



Sustainable Ranching to Support Rangeland Conservation

Ranching – tending livestock as a means to convert grassland resources into food, fiber and income – is an important part of the cultural, economic, and ecological landscape of the western United States¹. The stewardship decisions of a relatively small number of ranches, numbering just over 20,000, help determine ecosystem conditions on a large percentage of the western landscape. Most of these ranches are managed as multigenerational, family-run businesses.²

Ranches operate in northern forests and southern deserts, across the vast plains, and in almost all rural landscapes in

between. Ranching can be multi-functional; producing food and fiber, providing meaningful employment, maintaining cultural traditions, open space; and an array of ecosystem services such as biodiversity³ conservation, wildlife corridors, and carbon sequestration and storage.

Rangelands serve an important ecological role in the western landscape by providing vital habitat to an array of species, as well as essential forage to livestock operations. In many cases these lands, whether under public or private ownership, have been impacted by historical grazing practices that preceded contemporary understanding of

Key Recommendations: Principles for the Development of Sustainable Ranching Policy in the West

Congress, the Administration, and the Agencies that manage western landscapes must consider the need for economic, social and ecological sustainability for western ranchlands. Based on current dynamics within the ranching sector and the policy arena, new policy initiatives and attempts to reform current regulatory and federal programs should adhere to the following principles to ensure maximum effectiveness and strategic use of federal investments:

Incentivize and Support Collaboration and Partnerships:

Partner with collaborative groups to solve resource conflicts and build trust among stakeholders. Provide financial and technical support for community-based organizations¹ to build and create local capacity to innovate and implement solutions.

Leverage Market Resources:

Support projects that add value to traditional ranch products, and promote access to payment for ecosystem services to diversify the economic uses of working landscapes and ensure the viability of family ranches.

Increase Access to Financial Capital: Provide financial resources to accelerate conservation-based ranching programs, models and economies; incentivize innovative projects protecting and stewarding soil, water, and other ecological and social values.

Practice and Incentivize Adaptive Management: Base regulation and management on the best available science and local knowledge¹ and support the tools that allow for adaptive management. Recognize comprehensive monitoring as a central element in advancing sustainable stewardship.

Promote Landscape Level Conservation: Recognize and address the social, economic, and ecological connections between private and public lands that share ecological processes and span the forests, rangeland, and river systems that define the West.

¹ Accessing local knowledge to ground-truth scientific research is necessary for effective implementation.

Working together to find policy solutions to the ecological and economic challenges of the rural West

RVCC is comprised of rural western, regional, and national organizations that have joined together to promote balanced conservation-based approaches to the ecological and economic problems facing the West. We are committed to finding and promoting solutions through collaborative, place-based work that recognizes the inextricable link between the long-term health of the land and well-being of rural communities. We come from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington.





rangeland science and ecology. Today, there are growing numbers of exemplary ranchers practicing innovative range stewardship to restore ecological integrity to degraded rangelands and maintain existing healthy landscapes, all while using livestock revenues to sustain operations and support the local economy. Proactive support for conserving landscapes, and providing the tools, incentives and markets necessary to promote conservation-oriented ranching will restore and maintain biodiversity and open space while providing food, fiber and jobs across the western United States.

This paper describes the policy challenges that ranchers and range stewards face in providing the infrastructure to restore and conserve the western landscape. It offers recommendations for how federal programs and investments could accelerate and increase the adoption of sustainable ranching practices to assist in making ranching an economically viable conservation strategy for western rural communities.

