain or create specific habitat constituents for a species.
- Fuel reduction
- Target graze to reduce specific invasive species.



Grazing Systems

- **Sites are not simply grazed or ungrazed!**
- Variables include
 - Grazing intensity
 - Stocking rate
 - Length and season of use
 - Species and class of animal
 - Goats, Sheep, Livestock
 - Cow/Calf pairs, “stockers”, different breeds.



Developing a grazing program.

Infrastructure needs:

- Fencing to contain cattle on site.
 - Very expensive if not present.
- Water sources.
- Access to bring livestock on and off property.



Goals and Objectives

- Goals – what you want to happen on the land.
 - “Increase percent cover of native forbs”
 - “Increase active SKR burrows”
 - “Increase or maintain native perennial grass cover”
- Objectives – what you are going to do to get there.
 - “Decrease annual grass biomass by 60% by doing winter, early spring grazing.”
 - “Target graze mustard invaded pasture from May to July”.

Developing a grazing program.

- Stocking rate = (number of head X length of time)
 - Results based, what do you want to leave on the ground.
 - Adaptive, not prescriptive.
- Season of use
 - Critical consideration to meet goals and objectives.



Developing a grazing program

- Other resources to include in a plan:
 - Riparian resources
 - Adaptive management – fence last approach
 - Season of use, water sources, supplements, herding all effective at limiting riparian impacts
 - Soil impacts (compaction and erosion)
 - Water quality
 - Lots of emerging research
 - Small buffers have big impacts.
 - Recreation
 - Chaparral and CSS

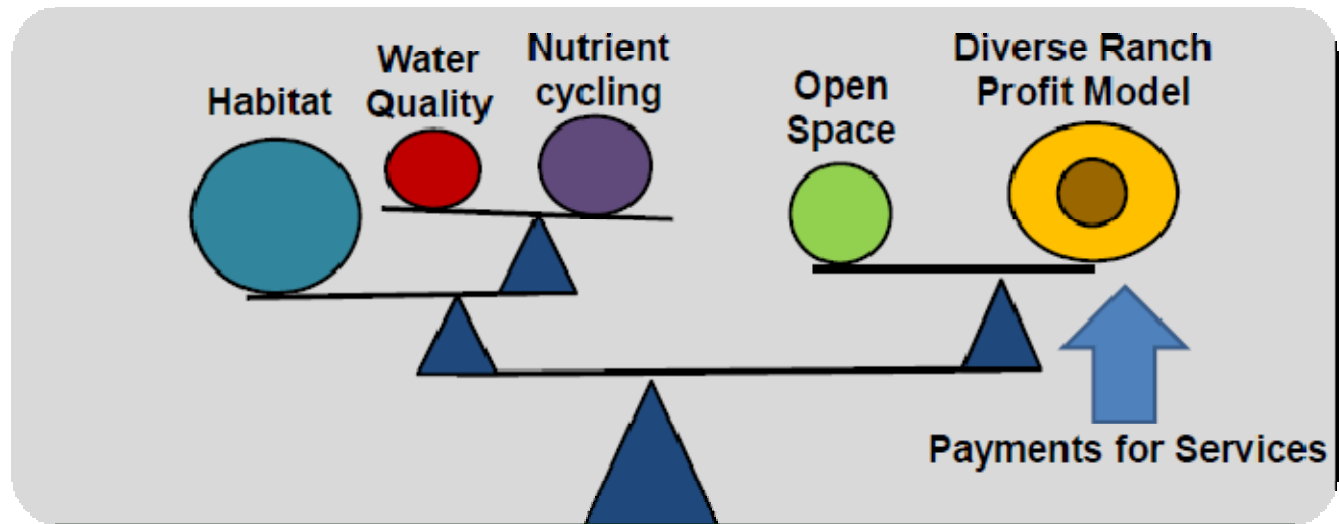
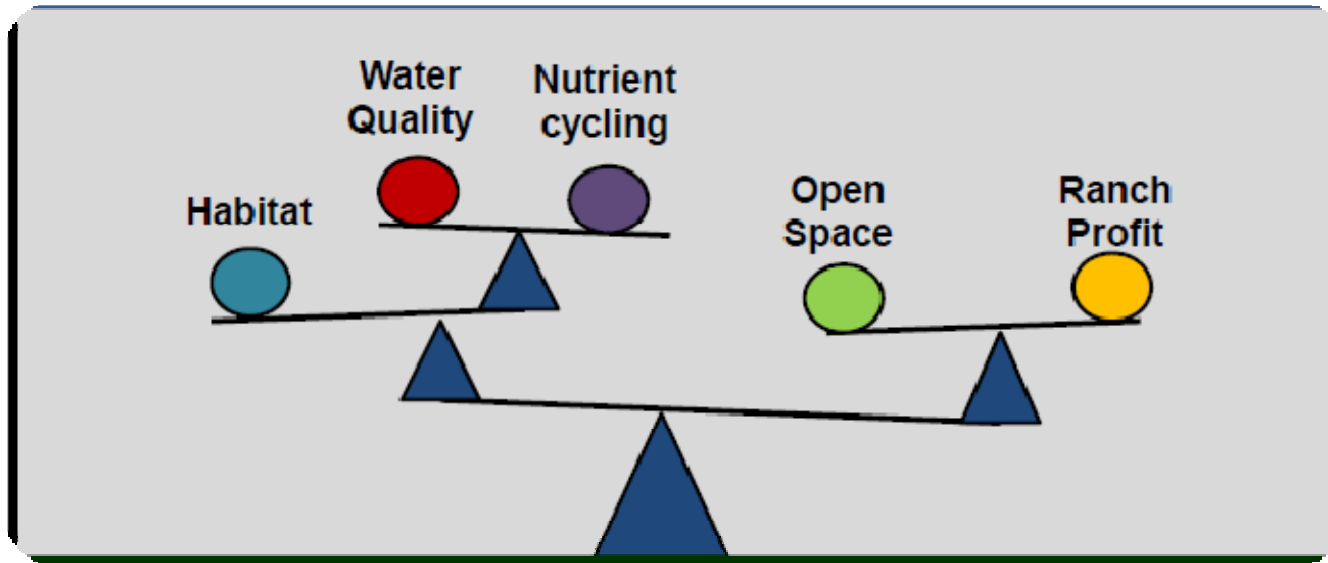


