

HEARING TO REVIEW THE STATE OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

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CONTENTS

	Page
Conaway, Hon. K. Michael, a Representative in Congress from Texas, opening statement	1
Prepared statement	2
Lujan Grisham, Hon. Michelle, a Representative in Congress from New Mexico, submitted letter on behalf of David Sanchez, Vice President, Northern New Mexico Stockman's Association	84
Peterson, Hon. Collin C., a Representative in Congress from Minnesota, opening statement	3
WITNESS	
Vilsack, Hon. Thomas "Tom" J., Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.	4
Prepared statement	6
Submitted questions	63

HEARING TO REVIEW THE STATE OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 1300 of the Longworth House Office Building, Hon. K. Michael Conaway [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Conaway, Neugebauer, Goodlatte, Lucas, King, Thompson, Gibbs, Austin Scott of Georgia, Crawford, DesJarlais, Gibson, Hartzler, Benishek, LaMalfa, Davis, Yoho, Walorski, Allen, Bost, Rouzer, Abraham, Emmer, Moolenaar, Newhouse, Peterson, David Scott of Georgia, Costa, Walz, McGovern, DelBene, Lujan Grisham, Kuster, Nolan, Maloney, Kirkpatrick, Aguilar, Plaskett, Adams, Graham, and Ashford.

Staff present: Bart Fischer, Haley Graves, Jackie Barber, Jessica Carter, John Goldberg, Leah Christensen, Margaret Wetherald, Matt Schertz, Scott Graves, Ted Monoson, Anne Simmons, Keith Jones, Lisa Shelton, Liz Friedlander, Mike Stranz, and Nicole Scott.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

The CHAIRMAN. I now call the hearing to order. I have asked Ralph Lee Abraham to open us with a prayer. Ralph?

Mr. ABRAHAM. Our Father, we thank You for Your presence today on this beautiful day. As always, we ask for knowledge and understanding, but more importantly, we ask for wisdom, so we can take that knowledge and apply it to our country. To our servicemen and servicewomen in harm's way today, please give them comfort and security always. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Thank you, Ralph, I appreciate that. The hearing will come to order. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture to review the state of the rural economy, will come to order. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for appearing before the Committee today. We know you are really busy. We appreciate you coming here to visit with us today. You have, and we all enjoy, a good working relationship with each other, including with our previous Chairman, Mr. Lucas, and I look forward to continuing that tradition.

Saturday marked the 1 year anniversary of the signing of the Agricultural Act of 2014. As you know, economic conditions for many producers have changed dramatically since then, with commodity prices plunging up to 50 percent. Drought, and other natural disas-

ters, have resulted in disaster declarations in 32 states across the country last year. The net effect is an estimated 43 percent decline in net farm income over the past 2 years.

A good many producers are struggling to demonstrate to lenders that they can cash flow their operations in order to secure credit, and to farm for another year. Adding to the anxiety of producers is the implementation of the farm bill, where hard decisions, with very significant consequences, will have to be made in the coming weeks.

While the agricultural economy has been turned on its head, Mr. Secretary, you and your team have been hard at work implementing the 2014 Farm Bill, and I want to publicly thank you for the work your team has done thus far. I also want to thank, here at this hearing, the RMA Administrator, Brandon Willis in particular, for your dogged determination in getting the actual production history adjustment, now called the yield exclusion, implemented in time for spring planted crops. This was a significant lift, and the efforts did not go unnoticed, so thank you very much. While there have been a few bumps along the way, and certain challenges remain, you and your team deserve to be commended for your work in this effort.

While I thank you for your hard work in implementing the farm bill, including several improvements made to crop insurance, I must admit that I was disappointed to see the Administration's 2016 budget proposal, which slashes \$16 billion from crop insurance, a reduction of over 17 percent. With commodity markets plummeting, and producers struggling to find financing, now is precisely the wrong time to weaken crop insurance.

I would also note that, despite the economic turbulence in rural America, the commodity title of the farm bill is still slated to save taxpayers money relative to the old direct payment system, and the cost of Federal crop insurance is also expected to decline. Moreover, overall farm bill savings anticipated during the farm bill debate remain intact under the January baseline.

We are at the beginning of a new Congress, and a new year, and just like farmers don't know what the year will bring in terms of weather and markets, we too cannot predict the twists and turns of the political process. But what we do know is that hard work always finds its rewards. To that end, my colleagues and I look forward to rolling up our sleeves and getting to work.

Mr. Secretary, again, thank you for being with us today. I look forward to your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Conaway follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM TEXAS

Thank you Mr. Secretary for appearing before the Committee today. You are a very busy man (we might have contributed to that) so we appreciate you taking the time to be here with us today. You have long enjoyed a good working relationship with this Committee, including with our previous Chairman, Mr. Lucas, and I look forward to continuing that tradition, going forward.

Saturday marked the 1 year anniversary of the signing of the Agricultural Act of 2014. As you know, economic conditions for many producers have changed dramatically since then, with commodity markets plunging by up to 50 percent. Drought and other natural disasters also resulted in disaster declarations in 33

states across the country last year. The net effect was an estimated 43 percent decline in net farm income over the past 2 years.

A good many producers are struggling to demonstrate to lenders that they can cash flow in order to secure credit and farm for another year. Adding to the anxiety of producers is the implementation of the farm bill where hard decisions with very significant consequences will have to be made in the coming weeks.

While the agricultural economy has been turned on its head, Mr. Secretary, you and your team have been hard at work implementing the 2014 Farm Bill, and I want to publicly thank you for the work your team has done thus far. I also want to thank you—and RMA Administrator Brandon Willis in particular—for your dogged determination in getting the APH Adjustment—now called the Yield Exclusion—implemented in time for spring-planted crops. That was a significant lift, and it did not go unnoticed.

While there have been a few bumps along the way—and to be certain, challenges remain—you and your team deserve to be commended for your work.

While I thank you for your hard work implementing the farm bill—including several improvements made to crop insurance—I must admit that I was disappointed to see the Administration's FY 2016 budget proposal that slashes \$16 billion from crop insurance—a reduction of over 17%. With commodity markets plummeting and producers struggling to find financing, now is precisely the wrong time to weaken crop insurance.

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We are at the beginning of a new Congress and a new year. And just like farmers don't know what the year will bring in terms of weather and markets, we too can't predict the twists and turns of the political process. But what we do know is that hard work always finds its reward. To that end, my colleagues and I look forward to rolling up our sleeves and getting to work.

Mr. Secretary, again thank you for being with us today. I look forward to your testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. And now an opening statement from the Ranking Member, Mr. Peterson.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM MINNESOTA**

Mr. PETERSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and thank the Secretary for joining us today. Welcome back to the Committee, Mr. Secretary. Today we are looking at the rural economy, which, over the past few years, has done pretty well. I think that is partly why it was so difficult to get a farm bill passed, frankly.

And it is good that we were able to get it done, because the farm bill provides a safety net to farmers during difficult times. Although I have been to some of these meetings that they have been putting on in our state on the provisions of the farm bill, I am concerned about some of the things that I have heard. And this is no reflection on the Department. They have done a great job of implementing it. These are problems that we caused with this base acre situation, which was not something that Frank Lucas and I were for.

I am concerned about some of the things that I am hearing. And I am a little bit worried that we might run into a time constraint of getting this thing done by March 31, because you have a lot of farmers out there maneuvering around. So we will just have to see how it happens. At least we have the farm bill in place, and we still have crop insurance in place, so we will see how things work out.

Even with the budget savings we provided, there are still people out there talking about re-opening the farm bill, and saving money in crop insurance, or SNAP, or other areas of the farm bill. This is, in my opinion, a very bad idea. We had a hard enough time getting this bill done. We do not need to get back into that quagmire again, and so I hope the Committee stays together in opposition to any cuts to farm bill programs, or any opening of the farm bill. We have done our work, and we were the one committee that stepped up to the plate and actually reduced the budget.

With regard to the implementation, as I said, I have been generally pleased. We didn't make this easy, and some of these programs, as I have indicated, are more complicated than I would have liked, but it seems like things are going along, and hopefully people will meet the deadlines of updating their bases and yields by the end of this month, and making the decisions on which program to choose by the end of next month.

So, again, I thank the Chairman for holding today's hearing, and look forward to hearing from the Secretary, and the discussion that ensues.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the Ranking Member. The chair will request that other Members submit their opening statements for the record so the witness may begin his testimony, and to ensure there is ample time for questions.

With that, I would like to welcome our witness to the table, the Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, 30th Secretary, I believe, of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. Secretary Vilsack, please begin when you are ready, sir.

**STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS "TOM" J. VILSACK, SECRETARY,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Secretary VILSACK. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and to Representative Peterson, and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the invitation that was extended by the Chairman to address you today. Let me spend just a couple of minutes, if I might, giving more detail on the implementation of the farm bill so the Committee is fully aware of the steps that have been taken over the last year.

We have conducted over 4,600 events and interactions with producers to explain some of the complicated provisions of the farm bill. We are pleased with the activities of our very dedicated people at USDA. Over 546,000 payments have been made under the disaster assistance programs established by Congress in the farm bill, resulting in close to \$4.8 billion being provided, primarily to livestock producers who suffered through some very difficult times as a result of drought and other issues.

We are excited about the opportunity to continue to promote credit to farmers. The microloan program limit has been increased, as Congress directed, to \$50,000, and we are taking a look at how we might be able to help beginning farmers access new credit opportunities that were created by the farm bill. Supplemental crop insurance, the STAX program has been established. Over \$500 million has been provided in the Cotton Assistance Transition Program. The organic price election is in place. Changes have been

made to the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) to expand opportunities for specialty crop producers.

Over 23,000 producers did, in fact, sign up to participate in 2015 in the Dairy Margin Protection Program. Approximately 55 percent of that number decided to buy up coverage, and it may very well be at the end of this year that those who purchased buy up coverage may be happy that they did.

Mention has been made of the safety net, and indeed we are in the process of implementing the Agricultural Risk Coverage Program (ARC) and the Price Loss Coverage Program (PLC). Over ½ million farms have already re-allocated their base acres, and over 208,000 farms, which represents roughly nine percent of eligible farms, have already made the election of ARC or PLC. Obviously, this is an extremely important election.

Our hope is that farmers who have made up their mind, who have looked at the numbers and made the determination of what is best for each individual farm will get to make that decision quickly, so that we are not faced with a situation where everyone makes that decision at the last minute. We obviously want to be able to process all of this work in a timely way, so to the extent that people can be encouraged to do so early, that would be beneficial.

The Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research has been set up. Several meetings have been held: \$200 million has been directed to an account, and we anticipate and expect that private foundation will begin making decisions about research projects sometime in 2015.

We are pleased with the response to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program: 115 projects were funded, with \$372 million. We anticipate another round of this Regional Conservation Partnership Program competition at the end of the year. Roughly \$200 million will be made available at that time.

Easement programs have been consolidated. In the forestry title the stewardship contracting has been extended. We worked with governors across the country in 35 states to identify millions of acres of forested land that provide an opportunity for us to focus our attention, and used a streamlined NEPA process to encourage more treatment, and more resilience in restoration of our forests.

We are working on amendments to the section 9003 energy program to expand that opportunity to include the bioeconomy. Local and regional food systems have benefited from the Farmers' Market Promotion Program and the Local Foods Promotion Program established in the farm bill. And we are now in the process of reviewing over 40 applications we received from states to take advantage of the SNAP employment and training pilot, and we are very pleased with the interest that that program has generated.

Mr. Chairman, I remain very bullish on the economy, the agricultural economy, and the rural economy. I think we are focused on an opportunity of not only expanding at a record level of exports, a record expansion of local and regional food system market opportunities, the development of new ecosystem markets, and additional investment in conservation, and the expansion of the bioeconomy, where we are seeing manufacturing returning to the rural economy. We still have work to do, no question.

Obviously, commodity prices are down a bit, but, as I said yesterday to our team, it is sort of like major league baseball players who begin spring training, you hit .370 one year, you hit .320 the next year. Maybe you are down a little bit, but you still had a pretty decent year. We have the best farmers in the world, the most productive farmers in the world, providing the best product in the world. I am confident that that will continue.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Vilsack follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS "TOM" J. VILSACK, SECRETARY, U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, I am pleased to provide an update on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) progress in implementing the Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) and the state of rural America. First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for its hard work in crafting this critical piece of legislation. The farm bill provides the necessary tools to allow the proud men and women of rural America to feed hundreds of millions around the world and resources to support economic development and job creation in rural America.

The new farm bill, with 12 titles and more than 450 provisions, is a large piece of legislation and implementing it has required a coordinated effort across all areas of USDA. We made implementation a top priority at the Department. Immediately after enactment, USDA established a 2014 Farm Bill implementation team composed of key sub-cabinet officials and experts from every mission area of the Department to put new programs in place and make mandated reforms to existing programs. I am proud of the work USDA employees have undertaken to implement the farm bill. Through their hard work, this effort has been called "the most successful farm bill implementation" to date.

As we mark the 1 year anniversary of the farm bill being signed into law, I am pleased to say that we have made major progress on every title of the law and achieved significant results for those impacted by the law. I have no doubt that these results will only continue as we begin year two.

Title I: Commodities

Farmers, ranchers and those working in supporting industries maintain an agriculture sector that has seen strong growth over the past 5 years. Agriculture accounts for about \$775.8 billion in economic activity, supports one out of every eleven jobs in the economy, and helps to maintain vibrant, thriving rural communities. U.S. agriculture is expanding into new markets around the world, spurring innovation, and creating jobs and opportunity on and off the farm.

The future of rural America depends on the continued leadership of our farmers and ranchers, and we must make sure they have the tools they need to continue to grow, and a strong safety net to support them during tough times.

At the direction of the President, USDA made the disaster programs our number one priority and expedited the implementation of these programs. The new farm bill reauthorized disaster assistance programs (including the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, the Livestock Indemnity Program, the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program, and the Tree Assistance Program) that had not been operational since 2011.

These programs provide much-needed relief to struggling farmers and ranchers impacted by natural disasters. I'm proud to say that within 60 days of enactment, USDA began accepting applications for disaster assistance programs restored in the 2014 Farm Bill. This was truly a significant accomplishment, as it took a year to implement disaster relief programs after the last farm bill was passed in 2008.

USDA has received over 567,000 applications for these programs and more than \$4.7 billion in disaster program payments have been issued to producers to assist in their financial recovery. While these disaster payments will not replace all of the losses farmers and ranchers faced, they provided some relief to ensure that extreme weather won't cause families to lose their farms.

In September, USDA ushered in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades by unveiling the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. Producers will have through the end of March 2015 to select which program works best for their operations.

To help farmers choose between ARC and PLC, USDA helped create online tools that allow farmers to enter information about their operation that is used to provide

projections about what each program will mean for their operation under possible future scenarios. USDA provided \$3 million to the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri and the Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC) at Texas A&M (co-leads for the National Association of Agricultural and Food Policy), along with the University of Illinois (lead for the National Coalition for Producer Education) to develop the tools.

USDA's Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency also worked together to offer certified yield data that producers can use to better calculate how the new safety net programs can offer the best protection against market swings. This is the first time that producers will update yields since 1986.

More than 23,000 of the nation's dairy operations—over $\frac{1}{2}$ of all dairy farms in America—have enrolled in the new Margin Protection Program. During the 3 months of the enrollment period, USDA conducted a robust education and outreach effort to the nation's dairy producers. The Department held over 500 public meetings, sent out nearly 60,000 direct mailings, and conducted more than 400 demonstrations of the Web-based tool designed to help applicants to calculate their specific coverage needs.

Title II: Conservation

USDA's conservation efforts have enrolled a record number of acres in programs that have saved millions of tons of soil, improved water quality, preserved habitat for wildlife and protected sensitive ecological areas. To accomplish these goals, USDA has partnered with a record number of farmers, ranchers and landowners on conservation projects since 2009. In addition to protecting cropland and critical habitats, conservation can help to boost local economies. For example, a 2013 study commissioned by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation found that conservation activities supported more than 600,000 jobs.

USDA launched the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in May 2014. This new farm bill program is an entirely new approach to conservation efforts. RCPP is a competitive program where local partners, in partnership with Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) design conservation projects that are specific to their region. It has three funding pools: 35 percent of total program funding directed to designated critical conservation areas, including the Great Lakes Region, Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Mississippi River Basin, Longleaf Pine Range, Columbia River Basin, California Bay Delta, Prairie Grasslands, and the Colorado River Basin; 40 percent directed to regional or multi-state projects through a national competitive process; and 25 percent directed to state-level projects through a competitive process established by NRCS State leaders.

Nearly 600 pre-proposals were submitted for RCPP, and the top pre-proposals were invited to submit a full proposal. This resulted in 210 full proposals requesting \$1.4 billion—four times the available funding for the first round (\$370 million). In January, USDA awarded funding to 115 high-impact, locally-led projects across all 50 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. USDA provided more than \$370 million that will leverage an estimated \$400 million in partner contributions. The total investment of nearly \$800 million will improve the nation's water quality, support wildlife habitat and enhance the environment.

These partnerships empower communities to set priorities and lead the way on conservation efforts important for their region.

RCPP builds on the results achieved by USDA's traditional conservation programs, which have achieved significant results over the past 6 years. USDA has enrolled more than 79 million acres of agricultural working lands in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to help producers implement conservation practices. In addition, more than 67 million acres, an area about the size of the State of Colorado, have been enrolled into the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to incentivize the most productive, beneficial conservation practices.

At the end of 2014, USDA published interim final rules for CSP and EQIP. The EQIP interim final rule includes efforts to simplify the existing regulation regarding conservation practice scheduling, payment limitations and other administrative actions.

The 2014 Farm Bill extended authority to enroll acreage in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) through September 30, 2018 and requires enrollment to be no more than 24 million acres beginning October 1, 2016. Enrollment under continuous CRP and 1 year extensions were offered last year and FSA expects to publish a rule late this spring to fully restart the program and implement the remaining farm bill changes. With the cap on acreage, the Department is focused on ways to increase per acre conservation, wildlife and environmental benefits through a variety of targeted approaches.

Title III: Trade

USDA is supporting America's farmers and ranchers as they build on record agricultural exports. In FY 2014, exports of U.S. food and agricultural products reached a record \$152.5 billion and supported nearly one million American jobs. The potential for agricultural exports is considerable and USDA is already taking action to help producers secure and expand market access for American agricultural products. But it is also critically important that we have Trade Promotion Authority as we seek approval of trade agreements that support and create U.S. jobs while helping American agriculture to compete even more successfully. Trade Promotion Authority will help ensure that America's farmers, ranchers, and food processors receive the greatest benefit from these negotiations, and builds on efforts that have helped achieve record agricultural exports over the past 6 years.

Thanks to resources in the new farm bill, USDA is also able to continue funding for trade promotion and market expansion for U.S. agricultural products overseas. An independent study released in 2010 found that trade promotion programs like Market Access Program (MAP), and Foreign Market Development (FMD) provide \$35 in economic benefits for every dollar spent by government and industry on market development. USDA moved quickly to implement trade promotion programs reauthorized under the 2014 Farm Bill. Through the MAP, USDA has provided \$173.2 million in FY 2015 to 62 nonprofit organizations and cooperatives to help build commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural products and commodities. Participants contribute on average a 214 percent match for generic marketing and promotion activities and a dollar-for-dollar match for promotion of branded products. Through the FMD Program, USDA has provided \$26.7 million in FY 2015 to 22 trade organizations to help create, expand, and maintain long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products.

In addition to the MAP and FMD programs, eligible organizations can apply for funding through the Quality Samples Program (QSP), Emerging Markets Program (EMP), and the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) Program, which includes the programmatic change under the 2014 Farm Bill to allow participants to address technical barriers to trade regardless of whether they are related to a sanitary or phytosanitary barrier.

Title IV: Nutrition

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provisions of the 2014 Farm Bill preserve the fundamental structure of the program, invest in helping SNAP participants move to self-sufficiency, strengthen program integrity efforts, continue to modernize the program through technology, and emphasize the importance of good nutrition through enhanced retailer standards and grants for incentives that help SNAP participants stretch their dollars further to buy fruits and vegetables.

SNAP helps millions of hardworking families put healthy food on the table as they get back on their feet. More than $\frac{1}{2}$ of SNAP recipients are children and the elderly, and less than 7% of households receive cash assistance. Among SNAP households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult, more than $\frac{1}{2}$ work—and more than 80 percent work in the year before or after receiving SNAP. With a stronger economy SNAP participation is beginning to gradually decline. Comparing Fiscal Year 2014 with Fiscal Year 2013, average participation decreased 2.3 percent or by approximately 1.1 million people. While the economic trends are encouraging, SNAP remains critical to millions of Americans.

The farm bill provided \$200 million for SNAP employment and training pilots to help participants find jobs and increase their earnings. The funds will be used to develop and test innovative approaches that connect SNAP recipients with the preparation, training, work supports, and opportunities they need to enter and remain in the workforce, to move off of SNAP, and to build stronger futures for their families. The pilots are intended to help recipients build their skills and match them with good paying jobs. The goal of the pilots will be to increase the number of work registrants who obtain employment, increase their earned income, and move toward self-sufficiency. USDA put out a request for proposals for pilot projects in August 2014 and plans to award funding for up to ten projects. We were pleased with the strong response to this RFP with proposals from over 30 states. USDA plans to work with all states to maximize the core E&T program, even if they are not recipients of the farm bill funding.

The new farm bill builds on USDA's ongoing efforts to root out any waste, fraud, and abuse from the program, protect the taxpayer investment in SNAP and make sure that the program is there for those who truly need it. In FY 2013, SNAP achieved a record level of payment accuracy of 96.8 percent. Payment errors in FY 2013 were almost 64 percent lower than they were in FY 2000, among the lowest

in the Federal Government. USDA efforts have also resulted in a significant reduction in trafficking—USDA’s *The Extent of Trafficking in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: 2009–2011* study shows that the exchange of SNAP benefits for cash—which was estimated to be as high as four percent 15 years ago, down to just 1.3 percent according to the most recent data.

The farm bill authorized a Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) pilot to allow participating schools in at least five states to serve canned, frozen, and dried forms of fruits and vegetables through the program. Four states—Alaska, Delaware, Kansas, and Maine—applied to participate. The pilots are operating this school year. Each pilot has an evaluation component and results of the evaluations are expected in fall 2016.

USDA also issued guidance and provided technical assistance to state agencies regarding the requirement that state and local agencies begin phasing out the participation of women, infants and children in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, resulting in a smooth transition to a seniors-only program.

Title V: Credit

The 2012 Census of Agriculture data indicate there is tremendous growth potential for small and mid-sized producers, but many need additional support in order to become competitive. Accordingly, USDA has expanded efforts to connect small- and mid-sized farmers and ranchers with tools and resources to help them access capital, get information about land management and conservation practices, manage risk, find local markets, and other educational resources that will help them grow their operations and expand into new markets. The new farm bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

USDA has acted quickly to implement changes to Farm Loan Programs, including, among other things, eliminating loan term limits for guaranteed operating loans; modifying the definition of beginning farmers; allowing debt forgiveness on youth loans; and increasing the guaranteed amount on conservation loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers. USDA also implemented changes in the interest rate on Direct Farm Ownership loans that are made in conjunction with other lenders and increased the maximum loan amount for the down payment loan program from \$225,000 to \$300,000. On March 25, 2014, FSA issued an agency directive implementing non-discretionary microloan provisions. USDA also raised the borrowing limit for its microloan program from \$35,000 to \$50,000. Since the program began in January 2013, USDA has issued more than 10,000 microloans, 70 percent of which went to beginning farmers.

Title VI: Rural Development

USDA has made strategic investments in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. Since 2009, USDA has helped more than 900,000 families buy, repair or refinance a home; extended new or improved broadband service for 1.4 million Americans; improved or constructed more than 158,000 miles of electric line; invested in approximately 7,000 water and wastewater projects for nearly 14.5 million Americans; invested in more than 6,600 critical community facilities projects; and provided grants and loans to assist nearly 89,000 small and mid-sized businesses in rural America, creating or saving an estimated 420,000 jobs.

The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorized the tools that enable USDA to continue offering municipalities, businesses, and families the financing tools that can prompt economic growth and prosperity in rural communities. USDA is making good use of these tools in communities across the country. Because the farm bill included funding to address the backlog of water/wastewater improvement projects across the country, USDA acted quickly and on April 22, 2014, awarded \$150 million in grants, plus an additional \$237 million in loans and grants through the Water and Environmental Program, to 116 projects in 40 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to improve water and wastewater services and ensure that rural communities have access to reliable, clean and safe water. These awards go predominantly to very small, remote, and poor places.

USDA has also acted quickly to implement key new farm bill provisions that invest in rural businesses and critical infrastructure in order to strengthen rural communities and build on its rural development initiatives. In FY15 USDA will reopen the farm bill broadband program with new rules that align with the changes the Congress included in the 2014 Farm Bill and make approximately \$50 million in loans available to help ensure every corner of this country has reliable, high-speed

Internet access. Similarly, in FY15 USDA will accept applications for the Value-Added Producer Grant program, which helps agricultural producers generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase income. Since 2009, USDA has awarded 863 Value-Added Producer Grants totaling \$108 million.

The new farm bill streamlines the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program and Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEGr) program to create a new Rural Business Development Grant Program with all the same authorities as the previous two programs. In FY 2014, USDA ran RBOG and RBEGr as separate programs and in FY 2015, will issue a final rule establishing the new Rural Business Development Grant Program. In September 2014, USDA announced nearly \$3 million in grants to 28 organizations in 12 states through the two programs.

Even as we make these investments, rural America continues to face a unique set of challenges when it comes to combating poverty. While poverty is not limited to rural America, nearly 85 percent of persistent poverty counties are located in rural areas. In fact, 1/3 of rural counties have child poverty rates of over 30 percent, at a time when research increasingly demonstrates the negative effect of poverty on child development and educational attainment. Children are our future and we must do more to create better futures for our children and families and those striving to reach the middle class—this is something I look forward to working on with all of you.

Title VII: Research, Extension, and Related Matters

Scientific breakthroughs have helped our farmers, ranchers and growers increase production on the same amounts of land, using fewer inputs. Studies have shown that every dollar invested in agricultural research returns up to \$20 to the economy.

In the past 6 years alone, research by USDA scientists has led to over 750 patent applications covering a wide range of topics and discoveries. USDA also continues to aggressively partner with private companies, universities and others to transfer technology to the marketplace to benefit consumers and stakeholders. In Fiscal Year 2014 alone USDA received 83 patents, filed 119 patent applications, and disclosed 117 new inventions. Helping drive these innovations, USDA also had 267 active Cooperative Research and Development Agreements with outside investigators, which includes universities and other organizations, including 102 with small businesses.

