

**2025 RANGE MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**ANNUAL REPORT
AND WORKPLAN**



**STATE BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE
PROTECTION**

Approved by the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection March 10, 2026

Chair: Dr. Marc Horney

Vice-Chair: Dr. Stephanie Larson

January 22, 2026

The Board's mission is to lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands, and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the state.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) Annual Report and Workplan ('Report') is updated and approved by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) annually and is intended to catalogue the yearly accomplishments and status of ongoing RMAC efforts. The Report provides an update of current RMAC membership and staffing, summarizes RMAC activities and progress toward Annual Priorities and Objectives for the previous calendar year, details the Annual Priorities and Objectives for the upcoming calendar year, and highlights constraints and challenges for the committee in completing its Annual Priorities.

I. RMAC PROCESS SUMMARY

The Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is an advisory body to the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection ('Board'), statutorily authorized by [Public Resources Code \(PRC\) § 741](#).¹ A California range policy advisory body has existed in some form in the State since 1945, when the Board requested the appointment of the Range Improvement Advisory Committee (RIAC). The RIAC was established in 1946 to advise the Board on rangeland matters. In 1967 the RIAC was reconstructed and chartered with 11 voting members and nine non-voting technical consultants. The RIAC slipped into a period of dormancy and was reactivated and re-chartered as the RMAC in 1975. Legislation was introduced in 1984 to make the RMAC a statutory advisory body of the Board and the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). Additional legislation in 1996 expanded the advisory role to include the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The Secretaries of the CNRA, CalEPA, and CDFA are required to notify, and encouraged to consult with, the RMAC on rangeland issues.

The RMAC envisions a resilient rangeland landscape in California that provides a diversity of ecosystem services to support the state's ecological and human health. To do so, the RMAC monitors the present status and trends in California's rangeland resources; provides recommendations to the Board and advised agencies addressing them; and works to facilitate strong relationships with local, state, and federal agencies, academic institutions, and other professional organizations to develop data-driven solutions based on the current scientific consensus around environmental, social, and economic management while considering the diverse perspectives of stakeholders in California.

The RMAC reports on its activities in a variety of ways. The RMAC Strategic Plan ([RMAC 2025e](#)) is a formal document that guides the activities and longer-term (5-year) goals of the RMAC and is revised on a 5-year cycle; the RMAC will revise its Strategic Plan in 2025. The RMAC conducts open meetings a minimum of four times per year (quarterly) to conduct RMAC business, although meetings generally occur 6 to 8 times per year. Meetings are utilized to transparently conduct RMAC business and may include reports on progress toward goals and objectives of the RMAC, final reports on RMAC endeavors or other range-related efforts, and other presentations or discussions on range-related issues and research. The RMAC Chair or Board staff also report on the RMAC's activities via verbal updates at Board meetings throughout the year and will begin providing longer informational presentations on range-related issues under the purview of the Board in the coming 2026 year.

¹ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PRC§ionNum=741.

This report provides information on RMAC membership and operations, documents progress towards the Committee's 2025 annual priorities, lays out the Committee's 2026 annual priorities, and details other accomplishments and ongoing RMAC efforts.

II. CURRENT APPOINTED RMAC MEMBERS and STAFF

In 2025, the Committee had one Chair, one Vice-Chair, and 9 additional members, including three members of the public, one member from the California Resource Conservation District, seven members appointed from organizations representing rangeland owners, and one Board-appointed, non-voting, ex-officio member (see **Table 1**). Member nominations are reviewed at public RMAC meetings, and voting may occur if a quorum is present at noticed locations.

Table 1. Current RMAC Membership and Support Staff

Name	Seat Type	Affiliation	Term End
Marc Horney, Ph.D., Chair	General Public	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	01/2029 [†]
Stephanie Larson, Ph.D., Vice-Chair	Range Organization	University of California Cooperative Extension, Emeritus	01/2026 [†]
Tim Koopmann	Range Organization	California Cattlemen's Association	12/2029
Bart Cremers	Range Organization	Wildlands	05/2027
Noah J. Lopez	Range Organization	California Cattlemen's Association	03/2029
Rich Ross	Range Organization	California Cattlemen's Association	01/2028
Cole Bush	Range Organization	California Wool Growers Association	01/2026
Mark Gutierrez	Range Organization	California Wool Growers Association	03/2029
Paul Starrs, Ph.D.	General Public	Professor Emeritus, University of Nevada, Reno	01/2026
Alan Bower	General Public	United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	11/2029
Joel Kramer	California Resource Conservation Districts	California Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego	01/2026
Katie Delbar	Board-appointed ex-officio member*	Industry Representative, Board of Forestry & Fire Protection	n/a
Support Staff			
Edith Hannigan through Feb 2025; Tony Andersen beginning Sept 2025	Executive Officer	Board of Forestry & Fire Protection	n/a
Mazonika Kemp	Office Technician	Board of Forestry & Fire Protection	n/a
Kristina Wolf, Ph.D.	Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)	Certified Range Manager 122, Board of Forestry & Fire Protection	n/a

* The Board (Board of Forestry & Fire Protection) member shall have no vote in Committee actions except in the case of a tie.

† The Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed for one-year terms extending the calendar year at the first meeting of the year.

The Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed on an annual basis: Chair Dr. Marc Horney and Vice-Chair Dr. Stephanie Larson were re-appointed to those positions through January 2026. New members nominated by organizations representing rangeland owners ('rangeland organization' seats) included: Noah J. Lopez of Western Resource Strategies, nominated by the California Cattlemen's Foundation, appointed in March 2025; Mark Guitierrez, rancher and Chair of the California Woolgrowers Association Targeted Grazing committee, appointed in March 2025; Alan Bower, Rangeland Management Specialist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, appointed in November 2025; and Tim Koopman, rancher, nominated by the California Cattlemen's Association, appointed in December 2025.

Jeremy Walker, manager of Corte Madera Ranch and occupying a rangeland organization seat, stepped down in early 2025. Lance Criley, whose term expired in Nov 2025, stepped down in summer of 2025. representative of the U.S. Forest Service and occupying a rangeland organization seat, stepped down in November 2025. Four seat terms expire in January 2026: members in two of these seats stepped down in December 2025, one for a member nominated by an organization representing rangeland owners (Cole Bush), and one for a representative of the California Resource Conservation District (CA RCD) (Joel Kramer); the two remaining seats for Members Dr. Starrs and Dr. Larson will likely remain filled in 2026, as they expressed their willingness to continue to serve on the committee for an additional four-year term.

Three committee seats will be open at the start of 2026: one for a representative of the CA RCDs, and two for rangeland organizations. Expiring terms and members' ability to remain in their seat for the duration of the year will be assessed at the first meeting of the new year to determine if current members will continue to serve. If a quorum is present, reappointment votes will be cast at the first meeting of the new year if a quorum is present; if not, nominations for new members will be accepted and reviewed as submitted until all seats are filled. A [Call for Nominations](#)² is posted to the [RMAC webpage](#)³ and disseminated to various stakeholders when seats are open.

III. RMAC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2025, the RMAC accomplished the following:

- The RMAC **met seven times** in open, virtual/hybrid public webcast meetings to conduct business, and a quorum was reached at 5 of these meetings. The average annual attendance rate was 72.5% among the voting member body, and attendance rates for individual members ranged from 42%–100%. Meeting activities included approval of meeting minutes; membership updates and appointments; legislative and partner updates; workshop planning; and public education and outreach presentations by rangeland and natural resource representatives, professionals, and practitioners.
- **Re-appointed** Dr. Marc Horney as Chair and Dr. Stephanie Larson as Vice Chair to one-year chair and vice-chair terms, respectively, while Chair Horney was reappointed to a four-year member term. New members included Noah J. Lopez of Western Resource Strategies, nominated by the

² <https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdf6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/bof-website/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee---rmac/rmac-document-archive/rmac-call-for-nominations-22026.pdf?rev=edc982f9b44d40498f8bd55a217b58c4&hash=FEF700D3AA431939FA0056AF847FB5E7>

³ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee>

California Cattlemen’s Foundation; Mark Gutierrez, rancher and Chair of the California Woolgrowers Association Targeted Grazing committee; Alan Bower, Rangeland Management Specialist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Tim Koopman, rancher, nominated by the California Cattlemen’s Association.