Developing a grazing program

- Relationship with operator
 - Grazing program must be economically feasible for operator to be sustainable.
 - They need some sense of security and flexibility in the relationship.



Including the operator in the sustainability equation.



Graphics shamelessly stolen from Dr. Ken Tate, UC Davis

Resources to help:

- Certified Rangeland Managers – CRM
 - Certified by California Dept. Of Forestry. Required to be involved with rangeland management activities on “forested landscapes”.
 - List can be found at <http://casrm.rangelands.org/>
- University of California Cooperative Extension.
- Local livestock operators
- Your colleagues north of the grapevine

Working to Keeping Ranchers, Ranching!

Home
About Us
Strategic Plan
Signatories
Calendar/Events
Resources
Research
Focus Area
Photo Gallery
Stories
History
E-Updates
Contact Us



NEWS

March 5, 2012 Rangeland Coalition signatories sent Senate Committee on Agriculture letter highlighting mutual priorities for 2012 Farm Bill. [Click here to read the letter.](#)

February 2, 2012 - Rangeland Coalition wrote a letter of support for 5 Dot Ranch for the Beef Improvement Federation Producer of the Year Award. [Click here to read the letter.](#)

FEATURE

Summit
January 19-20, 2012
UC Davis Freeborn Hall

[Click here for event highlights, materials and presentations.](#)



I Love California Rangelands
Facebook

California Rangeland Coalition – Homepage at <http://www.carangeland.org/>

Useful links

- UC Cooperative Extension: Livestock, Range and Natural Resources.
<http://ucanr.org/sites/uccelr/>
- UC Davis, Plant Sciences: California Rangelands.
<http://californiarangeland.ucdavis.edu/>
- California Rangeland Watershed Lab.
<http://rangelandwatersheds.ucdavis.edu/index.htm>
- California-Pacific Society of Range Management. <http://casrm.rangelands.org/>
- Bush, Lisa. “Grazing Handbook”.
<http://sotoyomercd.org/GrazingHandbook.pdf>
- NRCS. “Conservation Benefits of Rangeland Practices”.
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/?&cid=stelprdb1045811>
- The Landscape Toolbox, Tools and Methods for Effective Rangeland Management. <http://methods.landscapetoolbox.org/>