In July, USDA created the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR) and appointed individuals to a 15-member board of directors. The foundation's board of directors was chosen to represent the diverse sectors of agriculture. Seven of these board members were selected by the unanimous vote of the board's five *ex officio* members from lists of candidates provided by industry, while eight representatives were unanimously elected from a list of candidates provided by the National Academy of Sciences. Congress mandated that the *ex officio* members choose the initial 15 board members from among the lists provided by these two groups. The board members have the option of adding additional members, if they so choose.

FFAR will leverage public and private resources to increase the scientific and technological research, innovation, and partnerships critical to boosting America's agricultural economy. In a time of Federal budgetary restraints, the new foundation is another innovative way to continue and expand investment in agricultural research. It will complement existing Federal and federally-funded agricultural science research endeavors and accelerate solutions to the challenges American agriculture.

Other research provisions of the 2014 Farm Bill focus on investments at colleges and universities throughout the United States, with an emphasis on Land-Grant institutions. The farm bill provides new or expanded investments in research critical for the success of beginning farmers and ranchers, specialty crop producers, and organic producers.

As authorized by the farm bill, USDA has provided significant sums for a variety of research, extension, and education efforts. For example, on Feb. 2, 2015, USDA announced more than \$18 million in grants to educate, mentor, and enhance the potential of the next generation of farmers to sustain careers in agriculture through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. This program aims to support those who have farmed or ranched less than 10 years with workshops, educational teams, training, and technical assistance throughout the United States. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture awards grants to organizations that implement programs to train beginning farmers and ranchers.

On October 2, 2014, USDA announced the award of \$51.8 million in grants through its Specialty Crop Research Initiative to support the specialty crop sector by developing and disseminating science-based tools to address the needs of specific crops. These research and extension project grants fund a wide variety of efforts,

including research to improve crop characteristics, identifying and addressing threats from pests and diseases, improving production and profitability, developing new production innovations and technologies, and developing methods to respond to food safety hazards.

Through the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI), USDA awarded on September 29, 2014, more than \$19 million in grants to help producers and processors who have already adopted organic standards grow and market high-quality organic agricultural products. OREI's priority concerns include biological, physical and social sciences. OREI-funded projects assist farmers and ranchers with whole farm planning by delivering practical research-based information and will improve the ability of growers to develop the Organic System Plan required for certification.

Title VIII: Forestry

Under the new farm bill, the Forest Service is provided greater tools to maintain the nation's forests and grasslands, including permanent stewardship contracting and Good Neighbor authorities, and provisions to aid efficient planning and implementation of landscape scale projects that reduce insect, disease and fire risks. These tools give the agency increased ability to work collaboratively with states, Tribes and a wide range of citizens and stakeholders to accomplish critical forest and watershed restoration work and conserve the nation's forests and grasslands.

Last May, USDA designated 94 National Forest areas in 35 states to address insect and disease threats that weaken forests and increase the risk of forest fire.

Title IX: Energy

New opportunities in advanced biobased products and renewable energy expand the potential to strengthen rural manufacturing, particularly of products made from renewable materials from our farms and forests. Rural America desperately needs those jobs, and every American benefits from our expanded competitiveness in this globally emerging market.

USDA is helping to create markets for advanced biofuels from non-food, non-feed sources—from the farm field to the end-user. To encourage feedstock production for renewable energy, the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) is incentivizing more than 850 growers and landowners farming nearly 48,000 acres to establish and produce dedicated, nonfood advanced biofuel feedstocks for energy conversion facilities. In July, we selected 36 energy facilities in 14 states to accept biomass deliveries supported by BCAP.

USDA has also invested in the work needed to create advanced biofuels refineries. Since 2009, USDA has invested in efforts to create nine new advanced refineries nationwide. We have also created six regional research centers across America to develop advanced biobased energy technology that's appropriate to every region. With the nearly \$900 million in mandatory money provided in the Energy Title of the 2014 Farm Bill, we can continue these efforts to expand the biobased economy and support economic development opportunities in rural America.

The new farm bill makes significant investments in the bioeconomy and renewable energy programs. The legislation preserves the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), which provides critical investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency across rural America, helping to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Over the past few years we have collected good feedback from folks around the country about how we could improve the REAP program—and Congress also provided some direction in the 2014 Farm Bill. In December, USDA published a new REAP rule, which takes these changes into account and also strives to make the program more accessible to rural business owners and producers of all kinds. The rule goes into effect this week and USDA will be announcing the availability of approximately \$280 million in grants and loan guarantees for the new REAP program in the near future.

Title X: Horticulture

A surge in consumer demand for locally-produced food is creating jobs and opportunity throughout rural America, for farms as well as small businesses that store, process, market and distribute food locally and regionally. USDA data indicate that local food sales were at least \$6.1 billion in 2012, with industry sources estimating the market's value at more than \$9 billion. Perhaps more important for USDA's mission, our research shows that money spent on local food continues to circulate locally, creating demand for other businesses and services in rural communities. As such, this strategy is a critical piece of USDA's work to support rural economies more generally.

With the release of the Census of Agriculture results last year, USDA learned that over 160,000 farmers and ranchers nationwide are selling their products locally. They're tapping in to growing consumer demand for locally-grown food; con-

sumers want to support their local economy when they purchase food, whether that's at a farmers market, a grocery store, or their workplace cafeteria.

Direct-to-consumer sales like those that take place at a farmers market help consumers connect with the source of their food and learn more about agriculture. Today, we have more than 8,200 farmers markets registered with the AMS National Farmers Market Directory. But this economic sector is more than that. As it matures, it is opening opportunities for farms of all sizes, especially mid-sized farms, to supply larger-volume buyers like local retailers. USDA has invested in local food infrastructure—from cold storage facilities, to processing plants, to food hubs that aggregate and distribute local products—and has helped facilitate new market access for these producers. Recently, we launched a new set of Local Food Directories to help consumers find Community Supported Agriculture enterprises, food hubs and on-farm stores.

The 2014 Farm Bill continues to build on programs established in the 2008 Farm Bill to promote local and regional food systems and support specialty crop and organic agriculture. Sales of specialty crops total nearly \$65 billion per year, making them a critical part of the U.S. economy. In October, USDA announced \$66 million for 838 Specialty Crop Block Grants to State Departments of Agriculture for projects that help support specialty crop growers, including locally grown fruits and vegetables, through research and programs to increase demand. As directed by the farm bill, the block grants were allocated to U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and territories based on a formula that took into consideration both specialty crop acreage and production value. Nearly all states saw an increase in funds.

In September, USDA awarded over \$27 million in competitive grant funds for projects through the new Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program that support local and regional food systems. As directed by the 2014 Farm Bill, priority will be given to projects that benefit under-served communities, including those that are located in areas of concentrated poverty with limited access to fresh locally or regionally grown foods.

In order to help prevent the introduction or spread of plant pests and diseases that threaten America's agriculture economy and the environment, in April 2014 USDA allocated \$48.1 million to 383 projects in 49 states, Guam and Puerto Rico through the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program. The projects are helping states and other partners continue providing and strengthening protections against agricultural threats and could also allow the reallocation of resources to other critical programs. In addition, in June, USDA allocated \$5 million to support 19 projects in 14 states through the National Clean Plant Network cooperative agreements program.

Title XI: Crop Insurance

The crop insurance program has become an increasingly important component of the farm safety net, and crop insurance protections for all farmers, particularly beginning farmers and ranchers, have been strengthened under the new farm bill. For example, changes made by the 2014 Farm Bill have allowed us to provide better crop insurance coverage for almost 1,300 beginning farmers and ranchers already, only ten percent into the reporting cycle. We've also expanded coverage for 26 organic crops so that these producers can buy the level of insurance that meets their production needs.

USDA is now able to offer Whole-Farm Revenue Protection plan of insurance to provide safety net protection for specialty, fresh fruit and vegetable growers and organic producers, as well as reward farm diversification through premium discounts on crop insurance coverage. The Whole-Farm Revenue Protection plan of insurance was made available in 45 states for 2015. USDA has started the work to expand Whole-Farm Revenue Protection to the rest of the country. These areas are targeted for expansion for the 2016 crop year.

USDA staff worked hard to implement several 2014 Farm Bill programs ahead of schedule, such as ARC, PLC, the Price Loss Coverage, Supplemental Coverage Option and Stacked Income Protection Plan. Because of that, USDA was able to leverage data from ARC and PLC to extract the information needed to implement Actual Production History (APH) Yield Exclusion earlier than expected.

In October, USDA announced that the APH Yield Exclusion will be available for farmers of select crops starting in spring 2015. APH allows eligible producers who have been hit with severe weather to receive a higher approved yield on their insurance policies through the Federal Crop Insurance Program. The APH Yield Exclusion is being implemented beginning with the 2015 crop year for corn, soybeans, spring wheat, cotton, grain sorghum, rice, barley, canola, sunflowers, peanuts, and popcorn.

APH Yield Exclusion will be available for additional crops beginning with the 2016 crop year, including winter wheat. USDA is currently reviewing crops that will be eligible for APH Yield Exclusion for the 2016 crop year. The choice of crops and counties selected for 2016 and subsequent crop years will be based on data availability criteria designed to ensure actuarial soundness and program integrity. USDA expects to announce the new crops throughout the year with most of the announcements to be made in the fall of 2015.

Title XII: Miscellaneous

In November, USDA announced Karis T. Gutter, a Marine Corps Reserve veteran and current USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services as the first USDA Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison, a position created by the 2014 Farm Bill. The MVA Liaison will coordinate USDA leadership across the Department to provide information, resources and support for active duty military and veterans interested in agriculture. The MVA Liaison will also have authority to facilitate formal relationships between USDA and other government agencies and nonprofit organizations to strengthen USDA support for veterans.

In December, USDA awarded grants to 62 community-based and nonprofit organizations and educational institutions to conduct training, outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged (including Tribal) and veteran farmers and ranchers through the 2501 Program. USDA has assisted more than 6,100 beginning, small, veteran and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers through the program since October 2014.

USDA also implemented the receipt for service requirement in the 2014 Farm Bill and has issued 101,462 receipts for service to USDA customers between December 1, 2014 and January 28, 2015.

Conclusion

Again, thank you for this opportunity to update you on USDA's progress to implement the 2014 Farm Bill. Farmers, ranchers, rural communities and other USDA stakeholders have waited several years for this legislation, and USDA has made implementation of the bill a high priority.

I am pleased to say that in just over a year, important progress has been made on every title, including updates to risk management tools, modifications to farm loan programs, announcements regarding available funds for agricultural research and much more. Moving forward, USDA staff and I will continue to engage with Members of Congress and stakeholders during the implementation process and as we continue to carry out critical mission of serving America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary. Again, thank you for being here today. The chair would remind Members that they will be recognized for questions in order of seniority, for the Members who were here at the start of the hearing. After that, Members will be recognized in order of arrival. I appreciate our Members' understanding. I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Secretary, again, thanks. Crop insurance is clearly the backbone of our safety net, and for several budgets in a row the Administration has proposed additional cuts, on top of the money that was cut in 2008, on top of the money that was cut as a result of the SRA. You are on record with *Politico* saying that you think the company returns are way too healthy. I am a CPA, and return on investment, and whether or not somebody is making money, that is a mathematical computation, and there seems to be some differences of opinion.

RMA thinks that the companies are making a lot—in the six percent range, well south of the 14 percent cap that is put into the farm bill. We have had crop reinsurance folks come to us saying they are exiting the business, they are making very difficult decisions whether or not they can continue to allocate capital to this important initiative. It is the public-private team that has driven the success of crop insurance.

Could you give us your thoughts on this? Could you share with us how RMA computes the numbers, and can we get a better sense of why the Administration believes that crop insurance folks are making too much money?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, first of all, Mr. Chairman, I certainly acknowledge the importance of crop insurance as a critical component to the safety net. Over \$55 billion has been paid out since I have been Secretary in crop insurance payouts, so obviously it is extraordinarily important.

It is a balance between producers, insurance companies, and the taxpayer. And the reality is that both the Government Accountability Office (GAO), our own Inspector General, have raised questions and concerns about various aspects of the program.

What we have proposed is a reform in the Prevented Planting Program. Essentially, it creates a current disincentive for planting the second crop. We think that should be dealt with and addressed. In terms of the harvest price option loss coverage, that is a question of whether or not we, or you, or us, believe that the partnership should be more of a 50/50 partnership, instead of a 65/35 partnership, in terms of the level of subsidy.

The bottom line is you can look at any 1 year, and you can make a conclusion about whether or not this is a profitable or not profitable enterprise. The reality is, if you look at a long enough period of time, and it is important because folks can point to a year where maybe it was a loss, 1 or 2 years out of the last 15 or 16. We can also point to a place where the return on premiums was 34 percent, 32 percent, so you have to look at the long trend.

What we have found is that this enterprise can be actuarially sound at 12 percent on balance. Over history, the return has been somewhere between 14 and 17 percent. So it is just a matter of the long term. This is a healthy industry, and we are seeing an expansion of the number of insurance policies and crops being insured.

The CHAIRMAN. You are clearly saying that, but you are not saying it expands the number of folks. If this is such a profitable business, there would be folks trying to get in it, and what we are being told is that there are folks getting out. It seems like there is a sense at OMB that they don't want a public-private partnership. They want crop insurance to be solely public, and that makes no sense to many of us.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I don't think that is quite accurate, Mr. Chairman. I think that OMB's position, and our position, is that it is a balance. It is a proper balance, and a partnership. When subsidies are as high as 65, 70, 80 percent, the question is, is that the right level?

The CHAIRMAN. And those have been coming down.

Secretary VILSACK. They—

The CHAIRMAN. In those early years, I mean these guys are in the arena for today forward. I get the historical look back, but the trend is in the wrong direction. Much of that happened before the 2008 Farm Bill, as well as the standard reinsurance agreement that was done in 2011. I am hard pressed to see how those previous years can be used as an excuse for further cuts.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, again, we have seen years where the profits have been pretty good—

The CHAIRMAN. All right, which year was that, post-2011?

Secretary VILSACK. I will get that to you. I think it is——

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Secretary VILSACK.—2012, 2011–2012.

The CHAIRMAN. Right: 2012 was a disaster drought year. The other thing I would like to get, if we could, is an agreement that whatever RMA is using to drive the conversation, that that would be shared with the rest of us so we could see the numbers. This isn't rocket science. This is premiums in, expenses out. What expenses get included in the number ought to be a part of the conversation, so rather than talk about what it ought to be we can talk about what it is, and then talk about what it ought to be?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I am happy to provide you, but 2011 was 18 percent.

The CHAIRMAN. Was what?

Secretary VILSACK. It was 18 percent.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, and 2011 was prior to the SRA renegotiation, which stripped another \$8 billion out of the system, so I have you on that. I understand the 2008. This is an important industry, all of us believe that. Your statement is full of compliments to the crop insurance system. We need to keep it in business, and my personal opinion is we need to keep it as a public-private partnership, so——

Secretary VILSACK. I don't disagree with that, Mr. Chairman. I think you are right about that.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you. My time has expired. Mr. Peterson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. PETERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary, you and I have had many conversations about the future of CRP. We are in agreement that this has been a good program, and it has a number of different aspects which I support, improving water quality, protecting highly erodible land. But one of the components is also wildlife, and we made that $\frac{1}{3}$ of the components.

So as we go forward, because we had to lower the cap, and we have all these different continuous programs within the system and so forth, I am concerned that we are going to lose kind of the way it was spread across the landscape when it started. And it started not as a conservation program, but as a way to get land out of production, so it is a little different situation.

But one of the reasons, in my opinion, it has been so successful with wildlife is the fact that it kind of was all over the place, and we had big tracts that spread out predators, and allowed these birds to survive. What are your thoughts about doing a general sign-up? I know there are things that are being looked at, in terms of programs within the system, but we have 1.9 million acres coming out this year, and we have room to do a million acre general sign-up. And, according to your folks you are considering it, but you haven't made decisions yet? I would like to know where you are at with that.

Secretary VILSACK. We are taking a look at this, and the decision-making process is probably going to lead us to an early spring decision-making process, in terms of what we do.

I am confident we will have, at some point, a general sign-up. I think the general sign-up will focus, as it should, on highly erodible

areas, and making sure that we use our precious resources in the most effective way. We obviously will continue some of the continuous programs that have been pretty popular, the Safe Program, for example, the programs that refocused on upland bird populations, that, obviously, will continue.

And we are also looking at a way in which we could use Conservation Reserve Program creatively to complement the regional conservation partnership efforts to the extent that folks are not able to qualify for the competitive resources in that program. There is a possibility of using CRP in a very creative way to enhance larger watershed and larger scale conservation efforts. I don't think you are going to be disappointed, Congressman, in terms of our commitment to CRP.

Mr. PETERSON. And are you looking at using some of the grassland reserve to maybe take the place of some of this land that is going out? Have you looked at that?

Secretary VILSACK. That is a possibility. It is also a possibility of taking a look at the new easement programs in an effort to try to encourage utilization of these. We have created greater flexibility in those programs to be able to adjust to the individual state requirements and needs.

Mr. PETERSON. And I don't know what the answer to this is, but I understand we want to protect highly erodible land, but if you focus the whole program on that, what you are going to do, at least in my part of the world, is concentrate this in a very narrow area, and exclude a whole bunch of other people. I am not sure that is where we want to go long term.

There should be some way to move this CRP into some of these areas where you have traditionally had CRP that are going to be excluded because they don't meet the highly erodible land test. In terms of wildlife, I am concerned about that. I don't know what the answer is, necessarily, but that is what I am worried about.

And you have people concentrating on these highly erodible areas, and you have the wildlife groups involved, and what you have happening is you have a lot of folks that are going out there and buying farms for wildlife, and using these programs to fund it? Which I guess is okay, but we want to have the ability for ordinary farmers to be involved in this too, farmers that are going to put this land into CRP, and open it up for hunting. If this goes to only people that are buying things for wildlife, they are not going to let anybody on the land except their friends. So I am just concerned about making this too restrictive.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I certainly hear you, and I would also say that you have raised an issue that is an even larger issue to converse about, which is this issue of land tenure, and who is going to own the land, and who is going to operate the land in the future. In the next 10 to 15 years we are facing a significant shift in transfer of land ownership, based on the age of existing landowners. And it is something that I have just instructed our beginning farmer and rancher advisory group to take a very concerted look at this issue. It is a serious one.

Mr. PETERSON. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, sir. Mr. Neugebauer, for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here this morning. Now, first of all, I want to also thank you for your efforts to go ahead and resolve the production history issue. That was very important to people in my district. I also want to associate myself with the remarks of the Chairman.

As you know, Mr. Secretary, when we did the farm bill, we moved a lot of the safety net to, basically, the risk management area, and so a lot of the safety net for farmers across the country today relies more on crop insurance than it did on the commodity programs, and so protecting them is extremely important.

An issue that has come up, and maybe you can reflect on it a little bit, over the past few weeks we have been hearing from the cotton producers and cotton marketing cooperatives that there is a large amount of uncertainty surrounding the payment status on any gains realized in the cotton loan program as it relates to payment limits. And while this issue affects individual producers, there is some concern that it will impact the marketing practices for cotton, and the follow of cotton, through the supply chain and the textile mills.

The issue is, with the payment limits in place, some of the producers don't know exactly what their gains are. In certain circumstances, they might have to pay those monies back. Is the Department working on a real-time basis to kind of keep producers up to date on what the status is?

Secretary VILSACK. We are aware of this, and we have been working with the Cotton Council to try to figure this out. Part of the challenge is the statute is written in such a way that we don't have a great deal of flexibility, in terms of the timing of all of this, but we are working to try to figure out a way in which producers will not be harmed and not be hurt by this. And we are working directly with the Council to try to figure this out.

I don't know that we have found the answer yet, but we are certainly aware of the problem, and we are diligently working to try to figure out how to do it in the confines of the fairly strict direction from the statute. We can't create the flexibility that you might be able to create by waiting for another year to institute the program. We don't think we have that flexibility, so we have to figure something out.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I appreciate that. And if you could keep the Committee advised on that process, I would appreciate it. The other thing that I wanted to visit with you, when you came to sit with some of the Members of the House Agriculture Committee last week, and talked about what is going on in trade. As you know, trade is extremely important to agriculture. With the recent defeat at the WTO with cotton with the Brazil case, we were forced to kind of basically re-draft our farm program, particularly for cotton producers.

One of the concerns that a lot of the people in cotton have right now is, particularly with China, are they playing by the rules? Their policy is not very transparent, and they have a huge influence on the world price of cotton. Right now the price is down. Can you kind of expand on what the Department is doing to help make sure that our friends in China are playing by the rules?

Secretary VILSACK. That is a big challenge, Congressman. I would say that we are heartened by the announcement today from the U.S. Trade Representative's office beginning the process within the WTO to raise questions about the export subsidies that China is engaged in, and agriculture is one of the industries that was identified as being part of that effort. And certainly it is fairly clear that they have not necessarily been playing by the rules in a number of areas.

We have also urged them, in terms of their reserves, their cotton reserves, to have much greater transparency in terms of what they have, and where they have it, and what they are going to do with it, because that obviously does indeed impact and create instability in the market, which we don't need. This is an issue that is raised in every meeting that we have with the Chinese, along with several other issues that we have with them.

In the last meeting I have had, we suggested that there needs to be a strategic dialogue with China, a much more in-depth dialogue and conversation about a variety of issues, from biotech, to regulatory processes, to subsidies, to the way in which they control markets. And they have agreed to the strategic dialogue. We will be submitting to them a proposed agenda, and the hope would be that that dialogue will begin this spring.

They are our number one customer, and so we obviously have to be sensitive to that. But, at the same time, we want a science-based and rules-based system, because if everyone plays fair, we will do just fine in that system. If we are at a disadvantage, obviously that is a problem. We are calling them out, and we should.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Scott, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Secretary, the Federal Government has had a drastic, very dangerous decline in their Federal purchases of peanut butter. This is very devastating to our peanut producers and farmers, and all throughout our retail industry. This is going on while peanut butter is perhaps one of the most nutrient packed protein foods that you can eat. It helps fight our children's obesity, and it helps with our nutrition and food program.

Yet, just listen to this fact, Mr. Chairman: 20 years ago, in 1995, the Federal Government was purchasing 80 million pounds of peanut butter; 20 years later, last year in 2014, it is just below 13 million pounds. That is almost 150 percent loss. I mean, that is devastating to any industry, but can you imagine what that is to the peanut industry? And we have to find out a reason for that.

So what I want to ask you to do, Mr. Chairman, is to stop by the side of the road here for a moment and help the peanut industry. Help particularly in Georgia. Many of our states share this problem, but Georgia leads the nation. I want you to know that I am leading the fight to get an answer to this situation.

So what I want to ask you, if you would be kind enough, and your staff, to review this situation with the urgency that these farmers and producers are sensing. We are losing farms. Our children are not getting the nutritious food that they need. Our food

and nutrition program is losing. To go from 80 million pounds of purchasing down to less than 30 million, that is unacceptable. Mr. Secretary, I know you care about our children and our families; so, please, will you direct your staff to report back to this Committee some solutions that we can go to work on to turn this train around?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, I will direct my deputy, who is a Georgia native, to pay some attention to this issue and get back to you. It is a question I am not prepared to answer today, but you have raised it, and you deserve an answer.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you so much, and you couldn't have a better person leading the fight than a good citizen from Georgia.

Let me go back to COOL for a second, the Country-of-Origin Labeling. How do we fix this problem, Mr. Secretary, with the country-of-origin labeling? It is a grave concern to our beef, our poultry folks, who are very concerned. Can you give us an update on COOL, and how we will be able to fix this problem so it doesn't cause any more harm to the United States agriculture industry?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, Congressman, I would say three things. One, we are in the process of appealing the adverse decision in the WTO. That decision is likely to come out sometime this spring, and, obviously, that would potentially solve the problem. If we aren't successful in that appeal, we have looked at this from a regulatory perspective, and we have concluded that we cannot, at the agency and Department level, navigate the difficult path between what Congress has mandated to us, and what the WTO says is acceptable.

So Congress is either going to have to rescind the rule, or modify the rule, to create some kind of more generic label, a North American label, for example, that would enable enforcement and implementation without segregation of livestock. I would say that our Canadian friends, with all due respect, overstate the challenge and the issue that it is created for them, in terms of the damages they sustained. There is a recent report by the National Farmers' Union that suggests that they have not been damaged anywhere near as much as they claim.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. All right, Mr. Secretary, thank you. I have just a few seconds. Could you give us an update on the proposed rule that could very well allow South American beef entering into this country? And many of our farmers are concerned about that, because it could bring in foot and mouth disease.

Secretary VILSACK. If I can ask the chair for just about 30 seconds to respond to this, because it is a very important question. We have traveled around the country, and around the world, touting American agriculture, and suggesting that we need in our trading relationships a rules-based and science-based system, which means that we have to live by that system that we advocate. If we are asking the Chinese to play by a certain set of rules, we obviously have to play by those rules as well.

That involves, basically, a focus on risk assessment, and our folks at Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have done a very detailed risk assessment, and have concluded that certain regions of countries can indeed be allowed to export fresh and chilled beef to the United States without raising an undue risk rel-

ative to foot-and-mouth. In other regions, the risk assessment has not indicated safety. So the ability to export to the United States would be restricted to those areas where we have already done a very extensive risk assessment. There would obviously also be checks at the border when this beef comes in.

If we don't do this, then it is very difficult for me to go to China and say, "You need a rules-based and science-based system for GMOs," or to Europe and say, "Hormone beef ought to be allowed to be traded, because the science says it is okay, and the rules say it is okay." It is about consistency, and it starts with a very strong and significant risk assessment that we have done over the course of years.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Right. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Secretary, but the major point I want to make in conclusion is that we need to give our beef, and our pork, and our poultry folks here some kind of relief. Particularly our beef, because there is a reason why they are fearing that this South American beef could cause foot-and-mouth disease. And I just hope that before we let the chickens out of the barn here, so to speak, that we close the barn door.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Lucas for, 5 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary, for participating in a little anniversary, the first anniversary of the farm bill when you were in Oklahoma a couple weeks ago.

Secretary, I think we would all agree, and certainly you and I would agree, that using cover crops is a good conservation practice. In fact, I know the Administration has been doing a lot to encourage the use of cover crops. You can imagine my surprise when I hear from my producers that perhaps FSA may not be counting cover crops as eligible for ARC or PLC on generic base. Can you help us make sure that we don't punish producers who are trying to adopt sound conservation practices like planting cover crops?

Secretary VILSACK. I am used to referring to you as Mr. Chairman, so I may slip, Mr. Chairman, if I—

Mr. LUCAS. No, that title goes with you, no matter where you are—

Secretary VILSACK. It goes both sides—

Mr. LUCAS. Absolutely.

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, look, we are indeed a strong proponent of cover crops, and we have seen a 350 percent increase in the amount of cover crop activity in the last several years, which is a good thing. We recognize that cover crops are part of the stewardship ethic that farmers and ranchers have. The problem is that we are not certain that there is the kind of flexibility that we would need to have in terms of the definition under ARC and PLC to be able to cover this. It is an interpretation of the statute.