Working ranches and healthy rangelands provide ecological and economic benefits

Federal land management policies and regulations should support “working landscapes” and recognize the inextricable link between the long-term health of the land and the well being of rural communities across the West. These policies should recognize the importance of sustainable ranching and working rangelands because they are:

Building long-term land stewardship. Ranches are often located in areas of highest concern for conservationists. Deeded ranchlands cluster around riparian areas and wetlands⁴ that are essential for the life support and survival of the majority of terrestrial and aquatic species, both wild and domesticated. Rangelands are a significant carbon sink and properly managed grazing has been shown to increase soil carbon storage in western rangelands.⁵ A stable ranching community with access to the right tools, resources and incentives can provide a lasting and effective stewardship workforce. Ranchers and ranching comprise a unique socioeconomic institution whose attributes and assets are currently under-utilized and should be leveraged for conservation.

Contributing to vibrant economies and communities in rural America. Ranchers operate on over 400 million acres of private and public grasslands, rangelands, and forests in eleven western states.⁶ Cattle and other livestock species convert forage into meat and a variety of other products through grazing. Since a considerable amount of this land is not suitable for crop production other than hay, grazing livestock significantly increases the amount of available land, which unconverted, provides jobs and food, and supporting the heritage and economies of many rural communities.

Providing cost-effective support for conservation and ecosystem services. Under the right set of institutional circumstances, ranching can be a cost effective, sustainable approach for rangeland conservation and the provision of ecosystem services (water, open space, carbon sequestration and storage, recreation, species protection, and food, fuel, and fiber production). There are abundant examples of the compatibility between grazing and biodiversity conservation⁷ and a growing number of innovative individuals and groups who have achieved remarkable conservation and operational resilience within their regions (see pull out box on page 7).

Maintaining open space. Ranches remain a frontline for defense of open space and prevent the conversion and fragmentation of land. The incentives and interests of ranchers in maintaining viable operations requires the retention of large open spaces that provide ecological and aesthetic values to the broader population.

Protecting both public and private lands. Private and public lands intersect in the same landscape and the viability of ranching as a multi-functional service provider is inextricably linked to the interplay between public and private land utilization and conservation.⁸ Many ranchers, under their current operational structures and market realities, only remain economically viable because of their access to public land. Their private lands often serve as buffers between public lands and developed areas, protecting and enhancing our public lands.⁹ For instance, private ranchlands allow wildlife to move back and forth between public and private lands, minimizing the threats that come from exurban development on private lands.¹⁰ Public lands policy should support appropriate, sustainable

public land grazing practices, and recognize the interplay between access to public lands and broader landscape-scale conservation efforts.

Policy challenges to the future of ranching and conservation

Today, the western United States faces a dynamic of inter-related social, economic and ecological factors that threaten ecosystems, wildlife and ecological services, and also the culture and economies of traditional ranchers and ranching communities.

While regional experiences may vary, challenges to the conservation of rangelands and the sustainability of ranching communities throughout the West can include:

High demand for competing land uses. Exponential growth in demand for smaller, amenity-driven land parcels, as well as oil and gas development and conversion of native grasslands to large-scale food and non-food (energy) crop production all contribute to the fragmentation and conversion of large landscapes that alter or preclude significant ecological functions and processes, and the viability of socially and ecologically important species.

Spread of invasive species. Invasive species are a significant threat to current rangeland ecosystems and ranch land productivity. Invasive species degrade the environmental, economic and social services provided by range and rangelands.

High turnover of family ranches. Ranchland real estate values sometimes far surpass the agricultural value of the land, effectively pricing ranchers out of the market and attracting a new demographic of (often absentee) land-owners. This new wave of property owners and managers are often inexperienced, and may lack the traditional knowledge of place and awareness of management practices necessary to sustain long-term stewardship and conservation.

Divestment in the land management agencies and continually understaffed agencies. A reduction in the availability of staff dedicated to rangeland issues lessens the agencies' ability to interact with and develop partnerships with ranchers. This shortage can lead to knowledge

gaps about specific land management needs for a given area, and a lack of technical assistance necessary to implement effective practices on the ground.



