

Weminuche Landscape Grazing Analysis comment period are as follows.

If your district's goal or any other land management agency's goal is to manage the land so that the land benefits from the management, then everything done or not done to the land must not have a negative effect to the land.

Number one, the soil health of these lands must be the priority. Without good soil health you don't have a productive ecosystem. Good soil health begins with good soil biology and management of the land to enhance soil ecology. When good biology can thrive, that biology can feed the plants the nutrients to grow strong and survive stressful periods, such as drought. The question becomes how to manage for soil ecology. There have been many good managers across the country practicing good techniques that can be used, and keeping an open mind to what might work is a key item. In many cases we have developed a problem with invasive brush and tree over growth; this must be solved in order to begin to fix the ecosystem. For example a brush or tree species that begins to exceed a population of 50 species per acre begins to have a negative impact on its environment. In many cases we have forests with tree populations of 2500 plus per acre when they were once at 40 per acre in the early 1900's. Those high tree numbers lead to erosion, drought like conditions, less water table recharge, less beneficial species such as grass, fewer grass species diversity, small weaker tree species, less wildlife, more bare ground, less soil biology and diversity, greater fire danger causing even more harm to our lands. This is a vicious cycle we have created and need to begin to pull together great minds of this nation, who do not have an agenda, but are truly looking to heal the land. These and many more issues are what we are now seeing due to management for a belief or cause and not for good soil health and land health. In many western areas we have an over growth of creosote, which causes many negative effects on soil health from its own toxins to robbing any water that maybe present, yet we do very little to rid our "Public Lands" of such a horrible invasive brush. Until we begin to get our overgrowth of brush and tree species to a more natural level we cannot begin to fix our issues and create a healthy soil.

Without cattle/sheep harvesting the sun's energy by grazing the grass, forbs and shrubs, those plants become weak and nonproductive, which leads to a reduction in the soil's biology. This biology has the ability to feed the plant the nutrients needed to grow strong and healthy. Some grass getting trampled to the ground isn't a bad thing, just as when a manure pile hits the ground it is the utmost recycling process at work, returning nutrients back to the soil for its biology to take in and begin the whole process again of plant growth from the sun's energy into more forage to be harvested. It is what true nature is and how it works!! In this grazing process close monitoring needs to take place, we don't want to graze the plants to where it has a negative effect on them. Rest between grazing is very important and insuring that the plants have recovered. This may mean that these land agencies need to begin to think out of the box

and provide a rancher with other options for grazing until their allotment has recovered. For example creating reserve allotments from already unused areas to be used temporarily.

Management techniques that remove grazing in the “preservation of the land” will lead to the destruction of the land, just as over grazing the land will.

If we begin to look at the management of land from its core, soil ecology, then we can find real solutions to our problems.

Sincerely

Wesley Eaton