So the question is whether or not we can work together to see whether or not there is a change, or a modification, or if there is additional information you want to supply to us that would suggest that our interpretation of the statute is not correct.

Mr. LUCAS. I would just note, Mr. Secretary, the practice is a solid conservation practice. The Department has encouraged what-

ever we can do to work together to help make sure this continues forward would be in the best interest of the environment and the soil out there. That said, while you were in Oklahoma, some peanut producers expressed their concerns—and not just in Oklahoma, but a number of adjoining states—of their issues where they were contracted with a company for their peanut crop that is now going through bankruptcy. Can you assure us that you are doing everything in your power to protect those producers, and to ensure that they are able to stay in their marketing—which is a really important issue with them.

And I know this is sort of a unique circumstance, we have not gone through this process before, but can you shed a little light on that, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, indeed there were a number of producers that did business with this entity that has now filed bankruptcy. We are working with the lawyers of the new licensee, or the new owner of the facility, in an effort to try to navigate the tricky bankruptcy laws to ensure we do everything we possibly can to protect producers. I am hopeful that we can get something worked out, but I don't want to over-represent where we are in this process. We are trying to get to a place where producers can be protected, those contracts can be honored, and it doesn't cause significant financial harm to those producers. But it does depend a great deal on the new owner, or licensee.

Mr. LUCAS. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. And I would simply note to my colleagues on the Committee that farm bills are written not for the good times, but the bad times. And when we started this process, Mr. Chairman, some years ago, corn, wheat, things were in an amazingly different set of circumstances, and now we are in potentially some challenging times.

But that is what the farm bill is for, and that is the effort that we put into it, and how we implement all that is critically important to our constituents, our neighbors' ability to survive. I would just simply, once again, I thank the Secretary for his help through that long and daunting process, and the patience of everyone, from our present Chairman on down. And by the way, I have gotten to the point where I kind of like the phrase Chairman Conaway.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that very much, and the gentleman yields back. Mr. Costa for, 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member, for holding this timely hearing, and, Mr. Secretary, for your good efforts in implementing the farm bill on the first year anniversary. I have a number of questions. I want to go quickly. A number of them relate to California specifically.

You came out almost about a year ago this month with myself and the President and, firsthand, looked at the impacts of this devastating drought, that now is in its fourth year, that is having catastrophic impacts. I would like to get a sense from you as to what the USDA is doing for farmers in the San Joaquin Valley who are suffering because of a lack of a reliable water supply, 600,000 acres out of 6 million acres in California have been fallowed last year. Could you please quickly talk about any mitigation efforts?

Secretary VILSACK. Obviously additional livestock disaster assistance, \$109 million, additional EQIP resources have been provided, additional emergency community water resources have been provided. Emergency water grants totaling roughly \$40 to \$50 million, that are in the process of being distributed and provided to producers to look at irrigation systems. There is also additional research that is taking place, not just in California, but around the country, through the Conservation Innovation Grant, to see how we might be able to deal with the consequences of drought.

Mr. COSTA. Well, I would like to talk with you about this at greater length. Let me move on. This is more West Coast oriented. Has the Department conducted an economic analysis on the results of the labor dispute on West Coast ports?

The Administration obviously has a mediator that is involved right now. I don't know if the President has been made aware of the current strain on products that have been sold that are sitting at Long Beach, L.A. Harbor, Oakland, up the West Coast now for several months. It is really having the ripple effect, in terms of from the farm to the selling of these products. Well, the products have been sold, and they are sitting there.

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, I personally wrote a letter to the President several weeks ago, advising him of the concerns that we had about the situation at the port. I can you tell you that we know from prior history, where there have been labor issues at the port, that it is a serious issue to containerized supplies. Bulk grain supplies are moving, but the containerized supplies have been, as you have indicated, delayed. So we are looking at a very serious situation in—

Mr. COSTA. The implications for employees, retailers, processors, transportation sector, farmers, ranchers, consumers, are significant.

Secretary VILSACK. We are fully aware of this. We meet on a day to day basis encouraging the sides to get this resolved. It is my understanding that there are just a couple of remaining issues. They are serious issues, but the hope is that these folks can get the last two issues resolved so this thing can—

Mr. COSTA. Well, your support, and your efforts with the Secretary of Labor, would be very much appreciated to bring this to an end for all the right reasons.

The trade agreements, both TPA, T-TIP, have potential benefits to America's agriculture economy, and I am wondering if you have been doing an economic analysis that we could look at on a region by region basis, sector by sector benefits to American agricultures, and have that finalized before Fast Track is proposed, or comes to the Congress?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, we will get you an evaluation we have done by Congressional district.

Mr. COSTA. That would be terrific. A year ago, as a part of the negotiations with the farm bill, we had a segment in there as it related to allowing California dairy industry to participate in the Federal Milk Marketing Order. Can you assure me that we are moving ahead on schedule? Three of the major dairy industries have written a letter, and they would like to get moving, that you have done your due diligence, and we appreciate that?

Secretary VILSACK. If I am not mistaken, a petition has been filed, and the process—

Mr. COSTA. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—has started. That involves, obviously, a hearing, and then there is a referendum, but we are moving forward. We have had folks go out there on four occasions to talk about this issue.

Mr. COSTA. Yes, and they have done a good job. I want to thank you and the Department. Finally, this Argentine lemon import situation, will the Department be following up with APHIS in permitting access of Argentine lemons to the U.S. market?

Secretary VILSACK. It will, consistent with an appropriate pest risk analysis and assessment. It gets back to this issue of science-based and rules-based systems. Absolutely.

Mr. COSTA. Right. And I just want to add my thoughts on the COOL effort. This does need to be resolved sooner than later. You and I have had a different take on it, but whether or not a North American labeling is a solution I am not sure, but, for the benefit of good trade for our partners, and for America, we need to resolve it.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Gibbs, 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBBS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary, for being here. There is one big issue that the agriculture community is really concerned about, and you mentioned in your testimony the EPA and the Army Corps WOTUS rule, and almost every agricultural organization and agricultural entity is opposed to the proposed rule. The majority of the states are.

We had a hearing in another committee last week, with the EPA Director and Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, and one thing they talk about is significant nexus, meaning that waters that have biological or chemical relationship to navigable waters could be a significant nexus, which is kind of open-ended, case-by-case determination.

And we also learned that if, in furrows, grassed waterways, if they have significant nexus under that determination, then a farmer and an adjoining land owner would come into that dictate, that they would have to get a section 404 permit if they are doing any plowing activities, dredge or fill, or a section 402 permit from the EPA in regard to apply pesticide and herbicides if they are *waters of the United States*. And we heard from, I think it was the Deputy Attorney General of Oklahoma that said that that can cost over \$300,000.

So the impact to American agriculture can be quite severe in this area. What has USDA done to advocate for farmers on this? Did you make comments during the comment period that has been ongoing? What has USDA's role been to address the agricultural community's issues?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, we have indeed discussed this issue with the Administrator, and with EPA officials. The ephemeral issue is one that we have specifically commented on, the difficulty of establishing something with a bank and a bed, and an occasional water resource, and how that actually in the real world works. So we have educated—that is—we see our role as educating,

as providing input in terms of how this might impact. Obviously, it is not our decision to make. It is another sister agency, we have to respect that, but we have expressed some issues and some concerns about the *ephemeral* definition.

Mr. GIBBS. Well, if I was in your position, I would take a tough stance advocating, which I I assume you are. But with the aspect of saying that agriculture is so important, and that they ought to go back and work back with the states. They did not involve the states. They are saying they are involving the states now, but they didn't, because we have had a majority of the states actually testify that there was no interaction with them.

And the Clean Water Act was really set up to be a partnership with the Federal Government and the states, with the states implementing the Clean Water Act and enforcing it under the guidance and advisement of the Federal Government, and not just a complete power grab.

The other issue I wanted to mention, and Mr. Costa mentioned a little bit, a concern about the work slowdown on the West Coast ports, and especially when we are looking at the trade agreements, and the possibility, as this continues or even gets worse, of losing market share because our foreign customers are going to look for other options if they don't think we are a reliable customer.

You made the comment that you have and the Administration tried to work on this, but if it comes to a complete lockout or a strike, would the USDA advocate to the President to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, the issue with Taft-Hartley is an interesting one, because, as you know, it requires a Federal Judge being convinced to issue an injunction. Thirty years ago that was a relatively simple process. Recent port difficulties, and recent requests for Taft-Hartley, have indicated a much higher bar, from an evidentiary standpoint, to inject that.

Frankly, the preferred option, obviously, is for the parties to get this resolved. And it is my understanding that, as I said earlier, there are just a couple of issues. If there are only a couple of issues left, it—

Mr. GIBBS. Well, I think the couple of issues are pretty significant.

Secretary VILSACK. They are significant. I am not suggesting they are not. But, as you all have outlined, the impact of this is quite significant. And when you take a look at how this could ripple throughout not just agriculture, but a variety of other parts of our economy, at a time when we are seeing the economy begin to pick up, it seems to me that the parties ought to be doing everything they possibly can—

Mr. GIBBS. I guess I would just advocate that the Administration needs to use all the resources they can to make sure that the slowdown ends, and it doesn't get worse, because the ripple impact, even to my state, to Ohio, is significant.

Secretary VILSACK. I can tell you that we have reached out to both parties, encouraging them to get this done, and we have literally daily meetings on this.

Mr. GIBBS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Ms. DelBene, for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELBENE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being with us today, and I want to thank you and your staff for all the work you are doing to quickly implement the farm bill. And I would also like to extend an invitation for you to come out and visit Washington's First Congressional District and see some of the great work happening with our farmers and agriculture there. I sent you a more formal invitation, but I hope you will be able to find the time to come out. Plus, we are getting starting to get to the time of year where weather gets better, and it will be pretty beautiful out there.

I have very high hopes for the new SNAP employment and training programs that are out there, the pilots that are out there. We introduced a bill that was based on work we had done in Washington State, and that has kind of been the model of the program that we included in the farm bill, and I wanted to get your feedback. I think you said you had 43 responses so far, but I wanted your feedback on how the request for proposal process has been going, what types of proposals you have received, and are you on track to make a decision on those later this month?

Secretary VILSACK. There have been 35 states, over 40 applications. They are in the process of being reviewed. I believe that our decision-making will probably take place in the first part of March.

Ms. DELBENE. Okay.

Secretary VILSACK. The projects range everywhere from demand job opportunities—some of these folks are obviously very difficult, in terms of their circumstances, their barriers to employment, so there will be a concerted effort in some of these projects to remove those barriers, and to provide the help and assistance that folks need to get to work. Some are folks on potentially apprenticeships that could potentially lead to gainful employment. So there is a broad array of options.

You are correct, Washington is a model for the rest of the country, and our hope is that, through these ten projects, that we create a best practices model, if you will, or manual that other states can follow. We also hope that the conversation allows states that are currently receiving over \$300 million to utilize those resources fully and more efficiently. Many states do not take full advantage of the 50/50 money in employment training, which is unfortunate, and many states may not be using those resources as efficiently and as effectively as they can.

We have put a lot of time and effort into this, and I am personally involved.

Ms. DELBENE. Well, thank you. I look forward to hearing the results in March. On trade, in your testimony you highlighted the importance of trade to agriculture, definitely in our region, and making sure we open new markets. Ambassador Froman came out to my district and met with my farmers on the Trans-Pacific Partnership in particular, and it is very, very important to our dairy farmers that any access that U.S. grants under imports is balanced with commercially meaningful access in Canada and Japan.

And my farmers are very concerned at this point that there may be new access to the U.S. market without making sure that we

have made meaningful new access into Japan and Canada. And while we made great progress on the safety net in the farm bill, I hope you will encourage a positive deal for our dairy farmers, and I wondered if you have engaged with your Canadian counterparts at all on this issue, or have any other feedback for us on this issue.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, we have engaged with the Canadians, but they have been very reluctant to negotiate. Very reluctant to negotiate. And, in fact, they have acknowledged an unwillingness to put any real significant deal in the discussion. I am not quite sure whether it is their politics, or whether they are concerned about whether or not we can make a deal without the President having the trade promotion authority that every President has had since Franklin Roosevelt, but, whatever the reason, they have been far less willing to negotiate than the Japanese.

We have been making some progress in terms of our conversations with the Japanese. There is still work to be done, but the with the Canadians are another matter. My hope is, given the magnitude of this deal, and the importance of it to American agriculture, and to the American economy, that the Canadians take a different view and engage more meaningfully in negotiations.

Ms. DELBENE. Thank you.

Secretary VILSACK. I would say—let me, if I—

Ms. DELBENE. Go ahead.

Secretary VILSACK.—could just say, this is not about getting a deal, it is about getting a good deal. And if it is not a good deal, then there won't be a deal.

Ms. DELBENE. Thank you. This is a very important issue, so thank you for being engaged and involved there, and I will yield back the remainder of my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding back. Mr. Austin Scott, for 5 minutes.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Vilsack, thanks for being here today. And I want to just kind of, again, follow up on what Chairman Lucas said about when a producer is planting multiple crops, a cover crop, or a grazing crop. And I hope that you will continue to work with the Committee to give the farmer the flexibility that they need. I certainly don't pretend to speak for the Committee as a whole, but if you do need flexibility or additional language, I hope that you will let us know sooner rather than later so that we can work together to resolve that issue.

When we talk about the economy in rural Georgia, in my part of the state, it revolves on a couple of different commodities. One of them is cotton. And I have read the most recent World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. I have watched cotton prices lately, and I can tell you I am extremely concerned about what I see happening in the cotton market. And I am going to give you a couple of numbers, and then I am just going to ask, if you would, that someone from your Department could maybe look a little further into this and follow up with us. But the National Cotton Council is estimating 15 percent fewer acres. We, the USDA, in the most recent report revised export projections up, yet, on the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, our expected price is holding at 61¢, the 61¢, 65¢ range.

One of the things that we are seeing is that Pakistan's production would actually go up in our report. News reports from Pakistan actually estimate that they may miss their crop by as much as 3 million bales of cotton. So I would just ask, if we could, that we would have your specialist in cotton look at that, again, specifically with regard to Pakistan. I am extremely concerned about what appears to be a dysfunction in the market with price, and that is coming from some manipulation in some other countries, not Pakistan, but China more so, and a couple of others.

And I would just ask if you could get your people to check that Pakistan estimate again? Because we are saying it is that we are anticipating that it is going up, their reports are suggesting that it is going down, and it would be helpful to our producers if we just took a second look at that. Because I am extremely concerned that, if these prices stay where they are, that the number of acres planted will be significantly less than 15 percent.

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, you made the request, and we will follow up on it.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you for that. And one other thing that I would mention, in the President's budget, he has given no authority for guaranteed lending, but given \$2.2 billion for direct lending. And my question is since the USDA, in the past, has worked in this partnership with the guaranteed lending, and why have we seen the shift to 100 percent direct lending, instead of the guaranteed lending from the Administration?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, I want to make sure I know which loan program you are talking about. Are you talking about the Community Facility Program?

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Yes, sir.

Secretary VILSACK. Okay. First of all, we have had better luck with the direct program working with folks locally. We have seen a continued interest in this. It has to do with the subsidy rate. Guaranteed program, obviously, the subsidy rate is less and less of the impact on the budget. Part of the challenge that we face is that our discretionary budget, which this is part of—

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—is less than it was in Fiscal Year 2010: more than 50 percent of the budget is in four areas, WIC, it is in fire suppression, and forest maintenance. It is in food safety, and it is in rental assistance. And part of the challenge is that, when you are dealing with sequester, and dealing with cuts, and dealing with reductions, when 50 percent is going up, the other 50 percent, obviously, you have to take a look at it. We can continue to do as much work with the guaranteed as with the direct, but it doesn't cost as much to the budget.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. I would appreciate it if you would be willing to share the loss ratios in both of those programs. And it just seems to me that with the lending program, where we have the private sector participating, we actually get more dollars into the economy than if it is the direct lending.

Mr. Chairman, I will yield my time, and apologize, Secretary Vilsack. I am going to be stepping out to an Armed Services Committee meeting.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Ms. Plaskett, for 5 minutes?

Ms. PLASKETT. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and a pleasant good day to you, Mr. Secretary. I first also want to invite you to visit the U.S. Virgin Islands, which I hope you and your staff could make a visit to, I am sure you will find the weather to be much more pleasant now, if you make that trip earlier rather than later.

But the U.S. Virgin Islands, in all seriousness, at one time was considered the bread basket of the Caribbean. Particularly on the island of St. Croix, which was primarily agriculture at one time, and has since fallen off of the track, in terms of its agricultural—not only it—feeding itself, but also its exports.

I notice so many of the programs that are available in the Department of Agriculture, your MAP, your Farmers' Market Development Programs, particularly the Emerging Markets Program, which would be of great assistance to us in the U.S. Virgin Islands, we seem to have a bottleneck because so many of those offices come through Puerto Rico.

And I wanted you to speak on the availability of this funding to those areas that your agency has identified as being remote, small, and impoverished as well. We have, over the entire island, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the children in the U.S. Virgin Islands living in poverty. So I wanted to know if you could talk about the effectiveness of these programs on growing new markets, in terms of agriculture, and how the Virgin Islands could benefit from that.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, Congresswoman, the programs you mentioned are primarily export promotion programs—

Ms. PLASKETT. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—that work with commodity groups and organizations that are involved in exports. I think what I would suggest, in terms of rebuilding the economy, is that there may be an opportunity for us to focus on some of our value-added processing resources, some of our local and regional food promotion resources to create more product that could potentially be available for export and/or to furnish the needs of the island.

We are seeing a significant increase in local and regional food systems, and it is a multi-billion dollar opportunity, and we have a number of programs under our Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative that would potentially be useful. I would be happy to have our team at USDA reach out to your staff to give you a full briefing on both the export assistance programs, as well as the local and regional food promotion programs.

Ms. PLASKETT. Additionally, with respect to that, if you would also talk about the rural development? We are, in fact, as your statement talks about, very small, remote, and a poor place. We know that your water and environmental programs were available to 40 states, as well as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico received the benefit from those programs. We, in fact, have infrastructure, as well as housing and community facilities issues which are at an extreme rate.

In terms of our facilities, we haven't had a new school built in the U.S. Virgin Islands in over 30 years, so you can imagine the great need that the people of the territories have for some of the

availability that comes under the agency. And I was hoping you would talk about the awarding of that \$150 million grant that those other places, who had access to—in terms of our waterways—and some of the other things that those things could be used to strengthen rural communities.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, the \$150 million was an allocation from the farm bill, but we have a series of infrastructure projects under Rural Development. Electric, water, community facilities, and broadband, and all of those would potentially be available—

Ms. PLASKETT. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—for utilization in the Virgin Islands. In fact, we have been having conversations with folks down there about some of the high costs of electricity and power—

Ms. PLASKETT. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—and whether or not—either the Rural Energy for America Program, or our general electric program could provide help and assistance to create more reliance on renewables, and less reliance on high cost energy sources. So all of those programs, again, are available. It is just a matter of prioritizing and figuring out what is the most important thing you need, and having our teams work with your office to identify the program, and to make sure that the application is in an appropriate form.

Ms. PLASKETT. Well, my office wants to work very vigilantly with you on alleviating any bottlenecks, or any problems we may have in those applications. With our cost of electricity at potentially, in some instances, 49¢ per kilowatt, when, here on the mainland it is about 11¢ to 14¢, that is cataclysmic to families, as well as businesses there.

Secretary VILSACK. It may be helpful for one member of your staff to attend a function we are holding on March 23 down at the Department, where we are going to outline some of our programs to a group of folks who are interested in knowing more detail about them. So we will get an invitation out to your staff.

Ms. PLASKETT. Thank you very much. I yield the balance of my time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired. Mr. Crawford, 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, a couple of quick questions, but first I want to thank you on behalf of Arkansas rice farmers. We had a little bit of a snafu due to a price reporting issue that would have delayed payments, PLC and ARC payments, specifically to rice farmers, and you and your staff have been very diligent in helping us rectify that problem. So, on behalf of Arkansas rice farmers, thank you for that, I appreciate it.

I have an issue with the safety net sign-up deadline. I know you and your team have been working on the farm bill implementation, and I certainly appreciate that. What I am hearing at home from my farmers is that there is still an awful lot to learn about it, and they are working with the decision aides in evaluating their options. Do you suspect that there is going to be adequate FSA resources at local offices to handle what I would assume would be a rush of farmers here in the latter part of the sign-up window?

Secretary VILSACK. That is why we are encouraging folks who have made a decision, Congressman, to let us know now, as over

200,000 producers have. And, obviously, if they decide now, and a week or 2 from now they decide they wanted to change, they could do that. So we are encouraging folks as they make decisions to basically implement those decisions.

We are obviously going to do what we have to do to make sure that we meet the demand, but it would be lot easier for us if it was spread out over a period of time, than——

Mr. CRAWFORD. Sure.

Secretary VILSACK.—everybody waiting until the last minute.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Is there a protocol possibly in place for a situation that might arise, where the appointment slots are unavailable, due to just the volume? Is there a possible protocol to address that issue?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, we have in the past, in situations like this, created a process. At this point it really is an issue of folks going online, taking a look at the models, and making a decision. And it really is not quite as detailed as perhaps making an appointment to sign up for disaster assistance. It is a little bit different than that.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK. So I am not sure that we necessarily need a specific protocol. We have already done 4,600 meetings, so we are obviously getting out there. And hundreds of thousands of hits on the model, so this is about folks getting online, doing the calculation, coming to a conclusion, and just simply letting us know.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Okay. Last question here, and I know I am going to sound like a broken record, particularly to my colleagues here, and I am hoping this is the last time I will have to ask this question, but we had this hearing last year, and I asked this question at the same time last year, when would USDA issue a final rule implementing a catfish inspection program? And you told me then it will be ready to go by December of 2014, and we still haven't got that. December has come and gone, and I haven't seen the progress we need. This was authorized 7 years ago. Can you give me a date-certain when we can actually expect a final rule on catfish inspection?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I am very, very hopeful that you will see something in April of this year.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Okay. All right. I appreciate you being here, and look forward to working with you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Ms. Lujan Grisham, 5 minutes.

Ms. LUJAN GRISHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Secretary Vilsack. I get to be one of the Members that says thank you for coming to New Mexico, and meeting with me, and our farmers and ranchers, and thank you very much for increasing the staff of USDA, in New Mexico and in the region. I think that that is going to facilitate many of the programs and heighten the success of the rural economic development investments that you have made in New Mexico, and I appreciate all those.

I want to focus today, really, on the SNAP program in the state. As you know, New Mexico still ranks last. We are the worst for child hunger. We are third in the nation for adult hunger. We have one of the worst economies in the country, if not the worst. Our un-

employment is much higher than the national average. And, basically, in fact in most of rural New Mexico, there are no job opportunities, except for oil and gas, and actually that is beginning now to diminish in the state, so we are really suffering.

So, as a result, we have many able-bodied adults without dependents that are looking for work, but remain unemployed, because, quite frankly, there are just no jobs in the state. I am very concerned that the state did not seek a Federal waiver of the SNAP work rules, despite the economic situation in the state. And, in addition, the state has developed a 2015 employment and training program, which USDA has approved, that, as we all know, requires additional participants to sign up online for job searches, to appear in local benefit offices, and, in many cases, do community service.

And while I think that these are all productive requirements in circumstances where they are available, many New Mexicans cannot meet these requirements because they don't have access to technology, and they frequently lack access to child care and transportation. So instead of helping New Mexicans find jobs, or access job training opportunities, I am afraid that the unworkable employment and training (E&T) plan will, in fact, result in more needy families getting kicked off SNAP.

While the 2015 E&T plan was put on hold due to court action, I expect the states to resume the programs, in limitation, later this year. Can you talk to me a little bit about what kind of oversight you conduct when evaluating and approving state E&T programs, and maybe in light of the fact that New Mexico has such a terrible economic situation, and the hunger rates are so high, would that oversight be enhanced in some way?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, we are going to learn something from the pilots that we are trying to fund through the farm bill pilot program. I am not sure if New Mexico applied, if they are one of the 35 states that did. If they didn't, they should have, given the outline of the circumstances that you have addressed.

We are spending more time taking a look at this issue because of the fact that so little of the 50/50 money is actually spent by states, and the money that is spent, the \$90 million that is 100 percent Federal money, I have raised questions about whether or not it is as effectively spent as it should.

I can tell you that our teams have gone out and actually have visited Workforce Development Centers, they visited human resource departments, they have visited states throughout the country to identify who is doing well and who is not doing very well. And I am happy to have our team take a specific look at New Mexico, if they haven't already taken a look at that. So there has been heightened oversight, and we are very focused on trying to make sure that these dollars are used wisely and effectively.

Ms. LUJAN GRISHAM. Mr. Secretary, I would really welcome more attention to New Mexico. Given my opening remarks, I think that you have done an outstanding job investing in the state, and really taking a look. We don't want to see any of these pilots, or these initiatives, cause more hunger in the state, and I would really encourage you not just to look at the operations of the state, but really the impact on the beneficiaries.

And, in fact, New Mexico does have some of USDA money that would help with the reimbursements for participants to pay for transportation and child care costs in the E&T program, but the problem is they can't fund those costs, so getting a reimbursement when you are at or below the poverty line isn't helpful. And, also, the state only requested funding for about 900 people, but we have tens of thousands of individuals who were affected, and are on SNAP, and now required to do either the E&T or the work requirements.

So I am very concerned we are not seeing the kind of movement to move away from the really tragic hunger problems we have in New Mexico. So I appreciate that offer.

I would like to submit the following letter and two supporting reports that were sent to our office by the Northern New Mexico Stockmen's Association (NNMSA) on February 11, 2015. The letter details NNMSA's concerns regarding the Forest Service's management of grazing permits and Forest Service's inconsistent implementation of regulations toward minority ranchers.

[The documents referred to are located on p. 84.]

Ms. LUJAN GRISHAM. I know I am out of time, and anything else that we can do to support you to do that oversight, you can count on my office. Mr. Chairman, thank you, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Mr. Benishek, 5 minutes.

Mr. BENISHEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here today, Secretary Vilsack. The many rural areas in the country that are very dependent on the timber industry for their economic sustainability and growth, including my district, which covers northern Michigan, I have three large Federal forests in my district, what changes are being advocated by the Department that would encourage the Forest Service to focus on growing the timber harvest, enhancing mineral development, and offering additional recreational opportunities on Federal forest land?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, there are several things, Congressman. First of all, we are, each and every year, attempting to treat more wood so that we create more opportunities for timber industry. Last year it was close to 2.8 billion board feet. I think the goal is close to 3 billion board feet this year. Second, we are focusing on wood energy opportunities. There are over 230 wood energy projects that the Department has funded. We have looked at a way of streamlining the NEPA process so that we can get work done more quickly, and that is some of the areas that have been designated as a result of the farm bill.

