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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAZING ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS REVISION
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Courtyard by Marriott
1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

March 27, 2003

1:00 p.m.

Transcript of Public Comments

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1 STATEMENT OF GEORGE LEA
2 PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION

3 MR. LEA: Well, it is a pleasure to be
4 here and have this opportunity to present the
5 views of the Public Lands Foundation, I am George
6 Lea, the president of the Public Lands Foundation.

7 Let me first explain what the
8 foundation is. We are a nonprofit national
9 organization, the members of which are primarily
10 retired BLM people, but we have working BLM people
11 as well as members of the general public as
12 members. We have been in operation now for about
13 16 years and we have about a thousand members.
14 Our mission is basically to support multiple use,
15 and of course that includes livestock grazing.

16 There are few organizations that
17 support a broad multiple use of the public lands

18 and we are one of the few. We work to keep the
19 lands public and open to the public. We encourage
20 professionalism amongst our employees as well as
21 the scientific management of the lands that the
22 Bureau administers. We are only concerned with
23 the lands that BLM administers. We follow what
24 happens with the Forest Service, but BLM is our
25 primary focus.

4

1 We encourage communications between our
2 members and between our members and the public.
3 All of our officers and our board of directors all
4 serve without compensation.

5 We note that the 1995 changes had
6 hardly been in operation long enough to evaluate
7 their effectiveness. That was a very large, a
8 very costly effort, and therefore, we ask that you
9 explain why it's necessary to address new grazing
10 regulations at this time. We followed the
11 adoption of the 1995 rule very closely and are not
12 aware of any serious problems as a result of it.

13 However, in any modifications you do

14 make or contemplate in the Code of Federal
15 Regulations, we have some concepts which we ask
16 you to consider.

17 First of all, since BLM and the Forest
18 Service have identical legislative mandates, they
19 have lands that are in many cases identical in
20 character, in some cases they adjoin one another,
21 and in many cases grazing permittees have permits
22 on both Forest Service and BLM lands. Therefore,
23 it is our view that any regulations that you come
24 up with should not be just similar to the Forest
25 Service but they should be identical.

5

1 Secondly, we believe that the ownership
2 of all permanent physical improvements on the
3 public lands, all range improvements, should be
4 held by the Land Management Agency. This is
5 particularly important when it comes to such
6 improvements that are important for multiple use
7 management of public lands. And we are aware of
8 the recent Supreme Court decision which upheld the

9 Bureau's authority to take title to improvements,
10 even though they may be developed under a
11 cooperative agreement.

12 Temporary range improvements that are
13 placed by the permittee to facilitate his handling
14 of livestock, we can see that they can retain the
15 title to such temporary improvements, but all
16 permanent improvements should be held by the
17 management agency.

18 Thirdly, we believe that the Bureau
19 manager needs the flexibility to make quick
20 changes when need be in the grazing permit
21 operations. He must have the authority to do
22 these, make these changes quickly, so we suggest
23 that you streamline the regulations in that
24 respect and eliminate the extensive delays that
25 occur, and we encourage the show cause and full

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1 force and effect concepts to be included and
2 become a routine Bureau policy.

3 Fourthly, I guess it's four, we believe
4 that in the land use planning process, a decision

5 needs to be made up front, early in the process,
6 where lands are determined, where those lands, the
7 lands are classified as to those suitable for
8 grazing and the lands that are not suitable for
9 grazing, that needs to be done early in the
10 process. And after a decision is made, those
11 lands that are determined not to be suitable for
12 grazing, if grazing exists, there should be a plan
13 and a policy to eliminate that grazing as soon as
14 possible, but in no case no less than ten years.

15 Fifth, where non-federal land exists,
16 non-grazing land, like state or private land, and
17 when someone applies for exchange use for that
18 land, that land must be within the person's
19 allotment in the future. I know that this has
20 been done in the past but we're talking about the
21 future, we don't intend to have you undo some of
22 these situations. But in any case, where
23 non-federal lands are offered for exchange use,
24 the land needs to be within the person's area of
25 use.

1 One of the bigger problems that you
2 have is the relationship between the permittee and
3 access to public lands. We believe that in no
4 case should a permittee be permitted to deny
5 access to public lands and particularly to make a
6 profit, to be in the business of doing that, and
7 we think that should be a grounds for cancellation
8 of a grazing preference.