Resource Conflicts. Conflicts and misunderstandings, including litigation, involving water quality and quantity, fish, plant and wildlife protection, game and non-game habitat management, invasive species, and the regulations that govern grazing management can polarize communities, limit opportunities, flexibility, and available resources for improving ranching practices and wildlife conservation through cooperative efforts. This can create an atmosphere that inhibits planning and decision-making certainty for ranch operators.

Razor-thin profits. The viability of sustainable ranching operations is essential for long-term conservation and stewardship. However, many ranchers are facing a decline in profits as markets fluctuate unexpectedly. For example, returns from commodity beef sales, while cyclical, have been less likely to keep pace with costs of cattle production (e.g. fertilizer, hay, diesel fuel for equipment, costs of living, insurance, etc.), generally leading to decreased profitability.

This suite of challenges results in three alarming broadscale trends:

1. Increased fragmentation and development pressure on open space needed to conserve and promote biological and species diversity, healthy ecosystem processes and function, and ultimately, the supply of ecosystem services upon which we, as a nation, rely.
2. An aging population of ranchers and fewer opportunities for continuity in management and knowledge caused by a dearth of young people interested in remaining in or returning to ranching communities without sufficient assurances of economic viability – effectively de-populating many rural communities and eroding their social fabric.
3. The erosion of a stewardship workforce (ranchers) ready to restore and maintain species, natural functions and ecosystem services, and the ability to protect open space.



Policy recommendations to catalyze immediate and systematic change

There are several Immediate actions that should be prioritized and implemented over the short-term to improve policies and procedures that affect the management of rangelands and the economic viability of ranches in the western United States. However, advancing the way that western landscapes are managed and creating new incentives that recognize the potential role of ranching in the health and productivity of rangelands will require systemic changes in program structures, delivery, and congressional investments. Long term actions articulate broad themes which promote sustainable ranching policy in the West.

The following policy recommendations are organized into Immediate and Long-term actions:

1. Incentivize and support collaboration and partnerships.

As with the RVCC's work promoting collaborative forestry we support collaboration as integral to finding common ground and creating strong and lasting solutions. Federal agencies should work with collaborative groups comprised of the diverse, sometimes competing, interests that affect ranchlands. Federal programs should provide financial and technical support to build and create local capacity to innovate and implement solutions, avoid litigation, resolve social conflict, minimize associated costs, and build trust among stakeholders.

Conservation funding for direct restoration work can go unused if there is a lack of resources for the supporting activities that develop and precede a project. Community-based organizations (CBOs) that accelerate and broaden on-the-ground implementation often struggle to secure sources of funding to facilitate and organize collaborative processes, to disseminate information and recruit land-owners, and to serve as problem solving liaisons between federal agencies and ranchers on the ground.

To take immediate action, we recommend:

The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior should direct their agencies to work with CBOs to increase inter-agency, inter-departmental protocols, staffing, and performance

measures to ensure effective, non-duplicative, and integrated approaches to building and supporting CBOs as catalysts for effective conservation and sustainable economic development.

Over the long term, we recommend:

All federal agencies that interface with natural resource-based communities (e.g. NRCS, FWS, FS, BLM and RD) should design their programs to:

- Enhance and expand partnerships with CBOs;
- Provide financial assistance through grant and loan programs as appropriate to local CBOs; and
- Provide technical assistance and access to government research, data, and other relevant information to support local CBOs.

2. Leverage market resources.

Expenditure of public capital cannot by itself achieve land conservation or community sustainability. Public funds should be invested in catalytic measures that allow ranchers to leverage opportunities in existing and emerging markets to achieve greater economic security through conservation-oriented management. While we recognize the ongoing importance of commodity based livestock markets to support ranching, we must ensure that ranchers who seek out emerging markets for conservation-based, value-added products, as well as ecosystem services have access to and can easily participate in them, creating new revenue streams and adding value to traditional commodity products.

a. Value-Added Production

We must ensure that those ranchers who seek out value added¹¹ opportunities have ready access to: a) loans and grants to support exploration of new business models outside of or in addition to current commodity market structures; b) small- and mid-scale slaughter and processing facilities, which are appropriately inspected, to allow for niche-oriented production, distribution, and sales to encourage the increase of locally-produced, small-scale, and sustainably-raised products.



