



MISSION

The mission of WSLCA is to create value for our beneficiaries through leadership, education, and sound land management.

RANGE AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Many western states manage range and agricultural lands as part of their mandate to provide funding for public schools and other beneficiaries. These lands were granted to states by the federal government at the time of statehood, and are considered "school and institutional trust lands."

BY THE NUMBERS

- ◆ More than 36 million acres of range and agricultural lands
- ◆ Agricultural (crop) land represents less than 5 percent of total range (grazing) land acreage
- ◆ Revenues were approximately \$103 million in FY 2012
- ◆ Acreages range from a low of 726 acres of agricultural land and 14,000 acres of rangeland in California, to a high of 8.8 million acres of combined agricultural/rangelands in New Mexico. Arizona has 8,370,000 acres of rangelands alone.

Western states' range and agricultural lands are leased for a variety of purposes:

- ◆ Grazing
- ◆ Crop production (irrigated and dry crop)
- ◆ Hay
- ◆ Orchards and vineyards (Washington)

FEDERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST

Federal:

- ◆ LISTING OF THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES continues to be a concern for western range managers.

An important tool in managing for T & E species is the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances, which helps reduce conflicts on or near critical habitat. States working with this tool currently include: New Mexico for Dunes Sagebrush Lizard and Lesser Prairie Chicken, and Oregon for Greater Sage Grouse. Utah is working to de-list the Utah Prairie Dog. The CCA (without assurances) also is a tool being used by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and local organizations for species conservation.

- ◆ DESIGNATIONS OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS and other conservation areas near state trust land can affect states' ability to get fair market prices for land leases, and affect access to state land.
- ◆ FEDERAL LAND EXCHANGE PROCESS is often very time-consuming and onerous for states.
- ◆ LEASE RATES – The trust management mandate requires states to charge market rents on behalf of their beneficiaries. Due to distinctly different management mandates, state lands may have a higher fee structure than federal lands. However, state lands often provide more services to lessees.

Other Concerns About Range and Agricultural Land Uses:

- ◆ INCREASED DROUGHT AND PRESSURE ON WATER USERS
- ◆ FIRE SUPPRESSION ON STATE AND ADJACENT FEDERAL LANDS
- ◆ CONTROL OF FERAL HOGS

New Uses:

- ◆ WIND & SOLAR ENERGY
- ◆ COMMUNICATION SITES
- ◆ ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, RARE EARTHS, COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- ◆ CONVERTING LANDS – Several states continue to look at converting grazing lands to agricultural (irrigated) lands to generate more revenue. Other states are weighing the longterm viability of converting to irrigated land (i.e., will the short-term revenue boost be sustainable into the future?).
- ◆ PUBLIC RECREATION ON STATE RANGELANDS – While not managed specifically for recreational uses, state rangelands provide opportunities for hunters, campers, hikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts. Nearby rural communities also enjoy the economic benefits these recreationists generate.

Survey results based on information from the following member states:

AR (no ag/rangelands); AZ, CA, CO, ID, MISS, MT, ND, NEB, NEV (none), NM, OK, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WISC (none) and WY

Not represented: AK, HI, LA, MN

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