

Draft Management Plan for
Bakers Peak Home Owners Association

Fall 2018

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Outcomes of the Intended Grazing Plan:

- 1) Much reduced conflicts among owners relative to livestock grazing
- 2) Improved rangeland and forest vegetation
- 3) Enhanced Wildlife Habitat
- 4) Improve water relations to the point where addition spring water and stream flow is manifested
- 5) Reduce wildfire risk
- 6) Meet the criteria of agricultural land use for Moffat County

The approaches to achieve the above outcomes are to begin with a pilot grazing program employing herded sheep as a grazing tool.

This will be done with a defined rotational use of livestock. Since herded sheep do not require fencing the mountain would be roughly divided into quarters: North East, South East, South West, and North West. These areas would be targets for seasonal use and rotation of grazing use so that the herder can define areas of use and duration of grazing use. The Grazing on date would be not sooner than May 1 and the off date would be the mid-week before July 4th. The on date should be flexible by year. The warmer, drier years would be earlier but be matched with the amount of feed available on the mountain. The average date is likely to be about May 15- 20.

The rotation would begin in odd years in the Southwest corner of the property and proceed to the east, then around the west side finishing in the Northwest corner. In even years the rotation would reverse beginning in the Northeast corner and proceeding to the west again finishing in the northwest corner. This is the wettest area and will be accessible latest. Once in every three years the end location will be in the northeast corner. **(Note: The off location may be an area with the best road access, if the sheep need to be trucked out. This would be a temporary area, used not more than two (2) days, with portable corrals and chute to facilitate shipping.)**

Class of livestock: It is most likely, that dry ewes or yearling ewes without lambs would be the best choice because ewes with lambs may not be able to use the mountain during this period.

Facilities: Most livestock leases include the infrastructure to meet the needs of the livestock. In this case, watering facilities may be needed to allow effective use on the mountain. This probably would include providing portable troughs suitable for sheep. Where there is water available to be pumped to troughs that should be made available

without charge to the livestock owner/ lessee. If no water is available, the lessee should plan to truck water. Corrals – See above.

Grazing administration: The range management consultant and the grazing chair will be responsible to administer grazing use and location and assure compliance with degree of use and appropriate location of the sheep. Sheep typically bed on high ground, so the Home Owners Association should expect to see a camp and herder with dogs and horses in such locations across the mountain associated with the management of the sheep. The bed grounds should be used no more than three (3) days before they are moved to a new location. Guarding dogs are a regular part of sheep management to reduce predation. It should be expected that the sheep will be accompanied by guarding dogs. However, the lessee should assure that adequate prevention is taken to preclude impacts of guarding dogs on wildlife and any domestic dogs that are present. (Careful coordination must be done with the lessee and the home owners to avoid conflict.)

Stocking Rate: There are approximately 4500 acres in the association area of which perhaps 1/3 will not be used by livestock. The remainder of about 3000 acres should be stocked at about 10 acres per animal unit month (AUM). The AUM equivalent for sheep is five sheep per AUM. That means the suggested beginning stocking rate would be 1500 ewes for one month. It might be expected that the lessee may choose to stock fewer sheep but it should be flexible. In no circumstances, should there be lessee livestock left on the mountain after mid-week before July 4th.

Lease rate: The lease fee should be negotiable, depending on the degree of commitment by each party to providing infrastructure, fencing, water and other items. The average fee in the region is between \$12 and \$20 per AUM.

Monitoring: It will be the responsibility of the range management consultant working with the lessee and the livestock grazing chair to monitor the grazing process, degree of use and outcomes of livestock grazing. A written and oral report will be produced each year to the Baker's Peak Home Owners Association Board of Directors (BOD) and may be offered to others at the discretion of the BOD. (Monitoring protocol will be negotiated with the BOD)