

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Provide Science Based Livestock Nutrition, Husbandry, and Behavior Direction for Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS

**Discipline:** Natural  
**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance/Education  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** Montana State University  
**Effective Dates:** 4/16/2012 - 9/30/2014  
**Funding Amount:** \$5,000

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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Investigator: Rachel Endecott, Ph.D., Extension Beef/Cattle Specialist, Animal and Range Sciences Department, Montana State University, 243 Fort Keogh Rd, Miles City, MT 59301; 406-874-8286; rachel.endecott@montana.edu

**Project Abstract:** The Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (GRKO) is the unit of the National Park Service created to specifically preserve and tell the story of frontier cattle ranching and its evolution into modern times. The ranch offers exceptional opportunities for visitors to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of an authentic working cattle ranch by viewing, participating, and interacting with the cultural landscape such as:

- Haying with horses;
- Seeing livestock graze on the range; and
- Observing key livestock operations in various seasons, such as moving cattle, branding, and calving.

Healthy and well cared for livestock are key to these visitor opportunities and the ethical responsibility of GRKO. This project will promote the health and welfare of livestock at GRKO by providing current science based livestock nutrition and husbandry direction in a consolidated Best Management Practices document for livestock management. The livestock practices document will:

- Provide recommendations for adequate nutritional needs and herd health;
- Give direction for disease prevention and treatment;
- Provide low stress handling recommendations to promote the welfare and humane treatment of livestock;
- Provide continuity of livestock care at a site managed by an organization where managers and staff typically stay three to five years before moving on;
- Direct policy for non-NPS livestock brought on site for special events;
- Give proactive biosecurity direction on issues such as the highly contagious and deadly horse herpes virus outbreak that occurred in 2011;
- Refine and lead to formalized practices that balance the available resources, economic inputs, visitor needs and historic mandate; and
- Provide staff producing visitor programs information on how livestock is cared for.

GRKO will work with Principal Investigator, Montana State University Specialist Dr. Rachel Endcott, who will oversee a student to implement the following scope of work:

- meet with GRKO staff to become familiar with current livestock nutrition, husbandry and behavior practices utilized or needed;
- complete a literature review for and compile applicable recommendations and practices;
- work with GRKO staff to tailor site specific practices; and
- provide a consolidated GRKO livestock practices document.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

15, 2013 Student submits draft Livestock BMPs for GRKO review  
April 15, 2013 Final report complete & submitted to RM-CESU & the park

**Keywords:** Livestock Best Management Practices, student intern, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Montana State University,