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PUBLIC COMMENTS

**KIELSMEIER Nicole**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Monday, January 10, 2005 3:12 PM  
**To:** KIELSMEIER Nicole  
**Subject:** opinion on grazing fees

I am submitting this e-mail in response to a newspaper article I read regarding the need for public input on grazing fees charged to ranchers.

First I should make two points very clear - I am not a fan of the Oregon Cattleman's Association because of their anti-wolf stance, and second, I was an auditor for the Secretary of State for over 20 years, so I do know something about audits. It is a lot easier for auditors to come to conclusions, than solutions. Just because we don't charge open-market value for grazing rights, doesn't mean that we should. We need to analyze the purpose of the public lands in question and whether Oregonians simply want this land to provide income, or whether they also want the land for aesthetic reasons. I want the land for aesthetic reasons. The money isn't as important as preserving the land and the wildlife on the land, and requiring anyone who grazes on that land, to also respect and preserve the wildlife.

I think that public lands should be available for everyone to use for any legal purpose they choose. It seems to me that often, the rights of the Oregon Cattleman's Association are given preferential treatment. The fees charged to them for grazing rights seem ridiculously low. However, this is an opportunity for the OAR to work with environmental folks, like myself, who want wolf reintroduction onto public lands. I do not think it would be wise to raise the grazing fees, and give cattlemen priority over the public land they graze, at the expense of other Oregonians who also want to see wolves thrive on this same land.

In short, I think that there is a bigger picture here that needs to be addressed - basically - what do we, all Oregonians, want public grazing land to be used for? Do we want it exclusively for cattle, or do we want elk, deer, wolves and coyotes to have equal rights on this land. If we want the latter, than we probably cannot justify charging more for grazing rights, because we are not giving the cattlemen exclusive rights to this land. By requiring the cattlemen to live in harmony with wolves and coyotes, we are asking them to assume risk, that results in a cost to them. *(except that Defenders of Wildlife will reimburse them for proven wolf predation - which is a great deal for the cattlemen)* but - This is assuming that cattlemen realize that they MUST share this land with other species. They must share public land without killing predators, and they must take full responsibility for the safety of their livestock - including predation - and accept that when their livestock is killed, it is their own fault for not protecting their livestock.

I do not want to give up my rights to public land - this land needs to be shared by everyone for a variety of uses. If increasing the rates, means that my rights (which are not cattle or sheep oriented) are jeopardized, then I would be against raising the rates. But, if my rights are already in jeopardy and possibly already taken away, then yes, you better be charging full market value or more, for the cattle industry to use MY land.

thanks

1/12/2005

**KIELSMEIER Nicole**

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**From:****Sent:** Tuesday, January 11, 2005 12:34 PM**To:** nichole.kielsmeier@dsl.state.or.us**Subject:** grazing fees

Nichole,

I read an article in the Bend Bulletin inviting comments on setting grazing fees for state lands. I'd like to comment on this. About 20 - 25 years ago, an economics professor in OSU's Dept. of Agricultural & Resource Economics did a study commissioned by BLM in Portland, Oregon. As I recall, his findings were that the cost to BLM of administering the BLM grazing lands was about \$14/ AUM. At that time, grazing fees were set at less than \$4/ AUM. This of course resulted in a massive public subsidy for ranchers with BLM grazing rights. At the same time, the range lands were in terrible shape, having been heavily overgrazed in nearly all cases.

I don't know what the condition of the state lands is at present or what the costs to Oregon tax payers are to administer and make them available to ranchers. I would hope that you have that information. I do not think that trying to determine what the going rate is should be the first question. That may be a consideration after determining costs to taxpayers and the present condition of the range.

I do spend a lot of time on Eastern Oregon public lands for bow hunting and chukar hunting and am always appalled at the extremely poor condition of grazing lease lands. The damage done by cattle on these lease lands to bring in a meager income for a few people in no way justifies a public subsidy to cattlemen. That is not only a welfare program but causing harm to wildlife habitat at the same time. One suggestion along this line is to have the Oregon DFW evaluate the condition of all state grazing fee lands for wildlife habitat.