- The **State Lands Grazing Packet** ([RMAC 2025d](#)) was finalized and approved in August 2025, which includes a:
 - **Grazing Agreement** outline/template, with support and approval from the Department of General Services (DGS);
 - **Management Action Plan** outline and template to assist in creating a grazing management plan as a stand-alone document or as an attachment to a Grazing Agreement; and,
 - **Guidebook** accompanying the above templates to assist users in the development, planning, and implementation of Grazing Agreements and Management Action Plans, with a focus on state-managed lands, although it could be modified for use on other lands.

Dr. Larry Ford presented at the April 2025 Board meeting ([Ford 2025a](#)) on the State Lands Grazing Packet ([RMAC 2025d](#)), its various components, and how the guidance and templates would support state agencies in expanding the use of grazing on state-managed lands.

- [Senate Bill \(SB\) 675: Prescribed grazing: local assistance grant program: Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force \(2023-2024\)](#)⁴ was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 27, 2024. SB 675 was introduced by Senator Monique Limón in February 2023 and sponsored by the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN). SB 675 furthers efforts to support prescribed grazing in the State by doing the following:
 - **Clarifies eligibility of projects including fencing or watering improvements:** *“(A) Projects involving the application of prescribed grazing, which may include the installation of fencing or watering improvements... (B) Watering improvements described in subparagraph (A) shall not include the creation of a well or replacement of well infrastructure.”*
 - **Requires RMAC to develop guidance for local or regional prescribed grazing plans, in consultation with relevant agencies and experts, by July 1, 2025:** *“On or before July 1, 2025, the Range Management Advisory Committee, established pursuant to Section 741, in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, fire ecologists with expertise in the full range of California’s vegetation communities, and the University of California Cooperative Extension Livestock and Natural Resources Advisors and Specialists, shall develop guidance for local or regional prescribed grazing plans.*
 - **Requires State Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force (‘Task Force’) to develop strategic action plan to expand the use of prescribed grazing, in consultation with RMAC, by June 30, 2025:** *“On or before June 30, 2025, the task force, in consultation with the Range Management Advisory Committee of the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, established pursuant to Section 741, shall develop a strategic action plan to expand the use of prescribed grazing to support the state’s efforts to increase the pace and scale of wildfire*

⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB675

and forest resilience activities and strengthen the protection of communities and reduce their fire risk.”

- Board staff worked to develop a **Budget Change Proposal (BCP)** to request one full-time Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory) position to support the implementation of SB 675 and the expanding role of the RMAC. The Board allocates 15% of one Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) position to administrative support of the RMAC’s duties and functions, which is not sufficient to adequately meet the needs of the RMAC or SB 675. However, the BCP was not funded in the State’s final budget released in early 2025. To support the increased administrative needs of the RMAC, the Board developed a contract to temporarily hire a student intern through at least June 2026. Student interns assist the needs of the RMAC by performing administrative duties, literature reviews to support RMAC deliverables (e.g., the 2025 Prescribed Herbivory White Paper Update [[RMAC 2025c](#)], SB 675 Local-Regional Grazing Guidance [[RMAC 2025b](#)]).

Passage of SB 675 in September 2024 shifted the focus of the RMAC to fulfillment of this legislative mandate in 2025. As such, the RMAC combined its **Annual Educational Workshop Series** (see **Table 3, Goal 3**) in 2025 with efforts to support SB 675 implementation. To further leverage resources outside the Board and the RMAC to ensure the development of the Local-Regional Grazing Guidance by the end of 2025, small working groups comprising 1–2 RMAC members and stakeholders from industry, government agencies, and the public were formed to support gathering of additional input from stakeholders across California and inform the development of the Local-Regional Grazing Guidance (‘Guidance’) mandated by SB 675. A **statewide kickoff meeting**⁵ with over 130 attendees occurred on April 28, 2025 to orient stakeholders to the details of SB 675, provide information on prescribed grazing in California, develop a plan for implementation of SB 675, and create Regional Action Teams to inform and develop the Local-Regional Grazing Guidance ([Larson and Bush 2025](#), [Wolf 2025](#)).

Board staff Dr. Wolf presented a poster on **SB 675 and prescribed grazing**⁶ at the **Rustici Rangeland Science Symposium** on February 18, 2025 ([Horney 2025](#)). Chair Horney provided the same poster presentation at the **California Rangeland Conservation Coalition Rangeland Summit** on March 5, 2025. Vice-Chair Larson gave a **presentation**⁷ at that Summit as well on targeted grazing, wildfire, and the role of SB 675 ([Larson 2025c](#)). To support the directive of **PRC § 741**⁸ to advise the Board on

⁵ <https://calfire.app.box.com/s/lazmsriatm1hle1w47iwze6lc91to0pb>

⁶ https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdff6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/bof-website/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee---rmac/workshop-resources/2025-russell-rustici-symposium/2-2025-rustici_rmac_sb675.pdf?rev=f6e2ded024244305aecb503221d7a3e7&hash=C9BE1146B4613A9948B837AA0C4EE7DA

⁷ <https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdff6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/bof-website/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee---rmac/workshop-resources/presentation-for-fire-protection/4-sb-675-presentation-to-the-board-2025-05-14.pdf?rev=4a9b6f85acc4e6abc99b274ddeb2fdf&hash=9197EBC3AB0730EB3C3324C5FB76CBFA>

⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PRC§ionNum=741

rangeland resource matters, the RMAC provided a [presentation on prescribed grazing](#)⁹ at the Board's May 2025 meeting ([Larson 2025a](#)). Vice Chair Dr. Larson—U.C. Cooperative Extension Livestock and Range Management Advisor and vice-chair of the RMAC—described efforts the RMAC has engaged in over the previous years to support the expansion of prescribed grazing for vegetation management, especially as it relates to wildfire resilience and the implementation of SB 675. A second [virtual workshop](#)¹⁰ was conducted on August 19, 2025 ([Larson 2025b](#), [Morrow 2025](#), [Chasin Goat Grazing 2025](#)) to provide information to stakeholders on SB 675 and prescribed grazing, and to glean stakeholder input on challenges, constraints, and needs to support the expansion of prescribed grazing as a tool for fuels management in California.

A **Stakeholder Input Survey** was disseminated to over 2,000 rangeland stakeholders, and anonymous responses also informed development of the guidance. The survey was open from August 4 through September 5, 2025 and was completed or at least partially completed by 216 respondents; responses ranged in level of detail and completeness. Lastly, a 30-day public comment period open from October 8 through November 7, 2025 allowed for additional input from stakeholders on the Guidance draft. Guidance drafts and the implementation process were shared and discussed at several RMAC meetings, and at the December 1, 2025 RMAC meeting, the Committee voted to finalize the draft for Board review. Materials shared at all public meetings are available on the [RMAC webpage](#).¹¹ Vice Chair Dr. Larson provided an overview of the finalized **Local-Regional Grazing Guidance** to the Board at that meeting ([Larson 2025d](#)), and the Board voted to approve the draft at its December 10, 2025 meeting. The final **Local-Regional Grazing Guidance** ([RMAC 2025b](#)) will be published online and distributed to stakeholders in early 2026.

The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force ('Task Force') also concurrently worked on development of its mandated deliverable from SB 675 (i.e., Task Force Strategic Action Plan prescribed grazing recommendations). Members Cremers, Delbar, and Bush were members of the Task Force's Prescribed Grazing Working Group, a team created to support development of prescribed grazing recommendations for consideration for incorporation into the Task Force's 2025 Strategic Action Plan (SAP). This team included range managers and experts from across California who liaised with the Task Force and the RMAC to support development of the prescribed grazing guidance for that deliverable. Board staff provided final editorial comments to the Task Force draft in November 2025, and it is anticipated that the final Task Force 2025 SAP will be released in early 2026. A [press release and research brief](#)¹² was developed to provide information on prescribed grazing and the efforts of the Working Group ([Roche and Macon 2025](#)).

