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Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

Newsletter No. 71

March 2010



The Costs of Grazing.....? Do you know your livestock grazing costs ?

- by Kathleen Jachowski

OK, let's get this rascal onto the table and take a look at it. Current and correct information is what makes for a strong defense, and a strong business model.

Costs in the public and private arenas have changed over the past years. Public land grazers are frequently frustrated by the lack of information the general public has about what it costs to run cattle on either public land or private land.

Why should the public 'just know'? It is not their line of work. It's ours, and we should know, and we should not hesitate to include all the hidden costs which go into grazing livestock on either public or private land.

Here are just a few of the obvious costs that are probably worth putting a pencil to:

- Labor costs:
- Rider
 - Improvement Maintenance
 - Water
 - Fence
 - Other
 - Improvement Construction
 - Water
 - Fence
 - Other

- Salt
- Transportation Costs
- Horse Maintenance

There are more, and adding those to your list as they come to mind might be very useful down the trail to the court of 'public opinion' and elsewhere.

USFS and BLM: Public's lack of old-fashioned respect for resources at the heart of this problem!

- by Kathleen Jachowski

The issue brought out in the article below is one which the Guardians has recently begun to tackle, relative to illegal mechanized off-road use. We are not the only ones chasing this rabbit down the trail(s)...trails that are creating serious damage to resources, and fueling conflict among user groups. Permittees are concerned the fines are so low, people just pay them and 'keep going'. This is the reality.

One might say, well just raise the fines. It's more complicated than one might think, but certainly not insurmountable. One might also say, increase the role of local law enforcement and have the judicial system come in to play more strongly. That too is a little more complicated, but again not impossible.

Solving this growing problem will take a little patience, but not so much patience that we are all in assisted living by the time we see results on the ground and in violators' pocket-books. The Guardians certainly support having the punishment fit the crime.

Equally important, however, is recognition and awareness of WHY this is happening, and on such a large scale. Simply stated, our nation has produced millions of people who were brought up with bad manners coupled with a selfish disregard for their fellow citizens and for their nation. We are seeing this type of conduct and attitude in many, many realms. It is not just on our public lands.

I think the WHY of this warrants serious reflection and a mature willingness to change this national direction.

For now, however, an immediate and effective tool of correction is exactly what this proposed legislation is suggesting.

The following is reprinted with permission.

*Please see **Respect** on page 2*

"A passive and ignorant citizenry will never create a sustainable world ."

~ Andrew Gates (1938 -)

Respect continued from page 1

Udall aims to stiffen fines for damage to public lands

Proposed legislation would increase penalties for illegal activity and help undo damage done to national forests

By [Julie Sutor](#)

Summit Daily News, Sunday, February 14, 2010

<http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20100214/>

<NEWS/100219898/1078&ParentProfile=1055>

WASHINGTON, D.C. — For those who do damage to public lands, federal lawmakers are working to ensure the punishment fits the crime.

U.S. Sen. Mark Udall and Rep. John Salazar introduced legislation in Congress to significantly increase fines and jail time for illegal or reckless activities that damage Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management land.

Public lands agencies have been struggling to keep up with damage caused by careless and reckless users, according to a statement issued by the two Colorado lawmakers. They say today's fines and penalties for illegal use of public land don't come close to covering the cost of repairs. For example, federal law prevents the U.S. Bureau of Land Management from assessing a fine greater than \$1,000 — even if the damage from violations costs thousands more to fix.

"Increasing the penalties for people who knowingly or recklessly damage public lands would help restore damage — and just as importantly, prevent harm in the first place," Udall said.

The proposed legislation would amend regulations that have not been updated since 1976. It would increase fines and penalties for intentional and accidental violations in hopes of deterring damage and ensuring that when damage does occur, those who caused it foot at least part of the bill.

"While most visitors to our public lands are responsible and law-abiding, some either knowingly or carelessly cause serious harm to areas that were set aside for everyone to enjoy. In some cases — as in the careless use of fire — they're putting people's lives and homes at risk. The public shouldn't have to pay for damage caused by a few careless visitors," Udall said.

The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to assess up to \$100,000 in fines, up to 12 months in jail or both. The bill would also establish that any reckless use of fire on federal public lands would result in a minimum fine of \$500.

"Coloradans understand the value of protecting our public lands," Salazar said. "The tourism and natural resources derived from our public lands are critical to our economy. We must protect them for future generations."

Variety of damage

According to research conducted by Udall's office, the U.S. Forest Service and other public lands agencies encounter a wide variety of damage: unauthorized off-road vehicle use, dumping of hazardous materials, litter, unauthorized road construction, illegal removal of trees and sensitive plants, unauthorized mining activity, alterations of stream flows, vandalism and damage to riparian areas.