If cattle on state range lands can be administered at a profit for taxpayers WITHOUT causing damage to the range, then set the rate at a competitive level. However, DSL's first duty is to the citizens of Oregon.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

1/12/2005

1/11/05

State Lands Rangeland Grazing Fee  
Advisory Committee

Honorable Committee Members:

We object to an increase in State Lease grazing fee formula. Currently we pay about three times the amount for State lease AUM's as we do for similar Federal lease AUM's. We feel the other users of our State lease lands should pay their fair share. We have experienced the following costs due to the other users of our State lease lands:

- 1.) Gate and fences broken or left open – cattle have to be found and gathered and then damages have to be repaired.
- 2.) Noxious weeds being transported onto State lease lands by other users.
- 3.) Cattle stampeded through fences by hunters using spotlights at night.
- 4.) Loss of cattle due to theft by other users.
- 5.) Cattle being harassed by four-wheelers and dogs.
- 6.) Etc.

One source of additional revenue by these other users might be from the Parks or ODFW budgets.

We object to comparing State lease land to the renting of private lands. This is like comparing apples to oranges – they are not like comparisons.

We currently rent private pasture – with our private pasture we get:

- 1.) Full time care including facilities for veterinary care.
- 2.) Full set of corrals including holding and loading facilities.
- 3.) Someone to rotate the cattle from pasture to pasture and keep fences in good repair.

- 4.) Our cattle are the only users – the land is posted NO HUNTING OR TRESSPASSING – all exterior gates are locked.
- 5.) The cattle are looked at daily – all their needs (feed, water, minerals, health, etc.) are met by our landlord.
- 6.) We as users do not have to do anything – we do not have to fix fence, spray weeds, look for cattle, take care of cattle, provide water, etc.

We would ask that ALL THE FACTORS be considered. Comparing private lands to State lands is like staying in a “tent” to staying in a “bed and breakfast”.

Another factor that needs to be considered is the over all economic effect on the regions being affected. As you know, and as all economic studies indicate, Southeast Oregon has an extremely high poverty rate. According to the Lake County Examiner (1/6/05), Oregon Housing and Community Services new report on Poverty 2004 shows:

“In Lake County the number of families in poverty increased 28 percent between 1979 and 1999.”

Those of us living on the financial edge do not need another unjust expense. We would ask that our current lease rates be only compared to USDA and BLM lease rates.

In conclusion we would like to thank each of you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Plush, Oregon 97637

P.S.

The rate for 2005 is \$5.03 per AUM compared to \$4.32 for 2004.

JOE 4/12/05

Thanks for  
getting this into  
the Public Comment  
at the HINES  
MEETING—

**LILLY John**

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**From:** KIELSMEIER Nicole  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 12, 2005 12:48 PM  
**To:** KROFT Jeff; LILLY John  
**Subject:** FW: Grazing Fees

-----Original Message-----

**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 12, 2005 12:25 PM  
**To:** KIELSMEIER Nicole  
**Subject:** Grazing Fees

I object to ANY grazing in National Forests or any public land any where! Why should the cattlemen get to ruin our forests and grass lands and why do they have such "clout" with the Oregon Government? They should be charged \$100/per animal per month!!!

These are questions I would like answered. I object to any domestic animals on public land!!!!

Thanks for listening. Sisters, Oregon

DIVISION OF STATE LANDS  
RECEIVED

JAN 24 P 3: 34

Bend, OR 97701

Jan. 17, 2005

Nicole Kielsmeier  
Dept. State Lands  
Policy & Planning Division  
775 Summer St. NE, Suite 100  
Salem, OR 97301-1279

Dear Ms. Kielsmeier::

I wish to offer a possible solution to the long debate over grazing fees on public lands. I think the taxpayer should get a better return from permitting use of public lands for private benefit. While I would personally like to see a phase-out of grazing on public lands in Oregon, I also recognize the importance of maintaining the family ranch.

As a compromise I suggest the following. If an allotment is cancelled or vacated, grazing fees would be established through a competitive bidding process as regulations require presently on the Eastern U.S federal lands. To encourage good long-term stewardship, grazing fees at permit renewal (or annually) would be increased using an accepted cost of living or inflation adjustment for the term of the permit and not be subjected to a competitive bidding process until the allotment is again vacated. Vacated allotments should be evaluated and managed for their rehabilitation needs and importance for conservation of biological diversity before (if) grazing is again permitted.

I hope my ideas will offer some food for thought for a policy that is long overdue for an overhaul. I apologize if my use of terminology is not entirely accurate.

Sincerely,