To take immediate action, we recommend:

- Continue and expand programs such as USDA’s “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” to help connect rural ranch products to urban consumers and markets;
- Assure that food safety regulations, such as impending Food Safety Inspection Service validation requirements, do not unfairly burden small-/mid-scale processors, and improve consistency of interpretation of FSIS regulations across districts and among inspectors;

Over the long-term, we recommend:

- Improve availability of and fully fund loan/grant programs to enhance small-to-mid-scale processing infrastructure,
- Assure that federal inspectors are available, especially in cases when states cut state-level inspection programs, in order for smaller ranchers to be able to access various niche markets;
- Strengthen the integrity of and provide broad education and training on voluntary labeling claims, for example, “natural” and “grass-fed.”

b. Ecosystem Services

Ecosystem services markets have the potential to provide additional streams of revenue to landowners by compensating them for the public benefits they provide through natural resource management. We must ensure ranchers and rancher-led community-based organizations have access to and help shape emerging markets for Payments for Ecosystem Services.

To take immediate action, we recommend:

The 2008 Farm Bill established a federal government-wide Conservation and Land Management Environmental Services Board and a USDA Office of Ecosystem Services and Markets¹² to create technical guidelines to assess ecosystem services. We urge these boards to create and recognize formal representation of community-based conservation organizations and ranchers in any processes utilized by the new USDA Office of Ecosystem Services & Markets to advise this office in the development of future federal programs and incentives.

Over the long term, we recommend:

As these entities develop policies and activities governing ecosystem services markets, we encourage them to provide incentives and assistance for conducting outreach to small landowners and for aggregating multiple small landowners to a scale that allows for participation in these markets. This would reduce the costs of administering markets, provide assistance and guidance to eligible landowners, and help ensure the continued flow of ecosystem services from family-owned lands. These policies should recognize and support the role of intermediary organizations (such as community-based organizations) in providing outreach and aggregation assistance to private landowners.

3. Increase access to financial capital.

Ensuring public investment in conservation-based ranching programs, models and economies by prioritizing funding for new and existing programs to convey technical assistance and financial incentives to conservation-oriented ranchland owners is critical to ensure landowners’ ability to safeguard important ecosystem services and values and produce high quality food and fiber. Providing fair compensation for the willingness and the investments ranchers are and can be making toward the nation’s ecologic and economic health is an essential step toward conserving the natural systems upon which ranchers depend. Moreover, during uncertain economic times, the employment opportunities that result from stewardship activities on private lands cannot be overlooked.

a. Current Farm Bill

The Natural Resource Conservation Service’s programs within the USDA provide critical technical and financial assistance to private landowners and communities. However, funding and coordination with other federal programs such as Rural Development, stewardship incentives, technical assistance, and financial support for communities and private landowners remains insufficient.

To take immediate action, we recommend:

Increase funding for the incentives and resources provided to private forest and ranchland owners by the Farm Bill conservation programs (e.g. Farm and Ranchland



Protection Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Grassland Reserve Program). We encourage funding for conservation programs at the level in the 2008 Farm Bill to ensure that these programs continue to grow the opportunities for rangeland owners to improve their bottom line and ecological sustainability.

Over the long term, we recommend:

Increase investment in the land management agencies to support the delivery of conservation programs by agency staff, or Technical Service Providers housed in community-based organizations. Insufficient agency staff to administer programs limits access to available conservation funding and/or use of new innovative programs.

