

Grazing Committee Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2023 6:00 pm at the MOC

Call to Order and Roll Call:

The Meeting began with Marty Pachelli, as Chair, calling it to order. There were 10 total attendees - Marty Pachelli, Tom Roelofs, Tim Storey, Tim Nash, Carolyn Dillow Phillips, Don and Christa Perkinson, Carol Smith, Jack Wiseman, and Bill Nielsen.

Assessment and Discussion concerning 2022 and 2023 regarding Cattle grazing:

Marty reminded the group about the reason we did not have the cattle on the ranch in 2022 and our abiding by the professional assessment of Sammie Molinaro, District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the USDA, which was done in December 2021. His report suggested we “rest” the ranch from grazing for up to 3 years during the growing season, due to it being overgrazed for the past several years prior.

The Committee met this evening to assess whether, after one year of rest, we should rest the ranch longer.

Conversation focused around the observations of increased wildlife on the ranch this summer, fall and winter, and the recovery of the forage. While we did have some rains which helped the grasses to have good seed heads, and hopefully will germinate well, it was felt another year of resting from cattle grazing as the report indicates, would be in the best interest.

The Common Area Committee plans to have more weed killer and be able to be more aggressive with that aspect in 2023, specifically targeting Gallinas Conservatory area for better grazing type materials and less noxious weeds which have become prolific on the ranch where it was overgrazed.

Not having in 2023 grazing was voted unanimously to be the advice from the group to the POA Board.

While the group realizes proper fire mitigation work involving forest thinning, brush mulching/mowing, field and meadow mowing, and weed control are key components in maintaining the health and aesthetics of our forested properties, the committee recognizes cattle can also be a component used to reduce fine fuel overgrowth.

Therefore, unless we have a dry spring and summer, we will likely recommend to the POA Board to have a cattle lease again in 2024.

Contract:

It was suggested we have a contract written for the future grazing ranchers. Marty and several others offered suggestions concerning what should be included. Several of those items include

- a) increasing the price to be \$15 per AUM (average rate now is \$15-20 and we previously charged only \$10 per AUM)
- b) Having some payment each month;
- c) Using the money obtained from grazing to create more water sources or other needs;
- d) Have 40-60 AUM as a limit for a 4 month period (May1-August 31 was suggested).
- e) Have a monetary fine for cattle here longer than contract states

Next Meeting: There will tentatively be a meeting of the Committee late summer or early fall to assess the recovery of our ranch grazing areas. Once this meeting is set, it will be announced on the website.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.