

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION GUIDE**

PRESCRIBED GRAZING

(Acre)

CODE 528

SPECIFICATIONS APPLICABLE TO PRESCRIBED GRAZING 528:

A Prescribed Grazing schedule will be prepared for all fields and pastures incorporating any additional feed supplementation for the operating unit or portion of an operating unit being addressed. Grazing schedules will be recorded in a manner that is readily understood and useable by the decision maker in their daily operations. The manner of documentation will depend upon the size and complexity of the operating unit and the details required for a grazing prescription.

A prescribed grazing schedule will include the following information:

1. Location - Field numbers, and Map or Sketch that includes resource condition, existing structures, facilities, watering locations and fences.
2. Acres and how determined.
3. Erosion predictions if primary purpose was erosion control.
4. Documentation of the expected forage quantity and quality for each management unit(s), i.e., pastures during the grazing period. WY-ECS-2 is applicable.
5. Forage-Animal Balance developed as a sustainable grazing plan for the management unit(s), which insures forage produced or available meets forage demand of livestock and/or wildlife of concern. WY-ECS-3 or WY-ECS-20 is applicable.
6. Grazing Plan developed for livestock that identifies periods of grazing, rest, and other treatment activities for each management unit(s). NP-ECS-2 is applicable.
7. Contingency plan developed that details potential problems (i.e., severe drought, flooding) and serves as a guide for adjusting the grazing prescription to ensure resource management and economic feasibility without resource degradation.
8. Monitoring plan developed with appropriate records to assess whether the grazing strategy is meeting objectives. Identify the key areas and key plants that the manager should evaluate in making grazing management decisions. WY-ECS-414 and WY-ECS-26 are applicable.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

NRCS, WY

July, 2008

Grazing use on range or grazeable woodland grasses and grass-like species will not remove more than 50 percent by weight of the current year's growth of the designated key species when grazed during the growing season. When grazed during the dormant season or in a grazing schedule that allows for short grazing periods followed by long rest periods of 30 days during fast growth to 60 or more days during slow growth, grazing use will not remove more than 60 percent. The utilization gauge developed by the U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Forest & Range Experiment Station, may be used to determine the percent of weight removed of common forage grasses by estimating the percent of the plant height removed.

Grazing use on range browse or grazeable woodland browse species may be utilized at 65 percent of the current years' growth of the designated key browse species. Degree of use on browse species is based on the amount of current years' growth removed.

Grazing utilization on pasturelands will be based on leaf length. Attachment 1 for pasturelands provides the minimum leaf lengths at which to initiate and end grazing, as well as the leaf length needed for plant health prior to the first killing frost.

Degraded grazing lands can benefit from one to two years of deferment during the growing season. Deferment will be from spring green-up to seed maturity of the key species.

Complete year long rest is generally not required to restore vigor to depleted grazing lands and, over time, can become detrimental to plant vigor and species composition.

Additional criteria for the development of management intensive grazing programs.

Grazing and rest periods shall be scheduled to meet the desired objectives for the plant communities and the associated resources in each pasture including the grazing animals.

Livestock movements shall be based on plant growth and utilization and not calendar dates.

The planned grazing sequence shall provide significant periods of rest at least every other year during the primary growing season of the key plant species.

Grazing sequences will be changed or adjusted when significant changes in plant vigor or composition, animal kinds and classes, or management objectives occur.

Grazing sequences will be such that the same pasture is not grazed year after year during the same period of the growing season. Rest periods on dryland grazing areas shall be a minimum of 30 days during fast growth up to 60+ days during slow growth. On irrigated grazing lands rest shall range from 20 to 40+ days depending on plant growth rate.

The grazing manager shall be encouraged to initiate a monitoring program to document actual grazing dates, livestock performance, climatic conditions, vegetation utilization and changes over time in order to analyze results and to develop the following years grazing schedule.

ATTACHMENT NUMBER ONE: 528 - PRESCRIBED GRAZING, PASTURELAND

Approximate minimum leaf lengths, in inches, for pasture management, animal health, and animal productivity.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<i>Begin Grazing</i>	<i>Grazed Leaf Length</i>	<i>Regrowth before Killing Frost *</i>
<i>GRASSES:</i>			
<i>bluegrass, big</i>	6	4	8
<i>bluegrass, Kentucky</i>	4	3	3
<i>bromegrass, smooth</i>	6	4	4
<i>bromegrass, meadow</i>	6	4	4
<i>canarygrass, reed</i>	8	7	8
<i>fescue, tall</i>	6	4	5
<i>foxtail, creeping</i>	5	4	5
<i>foxtail, meadow</i>	5	4	5
<i>needlegrass, green</i>	6	4	5
<i>orchardgrass</i>	6	4	6
<i>timothy</i>	6	4	6

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<i>wheatgrass, beardless</i>	7	5	7
<i>wheatgrass, bluebunch</i>	7	5	7
<i>wheatgrass, crested (standard)</i>	4	3	3
<i>wheatgrass, Fairway</i>	4	2	2
<i>wheatgrass, FairXstand</i>	4	3	3
<i>wheatgrass, intermed.</i>	8	4	7
<i>wheatgrass, pubescent</i>	8	4	7
<i>wheatgrass, Siberian</i>	3	2	3
<i>wheatgrass, slender</i>	6	4	6
<i>wheatgrass, streambank</i>	4	3	3
<i>wheatgrass, tall</i>	8	7	8
<i>wheatgrass, thickspike</i>	4	4	4
<i>wheatgrass, western</i>	5	4	4
<i>wildrye, Altai</i>	6	5	5
<i>wildrye, beardless</i>	5	4	4
<i>wildrye, Russian</i>	6	3	4

LEGUMES:

Grazed Stubble Height

<i>alfalfa</i>	6	6	7
<i>clover, alsike</i>	4	3	6
<i>clover, ladino</i>	3	3	6
<i>clover, red</i>	6	5	6
<i>clover, white</i>	3	3	3
<i>milkvetch, cicer</i>	4	3	5
<i>sainfoin</i>	8	4	6
<i>sweetclover, white</i>	8	3	4
<i>sweetclover, yellow</i>	8	3	4
<i>trefoil, birdsfoot</i>	8	3	5

vetch, hairy

8

4

4

OTHER:

Grass-Legume (base on legume)

**Minimum leaf length/ stubble height for grazing after killing frost is 3 inches. Remove animals prior to spring green-up.*