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December 10, 1996



Thomas W. Ferns, NEPA Document Manager  
Hanford Remedial Action  
EIS  
U. S. Dept. of Energy  
Richland Operations Office  
P. O. Box 550, MSIN HO-12  
Richland, WA 99352

RECEIVED

DEC 11 1996  
DOE-RL / DCC

Dear Mr. Ferns:

All of the wildlife and habitat management areas shown on page S-11, Figure S-2 Hanford Site Proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan, should be made available for a managed grazing program by domestic sheep and cattle as this was a prior economic use of the area and would assist in removing some of the vegetation that has contributed to several large range fires in the past few years.

The area on the North slope, North of the Vernita Bridge Othello State Highway should be returned to the Bureau of Reclamation and private ownership to allow for irrigated agricultural developments. The area South of the road to the river should be made available for a livestock grazing program.

The area North of Highway 241 to the Hanford West gate and thence West of the road to Vernita Bridge should be made available for a livestock grazing program, as this was a prior economic use of the area by my Father prior to 1943, when it was acquired from him under the War Powers Act.

The Columbia Reach area of the river should be managed under local control by the three counties affected.

Thomas W. Ferns  
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Enclosed please find an recent article from the Yakima Herald-Republic which details some facts of studies showing grazing improves the habitat. The Washington State Wool Growers Association also supports the above grazing program.

