Dec 1981

Don Gordon

About BI Mt Exp. For.

Place names

People

Range - Experimental work on "forest"

History of grazing vicinity

Specific dates otab. Sus Res. Center

Personnel

Advisory Committee

Well at BI Mt Hights

Buildings " "

Logging operations

Equipment.
December 4, 1981

Joseph L. Egan  
Assistant Administrator  
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
Wildlife Division  
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Joe:

My suggestions on your memorandum to regional supervisors on, "Rest-rotation Grazing and Multiple-use Land Management" are incorporated in the enclosed version of the memo. I hope you find some of the suggestions helpful in working out a final draft. Try the final draft on Wilbur Rehmann before you send it out.

Happy holidays to you and your family.

Sincerely,

A. L. Hormay
Revision, Draft

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: All Regional Supervisors

FROM: JLE

SUBJECT: Rest-rotation Grazing and Multiple-use Land Management

No doubt you are aware that for the past several years I have been promoting the use of rest-rotation grazing on range lands in Montana. I am firmly convinced that with this type of grazing, vegetation and soil, which are the basis of renewable resources including wildlife, can be improved and maintained under livestock use and further that this type of grazing can be highly beneficial to wildlife.

Directors Wambuck, Colbo, and Flynn have officially supported my efforts to get this type of grazing better understood and more widely applied.

Rest-rotation grazing has been around for nearly 30 years now but it is still not well understood and in many cases has been improperly applied.

The method was developed by A. L. "Gus" Hormay in 1948 while he was with the Forest Service as a range scientist. At a later time he also worked for the Bureau of Land Management. Gus retired from the government in 1977 after 47 years of service. He is now a range management consultant.

A rest-rotation grazing system was first applied on a practical scale on the Harvey Valley cattle allotment on the Lassen National Forest in California in 1952. Since then many systems have been implemented on ranges throughout the west, including Montana, mainly on public lands.

Many, if not most of these systems were improperly designed or improperly applied. Many were abandoned after a short period of use. Results with them have left much to be desired. They have given rest-rotation grazing a bad name. These prostituted systems are not and should not be called rest-rotation grazing systems.

With rest-rotation grazing a specific grazing system is developed for each range by the range manager. A rest-rotation grazing system therefore is designed and unique. Each system is different. It is fashioned objectively to meet plant growth requirements and management objectives on the particular range. Its effectiveness depends entirely on the range manager and his knowledge and good judgment.
There are many misconceptions about rest-rotation grazing in wildlife circles. Some are:

1. It is designed primarily to produce grass and livestock
2. It is detrimental to the growth of forbs, shrubs and trees important to wildlife
3. It calls for heavy grazing in some pastures
4. It deteriorates riparian habitat
5. It calls for spraying, chaining and artificial seeding.

None of these is true.

The sole purpose of a rest-rotation grazing system is to promote and maintain the growth of vegetation on the range. It is designed objectively to accomplish this and thus maintain the basis of renewable resources and land productivity. It is not aimed at producing livestock or any other resource except vegetation.

Vegetation is maintained on the range with rest-rotation grazing by timely resting of the range from grazing. All plants, forbs, shrubs and trees as well as grasses are provided opportunity to grow and reproduce during rest periods. All areas including riparian sites are rested and vegetation growth on them enhanced. I observed such responses on the Matador cattle allotment near Dillon. This is a BLM allotment.

A good form of rest-rotation grazing was implemented on the area in 1976. I saw the area some ten years earlier. It was severely deteriorated. The riparian sites were really in sad shape.

I visited the area again in the summer of 1980 with Hornay and others. The improvement of the entire area under rest-rotation grazing was incredible. Riparian areas had grown up with vegetation to the point the creeks were hardly visible. All this was accomplished without excluding livestock from the riparian areas.

Stocking rate, degree of vegetation use and the desirability and need for cultural practices like spraying, chaining and artificial seeding are all decided by the range manager. They are not called for or are part of rest-rotation grazing.

Important benefits accrue to wildlife with rest-rotation grazing that cannot be realized with continuous grazing, the method used on most ranges. In a well designed rest-rotation grazing system at least one-third of the range is protected from livestock use the entire year and some two-thirds until about mid season. These portions of the range are thus available exclusively to wildlife and other uses.
I urge you to take advantage of every opportunity to look at ranges where rest-rotation grazing is properly applied and judge results for yourself.

The Department needs the support of the livestock industry and the industry that of the Department. What better vehicle for developing closer relations than rest-rotation grazing?

You probably know that late in 1978 the Grazing Districts Division of the Montana Department of Natural Resources, the Wildlife Division of the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, the Montana Wildlife Federation, and others arranged a meeting in Glasgow aimed at paving the way for getting rest-rotation grazing applied on some grazing allotments on the C. M. Russell Wildlife Refuge and associated areas outside the refuge administered by BLM. The meeting was attended by concerned interests including stockmen on September 20. The services of Gus Hormay were obtained to explain rest-rotation grazing to the group and help facilitate this effort.

Five ranchers expressed desire to see rest-rotation grazing practiced on their allotments: Sever Enkerud (representing the Wittmeyer Grazing Association), Gene Barnard, and the Weiderrick brothers on the north side of the Missouri River and Dan Rindall and Bob Buffington on the south side. Representatives of the various interests, including Hormay and I toured the allotments with the ranchers on October 16-19. Hormay then prepared rest-rotation grazing proposals for each allotment.

The proposals were described to FWS and BLM on March 9, 1979 in a meeting in Billings attended by a broad spectrum of state, federal and private wild land management interests. Burton W. Rounds, Area Manager FWS, and Edwin Zaidlich, then State Director BLM, were present. The question put to these two agency heads was--Would you be willing to see rest-rotation grazing tried on the 5 allotments?

After considering the matter both replied in due time in the following vain--We understand rest-rotation grazing. The proposals are reasonable. However . . . .--And the matter was left there.

Recently BLM has expressed interest in pursuing the proposals. FWS shows little desire to do so.

I plan to continue to press in every way I can to get rest-rotation grazing implemented on these allotments and on other ranges in Montana. I need and solicit your help.

Please let me have your thoughts on the subject of this memorandum.

J. L. Egan
Montana Dept FWP

Suggestions on memorandum to Regional Supervisors on Restoration Grazing and Multiple-use Land Management

Spent 4 days revising memo. during period Oct 25 - Nov 4
Change 2 days @ $225.00 Total $450.00

Submitted invoice Dec 15, 1981

Paid (received payment) Jan 6, 1982
August J. Hornay
Range Management Consultant
101 Acolin Street
San Francisco, Ca 94131

12-31-81

Dear Sue,

As you can see, you have not received the reminder of your requested information by Jan. 1. I have been swamped with immediate projects, but they are nearly behind me and you will be getting your information at the soonest opportunity.

I would like to discuss the tentative format for our March session fairly soon if possible.

Thank you for your patience.

Sincerely,

[Signature]