

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Secretary Rollins:

We strongly support your Secretarial Memorandum 1078-006 to increase timber production from our National Forest System and carry out emergency actions to reduce wildfire risk. Your order builds upon and expands President Trump's Executive Order 14225 and will provide substantial reinforcement for the President's national and economic agendas. As you work to implement this Memorandum, we would like to highlight the role that grazing can play in the removal of hazardous fuels.

Over the last 60 years, there has been a radical reduction in livestock grazing on BLM and Forest Service land. In 1955, there were more than 15 million Animal Unit Months authorized on BLM land; now, that number is usually less than 11 million. The Forest Service saw a similar decline. A decrease in grazing results in the build up of fine fuels on the ground. The Forest Service has hundreds of vacant grazing allotments – areas that have been identified as important to be grazed – that have not been issued to a permittee for many years. These vacant allotments become a risk to the land within their borders as well as to the areas around them.

Grazing is a crucial tool to control the fine fuels that feed these wildfires. Cattle and sheep can be used at scale to reduce fire risk, improve post-fire rangeland conditions, and create fuels breaks for a return to a healthier fire matrix. While fire can be a key component of maintaining forest health, the current wildland fire trends are costing millions in economic losses and often burn with such intensity the land struggles to recover. Grazing is a sensible mitigation approach to minimize the intensity and risk of wildfires while supporting local livestock producers and improving forest management.

In October 2022, California Agriculture published a research article<sup>1</sup> finding that without grazing in the state, there would be “hundreds or possibly thousands of additional pounds/acre of fuel on

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<sup>1</sup> <https://californiaagriculture.org/article/108623>

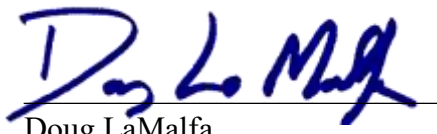
the rangelands, potentially leading to larger and more devastating fires.” The paper concluded that, “there are opportunities to improve fire safety by grazing rangelands that are not currently being grazed—or even by increasing grazing intensity on very lightly grazed areas.”

As the wildfire season is quickly approaching, we believe all or a combination of the following recommendations could be successfully implemented to further reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires:

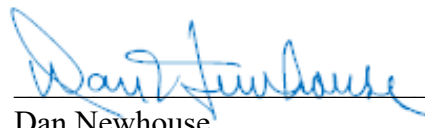
1. Utilize targeted grazing to create fuel breaks to control fire behavior.
2. Reopen vacant allotments to control fuels and provide forage for burned-out ranchers.
3. Incorporate grazing as a first-line tool for fuels treatments, rather than on a pilot-project basis.
4. Allow integration of permittees into wildfire response teams.
5. Use prescribed grazing as the tool of choice when other methods are unavailable.

We appreciate your willingness to review this perspective on utilizing grazing for wildfire reduction. We hope you share our concerns and can prioritize implementing these recommendations as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support for the timber and ranching industries.

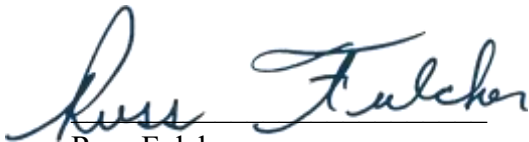
Sincerely,



Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress



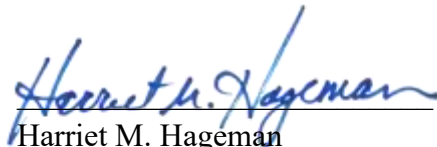
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