

# UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF GRAZING



## LIVESTOCK GRAZING IS AN ESSENTIAL LAND MANAGEMENT TOOL

Today, more than 22,000 ranchers graze cattle and sheep on federal lands. Grazing provides innumerable benefits to land management agencies, ecosystems, and rural communities while producing high-quality food and fiber on land ill-suited to other agricultural purposes. As stewards of the land, ranchers serve on the front lines to preserve the rich open spaces which all Americans enjoy.



### GRAZING IS THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR WILDFIRE PREVENTION

Grazing in the early and late season can drastically reduce the amount of highly combustible, invasive cheatgrass (*B. tectorum*).

Wildfire is a primary threat to sensitive species such as the Greater Sage-grouse.

The National Interagency Fire Center estimates an average cost of \$150/acre to reduce fuel loads. Grazing provides this service at virtually no cost to the taxpayer.

### GRAZING IS A WIN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Grassland ecosystems are dependent upon grazing to spur the lifecycle of perennial grasses, and modern managed grazing is the most efficient means of replicating this natural process.

Livestock grazing captures carbon and increases the rate of sequestration.

Ranchers finance critical range projects out of their own pocket, which can include watershed improvements, well installations, and invasive grass treatments. These activities benefit the native flora and fauna as well as the outdoor enthusiasts that enjoy these vast landscapes.

### GRAZING DRIVES RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Grazing and related industries are essential economic drivers for rural communities in the American West.

Ranchers holding federal grazing permits support local businesses year-round, especially during the recreation and tourism off-seasons.

Ranchers are community leaders, serving on local school boards, county commissions, advisory committees, and numerous other capacities.

**Bottom line: Livestock grazing is an essential land management tool that prevents catastrophic wildfire, cycles nutrients through the soil, fosters healthy habitats for wildlife, and supports rural economic development.**