Cowboys on the Green



Saturday
June 12th
9am

Green Hills
Golf Club
Worland, WYO

Guardians of the Range
Fund Raiser Golf Tournament
in honor of
National Day of the American Cowboy

Mark your calendars!
Watch this newsletter and our website for details
www.GuardiansoftheRange.org

Logo Courtesy Victoria Balas

In the summer of 2000, two recreational off-road vehicles ignored closure signs while four-wheel driving on BLM land high above Silverton. They got stuck for five days on a 70-percent slope at 12,500 feet along the flanks of Houghton Mountain. The incident caused significant damage to the high alpine tundra, a delicate ecosystem that may take thousands of years to recover. Despite the extent of the damage, the violators were fined only \$600 apiece.

In an event in the mountains near Boulder, now known as "Mudfest," two Denver radio personalities led an off-road outing during which hundreds of people drove their vehicles in a sensitive wetland area. Riders destroyed seven acres of wetlands and seriously damaged another 18 acres, including prime habitat for an endangered species of toad. Estimates of the costs to repair the damage ranged from \$66,000 to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Much of the event took place on private land, but the riders crossed a portion of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest to get there. The only penalty was a \$50 fine assessed to the two DJs for not securing a special use permit to cross the public lands.

Julie Sutor can be reached at (970) 668-4630.



Direct from the Director: Something of Which to Be Proud

(A message from your Executive Director; but I offer this from the selection of the themes I frequently incorporate into my independent public speaking.)

There never has been, nor will there ever be a nation built, a nation protected, or a nation prosper without agriculture at its foundation! Three for the price of one industry, not a bad return for anybody's money! Hope you enjoy the article below, reprinted with permission!

Agriculture is a Bright Spot In Bad Economy

- by Lynne Finnerty

With the U.S. facing deep economic turmoil and unemployment hovering around 10 percent, it might seem as if there's little to be optimistic about. Agriculture, however, has helped fortify the economy when it needed it most, as other sectors such as U.S. automobile manufacturing, real estate and construction have contracted and shed workers.

Funny thing, how agriculture often is overshadowed by seemingly more exciting industries, like, say, derivatives trading, but turns out to be the old reliable when other endeavors fail. Just like the tortoise and the hare in Aesop's fable, farmers and ranchers keep plodding along, producing food, fiber and fuel stocks.

To contrast two industries in particular, auto manufacturing and agriculture, let's zoom in on the state of Michigan, home to the big U.S. automakers and attendant industries like auto parts manufacturing. With the decline in the automakers' fortunes, the state's unemployment rate has risen to the highest in the nation, 14.6 percent.

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Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

On the bright side, agriculture in Michigan contributes \$71.3 billion to the state's economy, an increase of \$16.3 billion since 1997. That's right – an increase. Production agriculture, food processing and related businesses employ more than 1 million Michigan residents – jobs for which they probably are extra-thankful as they see so many of their friends, family and neighbors being laid off.

U.S. agriculture has maintained a trade surplus for the last 47 years straight. Farming and ranching was one of only four segments of the national economy with a trade surplus in 2009.

This isn't to say that agriculture hasn't taken its lumps. USDA estimates farm income to be down 34.5 percent in 2009 compared to 2008. That's largely due to less demand both in the U.S. and overseas because of the global recession.

However, given productive soil, a supply of workers, reliable inputs, limited regulations and, of course, a couple inches of rain, farmers will keep farming, ranchers will keep ranching and American agriculture will remain a bulwark against severe downturns in other sectors.

Over the last two years there have been several news stories about recession-proof jobs – things like health care and education. Agriculture isn't recession proof, but we've got to eat! There will always be a demand for food grown and packaged here in America.

Our elected leaders should take note of the role agriculture has played in shoring up the U.S. economy while ensuring a safe, plentiful food supply. They should steer clear of policies that shrink our capacity to produce food, such as the cap-and-trade climate bill passed by the House last year, which would move 59 million acres out of agriculture into trees. And they should approve policies that increase our ability to sell U.S. farm products around the world, such as the pending trade deals with Colombia, Panama and South Korea.

Good ole U.S. agriculture may not seem as exciting as making millions flipping houses. But it's an economic powerhouse that, if we don't turn our backs on it, will employ many of our citizens and feed much of the world for decades to come.

Lynne Finnerty is the editor of FBNews, the newspaper of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

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More Efficient Newsletter

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We also now post the newsletter on our website:

www.guardiansoftherange.org.

Brucellosis & Trichomoniasis

We strongly encourage livestock producers to check with the Wyoming Livestock Board, and/or the office of the Wyoming State Veterinarian, on current status of rules and regulations open for public comment for these diseases.

Especially on common allotments – know what is happening relative to trichomoniasis

If you have changes to your mailing information, please call 307-587-3723 or email guardians@hughes.net.

www.GuardiansoftheRange.org