A VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIP
GRAZING LANDS CONSERVATION INITIATIVE
GLCI

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative

A Voluntary Partnership with Private Landowners

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National GLCI Steering Committee

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Forage and Grassland Council

American Sheep Industry

Dairy Industry Representatives

National Association of Conservation Districts

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Society for Range Management

Soil and Water Conservation Society

The Nature Conservancy

Advisors

Cooperative State Research Extension & Education Service

Land Grant Universities

USDA Agriculture Research Service

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Excellent Meeting in Bozeman

The National GLCI Steering Committee met in Bozeman at Montana State University (MSU), August 8–9. Senator Conrad Burns, accompanied by staff-members Dewight McKay and Rick Molen met with the committee on Saturday.

The committee reviewed a summary of priority areas in grazinglands research and education as reported by twenty-three states responding to the GLCI Steering Committee survey.

A total of 315 individual items were identified under the six major categories which appeared on the survey. Only 36 were identified by more than one state as a priority need. Across all categories, 22 items related to training and the need for workshops, field-days, seminars or similar educational activities on various subjects. A total of 7 requested printed materials (manuals, fact sheets) on specific subjects. Sixteen related to economics, profitability, or cost/benefit analyses of specific practices.

The following items ranked highest in priority in terms of appearance on the largest number of surveys, across all categories:

- Advantages/disadvantages of excluding livestock from streams and ponds
- Additional training for agency employees
- Develop biological control programs for invasive weeds
- Legume management and availability of better cultivars
- Multispecies grazing as an approach to diversification
- Seminars and field days on Management Intensive Grazing
- Better monitoring techniques and decision evaluations
- Improved forage varieties

The committee toured four ranches Saturday afternoon to look at grazing management on private grazing lands. Jerry Hammer is intensifying private grazing land management on his ranch to overcome a more limiting public land grazing allotment. The Gallatin River Ranch has overcome some of the economic hardships of making a living off grazing lands through open space housing developments. Joe Skinner has intensified his grazing management of riparian areas for the last twelve years and has a detailed monitoring system. Tom Milesnick is improving riparian areas without fencing them out from livestock grazing while still protecting one of Montana's best fisheries.

An optional range tour Sunday and Monday was also very informative. The tour featured a visit to the MSU Red Bluff Research Ranch in Norris, a visit to public sheep grazing allotments in the Gravelly Mountain Range, a presentation on a Coordinated Resource Management project in Southwestern Montana and a program by Dr. John Walker entitled "Perceptions of Yellowstone Park Use and Condition". The tour concluded Monday with several stops in the West Yellowstone and Gallatin River Watershed area.

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