9 Further, in some states it has been the
10 practice, hopefully it no longer exists, but the
11 potential is there for the grazing permittee to
12 extract a fee from an oil and gas company who
13 happens to be crossing the public land they have
14 been allotted, they have a right of way permit but
15 the yet the permittee is there with his hand out
16 to enable them to pass through the public lands on
17 their allotment, and we think that is certainly
18 grounds for cancelling the grazing preference.

19 Perhaps one of the largest issues here
20 that you're faced with is the water issue and as
21 you know in the arid west, if you control the
22 water, you control the land. It's just that
23 simple. And water must be available for multiple
24 use management and the control of that water must
25 be in the hands of the managing agency. So in no

1 cases should water permits from the states be
2 granted to the permittee, but the government, the
3 BLM should hold those water rights.

4 There are many cases of -- well, if you
5 look at the statistics of your grazing permittees,
6 as you know, like 90 percent of them, maybe 80
7 percent of them are not economically significant
8 and in many cases they are small operations, the
9 permittee views the operation as a hobby, they
10 make their living by outside work, and these small
11 operators just do not, they don't have the
12 facilities or financial ability in many cases to
13 do effective land management. We suggest that
14 somehow the Bureau think about aggregating or
15 bringing together these small outlets, so that
16 you've got a unit that's manageable.

17 The idea of a common, what you call a
18 reserve common allotment, we think has merit and
19 as a source of such forage, we suggest that the
20 Bureau consider the Department of Agriculture's
21 Farm Service Agency conservation reserve program,
22 where private lands are placed into reserve. The
23 grassland reserve program should be made available

24 for the Bureau to use as the source of this forage
25 for these common allotments.

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1 According to the statistics I have been
2 able to get from the Department of Agriculture, as
3 of December last year, there were 4.2 million
4 acres of introduced grasses and legumes, 6.2
5 million acres of (inaudible) grasses, and 14.9
6 acres of existing grasses and legumes under the
7 conservation reserve program. On average, the
8 government has paid \$39 an acre for that grass,
9 and a majority of this acreage are located in or
10 adjacent to public lands or are within an
11 economical distance of the public lands and should
12 be considered.

13 To my understanding, the Forest Service
14 has been able to transfer some of their grazing
15 lands to these acreages, and I suggest that the
16 Bureau have the same authority.

17 My last point involves monitoring.
18 Monitoring is an important element of any range
19 management program, as you well know, and the

20 Bureau has been doing this monitoring for many
21 years, they have the capability, they have the
22 knowledge with the research backed monitoring
23 studies, and so that if there is any
24 contemplations in the grazing regulations you're
25 going to put some constraints on monitoring, I

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1 would suggest you do not do that. The data
2 collected is too important to be collected by a
3 private organization, it should be collected by
4 the bureau so that they can use it in their
5 decision making.

6 I think that's it, the flag has just
7 passed, and I appreciate the opportunity to be
8 here. Thank you.

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11 these meetings around the country and here today
12 in D.C. for gathering public input into what the
13 new grazing regulations should like. Grazing of
14 lands in the west has been taking place for
15 hundreds of years. Many members of the Public
16 Lands Council and NCBA are ranching families that
17 have been on the land for generations.

18 Their permits to graze on public lands
19 are what keep their operation established and much
20 of the western culture and communities intact.
21 Maintaining ranching operations on public and
22 private lands also provides important benefits to
23 the public, such as open space, fire and weed
24 control, and wildlife habitat.

25 Because of the importance of public

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1 lands grazing, we are grateful to the BLM for its
2 review and proposal to refine grazing regulations.
3 While we recognize the Agency has the difficult
4 charge of balancing multiple uses of its lands,
5 grazing is one of the statutorily recognized uses

6 and the legitimate interests of our industry need
7 to be reflected in the laws, regulations and
8 policies that govern the use of public lands.

9 PLC/NCBA will present detailed written
10 comments on the A-NPR as well as the proposed
11 rule, but for now I would like to comment on just
12 a couple of issues.

13 First, PLC recognizes that public lands
14 are for all members of the public to use
15 responsibly. We do not think that allotment gates
16 should be a lock to keep out responsible users
17 such as sportsmen. We appreciate the
18 consideration BLM is showing for the problem of
19 cattle leaving their assigned allotments through
20 open gates, by asking in the A-NPR for comment on
21 the possibility of authorizing locked gates, but
22 our preferred solution is to give more flexibility
23 to range managers to determine the reason why
24 cattle are found occasionally off their allotments
25 and to devise a response that's proportionate to

1 the reasons the situation arose in the first

2 place.