- The process of revising the **2024 Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives** began in late 2024. In compliance with [PRC § 741](#),¹³ the RMAC formally solicited agency priorities in October 2024 from the Board, CNRA, CalEPA, and CDFA for review and integration into the priorities and goals of the

⁹ <https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdf6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/bof-website/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee---rmac/workshop-resources/presentation-for-fire-protection/4-sb-675-presentation-to-the-board-2025-05-14.pdf?rev=4a9b6f85acc4e6abc99b274ddeb2fdf&hash=9197EBC3AB0730EB3C3324C5FB76CBFA>

¹⁰ <https://calfire.box.com/s/lazmsriatm1hle1w47iwze6lc91to0pb>

¹¹ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee>

¹² https://rangelands.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk13956/files/media/documents/RxGrazing_fire_brief.pdf

¹³ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PRC§ionNum=741

RMAC. Board staff provided written notice to the Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of each of the advised agencies, along with additional supporting contacts at each agency, to solicit input on the 2025 RMAC's Annual Priorities. The Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives were finalized at the RMAC's January 2025 meeting and approved by the Board in March 2025, when it approved the RMAC's **2024 Annual Report and Workplan** ([RMAC 2025a](#)).

To develop the **2025 Annual Priorities** Board staff solicited input from advised agency executive and administrative teams on the development of the RMAC's 2025 Annual Priorities in October 2025. Advised agencies were requested to respond by December 19, 2025, for incorporation in the RMAC's Annual Report & Workplan, so that this report could be finalized and approved at the first meeting of the year. The RMAC also solicited stakeholders and member input during multiple public meetings in 2025 to inform the 2026 Annual Priorities. Synergistic priorities from advised agencies and stakeholders were considered during the revision of the Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives (i.e., action items). It is expected that the final 2025 Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives—which are embedded in this 2025 Annual Report and Workplan—will be finalized and approved at the first RMAC meeting of 2026, if the 2025 Annual Report and Workplan are approved at that time.

- Appointed members and support staff to teams working under advised agencies and other organizations with synergistic goals:
 - As a member of the **CWGA's Targeted Grazing Committee**, Members Bush and Gutierrez spearhead an action team to liaise with that committee to develop work products focused on prescribed grazing for fuels reduction. This team finalized a comprehensive update of the **2015 Prescribed Herbivory White Paper** ([RMAC 2015](#)): the **2025 Prescribed Herbivory White Paper Update** ([RMAC 2025c](#)). This team is currently drafting a **Request for Proposals (RFP) template** (in prep.) as well, specific to service-based contracts for organizations interested in utilizing prescribed grazing for vegetation management projects. This RFP template will assist those organizations unfamiliar with prescribed grazing in developing a RFP that is straightforward, easy to follow, and has the highest chance of success for securing knowledgeable and experienced service providers that can deliver on the needs and desired outcomes of the land managers. Lastly, this team is also exploring options to develop stand-alone Technical Guides on Prescribed Herbivory in California and aims to have drafts ready for review in late 2026.
 - Board staff continues to attend monthly meetings of the **Natural Working Lands (NWL) Science Team** under the CNRA and works with and provides input to the team for integration of range-related resource issues into climate-smart strategies. Members of this team work to inform and review modeling and analyses for natural and working lands strategies, advise state agencies on implementation strategies and standardized accounting, and provide recommendations on addressing barriers to efficient implementation of climate action in natural and working lands.
 - Board staff produced a draft for the rangelands chapter of the **2024 Assessment** for the [Forest and Resource Assessment Program](#),¹⁴ which evaluates the amount and extent of California's forests and rangelands, analyzes their conditions, and identifies alternative

¹⁴ <https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/fire-resource-assessment-program>

management and policy guidelines. Board staff Dr. Wolf and the Chair Horney provided final editorial input on this chapter in 2025. It is anticipated that this draft will be published and available to the public in 2026.

- Board staff Dr. Wolf and RMAC Member Bush presented to the **Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee** on April 15, 2025, on the utilization of prescribed herbivory for fuels management and wildfire mitigation. The presentation included details on SB 675 and current and forthcoming resources produced by the RMAC to support the increased pace and scale of prescribed herbivory across California ([Wolf and Bush 2025](#)).
- Board staff attended the Blue and Valley Oak Conservation Planning Workshop from November 19-21, 2025, hosted at The Wildlands Conservancy's Rana Creek Preserve in Carmel Valley. Board staff contributed to development of a conservation plan for these species, while establishing collaborations with oak woodland partners. These collaborations will support a long-term goal of the RMAC to develop and implement a training program bringing together forestry and rangeland professionals and managers to cross-train managers on vegetation and fuels management in oak woodlands, savannas, and other ecosystems where grazing is applied as a land management tool, including in forestlands. Two new partners will attend the January 2026 RMAC meeting to discuss next steps in developing this educational program and to discuss blue and valley oak conservation needs.
- A variety of speakers provided **presentations to the RMAC** audience at public meetings to disseminate information on and discuss potential needs and solutions for rangeland issues in California. Speakers and topics included:
 - **California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Noxious Weeds Program: Partnering with the RMAC** – Trevor Fox, Senior Environmental Scientist, CDFA Noxious Weeds Program ([Kratville and Fox 2025](#))
 - **New Rangeland Research Lab at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo: Geospatial Systems Lab Demo:** Madison Muschetto and Sam Ericksen, graduate students, Cal Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo ([Muschetto and Ericksen 2025](#))
 - [Rancher Technical Assistance Program](#)¹⁵ – Member Noah Lopez, California Cattlemen's Foundation
 - [Grazing for Resilience on and around Department of Defense Military Installations and Bases](#)¹⁶ – Deb Loomis, Hinterland Institute
 - **Status and Future of Board of Forestry & Fire Protection and California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management CRM Program** – Dr. Larry Ford, LD Ford, Consultants in Rangeland Conservation Science ([Ford 2025b](#))
 - **Rangeland Education courses to be offered through Cal Poly Humboldt Extended Education to support CRMs** – Dr. Susan Marshall, Professor, Cal Polytechnic State University, Humboldt ([Marshall 2025](#))

¹⁵ <https://calfire.box.com/s/bl20mncsdbqubynddbn2xyv14vsv1f48>

¹⁶ <https://calfire.box.com/s/bl20mncsdbqubynddbn2xyv14vsv1f48>

IV. **ANNUAL PRIORITIES, GOALS, and OBJECTIVES**

Annual priorities are generally reviewed in the fall, further developed in early winter, and voted on at the first RMAC meeting of each year to guide the activities of the committee. The 2025 priorities were embedded in the **2024 Annual report and Workplan** ([RMAC 2025a](#)), and the 2026 priorities are embedded in this 2025 Annual Report and Workplan. Each Annual Report and Workplan provides a status of the progress made on the Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives that were established for that calendar year, and provides an aspirational list of the Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives for the upcoming year. The vision and mission of RMAC are supported by the Overarching priorities outlined in the RMAC **Strategic Plan** ([RMAC 2025d](#)) and in targeted, shorter-term Goals and Objectives.

The RMAC's vision and mission guide its Overarching Priorities (**Table 2**), and the Annual Priorities, Goals, and Objectives are developed annually to fulfill these. The RMAC's Overarching Priorities are longer-term priorities of the RMAC that require actions on multiple fronts, often over multiple years, to accomplish. The **Strategic Plan** ([RMAC 2025d](#)) outlines four main Overarching Priorities.

Table 2. Range Management Advisory Committee Overarching Priorities

Priority I. Advise Board and state agencies	Consider matters related to California’s rangeland and forested rangeland resources that are under consideration by the Secretaries, the Board, or Federal agencies (as appropriate given the Board’s role in representing State interests in Federal timberlands), offer advice and consultation, and recommend appropriate policy measures or administrative actions.
Priority II. Education & Workforce Development	Share information and educational opportunities to Certified Range Managers and government agency rangeland and forestry staff to grow professional knowledge in the field of rangeland resource management.
Priority III. CDFA Weeds Programs	Consult on the development and implementation of the Noxious Weeds Program through the California Department of Food and Agriculture (see FAC § 7271 ¹⁷ and 7273 ¹⁸).
Priority IV. Monitor & address range issues	Monitor for issues in rangeland science and management and convene groups of relevant professionals to address these issues.