We have created a new wood energy—a wood contest that is taking a look at cross-laminated timber to create a new industry that doesn't exist in this country that would allow wood to be used as structural materials in multi-story buildings. The contest is essentially challenging someone to come up and actually build a—

Mr. BENISHEK. Well, no, that is very admirable, but, to tell you the truth, Secretary Vilsack, in my experience, it is very difficult to get the timber out of the woods. In the last 5 years, the three National Forests of Michigan, all of which are in my district, have just sold over 49 percent of their ASQ. What is preventing you from getting a higher percentage of the ASQ out of the forest?

Secretary VILSACK. Part of the challenge is the budget, and the reason it is a challenge is because 40 percent of our budget is spent on fire suppression. That is 15 years ago it was about 15 percent. And so what happens is we cannot do the kind of work that we would like to be able to do because we have to borrow from the restoration resiliency funds to put fires out. That is——

Mr. BENISHEK. Well, and this is the answer I get from you guys a lot, and that is in the private sector, when you cut down trees in your forest, you make money, and you produce money. And, actually, in the Federal forests, in our areas, part of the income from the Federal forests goes to local schools. And from industry, you are talking about the timber industry, and the structural timber stuff, and that is all well and good, but the real problem is we have difficulty getting the timber out of the forest.

And a lot of it is due to the fact that, to get timber out of the forest, it costs the Federal Government a lot more than it costs the average person on the state forest, or on a private forest. And when you keep asking for more budget, it doesn't make any sense to me, because states and private industry, they make money when they cut trees down, and you are supposed to be the steward of America's resource, the American forest, which belongs to the American people. And you should be able to find a way to harvest these resources, manage these resources that provide a return for the American people, not asking for more budget, so——

Secretary VILSACK. Well——

Mr. BENISHEK.—tell me a way we can make that more efficient.

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, we are not asking for more money. We are asking it to be structured and budgeted in a slightly different way. It is not more money. Essentially, we would like some of these catastrophic fires to be treated as the disasters that they are, and funded out of that source. That would free up the resources——

Mr. BENISHEK. Well, Mr. Vilsack, let me tell you this. If you could give me some guidance into how to direct this Committee to change the law that would allow the Forest Service to be more efficient in managing the Federal forest, I will be right there to make that happen. Because I have been looking for some ideas to make the Forest Service more efficient and not cost so much to manage our forests. And I would look for your, or anyone else's, input as to how to make that happen.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, we have created a lot of efficiencies. I am happy to sit down with you and talk about the efficiencies that we have had to create because our budget is less than it was when I first became Secretary.

Mr. BENISHEK. I have time for maybe one more question here. When you submitted your budget last year, you requested a budget increase of \$50 million, and estimated that you would harvest 3.1 billion board feet, but you didn't get to that. Why weren't you able to achieve your original goal?

Secretary VILSACK. It gets back to the point I tried to make to you, sir, that when we have to borrow money from the restoration and resiliency portions of the budget because Congress doesn't provide adequate resources to fight fires, it creates a situation where we can't contract for the work that you would like us to do because

we don't have the resources. Congress repays the fund the following year, but there is never the stability.

That is why it is important to treat these catastrophic fires as the catastrophes they are, fund that out of the emergency fund. That frees up resources, and provides stability that would allow us to do a lot more work. We have been asking for this for a couple years. That is the answer.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. McGovern, for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another hearing, so I am going to be very brief. Mr. Vilsack, as you know, hunger still remains a problem in this country. Ms. Lujan Grisham talked about the situation in New Mexico, but it is all over this country. And USDA has reported that last year that nearly 60 million children, one in five, lived in households that were food insecure, and they found that a food insecure household is a household at a level with an economic and social condition of limited access to food. And this is an issue that impacts not only urban areas, but rural areas as well.

I am concerned about reports that there are some in this body who want to go back after the SNAP program. It is one of the most efficiently run Federal programs that we have. I think there is more than enough data to prove that. It is a benefit that, quite frankly, is inadequate for a lot of people. They end up going to food banks and food pantries as well. But this idea of going back after the program would be a huge mistake. I don't think SNAP should be used as an ATM machine to pay for other priorities, or to balance the budget. There are people who literally depend on it to put food on the table.

My request to the Administration, and to you, is to draw a line in the sand on this issue. No more cuts to SNAP, no more cuts to food and nutrition programs. We cannot balance the budget on the backs of poor people. I am all for, if you want to do oversight hearings, that is fine. You want to find ways to make the program more efficient, but not at the expense of taking benefits away from people who need it.

The majority of people on this program are children, and are senior citizens, and are people who are disabled. Of those who work, the majority do work, but they don't earn enough to be able to not require this benefit. So my request is simple. It is important to draw a line in the sand so we don't start going down a road that would be detrimental to a lot of people in this country.

This is an important program, again, SNAP is given. We gave it in the farm bill, gave for the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act. The ARRA monies weren't extended enough, and we need some strong pushback from the Administration to make it clear to everybody here that we are not going to tolerate any more cuts in this program.

Secretary VILSACK. Did the gentleman have—

Mr. MCGOVERN. Yes. If you could give me the answer yes, that that is all I am looking for, and then I am done.

Secretary VILSACK. I think the President is the person who draws the lines in the sand, and I am certainly not going to preempt him, but I will certainly, obviously, express concerns we have

about the level of food insecurity. I will express concerns about folks who suggest that this is a program that is overrun by fraud when the fraud rate is a little over one percent, one of the lowest in the Federal Government. Or the error rate, which is about 3½ percent. So, combined, it is the lowest it has been in history.

And you are correct, that 80 percent of the folks that are on SNAP are either people with disabilities, senior citizens, children, or folks who are actually in the workforce. The right way to deal with the cost of this program is to figure out ways in which we can get folks who are able-bodied and want to work to work.

Mr. MCGOVERN. And I will just point out that CBO estimates show that the costs are starting to fall as a result of the fact that we didn't extend the ARRA monies, but also the economy is getting better.

Secretary VILSACK. Two percent reduction apart from the recovery money not being extended because, as you indicated, the economy is getting better, and people are finding opportunities. That is the right way to do this, which is why we are putting a lot of time and emphasis on the employment and training aspect of it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. All right. Well, I appreciate it. Again, the strongest possible signal should be sent for the Administration, that enough is enough, and I appreciate all your work, and your service, and the people who work with you over at USDA. They do a great job, and they are always responsive, and so we are very grateful, so thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. My apologies to Mr. Ashburn, you should have gone ahead of Mr. McGovern. Mr. Yoho for, 5 minutes.

Mr. YOH0. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Vilsack, thank you for being here, and I want to commend you on implementing so much of the farm bill so fast, especially the emphasis put on citrus. I come from Florida, and Florida is the number one citrus producer in the country. But you also realize that we have 90 percent of our trees affected by citrus greening, and it is a devastating situation.

Florida without oranges would be like, for those old enough to remember, Sears without Roebuck. They kind of go hand in hand. And it is important that we work—and I commend you—what the University of Florida, and IFAS, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Science is doing in that area. It is estimated in our area that the citrus industry is a \$1.3 billion in lost revenue just from citrus greening, and it has roughly put 6,500 people out of work.

One of my questions to you is that I have heard from growers in Florida that the antimicrobials and bactericides seem to be key in developing a cure for this. How does the USDA plan to work with the CDC, the FDA, EPA, to ensure these treatments are approved in a timely manner? And if we can focus on fast-tracking, because if we lose those groves, they are going to go into condominiums, they are going to go into something else, and I would prefer to keep them in ag.

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, I certainly understand the challenge that citrus greening represents to your state. It is a \$9 billion industry, and 76,000 jobs impacted and effected. We will do everything we can to make sure that whatever the treatments are,

or whatever the solutions are, get into the marketplace as quickly as we can. As you know, we announced yesterday \$30 million of assistance divided among a variety of different avenues. We have had an entity that involves state and local folks working with us to try to prioritize where we should spend this money. When we come up with a solution, I guarantee you we will do everything we possibly can to get it implemented as quickly as we can.

Mr. YOHO. Okay. And then I agree with Mr. Scott on a couple things. We are going to have to work together, Mr. Scott, to revisit peanuts, especially peanut butter, and look at ways to increase the consumption here domestically. And if you look at the nutrient contents of that, it is a high protein, high energy source, and it can solve a lot of the problems we have here.

In addition, when we look at other countries and foreign aid, I hope that we put a lot of emphasis on the assistance to other nations instead of money, we look at ways of giving trade, not aid. And the aid and, good, healthy nutritional sources, and that would help solve a problem here with our oversupply of domestic peanuts. So if you would work on that with the trade people, I know a lot of people would really appreciate that.

And going, again, back to what Mr. Scott said about foot-and-mouth disease in our beef imports from South America, Brazil, and northern Argentina, you said our policy should be based on science, and it is what our policy should be based on. We sent a letter to Mr. Shea, in charge of APHIS, requesting transparency on the studies. Because if you look at what they have done over there, as far as a study with APHIS, what they have come out with it is not a requirement for the written reporting or documentation of the visits by the APHIS personnel, so we don't know really when they got there, when they inspected the plants.

And since that region is still actively vaccinating for foot-and-mouth disease, and looking at the rules, Title 9 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, they can't be deemed free of foot-and-mouth disease. That economic impact on our country, if foot-and-mouth disease, came to America, would be devastating to our livestock industry. Reports I have heard is \$50 to \$100 billion, and it would kill our export market. So I implore you to really stand strong on that.

And if it is based on science, we could use that same argument on BSE in our cattle. You know, going to other nations, as far as a source of contamination, which it is not. When we have had two cases in the span of—since it has been diagnosed, two cases, and one of them was an atypical case, and we have 330 million people here, and a lot of us are meat consumers, and that is a pretty good study, that we don't really have a problem, but yet other nations are using that to prevent us from importing our beef.

Secretary VILSACK. We make that case to the Chinese every single time we meet with them. It is the case we made to re-open in Japan. It is the case we made to re-open in Korea. It is the case we made to re-open in Hong Kong. It is the case we made, and are making, in Taiwan. So this is the consistency issue, Congressman.

Mr. YOHO. It is.

Secretary VILSACK. You have to be consistent. You can't say to China, follow science, follow the risk assessment. And then disagree when the risk assessment and science tells us that we have

to open up opportunities here in the U.S. to import, we have to be consistent.

Mr. YOHO. But without the transparency——

Secretary VILSACK. That is a fair point.

Mr. YOHO.—and we need to get that out. And the last thing is that I hope——

Secretary VILSACK. That is a fair point.

Mr. YOHO.—you stand strong on WOTUS, especially with our agricultural income down 25 percent, the net income, and stay strong on the ag side. Thank you, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Ms. Adams, for 5 minutes.

Ms. ADAMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Vilsack. North Carolina is the nation's third most diverse agricultural state, with nearly all climatic and soil conditions represented. The state is also home to a strong public university system, with robust research in the agricultural sciences, and this includes North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, of which I am a proud graduate, twice, of.

The USDA budget requests \$10 million for research at 1890 institutions, and that includes North Carolina A&T. The budget also requests \$2 million for facilities improvement. My question is, how will these funds translate into improvements at individual institutions, such as North Carolina A&T?

Secretary VILSACK. It is an application process, where universities will come to us with plans, in terms of how they could use the resources most effectively, and then those applications are sort of judged and scored, and the folks who have the strongest application, the folks who have leveraging resources, the folks that have partnerships with other universities or other entities, obviously score higher. And it is an effort to try to compliment the additional resources that are provided on a formula basis to the 1890s.

Ms. ADAMS. Okay. My next question, when I look at the budget, and there is no new funding for STEM programs through the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, why was this program cut, and what can STEM schools do for funding through other programs? How can they seek that funding?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, NIFA has a variety of programs. If someone has a STEM opportunity, they can participate in the other competitive programs that NIFA is engaged in. We provide hundreds of millions of dollars of competitive grants every single year. Again, I don't know specifically about the STEM budget item. I know that there was a conversation with a number of other entities, NASA, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education, in an effort to sort of coordinate all STEM programs.

So they were sort of put under a different heading in the budget, so the resources are still there, but there is a more collaborative process in deciding where they are spent, so that we have a coordinated and consolidated approach to STEM. And, in fact, the budget the President submitted actually has a 50 percent increase over last year for those programs. So there is more money, it is just not necessarily in our budget. It is sort of a U.S. Government-wide effort.

Ms. ADAMS. Okay. First of all, let me just make this comment: North Carolina is a specialty crop state, third most diverse state for crops, 90 commodity groups. Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables which are fundamental to a healthy diet. The USDA Specialty Crops Grant Program is a good start to help support all of these specialty crops, which are important to North Carolina, but much more could be done to improve the yield, the variety, the drought tolerance, and nutritional value. What is the Department's plan to improve research for specialty crops?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, there is a specific Specialty Crop Research Initiative, which is designed to focus on greater protection and productivity of specialty crops. It is a different part of the farm bill, and that is part of that also we had the discussion about citrus greening, and it is sort of included in that. But I believe it is over \$100 million that was allocated for this initiative, so there is a research initiative.

The block grant initiative is essentially money that is given to states to promote, to market, to create new market opportunities for specialty crops. It is a slightly different program.

Ms. ADAMS. Thank you, sir. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back.

Mr. Ashford, I apologize to you one more time. I skipped you again. You need to be more vocal or something down there. No, not yet. Mrs. Walorski, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, I am grateful that you are here today. We have never formally met, and I am thrilled to already hear the discussion that has been going on about the SNAP program. And I will be chairing the Subcommittee on Nutrition, and I am grateful for that opportunity. We are going to take on a full scale review of the SNAP program. It is intended to be a thoughtful, deliberative process, so as we approach re-authorization, we will be prepared to make meaningful improvements to the program to benefit the recipients, the program administrators, and the taxpayers. I want to ensure that we protect the most vulnerable populations, that we have already talked about here, and find a collective means to not have hungry kids in America. That is a passion of mine.

As legislators, we are accountable to the taxpayers who fund the program. We have an obligation to ensure that these programs run in the most efficient and effective way possible. To do this, it is going to take a systematic approach to reviewing the various aspects of the SNAP program, from its overall mission down to the administration of benefits, and ultimately the recipient experience. The review process will include a range of stakeholder perspectives, including current and former recipients, nonprofits, the on the ground service providers, states, and localities, the food industry, nutrition experts, and policy researchers.

I know you have an incredible history, and I commend your history on being active in this program. You have been a positive force, and I appreciate that as well for the changes that came out in the last farm bill. One of the things I am asking for is your commitment to fully engaging with us on this dialogue in this thoughtful, deliberative process that we are going to embark upon, and that your staff will be a useful resource to us so we all get to the

end goal here. And I just wanted just to give you the opportunity to say that you are going to be a willing partner, and not be wary in the ensuing process. So, sir?

Secretary VILSACK. We, obviously, will cooperate, and try to be as helpful as we possibly can in the review that you undertake.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Well, and I believe we share the same goal. We want to see what works too, and we want to be able to stand by some of the programs you have already been talking about here for the last hour and a half. And I appreciate that you are holding the task of getting that stuff done, even from the new farm bill.

I also want to just go on the record quickly, like many of my colleagues here, on the issue with the WOTUS Program, the *Waters of the U.S.* I live, obviously, in northern Indiana. We have about 12,000 family farms. This has been one of the general concerns since I was elected to Congress, and I just want to make sure that you are on board.

And I appreciate some of your answers in this, but being able to stand up in the position you are in and fight for both rural and urban farms, this is one of the most devastating regulations that I hear about in my district. Can you take just a second and just speak to that again?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, first of all, we have made a concerted effort to—myself directly, with the Administrator, and through our senior staff, and through our technical staff to do what we can to educate folks at EPA, as they formulate policy, on the impacts of potential policies on folks in the real world.

Second, we have encouraged Administrator McCarthy to actually talk to farmers, to go out and visit farm areas, which she has. Third, we have encouraged the Administrator to meet regularly with commodity groups so that there is a vehicle for which they can express concerns. And we have clearly indicated some issues that have arisen, especially as I related to earlier with ephemeral streams. The reality is that those of us who own farmland are very familiar with those circumstances and situations, and it is a very difficult task, and so we have conveyed that.

Now, it is a sister agency, and I have to respect that. And it is sort of like asking you to make sure the Senate does what it should do. Well, you can't dictate to the Senate, can you? I mean, you try, maybe, but—

Mrs. WALORSKI. True, I appreciate that, and I do appreciate the bully pulpit, though, you do have. I think there is a difference when you are a Secretary, and you have the opportunity to speak to another Secretary. I would just encourage you to keep holding a line for the family farmers. They don't feel like they are being heard by this Administration, so I feel like, with my fellow Hoosier farmers, they feel like there is really nobody at the table arguing for them. But I want to thank you for what you have done for it.

Secretary VILSACK. If I can respond to that, there are a multitude of ways in which this Department is speaking up for, and defending, and advocating on behalf of American farmers. We were engaged in making sure that folks across the country understood the importance of having a farm bill to them. Not just to the producers, but to the entire country. We have been very aggressive in our trade promotion. We have been very aggressive in opening up

new markets here locally, so that big guys and small guys can co-exist and prosper.

This Department is not very well understood by a lot of folks, and we are trying our best to make sure that everybody understands how significant and important it is. And I go out and speak to groups all across the country in an effort to try to make sure that rural America and farmers are not forgotten.

Mrs. WALORSKI. I appreciate that, sir, and I was one that voted for the farm bill three times, every which way it came, every which way but loose, and I appreciate that as well, and I want to commend you for that. But I wouldn't be doing my duty as well if I didn't stand up for Hoosier farmers today and say thank you, and please keep them in mind. We appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired. Mr. Ashford, for 5 minutes.

Mr. ASHFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary, just as a quick aside, I am from Omaha, and when you were Governor, I want to thank you for the vision that you had then in developing the riverfront between Council Bluffs and Omaha. We are now seeing a 50 year vision statement that started, really, with your Administration, and it is a big deal for Sarpy County, and Douglas County, and Pottawattamie County, Iowa too. I want to thank you publicly for starting that process. It is a big deal for our state.

My question, one topic is the USDA Center, Clay Center. And I know we did ask the Mead Animal Research Center issue that was focused upon in *The New York Times* article a couple of weeks ago, or 10 days ago or so. What is going on in that area? We did send a letter over, and I know we will get a response, but the University of Nebraska is very concerned about it, as are Nebraskans generally. Do you have any comments or thoughts on—

Secretary VILSACK. Sure. I would say three things. First of all, obviously, we take any assertions along the lines of that article very seriously. I would point out that some of the issues that were raised in that article are no longer the practice, and no longer the case, and haven't been for a number of years. But, nevertheless, out of respect for the concerns that had been raised, I ordered a 60 day independent review, outside of our people, to take a look at processes and procedures that are taking place, in terms of approvals of research projects, and the oversight of research projects.

We appointed an ombudsman, so that individuals who are at research facilities who have concerns about practices, and want to raise those concerns, but are fearful in doing so, that they will now have an outlet to be able to do that without retaliation.

And, third, after we get the report, and whatever recommendations are made, we will certainly take a look at those and implement them as quickly and as effectively as possible, and then we will follow up with a more general review of other facilities in the USDA network that are involved maybe not as much as the Center is in animal research. So we are taking a look at this, we are being thoughtful about it, and we are being proactive about it.

Mr. ASHFORD. Thank you. There are many at the University that are very concerned, because they are involved, to some extent, at the Center.

Secretary VILSACK. They are.

Mr. ASHFORD. It is a USDA facility, obviously, and there have been some concerns raised by veterinarians, and others at the University of Nebraska, and researchers. So I appreciate that, and I will yield back the rest of my time. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. The gentleman yields back. Mr. Allen, for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Secretary, first I want to thank you for coming before the Committee today, and thank you for your works for agriculture across America. I would also like to echo a few of my colleagues' statements, and encourage you, as the voice of agriculture in the President's cabinet, to stand up for America's farmers and ranchers, and defend these hardworking men and women against any policies that could threaten their livelihood.

As you know, in my home State of Georgia, agriculture is the number one economic industry. In 2012 alone, Georgia planted over 1 million acres of cotton. Specifically, in my district, cotton is among the largest crops planted, and currently many of my farmers are very concerned. The 2014 Farm Bill made necessary changes to the cotton program, and with extremely low prices, many of my farmers are worried, and even debating whether or not they should plant cotton.

You had mentioned good progress in the implementation of the STAX Program, but what can USDA do to address some of their concerns, or what would your advice be to some of the cotton farmers in my district?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, first of all, we did provide nearly \$½ billion of transition assistance to cotton producers. We have the STAX Program up and going. We continue to promote exports, and we continue to try to make sure that countries like China play by the rules. Those are four very important points to be made. And that last point, in particular, is that I am very pleased with the USTR's announcement today of additional actions potentially against China to try to get them to play by the rules. At the end of the day, that is extremely important, especially in the cotton area.

Mr. ALLEN. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK. And greater transparency from our friends in China. I recognize they are our number one customer, and I respect that, and we, obviously, are providing them a good quality product at an affordable price, but they are, at times, unpredictable in their approach towards trade. And to the extent we can get them more aligned with a science-based and rules-based system, it would be beneficial not just for us, but also for them.

And we are just going to continue to promote trade as a vehicle for advocating for all of agriculture. We have the best farmers in the world, and we have the best product in the world, and it is affordable. The current situation with the dollar makes it a little bit more challenging, but that means that we need to do an even better job of aggressively promoting agriculture overseas. That is why these trade agreements are important. That is why we believe the trade promotion authority is important.

This Trans-Pacific Partnership is a big deal. Just to give you a sense of this, you may know this already, but I want you to know

that I know that, in Asia, we are looking at 525 million middle class consumers today, and in 15 years, that number is 2.7 billion. So there is an enormous opportunity there for high value products that American producers can provide.

But if we are shut out of that, if we cannot conclude that agreement, it is not as if nothing else happens. China fills the void, creates agreements that is an all Asia trade agreement that doesn't have side standards, doesn't provide us a fair opportunity, or members of TPP negotiate their own individual side deals, at which point we are also left out. So it is extremely important long term for your producers that we continue to promote fair, high standards, trade opportunities where everyone plays by the same set of rules.

Mr. ALLEN. I agree. Also, one other follow up question. The Conservation Reserve Program has changed considerably over the last 30 years. As you know, the Agricultural Act of 2014 reduces the CRP acreage cap. What do you see is the future of the CRP Program?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, it is a continuation of the good work that it does. In earlier discussions I pointed out that there no doubt will be a general sign-up, and there will be a continued focus on the continuous programs that have been popular.

I do think, because we are seeing a reduction in acres, that we need to find creative ways to encourage CRP, and one of the creative ways that I am interested in doing is a better coordination between NRCS and FSA, in terms of this regional conservation partnership effort, and CRP. I think there is an opportunity to leverage, potentially, and get more acres involved in conservation. Maybe not specifically in CRP, but leverage those resources more effectively. We are looking at creative ways to do that.

Mr. ALLEN. I want to put on your radar that I have some constituents who are having trouble with the opt-out provision in the CRP Program, and I may ask for your help at a later date, should some of these issues not get resolved.

Secretary VILSACK. Mr. Batta is right behind me—

Mr. ALLEN. Okay.

Secretary VILSACK.—he is our person. Let us know what the issue is, and we will definitely get you an answer. Hopefully it will be the answer you want, but we will definitely get you an answer.

Mr. ALLEN. Okay.

I yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Rouzer?

The CHAIRMAN. David Rouzer?

Mr. ROUZER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, I appreciate you coming—did I lose my microphone? There we go. I appreciate you coming before the Committee today. I have had to step out a couple times, and I apologize, during the course of one of my excursions, on the way back, I heard you talking a little bit about Country-of-Origin Labeling. This is such an important trade matter that I want to bring that back up, and forgive me if I am asking a duplicate question.

I know the farm bill, which was enacted a little bit more than a year ago, included language requiring USDA to conduct an economic analysis of the impact of our nation's current mandatory

country-of-origin labeling regulations on consumers, livestock producers, and packers. I understand this report was due last August. Do we know when this report will be completed?

Secretary VILSACK. I just wanted to check with my staff. We have contracted with an outside entity, and we expect their report shortly.

Mr. ROUZER. Very good. One follow-up associated with this. Can you take a moment to outline the timetable associated with the current WTO process on this COOL case?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, we expect and anticipate sometime this spring seeing where we are headed, in terms of the appeal. And if we win the appeal, then, obviously, that is one route. If we lose the appeal, then the question is whether or not Canada and Mexico decide to retaliate, and if so, what. There will be some issues relative to the size of the retaliation, based on studies that I have seen.

There is also the opportunity for Congress to weigh in on this. The problem, Congressman, is that Congress has said to us, "Look, we want a label that identifies U.S. product." The problem, from a WTO perspective is that, once you have that label, then you have to segregate livestock that comes in from different sources. WTO says once you segregate, that is a problem, that is an undue burden, you can't do that. So there is no way we can square the hole here. We either have to get rid of the rule, or we have to amend the rule to provide a more generic label that gets away from segregation. Or we win the appeal. One of those two routes.

Mr. ROUZER. Assuming we would lose the appeal, how soon do you anticipate Mexico and Canada would retaliate?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, our hope would be that we would be able to, first and foremost, talk about the extent. There are some serious differences of opinion about how dramatic this has been, for Canadian producers in particular, and so that would have to be resolved. I don't think it would be immediate, as in the next day or next week, but certainly would be in the short term, there would be an effort. We looked at this, we tried to figure out, if there is a regulatory way around this? We tried a couple of times, and we have not been successful, so either we win the appeal, or Congress has to act.

Mr. ROUZER. Thank you. One final question with the time I have remaining. I represent southeastern North Carolina. We have everything from tobacco, to sweet potatoes, to strawberries, to blueberries, a lot of livestock. My question for you with regard to the implementation of the unified payment limit: how is that proceeding? How is that coming along?

Secretary VILSACK. Congressman, I am going to have to get back to you on that. I don't know the answer to that question, and I will find out, and get back to you immediately.

Mr. ROUZER. I have a lot of producers that would have an interest in that.

Secretary VILSACK. Okay.

Mr. ROUZER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Mr. Emmer, for 5 minutes. Mr. Emmer, for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER. I have to—sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. Excuse me.

Mr. EMMER. I think in the old country it was Congressman.

Secretary VILSACK. Excuse me for just a second.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry, yes, sir? Secretary.

Secretary VILSACK. I didn't understand your question. If you are asking about the *actively engaged* definition, if that is what you are asking about, yes, sir, then I can tell you that we are in the process of completing work on that, and we would anticipate something perhaps this spring in terms of what it is.

Let me just simply point out to you, and to everyone who is interested in this issue, the area that we are dealing with, and the number of farmers that we are dealing with, and the type of farmers we are dealing with is very narrow. This does not apply to family farms. It doesn't apply to corporations. It is really pretty much limited to partnerships and limited partnerships, based on the language that is in the farm bill, so we are talking about a relatively very small percentage of producers that may be impacted by whatever we decide. But we are completing work on this, and I would anticipate sometime this spring.

Mr. ROUZER. Thank you.

