

# PLC PRIORITIES FARM BILL



PLC represents cattle and sheep ranchers who hold approximately 22,000 federal grazing permits across the West. In addition to producing high-quality beef, lamb, and wool and forming the backbone of the rural economy in more than a dozen states, our members serve as the primary caretakers of more than 250 million acres of America's public lands, and hundreds of millions of acres of private land. Every public lands rancher also has private land, so a successful Farm Bill affects all of the cattle, sheep, and wool sectors.

The Farm Bill provides important tools to leverage targeted grazing to reduce wildfire risk, use grazing to protect neighboring commodities, and ensure strong American production of beef, lamb, and wool. Broadly, PLC believes the Farm Bill must empower permittees as partners in conservation, leverage grazing as a landscape management tool, and take aggressive action on the wildfire crisis that continues to degrade public rangelands and forests.

## **PRIORITIZE GRAZING AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER WILDFIRE**

- ◆ **Direct agencies to expand the use of proactive, targeted grazing in fuels management programs.** This may include direction on using Categorical Exclusions and programmatic NEPA assessments where appropriate.
- ◆ **Authorize and expand cross-boundary wildfire mitigation work** to include but also go beyond the USFS's Wildfire Crisis Strategy zones.
- ◆ **Direct agencies to consider *all* tools for rehabilitating post-fire areas and preventing recurring fire, rather than banning permittees from a burned allotment for the arbitrary period of 1-3 years.**
- ◆ **Authorize agencies to use post-fire recovery funds to rebuild fences, water lines, gates, and other operational infrastructure** (all of which is originally paid for and installed by the permittee) to enable that permittee to quickly restore grazing to prevent further fire risk.
- ◆ **Authorize the use of emerging technologies like virtual fences to supplement post-fire infrastructure needs.**

## **RECOGNIZE GRAZING AS A CLIMATE-SMART CONSERVATION PRACTICE**

- ◆ **Utilize livestock grazing to fight annual invasive grasses.** Unlike other mechanical and chemical treatments, grazing can be applied with fine-grain targeting *and* at scale across huge projects.
- ◆ **Streamline NEPA assessments** to allow infrastructure work to move forward.
- ◆ **Include grazing projects in the scope of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and other collaborative stewardship programs.**
- ◆ **Fully fund the programs that best support working lands and allow for utility on federal lands.**
- ◆ **Explicitly authorize grazing in emergency scenarios and for targeted management.**
- ◆ **Restore the EQIP carveout that set aside 50% of funds for livestock-related practices.**

## **SAFEGUARD THE TOOLS THAT SAFEGUARD US**

- ◆ **Strengthen risk management tools** like the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Livestock Forage Program (LFP). These programs are critical for Western farmers and ranchers, especially where large carnivore species are present.
- ◆ **Renew and fully fund the National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank (NAVVCB) and National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP).** PLC worked with the American Sheep Industry to execute a recent NADPRP grant to develop movement plans on federal lands in case of a disease outbreak. Western farmers and ranchers understand that having a strong vaccine bank and a plan for foreign animal disease is critical for the future of our industry.

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