

Expanding Grazing Opportunities for Reducing Wildfire

California Wool Growers Association

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Overview

- What is the California Wool Growers Association and who are its members?
- CWGA Fire and Grazing Ad Hoc Committee
- Targeted Grazing Directory and Clearinghouse
- Policy Engagement and Targeted Grazing

"To be successful with sheep, even when you're not thinking about them, you need to think about them a little."

- Ivan Doig, Dancing at the Rascal Fair



My Background

- Currently a partner in Flying Mule Sheep Company – part-time commercial sheep operation near Auburn, CA.
- Also UCCE Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for Placer, Nevada, Sutter, and Yuba Counties.
- Have previously provided targeted grazing services and managed grazing operations for large scale (5000+ sheep and goats) in foothills, Sacramento Valley, and Bay Area



**California Wool Growers
Association**

California Wool Growers Association



- Founded in 1860 – the oldest livestock organization in CA.
- Our 330 members represent all segments of the sheep industry.
- CA is #2 in sheep inventory, #1 in lamb and wool production in US.
- Not just wool sheep – hair sheep and goat producers are also members!

CWGA Fire and Grazing Ad Hoc Committee



- Established by CWGA board in 2018
- Focus:
 - Public outreach and education
 - Public policy
 - Funding sources – especially cost-share opportunities for landowners who want to hire targeted grazing services

CWGA Targeted Grazing Directory and Clearinghouse

- Directory provides list of CWGA members who provide targeted grazing services.
- Clearinghouse provides a place for targeted grazing requests for proposals to be posted.



<http://californiawoolgrowers.org/>

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Policy Engagement

Certification of Targeted Grazing Contractors

- CWGA members are opposed to additional layers of regulation and/or certification at a time when we need more contractors in the business.
- An informal survey of grazing clients does not identify an external desire for certification.
- This seems to be a solution in search of a problem.

Unintended consequences of Ag Overtime Rules

- H2A rangeland herding work is subject to special provisions developed by the US Dept of Labor. Employers pay a monthly salary PLUS housing and meals.
- AB 1066 went into effect in 2019 – changes the way overtime is calculated for agricultural workers.
- CA Dept of Industrial Relations (DIR) assumes herders work 168 hours per week (24/7).
- Federal regulations promulgated by the Obama administration indicate that herders are to be paid a monthly wage based on a 48-hour work week.
- Under DIR interpretation, herder wages will increase 50% beginning in 2022*, and will increase further from that point.
- CWGA is asking the Newsom administration to bring state guidelines in line with federal definitions.
- If DIR interpretation stands, many large-scale producers have indicated that they would move out of state.

Questions?