The annual goals and objectives of the RMAC are established, as appropriate, on an annual basis to address more time-sensitive, current issues and needs in range resource management in California, and fall under the RMAC Priorities, above. Goals are developed annually and tier off the Overarching Priorities of the RMAC, while Objectives are more specific action items associated with a Goal. Progress made in 2025 toward the Priorities, Goals, and Objectives is detailed in **Table 3**. The revised Goals for 2026 precede the table of 2026 Priorities, Goals, and Objectives (**Table 4**), which includes information on leads, partners, status, and estimated completion dates.

2025 RMAC Goals and Purpose

GOAL 1: Develop and promote appropriate rangeland resource management guidance to support fuels management and other ecosystem services.

Purpose: Prescribed grazing is a valuable tool for vegetation management but can be complex and difficult to manage for multiple outcomes and successful outcomes may require high levels of expertise. There is a need to further support prescribed grazing as a practical option for state land management agencies, where appropriate and suitable for accomplishing ecological, environmental, and cultural objectives—especially where complementary to State goals and targets—and can be managed to produce results consistent with requirements of environmental regulatory agencies. To address this, the RMAC may develop and/or promote appropriate guidance for grazing before and following wildfire on California rangelands. The combined expertise of the RMAC members and stakeholders is a valuable resource that the RMAC can leverage to support the dissemination of practicable, data-driven information to assist land managers in the proper application best management practices. The RMAC will also monitor livestock policies required by state lands managers for consistency with the best available science identified by UCCE/UC ANR and other

¹⁷ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=FAC§ionNum=7271

¹⁸

https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7273.&nodeTreePath=5.4.1.2&lawCode=FAC

state efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change (e.g., [California's Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy](#)¹⁹). Grazing is a fuel reduction method in the [State's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan](#),²⁰ but few professionals in the state have the necessary experience to develop feasible grazing plans for this purpose. This Goal dovetails with new mandates in SB 675 related to prescribed grazing guidance at the local, regional, and state levels. These efforts will also provide guidance and resources to support improved range management practices at a broader scale across the livestock industry, will support the provisioning of ecosystem services, and support resilient, communities. These efforts will also support California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets, which include ambitious, science-driven targets for activities related to rangeland management. For example, the targets call for 33.5 million acres of forests, shrublands and chaparral, and grasslands managed to reduce wildfire risk, including prescribed herbivory, by 2045. Additionally, the targets call for 1 million acres of grasslands restoration by 2045, which includes prescribed grazing in line with California's Climate Smart Lands Strategy.

GOAL 2: Support outreach, education, and workforce development to build rangeland management expertise in the State.

Purpose: There are 77 registered CRMs left in the State, with approximately 25% working as rangeland managers. RMAC needs to promote leveraging that expertise where appropriate or required, including within CAL FIRE for developing burn plans and conducting prescribed burning in rangelands, mixed range-forest systems, and shrublands. There is a need to integrate and coordinate Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) with Certified Rangeland Managers (CRMs) for the purpose of developing effective fuels management treatments from their different but complementary professional backgrounds, for example, via combined training programs with both RPFs and CRMs to develop burn plans integrated with other fuel treatment activities, including prescribed grazing. Moreover, state-wide training and demonstrations in methods of reducing fine fuels using grazing are necessary to implement this practice at scale. Educational efforts should include recommendations for evaluating and mitigating site-specific rangeland resource management and grazing treatment impacts on wildlife habitats, water quality, and fuel bed characteristics.

GOAL 3: Collaborate with advised and related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies to prioritize rangeland management research priorities and utilize networks to monitor and promote planning to address concerns.

Purpose: Rangelands support a diverse suite of ecosystem services and serve a diverse citizenry. To encourage a diverse set of voices are included in consideration of rangeland management in California, the RMAC will broaden connections and interactions with organizations involved in large-scale management of rangelands in California that have not historically or recently been part of its formal stakeholders. Circulate and elevate practical needs for rangeland management research from land managers and agency staff to research organizations in California with the technical skill and capacity to properly investigate them. Monitor regulatory initiatives on surface water pollution, ground water management, soil health, and soil carbon sequestration. Remain in position to provide constructive feedback to agencies on the scientific merit and practicality of regulatory efforts meant to protect water quality and sustain its availability and affordability.

¹⁹ <https://resources.ca.gov/initiatives/expanding-nature-based-solutions>

²⁰ <https://wildfiretaskforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/californiawildfireandforestresilienceactionplan.pdf>

Table 3 (Panel 1 of 5). Progress Toward 2025 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities.

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates				Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Objective Attained?	Intended Audience	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 1. Develop and promote appropriate rangeland resource management guidance to support fuels management and other ecosystem services.							
1a. Finalize and disseminate DGS-approved standard template(s)/form(s) with accompanying guidance document for constructing grazing agreements and grazing management plans for use by state agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bart Cremers, Lance Criley, Cole Bush, Rich Ross • SLGLLM • <i>Dr. Larry Ford, Jeanette Griffin</i> • DGS 	Completed 06/2025	Public, Graziers, Agency	X			X
1b. Establish appropriate guidance for grazing on California rangelands, with an emphasis on state-managed lands, via informational publications, publications, and technical guidance for public and agency use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cole Bush, Dr. Paul Starrs, Dr. Stephanie Larson, Bart Cremers • CWGA TG, • <i>Task Force, Prescribed Herbivory Working Group, CAL FIRE</i> 	Partial Completion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Prescribed Herbivory white paper update published. • Review CAL FIRE prescribed herbivory draft for Fuels Reduction Guide – not received from CAL FIRE. • Prescribed Herbivory Technical Guidance draft planned for mid- to late 2025 – moved to 2026. • SB 675 Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft guidance for Task Force’s Strategic Action Plan • RMAC’s Local and regional grazing guidance approved by Board Dec 10, 2025. 	Public, Graziers, Agency	X			X

Table 3. Continued next page.

Table 3 (Panel 2 of 5). Progress Toward 2025 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates				Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Objective Attained?	Intended Audience	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 2. Support outreach, education, and workforce development to build rangeland management expertise in the State.							
2a. RMAC action team to develop relationships with the CLFA and the CRM Panel, and establish, develop, and implement joint CRM-RPF annual fuels management training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney, Jeremy Walker, Lance Criley, Joel Kramer, Dr. Stephanie Larson • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall, YG Gentry</i> • <i>CLFA, CFA, RCDs, PBAs, CAL FIRE, local fire departments, Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, PFEC</i> 	Ongoing Conversations ongoing with CLFA, CFA, and other partners to develop oak woodland training in 2026 or beyond.	CRMs, RPFs		X	X	
2b. Coordinate CRM and RPF requirements and exam contents where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall, Dr. Jamie Bartolome, Denise Defreese</i> • <i>Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, OPFR, PFEC</i> 	Ongoing Conversations ongoing with CRM Panel members and Board.	CRMs, RPFs	X			X
2c. Promote existing efforts to develop a statewide training program for potential CRMs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall</i> • <i>OPFR, Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, PFEC</i> 	Ongoing Continued conversations with key partners to explore opportunities.	CRMs		X		

