

Prescribed Grazing

WA-528

Washington Conservation Practice- Energy CAP Job Sheet

July 2013

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| Operator: | Technical Service Provider: |
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Definition

Managing the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals.

Purposes

- Improve or maintain desired species composition and vigor of plant communities.
- Improve or maintain quantity and quality of forage for grazing and browsing animals' health and productivity.
- Improve or maintain surface and/or subsurface water quality and quantity.
- Improve or maintain riparian and watershed function.
- Reduce accelerated soil erosion, and maintain or improve soil condition.
- Improve or maintain the quantity and quality of food and/or cover available for wildlife.
- Manage fine fuel loads to achieve desired conditions.

Grazing Land Objective

Maintain an adequate forage base to meet the producer's objectives, yet maintain the productivity and vigor of the desirable forage species according to professional discipline standards. Grazing will be managed to promote desired conditions for upland and riparian area health and function.

Practice Information

Prescribed Grazing is a learning-tool:

Plan the grazing

- Manage the grazing - Monitor and evaluate the results - Adjust the grazing schedule.

With Prescribed Grazing two variables are controlled:

- A. Stock density - the numbers and class of livestock
- B. Timing of grazing periods and recovery periods (Season of use (when); Duration or length of grazing periods (how long); Frequency of grazing periods (how often).)

To successfully implement Prescribed Grazing the following is expected:

1. Work with NRCS to develop a grazing schedule
2. Manage stock numbers and the duration of grazing periods for each pasture.
3. Adequate quantity and quality drinking water will be supplied at all times during period of occupancy.
4. Manage grazing periods and recovery periods
5. Keep records throughout the grazing season
 - a. Livestock use records on each pasture - dates in and out, numbers of animals, weight or class of animals
 - b. Precipitation and the type of growing season
6. Monitor the results
 - a. Select for each pasture a key area and key species to manage.
 - b. Monitor utilization or stubble height of key species at



key areas.

c. Keep a record of observations and supporting photographs.

7. Evaluate and adjust the next year's grazing schedule.

a. What was the utilization or stubble height of key species for each pasture?

1. b. What adjustments are needed?

Additional information including practice jobsheets and supporting technical notes are available in the local NRCS Field Office Technical Guide

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation. Prescribed Grazing will be applied on a continuing basis throughout the occupation period of all planned grazing units.

Adjustments will be made as needed to ensure that the goals and

objectives of the prescribed grazing strategy are met.

Maintenance. Monitoring data and grazing records will be used on a regular basis within the prescribed grazing plan to insure that objectives are being met, or to make necessary changes in the prescribed grazing plan to meet objectives.

All facilitating and accelerating practices (e.g. Fence (382), Pest Management (595), Brush Management (314), Pasture Planting (512) (etc.) that are needed to effect adequate grazing and/or browsing distribution as planned by this practice standard will be maintained in good working order and are being operated as intended.

CLIENTS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I:

have reviewed and understand the above information on Prescribed Grazing and that if entered into a contract for this practice with the NRCS the following will be required.

- Planned use of key herbaceous forage species will not be below the stated minimum stubble heights in pastures or will not exceed maximum percent use requirements;
- Livestock forage requirements, wildlife use and pest damage will be balance with forage availability;
- If irrigation water is applied, the field will be allowed to dry to at least water holding capacity before animal turn-out.
- Recovery periods will be designed and applied during the season of active growth;
- Winter feed areas will be selected away from riparian areas, manure will be spread or scattered if build up is likely to cause resource concern, and stocking rates and time of use will be selected as needed to prevent physical damage to herbaceous and woody plant species;
- A monitoring plan developed for uplands and riparian areas;
- Contingency plan for the entire grazing unit, which includes drought, fire, hail, insect infestations, and other catastrophic events that have the potential to be detrimental to the forage resource;

All practices contracted with the NRCS will be subject to current WA conservation practice standards.

Client's signature: _____ Date: _____

Contract No. _____