Secretary VILSACK. Sorry, I—

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Emmer, 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for having this hearing. Mr. Secretary, it is nice to have a dialogue. I will just say to you I have been very impressed. When we get the little sound bites that you see, it is not quite the same as when we have an opportunity to have a dialogue with you, and listen to you.

There are three areas that I am going to try to cover in the limited time that I have. One, I just want to quickly go back to the issue on *waters of the U.S.* that you have commented a couple times already today. It is my understanding that the Small Business Administration's Department of Advocacy had written a letter to the EPA asking to pull the rule. And I listened to your answer to Representative Walorski, if I said it right, earlier, where you pointed out, or you commented that it is a sister agency, and because of that you respect the agency process.

But I guess my question to you is, if it is harmful, and I hear this all over Minnesota, where I come from, not just in the district that I represent, they are very concerned with this potential rule, the finalization of the rule, based on the one that was proposed. If there has been a call by others to pull the rule, and you have some concerns that you have even expressed, why wouldn't you, or your agency, request the EPA actually pull the rule?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, it is about how you could have the most effective relationship on not just a single issue, but on all issues impacting agriculture. EPA is engaged in quite a few. I wake up every morning, when I say my prayers, and I am thankful that I am not the EPA Administrator, because we are involved in a multitude of issues with the EPA. And so it is a question of style, I guess. Some people want a more open style, some people think it is more effective to work, in a sense, behind the scenes. You and I can have a difference of opinion about that, but I am concerned about making sure that I have a relationship so that I am in a po-

sition to have an impact on not just one rule, but on all of the rules.

Mr. EMMER. And I take that back, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate that. After listening to you today, even though we might disagree on some things, I would actually be happy if you were at the EPA, but we will leave that alone.

Secretary VILSACK. You obviously——

Mr. EMMER. I didn't mean to upset——

Secretary VILSACK. You have some serious concerns with me, if that is the case.

Mr. EMMER. No. I am teasing too. I hope you appreciate the levity. Trade Promotion Authority, very quickly. You have talked about that a little bit. That is something that I am seriously interested in. We have a letter going around right now amongst Republican freshmen, trying to encourage them to give the President a strong message that we are supportive of trade promotion authority in getting these deals done.

I asked the Trade Representative the other day, Michael Froman, he said that the President is going to make actual phone calls to people in his party to get support for an eventual vote. What are you doing personally, or your agency, to try and educate and encourage votes on the President's side?

Secretary VILSACK. I have a list of 13 individual Members, either Representatives or Senators, that I am responsible for calling, and I am looking at a couple of them as I speak that I call on a regular basis to inform on the impacts of trade. I have made two rounds of calls. We have also created, within the Department, fact sheets so that folks understand and appreciate the impact that trade has on their state, or on their Congressional district, and the importance of getting this done. And we have also, obviously, in public appearances, expressed support for a strong effort on the part of TPA, because without it it is very difficult to negotiate, when the folks on the other side of the table think that you can't actually deliver whatever it is you are negotiating, because somebody else is going to have the ability to amend or modify.

Mr. EMMER. You probably already know this, but I met with some of the Canadian folks in our area the day before yesterday, and they told me the reason that they are hesitating doing anything is because they want to know that when they come to the table that the Administration has the ability to do a final deal. At least, that is their position.

Secretary VILSACK. I think that is part of it. I think they are waiting to see what other deals are negotiated, and they also have an eye on their own politics, which is——

Mr. EMMER. Right.

Secretary VILSACK.—understandable.

Mr. EMMER. Well, and that is all the more reason to eliminate another excuse, by taking——

Secretary VILSACK. Right.

Mr. EMMER.—care of TPA. Last, with whatever little time I have left, could you just give me a thumbnail as to how the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Loan Program is working?

Secretary VILSACK. Sure. Well, there are two aspects of this. The first aspect is roughly \$18 million is allocated to a number of enti-

ties to basically create systems that impress upon young people, veterans, and others who are interested in farming the various programs that are available. The second piece of this is the loan portfolio that we have. We do roughly 42,000 loans a year. Well over 50 percent of those loans go to beginning farmers. I think the budget the President proposed would be roughly 23,000 loans would be made available, either operating or ownership loans.

Third, there is a new opportunity with reference to crop insurance, where beginning farmers are given a slight break on premiums. The last is the conservation part of it. Most of our conservation programs require match, and require up-front investment for beginning farmers. There is a little flexibility in terms of advancing conservation resources. So all of that is taking place right now. And we have a very aggressive effort that the deputy is leading to go out and make sure that folks are aware of these programs.

We are trying to encourage the Department of Defense to allow us to come on to bases before people are discharged from their military service to give them a sense of what the programs are. And we are also heavily engaged in encouraging them to even look at our microloan program. A number of beginning farmers have taken advantage. We have done about 10,000 of those loans in the past. The majority of them are to beginning farmers.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Gibson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBSON. Well, thanks, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here today. I think this hearing has been very productive. I have read very closely your testimony, and have also been enlightened by your elaboration here today. And let me also say, and I believe I have shared this with you when you have come here before, that my area in upstate New York deeply appreciates your commitment to agriculture, and to helping New York. You have been to our area a number of times, and certainly, from a nonpartisan perspective, we view you as somebody who has been very helpful. And I know you have some roots there with Hamilton College and Albany Law, so thank you for all that you are doing.

I do want to make another pass at *waters of the U.S.* I am opposed to this proposed rule, very concerned about it, but I am going to come at it in a slightly—perhaps a different way here, and I have a question for you. It is a difficult one, but I would appreciate your response to it. And, really, thinking about it conceptually, how important the environment is to all us, and to future generations, and you would be hard pressed to find stronger stewards of our environment.

And, when you think about how the Administration is approaching this, it seems to me that, from a conceptual standpoint, you have the EPA, that is bringing forward this proposed rule at the same time the Administration is proposing cuts to conservation programs, like EQIP, which is a really good program that helps with the environment. So I just wonder, has anybody engaged—and I understand that you have a purview, and you have a charter, and you have to work with your colleagues, and I certainly appreciate that, but has anybody broached that just as a point that it seems contradictory that, while we all want to advance balanced policies

that help promote the economy, and balance our need to protect the environment, that we are bringing forward, what I would describe as an onerous regime under the EPA, at the same time we are taking back money from farmers, who are good stewards of the environment.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I have a slightly different view on terms of the overall financing of conservation, in the sense that it may very well be that individual programs may not have as much increase as they were destined to, based on the farm bill, based on the authority, but that doesn't necessarily mean that less money is being spent on conservation. And the reason I say that is because we are really focused at USDA in trying to figure out how best to leverage the dollars we have.

So creating ecosystem markets, creating incentives for corporations to invest in conservation to fulfill some social responsibility that they have identified—we do business with Coca-Cola. We recently had Chevrolet purchase some carbon credits for a working ranch, that is extending the amount of money that is actually invested. And we actually have a record number of acres enrolled in conservation today, and a record number of participants and producers, and we are doing an assessment, trying to make sure that people understand that this conservation is working.

I understand the point you are trying to make, but what we are trying to do is to work around tight budgets and difficult budgets to figure out ways in which we can be creative to use the dollars we have, to leverage them to actually do more work in the field. And the great deal of interest in the Regional Conservation Partnership Program is reflective of that. We are going to double the amount of conservation activity in those 115 projects because of the leveraging opportunity.

Mr. GIBSON. Well, I certainly appreciate those comments. And, to your broader point that, how smartly we use these resources is at least as important as the total extent of investment. I agree with that point. I would also share with you that, in our area, we always have a list of folks who want to be involved in these conservation programs. We don't get to all those that want to use these programs, and I think that they have been a good investment, by way of the American taxpayer dollars, and so we will continue to work with you on this. And, once again, I just appreciate your diligence and your commitment.

I am going to submit for the record—we have been working with you guys on broadband extensively. Thank you for that as well, and we will be submitting, a question for the record on that score too, in terms of this year, and the years to come. So with that, Mr. Chairman, thank you. I think this has been a productive hearing, and I appreciate that very much. So thank, you, Mr. Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Mr. LaMalfa, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Vilsack, for appearing today. To echo just a little bit on what Mr. Benishek was very frustrated, as am I, on our forestry, U.S.—National Forest Service in northern California as well, we appreciate your visit to Trinity County a year or 2 ago. The neighboring county, Siskiyou County, suffered 250,000+ acres of fire loss last year,

much of that on national lands, but it also affects the neighbors as well.

The point you brought up, separating the funding, the emergency funding, that is something we will work on. We understand, and get that. That should be a separate pot so you can do your work, but also there is a component that there is revenue generated by getting these sales out there. And when one of the forest units, all they could put out was a couple of sales for a couple loads of firewood, we are not going to get very far at that rate, so we need to be much more aggressive on meeting these numbers for how each of these forest units would perform.

Of critical importance to the West Coast, obviously, coming back to the ports that have been mentioned a couple times here, we have estimates of beef sales are down \$40 million for a recent period of time, per week, I think. Citrus exports, of course, $\frac{1}{3}$ of our citrus in California is exported. It is getting to the point where it is spoiling, and they don't have the time period to wait for this much longer. It will take 4 months to clear a backlog: \$20 million a week to the citrus industry. Almonds, we grow a lot of those in California as well, and we have a lot of containers sitting on the port docks, as well as back at their facilities at home, and so this is a very real effect. We are looking at—if this gets to its worst—one estimate, \$2.1 billion a day to the national economy. In an economy that is trying to recover, that doesn't help much.

So what I would ask you, as one arm of the Administration, is to be really aggressive, and urge your colleagues inside the Administration—and I know you are. You have been working at them, but this needs to be taken to the next step, because of the effect on the ag economy, on all of our exports, and the American economy.

One more stat I have is that USDA released, just yesterday, an estimate of farm income decreasing 43 percent in this coming year. Sir, how much of this decrease can be attributed to either the drought in California, the western states, and/or this West Coast port slowdown?

Secretary VILSACK. The answer to your question would probably be better answered by our Chief Economist, and I am going to have him provide a more detailed response to your question.

But let me suggest that the primary reason we are seeing a decrease is because commodity prices have come down across the board. This is not just one or two areas of agriculture, this is—and you would expect that, because we had bumper crops.

Mr. LAMALFA. You see market share from this port thing being a part of that, or because of drought?

Secretary VILSACK. Not today, if this thing continues to linger, there is always that risk, because we become a less reliable supplier. One of the things we market to the rest of the world is how reliable a supplier we are. So there is a consequence to this, which is why we meet on a daily basis, and are encouraging these folks to get these things worked out. There are two issues, as I understand it, and both of those issues, it seems to me, could be worked out if reasonable people got in a room, and really were dedicated to getting it done. And I hope that they do.

Mr. LAMALFA. Let us get the reasonable people in the room, then.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, there are other issues. There is the rail issue, which we haven't talked about today, which is not as acute as it was maybe a couple of months ago, but it is still something that is a long term challenge, especially in the upper Midwest, in terms of the competition for rail, and the need for rail service, and the rail companies to continue to invest in new locomotives, and new cars, and new track, and improved track.

Mr. LAMALFA. Certainly.

Secretary VILSACK. There is also the fact that other parts of the world have also had pretty good crops. So, I mean, it is a combination of things, but—

Mr. LAMALFA. There is a market, we just need to be sure we are as strong as possible. I am sorry, my time is so limited here. To the *waters of the United States*, this really is a vast overreach of property rights, and we need you to be a strong voice to have sense restored back to that. We have things we can do here to slow it up via funding, like that, but it really needs to go back to the drawing board, and not have them put in this rule that is devastating—they are already getting ahead of the curve in my district, enforcing things that go against the section 404 of what is a legitimate farming practice. They are interpreting beyond their bounds.

Last, I know—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. We have other Members to come, so the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. DesJarlais, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Vilsack, for being here today. I have two issues. First, each year, in Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District, we host the Tennessee Walking Horse National Championship, known as The Celebration, and since my election in 2010, my staff and I have been working closely with the staff and members of APHIS to find an amenable solution to some of the discrepancies that have been highlighted in the current inspection process. I think horse owners, trainers, staff members, and Members of this Committee all can agree that the welfare of these beautiful animals are certainly worthy of our concern.

However, as I learn more about the process, it is my belief that many participants, in fact, the overwhelming majority, have been subjected to an inspection process system that is inconsistent, and overly subjective. And I simply bring this issue to your attention today, Mr. Secretary, to ask for your agency's continued engagement to find a common sense workable solution that will allow this time-honored tradition to continue and flourish. So can I have your assurance that your staff will continue to work with me in this matter?

Secretary VILSACK. As we have, and the key here is to continue to focus on technologies that would allow us to do a good job of making sure that we protect these wonderful animals, and at the same time allow this important tradition. I am very well aware of this issue, and I know it is hotly contested among a lot of folks down your way.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Well, I think that people are coming together, and we are just trying to have a set of rules that everybody can

play by that is fair. And I appreciate the efforts of USDA, and them coming to the table and talking, I really do. So we will look forward to continuing to work with you on that.

Second, this issue has been plaguing a lot of farmers and cattlemen throughout Tennessee and other states, and that is getting compensated for losses by the black vultures. And, in one instance, the farmer had pictures of a live calf, and a couple hours later another picture of the same calf that was dead, with the vultures flying around it, but yet it is hard to get compensation.

Losses are higher this year, and we have been working primarily with Fish and Wildlife Services on this issue. But one of the issues my constituents have raised is the trouble they are having getting necessary documentation of such losses to satisfy the requirement for FSA offices. The Tennessee Cattlemen's Association said that FSA is claiming that they need someone from a Federal agency to come out to farms and verify losses. However, FSA believes that Fish and Wildlife folks are not able to come and make such verifications, so currently it seems as though there is no way for producers to receive payment through the Livestock Indemnity Program for such losses.

Long story short, this seems to be a communication issue, and I would greatly appreciate if your staff could follow up with mine to see if we can sort through this matter.

Secretary VILSACK. We will absolutely do that. The wonderful thing about this Department is that you get things like black vultures, and issues involving black vultures.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you for your time, sir. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Mr. King, for 5 minutes.

Mr. KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Secretary, I thank you for your testimony here today. It is a bit of a long haul through here. A whole series of things come in front for me, and some of it has been addressed. I wanted to take up the case, and ask if you are aware, or if not, I encourage you to take a look at, a case that was decided in the Central District of California in Federal Court. A Canadian company, a French-Canadian corporation also, *Hot's Restaurant Group, Inc. v. Harris, (Association des Eleveurs de Canards et D'Oies du Québec, a Canadian nonprofit corporation; HVFG LLC, a New York limited liability company; and Hot's Restaurant Group, Inc., a California corporation, Plaintiffs, v. Kamala D. Harris)* the Attorney General of California on foie gras liver. Have you happened to see that decision at this point?

Secretary VILSACK. I have not, Congressman.

Mr. KING. Thank you. I will briefly, then, touch that, and direct your attention to it. There has been an objection on the part of some of the animal rights organization, included HSUS, against force feeding ducks and geese to enlarge their liver, the French foie gras liver. And, in that case, it was decided, this is a couple of weeks ago, by my information, that Federal pre-emption supersedes California law.

And it would be a case, I believe, exactly on point with the ag issue in California that I know you are aware of. And so I want to direct the attention of you and your office to that case, and perhaps we could get some support for our egg producers who are

watching as California is dictating the cage size in all of the states, and created the beginnings of a patchwork of regulations.

The second thing I would bring up, then, would be the President's State of the Union Address. It caught my attention when he said that they would be creating new jobs by converting sunlight into liquid fuel. I am an Iowan. That sounded like ethanol to me. How did you interpret that statement?

Secretary VILSACK. I think that is a consistent interpretation.

Mr. KING. Thank you. Then I will take it that way as well. And you also mentioned that there have been \$55 billion in payouts in crop insurance. And that \$55 billion in payouts, can you tell me what percentage of that is the unsubsidized portion of the producer premium *versus* the subsidized portion of the premium, and then, of course, the shortfall?

Secretary VILSACK. I am not sure I understand the question, Congressman, but, basically what I know is that \$55 billion has been paid out in indemnification, so—

Mr. KING. That means \$55 billion worth of—

Secretary VILSACK. Total.

Mr. KING.—claims—total. When I ask the question of the premiums that are billed to our producers, a portion of that premium is out of their pocket, a portion of that premium is subsidized. And so can you break that down as to how much of that is paid for by the producers, and how much of it is paid for by the taxpayers?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, I will try to answer the question, and if I don't answer it correctly, we will get you the correct answer. What I do know is that roughly 62 percent of overall premiums are subsidized by the taxpayer, paid by the taxpayer, and 38 percent is paid by the producer.

Mr. KING. That is generally what I am looking for. Have you or your office looked at this from any perspective on disparity, could you identify if there were a geographical transfer taking place consistently under Federal crop indemnity payments?

Secretary VILSACK. In other words, is one region of the country paying a disproportionate share of premiums, and not getting much in the way of recovery *versus* another that is—I don't know that that exists. I am fairly certain that the Midwest, obviously, pays a significant part of those premiums, because of the commodities that are grown there. We could certainly ask our folks to take a look at that.

Mr. KING. And you do have people that are the go-to people for me to have a conversation with—

Secretary VILSACK. Sure.

Mr. KING.—as well?

Secretary VILSACK. Yes. I do know that there is a disparity in terms of the size of operations, and the amount of premium subsidy, and so forth; whether it is geographic—but certainly the size of the operation, there are significant disparities.

Mr. KING. And did you know how broad the span is of years we use to measure and set those premiums?

Secretary VILSACK. I don't know the answer to that question, but I know that we have, in the past, talked about 10, 15 year timeframes, but that may not be what is used. I—

Mr. KING. And I am aware we have 30 years' worth of records, and so raise this topic, and I would like it if you could inform my office of who my contact person should be in your Department to drill into this a little deeper, if you could, Mr.—

Secretary VILSACK. Well, Brandon Willis, the RMA Administrator, would probably be the best place to start.

Mr. KING. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Mr. Newhouse—I missed you a while ago. You are recognized for 5 minutes. I am sorry about that.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. It is hard to see me down here, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the—

The CHAIRMAN. That is outpost forward.

Secretary VILSACK. It is easier for me to see you.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Yes. We are closer. But thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate you sticking it out to the bitter end here, and the opportunity to be part of this conversation. I very much appreciate your answers so far this morning, and I look forward to working with you, just let me say that. Let me agree with one of your earlier statements, our American farmers are some of the best farmers in the world, producing some of the best products in the world, which I have had the honor and privilege to represent in different venues. And I agree with that statement, and it truly is a privilege to represent agriculture in the United States of America.

Having said that, let me add to what some of my other colleagues are talking about, as far as the labor dispute we are experiencing on the West Coast ports. Being from the State of Washington, this is a huge issue for us. If we can produce the best products, and can't get them to our markets, what good is that? Just to personalize this a little bit, some of my friends, my farmer friends, are experiencing potential bankruptcies because of the slowdown at the ports because of the labor disputes.

We are seeing, as you know, in Washington State we have a record apple crop this year, which we had plenty of challenging marketing, even without the labor problems, so that is causing a huge upheaval in the apple industry. We were seeing layoffs of people at warehouses, loss of jobs. I am seeing a tremendous loss in opportunities when it comes to marketing those apples in Asia, or some of our primary markets. We just can't get the fruit there at particular times, like the Chinese New Year, which is a huge marketing window for us we are losing.

Just, daily I am hearing stories about the hardships people are facing. Organic poultry producers are unable to get organic feed greens and are at the risk of losing their certification. So just huge implications all up and down the agricultural sector. As you know, Washington State is a very—I hate to use the word *dependent*, but we are very involved in exports. At least 30 percent of our crops are exported, but on some commodities it is upwards of 90 percent. When you are talking about hops or wheat, potatoes, 40 percent. It is a huge part of our economy.

From a little different perspective, investments in MAP dollars, certainly the Foreign Agricultural Service, trade partnerships, all those things add up to a huge investment in this area. And so I

guess my question is, how can we help you? I know you have been a tremendous advocate, and that is something that we would like to get to the bottom of, and puzzle it out.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, Congressman, you have helped producers in your area, and producers who are impacted by this, by the series of questions that have been raised here, because obviously that has been a focus of our conversation here today, and that will, obviously, be reported, and that will strengthen the resolve that we have to try to put appropriate pressure on both sides to work out whatever differences remain, because there are real people being affected in a real way by all of this, and it is not just the people around the negotiating table who get impacted. There are good, hard-working folks who, through no fault of theirs, are faced with some very serious issues, which you have outlined.

The very fact of bringing it up, and continuing to bring it up, puts the spotlight on it. As the spotlight gets brighter and brighter, the hope would be that people would be reasonable and get it worked out.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I appreciate that. Let me switch gears really quickly, limited amount of time. Headlines every year, the West is burning. In my state we had a record forest fire approaching 500,000 acres, so the issue of forest management by the Federal Government is at the top of a lot of people's minds. I know in the 2014 Farm Bill there was a section that allowed states to designate some landscape scale area. Just maybe briefly an update on that, and maybe get some help on where Washington's application is, and how can we move the dial improving the partnership with states and local entities in order to improve forest management?

Secretary VILSACK. Thirty five states have expressed a desire to have segments of their forest involved in that program. The Forest Service Chief expanded the acreage, so it now constitutes 45 million acres that have been identified, in terms of pest and disease issues. Unfortunately, the farm bill basically provides for the accelerated NEPA process for 3,000 acres, which is important, but, obviously, we are talking about millions of acres, not thousands of acres. We will use that power.

The other thing the Forest Service has done is they have created a large scale NEPA, where they are basically taking a look at large scale landscapes, which means that when individual projects come up, the time it takes to do the NEPA analysis that is required for the project will be less. So we are trying to figure out ways in which by using a large scale effort we can reduce the amount of time overall to get projects.

The other thing we are doing is we are trying to expand market opportunities across the board. It is traditional, it is wood to energy, and it is new market opportunities. And this—the structural material—we at the Forest Service, every building over 10,000² has to be first and foremost built with wood, if it can be. That is sort of a directive that we have provided as part of a green building initiative. So there are a number of things we are doing in that space.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Goodlatte, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary, welcome. In the new farm bill, there is a key bipartisan compromise that I was proud to spearhead with Congressman David Scott that protects dairy farmers, as well as restaurants, food processors, grocery stores, and consumers. This amendment formed the framework for the dairy title of the farm bill, and was designed to provide our nation's dairy producers with a viable safety net, without supply management, or new administrative burdens. And it was supported by more than 140 diverse groups, and 291 Members of the House voted for it.

In implementing the regulations, as I understand it, they restrict individuals with significant ownership interest in one dairy from establishing ownership in a new dairy, and gaining eligibility. Could you please confirm the ability of a dairy farmer to expand his dairy production capacity through new farm operations, and maintain eligibility in the MPP?

Secretary VILSACK. I think we are still in the process of working on precisely how that can be done, and we have solicited input from the producers in terms of how we navigate the ability to expand against the assurance that the program will not be misused. And we are still in the process of formulating a final determination and decision about that. It is not an effort to try to avoid expansion, but we have to be sensitive, obviously, to making sure that folks don't take advantage of the system when it is inappropriate.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Well, we certainly understand that, but we also want to encourage having an abundant supply of milk, both for use here at home, and for export, and would encourage you to take an open-minded approach to not replacing one form of supply management with another. So thank you.

I would also like to switch gears and talk about demand management, I am not from Iowa, as you are, and my friend Mr. King is. I am from a district where my livestock producing farmers do not have demand management on the chickens, and turkeys, and beef cattle, and dairy products that they produce. And, therefore, I am concerned about the continued growth of the consumption of corn under the Renewable Fuel Standard.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, if implemented, the heightened 2017 RFS requirements would increase the amount of total U.S. food expenditures by \$3½ billion in just that 1 year, and it is going to continue to accelerate and get worse in years where there is a shortage of corn production, and in years down the road, when you get closer to 2022, when the requirement is that we produce 36 billion gallons of ethanol a year.

This problem is only going to get worse, so I would like to ask if you would let us know how the Department of Agriculture is working with the EPA and impacted livestock producers to ameliorate the cost of what I consider to be, and an increasing number of Americans considered to be, unworkable RFS standards. That seems to pit one sector of U.S. agriculture against another.

Secretary VILSACK. Well, you and I are going to have to respectfully disagree about this, Congressman.

Mr. GOODLATTE. We always have. I—

Secretary VILSACK. I mean, I am sure that you are not surprised by that. And the reason why I feel as strongly as I do on the other

side of this is because of the productivity of American agriculture. Corn production has increased significantly. I remember practicing law in 1975 with my father-in-law, and doing income tax returns, and producers were planting, in my state, about 16,000, 17,000 seeds per acre. Today those very same producers, on that very same land, are actually utilizing somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 seeds per acre. The technology has allowed us to grow more. So, in terms of the percentage of food—of corn that is being used for production of feed, and food, and exports, that hasn't changed. The excess is basically going into production of ethanol.

Second, when ethanol is produced, it is not just ethanol, it is also co-products and byproducts, as you well know. And the DDGs are a feed supplement that is pretty significant, and represent roughly $\frac{1}{3}$ of everything that goes into the ethanol production. And then, finally, we are obviously gravitating away from an over-reliance on corn towards corn stover, towards woody biomass, towards perennial grasses. And there are plants now that are up and running, and work towards commercial-sized operations, where you are not going to have—

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Secretary, reclaiming my time, which is running out, I don't disagree with the ability to produce fuel from a wide variety of sources, and certainly from non-productive sources today. That would be a good thing, but that has been the promise for a long, long time. In the meantime, there are growing concerns by consumer groups, hunger organizations, environmental organizations, as well as those of us who traditionally believe in free market agriculture, to make sure that our corn crop is not manipulated the way it is by an artificial government policy.

So I understand your disagreement. I understand that you are, as Mr. King noted, from Iowa, the capital of ethanol production, but I will just note that it doesn't sell as well in the hinterlands of many other parts of American agriculture, or the American economy in general.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Davis, 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS. It is good to be sandwiched between Mr. King, and then my colleague, Mr. Goodlatte. And I come back to you and say I agree with many of your statements. It is good, maybe, not to be the king of ethanol like Iowa is, but we are a close second in Illinois, and I do believe that many in the livestock industry are going to be taking advantage of the low prices, and also the oversupply of some of our corn this year. And I am concerned about what EPA is going to do with the RFS myself, so thank you for your support on that issue, and I will respectfully disagree with my friend and colleague Mr. Goodlatte.

A couple of issues that have already been brought up, I don't want to continue to ask you questions about them, but I at least want to give my thoughts. I hope that the Administration can do whatever it takes to help end the strike on the West Coast, because it is severely impacting products in the Midwest. And I would urge you to do whatever you can, and thank you for your vigilance.

Also, crop insurance, I am concerned with the President's proposal. I oppose the President's call for a \$16 billion cut to crop in-

insurance. Farmers have endured an estimated 43 percent decline in net farm income over the last 2 years, and now is not the time, as Chairman Conaway said, to cut out this public-private partnership. And this is working, and it requires producers to have skin in the game.