Table 3. *Continued next page.*

Table 3 (Panel 3 of 5). Progress Toward 2025 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates				Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Objective Attained?	Intended Audience	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 2. Support outreach, education, and workforce development to build rangeland management expertise in the State.							
2d. Meet with CRM Panel and Cal-Pac SRM leadership to discuss methods of promoting CRM utilization and/or further development of the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney, Dr. Stephanie Larson • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall</i> • <i>Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel</i> 	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued conversations with key partners to explore opportunities. • Courses established, RMAC can help promote. 	CRMs		X		
2e. Invite experts to discuss integrated fuels treatments including prescribed herbivory at a public RMAC meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lenya Quinn-Davidson</i> • <i>CAL FIRE, UCCE/UCANR, PBAs, local fire departments</i> 	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued conversations with key partners to explore opportunities. • Presentations on integrated fuels treatments. • Member Bush will reach out to Celine Moomey and Ryan Matheson. • Member Kramer can follow up on integrated fuels treatment project. 	Public, Graziers, Agency		X		
2f. Conduct and promote a collaborative annual educational workshop series on a topic of current significance in California rangelands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joel Kramer, Dr. Marc Horney, Dr. Stephanie Larson, Bart Cremers • <i>UCCE/UC ANR, NRCS, CAL FIRE, BLM, CDFW</i> 	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey developed to solicit input on stakeholder and agency needs and inform development of the 2025 educational series. • Survey completed. • Combined with SB 675 implementation efforts. 	Public, Graziers, Agency		X		

Table 3. *Continued next page.*

Table 3 (Panel 4 of 5). Progress Toward 2025 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates				Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Objective Attained?	Intended Audience	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 3. Collaborate with advised and related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies to prioritize rangeland management research priorities and utilize networks to monitor and promote planning to address concerns.							
3a. Regularly solicit requests rangeland management topics and extend invitations for periodic public reports on activities and issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMAC Members • Advised agencies (CDFA, CalEPA, CNRA, Board) 	Ongoing	Public, Graziers, Agency	X			X
3b. Facilitate an inventory of existing land management plans and a system for periodic reporting of range management activities to meet progress reporting requirements of state programs, including the Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets (AB 1757 ²¹).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Stephanie Larson, Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Natural and Working Lands Science Team, Advised agencies (CDFA, CalEPA, CNRA, Board)</i> 	Ongoing	Public, Graziers, Agency		X		X

Table 3. Continued next page.

²¹ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1757

Table 3 (Panel 5 of 5). Progress Toward 2025 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates				Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Objective Attained?	Intended Audience	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 3. Collaborate with advised and related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies to prioritize rangeland management research priorities and utilize networks to monitor and promote planning to address concerns.							
3c. Initiate proof-of-concept projects or small-scale collaborative investigations of grazing impacts, including those related to CDFA mandates FAC § 7271 ²² and 7273 . ²³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joel Kramer, Lance Criley, Jeremy Walker, Cole Bush, Dr. Stephanie Larson, Dr. Marc Horney • RCDs, UCCE/UCANR • <i>Hopland Research & Extension Center</i> 	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SB 675 efforts contributed. • BCP proposed funding for a demonstration site. • Ongoing conversations to develop demonstration projects and platforms to share project outcomes (e.g., written updates and in-person workshops and field tours). 	Public, Graziers, Agency		X	X	X

Key: BLM = Bureau of Land Management; Board = Board of Forestry & Fire Protection; CalEPA = CA Environmental Protection Agency; CAL FIRE = Department of Forestry & Fire Protection; Cal-Pac SRM = CA Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management; CDFW = CA Department of Fish & Wildlife; CFA = California Forestry Association; CLFA = CA Licensed Foresters Association; CNRA = CA Natural Resources Agency; CDFA = CA Department of Food & Agriculture; CRM = Certified Rangeland Manager; CWGA TGC = CA Wool Growers Association - Targeted Grazing Committee; DGS = CA Department of General Services; FAC = Food and Agriculture Code; NRCS = Natural Resources Conservation Service; PBA = Prescribed Burn Association; PFEC = Professional Foresters Examining Committee; RCD = Resource Conservation District; RMAC = Rangeland Management Advisory Committee; RPF = Registered Professional Forester; SLGLLM = State Lands Grazing License & Land Management, a subcommittee of the RMAC; Task Force = Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force; UCCE/UCANR = UCCE = University of CA Cooperative Extension/University of CA Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

²² https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=FAC§ionNum=7271.

²³ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7273.&nodeTreePath=5.4.1.2&lawCode=FAC

2026 RMAC Goals and Purpose

In 2026, the RMAC’s overarching priorities and goals remained the same (see **Table 4**); objectives were updated to accommodate considerations around changes in the RMAC’s priorities, member ability to meet objectives, and the foreseeable severe limitation in staffing, and resources.

Table 4 (Panel 1 of 5). 2026 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities.

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates					Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Status	Intended Audience	Estimated Completion	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 1. Develop and promote appropriate rangeland resource management guidance to support fuels management and other ecosystem services.								
1a. Finalize and disseminate DGS-approved standard template(s)/form(s) with accompanying guidance document for constructing grazing agreements and grazing management plans for use by state agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich Ross SLGLLM Dr. Larry Ford, Jeanette Griffin DGS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Templates completed in 2025. In 2026, solicit and compile feedback on the templates and guidance. 	State agencies, Graziers	2026	X			X
1b. Establish appropriate guidance for grazing California rangelands, with an emphasis on state-managed lands, via informational publications, publications, and technical guidance for public and agency use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Paul Starrs, Dr. Stephanie Larson CWGA TG, Task Force, Prescribed Herbivory Working Group, CAL FIRE 	Finalizing and distributing SB 675 document.	Public, Graziers, Agency	Ongoing	X	X		X

Table 4. Continued next page.

Table 4 (Panel 2 of 5). 2026 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates					Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Status	Intended Audience	Estimated Completion	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 2. Support outreach, education, and workforce development to build rangeland management expertise in the State.								
2a. RMAC Action Team to develop relationships with the CLFA and the CRM Panel, and establish, develop, and implement joint CRM-RPF annual fuels management training. CRM-RPF demonstration project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney, RMAC members • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall, YG Gentry</i> • <i>Wildlands, CLFA, CFA, RCDs, PBAs, CAL FIRE, local fire departments, Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, PFEC</i> 	Conversations ongoing with CLFA, CFA, Wildlands, and other partners to develop oak woodland training in 2026 or beyond.	CRMs, RPFs	Ongoing		X	X	
2b. Coordinate CRM and RPF requirements and exam contents where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall, Dr. Jamie Bartolome, Denise Defreese</i> • <i>Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, OPFR, PFEC</i> 	Conversations ongoing with CRM Panel members and Board.	CRMs, RPFs	Ongoing	X			X
2c. Promote existing efforts to develop a statewide training program for potential CRMs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall</i> • <i>Dr. Stephanie Larson</i> • <i>OPFR, Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel, PFEC</i> 	Courses established, RMAC can aid in promotion of this online and through listserv email. Reach out to Chico State Program.	CRMs	Ongoing		X		

Table 4. *Continued next page.*

Table 4 (Panel 3 of 5). 2026 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates					Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Status	Intended Audience	Estimated Completion	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 2. Support outreach, education, and workforce development to build rangeland management expertise in the State.								
2d. Meet with CRM Panel and Cal-Pac SRM leadership to discuss methods of promoting CRM utilization and/or further development of the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney, Dr. Stephanie Larson • <i>Dr. Susan Marshall</i> • <i>Cal-Pac SRM CRM Panel</i> 	Conversations ongoing with CRM Panel members and Board.	CRMs	Ongoing		X		
2e. Invite experts to discuss integrated fuels treatments including prescribed herbivory at a public RMAC meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lenya Quinn-Davidson</i> • <i>CAL FIRE, UCCE/UCANR, PBAs, local fire departments</i> 	Conversations ongoing.	Public, Graziers, Agency	Ongoing		X		
2f. Conduct and promote a collaborative annual educational workshop series on a topic of current significance in California rangelands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Marc Horney, Dr. Stephanie Larson, • <i>UCCE/UC ANR, NRCS, CAL FIRE, BLM, CDFW</i> 	Conversations ongoing.	Public, Graziers, Agency	Ongoing		X		