3 And secondly, we applaud BLM's, or we
4 are interested in having BLM consider as part of
5 the process the extent to which categorical
6 exclusions apply to grazing activities. The more
7 the Agency can be relieved of producing
8 documentation analyzing routine activities which
9 have been shown through experience to have no
10 adverse impact on the environment, the more it can
11 devote its limited financial resources to actually
12 managing the resources on the ground.

13 Better stewardship of our public lands
14 is an outcome desired by all Americans. Again,
15 thank you for holding this hearing. We are
16 appreciative of all you are doing here, and for
17 giving the cattlemen the opportunity to present
18 comments. Thank you.

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1 STATEMENT OF RICHARD KRAUSE
2 REGULATORY COUNSEL
3 AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

4 MR. KRAUSE: Thank you very much. My
5 name is Rick Krause. I am regulatory counsel for
6 American Farm Bureau Federation.

7 Before we get started, I have one
8 question with regard to the proceedings here
9 today. Is there going to be transcripts available
10 at all? Have you thought about having transcripts
11 of this and of the other meetings?

12 MR. REUWSAAT: We certainly can, if
13 you want. They will be part of the public record.

14 MR. KRAUSE: Thank you very much.

15 American Farm Bureau is the largest
16 general farm organization in the United States.
17 We represent the interests of more than 5.3
18 million member families in all 50 states and
19 Puerto Rico. We represent a significant number of
20 livestock producers in the Western U.S., who use
21 federal lands for grazing purposes. We're pleased
22 to offer some preliminary comments on the scoping
23 phase of the environmental impact statement
24 process, and also on advanced notice of proposed

25 rule making. We plan to make some more detailed

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1 comments at a later time.

2 In large part the American west was
3 settled by farmers and ranchers engaged in
4 livestock production. When Congress began to
5 regulate livestock grazing on Federal lands, a key
6 component of that regulatory scheme as expressed
7 in the Taylor Grazing Act was the maintenance of
8 the economic viability of the ranching community.
9 Many rural communities throughout the west depend
10 on federal lands grazing for their economic
11 stability.

12 But ranching is more than just
13 livestock production; it's a way of life for many
14 westerners. Ranchers are good stewards of the
15 land they use. Some of the best wildlife habitat
16 is found on these lands. Federal lands ranchers
17 preserve open space and provide valuable
18 environmental contributions across the west. A
19 significant number of ranching families live in
20 the same place that their ancestors settled in the

21 19th century. Drought, wildfire, fluctuating
22 prices and lawsuits have made livestock ranching a
23 much more challenging endeavor in recent years.
24 Fourth and fifth generation ranchers face the loss
25 of the lands and the only way of life that they

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1 have known. The stability of the ranching
2 community that the Taylor Grazing Act sought to
3 preserve is being severely challenged.

4 We support the efforts of the Bureau of
5 Land Management to cut red tape so that more time
6 and effort is devoted to on-ground improvements.
7 We also support efforts to provide greater
8 flexibility to land managers and ranchers while at
9 the same time improving the conservation of the
10 land.

11 The A-NPR identifies a number of issues
12 that benefit both the rancher and the resource. I
13 will only talk about a few of these issues in the
14 limited time that I have.

15 First is the issue of the reserve

16 common allotments. This new concept would develop
17 a system of BLM lands to be held in reserve to be
18 available for emergency grazing if needed.

19 Reserve allotments would be allocated for use by
20 livestock permittees whose regular allotments are
21 unavailable due to restoration, drought, wildfire,
22 or other extraordinary reasons.

23 A reserve allotment program could
24 provide flexibility to both the BLM and to
25 livestock permittees. It will allow BLM to

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1 undertake needed restoration work on allotments
2 while at the same time allowing a grazing
3 permittee an alternative source of forage while
4 that restoration work was being done. The
5 resource would benefit because such a program
6 would encourage both the BLM and the permittee to
7 undertake projects to improve the range.

8 A reserve allotment program would also
9 provide an allotment for producers whose
10 allotments are unusable due to weather or
11 fire-related reasons beyond their control. It

12 would also allow allotments that are stressed by
13 fire and weather time to recover. But any reserve
14 common allotment program should contain at least
15 these principles:

16 First, reserve common allotments should
17 be drawn from vacant allotments and not created by
18 removing permittees from existing allotments.

19 Second, reserve allotments might be
20 drawn from allotments where non-use is taken for
21 reasons other than needed rest, but this would
22 require the consent of the permittee who has taken
23 non-use and would require compensation or
24 agreement for maintenance of fencing and other
25 range improvements contained on that allotment.

