

Outcome-based Grazing Program

The Bureau of Land Management implements an initiative known as Outcome-based Grazing Authorizations. It is designed to offer a more collaborative approach between the BLM and its partners within the livestock grazing community when issuing grazing authorizations. The following is part of a series highlighting ranches in this pilot program.



Fitzgerald Ranches

Plush, Oregon

Q & A with Eleanor Fitzgerald, Ranch Family Shareholder

How would you describe this ranch to someone who has never been there?

It is absolutely beautiful. We have some breath-taking landscapes with lots of healthy cattle as well as an abundance of wildlife and birds. At Fitzgerald Ranch we manage private land as well as work with public lands.

What is the philosophy that guides this ranch?

It's a fourth-generation family business. The fifth generation is coming up, so we're in it for the long haul. Our focus is getting it ready for the next generation. We aim to take care of the land so it can take care of us and our livestock.

Why did this ranch enroll in the outcome-based grazing program?

I read an article about it in the newspaper, and I thought that this is something that we needed to do. This is something that a lot of us have been working toward for a long time. Land managers and the BLM need to be thought of as partners. We need to be able to work together to better manage the land and provide a better outcome for not only us and our cattle, but for the wildlife and the land as well.

Why is some flexibility important in a grazing permit?

Because you're dealing with mother nature and she can be quite unpredictable. We're the people on the ground. It is our job to deal with what she gives us and act accordingly. We never get the same amount of rain at the same time, which means that we don't get the same amount of feed at the same time either. Having the flexibility to change our permit as we go along with what nature gives us is an important asset to have to produce the best feed and cattle possible.

Why should someone who isn't involved in agriculture care about how public lands are managed?

Everyone should care about how public lands are managed. Public lands aren't just for us to run cattle on, but for the public to use, too. When public lands are managed properly, it can be a really beautiful thing. When we all work together to properly manage public lands, it has a lot of benefits. A big benefit to properly managing the land is the prevention of wildfires. When we use the livestock to keep the fuels trimmed down to an appropriate level, we can keep the number of wildfires down, too. Everyone can benefit from that.



***Partnering to Conserve Sagebrush Rangelands** is a collaborative effort between the BLM and Intermountain West Joint Venture. Our purpose to catalyze proactive, voluntary, and community-led sagebrush rangeland conservation – expanding success across private and public lands. This collaboration is supporting the Outcome-Based Grazing Authorizations efforts. Learn more at www.PartnersInTheSage.com.*