



Strategies to Manage Livestock Grazing to Meet Riparian Objectives

Sandra K. Wyman; National Riparian Service Team; Contact Author Email: sandra_wyman@blm.gov

Grazing management based only on objectives for uplands does not often maintain or improve riparian areas in the same pasture. Land use plan objectives and management prescriptions must accommodate specific riparian area features while considering the needs of the entire watershed and fit in with the livestock managers operation. A grazing prescription that does not address one or the other may be doomed for ecological and economic failure. Simply fencing off all riparian areas to exclude livestock grazing is often impractical due to topography, size, and expense, and may be unnecessary to achieve riparian area condition objectives. Grazing management strategies that are developed to meet the objectives for a particular riparian area may need additional management practices to facilitate riparian area maintenance or improvement. These practices include techniques that attract livestock away from riparian areas, herd management and animal husbandry practices that promote distribution, and restrict livestock use of riparian areas. Land managers throughout the country have developed management strategies that improved riparian area conditions. The use of comprehensive grazing strategies that may include the development of off-site water, supplementation, water gaps, rest, fencing, low-stress stockmanship or culling, as well as other practices have been shown to improve and maintain riparian area vigor. A comprehensive grazing strategy should also address maintenance needs and use adaptive management practices to determine if the goals and objectives are being met to ensure resource and livestock management success.

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