

Anonymous Anonymous

We are a multi-generational family farm and we value being land stewards and everything that encompasses, proposals feel as though stage is being set for mandatory, regulatory requirements on family ranch operations and that is something we strongly oppose.

We oppose anything that puts the viability of our business and risks the health of our livestock as a real and opposing threat to agriculture's future.

While we can appreciate some of the other goals as good stewardship, some of the actual recommendations for livestock management lack practicality. It would be important to note that if a rancher were interested in some of these, it would require funding that they may not have. Stream crossings and fences all cost money. Ranching these days is already a narrow margin, if not at a loss some years. Barriers to access of pasture and range-lands, all of which need management for wildlife and wildfires would be a HUGE detriment to local communities.

We have concerns if a recommendations to range, water and soil implications would not be viable on many of our family ranches.

There is no "one size fits all" recommendation that works for every ranch. We strive toward regenerative ranching practices which are leading the way to improvement of soil, forage, habitats and water sources and undue regulatory implications will slow if not stop most local ranchers or if unable to fund such regulation to be non-compliant by force where they are already doing "good stewardship".

In addition to comments regarding the Livestock Management Recommendations, we want to comment further regarding the chapter on Riparian Areas. Using Site Potential Tree Height (SPHT) for riparian restoration, even on a voluntary basis, ignores responsible stewardship.

In addition, we don't feel this recommendation adequately considers the positive impacts of current state and federal conservation practices such as CREP, ACEP, EQUIP CRP and others including the Washington Voluntary Stewardship Program, which is not even mentioned in draft chapters continues to be significantly underfunded.

Please consider our local family farms and not stand in the way of progress toward improvements being made to continue to feed our local communities, with disruption or food chains, poor crop harvests, declining ranching and farmers providing care to animal agriculture we find continued push in this direction to be unsettling to the future of agriculture and eventually society as a whole, should that system fail.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.