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1 Third, the Agency should devise a fair
2 and equitable process for allocating forage under
3 the reserve common allotment program.

4 And fourth, rules should specify
5 whether more than one permittee would be allowed
6 on the reserve allotment at a time, and if so, how

7 the use of the allocated is defined.

8 Secondly, the issue of title to range
9 improvements, another proposed change that
10 benefits both rancher and resource. It would
11 allow permittees to have title interest in range
12 improvements that they construct on their
13 allotments. Such arrangements were allowed before
14 1995 when the practice was eliminated.

15 Range requirements do not only
16 benefit -- or range improvements do not only
17 benefit ranchers, they also provide drinking water
18 for wildlife and provide other habitat
19 enhancements as well. They can be used to promote
20 biological diversity and to provide benefits to
21 the public.

22 Farmers and ranchers who fund and
23 construct range improvements should have an
24 ownership interest in them. They should be able
25 to list range improvements as assets on their

1 balance sheets in determining their eligibility

2 for bank operating loans.

3 The resource also benefits from an
4 ownership structure. Providing ownership will
5 give permittees an incentive to construct and
6 maintain range improvements on federal lands.
7 Permittees who are on the allotments are in a
8 better position to maintain those improvements
9 than BLM personnel who have limited time on the
10 ground and limited funding, and is stretched
11 beyond their control.

12 An increased balance sheet position
13 also allows more funds to be available to the
14 permittee for range improvements to increase
15 borrowing capacity.

16 While providing an ownership interest
17 in range improvements, the rules also allow
18 ranchers to completely -- do not allow ranchers to
19 completely own any permanent improvements.
20 Certain rules require that where pre-1995
21 improvements are already in the name of
22 permittees, they are to run with the land so that
23 subsequent permittees pay the value of the
24 improvements to the previous permittee.
25 Permittees are not free to take these improvements

1 with them when they relinquish their permits.

2 There are some additional issues as
3 well that we will address in comments in writing
4 but for now, I would like to mention a couple of
5 additional things that we would like to see in the
6 EIS and the subsequent rule making.

7 First, we think BLM procedures can be
8 further streamlined if certain permit actions are
9 categorically excluded from burdensome NEPA
10 documentation under the NEPA process. For
11 example, permit transfers upon sale or other
12 change of ownership of grazing property that don't
13 change the terms and conditions or duration of
14 existing permit, have little or no environmental
15 impacts, there is no reason that these should be
16 required to submit NEPA documentation.

17 Secondly, the Endangered Species Act is
18 a burden for all of us. Section VII consultations
19 under the Endangered Species Act can cause
20 livestock permittees major problems. Livestock
21 permittees need to be at the table with BLM and
22 the Fish and Wildlife Service, instead of having
23 their livelihoods determined behind closed doors
24 by these agencies in the consultation process.

25 Permittees should also receive notice

1 of any lawsuits that are filed against BLM so that
2 they can take appropriate actions to protect their
3 interests. These can be provided through the BLM
4 rule making process in this grazing rule.

5 And thirdly, in addition, the
6 subleasing surcharge that was imposed by the 1995
7 regulations should be reevaluated in the EIS with
8 the thought toward eliminating them.

9 If I have a couple more minutes -- how
10 much time do I have left? Two minutes?

11 I would like to address one other issue
12 then. That is extending the permitted use from
13 three to five years. We think this provides
14 greater flexibility to producers and to the forage
15 resource. However, the provision must be drafted
16 in such a way that it only applies to people
17 engaged in the livestock business as required by
18 the Taylor Grazing Act, and thus provides the
19 flexibility to bonafide ranchers and permittees.
20 It should not be allowed as an excuse to permit
21 conservation use of an allotment by someone not

22 engaged in ranching.

23 It is also very important that the
24 original concept of grazing preference as an
25 adjudicated amount of forage allocated to a

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1 permittee be restored through these regulations in
2 order to protect any amount of non-use from loss
3 in subsequent years. Grazing should not be lost
4 or reduced as a result of taking authorized
5 non-use.

6 We thank you for the opportunity to
7 provide comments today, we will provide more
8 detailed comments at a later date and we look
9 forward to working with you to developing
10 regulations that create more flexibility for land
11 managers and permittees, and also protect the
12 resource. Thank you very much.

