

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.



Smith Creek Ranch

Austin, Nevada

Q & A with Ray Hendrix, Ranch Manager

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

It's a ranch that shows what central Nevada really looks like. We have an abundance of water, sagebrush, and wildlife. There are some beautiful mountain views and rolling sagebrush hills. We run about 900 cattle throughout the year.

What is the philosophy that guides this ranch?

We just want to make it sustainable. We want to take care of the land and wildlife. We want to make sure that this place and way of making a living remains for generations to come. We aim to take care of the land and the wildlife so they prosper and return the favor to us.

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

The real truth is that I was really interested in this program as a way of possibly getting some of the wild horses gathered. As a matter of fact, the helicopter is out there gathering them right now. When the wild horses get to be over crowded, it can have a lot of negative impacts on the land and the water. When the land and the water are impacted negatively, it can also be detrimental to other wildlife. We have been fortunate enough to work as partners with the BLM for a long time. In a way, we had already been doing this Outcome-Based Grazing for a while. We are lucky enough to have good relationships with all of the BLM people we work with and have been able to work together well to take care of the land and livestock.

Why is some flexibility important in a grazing permit?

Because of the variability. Every year is different, and no two years are the same. Locked in dates and terms just don't work very well, especially in the Great Basin where we have such variable weather. You need the flexibility to manage the resources and be able to do what needs to be done at the time that it needs to be done. A ranch can't be dictated by a date on the calendar. It needs to be managed according to the given conditions from year to year in order to get the best outcome for the land and the animals.

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

Because public lands belong to everybody. They should be managed and taken care of so that everyone can benefit from and enjoy them. They should care because the lands are available to everybody forever.



***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.*