

Chapter 73

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Chapter Contents

- 73.0 Purpose
- 73.1 Applicability
- 73.2 Livestock Grazing Standards
- 73.3 Grazing Management Plans
- 73.4 Annual Report
- 73.5 Existing Livestock Confinement Facilities

- 73.0 Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to implement livestock grazing management practices consistent with meeting other resource management goals including soil conservation, water quality protection, conservation of natural vegetation, and protection of wildlife and fisheries habitat. Maintenance or reestablishment of woody vegetation where appropriate based on site conditions, along streams is essential to provide fisheries habitat protection, bank stability, reduction in stream channel width to depth ration and opportunities for overbank flooding to occur.
- 73.1 Applicability: All grazing operations as defined in Chapter 18 of the TRPA Code shall submit a grazing management plan.
- 73.2 Livestock Grazing Standards: Grazing pursuant to a TRPA approval shall comply with the following standards:
- 73.2.A Seasonal Limits: Livestock grazing shall be limited to a period commencing when firm soil conditions exist in the pastures and plants have achieved sufficient growth to maintain plant vigor required for growth and reproduction and ending October 15. The removal date may be adjusted based on annual growing conditions. The removal date for livestock must maintain the average minimum residual plant height required for streambank protection, maintain plant vigor, sediment entrapment and retention, and sufficient growth of woody vegetation. The minimum residual plant height shall be specified in the grazing management plan.
 - 73.2.B Grazing in Areas Adjacent to Stream Channels: Within 35' of stream channels, an appropriate average minimum residual plant height shall be maintained. In order to increase colonization by riparian plants along stream channels, decrease stream width to depth ratios, improve water quality, and fish habitat, trampling of colonizing riparian plants on stream point bars shall be limited to an average of 30 percent.

- 73.2.C Grazing of Woody Vegetation: Where potential exists based on soil texture and conditions, woody vegetation shall be managed to obtain a variety of age classes, species and growth forms. Woody vegetation shall be managed so that no more than an average of 20 percent of new willow sapling growth is utilized by livestock annually. On the remainder of the riparian area the woody vegetation shall be managed so that the woody vegetation is in balance with the remainder of the plant community.
- 73.2.D Seasons of Rest: In order to improve the vigor of riparian plant species consistent with site potential, seasons of rest or seasonal deferral of grazing shall be considered on the portions of the pasture which are in poor or very poor condition. Evidence of poor condition may include, lack of woody vegetation that is successfully reproducing and growing, lack of diversity of plant species, age classes, and rooting depths, and inadequate plant cover to provide bank protection and energy dissipation during high flows.
- 73.2.E Firm Soil: Livestock shall be allowed onsite only when the soil is firm enough or when sufficient snow cover is present to prevent damage to soil and vegetation.
- 73.2.F Grazing Level: Subject to the requirements of subsection 73.2.B, the livestock grazing level shall not exceed the carrying capacity of the range as determined by a qualified range professional in consultation with the livestock operator.
- 73.2.G Sensitive Plant Species: Livestock shall not be allowed in areas where sensitive plant species as defined in Chapter 2 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances or their habitats could be harmed, destroyed, or otherwise jeopardized pursuant to subsection 75.2.A of the TRPA Code of Ordinances.
- 73.2.H Migration Routes: Range improvements shall be designed so as not to interfere with migration routes of deer and other wildlife.
- 73.2.I Water Quality Standards: Livestock use shall not conflict with the attainment of water quality standards.
- 73.2.J BMPs: New livestock confinement facilities shall be in conformance with BMPs.
- 73.2.K Streambank Management: Livestock grazing shall be modified on banks of streams to eliminate water quality impacts where soil erosion or water quality problems exist, by the use of fencing, other electronic devices to create riparian pastures or other methods to modify livestock use. If fencing is used, access to the stream channel will only be at breaks in the fencing where low water crossings are installed. These crossings shall be armored with rock or other approved materials in order to protect the banks from erosion. Cattle access to the stream for watering purposes shall be at these crossings only. Any alternative man-made watering facilities should be located 100 feet away from stream channels and riparian areas.

73.3 Grazing Management Plans: All grazing operations shall submit a grazing management plan certified by a qualified range professional by May 30, 2002.

73.3.A Minimum Requirements: The grazing management plan shall include at a minimum:

- (1) Management Goals
- (2) The location and acreage of the range.
- (3) Present condition of the range, particularly regarding vegetation, soil erosion and compaction, and water quality.
- (4) The average minimum residual plant height to be maintained by the end of the grazing season, including technical justification.
- (5) A list of any sensitive plants found on the pasture and a plan for their protection.
- (6) The type and number of animals to be grazed.
- (7) The carrying capacity of the proposed range.
- (8) Establishment of a trend study at three to five years intervals to provide for adjustment of use as appropriate.
- (9) Description and location of containment facilities, if any.
- (10) Description of existing and proposed range improvements.
- (11) Identification of the length of grazing season.
- (12) Description of fisheries and wildlife resources.
- (13) Certification by the range professional (see definition in Chapter 2) that the plan complies with the provisions of this Code.
- (14) Photo plots should be established to document annual growing conditions changes which may occur with the vegetative community. The photo plots should be permanently located and repeatable.

73.3.B Confirmation of Plan or Permit: TRPA may require, at the operator's expense, confirmation of the adequacy of the grazing management plan or confirmation of compliance with the plan and the TRPA approval. The management plan should state why a particular system was chosen and provide a list of references or information from local experience that fully justifies the use of that grazing management system.

73.4 Annual Report: By the end of December directly after the grazing season, the operator shall submit an annual report for TRPA review. Any recommendations from TRPA for amendments to the management plan based on the review of the annual report, must be made to the operator one month prior to the start of the next grazing season, or grazing activities may commence for that year without addressing the suggested amendments.

73.4.A Report Contents: The report shall include the following information for the previous year:

- (1) Results of the trend study that shall include vegetation condition information, including, species composition, plant distribution, plant vigor, reproduction, and frequency, and soil condition status such as bare soil and evidence of erosion;
- (2) Season of use;
- (3) Number of animals grazed;
- (4) Minimum average residual plant height to be maintained, including technical justification, at end of season; and
- (5) Assessment of the impacts from last season to determine if impacts have long term effects.[§]

73.5 Existing Livestock Confinement Facilities: Existing livestock confinement facilities which are not in conformance with BMPs shall be brought into conformance within five years from the effective date of the Regional Plan, July 1, 1987.

[§] Amended 1/27/99