Table 4. *Continued next page.*

Table 4 (Panel 4 of 5). 2026 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates					Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Status	Intended Audience	Estimated Completion	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 3. Collaborate with advised and related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies to prioritize rangeland management research priorities and utilize networks to monitor and promote planning to address concerns.								
3a. Regularly solicit requests regarding rangeland management topics and extend invitations for periodic public reports on activities and issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMAC members • <i>Advised agencies (CDFA, CalEPA, CNRA, Board)</i> 	Conversations ongoing.	Public, Graziers, Agency	Ongoing	X			X
3b. Facilitate an inventory of existing land management plans and a system for periodic reporting of range management activities to meet progress reporting requirements of state programs, including the Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets (AB 1757 ²⁴).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Stephanie Larson, Dr. Marc Horney • <i>Natural and Working Lands Science Team, Advised agencies (CDFA, CalEPA, CNRA, Board)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board staff shared current repository with Chair and Vice-Chair; RMAC members to provide additional data to compile. • Possible inventory of grazed land in CA. 	Public, Graziers, Agency	2027		X		X

Table 4. *Continued next page.*

²⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1757

Table 4 (Panel 5 of 5). 2026 Annual Goals and Objectives to meet RMAC Priorities, *continued from previous page.*

Goals, Objectives, Leads & Partners, and Estimated Completion Dates					Objective Relationship to RMAC Priorities			
OBJECTIVE	Lead RMAC Member(s) & Partners	Status	Intended Audience	Estimated Completion	I - Advisement	II - Education	III - CDFA	IV - Assessment
GOAL 3. Collaborate with advised and related agencies, Native American tribes, and other administrative bodies to prioritize rangeland management research priorities and utilize networks to monitor and promote planning to address concerns.								
3c. Initiate proof-of-concept projects or small-scale collaborative investigations of grazing impacts, including those related to CDFA mandates FAC § 7271 and 7273.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Stephanie Larson, Dr. Marc Horney • RCDs, UCCE/UCANR • Hopland Research & Extension Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to develop demonstration projects and platform to share project outcomes (e.g., written updates and in-person workshops and field tours). • BCP Proposed funding a demonstration site. • See Objective 2a demonstration project. 	Ongoing	2027 and on		X	X	X

Key: BLM = Bureau of Land Management; Board = Board of Forestry & Fire Protection; CalEPA = CA Environmental Protection Agency; CAL FIRE = Department of Forestry & Fire Protection; Cal-Pac SRM = CA Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management; CDFW = CA Department of Fish & Wildlife; CFA = California Forestry Association; CLFA = CA Licensed Foresters Association; CNRA = CA Natural Resources Agency; CDFA = CA Department of Food & Agriculture; CRM = Certified Rangeland Manager; CWGA TGC = CA Wool Growers Association - Targeted Grazing Committee; DGS = CA Department of General Services; FAC = Food and Agriculture Code; NRCS = Natural Resources Conservation Service; PBA = Prescribed Burn Association; PFEC = Professional Foresters Examining Committee; RCD = Resource Conservation District; RMAC = Rangeland Management Advisory Committee; RPF = Registered Professional Forester; SLGLLM = State Lands Grazing License & Land Management, a subcommittee of the RMAC; Task Force = Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force; UCCE/UCANR = UCCE = University of CA Cooperative Extension/University of CA Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

V. RANGELAND RESOURCE CONCERNS and PROGRESS

California rangelands face a variety of complex social and environmental challenges. Throughout the course of conducting its annual business at open public meetings, RMAC members, members of the public, and other interested stakeholders bring issues related to rangelands to the attention of the RMAC. To address issues needing discussion or other actions, Board staff and RMAC members work to secure expert speakers to bring information to the public, facilitate discussions about issues and potential solutions, and bring these issues to the attention of the Board as appropriate. Topics of concern related to rangeland resources that were discussed at public RMAC meetings, potential actions taken to address the challenges, and ongoing or emerging challenges are summarized below.

- Livestock-wildlife conflicts have become an increasing concern in recent years, with gray wolf migration from nearby states encroaching into Northern counties. Research is currently undergoing in the UC Davis Department of Plant Sciences through the efforts of Dr. Tina Saitone and Dr. Ken Tate, U.C. Cooperative Extension specialists, whose research addresses the balancing act between the economic welfare of ranchers and gray wolf conservation and management (see [Dooley 2025](#)). The passing of Dr. Tate in 2025 was a major loss to the rangeland community in California. His contributions to the body of literature for rangeland research and management and will continue to pave the way for improved inquiry into, and management of, these valuable working landscapes.
- The [Williamson Act](#)²⁵ continues to have an unclear pathway. Also known as the **California Land Conservation Act of 1965** (see [Government Code § 51231](#)²⁶), the Williamson Act helped preserve agricultural and open space lands by providing a mechanism for local governments and landowners enter into voluntary contracts to restrict enrolled lands to agricultural and open space uses, typically for 10-year rolling terms, in exchange for property tax reductions as property tax was assessed on the value of the land as if it was not developable. Prior to this statute, property taxes were often prohibitively high based on the potential market value of the land, resulting in many agricultural landowners selling land to developers for conversion to urban uses. To compensate local governments for lost property tax revenue, the state would make “subvention payments” to cover a substantial portion of lost revenue. Subvention payments were sharply cut in 2009 and fully removed in 2011. While the state no longer provides subvention payments to reduce property taxes on enrolled lands, 52 counties administer local Williamson Act programs, along with some cities. Today, enrolled owners may see a 20 to 70% reduction in property taxes ([Wilber et al. 2024](#)). However, enrollments have dropped over time as support for this program wanes.

Acres enrolled in California have trended downward, with peak enrollment of over [16 million acres in 2004, but only around 10 million acres enrolled in 2021](#).²⁷ In 2022 the Department of Conservation (DOC) [reported](#)²⁸ that over 90,000 acres had come out of protection under the Williamson Act, and an additional 317,882 acres were planned for non-renewal in the following decade. Due to the discontinuation of reporting requirements in 2022 (see [SB 574 2021–2022](#):

²⁵ <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa>

²⁶ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=51231.&lawCode=GOV

²⁷ https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Documents/WA_CEQA%20Presentation%2010.2022.pdf

²⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=51231.&lawCode=GOV

[Agricultural Preserves: Williamson Act](#)²⁹), it is also likely that underreporting of enrollment has occurred, and as the state has given no indication that it will resume subvention payments, reporting rates will likely continue to decline. It is unclear how the discontinuation of state subvention payments in 2011 and reporting requirements in 2022 will impact enrolled acres, the likelihood of conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses, the rates of conversion, or the loss of ecosystem services and values on natural and working lands. A **2024 update** from the DOC ([DOC 2024](#)) reported that 16 million acres of California’s 30 million acres of farmland were protected under the Williamson Act in California. No additional reports have been released since 2024.

- Bill analysis and fact-finding efforts are a common component of the legislative and committee process. RMAC stakeholders are interested in learning more about upcoming and current legislation and may highlight concerns that potential policy changes may alleviate. Board staff monitor legislative activities and regularly solicit information on potential policy changes from RMAC members and the public. RMAC members and Board staff were active in supporting the implementation of SB 675 in 2025 and developed Local/Regional Grazing Guidance in 2025; however, Board staff shortages strongly constrain ongoing support of this legislative mandate or updates to the guidance over time.
- State funding opportunities to support invasive plant management has varied in recent years. While funding around healthy soils practices has had some short-term funding in recent years, funding is not being currently offered. Increases in the spread of invasive plant species that are less palatable to livestock are a continuing management challenge. The Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) mandates that the CDFA consult with the RMAC on their **Noxious Weeds Program**. CDFA is charged with managing funds received for the Noxious Weed Management Account. Article 1.7. Noxious Weeds Management of the [Food and Agriculture Code \(FAC\) § 7271\(c\)\(2\)\(A\)](#)³⁰ states “Twenty percent shall be made available toward research on the biology, ecology, or management of noxious and invasive weeds; the mapping, risk assessment, and prioritization of weeds; the prevention of weed introduction and spread; and education and outreach activities. These moneys shall be made available to qualified applicants through a grant program administered by the department. Proposals shall be evaluated in consultation with the Range Management Advisory Committee, established pursuant to Section 741 of the Public Resources Code, with an emphasis placed on funding of needs-based, applied, and practical research.” In addition, [FAC § 7273\(a\)](#)³¹ states that the CDFA “... shall designate and provide staff support to an oversight committee to monitor this article and shall consider input from weed management areas, county agricultural commissioners, and the Range Management Advisory Committee.”