Now, a question I have, it relates to a provision that I helped author in the farm bill that would give agriculture a seat at the table as part of the EPA Science Advisory Board. I think we need agriculture to have a seat at the table as part of this board, and I was hoping that the EPA has consulted with you on appointing new members, since they extended the time period. Have they—has Administrator McCarthy reached out to USDA on this issue?

Secretary VILSACK. There has been communication about this, and I know that there has been communication—two-way communication, in terms of our suggesting and responding. The application period is extended to March—

Mr. DAVIS. Right.

Secretary VILSACK.—30, and they have focused on a variety of agricultural expertise that they are looking for, so—

Mr. DAVIS. Great. But they have reached out to you, and you guys have been in communication? That is great. Thank you. I am actually very glad to hear that. I reinforced last week to Administrator McCarthy, Mr. Secretary, the Congressional intent of this bill, and I would hope the USDA would agree with me that we want somebody who is not just an agricultural scientist to be a part of this board. We want some real world production agriculture experience. And I would hope that you would take my Congressional intent to the Administrator when the decision is made. So thank you very much for your time there.

Now, the issue that I always talk to you about, school nutrition. I wanted to thank you for putting out the guidance memo for the exemption that our schools can apply for, if they show hardship, for the whole grain requirement. And, also, I want to thank you for implementing the freeze in current sodium levels until science can further back up target levels, which would be shown to benefit the health of children.

In your view, how are the schools going to be able to benefit from these provisions, and do you support efforts to continue providing this flexibility?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, throughout this process we have indicated a willingness to be flexible, as circumstances dictated. We are very excited about the opportunities that we are pursuing with our Team Up For Success Initiative, which is designed to mentor and pair up school districts that are having a difficult time dealing with the new requirements, for whatever reason, with school districts that are similarly situated, similar size, similar geographic location.

There was a day and a half seminar that was done down in Mississippi, University of Mississippi. We sort of piloted this notion. It was very well received, and so we want to see if we can continue doing that. We obviously want to continue the smarter lunchroom grants, and the school equipment grants, and the other financial resources that we are making available. So it is a combination of a variety of things, and that is why we are seeing—

Mr. DAVIS. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK.—general acceptance notwithstanding, some of the concerns that have been expressed by school districts and by students. A recent survey showed 70 percent of elementary students, and 63 percent of high school students, were okay with what is going on. When I was governor, I would have died for a 63 or 70 approval rating, and I suspect Members of Congress would too.

Mr. DAVIS. I wouldn't die, but I would be very excited for that approval rating. I want to thank you for sending members of the USDA to my district to talk with school lunch officials, and hear some of their concerns. And I appreciate what you are doing in implementing the flexibility, Mr. Secretary, and I look forward to working with you on this issue as we continue to move forward, and express the concerns of my school districts. And I still have an open invitation to have you come to central Illinois and talk to our superintendents. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Thompson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary, good to see you.

Secretary VILSACK. Good to see you.

Mr. THOMPSON. I wanted to revisit, as a number of Members have, Title VIII—Forestry. A robust forestry program through USDA and the Forest Service, U.S. Forest Service, that is best for a healthy forest and healthy rural communities. And you had talked about wildfires as being a big issue, and it certainly is, but my perspective on that is that, quite frankly, we have had decades of bipartisan neglectful management within our forests, which has resulted in forests that are not healthy, that have not been well maintained. And a lot of that comes from outside influences, through courts, and sometimes not through courts, onto the USDA and the Forest Service.

But the fact is, though, I sense that we are making some progress, let me just say. I want to thank you for the 230 wood energy projects. I think that is a part of what we are working together, putting together to make progress, but we have a long ways to go.

And what I would like to do is work with you and the Subcommittee that has shared, once again, responsibility for forestry and conservation to look at that. How do we continue that transition, going from burning money, and that is what we do when we don't properly manage our forests, to making money, to growing money. We know that we can do that, because timber is a commodity. It is an ag commodity. I am pleased with the things that we are doing that you have talked about, as I have, about the construction, mobile storage. We are creating market demand, and that is really good.

So there were a couple tools that we did give you that you didn't address in the testimony that you submitted, and I just wanted to touch base on—these are additional helpful tools to help us in that transition. If we properly manage the forest, and get close to that yield rate, we will reduce wildfires. We can never totally eliminate them, but we will reduce dramatically. And taking money away

from marketing and selling timber only compounds wildfires, so we really need to step back and look at that.

So some of the things that we had in there—just three things real briefly, and get an update, if you can, for me. The Bio-Preferred Program, where we actually added timber, first time ever, into the Bio-Preferred Program was really good for forest products. That helps our domestic timber industry. That speaks to increasing demand.

The forest roads—a point source of pollution designation was, quite frankly—if we are going to get in and do good timbering, we have to re-open some of the roads. A lot of our roads were shut down in the 1990s. Thirty percent of National Forest roads were shut down in the 1990s by an Administration, and I am hoping that this non-point source of pollution would help us get more roads.

And, finally, the categorical exclusion, which we granted for routine activities on the forests, but, quite frankly, we were sucking money out of timbering, and harvesting, and production of green timber sales. Stewardship contracting is good, but it is the green timber sales that really makes the most progress, and helps, financially, in rural communities. So the categorical exclusion for routine activities I hope will help strengthen the budgets. In the end, we won't be taking monies.

So those are at least three tools we provided in the farm bill. Just real briefly, I didn't know if you had any update on any of those three.

Secretary VILSACK. We are moving forward on the Bio-Preferred Program. In fact, I have this on the list that I ask our folks on a monthly basis about when progress is being made. And we are looking at guidelines for designating those entities sometime summer to late summer.

Mr. THOMPSON. Great.

Secretary VILSACK. I am trying recall the issue of roads, and, honestly, right now I am having a hard time remembering—

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, of course, we are pushing this into a point source—

Secretary VILSACK. Right.

Mr. THOMPSON.—pollution designation, which means we wouldn't be able to get in to access the natural resources of the forest.

Secretary VILSACK. I will have to get back to you on it. I think there has been progress on that, but I want to make sure that I give you the right answer on that, so I will ask staff to get back to you.

On the categorical exclusion, we definitely want to move forward on that. We have designated areas where that can be used, and we are looking at not just the 3,000 acres that are involved in that. We have, as I said, 45 million acres.

Mr. THOMPSON. Correct.

Secretary VILSACK. To your point earlier, there is plenty of blame to go around here. This is not about blame. It is really about what we do about this.

Mr. THOMPSON. Where we go in the future.

Secretary VILSACK. And so we are aggressively using this, and we are aggressively looking at ways in which we can comply with

all the requirements, and evaluations, and assessment requirements, but also get this thing moving.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, I look forward to working with you as we transition away from burning money to growing money, so thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Secretary, I have a second question I want to ask you really quickly. It is rumored that the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee—

Secretary VILSACK. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN.—is wanting to eliminate red meat from our diets as a part of those guidelines. Coming from cattle country, I am a little fired up about that. I hope that the whole panel is focused on nutrition science in developing those guidelines. Can you talk to us a little bit about if, in fact, you have all the authorities you need to insist that it is nutrition science that drives that train?

Secretary VILSACK. Yes, and the operative word of your question was *rumored*. That is just not the case.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, with reducing portion sizes, all those—

Secretary VILSACK. No, first of all, these are recommendations, which the Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Agriculture are free to accept, reject, or modify, based on, ultimately, the decision-making that we are responsible for. Second, these folks get together, they look at a literature review of the latest science. It is supposed to be driven by science, and it needs to be driven by science. There are a lot of issues that have to be resolved yet. This is by no means finalized.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Secretary VILSACK. And then last, but not least, I would be surprised if the recommendations relative to meat are fundamentally different than they were in previous guidelines.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Can you give me a sense of what the timeline is, and the steps between here—

Secretary VILSACK. Sure.

The CHAIRMAN.—and that final recommendation and report, whatever it is that goes on?

Secretary VILSACK. I think that we will be getting the recommendations, rather, very soon, within a matter of weeks, if not days. Then our team basically begins the process of working collaboratively with HHS, and they are the lead agency in this go-round.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Secretary VILSACK. I would anticipate and expect by the fall to early winter we have whatever the guidelines are going to be.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Well, again, we have mentioned this science-based decision-making process, and nutrition science ought to drive the train, and not sustainability, or environmental things, or other things like that. It ought to be nutrition based science, so I appreciate that. Mr. Peterson has one more question.

Mr. PETERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I was out, I apologize, but I was talking to our State DNR Commissioner, and he reminded me, this issue where the court stopped the wolf management system in Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and Michigan. Hopefully the Fish and Wildlife is going to appeal this, although they

have not told us, and it has to be done pretty quick, so whatever you could do there.

But his concern is that if we turned over the management to the state, and they were using that system to trap and hunt the wolves to keep them in line. Now that they have been put back on the endangered species list, or whatever they have done, their concern is that there is no funding for the Wildlife Services situation in Grand Rapids. Apparently you had \$½ million in your budget for Wildlife Services for wolf control, and you transferred that, because there wasn't need anymore or something. And so his question is, in light of what happened with this court case, is there going to be a way that we can get money back into Wildlife Services to deal with this?

Secretary VILSACK. There was a little over \$700,000 that was essentially taken out in the Fiscal Year 2011 budget process, and I am not sure whether we took it out or you all took it out, but in any event, it was taken out.

We are currently providing technical assistance to producers, and we will, obviously, be careful in how we are providing resources and prioritizing those, but we are still able to provide technical assistance.

Mr. PETERSON. What does that mean?

Secretary VILSACK. Well, basically providing information as to how they might be able to control against predators, and if they have a predator problem, the possibility of partial or full reimbursement for losses.

Mr. PETERSON. Now, they were using the money to hire trappers, so would technical services include that?

Secretary VILSACK. I don't want to say yes or no to that because I am not sure of the answer, so let me get back to you.

Mr. PETERSON. That is what they need. There are some trappers out there—

Secretary VILSACK. Okay.

Mr. PETERSON.—so I wanted to put it on your radar, that it is a big issue out there. And the other thing, in the previous discussion we had on CRP, our State DNR Commissioner corroborated what I was trying to bring up to you about where this stuff could end up, so I would request you—if you could, if you could have your people talk to the state? Because they had a big summit out there on CRP, and they have some of the same concerns that I have. And if you could have your people visit with them? And they have some good ideas about what maybe should be looked at, going forward.

Secretary VILSACK. This would be the DNR of Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON. Yes.

Secretary VILSACK. Okay.

Mr. PETERSON. State DNR, yes.

Secretary VILSACK. Okay.

Mr. PETERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. LaMalfa, the Secretary has a meeting at 1:00, so be very brief.

Mr. LAMALFA. Yes, sir, thank you. I did not get another shot, so one more time on the drama with *Waters of the United States*, what we have is pretty clear, pretty sensible section 404 exemptions on what a farming activity is, with regard to plowing, disking, land

use, planting, things like that, and that is what is not being interpreted well, to reasonable people. So we really need your strong voice in those discussions you have with fellow Secretaries, and in the Administration. We really need that help on that, because they are doing it to us up in the district at home.

Coming back to the ports issue here, please get the word out, with additional force with Secretary of Labor and others in the Administration that have a piece of that, because we have citrus in my state, and others, they are going to go bad, as well as the almonds I mentioned that are sitting on the dock. And I will finish on the almonds.

I slipped you a note, in case I didn't get a chance to talk to you again, on almond exports to Pakistan, and there is a lot of funny business going on with that, and how they are also getting pushed in through India without our tariffs, without our pricing on that. So they are underselling the value of our almonds, mislabeled as some other fashion. So we will need to have that discussion in the USTR to help make sure that that the integrity of that trade with our almonds going over there is held in place, and——

Secretary VILSACK. We will make sure that they know you are concerned about this.

Mr. LAMALFA. Okay. Congressman Denham, my colleague, is also very interested in that too as well.

Secretary VILSACK. Yes, I have it.

Mr. LAMALFA. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate the indulgence.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. Ranking Member, you have a——

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Secretary, thank you so very much. I want to reiterate what I said at the beginning of the meeting. You and your team did a great job on implementing the farm bill to date, and I don't want any kind of nits and nats remain to cause us to lose sight of the very hard work that went into not having nits and nats in a lot of other places.

But as we go forward, there will be some things that we will need to have conversations with, but I want to thank you, your team, Brandon Willis over at RMA as well, for the work that they did on getting us to where we are today, and we shouldn't discount all that other hard work that kept it from being a problem, should we have anything like that, going forward. So thank you for your views today. We all share a keen interest in a vibrant rural America, and it is based in production agriculture at its core, and so we all share that goal. And I appreciate you being here today, and I appreciate the working relationship that we have had so far, and that we intend to have in the future.

Secretary VILSACK. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity, and certainly look forward to working with you and the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Under the rules of the Committee, the record of today's hearing will remain open for 10 calendar days to receive additional material and supplementary written responses from the witness to any question posed by a Member. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:49 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

Response from Hon. Thomas “Tom” J. Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Questions Submitted by Hon. K. Michael Conaway, a Representative in Congress from Texas

Question 1. During consideration of the farm bill it was estimated that CC would affect a very limited number of producers. What is the number of producers that have been notified (total and per state) that they don’t have an AD–1026 on file in order to be eligible for crop insurance premium subsidy?

Answer. In December 2014, the Risk Management Agency sent letters to those (see chart below) that were identified as possibly not having an AD–1026 on file. However, this is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the number of producers affected by conservation compliance as many producers may have received multiple letters due to the fact that a producer could be a member of several entities such as a corporation or LLC. Further, some of these individuals and entities may no longer farm or be in existence. Therefore, a significant amount of the letters went to individuals or entities that may not actually need to file an AD–1026, but this methodology was the only way to ensure that everyone was notified. The cost benefit analysis associated with the interim conservation compliance rule estimated 16,000 to 25,000 persons or entities would be impacted by the expanded requirements, and that slightly less than ⅓ of those producers will need a conservation plan.

Producer Letters

State	Sent	State	Sent
Non-U.S.	12	MT	628
AK	15	NC	1,007
AL	378	ND	2,013
AR	551	NE	2,582
AZ	265	NH	33
CA	11,029	NJ	111
CO	1,058	NM	221
CT	124	NV	83
D.C.	4	NY	845
DE	48	OH	1,346
FL	3,196	OK	931
GA	1,118	OR	791
HI	67	PA	716
IA	2,853	RI	13
ID	530	SC	353
IL	3,333	SD	1,222
IN	1,221	TN	694
KS	3,140	TX	5,401
KY	1,468	UT	64
LA	506	VA	486
MA	256	VI	1
MD	168	VT	153
ME	170	WA	2,261
MI	1,163	WI	1,376
MN	2,965	WV	51
MO	2,260	WY	211
MS	418	Total	61,909

Question 2. Does the USDA support working in partnership with the Private Sector regarding investments in rural infrastructure and projects to provide essential services?

Answer. Yes, USDA is working to ensure that rural communities have increased financing options for investments in rural infrastructure and essential services. For example, in July 2014, the White House Rural Council, Chaired by USDA Secretary Vilsack, convened the inaugural Rural Opportunity Investment Conference (ROI) to

promote the investment opportunities that exist throughout rural America. At the event the Rural Council announced a new public private partnership to drive more investment to rural infrastructure. The U.S. Rural Infrastructure Opportunity Initiative represents a new approach to catalyzing private investment in infrastructure projects in rural America.

USDA currently uses a variety of ways to encourage public-private partnerships to provide affordable and sustainable infrastructure projects through financing and technical assistance. StrikeForce was launched in 2010 as a pilot project to strengthen economies. Since 2010, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 500 community partners and public entities across twenty states to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty. USDA's Rural Utilities Service funds projects and provides training in rural areas to ensure the delivery of quality water and wastewater service, necessary for healthy, growing rural communities.

Question 3. Wouldn't the Public-Private Partnership model be enhanced if a more balanced budget allocation were applied to the guaranteed lending program rather than the USDA being the sole lender with the taxpayers' money entirely exposed through the direct loan program?

Answer. The direct lending done by the Federal government occurs primarily to achieve a policy goal that is not be fulfilled by the private sector or through loan guarantees. This is the case with USDA's direct loans. Many of USDA's direct lending programs were established to serve those families, farmers, and communities whose rural and economic condition do not afford them access to private lending. Many of these programs have a "credit elsewhere test". The public-private partnerships found in the guaranteed lending programs administered by RD and FSA are robust and growing. In addition, the Department has successfully used Community Facilities (CF) Direct funds to leverage over \$1.2 billion of private investment into 335 of the CF Direct projects built between FY11 and FY14. Every year CF Direct loans combine with hundreds of millions from institutional investors and the capital credit markets to strengthen investment in critical community infrastructure projects spurring economic growth, job creation and access to improved health care, education and other critical services. Working together, the direct and guaranteed programs expand access to credit into markets not well served by private lenders, in a way where the underwriting risk is captured in the subsidy rate and budgetary decisions to fund these programs to achieve the policy goals can be debated with the cost to the taxpayers clearly defined.

Question 4. Doesn't the probability of loan defaults become elevated if the Private Sector is excluded from shared underwriting, monitoring and overall risk?

Answer. Consistent with Federal policies, credit assistance should be targeted to avoid displacing private markets, and where assistance is warranted, partial guarantees through private lenders should be used unless a deeper subsidy is necessary to meet policy goals, or loans on reasonable financing terms are not available. Moreover, there is no evidence that Federal direct loans default more frequently than private sector loans in a similar risk category. USDA's careful underwriting and servicing standards maintain strong portfolio performance with modest delinquency and foreclosure rates.

Question 5. Considering the burden on the Agency's reduced staff to deploy a \$2.2 billion in Community Facilities Direct loans annually, how can USDA assure this Committee that monitoring loans made in prior years remains a top priority?

Answer. The Community Facilities (CF) Direct Loan program continues to make the soundness of its portfolio a top priority, as shown by consistently low delinquency and default rates. RD is cognizant of our responsibilities to properly manage credit risk, and has not changed its strong underwriting criteria and practices despite the opportunity presented by increased program levels. It should also be noted that CF staffing was increased by 44 percent in the first quarter of FY15. All of the new hires are underwriters.

CF Direct Lending is also expanding its monitoring of loans through public private partnerships (PPP) with institutional investors and the capital credit markets. PPPs bring additional underwriting and monitoring to a transaction, and distribute risk among the partners. CF has also used the PPPs to improve its knowledge and technical expertise on financing large and complex community infrastructure projects and build long-term partnerships for future transactions, servicing current loans, and communicating with applicants and borrowers.

Question 6. Since commercial banks are highly regulated by Federal or state authorities, won't the safety and soundness of the USDA's loan portfolio be strengthened when partnering with the Private Sector instead of "going it alone"?

Question 6a. Consider the following when partnering with the Private Sector:

Commercial bank partners will underwrite the entire risk of the loan, not just their share to determine the financial health and repayment ability of the borrower. Their conclusions are submitted to the USDA for their secondary review and concurrence thus easing the burden on Agency staff, especially for highly complex situations such as hospital loans.

Question 6b. Risk underwriting will follow bank policies and procedures which are examined annually by Federal or state regulators to ensure safe and sound lending practices (banks will have “skin” in the game).

Question 6c. Continuous monitoring is required after loan origination as the risk of default and loss is inherent throughout the life of a loan. Partnering with the Private sector enhances the proactive nature and effectiveness of this critical area of credit management.

Question 6d. In the event of a default, Private sector partners collaborating with the Agency provide additional attention and strategies to correct deficiencies and avoid loss.

Answer 6-6d. USDA-RD is not going it alone. The largest portion of RD’s loan portfolio comes from its Guaranteed Loan programs. These loans are originated by commercial lenders in accordance with their regulators. For those markets commercial lenders do not serve, loans may be originated directly by RD in accordance with an equally effective set of laws, regulations and practices that assure the safety and soundness of its portfolio. The Department welcomes private sector lending to families and communities whose rural and economic conditions do not currently afford them access to commercial credit.

Question 7. I am sure you are aware of the many concerns that the agriculture community have raised over the Administration’s *waters of the U.S.* proposed rule. The rule, as proposed, will have far reaching consequences for the agriculture community. Can you give us some examples of how have you advocated for rural America throughout this rulemaking process?

Answer. USDA is aware that its role in the development of *waters of the U.S.* proposed rule is one of informing and educating, and that the authority and responsibility for developing and implementing regulations to achieve the objectives of the Clean Water Act reside wholly with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army. Throughout the rulemaking process, USDA consistently emphasized agriculture’s outstanding stewardship track record in delivering water resource benefits locally, regionally, and nationally. The commitment in the proposed rule to maintaining and clarifying existing agricultural exemptions underscored the recognition of agriculture as a valuable partner in achieving clean water objectives. USDA also highlighted the need for straightforward language for the many complex concepts contained in the proposed rule, for example in definitions of tributaries and other waters, as the agricultural community has consistently called for clarity.

Question 8. What role will USDA play during the interagency review of the *waters of the U.S.* proposed rule?

Answer. USDA is invited to review and provide comments on *Waters of the U.S.* rule via the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) interagency review process. The Department is in the process of reviewing that draft currently and will be providing comments to OMB for EPA and Army for consideration as it works to finalize the rule. USDA’s objective in this process is to continue to ensure the impacts on agriculture are fully evaluated.

Question 9. Do you feel that stakeholders in rural America where properly consulted in the development of the *waters of the U.S.* proposed rule?

Answer. The Federal Government has established processes and procedures for developing regulations that allow for public input. In general, the public is normally provided 60 days to provide comments on a proposed rule. However, recognizing the significant public interest in this rulemaking, the EPA and Army, extended the comment period on the proposed rule several times. All involved recognize that this is an important rule with potential to affect many sectors in achieving its objective of good water quality for all Americans, rural and urban alike.

Question 10. The Committee is aware of APHIS’ proposed rule to establish a performance standard for authorizing the importation and interstate movement of fruits and vegetables. This appears to be a significant modification of the current process for reviewing import petitions by foreign governments, as it eliminates certain economic analysis requirements and also eliminates interagency review. Therefore, the Committee is interested in how the important rights of due process that are embedded in the current process will be maintained under this modified proposal. Additionally, the Committee would like an explanation as to why this modi-

fication only addresses fruits and vegetables rather than the full scope of import petitions for which APHIS is responsible.

Answer. In September 2014, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) proposed a rule to streamline the approval of fruit and vegetable imports into the United States and the interstate movement from Hawaii and the U.S. territories. Reducing the regulatory burdens associated with our import approval process will give us more leverage with trading partners when negotiating more streamlined approvals for U.S. exports and access to new markets, to the benefit of U.S. producers. By putting in place a process that will allow us to be more responsive to our trading partners' requests, we expect to obtain quicker and more immediate access for U.S. commodities into their markets.

Under the proposed rule, instead of codifying region- and commodity-specific requirements in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, APHIS would use a streamlined noticed-based process. However, USDA would continue to use the same rigorous, science-based pest risk evaluations it does now when it reviews import requests. Further, the public would still be able to provide comments on the Agency's proposal at two separate times: for 30 days when APHIS publishes the draft pest risk assessment, and for 60 days when APHIS publishes the notice. APHIS, as it does under the existing process, would not take final actions before considering and responding to the public's comments. APHIS would also ensure that the Office of Management and Budget and other interested Federal agencies receive advanced notice of APHIS' actions and have the opportunity to provide input. APHIS would also continue to analyze the economic effects of a potential pest introduction as part of the pest risk analysis process.

In developing the proposed rule, APHIS actively solicited feedback from the public and reached out to explain the need for the rule; APHIS twice extended the comment period to allow stakeholders more time to provide comments and held a webinar with interested stakeholders to address their questions. APHIS is currently reviewing the comments and input it has received—including comments expressing some of the same concerns in your question—and will address them and incorporate them, as appropriate, when publishing a final rule.

Although the 2014 proposed rule only addresses fruits and vegetables, it is not the only instance of APHIS using this type of approach. A 2007 rule established a notice-based process for certain fruits and vegetables that do not have region- or commodity-specific phytosanitary import requirements, such as irradiated or fumigated fruit. There are other instances of APHIS using this notice-based approach. This includes notices that recognize the animal health disease status of certain countries; notices to prohibit entry of certain articles under the plants-for-planting regulations; and notices that quickly add or remove acceptable treatments for imported commodities. APHIS will continue to look for opportunities to streamline its regulations to provide more flexibility and adaptability, especially where the regulations lay out clear performance-based standards.

Question 11. The President's FY16 budget request states that under the goal of enhancing mitigation capabilities, APHIS provides technical assistance and develops new mitigation tools and strategies to address plant pest outbreaks. In FY14, APHIS spent \$17.6 million on 73 projects in this goal area.

How many of these projects addressed Mexfly exclusion and eradication?

Answer. The projects referenced in the question are specific to those funded by section 10007 of the 2014 Farm Bill, Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Programs. In 2014, there were two Farm Bill projects for Mexfly exclusion and eradication, totaling \$1.793 million. There is a separate appropriated line item that specifically includes fruit fly activities.

Question 11a. What was the total funding level allocated to Mexfly?

Answer. Aside from the farm bill funding mentioned above, APHIS funds ongoing activities to detect and respond to exotic fruit flies, including Mexfly, from the Specialty Crop Pests line item. In FY 2014, APHIS spent \$56.175 million on fruit fly activities, with \$11.6 million of this amount going towards Mexfly eradication and prevention activities. APHIS plans to use \$59 million from the Specialty Crop Pests line item in FY 2015 for fruit fly activities overall and anticipates spending a similar amount on Mexfly as in FY 2014.

Question 12. The Mexican Fruit Fly Rearing Facility located in Edinburg, Texas is a critical component of the USDA APHIS Mexfly Eradication program. However, APHIS's ability to effectively manage and prevent Mexfly populations has been hindered due to the condition of the Edinburg sterile fly production facility, which is nearly 30 years old.

How does this facility rank based on the APHIS facility condition index (FCI)?

Answer. The last FCI rating evaluation of the Edinburg, Texas sterile fly facility was in 2011. The facility scored 0.21, which placed it into the category of USDA facilities that need the most repair.

Based upon the results of the FCI, and the needs of the sterile insect program (notably a need for an increased insect-rearing capacity), APHIS is developing a plan for potential construction or renovation of the facility.

Question 13. PPQ requires 200 million sterile fly releases per week in order to manage Mexfly populations in Texas, but as a result of constant problems and lack of production capacity at the Texas facility this goal is never achieved. In addition, Mexfly populations have significantly increased in Mexico within the last year, meaning it is imperative that USDA take immediate action to reduce the threat of Mexfly in Texas and other citrus producing states.

How many sterile flies are currently being released on a weekly basis?

Answer. On average, APHIS is releasing approximately 100 million sterile male Mexflies per week produced by the Texas facility. In addition, APHIS brings in approximately 70 million sterile male Mexflies per week from the facility in Guatemala to supplement the Texas program.