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13 NRDC has long been concerned about the
14 management and resource conditions of the public
15 lands administered by BLM, particularly those
16 lands grazed by domestic cattle. For almost three
17 decades, NRDC has endeavored to help BLM halt
18 harmful grazing practices, improve and restore
19 resources, and to fulfill its stewardship
20 responsibilities for the lands and their owners,
21 the American public.

22 NRDC along with a host of others
23 concerned about public lands, participated
24 actively in the process by which the current
25 regulations were developed. We support those

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1 regulations and are very concerned about the
2 apparent intention of the Agency to roll back
3 protections that were adopted in 1995 and
4 subsequently upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

5 The 1995 rule making was a major effort
6 by BLM to promote land stewardship. The urgent
7 need for the effort was revealed by numerous

8 government documents, including reports issued by
9 the General Accounting Office and documents issued
10 by the agency itself. The environmental impact
11 statement that was prepared on the proposed
12 grazing rule, for example, revealed that extensive
13 areas of public lands, including the most
14 ecologically important areas of those lands, were
15 in degraded conditions and that many publicly
16 owned resources had been adversely affected by
17 grazing as established within the regulatory
18 scheme.

19 Regrettably, no significant improvement
20 in resource conditions appears to be enforced at
21 the time the environmental impact statement was
22 written and in the interim, there are new and
23 serious management problems, including the severe
24 multiyear drought in many parts of the west,
25 galloping and (inaudible) infestations, and

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1 increasing numbers of internal species. Against
2 this backdrop, it is hard to imagine returning to
3 the old system under which the deck was stacked in

4 favor of livestock and against the general
5 public's desire for healthy public lands.

6 It is regrettable that the Bureau has
7 chosen to provide no explanation for the kind of
8 changes it is contemplating, the reasons for those
9 changes and the goals it will be obtaining.
10 Nonetheless, the list of topics that would be
11 addressed is long and includes many issues that
12 were of great importance in the prior rule making.
13 Among those that NRDC is most concerned about are
14 the following:

15 First, authorizing livestock permittees
16 to lock gates on public lands, which can be used
17 to block access, even access by BLM managers.

18 Second, allowing permittees to have
19 titles to so-called range improvements, which also
20 would have the effect of creating private rights
21 on public lands and could hinder the ability to
22 take actions to correct current grazing abuses.

23 Third, streamlining the appeals
24 process. The Federal Land Policy and Management
25 Act contains clear and unrestrained rules with

1 regard to public participation in public land
2 matters.

3 Fourth, changing the regulation that
4 requires BLM to take actions to correct
5 appropriate misuse of public lands within a year,
6 the linchpin of the current regulatory scheme.

7 And fifth, changing the current policy
8 of monitoring necessary to change damaging grazing
9 practices.

10 In conclusion, we wish to remind BLM of
11 the inadequacies of its prior grazing rules and we
12 urge that the Agency be committed to continue its
13 efforts to restore the grazing conditions to the
14 benefit of all. The way to do that is to stick
15 with the current rules established which protect
16 the dominant use of the public lands.

17 Thank you.

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STATEMENT BY MARC SMITH

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

MR. SMITH: Thank you. My name is Marc Smith, with the National Wildlife Federation. We are going to submit more extensive comments as well, but I would like to mention six key points of our concerns.

The National Wildlife Federation has an interest in the BLM and its grazing practices. We have a long-time interest in how the BLM managed land has been administered for livestock grazing because we believe that these lands are an abundant home to fish and wildlife and many endangered species. Every year more and more people visit them to fish, hunt, camp, and hike, contributing significantly to local and regional economies. Unfortunately, the BLM system of allowing abusive and unstable livestock grazing on these lands, which has imperiled wildlife and fish, seriously degraded water quality and quantity, destroyed vegetation, ruined recreational value, and damaged uncounted

23 archeological sites and Native American treasures.

24 Unfortunately, as a result of such

25 practices, extensive areas of our lands are in an

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1 unhealthy condition, suffering from soil loss,
2 degraded waterways and fundamental expiration of
3 other vegetation. We are vitally interested in
4 insuring that federal lands are managed for
5 multiple use, including protection of wildlife and
6 its habitat and other resources.

7 NWF has members extensively throughout
8 the western states where BLM manages livestock
9 grazing, and these members frequently use the
10 public lands on which the BLM permits livestock
11 grazing. I just want to go over six quick points
12 in terms of the proposed rules.

