

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
INTERIM SPECIFICATION for CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

PRESCRIBED GRAZING

Issued January, 2012

CODE 528

This Interim Specification identifies additional planning requirements for application of Prescribed Grazing, 528, for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Managed Grazing.

GRAZING PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS

NRCS field offices can develop plans based on minimum grazing height and adjust stocking rates (AUMs), based on the job sheet attached.

Producers **must** request approval for Managed Grazing from Farm Service Agency (FSA) based on a technical review by NRCS, **PRIOR** to grazing and must follow the plan developed by NRCS.(attached), which is based on the minimum grazing heights, animal unit equivalents, production estimates, acceptable grazing length, total acres and key forage species.

NRCS field offices will also check with FSA on current notices and 2-CRP Part 19 for any updates or special situations such as drought and emergency grazing, etc.

Only 75% of the CRP acreage may be grazed at the 100% stocking rate or 100% of acreage grazed at the 75% stocking rate.

Completion of Colorado Job Sheet 528 (Stocking rate) on page 3 of this interim specification is required.

Producers will be assessed a 25% payment reduction.

Producers shall not hay or graze the same acreage.

Timing of Grazing Operations

- Grazing will not commence until after July 15, after the primary nesting season (PNS).
- Grazing operations will be suspended by September 30.
- Managed grazing is authorized for a single period up to 120 days. Timeframe July 16 – Sept. 30.
- Producers may not graze the same acreage more than 1 in 3 years for CRP-1's approved before Sept. 26, 2006. For CRP-1's approved after this date grazing may occur 1 in 5 years.
- No grazing is allowed on acreage planted with practice CP-42 Pollinator Habitat.

Minimum Grazing Height/Grazing Plans

- Participants must request authorization from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) **PRIOR** to grazing and must follow a grazing management plan developed by NRCS.
- Grazing may only occur 12 months after the stand is determined to be fully successful by NRCS and the minimum starting height has been achieved. Once the starting height for the first grazing period is achieved subsequent grazing periods will begin at the minimum starting height.
- Minimum grazing heights will be maintained for each key species occurring in the field. Heights for each species will be based on the amount of above-ground plant material that is required to assure plant health and the desired level of erosion control,

- Grazing height and grazing dates will be recorded on the grazing plan form. NRCS will maintain a copy of the plan - Stocking Rate (AUM) Grazing Plans
- Calculate stocking rate based on ocular estimates or actual clipping data.
- Producers will maintain adequate ground cover to protect soil from erosion and maintain plant health.
- **Follow Table 1 for minimum starting and grazing heights.**
- Record stocking rates on the Animal/Forage Balance Sheet or other acceptable job sheet or form. NRCS will maintain a copy of the grazing plan. Completion of applicable job sheets and page 2 of this interim specification is required. See Statement of Work for applicable forms.

Water Quality

- No grazing within **120** feet of a stream or permanent water body.

OPERATION and MAINTAINENCE

Maintain the minimum prescribed grazing heights through the date determined by the FSA State Committee.

CRP cover shall be re-established, at CRP participant's expense, if the cover fails as a result of managed grazing.

Stocking Rate

Table 1: Minimum Grazing Height Allowed

Key Forage Species	Minimum starting height (inches)	Minimum Height (inches)
Alfalfa	6	4
Alkali sacaton	6	4
Blue grama	3	2
Little bluestem	6	4
Orchardgrass	5	3
Russian wildrye	5	3
Sand bluestem	8	6
Sideoats grama	6	4
Smooth brome grass	5	3
Switchgrass	10	8
Tall wheatgrass	8	6
Wheatgrasses Pubescent, Siberian, or Intermediate	5	3
Wheatgrasses Western, Slender, Bluebunch, or Thickspike	6	4
Yellow indiagrass	8	6

Table 2: Animal Unit Equivalent (AUE)

Animal Class	Animal Units
1000 lb. cow + calf	1.10
Bull mature	1.30
Yearling heifers	0.80
Sheep, mature	0.20
Lamb, 1 yr. old	0.15
Horse	1.25
Others	NRPH

Table 3: Production Estimation

Soil Type / Grass Mix	Production	AUM's/Acre Available*
sandy / native grass	low	0.20
	normal	0.35
	high	0.59
loamy / native grass	low	0.15
	normal	0.25
	high	0.42
clayey / native grass	low	0.14
	normal	0.18
	high	0.30
Introduced Species	low	0.30
	normal	0.40
	high	0.50

Local adjustments can be made with actual field clipping

Table 4: Examples for Calculating Stocking Rate

Field No.	Soil Type / Grass Mix	Acres [A]	AUM's/ac Available [B]	Total Months Available [AxB=C]	AUE [D]	Planned # Months Grazed [E]	# of Head Allowed [C/(DxE)]
ex. 1	Sandy grass mix	480	.35	168	1.1	3	51
ex. 2	clayey – native mix	100	.18	18	1.3	2	7
ex. 3	loamy – native mix	320	.25	80	1.1	3	24

CRP Owner:	_____	CRP Contract #:	_____
Farm Number:	_____	Tract Number:	_____
Total Acres:	_____	Field Number:	_____
Planned Acres to Graze:	_____	Total Animal Units Grazed:	_____
FSA Approval:	_____		
Grazing Producer:	_____		
Planner Signature:	_____		