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AH ✓

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



To Don Hyypa
From John Firebaugh *JF*
Subject Aunt Molly Grazing Plan

Date 9/19/84

RECEIVED

SEP 20 1984

RECREATION & PARKS

On September 17, 1984, Joe Egan, Gus Hormay and I visited the ^{RECREATION & PARKS} Aunt Molly FAS with Don Taylor to look at the possibility of establishing a rest-rotation grazing system. We spent the entire day with Mr. Taylor visiting and touring not only our land but his as well. Mr. Hormay will be putting together a grazing plan (pastures, dates of grazing, AUM's, etc.) as a result of the information gathered on the trip. The plan will include Mr. Taylor's property as well as ours and will probably be set up as a three pasture rest-rotation grazing system. Of course, it will have to be acceptable to Mr. Taylor, but he is looking for a better way to manage his land and livestock. The plan should be ready some time this fall.

JF/pm

cc: Jim Ford
Lyn Nielsen

Sept 25, 1984

Joseph [EGAN]

Hope The enclosed ideas reach you
in time to do some good.

Felt I didn't have time to type
it out.

Qua

Sept. 25/84
A.L.H

Livestock Grazing Policy on Department Lands

The Department has acquired some \dots parcels of land totalling \dots acres for the purpose of managing them to provide fully for wildlife. (Livestock grazing was eliminated from these lands (except in one case where it was continued) until the expiration of a lease agreement.)

Most of these lands, the largest acreage, were ranch or other properties that had been grazed continuously and heavily ^{by livestock} for many years and were heavily deteriorated. Inferior species of plants ^{had} encroached upon the lands as the more desirable ones were killed out. Most serious the vegetation ^{cover} had been thinned resulting in soil erosion and ^{serious} loss of land production capacity.

With acquisition of these lands the Department assumed responsibility for rehabilitating them and maintaining them in a highly productive and natural condition as it provides for wildlife.

Sept 25/84
ALH

Continuing soil erosion is a serious problem on these lands. Even in the absence of livestock grazing it will take tens even hundreds of years for vegetation to reestablish on bare soil areas in sufficient amounts to arrest erosion depending on the amount of soil lost.

These lands can be rehabilitated and most rapidly, however, with livestock grazing use, with a particular type of grazing called rest-rotation. The following quotation from a publication on rest-rotation grazing briefly indicates what may be expected with this type of grazing.

Management must recognize that all renewable rangeland values stem directly or indirectly from vegetation. Sustained high-level production of these values therefore depends on proper management of the vegetation. The principal tool the rangeland manager has for managing vegetation is livestock grazing. It is the only force under firm control of the manager that can be applied on practically the entire range area.

Livestock grazing is desirable, if not essential, on rangelands for several reasons.

Desirable vegetation and the overall productive capacity of rangelands can be increased more rapidly with livestock grazing than without. Livestock can be used to perform many important functions that can be achieved no other way over the entire or major portion of the range. They can be used to trample seed into the soil thereby promoting more forage and a better soil cover; to remove stifling old growth on plants, thus increasing plant vigor and production of usable herbage; to stimulate adventitious growth and higher quality forage; and to reduce fire hazard.

Sept 25 1984
ALH

It will be The policy of The Department to

1. Take The measures necessary to rehabilitate The lands under its jurisdiction and maintain them in a natural state and highest possible productive condition.
2. Use rest-rotation grazing as The first and primary tool for improving The land wherever grazing can be used.
3. Await results with rest-rotation grazing before applying cultural practices such as artificial reseeding, spraying, chaining, burning and fertilization. The practices used must be soil conserving and non-polluting.