Question 13a. How many more are needed to address increased Mexfly populations?

Answer. Based upon the technical review APHIS has conducted of the needs of the fruit fly program in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the Agency believes the total needs are 400 million sterile male Mexflies, over 200 million more than it currently produces. APHIS recognizes that the demand for sterile insects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley is unable to be met by the existing sterile insect facility in Texas. Accordingly, the Agency is preparing a report to evaluate how best to meet those needs and what resources may be required.

Question 14. It has been reported that APHIS is in the process of developing a construction and renovation plan for the Edinburg sterile Mexfly production facility. When will this report be finalized?

Answer. APHIS expects the report on design and construction specifications to be completed in summer of 2015.

Question 14a. What can you tell me about USDA's plans for upgrading this facility? More specifically, what is the timeline for construction and when is the earliest date the facility can be completed? What resources are needed?

Answer. APHIS recognizes that the demand for sterile insects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley is unable to be met by the existing sterile insect facility in Texas. Accordingly, the Agency is preparing a report to evaluate how best to meet those needs and what resources may be required.

Question 14b. What is APHIS strategy for future investments?

Answer. APHIS recognizes that all of the fruit fly rearing facilities in Florida, Texas, and California are aging facilities and are likely in need of significant improvement or replacement. A systematic review of facility needs is being conducted to develop technical specifications, the statement of work, and other requirements for these three facilities. The information will be used in developing future plans for ensuring adequate production in all three facilities.

Question 15. In order to limit the economic damage caused by Mexfly, PPQ has successfully contained, controlled, eradicated pest populations and lifted Federal quarantines within the span of one growing season. However, on January 23, 2014, the Texas Department of Agriculture filed an emergency quarantine that has since been extended through January 2015.

What steps has APHIS taken to address this quarantine?

Answer. To prevent the spread of Mexfly to noninfested areas of the United States, APHIS and the Texas Department of Agriculture established a Mexfly regulated area that restricted the interstate movement of regulated articles in the quarantine area. APHIS has activated its emergency response protocols for fruit fly which include mobilizing Agency personnel to the Brownsville area and concentrating sterile fly resources in this area. The emergency response also includes intensive trapping and the use of chemical treatments. APHIS and the Texas Department of Agriculture are implementing additional strategies which include "new attract and kill" stations and targeted insecticidal ground sprays.

Question 15a. How does APHIS intend to improve Mexfly management and eradication efforts?

Answer. APHIS will continue with eradication efforts until full eradication is achieved. Central to this is the ongoing evaluation of the program's technical and infrastructure needs referenced in the previous question. Additionally, the Mexfly Technical Team, which includes APHIS and its international partners, is closely

evaluating the outbreak and making recommendations to enhance detection and control.

APHIS is also working to establish systems in Mexico to reduce the influx of the Mexfly population from Mexico into the United States, and is conducting risk analysis to understand the epidemiology of the outbreak in order to respond more effectively.

Question 16. We keep hearing from NIFA about an “iterative process” to improving the SCRI review. What recommendations have been received and how are they being implemented?

Answer. NIFA received 18 recommendations from the Specialty Crops Committee of the NAREEE Advisory Board and provided detailed responses to each recommendation. The Specialty Crops Committee recommendations and NIFA’s responses are included in the Farm Bill mandated Secretary’s report to the Congress, which is currently under development.

Question 17. The farm bill specifically included the statement, “final awards determinations should, to the maximum extent practicable, emphasize the results of the merit/relevance review process.” How did each grant application score on merit/relevancy review and how did this impact the final awards decision?

Answer. For the Specialty Crop Research Initiative Program, six page pre-applications were evaluated by panels of industry experts using a specific and consistent criteria for relevancy. The relevancy criteria include the level of stakeholder involvement in developing project goals and program evaluation, their continued engagement in the activities, and whether information developed by the project team will be delivered to stakeholders in ways that allow them to implement new and/or improved practices. These panels decide which pre-applications would be invited to submit full proposals for the program. If a pre-application was not deemed highly relevant, it was not invited to submit a full proposal. Full proposals are first evaluated for scientific merit. After the scientific merit discussion, the panel considers both evaluations (relevancy and scientific) and the comments of the relevancy reviewers to decide on the final ranking of priority for funding. Final award recommendations are developed by consensus after all evaluations are considered. The merit review panel also has a specific set of criteria on the scientific merit, including the potential impact of the work on the industry and outreach to the stakeholders.

Question 18. As you know, Congress has indicated its very clear intent through the most recent Farm Bill that industry be substantively and significantly involved in the review of the competitive grants programs including, but not limited to the Specialty Crop Research Initiative. Please tell us specifically what changes you are making in this year’s Request for Proposals to ensure that the projects funded are industry’s top priorities.

Answer. This year, content of pre-applications and full applications, as well as the process includes, industry representation. Currently SCRI has two separate and sequential review stages: relevancy review by the industry representatives and merit review by scientists from academia and industry. Only the preliminary proposals rated highly relevant by the industrial representatives are invited as full proposals. The merit review panel also contains industry scientists and considers both relevancy review panel comments as well as scientific merit in determining the ranking. Thus industry is involved in the initial selection of project pre-proposals as well as in final ranking of the projects for funding.

NIFA has always strived to ensure and improve industry involvement in the SCRI review process. In addition to the involvement of industry representatives during the relevancy review, industry scientists have been, and will continue to be, involved in the scientific merit review process. Whenever possible, other NIFA competitive programs include industry representatives and scientists on the review panels. NIFA offers several methods to submit stakeholder input including webinars and ongoing solicitation of comments on requests for proposals. NIFA considers this feedback when new requests for proposals are developed.

Question 19. Please describe in detail for us how the industry ranking of the most recent proposals to the SCRI will be conducted.

Answer. The Request for Applications, posted March 3, 2015, (http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/rfa/15_SCRIFinal%20to%20post.pdf) details how NIFA will conduct the industry relevancy review and the scientific merit review and how the outcomes of these processes will be combined to develop a funding recommendation. There are 3 points in the overall process where industry ranking will be considered. Industry relevancy reviewers will recommend which applicants will be invited to submit full applications. NIFA intends to abide by those recommendations.

Question 20. Please tell us exactly how the industry rankings were considered during the scientists' review of the proposals. Were all of the proposals considered by the science panel regardless of their industry rankings? Were the industry rankings communicated to the science panel reviewers?

Answer. SCRI is competed as two distinct areas: SCRI and the Citrus Disease Research and Extension program (CDRE). For both programs in 2014, applicants were invited to submit full applications based on the recommendation of the industry relevancy review panels. Presumably, the industry panels only recommended submission of applications that were highly relevant to their industries. All applications reviewed by the scientific merit panels contained the pre-application containing the Stakeholder Relevance Statement, and the reviews and comments from all industry reviewers. CDRE was competed after NIFA consulted with the SCC, so industry rankings were considered as described in the SCRI Management Plan.

Question 21. Mr. Secretary on November 13, 2014, the U.S. Forest Service issued a press release (<http://www.fs.fed.us/news/releases/forest-service-exceeds-yearly-forest-restoration-goals>) stating that you had exceeded your yearly restoration goals for Fiscal Year 2014. Among other things, the Forest Service claimed that they had maintained or restored 2.9 million acres and resulted in 2.8 billion board feet of timber volume sold. Since over 1 million acres appear to have been prescribed burned (89% of which was in the Southeastern Region), please provide for the committee the following information:

Of the 2.8 million acres on which the Forest Service conducted restoration work, how many acres:

Were treated with prescribed fire? Which Regions were these treatments in?

Answer. There were a total of 1,357,791 acres treated with prescribed fire.

Region	Rx Fire Acres
01	24,559
02	19,968
03	61,681
04	38,422
05	23,522
06	64,084
08	1,045,312
09	80,040
10	203
Grand Total	1,357,791

Question 21a. Were treated by wildfires being allowed to burn within prescription, or allowed to burn for resource benefit?

Answer. For 2014, 246,018 acres burned by wildfire were judged to have met land management objectives and were counted as fuel treatment accomplishments. NOTE: The 2009 guidance for federal fire policy does not categorize certain fires as "beneficial" at their onset as was the previous policy. Current policy guidance does continue to recognize that fire effects can produce beneficial results, however it does not require that there be explicit management intent to seek beneficial outcomes from a wildfire in order to count its' effects as beneficial. As a result, many wildfires are found to produce effects that are beneficial to natural resource objectives even though protection concerns required that they be suppressed either in part or in whole. At the discretion of the local Forest Supervisor, any wildfire initiated from a natural ignition source, such as lightning, may be assessed after the fire has been controlled to determine where fire effects have improved resource conditions and where they did not.

Question 21b. Were treated during fire suppression operations by ignition of backfires or other burnout operations?

Answer. We do not attempt to attribute acres burned to either the wildfire or fire-fighting efforts, because such estimates would be highly suspect and unreliable. When timing and conditions allow, firefighters may design their fire suppression actions with the intent of controlling the intensity and patterns of burning so as to minimize the negative effects and possibly even improve forest conditions. However, the convergence of the wildfire and any burnout actions initiated by firefighters typically occurs out of sight of the firefighters because safety concerns do not permit personnel to linger near the convergence zone; smoke, vegetation and terrain ob-

secure the view from any vantage point; the convergence may occur at night or several days or even weeks after the burnout occurred, so we do not have the means to track the information requested.

Question 21c. Were treated by mechanical removal of hazardous fuels?, including:

- i. Removal of non-commercial trees or brush
- ii. Removal of commercial timber that was sold pursuant to a timber sale or IRTC

Answer. 107,083 acres saw the removal of biomass which includes non-commercial trees and brush. "Removal of Biomass" is the physical removal of biomass from the site which is typically done by trucking the materials to a site where the biomass is stored for utilization. 150,951 acres were treated with commercial timber harvest. This includes acres treated through Integrated Resource Timber Contracts (IRTC).

Question 21d. Were treated by other methods including:

- i. Removal of noxious weeds
- ii. Hand trimming of brush
- iii. Treatment of lakes or streams to improve water quality.

Answer. The number of acres treated on Forest Service lands for invasive plants (noxious weeds) was 229,587. In addition, 30,721 acres of lakes and 3,488 miles of streams were treated for water quality and aquatic habitat restoration. Forest Service does not discern between hand trimming/thinning and other methods of trimming/thinning nor do we discern between activities in brush *vs.* tree forms of vegetation. Any manipulation done by hand is lumped together with mechanical treatments according to the treatment classifications found in table below.

2014 Forest Service Hazardous Fuels Treatment Acres Accomplished by Region and Method
2014⁶

Region	Rx Fire	Fire Use	Biological	Biomass Removal	Chemical	Chipping	Crushing	Grazing	Lop and Scatter	Machine Pile ¹	Mastication or Mowing	Thinning	Total
01	24,559	51,788	0	11,711	0	212	140	4,500	10,950	4,102	0	17,573	125,535
02	19,968	1,571	0	39,921	89	659	920	1,930	11,329	6,016	0	38,634	121,037
03	61,681	63,833	0	4,985	0	0	514	534	5,754	6,003	0	54,789	198,093
04	38,422	53,789	0	2,266	0	5,131	6,003	1,500	10,411	5,177	35	31,474	154,208
05	23,522	35,876	0	11,561	0	2,703	2,794	1,974	4,334	14,352	0	54,927	152,043
06	64,084	38,305	0	14,157	0	6,045	1,524	0	16,508	27,271	272	108,235	276,401
08	1,045,312	842	0	11,163	6,519	605	3,158	610	2,276	6,023	0	78,955	1,155,463
09	80,040	14	0	11,273	123	1,363	69	389	3,168	4,314	0	27,330	128,083
10	203	0	0	46	0	52	0	0	0	99	0	43	443
15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	1,357,791	246,018	0	107,083	6,731	16,770	15,122	11,487	64,730	73,357	307	411,960	2,311,306

* Includes Recovery Act acres

¹ FY14 Data Source: NFPORS Extract as of 11/01/2014 a.m.

² Includes Hand and Machine Pile acres.

Question 22. How many projects do you intend to implement this fiscal year under the Farm Bill Insect and Disease Treatment Areas authority? Please include how many acres you believe will be treated, and where those acres are.

Answer. Currently, nine farm bill projects have been entered in the Agency's Planning Appeals and Litigation System (PALS) database. Seven are categorical exclusions and two are EAs. Two of the seven CEs have decisions associated with them, and the Forest Service plans to implement them this year. The estimated size of these two projects to be implemented in FY 2015 is approximately 700 acres. The initial projects were developed in California, Idaho, Montana, New York and Utah where the new insect and disease provisions were identified as appropriate tools to address insect and disease issues on units of the National Forest System and where the projects are in areas where there has been support from the state and other partners. These initial projects will help the agency and its partners better understand and implement the new CE authority while additional projects are identified, planned and implemented.

Question 23. Please provide the Committee a detailed breakdown on CFLR project accomplishments, particularly:

- a. The state of NEPA documentation on CFLR projects, including:
 - Project selection date.
 - Date of scoping initiation.
 - NEPA documentation method selected (Decision Notice, CE, EA, EIS).
 - NEPA completion date (signed final EIS).

- b. How many acres have actually been treated on each CFLR project.

Answer. The agency has funded 23 projects through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program. Through the CFLRP, the agency and partners have made significant progress in reducing wildfire threats while exceeding the 5 year target for timber volume sold by nearly 25 percent. In addition to making 1.45 million acres more resilient to wildfire, the program improved the health of 1.33 million acres of wildlife habitat, and helped local economies support an average of 4,360 jobs each year.

Questions Submitted by Hon. Rodney Davis, a Representative in Congress from Illinois

Question 1. Mr. Secretary, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has proposed a new rule ("the proposed rule") that would revise Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection (AQI) fees on commercial transportation arriving at U.S. ports. This proposed new rule would affect incoming aircraft, ships, trucks and railroad cars. According to the summary of the proposed rule, APHIS is:

[We are] proposing to amend the user fee regulations by adding new fee categories and adjusting current fees charged for certain agricultural quarantine and inspection services that are provided in connection with certain commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international passengers arriving at ports in the customs territory of the United States. We are also proposing to adjust or remove the fee caps associated with commercial trucks, commercial vessels, and commercial railcars. We have determined that revised user fee categories and revised user fees are necessary to recover the costs of the current level of activity, to account for actual and projected increases in the cost of doing business, and to more accurately align fees with the costs associated with each fee service.¹

However, according to certain industries, under the proposed fee structure, a single international passenger flight would pay somewhere between \$225 and \$1,800 in AQI fees. In contrast, an all-cargo flight (regardless of size and how much cargo it is carrying) would pay a flat fee of \$225. Private flights (regardless of size and how many passengers or how much cargo it is carrying) would pay nothing at all. All flights—as you know—are subject to inspection.

It is unclear to individuals and entities outside of government what level engagement APHIS had with industry and affected parties, prior to drafting the proposed rule. In the future, I would encourage APHIS and any other rulemaking body to engage in dialogue with affected parties prior to proposing rules.

¹Summary of Proposed Rule available at <http://www.regulations.gov/#/documentDetail;D=APHIS-2013-0021-0002> (last visited Feb. 11, 2015).

As to my questions and requests, please provide the following documents and information to the U.S. House Agriculture Committee and my personal office:

- A narrative justifying the proposed fee structure and its failure to account for commercial carrier's cargo size.
- All documents and communications related to the analysis APHIS did to determine the proposed fee structure.
- All AQI cost data for both commercial cargo and passenger aircraft. With regard to passenger aircraft, identify which AQI costs for these flights are not covered by air-passenger paid AQI fees.
- A narrative justifying APHIS' decision to collect amounts from air passengers that exceed their inspection costs in order to fund reserves rather than collect amounts from commercial air passengers.

Answer. USDA agrees that stakeholder engagement is an important part of rule-making; and in that spirit, went to great lengths to educate interested parties and obtain their feedback about this rule. Throughout the process, APHIS held meetings with industry and affected parties to:

- Explore potential regulatory alternatives to adjusting user fees,
- Determine the need for a formal review of AQI user fees,
- Share the user fee review methodology,
- Provide an overview of the detailed findings of the user fee review,
- Explain the proposed user fee adjustments, and
- Receive feedback from affected stakeholders on the proposed changes.

In total, APHIS conducted six formal stakeholder meetings between 2011 and 2015 along with numerous small group meetings with affected stakeholders upon request. In addition, APHIS published information on its site about the user fee review, including two reports prepared by Grant Thornton on the fee setting process and the comprehensive findings of the review. In April 2014, when APHIS published the proposed rule to adjust user fees, the Agency conducted extensive outreach to impacted and interested stakeholders. This included briefings for House Agriculture Committee staff and other congressional Committees; courtesy calls and direct emails to representatives of affected industries, national associations, and potentially interested industry groups; and a conference call with interested stakeholders. In addition, APHIS sent messages through the APHIS Stakeholder Registry to announce the proposed changes and inform stakeholders of upcoming stakeholder meetings. Messages sent via the Registry in 2014 and 2015 were delivered to more than 11,000 unique subscribers.

- A narrative justifying the proposed fee structure and its failure to account for commercial carrier's cargo size.

APHIS followed federal guidance, including OMB A-25, Government Accountability Office (GAO) guidance for fee setting, and Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board Statement of Accounting Standards Number 4, to appropriately account for the AQI program costs used to determine the appropriate fees. The proposed fees represent the true cost to the Federal government for providing AQI services for commercial air carriers for cargo and passenger inspection. All arriving international commercial flights, except those specifically exempted under 7 CFR § 354.3(e)(2) (exclusive government aircraft, emergency landings, *etc.*) are subject to inspection because they may pose a sanitary or phytosanitary risk and are therefore subject to paying the commercial airline user fees.

In establishing AQI user fees, the proposed rule did not differentiate based on cargo size. Any cargo could carry insect pests, weed seeds, waste material from garbage, or other waste that is capable of harboring animal disease and may therefore be subject to inspection. Rather, the costs of our AQI activities were made contingent upon the time and effort required of APHIS and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staff to perform those activities identified via activity based cost modeling. Those activities must be performed regardless of the size or volume of the shipment; therefore, the size of the shipment does not determine the amount of the fees.

- All AQI cost data for both commercial cargo and passenger aircraft. With regard to passenger aircraft, identify which AQI costs for these flights are not covered by air-passenger paid AQI fees.

The 2010, 2011 and 2012 actual cost data for both air passenger and commercial aircraft used in the model for calculating the proposed fees are available at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2013-0021>.

The air passenger fee covers the cost of inspections related to passengers and the passenger and crew compartments of the plane, while the commercial aircraft fee covers cargo-related inspection costs. Specifically, the air passenger fee covers the costs for, among other things, screening passengers upon arrival for agricultural products by CBP Agriculture Specialists and CBP Officers; inspecting baggage using CBP agriculture canines and specialized non-intrusive inspection equipment; inspecting the interior of the passenger aircraft; monitoring the storage and removal of regulated international garbage from the aircraft; safeguarding and disposing of any seized or abandoned prohibited agricultural products; and identifying pests found on prohibited agricultural products brought into the country by air passengers.

The commercial aircraft fee charged to passenger flights covers, among other things, costs incurred in reviewing manifests and documentation accompanying incoming cargo; targeting higher-risk cargo for inspection or clearance; inspecting agricultural and agricultural-related commodities, international mail, expedited courier packages, containers, wood packaging and other packing materials and determining entry status; inspecting the aircraft hold or exterior for contaminants, pests, or invasive species; identifying pests found during those inspections; and safeguarding shipments pending PPQ determination for treatment or final disposition. If cargo being transported on a passenger flight requires treatment due to pest infestation, there would be an additional fee for such treatment.

- A narrative justifying APHIS' decision to collect amounts from air passengers that exceed their inspection costs in order to fund reserves rather than collect amounts from commercial air passengers.

The proposed air passenger fee is \$4 per passenger—a reduction of \$1 from the current fee structure—and represents the true cost to the Federal government for providing AQI services. Section 2509(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (21 U.S.C. 136a, FACT Act) authorizes APHIS to establish fees in a reasonable manner to recover funds spent on safeguarding activities. In addition to authorizing APHIS to collect user fees for inspection and related activities, the FACT Act directs APHIS to ensure that the fees cover the costs of administering the user fee program and maintaining a reasonable balance, also known as a “reserve,” to ensure that funding is available in the event that there are temporary reductions in the demand for AQI services leading to reduced fee collections, as was experienced in the past. As there are fixed costs (*i.e.*, cost that do not fluctuate with demand for AQI services) that the program incurs, a reserve is needed to ensure continuity of service in times of reduced fee collection. This provides certainty to importers regarding the availability of inspection services. In addition, the FACT Act, as amended, also requires that the cost of AQI services with respect to passengers as a class should include the cost of inspections of the aircraft or other conveyance. In the case of air passengers, the inspection of the aircraft includes the passenger and crew compartments.

- All documents and communications related to the analysis APHIS did to determine the proposed fee structure.

In April 2014, APHIS published the proposed rule, User Fees for Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Services, with a 60 day comment period that was extended 30 days. APHIS made several documents available with the proposed rule outlining the data used and analysis conducted in support of the proposed fee structure. These documents, “*Fee Setting Process Documentation and Recommendations, October 2011*” and “*AQI Fee Schedule Assessment and Alternatives, May 2012*” along with the approximately 250 stakeholder comments submitted on the proposal are available at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2013-0021>.*

Question 2. Mr. Secretary, on the subject of pollinators and pollinator health, I have the following questions:

What research is currently being conducted on proper habitat and nutrition for managed bees? Are forage and nutrition significant contributors to bee health? How significant is the Varroa mite problem for bee health and what steps is the Department taking to address this problem?

Answer. Currently, investigations are underway through the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). These investigations study the nutritional needs of colonies

* **Editor's note:** the docket, *in toto* is retained in Committee file.

throughout the year and the effects of nutritional stress on immunity, queen retention, and colony growth and survival. Studies are conducted at multiple levels. At the molecular level, the role of beneficial microbes in the bees and the colony food stores are being investigated by scientists in Tucson, Arizona, to determine the contributions of microbial communities to nutrient synthesis and food digestion and storage.

The effects of nutrition on the chemical communication system in the colony, especially as it relates to worker-queen interactions, also are being investigated. This is particularly important due to high queen losses experienced by commercial beekeepers. Studies were conducted comparing the nutritional quality of supplemental diets and natural forage and the effects on colony health. The resulting pathogen loads, and queen and overwintering colony loss, were determined and found to be higher in colonies fed the supplements. The nutritional analyses can serve as a basis for improving the nutritional quality of commercially available supplements. The study results pointed to the need for natural forage to ensure colony health and survival.

ARS scientists in Logan, Utah, are also evaluating the use of Conservation Reserve Program acreages to provide floral forage to multiply alfalfa leafcutting bees to supplement commercial populations for alfalfa seed production. Canadian populations must now be bought to pollinate alfalfa for seed. After 2 years of successful pilot trials, the scientists are now monitoring commercial production efforts (in collaboration with Forage Genetics). ARS scientists are quantifying pollen and nectar production, the bees' nest cell production, and specific losses (*e.g.*, release dispersal) and mortality factors that subtract from reproduction. Sweet clover is delivering annual, profitable population increases, which will be improved once several pestilence problems are fixed.

ARS scientists are addressing the continued feeding and reproduction of blue orchard bees for almond pollination after that crop's petal fall. Working with commercial growers, they are field-testing growing flowering resources that bloom right after almond, monitoring flower use, and later, provisioning and reproduction back at the nests. This promising strategy is needed to sustain these pollinators' managed populations for almond pollination, thus making it an economically attractive complement to honey bees.

These scientists are also studying ways to improve shelter designs for managed leafcutting bees. Diverse shelter designs in use today vary greatly in interior microclimate, and some are harmful (too hot) for bees or their progeny. Shelter design may also be influencing when and under what conditions healthy diapausing (a state of metabolic arrest similar to hibernating bears) alfalfa leafcutting bee brood is produced. The goal is to understand variation in shelter microclimate so that changes to design and/or board placement can provide environmental conditions most favorable for brood production.

ARS scientists are studying ways to improve the acceptability and practicality of nesting materials for cavity-nesting mason bee species, such as the blue orchard bee, which are useful for pollinating western U.S. berry and nut (almond) crops. New and practical designs are being tested to improve a prototype design by ARS of an affordable, portable nesting shelter. Alternate cavity designs to supplant straw inserts in polystyrene nesting boards are being explored with a manufacturer. A foolproof emergence box design has been designed and tested. A bee nesting attractant product was developed and a patent application has been filed. This product attracts blue orchard bees to nesting blocks, thus increasing the ability to maintain these orchard pollinators in commercial domiciles.

ARS scientists recently completed studies about wildflowers used by bees and grazing management practices, specifically their effect on the abundance and diversity of wildflowers utilized as forage by native bees in rangeland pastures of Wyoming. They found that, over time, a large-scale (30,000 acres) nest-rotation, pasture management scheme used by The Nature Conservancy led to less bare ground and shrub cover and more grass for cattle to eat. Wildflower diversity and densities remained mostly the same, although highly variable from pasture to pasture. At more favorable sites and years, wildflowers used by bees benefited. In harsh sites or drought years, the effect was not apparent.

NIFA also funds extramural research to address honey bee nutrition. NIFA-funded researchers at Iowa State University a combination of laboratory and field-based studies to examine the effects of three viruses and nutritional stress on worker bees and their colonies to determine whether these two negative factors together can cause the symptoms of CCD. These findings may lead to changes in apicultural management, such as: more informed virus quarantine practices, colony supplementation with multi-source pollen when bees are nutritionally stressed, allowing bees

to forage on crops of high nutritional value after low, and encouraging farmers and beekeepers to use land management practices that increase floral diversity.

NIFA-funded researchers at University of Florida, Gainesville are assessing the effects of exposure to pesticides and other xenobiotics on the survival, health and productivity of honey bee colonies and pollinator abundance and diversity. One component of this project is to determine how land management practices affect pollinator nutrition and how nutrition affects honey bee colony productivity and success in the context of pesticide and xenobiotic exposure.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) supports surveys and research to protect the health of honey bees and other pollinators. APHIS is funding projects with the Pollinator Partnership to test the associations between honey bees and common nursery plants to determine the current capacity of the nursery industry to promote bee forage. In addition, this will help identify plants for which the nursery industry should actively investigate alternative pest and disease management strategies. In addition, *Project Apis m.* is conducting an APHIS-funded study to support an increase in the quality and amount of habitat and forage for honey bees, and to relate the impact of that forage on mitigating honey bee pests and diseases.

USDA is also monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of CRP and EQIP conservation covers established to provide honey bees and other pollinators with nutritious forage habitat. FSA and NRCS have entered into an agreement with USGS's Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center to identify the plants used by honey bee colonies in 5 states: Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. This information will be combined with observations of colony survival rates to enhance USDA honey bee conservation effectiveness. In addition, FSA has agreements or contracts with USGS in Ft. Collins, the Oklahoma State University USGS Cooperative Study Unit, Iowa State University, and the Pollinator Partnership to monitor and assess the effectiveness of various CRP practices on honey bee productivity and native pollinator use.

