



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Grazing Guidelines and Policy



Fish and Wildlife Commission
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WDFW Mission



To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.

WDFW Lands

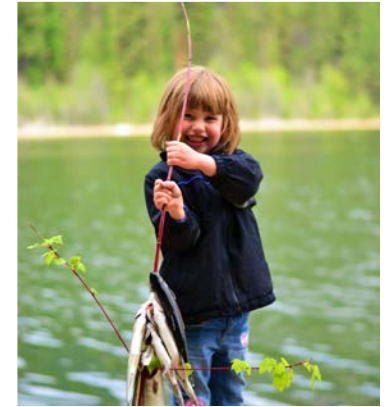
Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People



Our vision is a Washington where fish and wildlife thrive in healthy habitats, and where people experience and enjoy our state's natural gifts for generations to come.

WDFW Lands

Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People



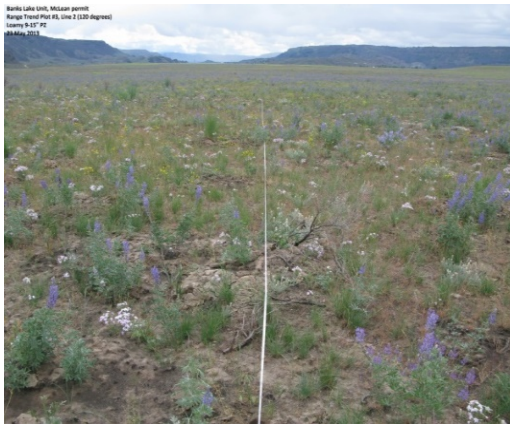
- Provide access for fishing, hunting, and other wildlife related recreation
- Foster experiences and exploration
- Preserve natural and cultural heritage

WDFW Grazing Permits

COUNTY	ACRES	# PERMITS	AUMs
Asotin	90540	6	1338
Clark	384	2	1100
Cowlitz	209	1	180
Douglas	19503	3	2931
Franklin	467	2	N/A
Garfield	1105	2	61
Grant	11998	6	2122
Kittitas	26937	4	1332
Klickitat	12212	6	806.5
Okanogan	33918	24	5056
Yakima	6343	5	250
Totals	122617	61	15252

Grazing Tool to Address Mission

- Manage vegetation to provide food for wildlife
- Enhance recreational opportunity
- Encourage habitat conservation across multiple ownerships at the landscape scale through coordinated resource management (CRM)
- Preserve habitat by protecting community character and open space



**Ecological Integrity will be
Monitored and Protected**



1,000,000 Acres of Public Lands

- 61 grazing permits
- 123,000 acres
- Grazing management plans
- Limit pasture area, stocking rates, duration
- Protect wetlands, riparian habitat, salmonids, sensitive species



What Does Grazing Achieve?

- Waterfowl habitat enhancement
- Increase shrub and grass growth for deer and elk (Chief Joseph WLA, Asotin Co)
- Control invasive weed biomass and fuels especially in degraded areas (Columbia Basin WLA, Grant Co)
- Landscape management (CRMs) in Asotin, Kittitas, Klickitat and Okanogan counties (Methow WLA, Okanogan Co)



What Does Grazing Achieve?

- Accommodate grazing when acquiring lands if compatible with mission (Simcoe Mountains WLA, Klickitat Co)
- Emergency grazing after wildfire (Methow WLA, Okanogan Co)



Grazing Guidelines and Policy Update

Why Now?

- Document current process
- Ensure consistency between WAC and policy
- Openly address emerging issues
- Ensure proper Commission review

WAC and Policy Revisions

WAC Revision Summary Points

- Clarify that permits are subject to desired ecological conditions, Strategic Plan as well as WDFW mission and management objectives
- Define when permits are sent to F&W Commission for
 - Temporary permits are included in commission review prior to becoming permanent
 - Clarify that grazing permitted during acquisition may continue for up to three years, but then must be sent to commission for review before further grazing
- Clarify that permits may be discontinued upon expiration- currently there is apparently a presumption of re-issuance

WAC and Policy Revisions

Policy Revision Summary Points

- Add role of grazing to enhance recreational opportunity and protect community character
- Maintain requirement that grazing must ensure that ecological integrity is maintained
- Remove duplicative language in WAC regarding commission review and content of grazing plans
- Require consistency with grazing WAC and the Department's conservation mission

Grazing Evaluation Framework

Consistently evaluate objectives and risk associated with potential new grazing

Potential Objectives

- Forage benefits to wildlife
- Control vegetation structure for waterfowl
- Agricultural residue control
- Other vegetation control (reduce competition, fuels management)
- Alternate pasture
- Coordinated resource management
- Potential fire risk
- Community and landscape value
- Maintain undeveloped space
- Build cooperative relationships