The Noxious Weed Program at CDFA has a history of dormancy and revival, and this program was only recently revived and staffed in 2024. One-time funding of \$10 million was allocated to the Noxious Weed Grant Program account, and funding of \$2.4 million was made available in FY 2022/23. Fifty-two counties were awarded funding for the survey and/or control of Noxious Weeds

²⁹ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB574

³⁰ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=FAC§ionNum=7271.

³¹

https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7273.&nodeTreePath=5.4.1.2&lawCode=FAC

defined within the [California Code of Regulations](#)³² 4500 list and or weeds identified by CDFA as being A, B, or Q rated weeds in that county. Projects were slated to run from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025. The involvement of the RMAC was not requested in the review of applications for the [2023 Noxious Weed Grant Program](#).³³ In 2024 a new Senior Environmental Scientist was hired to manage the program in 2024, and the RMAC began engagement with this new personnel in December to investigate potential opportunities and synergies to bolster noxious weeds management, education, and outreach. Program goals are highly synergistic with the current needs and priorities of RMAC stakeholders and partners, and include increasing the profitability of cropland and rangeland, reducing the fire hazard and fire control costs in the state, protecting the biodiversity of native ecosystems, and increasing water supply and flow. As the CDFA and RMAC have a statutory nexus to address noxious weeds, the RMAC also incorporated one new objective into the 2024 Annual Priorities based on input received from the CDFA.

Per legislative mandate (e.g., FAC 7271 and 7273), the RMAC should be included in the review of grant monies distributed for weed management. The RMAC did receive one presentation from this program in early 2025 and was informed that RMAC members would be invited to join a committee for review and selection of recently funded Weed Management Area (WMA) grants; however, no information was provided by CDFA thereafter. It does appear, however, that funds were awarded in 2025 by the CDFA for the WMA Program (see [CDFA 2024](#) and [Fox 2025](#)).

To further increase engagement with the CDFA, RMAC Members Kramer and Bush were appointed as RMAC representatives to interact with the [Healthy Soils Initiative](#)³⁴ under the CDFA in late 2022; however, little to no progress was made on the part of the RMAC in furthering efforts since then to showcase results or case-studies for range-related projects receiving Demonstration Block Grants through the [Healthy Soils Program](#)³⁵ (HSP). Discussions around the possibility of developing field tours or workshops highlighting results and implications for management born out of HSP Demonstration Grants have been ongoing, but state budget cuts to travel funding in 2024 limited the ability of the RMAC to partner with grantees. Severe limitations on Board staff time for RMAC support also strongly constrain progress on this front.

Moreover, HSP Demonstration Grants were not funded in FYs 2022/23 or 2023/24, and the most recent awards (see [2023 HSP Demonstration Grant Awards](#)³⁶) did not include livestock or range-related projects. The [Healthy Soils Program Block Grant Pilot](#)³⁷ program awarded 14 block grants in FY 2022/23, and funding may be awarded through those allocations to provide financial assistance to California agricultural operations through regional block grant administrators. For example, just under \$5 million was awarded to [Fibershed](#)³⁸ and partner the [Carbon Cycle Institute](#)³⁹ for

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[https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/index?_lrTS=20170110205034927&transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)&bhcp=1&bhash=1#38;Action=Welcome](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/index?_lrTS=20170110205034927&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&bhcp=1&bhash=1#38;Action=Welcome)

33 <https://www.grants.ca.gov/grants/2023-noxious-weed-grant-program/>

34 <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/healthsoils/>

35 <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthsoils/>

36 https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthsoils/docs/2023_HSP_Demo_awarded.pdf

37 <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthsoils/BlockGrantProgram.html>

38 <https://fibershed.org/>

39 <https://www.carboncycle.org/>

producers in Fresno, Humboldt, Kings, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, San Luis Obispo, and Solano counties. [HSP Incentive Grants](#)⁴⁰ fund range-related practices including prescribed grazing, range plantings, and riparian forest buffer. The most recent HSP Incentive Grants opened on January 22, 2024. In 2024, 155 [HSP Incentive Grant recipients](#)⁴¹ received \$10,030,719.54 in funding.

The RMAC will continue to share information with stakeholders as it is able regarding funding opportunities to improve healthy soils and invasive plant management practices on farms and ranches in California as information becomes available.

- **Workforce Development** continues to be a significant challenge in the rangeland management world, with a relatively small number of professionals with rangeland expertise or certification working in the State, and less than 80 currently licensed **Certified Rangeland Managers (CRM)** across California, of which approximately one-third provide rangeland management services. The CRM license is required for professional practice of rangeland management on non-federal forested landscapes as a specialty authorized under the Professional Foresters Licensing Act that requires the Registered Professional Forester license for the practice of forestry. While not legally required in many situations, the CRM license assures a level of rangeland expertise necessary to adequately develop suitable rangeland management plans that will sustain and protect range resources in California. A long-term trend in range experts retiring from agencies, alongside a lack of new graduates with adequate range credentials, has continued in California. Current challenges in rangeland resource personnel recruitment include:
 - A resource pool of landowners and managers with sufficient rangeland expertise to act as qualified rangeland consultants, but who lack the required coursework for eligibility to sit for the CRM exam.
 - The need for a clear crosswalk of coursework offered at learning institutions in California and beyond to bridge any gaps in requirements for CRM exam eligibility.
 - A need for identification of pathways and programs—including the development of such mechanisms—to fill gaps in rangeland education and skills, particularly those required for CRM exam eligibility.
 - A lack of place-based learning environments or programs on natural and working lands where meaningful learning opportunities may be cultivated, as well as a mechanism for crediting participants with the necessary rangeland management knowledge, skills, and abilities to act as range consultants in California and beyond.
 - The need for a centralized location for student and practitioner resources, particularly as they relate to the passage of the CRM exam.
 - Low pay scales and limited opportunities for advancement in the rangeland field; low recruitment rates due to a lack of qualified candidates at the local, state, and federal level for rangeland job classifications.

⁴⁰ https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/2024/2024_hsp_incentives_rga.pdf

⁴¹ https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/healthysoils/docs/2024_HSPIncentives_AwardedProjects.pdf

Dr. Susan Marshall, professor of Rangeland Resources and Soils at California Polytechnic State University, Humboldt, and Dr. Horney continue to work at local (California-Pacific section of the Society for Range Management) and national (Society for Range Management) levels to address constraints and challenges in workforce development efforts. Dr. Marshall presented the CRM Certification process in 2025 and the courses developed to help with that process ([Marshall 2025](#)). The [California Rangeland Education \(CRED\) Courses](#)⁴² have become available at California Polytechnic State University, Humboldt. Recent discussions with the Board and the RMAC have included addressing exam prerequisites, which are difficult to meet for many otherwise qualified potential applicants, despite their breadth of range experience and knowledge. Dr. Ford also presented future steps for CRM certification, with future issues including reducing restrictive education requirements, adding in supplementary education, and promoting use of grazing guidance documents ([Ford 2025b](#)). Low enrollment in the courses has, however, been a concern for the likelihood of these classes being offered.

