

RMAC ANNUAL PRIORITIES

These are tied back to RMAC's statutory mandates, which includes the annual review of current priorities, and incorporation of other advised agency priorities (e.g., CDFG, California Environmental Protection Agency [CalEPA], Board of Forestry and Fire Protection [Board], CNRA). Please review the priorities (called "objectives") in the Annual Priorities section of the Strategic Plan.

"SLGLLM" = RMAC subcommittee on State Lands Grazing License and Land Management

- **OBJECTIVE: Promote appropriate grazing for fuels management and multiple ecosystem services.**
 - **Purpose:** To make prescribed grazing a practical option for state land management agencies where it is appropriate and suitable for accomplishing ecological, environmental, and cultural objectives and can be managed to produce results consistent with requirements of environmental regulatory agencies.

Action Items:

1. (Lead: **SLGLLM**) Develop standard template/form(s) with a guidance document for constructing grazing license agreements for use by state agencies. (**Completion: 11/22**)
 - a. Template/form(s) must meet requirements of state agencies that may potentially use them, including Dept. Fish & Wildlife, State Parks, State Forests, with provision for allowing modification subject to review to accommodate special requirements of any others which may request them;
 - b. be approved for this use by General Services,
 - c. and follow standards of good practice recommended by UCCE and CRMs.
2. (Lead: **SLGLLM**) Develop or approve informational publications which agencies can use for
 - a. (1) conducting site inventories and assessments specific to the ecological site(s) on the management unit and their management objectives,
 - b. (2) developing adaptive management plans detailing the general use and specific objectives for the management unit, and
 - c. (3) producing detailed grazing plans that will form the basis for grazing licenses. These will be developed from general management unit plans which include [1] the clearly stated purpose/objective(s) for the grazing treatment, [2] measurable outcomes to be managed for from measures used to evaluate the performance of the grazing treatments, [3] infrastructure required for the grazing treatment, [4] description of the grazing practices to be used which include, at minimum, the types, estimated average weight, and numbers of animals to be used, the season(s) when grazed, the areas

to be treated with estimated acres, the stocking rate to be applied (animal units/treated area by length of time), what physical indications will be used to determine the start and end of each grazing treatment, and [5] identification of any resources requiring protection from damage by the grazing practices (sensitive plant species, soils, water quality, etc.).

i. These plans should be consistent with the content and purpose of the UC ANR Ranch Water Quality Planning Curriculum.

e-d. Coordinate with state agencies and major public landowners to facilitate an inventory of existing land management plans to assess which elements required for the grazing plan are already available.

(Completion: 3/23)

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase collaboration and joint educational opportunities for RPFs and CRMs**

- **Purpose:** To integrate and coordinate Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) with Certified Rangeland Managers (CRMs) for the purpose of developing effective fuels management treatments from their different but complementary professional backgrounds. There could be opportunities to rectify this, perhaps via combined training programs with both RPFs and CRMs to develop burn plans.

Action Items:

1. **(Lead: RMAC)** Establish an RMAC subcommittee to develop ongoing, working relationships with the California Licensed Foresters Association and the Certified Rangeland Managers Panel with the purpose of establishing annual fuels management trainings for both CRMs and RPFs to participate in together. **(Completion: 1/23)**
2. **(Lead: RMAC)** Initiate a public demonstration project for a select group of CRMs and RPFs to collaborate on a project where multiple, integrated fuels treatments requiring application of both forest and rangeland ecology practices are required. **(Completion: 9/23)**
3. **(Lead: RMAC)** Work with Professional Foresters Registration to explore points within the registration/licensing processes where CRM and RPF requirements and exam contents could be intentionally coordinated. **(Completion: 5/23)**

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase the number of CRMs, and utilization of them, in California**

- **Purpose:** There are only 86 CRMs left in the State. RMAC needs to promote using that expertise in CAL_FIRE for developing burn plans and conducting prescribed burns.

Action Items:

1. (**Lead: RMAC**) As needed, write letters of support for and promote the efforts of Drs. Susan Marshall and Marc Horney in obtaining funding to develop a statewide training program for potential CRMs. (**Completion: 3/23**)
 2. (**Lead: RMAC**) Invite CAL aFIREire representatives to discuss state requirements for planning and conducting prescribed burns as a CAL aFIREire employee or private “burn boss” at Sept or Nov RMAC meeting. (**Completion: 1/23**)
 3. (**Lead: RMAC**) Meet with CRM Panel and CalPac-SRM leadership to discuss other methods of promoting CRM utilization and/or further development of the program. (**Completion: 3/23**)
- **OBJECTIVE: Establish appropriate guidance for grazing following wildfire on California state-owned lands**
 - **Purpose:** Ensure that where grazing is being conducted on state lands that policies for grazing livestock management being required by state lands managers are consistent with the best available science identified by UC ANR and in state efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change in the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy. Cattle producers are reporting being asked to defer grazing for a season so that prescribed burns can be conducted, and then are often not being allowed to graze for several years afterwards. (These reports are presumably chiefly from USFS and BLM lands in the state, but the policy may also be adopted by state lands managers).