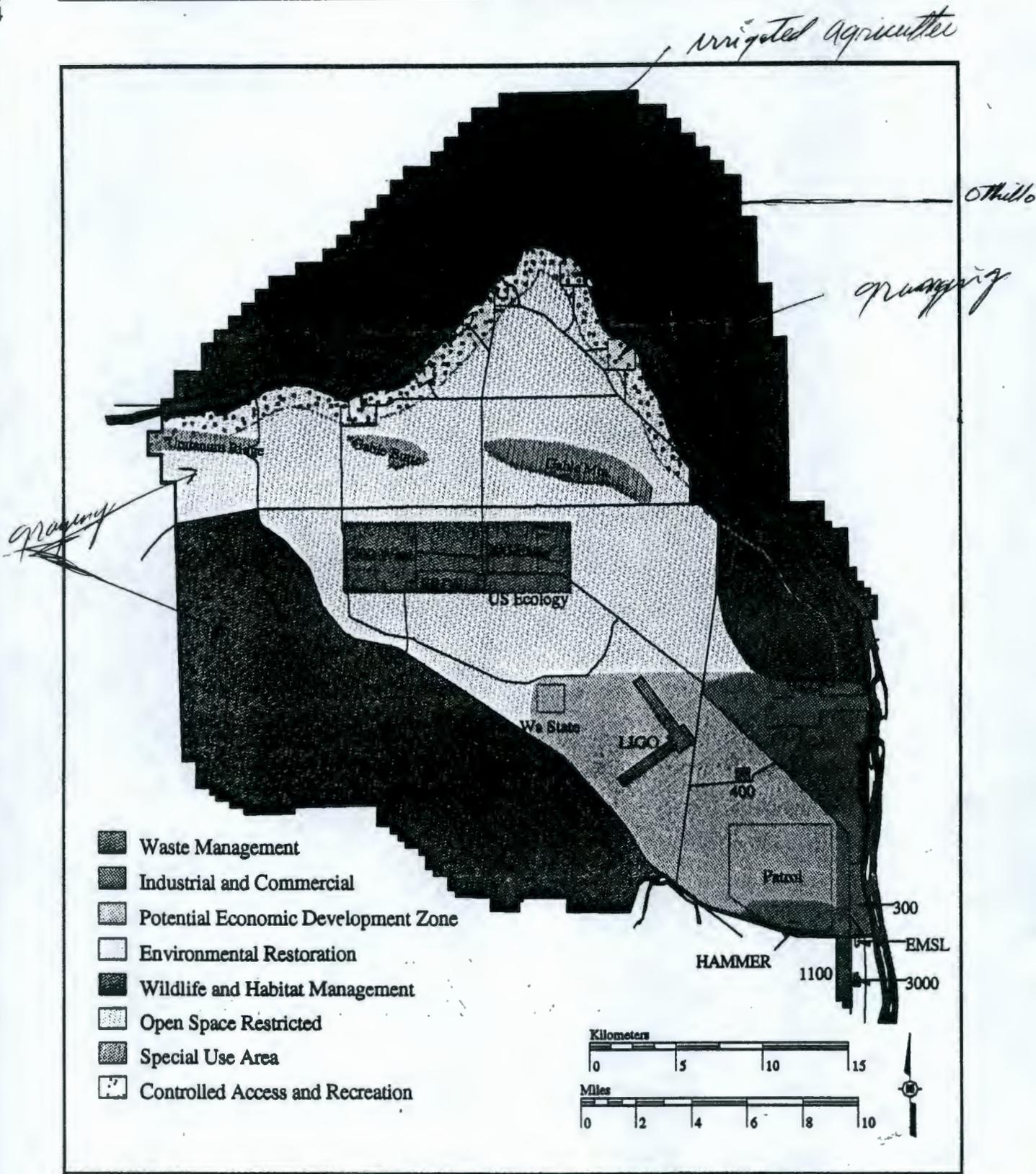
Sincerely, *S. Martinez Livestock Inc.*

*Simon Martinez Pres*  
Simon Martinez

SM/rb  
Enc.

Figure S-2. Hanford Site Proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map - 1997.

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## FARM &amp; GARDEN

# Studies show grazing improves the habitat

The last month has been an arousing one on the subject area of range management. Oregon's ballot measure 38, which would have virtually eliminated all grazing in the state, was defeated. There have been letters to the editor about cattle in creeks. A tribal group and the forest service have been at odds about salmon habitat and grazing.

I hope that everyone involved and the public can take a little rest on rhetoric and let me give you some facts to work with. This may be an educational moment for the public that read this column.

■ 1. Grazing a plant does not "hurt" a plant (source: C.W. Cook; Winrock International; 1994). Managed grazing stimulated a plant into production of more root and leaf area and increases plant vitality.

At this time of year, no damage is done to the grass plant by grazing off the top vegetative portion



WSU cooperative extension

**W. Frank Hendrix**

of the plant. It aids in the regrowth in the spring, thus making the plant more valuable for wildlife and domestic animals alike.

If a grass plant is not grazed, it actually decreases vitality and in some cases will kill the plant. An example of this would be to fence off a portion of an irrigated

pasture. In a year you will have a bald spot or the plant species will have changed to weeds.

■ 2. Grazing does not increase land erosion or increase a siltation of streams (source: C.B. Marlow; Wildlife Management Institute, 1995). This may surprise many, but the scientific information on the subject is that even heavy overgrazing (much more than recommended) had little or no effect on erosion or siltation of surrounding streams.

A road for four-wheeler track does an unbelievable amount of damage, and most of the siltation blamed on grazing and logging is directly induced by these.

■ 3. Riparian areas should be grazed (source: Buckhouse, 1994 & 1995). Riparian areas are defined as the land surrounding streams that tend to stay green longer in the spring and summer. They are different from other property for several reasons.

Riparian areas and the rights

and control of them are some of the hottest political potatoes in the western U.S. Riparian areas are some of the most productive grasslands in the world. They must be managed differently from the nonriparian areas to make sure overgrazing does not occur. Forage species growing in riparian areas tend to be invigorated by short-term grazing because they regrow very fast.

■ 4. Salmon prefer to spawn in locations where riparian areas have been grazed (source: Tibbs, et al., 1994 & 1995). The only long-term study on this subject was done in Oregon. It shows that salmon swam through study areas that have been nongrazed for many years. Salmon swam past riparian study areas that only allowed wildlife grazing too.

All of last year's salmon runs were located in study areas where riparian managed grazing has occurred for many years. This study has been repeated and has

shown the same results since 1987.

■ 5. Grazing helps forest trees grow (source: Euckhouse & Tibbs, 1990-1995). Scientific data is clear on this one. Grazing is a great aid in the growth of trees.

In one study, trees were an average of 8 feet larger in grazed areas compared to nongrazed area in only 15 years. Currently, in Canada, sheep are being used to graze in newly planted areas.

Sheep do not eat or damage the baby trees, and the increased growth due to less water competition of the grass and weeds is huge.

■ 6. Lowering water temperature and tree planting in riparian areas has little effect on survival of salmon (source: Moore, 1996; Kaczynski, 1996). Recent literature on this subject shows that a very small (1 percent to 2 percent) increase in salmon and steelhead is the only increase when the water temperature is

lowered to any level that is going to be achievable by planting trees and fencing riparian areas.

The literature goes on to state that removing fishing nets for 24 hours will have much more of an influence on the number of salmon than planting trees in riparian areas ever will. Using hundreds of thousands of dollars to stick a bunch of willow sticks in the ground and hoping that they become trees is in a large waste of sticks and money if you look at the actual facts.

The scientific data is solid on these subjects. The results and scientific facts may not be politically correct. Sometimes the facts can get in the way for a while but sooner or later they can't be ignored. The value of grazing in the Western U.S. is in the billions of dollars that taxpayers do not have to pay unless grazing is stopped.

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