

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Administrative History of Grazing

Discipline: Interdisciplinary
Type of Project: Research
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 9/30/2005 - 9/30/2010
Funding Amount: \$57,675

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract:

More than 100 of all national parks within the National Park Service (and 60 parks within the NPS Intermountain Region) have grazing, which has historically been broadly defined to include everything from NPS grazing to permitted livestock use. The range of grazing within the national parks includes such uses as pre-existing grazing that was allowed to continue as part of the park's enabling legislation (such as cattle grazing at Grand Teton National Park, and sheep grazing at Canyon de Chelly), grazing by animals that are an integral part of a park's living history interpretive experience (such as the ponies at Assateague Island/Chincoteague, the cattle herd at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, and the mixed livestock at George Washington Birthplace); the temporary use of grazing as a vegetation control (such as the use of goats for weed control at Devil's Tower National Monument); and the grazing of animals used by NPS staff (such as horses and llamas used by backcountry patrols at Yellowstone and Rocky Mountain National Parks).

However, although grazing is a widespread activity within NPS, there is no overall administrative history of grazing within the national parks system. Currently, the subject of grazing is researched on a park-by-park basis, and information on grazing appears is included in park files, park administrative histories, historic resource studies, determinations of eligibility, National Register nominations, cultural landscape studies, and management and planning documents. But more detailed information on the history of grazing within the national parks system as a whole is needed as a foundation for not only understanding the historical development of this activity, but also as a foundation for resource management decisions. Although a final scope of work will be the first task undertaken by the National Park Service and the university on this project, it is anticipated that the NPS administrative history of grazing will cover a broad range of topics.

SCOPE OF WORK

In FY05, the National Park Service provided the first phase of funding (\$7,000) for this project. The deliverable for Phase I was an approximate 80-page report that provided a detailed scope of work and research prospectus for an administrative history of livestock grazing in the National Parks. The contents of the Phase I report included:

- I. Introduction
- II. NPS Grazing History Chronology
- III. Parks and Pastoralism: A Preliminary History
- IV. Major Research Issues and Questions
- V. Grazing Types
- VI. List of Contacts
- VII. Bibliography
- VIII. Budget and Schedule

The Phase I report also identified three project alternatives, each representing varying amount of expertise and labor, result in reports of varying depth and utility. These included the Project Alternative No. 1 Alternative, as described below:

Project Alternative No. 1: \$50,000 (approximate)

This alternative will produce a brief but useful narrative for NPS resource managers and policy makers. Research, writing, and revision will take place in four stages over two and one-half years. Most of the work will be done by a research associate with some assistance from a graduate research assistant. A faculty member principal investigator will oversee the project and may contribute research and writing. Research will center on books and documents available at a university library, with only one week of research in NPS records at the National Archives. The final report will address the principal research themes and questions and will consist of about 90-100 pages in three main chapters. This project will not involve detailed research in NPS archival records, nor will it investigate U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management materials in the National Archives. Key events will be investigated less thoroughly than if the funding were greater. The narrative necessarily will contain less detail than if it were longer, and will provide cursory coverage of certain themes, such as legislative history.

Schedule

YEAR 1: Read and synthesize information from administrative histories, scholarly books, and journal articles; conduct telephone and personal interviews with key NPS personnel and other people involved in park grazing; examine grazing records kept by NPS Grazing Coordinator; examine selected government documents available in a university repository library; conduct one week of research at National Archives.

YEAR 2: Draft narrative chronological history of approximately 90-100 pages, including brief introduction, three chapters, conclusion, discussion of issues and questions for future research, notes, bibliography, and appendices.

YEAR 2.25: NPS and anonymous peers complete review of draft narrative.

YEAR 2.50: Revise and submit final NPS administrative history of grazing.

In FY06, The NPS obligated \$43,000 towards the completion of Project Alternative No. 1. With this FY08 task agreement, the NPS provides the remaining funds to complete Project Alternative No. 1.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Final NPS Administrative History of Grazing - due 09-30-2010

Keywords: livestock grazing, environmental history, National Park Service, Colorado State University