Action Items:

1. (**Lead: RMAC**) Produce an authoritative peer-reviewed publication explaining what is known about requirements for post-burn “rest” from defoliation and its application to the major grassland ecotypes in California (annual grasslands, blue oak savannas, coastal perennial prairie grasslands, Great Basin sagebrush-steppe). This review must consider not only impacts on forage production, but also potential impacts on wildlife habitats, water quality, and fuel bed characteristics - and recommendations for evaluating and mitigating them on a site-by-site basis. (**Completion: 9/23**)

Alternatives:

- a. Request such a publication from UC ANR (UCCE)
 - b. Request such a publication from faculty/students at CSUs (Cal Poly SLO, Chico, Humboldt) and/or UCs (Berkeley or Davis).
 - c. Organize an RMAC subcommittee to produce a white paper.
- **OBJECTIVE: Develop educational opportunities and outreach RE: fuel reduction methods**

- **Purpose:** Grazing is a fuel reduction method in the State's Wildfire Resilience Action Plan, but few professionals in the state doing planning and leading fuels treatments have experience with it. State-wide training and demonstrations in methods of reducing fine fuels using grazing is necessary to get the practice implemented at scale. This will require coordination with CAL_FIRE. Educational effort should include recommendations for evaluating and mitigating site-specific grazing treatment impacts on wildlife habitats, water quality, and fuel bed characteristics.

Action Items:

1. (Lead: RMAC) Continue to conduct and promote annual educational workshop series on the use of grazing for fine fuel reduction in collaboration with CAL_FIRE, UC ANR/UCCE, USDA-NRCS, and others. (Completion: 11/22)
 2. (Lead: RMAC) Work with UC ANR/UCCE to identify needs for technical and training information and establish a plan for producing them. (Completion: 3/23)
- **OBJECTIVE: Solicit and prioritize current California rangeland management research priorities (RMAC Strategic Objective 4: Monitor for issues in rangeland science and management).**
 - **Purpose:** To circulate and elevate practical needs for rangeland management research from land managers and agency staff to research organizations in California with the technical skill and capacity to properly investigate them.

Action Items:

1. (Lead: RMAC) Regularly solicit requests or solicitations for investigations of rangeland management topics. (Completion: 11/22)
 2. (Lead: RMAC) Where appropriate, initiate proof-of-concept projects or small-scale collaborative investigations utilizing CDFA mandates under the FAC 7271 and 7273. (Completion: 5/23)
- **OBJECTIVE: Increase collaborations with related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies**
 - **Purpose:** Broaden RMAC's connections and interactions with organizations involved in large-scale management of rangelands in California and that have not been part of its formal stakeholders.

Action Items:

1. (Lead: RMAC) Extend invitations for periodic public reports on their activities and current issues to the UC California Natural Reserve System, the California Rangeland Trust, the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition, the Central Coast Grazing Coalition, and others. (Completion: 11/22)

2. (**Lead: RMAC**) Extend invitations for input on RMAC priorities, synergistic efforts surrounding shared goals, and periodic public reports on their activities and current issues to advised agencies, including the Board, CalEPA, CNRA, and CDFA. (**Completion: 10/22**)

- **OBJECTIVE: Continue to monitor regulatory initiatives on surface water pollution and ground water management**

- **Purpose:** Remain in position to provide constructive feedback to agencies on the scientific merit and practicality of regulatory efforts meant to protect water quality and sustain its availability and affordability.

Action Items:

1. (**Lead: RMAC**) Re-establish RMAC's standing water quality subcommittee? (Rename to "Water Quality and Sustainability" or just "Water" subcommittee?)
 2. (**Lead: RMAC**) Establish an annual schedule for representatives from the State and Regional WCBs make presentations or submit reports to RMAC on their activities that may impact grazed lands in the state. Coordinate with state and regional board staffs to develop an annual report template to facilitate communication between State and regional Water Quality Control Boards. (**Completion: 1/23**)
 3. (**Lead: RMAC**) Establish an annual schedule for staff from DWR to make presentations or submit reports to RMAC on groundwater management plans under development that may impact grazed lands in the state. (**Completion: 1/23**)
- **OBJECTIVE: Livestock Pass Program**
 - **Purpose:** Monitor county-by-county implementations of the LP program and inter-county coordination. It has been reported that in some areas ranchers with livestock grazing in multiple counties have been issued passes which are only valid in their county of residence.

Action Items:

1. (**Lead: RMAC**) Agendize topic for Sept/Nov meeting. Invite CAL at FIREire, CFBF, or UC ANR staff who have knowledge of the state-wide implementation of the LPP program. (**Completion: 11/22**)