Recognize and support the integral role of communitybased organizations as entities that accelerate the implementation of conservation programs by bridging between agencies and landowners. (See Collaboration and Partnerships, above, page 4, recommendation 1.)

b. Estate Tax

Many ranchers are “land rich and cash poor” and high estate taxes can force the younger generations to sell parts or all of their family ranches. This is especially true in areas where land values have skyrocketed due to encroaching development. While the RVCC does not advocate for a repeal of the estate tax, the current tax structure must be reformed so that it protects open space and promotes vibrant rural economies by keeping future generations in ranching, while maintaining open space and conservation values.

To take immediate action, we recommend:

Reform the estate tax by exempting farms and ranch assets as long as the land continues in a family agricultural operation. In addition, exempt land with conservation easements, incentivizing a tool that permanently protects land with high value to the public. (These concepts are currently exemplified in the Family Farm Preservation and Conservation Estate Tax Act HR 3524, introduced by Representative Thompson (CA)).

4. Practice and incentivize adaptive management.

Basing private and public rangeland management on the best available science, connecting it to practical (local) knowledge for implementation, and providing support for the tools that allow good adaptive management is essential to promote successful collaborative practices, effectively conserve Western landscapes and ensure the viability and sustainability of ranching.

a. Monitoring

Both traditional and multi-party monitoring, including the creation of baselines and the regular collection of data are all essential to effective land management. Policy makers, land owners and managers, communities and citizens need adequate information to evaluate the impacts of management activities, correct detrimental practices, or demonstrate accomplishments. Without an effective way to accurately monitor the social, ecological and economic outcomes, it is difficult to make informed choices about outcomes, or move toward desired future conditions. Federal land management agencies are mandated to engage in such monitoring activities, but have been criticized for a lack of consistent, standardized indicators and information useful for reporting on the status of rangelands.

There is a need for a consistent, national information baseline, and common standards for assessment and planning to support proper and effective decision making, and reality-based direction for improvement and maintenance of land use and conservation practices applied to rangeland ecosystems.

To take immediate action, we recommend:

- Fully implement the existing authorities directing agencies to fund and carry out rangeland monitoring; and provide the agencies with the funding and training necessary for rangeland specialists to fulfill these mandated responsibilities.
- Ensure monitoring budgets allow for training of and direct co-monitoring by rangeland managers and owners, and include a preference for local contractors.

Over the long term, we recommend:

- Promote the development of a comprehensive set of inter-agency protocol (like the Sustainable Rangeland Roundtable Indicators and Criteria) and pilot projects to further refine these criteria.¹³
- Shift the focus of monitoring programs, across agencies, to outcome-based approaches instead of prescription and practices evaluation.
- Ensure that the design of monitoring criteria and indicators consider the information needs of emerging ecosystem service markets.
- Include early warning indicators¹⁴ in monitoring plans to enable better interim decision-making, adaptive management, and oversight by managers.

b. Management Standards and Agency Coordination



Whether public or private, ranchlands are at the intersection of multiple federal agency jurisdictions managing for conservation outcomes. For example, one landowner might work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service on private land, graze on both Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management allotments, and intersect with both Fish & Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries for endangered species conservation measures. While strong community-based organizations can assist in integrating agencies and mandates, multiple (sometimes competing) agency mandates, practices and standards often complicate landowner and agency efforts to effectively manage whole landscapes for conservation.

Rancher organized and led groups and coalitions exemplified by the snapshot below are making significant strides for conservation in their home territories.

The **Ranchers Stewardship Alliance** (South Phillips County, MT) mission is to promote ecological, social and economic conditions that will sustain the biodiversity and integrity of America's northern mixed-grass prairie for present and future generations. This group of 35 ranch families provides a critical bridge between government agencies, conservation groups and ranchers. RSA increases rancher involvement in restoration, organizes collaborative weed management efforts and hosts trainings to improve the economics and management of area ranches. (www.ranchersstewardshipalliance.org)