- **Aging Operators and Unsure Succession Plans:** The median age of California ranchers continues to rise, and the prospect for younger generations succeeding these operations continues to decrease. The number of farms and ranches also continues to decrease, while the average farm or ranch size is smaller in California than the national average. There are no state-wide initiatives or programs to assist ranchers in succession planning, although some events occurred in 2024 (e.g., [Conserving Your Legacy](#),⁴³), paid courses are offered (e.g., [The Regenerator: A Year of Farm Succession Planning](#)⁴⁴), and online resources are available (e.g., [California Land Transfer Navigators](#),⁴⁵ [Farm Succession Guidebook](#)⁴⁶).
- The **interannual variability** of rangeland quality and productivity can make livestock management highly uncertain. Successful and well-managed grazing requires flexible grazing contracts that allow for a variety of production conditions in any given year, and adaptive frameworks to guide managers to make the best grazing management decisions for the conditions present at any given time. **Rigid grazing agreements** exacerbate these management challenges, particularly those that base agreement renewals on performance criteria and/or compliance constraints, such as contracts that dictate the minimum or maximum amount of vegetation that can or must be removed, the exact number of animals allowed on a parcel, or rigid on/off dates that do not allow for bioclimatic variability. For example, 2023 was a heavy rainfall year and many grazers could not enter allotments until after May due to saturated soils and the potential for damage, but grazing agreements would not allow animals into allotments after May. This resulted in displaced animals with limited options for feed, overgrown areas that could not be grazed, and organizations on all sides failing to meet their ecological, social, and economic goals, in addition to unmitigated fire risk and public safety concerns due to high fuel loads. Limited grazing contract terms of 1–5 years are also a major impediment to grazing. Grazers may be unable or unwilling to invest time and money into proper management and maintenance of a parcel that they may not be allowed access to over the longer term (e.g., 10+ years). While the state-mandated limitations on contract duration of five years is unlikely to change in the near future, the efforts of the SLGLLM are intended to assist

⁴² <https://www.humboldt.edu/extended-education/cred>

⁴³ <https://rangelandtrust.org/events/succession-planning-workshop-2024/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.californiafarmlink.org/courses/the-regenerator>

⁴⁵ <https://farmland.org/land-transfer-navigators/california/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.californiafarmlink.org/toolshed/farm-succession-guidebook>

grazing operators and land managers in navigating the process of finding and applying for grazing permits, developing grazing licenses, and producing complementary and adaptive grazing management plans to better ensure successful environmental outcomes for the permittee and landowners.

- A variety of fuel management activities are commonly used throughout California, including mechanical and manual treatments, prescribed fire, and herbicide application. While livestock grazing is increasingly at the forefront of vegetation management discussions, it still lags in use across the state for a variety of reasons, including **organizational or community resistance to grazing for fuels reduction**. For example, CAL FIRE published its **Fuels Reduction Guidance** in 2021 ([CAL FIRE 2021](#)) which included most of these vegetation management activities except for information on prescribed grazing. The RMAC offered to produce an informational pamphlet addendum and a more in-depth white paper addressing prescribed herbivory as a fuels management tool for use alone or in combination with other tools. While CAL FIRE received the draft copy of the pamphlet addendum and considered including it in the current or future versions of their Fuels Reduction Guidance, ultimately it was decided that the information would not be included. The RMAC has received information that this topic may be reopened for consideration but has not received any guidance regarding potential next steps since summer 2023. In summer of 2024, RMAC staff received a request from CAL FIRE Communications Department to provide information on prescribed grazing for a section in the Fuels Reduction Guide. The RMAC provided the pamphlet it previously produced, requested additional information about the effort, and helped in reviewing the content, but has not received responses since. The RMAC did not receive any updates from CAL FIRE in 2025 on this effort.
- **Current state budget constraints and an ongoing lack of program funding** for the RMAC greatly limits its ability to develop, implement, and sustain long-term, effective programs to protect and sustain rangeland resources in California. The RMAC does not have an operating budget and relies on volunteers and partnering organizations to implement any activities. Additionally, one Board staffer is allocated 15% time to the RMAC, and staff support was further reduced in the latter half of 2025 to approximately 5% time (2 hours/week). While a student intern was hired to provide up to 20 hours per week in spring 2025, the lack of an operating budget strongly constrains the work of the RMAC. Public and agency need and interest remain high for the expanded workshops and educational offerings of the RMAC in future years, and requests for RMAC input and support to the public and other agencies are frequent; however, very limited staff resources and the ability of volunteer members to devote extensive time to the RMAC restricts its reach, influence, and ability to meet state mandates and directives.
- **Unaffordable or unavailable fire insurance** in high-risk WUI areas of California due to insurer-initiated non-renewals in California may mean landowners go uninsured or relocate to states where fire insurance is more attainable. This is an ongoing issue that has prompted much discussion and failed attempts by the legislature to develop a plan to keep insurance companies in California, and to develop affordable solutions for California residents and businesses. The matter will be raised again in the legislature in 2024. In a related vein, **gaps in prescribed fire insurance** have been bolstered by the allocation of a \$20 million [Prescribed Fire Liability Claims Fund Pilot](#)⁴⁷ which will

⁴⁷ <https://wildfiretaskforce.org/prescribed-fire-liability-claims-fund-pilot/>

cover losses in the rare instance that a prescribed or cultural burn escapes control, providing up to \$2 million in coverage for prescribed fire projects led by a qualified burn boss or cultural practitioner. The establishment of the recent [State Certified Prescribed-Fire Burn Boss](#)⁴⁸ (CARx) program provides an avenue for the training and certification of private individuals to become Burn Bosses, and limits their liability on prescribed fire projects, which may increase the pace and scale at which prescribed fire may be used as a tool for fuels management across the state. The RMAC welcomed Anthony Stornetta to talk to its stakeholders about the CARx Program and will continue to bring light to issues and potential resources around these matters.

- **Compliance with CEQA** may represent a considerable regulatory hurdle and financial investment for projects involving grazing, but often it is unclear when CEQA requirements must be met. The RMAC continues to invite experts from CAL FIRE and beyond to provide detailed information at meetings and workshops to assist managers in navigating this process. Obtaining the necessary expertise and funding the cost of conducting a compliant CEQA assessment for a grazing project is often prohibitive, and assistance programs for grazers and agencies could help fill this need. The [California Vegetation Treatment Program](#)⁴⁹ (CalVTP) is being updated per the Governor's March 1, 2025 Emergency Proclamation regarding wildfire, and stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide input into this program during a 45-day public comment period, which is anticipated to open in the late spring or early summer of 2026.
- Other challenges raised over the year during public RMAC meetings included issues related to the **Livestock Pass Program, prohibition of gas engines, and pre- and post-fire landscape management**. The RMAC will be working to secure speakers and develop activities to provide additional information to stakeholders, and will investigate avenues to fill these potential needs, including education and outreach, online resources, workshops, and recommendations for policy changes if warranted.

VI. CONCLUSION

The RMAC has substantially renewed efforts in the past several years to establish or re-invigorate collaborations with related agencies and organizations to better leverage the various resources, expertise, and efforts of these institutions to collectively support improved rangeland resource conditions across the State. The RMAC has marked substantial but annually variable growth in its annual educational program by capitalizing on its renewed collaborations with state agencies, internal state departments, and task forces, as well as local and state-wide range-related organizations. The RMAC expanded from three virtual-only webinars in 2022 to four webinars and five in-person field tours in 2023 but reduced the program down to one field tour in 2024 due to travel restrictions because of state budget constrictions. In 2025 the RMAC pivoted its attention to implementation and support for SB 675.

In the coming year, the RMAC will continue to support informational needs and efforts for the successful application of prescribed grazing and will continue ongoing efforts as it is able to support SB 675 implementation, despite continued reductions in available staff support and resources. The RMAC and

⁴⁸ <https://www.fire.ca.gov/osfm/what-we-do/state-fire-training/professional-certifications/state-certified-prescribed-fire-burn-boss>

⁴⁹ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/calvtp-homepage-and-storymap>

Board staff representatives will continue to liaise with advised agencies, departments, related partner organizations, and task forces, although in a reduced capacity and on a virtual basis due to state budget constraints and limited staff support. Where possible, the RMAC will partner with other organizations that can lead in-person workshops focused on contemporary range-related issues and best management practices. In addition, the RMAC will continue to coordinate with outside organizations to support the development of technical guidance, literature reviews/white papers, and pamphlets to support range resource management from the level of the individual to the state and federal agency. The RMAC will continue to support efforts by stakeholders to convert science-based results into reasonable, actionable state policies and guidance to improve rangeland conservation and management.

DRAFT

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