13 We really feel that there needs to be a
14 sense to clarify the need to revise the
15 regulations of '94. Specifically, BLM should
16 clarify the need and objective of revising the
17 grazing regulations so soon after the huge effort
18 and cost of revising the regulations in 1995. Why

19 is there a need to revise the regulations now,
20 given that some of the '94 regulations are just
21 beginning to bear fruit? For example, fundamental
22 rangeland health, which are important to restore
23 rangelands damaged by abusive livestock grazing,
24 are still being implemented. Even where BLM
25 initiated action in response to determinations the

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1 fundamentals of rangeland health were not being
2 met, BLM is just beginning to assess the
3 effectiveness of these measures.

4 NWF wants to insure that BLM's
5 proposals to modify grazing regulations does not
6 roll back measures in the '94 grazing regulations
7 designed to balance livestock use with other
8 natural resources.

9 Our second concern is blocking access
10 to public lands. Giving permittees the authority
11 to close public land is inappropriate, since the
12 BLM already has the authority to close public
13 lands to public use for appropriate reasons. If

14 such a regulation is proposed, the EIS must assess
15 the potential impact on the public's use of the
16 land, the potential for the grazers to abuse the
17 authority and the reasons why subsidized grazers
18 should have an authority no one else has.

19 If the BLM does propose to offer these
20 grazers the authority to block access to federal
21 lands, then an alternative regulation should be
22 included as follows: A grazing preference should
23 be considered for cancellation should the
24 permittee prevent the general public obtaining
25 lawful access to public land. As an incentive, a

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1 rancher's willingness to provide access to public
2 lands across his private lands might result in
3 some enhancement of his permit.

4 Third, taking action to meet
5 fundamentals of rangeland health. We oppose
6 delaying the time in which BLM must take action to
7 remedy violations affecting rangeland health,
8 which BLM has determined are a result of cattle
9 grazing, the fundamentals and most important

10 improvements to the grazing rules from the '94
11 revision. For the first time they provide some
12 sort of standard to insure that public lands are
13 managed specifically for multiple use and not
14 dominated by livestock grazing.

15 Given that rangeland health standards
16 were designed by local statewide resource advisory
17 councils, in which ranchers participated in, the
18 fundamentals should already have been attuned to
19 local conditions, and the BLM should adopt a
20 schedule to insure it promptly completes the
21 determinations as to whether the fundamentals of
22 rangeland health are being met, and should require
23 scheduled monitoring to insure that remedies
24 prescribed by BLM are actually making a
25 difference.

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1 In terms of monitoring, the
2 requirements must not be changed to hamstring BLM
3 from taking action when grazing is in fact
4 damaging natural resources. Until the '94

5 revision of the grazing rules, monitoring
6 requirements often hamstrung the BLM if it tried
7 to change harmful grazing practices. Moreover,
8 the '94 regulations allowed BLM to close off or
9 apportion an allotment to grazing if, quote,
10 according to the 43 CFR, continued grazing poses
11 an imminent likelihood of significant resource
12 damage.

13 Two more points. In regards to the
14 reserve common allotments, I think before
15 considering the designation of these, the
16 following four points must be considered: What
17 would be the trigger for allowing use of the
18 reserve common allotment? Poorly managed grazing
19 on an allotment should not be the reason to move
20 on to a reserve common allotment. Those
21 allotments should only be used to assist in the
22 restoration or conservation of other federal
23 lands. Before authorizing use of the reserve
24 common allotment, the BLM must insure that grazing
25 it will not cause damage to resources on that

1 common allotment.

2 Safeguards need to be provided to
3 assure that the reserves don't become commons, the
4 likes of which the Taylor Grazing Act was
5 implemented to prevent. And as a source of such
6 forage, the EIS should assess the potential of
7 lands and the Department of Agriculture Farm
8 Service Agency's conservation reserve program on
9 private land where large sums of public funds are
10 invested even year. The grasslands reserve
11 program should contain procedures wherein both BLM
12 and Forest Service may temporarily transfer
13 grazing use from public lands to such enrolled
14 lands.

15 And the last point I want to go over
16 real quickly is the water rights. We believe that
17 no committee should require a water right for
18 livestock grazing on public land. As we know all
19 too well from history, he who owns the water
20 controls the land. If regulations are proposed to
21 allow private acquisition of water under the laws
22 of various states, to bring to private livestock
23 on public lands, we request an analysis of the
24 impact on the public's control of the land
25 resources of those states.

1 Those are the six points that the
2 National Wildlife Federation has to cover here,
3 and we will submit further extensive comments
4 later.

5 Thank you.

6 (The meeting ended at 1:56 p.m.)

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