Cooperating to Enhance and Retain Grasslands

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Grasslands are declining
- Smaller cow herd, less pasture
- Lands leaving CRP
- Conversion to row crop
- Invasion by woody species and weeds

More diverse plants and structure

How can grazing improve prairies?

Grazing oak savannahs

Committing time and resources to livestock and wildlife
Patch burn grazing and plant diversity

Trying new seeding and management plans

Working with local beef producers to meet habitat goals

Balancing recreation and production goals
Grazing and wildlife

• Many recreational farms are under managed

Grazing can be an important part

• Both livestock producers and landowners would need to adapt

Livestock owners

- Benefit from accessing more forage at reasonable cost
- Will not graze for full utilization
- Animals are a tool to manage the land, need to plan how much grazing
- Can help home pastures recover
Landowners

- Get a local producer to watch things and help manage
- Use cattle to help get the disturbance and plant diversity
- Build relationship with reputable producer and communicate
- May be some added income

CRP and Grazing

- Managed Grazing on CRP
  - Split Option
    - Graze early April 1 – May 14
    - Graze late on same land August 2 – September 30
    - 25% payment reduction
    - Only 1/3 of the acres each year or all of the acres every 3 years

Early Spring Graze Down the Old Grass

High impact, short duration
Grazing for plant diversity
Forage quality concerns – may not work for all classes of cattle
Balancing nesting season and livestock grazing
Fence and water
What is a fair grazing fee?

Grazing partnerships
• Work with neighbors to use cattle on ungrazed sites
  – Targeted grazing to provide disturbance and structure
  – Fill gaps in year-round forage supply
• Continue to graze home pastures
  – More rest
  – More ground cover

Great results after rest period