

**RURAL HARITAGE PRESERVATION PROJECT**

**HC 60 Box 700**

**Ruby Valley, NV 89833**

**February 9, 2015**

**Issue # 1, Information Request # 2**

Nevada Sagebrush Ecosystem Council Members:

J.J. Goicoechea; Chris MacKenzie; Allen Biaggi; Steve Boies; Gerry Emm; Starla Lacy; Bevan Lister; Tina Nappe; and Sherman Swanson, each individually, in keeping with your oaths of office, and the mandates that are incorporated within the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Nevada, wherein it is required that "no person shall... be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law..." and the mandate that all planning for the protection of sage grouse.

Rural Heritage Preservation Project Findings:

Recognition of the true beneficial effects of livestock grazing to wildlife has been long ignored. Grazing impact prevents decadence in brush species by interrupting maturity. Grazing impact causes browse species to send forth new growth that is highly beneficial to sage grouse and deer alike. Consider the vast black sage flats that dominate the central valleys of Nevada that were positively impacted by wintering bands of sheep each year in the past. Sage grouse and deer alike thrived during those years when great numbers of sheep were being grazed throughout the State of Nevada.

Long time research specialist August L, "Gus" Hormay advocated grazing cattle during fall or winter on key deer winter range where bitterbrush decadence had become a problem. Cattle impact bitterbrush differently than do deer. Cattle, because of their large mouths and teeth, graze and hedge plants back to a greater degree than do deer. Cattle also rub on the plants with their heads and necks, breaking the plants back. As a consequence the plants are stimulated and revitalized - to such a degree, they send forth large amounts of nutritious new growth.

All plants have built in mechanisms whereby when they reach a certain size they cease growing. When this happens, leaf and stem material become course, woody and less nutritious. Removal of old growth serves to stimulate sage and bitterbrush, causing them to send forth great amounts of new growth important to deer and sage grouse alike. (See attachment A)

In a study completed by Paul Tueller and Jerald Tower in 1975, it was found that grazing often caused browse plants to produce as much as 80 percent more plant material than those that were completely protected. In one instance, bitterbrush plants that were grazed, produced 33.7 pounds of feed per acre, whereas fully protected plants produced only 7.3 pounds of feed per acre. (See attachment B)

In pursuance of NRS 239.010, and NRS 239.0107, please make available to us (via electronic mail, preferably) all such scientific, historical and commercial data as you may have access to which indicates that the findings of Paul Tueller, Jerald Tower and August L, Gus" Hormay's and Cliven Bundy regarding the beneficial effects of livestock grazing are incorrect.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cliff Gardner

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Leo M. Drozdoff, P.E. Director,  
Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Jim R. Barbee, Director  
Nevada Department of Agriculture

Tony Wasley, Director  
Nevada Department of Wildlife

Sirs:

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To:

Ted Koch, State Supervisor for the State of Nevada  
U. S. Fish; & Wildlife Service

Bill Dunkelberger, Forest Supervisor, Humboldt - Toiyabe National Forest  
United States Department of Agriculture

Amy Leuders, State Director, U. S. Department of Interior,  
Bureau of Land Management

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