

# Grazing Shall Continue in Wilderness Areas IT'S THE LAW

*"The Wilderness Act and Congressional Grazing Guidelines clearly state that established grazing shall continue, with the reasonably necessary use of motorized vehicles to maintain it."*

*- Senator Tim Johnson  
(guest piece, Rapid City Journal, 1/16/2010)*



**MYTH:** Wilderness prohibits livestock grazing.

**FACT:** The Wilderness Act of 1964 states that "the grazing of livestock...shall be permitted to continue."<sup>1</sup> This is *law*, not an agency regulation that can change at any time. Of all forms of Forest Service land management, wilderness designation provides ranchers the strongest assurance that they can continue to use the land for grazing and that the land will remain undeveloped.

**MYTH:** Wilderness seriously restricts livestock grazing and makes ranching more difficult.

**FACT:** The reasonable regulations referred to in the Wilderness Act are the Congressional Grazing Guidelines of 1980, and these carry the force of law. They ensure the Forest Service will provide necessary flexibility for ranchers and not be unduly restrictive. The Guidelines state grazing shall not be curtailed simply because an area is designated wilderness, nor can the agency use wilderness as a reason to phase out grazing.<sup>2</sup>

**MYTH:** Motorized use is not allowed for grazing purposes.

**FACT:** While the Wilderness Act does not allow motorized or mechanized use for recreation purposes, ranchers' occasional use of motorized equipment in wilderness *is allowed* for maintenance or other activities. Some examples are maintaining and repairing stock ponds, repairing fence, dropping large quantities of salt, rescuing sick or endangered animals in emergency situations, and emergency feeding.<sup>3</sup>

1. 16 U.S.C. 1131-1136

2. Forest Service Manual, Chapter 2323.22, Exhibit 1 Congressional Grazing Guidelines, Item #1.

3. Forest Service Manual, Chapter 2323.22, Exhibit 1 Congressional Grazing Guidelines, Items #2 and #5.