Developing a Handbook Summarizing the Use of Livestock as a Tool in Noxious Weed Management Programs in the Western United States

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Introduction
Researchers and grazing practitioners have long known that livestock grazing can be used as a tool to manage some noxious weeds. This knowledge however, has not been collected, summarized and shared in a useful format with other interested parties. In response, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension specialists and a University of Idaho weed scientist, developed a handbook and Web site concerning prescribed livestock grazing to control noxious weeds.

Objective
The project objective was to “assemble, summarize, and distribute state-of-the-art knowledge concerning livestock grazing as a noxious weed control tool in the western United States.”

Approach

Conduct literature review; survey researchers, weed district managers, and grazing practitioners; and formulate grazing for weed control guidelines plants that occur on at least two western states noxious weed lists.

Distribute livestock grazing guidelines to Cooperative Extension educators, Natural Resource Conservation Service personnel, and others via a published handbook, CD, and Web site.

Evaluate the program using telephone surveys, number of hits on the Web site, and information requests.

Results to Date
66 species occur on noxious weed lists for at least two western states.

80 surveys (28% return rate) were received, of which 70% were from grazing practitioners. Survey respondents reported experience with livestock grazing of noxious weeds for 21 species.

Of the species that occur on noxious weed lists for at least two western states, there was sufficient information to develop grazing guidelines for 28.

The draft handbook has been assembled and is in the peer review process. It will be published and distributed in November, 2006.

Example of a grazing guideline

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