Grazing Evaluation Framework

Potential Risks

- Conflicts with acquisition/management funding
- Fencing issues
- Diseases
- Conflicts with recovery plans, species of special interest, etc.
- Soils and soil crust impacts
- Conflicts with aquatic restoration
- Conflicts with recreation
- Weeds
- Wolf-livestock conflict

Costs



Wolf / Livestock Conflict Management Guidance

- Minimize wolf-livestock conflict
- Seek to maintain wolf recovery & promote co-existence with grazing
- Full spectrum of options from removing livestock to removing wolves
- Assess risk of conflict and, working with permittee, identify nonlethal deterrence and sanitation measures in Annual Operational Plan (AOP)
- May include, if necessary, temporary livestock removal or deferral
- WDFW will try to locate alternate pasture
- During the grazing season, reassessment triggered if:
 - Presence of “wolf activity center” less than 1 mile from pasture boundary
 - 2 depredations in 30 days or 3 in 10 months for local pack
 - 1 depredation on the permitted pasture

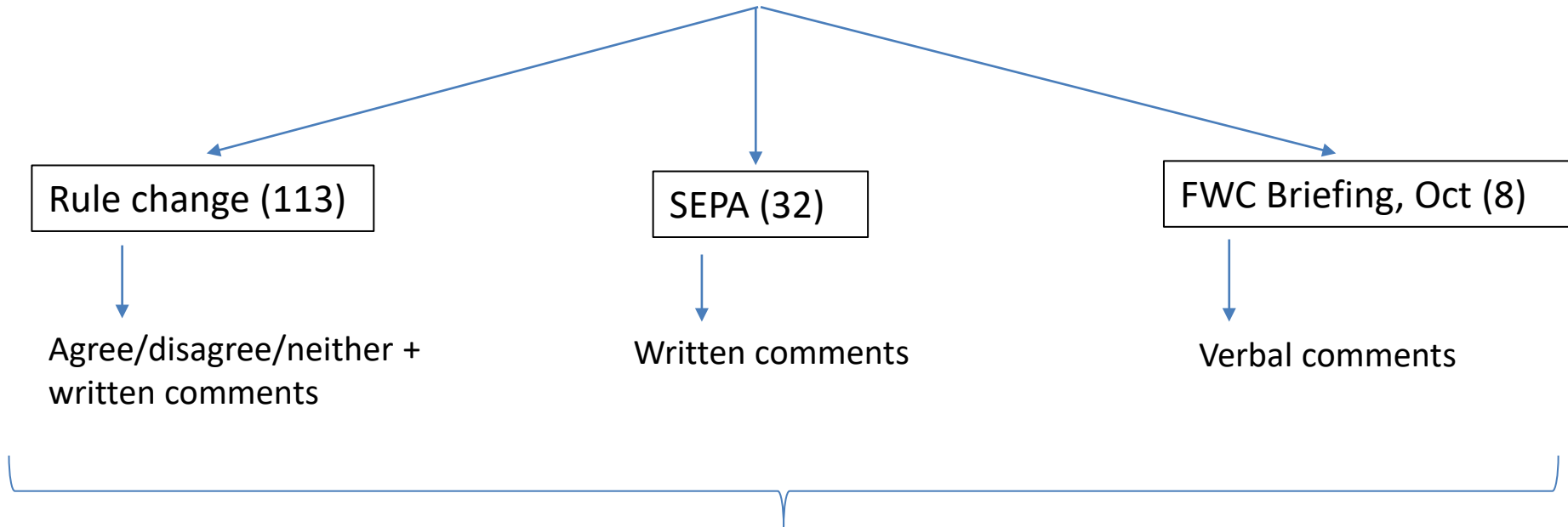
Wolf / Livestock Conflict Management 2020 Grazing Season

- Last summer there were several places where wolves were in the vicinity of existing grazing permits
- Only two permits were amended to add additional nonlethal deterrents beyond standard sanitation measures
- No livestock were removed from the land, no reduction of normal permitted grazing time
- Department staff provided the Director with a range of options to choose moving forward, which included removing livestock, and the Director chose to keep cows on the land

Public Engagement

- February 2019: Discussions with over 20 interested parties (conservation, producers, elected official) about wolf-livestock measures
- October/November 2019: Targeted day-long workshop specifically on policy and process for temporary removal of livestock with three representative members of conservation community and three representative members of the grazing community
- May 2020: Two targeted stakeholder outreach briefings with over 25 participants (conservation, producers) intended to be pre-SEPA discussion of our entire grazing program review
- May 2020: Letters to WDFW permittees and Wildlife Area Advisory Committee members
- September 2020: SEPA/Rule Development public input
- October 2020: Public comment at F&W Commission briefing

Public Comments



- Proposal was NOT a question of whether grazing should or should not be permitted, but commenters responded as if it were
- Of those opposed to grazing, common themes were don't kill wolves, and don't graze on public land
- Of those supporting grazing, fuels management/fire reduction was most common theme
- Several comments about specific precautions and technical management tools



Thank You!