Country Natural Beef (Western U.S.) is a co-op of ranchers with a strong land ethic that developed a new model for beef production, buffering themselves from the boom and bust commodity market with unique niche-marketing focused on value-added production, including environmental stewardship. Country Natural Beef is third-party certified by the Food Alliance and meets rigorous social, environmental, and quality standards. Over 4 million acres of land are under management of CNB member ranches. (www.countrynaturalbeef.com)

Lemhi Regional Land Trust (Salmon, ID) - A small group of ranchers in the rural community of Salmon, Idaho banded together in 2005 in order to generate and provide supportive funds and resources for the preservation of land and natural resources, and in particular, central Idaho ranchlands and agricultural land. Concerned about the future, these ranchers felt that the creation of a land trust could offer voluntary options and opportunities to landowners that were interested in protecting the landscape and lifestyle of this rural area. Not quite 5 years later, the land trust has worked with area landowners to conserve over 5,500 acres of working ranchlands and wildlife habitat and is on track to successfully continue this work in an iconic Western landscape. (www.lemhilandtrust.org)

Madison Valley Ranchlands Group (Madison Valley, MT) works to keep the ranching way of life in the Madison Valley Area by: developing ways to enhance the economic viability of family ranches; preserving traditional rural community and family ranch values; ensuring productive agriculture through the protection of private property rights and open space, as well as maintaining healthy grasslands, wildlife habitat, and watersheds; and working cooperatively with groups, agencies, and individuals who share our goals and commitment to the land. (www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org)



Over the long-term, we recommend:

That the Secretaries of Agriculture and of the Interior and their respective agencies work collaboratively with stakeholders and other relevant agencies to develop comprehensive, multi-agency, multi-species, ecosystem functionality (as opposed to single species requirements) standards and guidelines for land management that would:

- Reduce jurisdictional disconnects;
- Simplify interactions between agencies and landowners;
- Allow for synergies and efficiencies in the application of conservation funding;
- Provide support for all desirable species and ecosystem functions, whether protected or not; and
- Allow for the development, adoption and implementation of comprehensive monitoring protocols at the local and national levels.¹⁵

5. Prioritize landscape level conservation.

Private and public lands interrelate in a shared landscape. The economic viability of many ranches is dependant on access to public lands, which often help maintain the critical mass of agricultural production in rural economies. In turn, private lands serve as buffers between public lands and developed areas, and support ecological functions, like watershed hydrology, while contributing important habitat for migratory wildlife and unique habitats not found or well represented on adjacent public lands. Policies must recognize the social, economic, and ecological connections between private and public lands throughout the West.

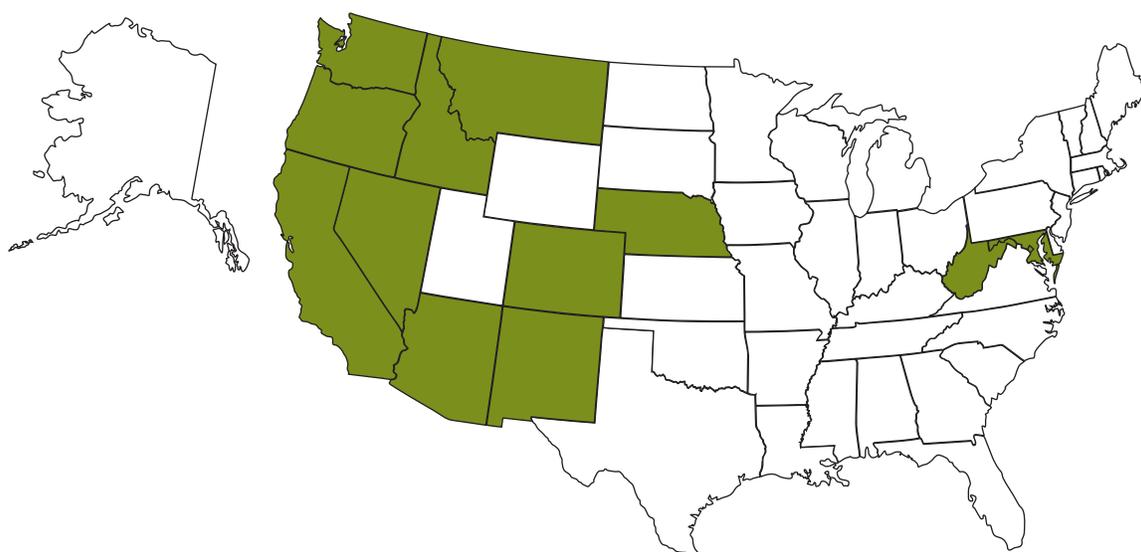
Over the long term, we recommend:

Provide strong support for landscape level conservation, including:

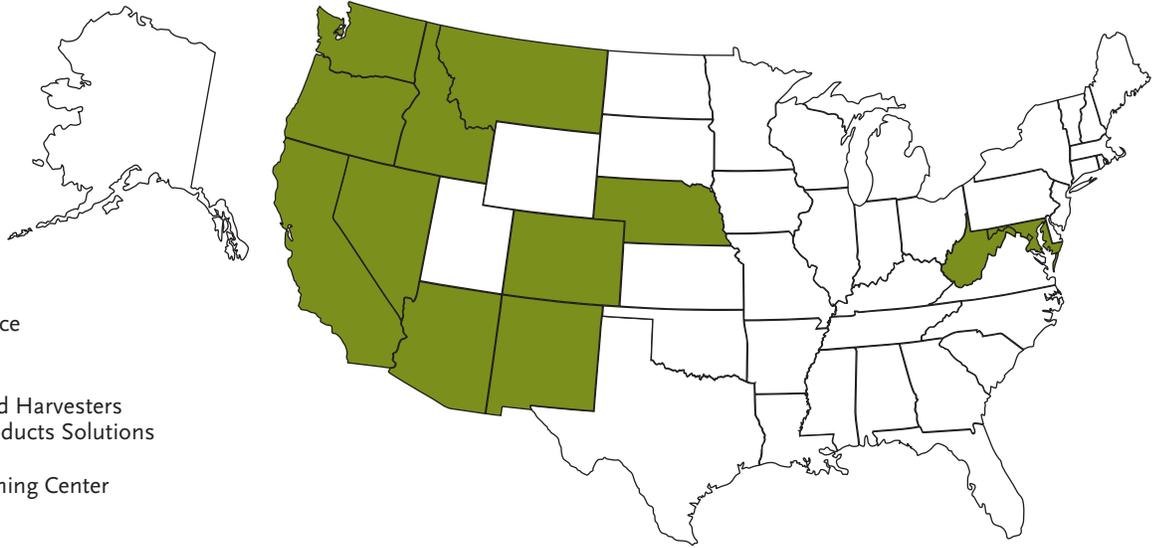
- Development of conservation-based planning for public lands grazing;
- Collaborative approaches to developing grazing allotment management plans;
- Multi-party monitoring with landowner/user participation;
- Provision of conservation incentives and cost-share programs to public as well as private lands;

- Robust agency capacity and staffing necessary to effectively work with landowners and deliver technical assistance for conservation programs;
- Public funding for strong community-based organizations which bridge between landowners and federal and state agencies;
- Significantly increased funding to match the scale of need for landscape restoration and long-term protection; and
- Focused support to combat the spread and impacts of invasive species.

