



Results Oriented Grazing for Ecological Resilience (R.O.G.E.R.)

A collaborative group



In early 2016, a group of Nevada ranchers with a proven track record of ecologically sound management across millions of acres of public and private lands in greater sage grouse habitats came together with various Federal and State Agency leaders and staff. The goals were to seek solutions for adaptive management within current and impending sage grouse land use plan amendments and improve ecological resilience, landscape health, and productivity. The “ROGER” group continues to work together towards these goals.

For more information, contact Jon Griggs jon@maggiecreek.com

GROUP PURPOSE – Collaborate among ranchers and agencies to achieve land management objectives that conserve sagebrush ecosystems and support ranching. The group will work to:

- Develop a shared vision of on-the-ground conditions
- Create a common understanding of what it will take to achieve those outcomes
- Identify ways to provide ranchers needed flexibility and take action
- Document and share successes, failures, and lessons learned with this group and others

GROUP FUNCTION – Create a venue to bring various parties together to communicate, share information, ask the hard questions, struggle through disagreements, and learn in order to develop solutions to the problems at hand. The group will function as an information, learning and communication venue that supports individuals or groups of individuals experimenting in different ways.

TOPICS OF FOCUS

Outcome-Based Grazing Permits

The purpose of outcome-based grazing is to give greater flexibility to livestock operators and BLM to adjust grazing use for changing conditions in order to achieve specific vegetative, habitat and livestock operation sustainability objectives. Rather than stipulating prescriptive terms and conditions that interfere with timely grazing management adjustments, the intent is to develop permits in a manner that allows operators to demonstrate their ability to achieve habitat and vegetative objectives by providing them the flexibility to exercise their knowledge, experience and stewardship through flexible numbers of AUMs and dates of use and the ability to install and maintain infrastructure in a timely manner. As a foundation of the outcome-based grazing process, the group is working to develop a common understanding of on-the-ground conditions and flexibilities needed to meet rangeland health and GRSG habitat objectives. The BLM’s Elko District has committed to complete two outcome-based grazing permits by 2019 (Elko Land and Livestock and Winecup-Gamble).



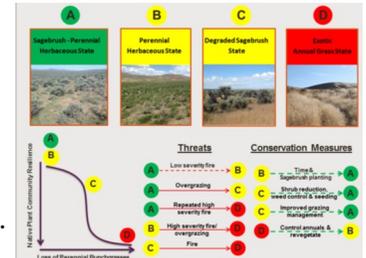


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Remote Sensing, Threat-Based Modeling and Vegetation Mapping to Assess and Monitor Rangeland Health and GRSG Habitat

The group is experimenting with the use of remote sensing technology and state and transition models (or disturbance response groups) to obtain accurate and precise measurements across a large scale and in a timely and cost-effective manner. Four ROGER ranchers [Humboldt (formerly known as Squaw Valley), Maggie Creek, Winecup-Gamble and Elko Land and Livestock] are working with Open Range Consulting and various university partners on this effort. The intent is to map the existing states or response groups within an allotment or management area to identify current conditions and threats and develop ecological objectives; consider the various management tools and actions available to meet those objectives; determine thresholds and responses to drive those actions; and design a monitoring plan that provides timely, cost effective and relevant feedback at the appropriate scale to drive adaptive management. They are also exploring how these technologies can be cross-walked and compared to more traditional monitoring and assessment methods. ROGER members are coordinating with individuals in Oregon who are engaged in similar efforts.



Grazing as a Fire Management Tool

Two ROGER rancher members (Elko Land and Livestock and Maggie Creek) are currently working with the Elko District to implement the first National Targeted Grazing for Fuel Reduction Demonstration project. The project is focused on using (and monitoring the results of) grazing to reduce fine fuels in an area that has a high fire frequency and, as a result, is currently dominated by invasive, non-native cheatgrass. Grazing management is meant to be adaptive, with cattle management altered as need by temporary fences, herding, water hauls, supplements, etc. The group is also interested in identifying opportunities to experiment with dormant season grazing in post-burn areas as a way to (1) remove fine fuels that carry fire early in the season and contribute to the duff layer that makes fires burn hotter; and (2) to reduce the cheatgrass seed load.



Grazing Response Index (GRI) and Other Adaptive Management Planning Tools

Four ROGER ranchers (Winecup-Gamble, Maggie Creek, Humboldt, and Cottonwood) are working with University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension, BLM, USFS and NRCS as part of a Western SARE funded project to explore the effectiveness of GRI and other adaptive planning tools and strategies in meeting rangeland health objectives by focusing on grazing distribution (i.e., timing, duration and intensity) and opportunity for plant recovery. Results will be shared through training programs, curriculum and fact-sheet development, and peer-reviewed publications.

