

# Multiple Use Ensures Responsible Management of America's Public Lands

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, requires "multiple use" on public lands. This means that every American has a place on public lands – whether a hiker, camper, cattle rancher or energy producer. Our nation's wide open spaces are available to be used in numerous ways.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the management of land to serve as many uses as possible is everywhere becoming more essential as populations grow and the demand for space increases.<sup>1</sup> In fact, multiple use is mandated by law in the U.S. because it is a key element of modern, responsible public land management.

America's public lands are currently managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and state agencies. These agencies manage the land in accordance with FLPMA, which<sup>2</sup> states that multiple use exists to "best meet the present and future needs of the American people."<sup>3</sup>

Public lands are essential to the health and well-being of western rural communities, to those producing much needed energy resources and also to tourists who come to enjoy their beauty.

## Preserving Public Lands for All to Use

Efforts to #ProtectPublicLands and keep them open for multiple use are vital for those who want to ensure these beautiful open spaces are maintained for all to enjoy, including local wildlife populations.

Because livestock grazing seamlessly coexists with other multiple use activities — unlike elevated resource or monument designations that eliminate or preclude multiple use activities and access to public lands — public land ranchers play an essential role in ensuring that public lands thrive. Ranchers act as stewards maintaining the health of the land, preserving access to and cleanliness of water sources, removing invasive plant species and serving as first responders fighting potentially devastating wildfires.

In recent years, several new statutes and regulations have challenged the ability to make economic use of many public lands. Restrictions due to endangered species, historic preservation requirements, and other federal impositions have begun to erode the important principle of multiple use and harmed the economies of adjacent communities. Revenue generated from grazing, recreation, timber operations and energy production are a direct result of successful multiple use and go on to fuel the health of local economies.

**Multiple use must remain a priority for the federal government so all Americans can continue to benefit from the natural resources of our public lands.**

1 [fa0.org/docrep/x5397e/x5397e03.htm](http://fa0.org/docrep/x5397e/x5397e03.htm)

2 <http://www.blm.gov/flpma/FLPMA.pdf>

3 [http://west.stanford.edu/students/soco/2012/multiple\\_use\\_policy](http://west.stanford.edu/students/soco/2012/multiple_use_policy)

4 [http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/About\\_BLM.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/About_BLM.html)



## What activities are included in multiple use?

The BLM's definition includes managing public land resources for "a variety of uses, such as energy development, livestock grazing, recreation, and timber harvesting, while protecting a wide array of natural, cultural, and historical resources."<sup>4</sup>

Multiple use essentially means that recreational land users, such as tourists, campers, hikers, and bikers, gain benefit from the same lands as producers, such as livestock grazers and energy sources. Ranching is an essential element of multiple use because the practice easily coexists with other activities and does not preclude any of them from happening concurrently.



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