- ¹ Knight, R. L., W. C. Gilgert, and E. Marston (Eds.). 2002. *Ranching west of the 100th meridian*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- ² Gentner, B. J., and J. A. Tanaka. 2002. Classifying federal public land grazing permittees. *Journal of Range Management* 55:2-11.
- ³ Maintaining biodiversity of native species enhances the resiliency of the ecosystem. Our definition of biodiversity includes fish and wildlife habitat and native vegetative cover.
- ⁴ Talbert, C. B., R. L. Knight, and J. E. Mitchell. 2007. Private ranchlands and public land grazing in the Southern Rocky Mountains. *Rangelands* 2:5-8.
- ⁵ G.E. Schuman, H.H. Janzen, and J.E. Herrick. 2002. Soil carbon dynamics and potential carbon sequestration by rangelands. *Environmental Pollution* 116: 391-396.
- ⁶ Lubowski, R. N., M. Vesterby, S. Bucholtz, A. Baez, and M. J. Roberts. 2002. Major uses of land in the United States, 2002. USDA Economic Research Service. (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB14/>).
- ⁷ Maestas, J. D., R. L. Knight, and W. C. Gilgert. 2003. Biodiversity across a rural land-use gradient. *Conservation Biology* 17:1425-1434.
- ⁸ Talbert et al. 2007.
- ⁹ Talbert, C. B., R. L. Knight, & J. E. Mitchell. 2007. Private ranchlands and public land grazing in the Southern Rocky Mountains. *Rangelands* 29:5-8. This study in the Southern Rocky Mountains found that 43% of the private lands adjacent to the USFS and BLM lands were ranchlands with federal grazing permits.
- ¹⁰ Maestas, J. D., R. L. Knight, & W. C. Gilgert. 2003. Biodiversity across a rural land-use gradient. *Conservation Biology* 17:1425-1434.
- ¹¹ Such as organic, grass-fed, local, or conservation beef.
- ¹² This office is now the Office of Environmental Markets.
- ¹³ The Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable (SRR) is working to develop a comprehensive set of Criteria and Indicators. (<http://sustainable.rangelands.org>)
- ¹⁴ For example, the first and earliest warning indicator of poor water cycle, germination sites for perennial plants, and sequestering carbon, is an increase in bare ground.
- ¹⁵ An example of this in the forestry context is the USDA Joint Forestry Team that was created in 2006 to develop recommendations to coordinate inter-agency delivery of forestry, conservation and technical assistance for working forests, farms, and ranches and provides a precedent and model for interagency collaboration and coordination.



Please see the back cover for a list of coalition partners.



Arizona

Bar T Bar Ranch
Diablo Trust
Flavors Without Borders
Farming and Foodways Alliance

California

Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters
Calaveras Healthy Impact Products Solutions
Fourth Sector Strategies
Watershed Research and Training Center

Colorado

Environmental Defense Fund

Idaho

Framing Our Community, Inc.
Lava Lake Land & Livestock
Lemhi County Economic Development Association
Lemhi Regional Land Trust
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
Salmon Valley Stewardship

Maryland

Communities Committee

Montana

Big Hole Watershed Committee
Centennial Valley Association
Flathead Economic Policy Center
Madison Valley Ranchland Group
Northwest Connections
Ranchers Stewardship Alliance
Swan Ecosystem Center

Nebraska

Native American Public Telecommunications, Inc.

Nevada

Boies Ranches, Inc.

New Mexico

Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations
Gila Woodnet
Restoration Technologies
Santa Clara Woodworks
SBS Wood Shavings
The Quivira Coalition

Oregon

Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council
Ecosystem Workforce Program
Grant County Court
Integrated Biomass Resources LLC
Lake County Resources Initiative
Oregon Rural Action
Renewable Energy Solutions
Rural Development Initiatives
Savory Institute
Siuslaw Institute
Sustainable Northwest
Yainix Ranch
Wallowa Resources

Washington

Conservation Northwest
Mt. Adams Resource Stewards
Washington DC
American Forests
West Virginia
Center for Economic Options

Additional resources available from Sustainable Northwest:

Community-based Organizations: Strategic Assets for Western Conservation, RVCC 2010

Rural Capacity for Conservation and Job Creation, RVCC 2011

For more information contact the RVCC Issue Experts:

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Learn more about RVCC here: www.SustainableNorthwest.org/rvcc

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Northwest