As for the Varroa mite problem, Varroa is one of the most important threats to honey bee health worldwide. Beekeepers rely on a variety of control measures including resistant lines of bees, two of which were developed by ARS scientists in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that have won Federal Consortium Technology Transfer awards. Other measures include chemical and non-chemical control strategies, e.g., the commercial HopGuard developed by ARS scientists in Tucson, Arizona.

ARS continues to screen compounds for activity in controlling Varroa. Research into the interactions of Varroa and viruses is ongoing and ARS is involved in working to control Varroa with a variety of sustainable techniques, including RNAi (gene silencing) and biological control agents.

NIFA also funds a variety of work on pests and diseases of pollinators. University of Minnesota extension specialists are assisting honeybee queen breeders in selecting for hygienic behavior, a trait that helps bees defend against Varroa mites and two other diseases, American foulbrood and chalk brood.

NIFA-funded Cornell scientists are testing the hypothesis that producing smaller colonies will give the mites fewer opportunities to reproduce and so will lower the per capita level of mite infestation of the bees.

NIFA-funded researchers at Penn State University are investigating the overall role of formulation ingredients added to chemicals used to control Varroa mites. The bulk of synthetic organic chemicals are formulation ingredients, generally recognized as safe, having no mandated tolerances, and whose residues remain unmonitored. Surfactants and solvents are showing high eco-toxicity to fish, amphibians, honey bees and other non-target organisms.

Varroa mites are a particularly detrimental honey bee pest so APHIS is supporting research to monitor for resistance to pesticides used for Varroa control. APHIS also collaborated with ARS and EPA to register oxalic acid as an active ingredient in pesticides for Varroa control. In addition, ARS and North Carolina State University are investigating interactions between Varroa and viruses through APHIS-funded projects.

Question 2a. Two summits on pollinator health were conducted last year on the impact of Varroa (February) and forage and nutrition (October). When will the findings from those summits be finalized and made public?

Answer. The proceedings from the Varroa Mite Summit and the Forage and Nutrition Summit are completed, have been reviewed by USDA and EPA, and have been released in support of the Strategy developed in response to the Presidential Memorandum on Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators.

Question 2b. Reliable data on bee population is challenging to find. What work is USDA doing to create a reliable system for a bee census so that a baseline can be determined?

Answer. USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) plans to measure colony loss on a quarterly basis. Survey work is anticipated to begin this spring. The current plans are for NASS to publish its first colony loss estimates in April 2016.

Additionally for FY 2016, NASS has requested an increase of \$500,000 for Pollinator Health Surveys as part of the government-wide Pollinator Health Initiative on Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). These additional funds will allow NASS to collaborate with USDA and other Federal partners to create an annual survey designed with the primary purpose of providing:

- (a) Improved baseline data and annual data to determine the extent of CCD,
- (b) Quantitative information on potential causal factors.
- (c) Enable more analysis of the Colony Loss survey data;
- (d) Determine if a larger sample size is needed for the Colony Loss surveys;
- (e) Discover if and the extent to which pollination costs for any commodities have increased in association with CCD; and
- (f) Enable more analysis of the pollination cost data.

NASS is committed to collaborating with USDA and the other departments on a unified and complementary approach to develop and support the Pollinator Health Initiative. This will allow NASS and its collaborators to address critical information needs at an accelerated pace and guide honey bee management at a national scale.

Question 2c. EPA has encouraged State Departments of Agriculture to work with local stakeholders to determine the best practices for managed pollinator partnership plans. How is USDA coordinating with State Departments of Agriculture and providing any needed expertise or resources to help the departments develop plans?

Answer. The USDA Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP) staff is participating in the process with the American Association Pest Control Officials (AAPCO), which is the association that is spearheading the development of these plans. OPMP staff is also involved with individual states, and the land-grant universities in those states, in the development of the crop specific pollinator plans. USDA also contracted with the Pollinator Partnership in producing baseline data on adoption of best management practices by major cropping systems in protecting honey bees. That report was posted in 2014.

Question 2d. What steps is the Department taking to ensure that findings from research and other pollinator-related activities are coordinated with any actions EPA is taking to enhance bee health?

Answer. USDA-ARS has worked closely over the past few years with EPA to enhance our understanding of the potential role of pesticide exposure on pollinator health. Activities include several ARS scientists serving on an EPA Science Advisory Panel to examine protocol testing and potential improvements needed to test for sub-lethal effects. ARS scientists have worked closely with EPA to design research protocols that would generate data to inform EPA of potential pesticide impacts. Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Scientific Advisory Panels (SAP), providing a public review of their reports, include:

- *Characterization and non-target organism data requirements for protein plant pesticides*, Arlington, VA, 1999.
- *Bt plant pesticides risk and benefit assessments*, Arlington, VA, 2000.
- *Pollinator Risk Assessment Framework*, Arlington, VA, Sept. 11–14, 2012. Jenkins, R., M. Berenbaum, K. Delcos, N. Fefferman, G. Hunt, R. James, S. Klaine, J. McManaman, N. Ostiguy, J. Pettis, J. Pistorius, T. L. Potter, M. Sandy, A. Schwab, D. Schlenck, D. Tarpy. *A set of scientific issues being considered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency regarding pollinator risk assessment framework*. Advisory Panel Meeting Sept. 11–14, 2012. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C. (Government Report).

The Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, has hosted two workshops specifically for EPA personnel to help educate individuals within EPA on pollinator biology. ARS continues to consult regularly with EPA on a variety of pollinator related issues, including sub-lethal pesticide effects and the need for alternative Varroa mite controls. ARS worked closely with EPA in 2015 to bring a new mite control product to market, oxalic acid, which provides a new tool to beekeepers to manage Varroa mites.

Another contribution is in the area of bee and mite population modeling. Quantifying the effects of pesticides on honey bees is difficult due to the social structure

of colonies. Effects from sublethal exposure to pesticides might not be obvious or immediate. One tool that may facilitate the evaluation of pesticide effects on honey bees that also incorporates multiple stressors that bees encounter is a model that simulates the processes of a honey bee colony and the impacts on the colony following pesticide exposures.

There are several models in the literature with varying levels of complexity and evaluation (*e.g.*, validation with empirical data, analysis of model sensitivity and uncertainty); however, none of the models were considered suitable for pesticide risk assessments in a regulatory context by the EPA because the models did not adequately account for effects of pesticides on bees.

When reviewing the existing honey bee colony models, EPA identified the BEEPOP model developed by ARS scientists in Tucson, Arizona, as one of the most important of the colony simulation models given that portions of other models that simulate in-hive dynamics are based on BEEPOP. The model allows for consideration of site-specific weather, which makes the model transferrable to different locations in the United States. Furthermore, ARS scientists updated BEEPOP to include the effects of Varroa mite infestation and treatments on colony growth and survival (VARROAPOP). ARS scientists are now working with EPA to incorporate pesticide exposure in the VARROAPOP model to determine the effects on colony population dynamics. With these modifications, VARROAPOP will be readily parameterized using existing biological and pesticide-specific data to determine the effects of pesticides on colony growth and survival.

ARS scientists also contribute to EPA collaboration by presenting talks, *e.g.*, the Webinar, “3,500 Species of bees: what to do with them all?” for the Environmental Protection Agency, Arlington, VA, 2011.

ARS and other USDA, EPA, and other government agencies also participate in the Bee Health and Colony Collapse Disorder Steering Committee (since 2007) and now the Pollinator Health Task Force, initiated in response to a memorandum by President Obama on pollinator health (2014).

Questions Submitted by Hon. Ted S. Yoho, a Representative in Congress from Florida

Question 1. Secretary Vilsack, in most instances, fine schedules are made public, for example with traffic infractions, because the public has a right to know.

In that same regard, the general public has a right to know how government agencies, like USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), calculate fines. Could you tell me why USDA or APHIS have not shared the table of penalty guidelines as disclosed in a March 2013 press release with the regulated community? As I understand it, some in the regulated community were denied the opportunity to see this information by FOIA and even Members of both the House and Senate are still waiting for a response to a letter asking for this.

Secretary Vilsack, transparency in government is an important facet of democracy and a pillar of principle with the current Administration. I and several other Members requested to see information regarding a table of penalty guidelines that USDA and APHIS use to enforce the Animal Welfare Act. Could you tell me, so I may share with my colleagues, the status of our request to see the table and when could we expect a response?

Answer. I appreciate your interest in this issue and am happy to provide you with additional information on this issue. As outlined in my June 9, 2014, response to your and several other Members' letter on this issue, APHIS takes into account four factors outlined by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) for assessing penalties: (1) the size of the business; (2) the gravity of the violation(s); (3) whether or not the regulated entity has shown good faith; and (4) the history of previous violations. APHIS staff would be happy to brief you or your staff on the factors we take into consideration in determining penalties under the AWA.

While I understand the interest in reviewing the AWA penalty guidelines themselves, USDA has not provided the guidelines in their entirety to the regulated community or others because the guidelines contain agency procedures and techniques for enforcing the AWA and assessing penalties for violations of the AWA. Moreover, release of these guidelines could lead to circumvention of the AWA. For example, the penalty guidelines contain additional information considered policy and guidance that would allow licensees to calculate the cost of doing business with certain AWA violations and to circumvent the penalty assessment. Additionally, subjects of enforcement actions may try to use them as a basis for arguing for reduced penalties in their own cases. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the version of the redacted guidelines we have released previously, I am happy to provide it to you. In addition, I am sharing below a simplified version of the AWA penalty work-

sheet that has been released publicly by the USDA Office of Inspector General and provides a general overview of how penalties are currently calculated.

Table 1 Simplified Penalty Worksheet

AWA Maximum Penalty for One Violation		\$10,000
Factors to Consider	Range of Reduction	Scenario
Size of Business	¹ 0 to 50%	(\$5,000)
Prior History	0 to 30%	(\$3,000)
Gravity	0 to 17%	(\$1,700)
Penalty Subtotal		\$300
Good Faith	0 or 25% of Penalty Subtotal	(\$75)
OGC Amount ²		\$225
Settlement	0 or 75% of OGC Amount	³ (\$169)
Initial Stipulation		\$56
Discretionary	Up to $\pm 30\%$ of Initial Stipulation	(\$17)
Final Stipulation ⁴		\$39
Highest Reduction Possible ⁵		99.6%

¹ This reduction is up to 50 percent for dealers. For all others, the reduction is up to 43 percent.

² The OGC amount may also be affected by the use of the discretionary reduction.

³ The actual effect of this reduction in most of the cases we reviewed was significantly higher than all other reductions on the worksheet.

⁴ This hypothetical example is for one violation only; stipulations usually include fines for multiple violations, which would increase the stipulation accordingly.

⁵ This is the highest reduction possible; the highest reduction in the cases we reviewed was 97 percent.

I would like to note, however, that the USDA Office of Inspector General published an audit in December 2014 that focused on APHIS' oversight of research facilities. OIG raised concerns with respect to two examples of reduced penalties that APHIS had calculated; therefore, the Agency is reviewing the penalty guidelines and worksheets to determine whether APHIS should adjust the reductions offered when determining penalties under the AWA.

Questions Submitted by Hon. James P. McGovern, a Representative in Congress from Massachusetts

Question 1. I have heard from farmers in my district with questions about H.R. 609, the Safe Food Act of 2015, which would establish a single Federal food safety agency. What are your thoughts on this legislation? How might it impact animal and meat inspections by USDA and USDA food safety programs such as GAP and harmonized GAP?

Answer. While USDA has not fully evaluated the Safe Food Act, proposals such as H.R. 609 are part of a larger conversation on improving public health.

The Administration's FY 16 budget included a proposal for a single food safety agency. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 48 million Americans are affected by foodborne illness each year. 128,000 of these individuals become hospitalized and 3,000 die. It is clear that the food safety system could benefit from increased coordination beyond the extensive efforts that already exist. Nothing about the way FSIS conducts its work changes as a result of the President's proposal. This is an initial step in what, if it goes forward, will be a long process. Constant line inspection is the cornerstone of FSIS' work and the President's budget requests \$1.012 billion dollars in operational funds for FSIS to continue this year within USDA. FSIS employees will continue their important work of ensuring the safety of America's supply of meat, poultry and processed egg products.

Question 2. I have also heard from several farmers about the issue of soil health. I understand that NRCS has a main focus on soil health and works with growers nationally on the importance of soil health for successful crop production and environmental stewardship. What role, if any, does EPA have in soil health? Does USDA have a plan to work cooperatively with EPA on soil health?

Answer. USDA–NRCS has a major emphasis on Soil Health and works with many partners to promote soil health systems and practices. Fully functioning, healthy soils absorb and retain more water, cycle nutrients better, are easier to manage, and suppress pests and pathogens more effectively. Healthy soils are more resilient to drought as they store more water that plants can access. With lower runoff and ero-

sion during heavy rainfall, the risk of flooding of downstream communities and water pollution is reduced, and food production can be maintained even with extreme weather events. Additionally, soil health management practices help maintain biodiversity, including supporting habitat and food for agriculturally critical pollinators, among other important functions.

USDA–NRCS has been working to expand the tools and approaches and partnerships to accelerate the adoption of soil health management systems (SHMS). In 2014, USDA awarded \$9.5 M in NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants to 23 partners in 24 states to evaluate and increase adoption of SHMS. The new Regional Conservation Partnership Program awarded at least 17 projects with a soil health focus in FY 2015. A National Cover Crop and Soil Health Conference in 2014 conducted in partnership with the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, reached approximately 6,000 landowners on the benefits of cover crops and SHMS. USDA already partners with many entities to enhance soil health, and is open to expanding that partnership to include any agency or organization with a mission and an interest in adoption of soil health management systems.

EPA’s Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee (FRRCC) established in 2008, provides independent policy advice, information, and recommendations to the Administrator on a range of environmental issues and policies that are of importance to agriculture and rural communities. In January 2015, this Committee dedicated its deliberations to soil health and the environmental benefits of healthy soils. Those deliberations culminated in discussions about opportunities to advance soil health, agricultural certainty, and outreach to agriculture. So while soil health is not a specific mission for EPA, the agency has demonstrated interest in the potential benefits of soil health practices related to issues over which the agency has regulatory responsibilities, such as water or air quality.

Question 3. The rule for the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is pending at the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Do you have an estimate on when that rule will be published? Because this program was a consolidation of three well-known existing programs, the need for stakeholder engagement and farmer education will be significant. Can you tell us what your plan is to get farmers and organizations up to speed on the new program and rule changes so we can best utilize this program? What is the timeline for that process?

Answer. The ACEP Interim Rule was published on February 27, 2015 and has a 60 day public comment period that ended April 28, 2015. NRCS will be conducting outreach and providing educational opportunities to stakeholders through a series of instructional and question and answer webinars. For example, NRCS will provide ‘ACEP–ALE 101’ and ‘ACEP–ALE Certification Process’ webinars for partners in April. Additionally, at the invitation of various stakeholder groups, NRCS State and National Headquarters staff will be participating in stakeholder meetings over the coming months to provide information and address questions. NRCS is also providing extensive training for Agency employees at the state level to ensure that they are well equipped to provide assistance to interested applicants on the new ACEP policy and procedures. Throughout April, NRCS will participate in a series of at least four live net-conferences hosted by Tribes to provide specific information and answer questions on the ACEP related to Tribal lands and opportunities for Tribes to participate in the program.

Question 4. I understand that because the ACEP rule is currently under review you can’t talk about specific provisions, but I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the need to make this program work for farmers of all sizes—specifically access to this program for beginning and new farmers. As you know, the farm bill included specific language that talked about the viability of these easements for keeping land in agriculture and keeping farmers on the farm. That is especially critical to my constituents in Massachusetts. Can you talk about your strategy for beginning farmers and this program?

Answer. During the process of developing and finalizing the interim rule, NRCS actively engaged the stakeholder community to outline key statutory changes. NRCS paid attention to the needs of beginning and new farmers in the process. For example, the ACEP interim rule addresses important issues such as, identifying as a criterion for projects of special significance whether a farm or ranch is operated for the purpose of increasing participation in agriculture and natural resource conservation by under-served communities, veterans, beginning farmers or ranchers, or farmers or ranchers with disabilities.

NRCS has skilled professionals at the field level who work with beginning and new farmers as well as other historically under-served producers, to recommend conservation solutions to their current natural resource concerns that may be available under ACEP, and assist with establishing long-term viability of their oper-

ations through ACEP and other NRCS programs. In addition to its dedicated county staff, NRCS has entered partnership agreements with Community Based Organizations, Tribal Organizations, 1890 and 1994 Land-Grant Institutions, to expand the agency's reach to historically under-served farmers and ranchers.

Question 5. I have also received questions about regional equity, which as I understand, is no longer based on a flat \$15 million minimum, but on a percent of overall funding. Can you tell me what that percentage will likely translate to in available dollars per state this year?

Answer. The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) revised the calculation for regional equity from a flat amount of \$15 million per state to a calculated amount based on 0.6 percent of the funding made available for the conservation programs authorized under subtitle D, (except the Conservation Reserve Program), subtitle H, and subtitle I of the Food Security Act of 1985. For FY 2015, the regional equity calculation for the covered programs is shown below:

Program	Funding Provided	RE per State
EQUIP	\$1,347,000,000	\$8,082,000
ACEP	393,975,000	2,363,850
RCPP	92,700,000	556,200
CStP	1,164,151,375	6,954,908
Total	1,950,477,000	17,956,958

States are required to annually submit a State Resource Assessment that reports on the resource needs in the State and demonstrates the State's ability to use at least 0.6 percent of the funds made available, as required by Section 1241(e) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841), as amended by section 2603 of the 2014 Farm Bill. The State Resource Assessment is the basis, in part, for allocating available funding across the States.

Question 6. I have also received questions about allocations between the ALE and WRE programs. How will USDA decide allocations between ALE and WRE this year? What percent of FA will go to each? What percent of TA?

Answer. NRCS is implementing Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) to respond to demand on an annual basis and is not establishing a funding split between the Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE) and Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE) components of ACEP over the life of the farm bill. We anticipate that the funding proportion will fluctuate reflecting partner and landowner demand and the dynamic nature of agricultural lands.

Funding for ACEP is less than 1/2 of that previously available under the repealed programs (Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)). Despite reduced funding, in FY 2014, 90,000 acres of farm and ranch lands were enrolled in ACEP-ALE; about 46 percent of the historic average acres under FRPP/GRP. Over 55,000 acres of wetlands were restored and protected through new ACEP-WRE; about 31 percent of the historic average acres under WRP. NRCS worked diligently to provide an equitable allocation of acres and funds across states and will continue to do so in FY 2015.

Question 7. Overall, I am pleased with the Regional Conservation Partnership Program in the new farm bill. Can you talk about ways we can encourage partnerships back home in our districts? What have you seen as successful projects so far and how can we apply lessons learned to our own states? For those projects that weren't selected, will NRCS be giving us more information as to how those applications can rise to the top during the next round?

Answer. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) demonstrates the importance of strong public-private partnerships in delivering local solutions to tough natural resource challenges. In the first offering of RCPP funding, over 230 strong final proposals were submitted by partners nationwide, and of those 115 proposals were selected for funding. These final projects demonstrated strong, diverse partnerships; leveraged significant contributions to the project; showed innovative solutions to identified natural resource challenges; and an emphasis on demonstrating positive results.

NRCS is committed to continuing outreach work to engage with interested partners to expand the reach of RCPP and further leverage the federal investments. NRCS provided feedback to partners who were not selected for funding in order to help improve future proposals the partners may wish to submit. On the RCPP

website, NRCS provided guidance about strengths and opportunities for improvements for applications submitted at the pre-proposal stage.

NRCS plans to increase webinars and outreach meetings, both nationally and at the state level, once the FY 2016 RCPP Announcement of Program Funding is released in April. Further, the agency is open to and regularly meets with applicants that were not selected in the initial round to provide additional feedback on ways to strengthen or improve the application.

Question 8. Finally, the allegations of horrific animal welfare abuse uncovered by *The New York Times* at the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) shocked the American public. During your testimony before the Committee on February 11th, you mentioned that some of the practices in the article were outdated and no longer in use. Can you expand upon your comments? What practices in the article have been phased out and what practices described in the article are still in place?

Answer. *The New York Times* article alleging mistreatment of livestock at USMARC is of great concern to me. Therefore, I established an expert panel of veterinarians and experts in animal welfare to review ARS's animal welfare policies, to assess the status of animals at USMARC, and to make recommendations to address any shortcomings they uncovered the draft report was released on March 9th (http://www.ree.usda.gov/ree/news/USMARC_AWHR_Panel_Report_PrePublic_Hearing_030602015.pdf).

The Department has solicited public input since release of the draft report. On March 18, 2015, a public teleconference was convened to present the expert panel's findings. A public email address has received thousands of comments. And on April 14, 2015, the NAREEE Advisory Board held a public teleconference to share their review of the expert panel report, offer their comments, and listen to public input. The final report will be provided to the committee upon completion.

Questions Submitted by Hon. Ann Kirkpatrick, a Representative in Congress from Arizona

Question 1. What have USDA and the USDA Office of Tribal Relations done to expand outreach efforts to assist Native American farmers and ranchers start and grow their businesses? What has USDA done to address underutilization of the Farm Service Agency and rural development programs within our tribal communities? How is USDA working to assist these under-served populations?

Answer. USDA provides outreach to Native American Farmers and Ranchers at the federal level as well as the state level. The USDA Office of Tribal Relations in the Office of the Secretary (OTR) serves as a singular point of contact for Tribal leaders, representatives, producers, and business owners seeking to gain more information on the USDA programs that can benefit their Tribe, business, or organization. The OTR works to ensure questions are answered and to arrange meetings with local USDA representatives in the tribes'/farmers'/ranchers' locale as well as in Washington, D.C. Through the Secretary's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity, targeted assistance addressing poverty has been the focus in 880 counties, parishes, Colonias, boroughs and tribal reservations across 21 states and Puerto Rico.

The Office of Tribal Relations administers the USDA Council for Native American Farming and Ranching (CNAFR), a FACA Committee established pursuant to the *Keepseagle* legal settlement. The CNAFR has made numerous recommendations to the Secretary that have resulted in USDA programs becoming better accessible to tribes and tribal citizens and other historically disadvantaged communities as well as small and beginning farmers and ranchers.

The role of the CNAFR is to:

- advise the Secretary of Agriculture on issues related to the participation of Native American farmers and ranchers in USDA programs including farm loan programs;
- transmit recommendations concerning any changes to USDA regulations or internal guidance or other measures that would eliminate barriers to program participation for Native American farmers and ranchers;
- examine methods of maximizing the number of new farming and ranching opportunities created through USDA programs through enhanced extension and financial literacy services;
- examine methods of encouraging intergovernmental cooperation to mitigate the effects of land tenure and probate issues on the delivery of USDA programs;
- evaluate other methods of creating new farming or ranching opportunities for Native American producers; and

- address other related issues as deemed appropriate.

In FY 2013, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provided over \$71 million in direct farm loans to 1,200 Native American-owned farming and ranching businesses. These funds were used to purchase land, equipment, and breed stock. The program assists Native American farms and ranches with their initial financing needs, providing the ability to create or enhance credit and strengthen small businesses, to improve rural economies. Additionally, the Agency guaranteed over \$35 million in commercial loans made to Native American farmers and ranchers. In the last 5 years the Agency has made or guaranteed \$470 million in assistance to Native American farmers and ranchers. Additionally, the USDA Farm Service Agency is working closely with Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and the Native American CDFI Network to certify Native American owned CDFIs as eligible lenders for FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program. This partnership of FSA and Native CDFI's will improve access to capital for Native American farmers and ranchers.

USDA made significant investments in economic development, housing and infrastructure projects to benefit Tribes in 2014. For USDA Rural Development alone, \$290.8 million was invested to directly benefit American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN).

USDA Rural Development Business Programs guaranteed four loans to AI/AN-owned businesses. The loans provided \$30.9 million in financing. Additionally, 18 Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEGr) (totaling \$2.7 million) and 11 Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) (totaling \$812,000) were awarded to Tribes and tribal entities, which will help create and save AI/AN jobs. One RBOG award will be used by the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) to develop a comprehensive economic development plan for 26 Tribes in the southern and eastern United States, while the Passamaquoddy Tribe in Maine received a \$99,500 RBEGr grant to establish a revolving loan fund for maple syrup businesses.

In Fiscal Year 2014 USDA Rural Development invested \$12.7 million to help Tribes finance essential community facilities including schools and clinics. Twenty-nine grants (\$4.1 million) were provided to 1994 Tribal Land-Grant Colleges and Universities through the USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Program.

USDA loans and grants also provide much needed financing for AI/AN families to purchase and repair single-family homes. This year, AI/AN homeowners received 116 direct home loans (\$14.8 million) and 961 Single Family Housing loan guarantees (\$133.3 million). USDA also provided \$1.4 million, through 229 grants and loans to elderly and very low income AI/AN homeowners to help make safety and efficiency repairs and improvements to their homes.

Through the Housing Preservation Grant program, USDA provided funding to assist tribes improve low income and elder housing in six states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah and Washington). For example, in California the Los Coyotes Band of Cahuillo and Cupeno Indians received \$50,000 to rehabilitate the homes of 15 tribal families. The Nevada Rural Housing Authority also received \$50,000 to weatherize homes in four counties, including homes of tribal members. In Washington, the Lummi Nation Housing Authority received over \$54,000 to help 24 very-low-income Tribal families rehabilitate and repair their homes.

In 2014, USDA's Telecommunications Programs provided 26 Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) grants totaling \$9.6 million to entities serving Tribal lands. Funding helps grantees purchase equipment to facilitate distance learning and telemedicine services. Navajo Technical College received a DLT grant of \$447,000 and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe received \$336,000 to create virtual learning and telemedicine networks that will bolster educational opportunities and facilitate AI access to specialized medical care.

USDA invested in 71 water and environmental projects benefiting Tribal communities throughout FY 2014. In total \$53.3 million directly benefited AI/AN. Total development cost of these projects—including funding from additional investors—totaled \$147.7 million. Nearly 57 percent of the project financing came from USDA. In total, 18 of these projects were in Alaska and 11 were funded through the Rural Alaska Village Grant program.

This year, USDA's Electric Programs invested \$17.2 million in direct loans to rural electric utilities. This investment brought new and improved electric infrastructure to 10,086 Native American electric consumers. USDA also provided four High Energy Cost Grants for Tribal projects, totaling \$6.2 million. Two of these grants were awarded to the Anchorage-based Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, which serves communities in Southwest Alaska, one was provided to the Denali Commission and another was awarded to Sacred Power Corporation for projects within the Navajo Nation.

Question 2. In 2010, you visited my District at the beginning of the 4 Forest Restoration Initiative, to restore the fire adapted ecosystems and prevent deadly forest fires in the Ronto, Kaibab, Coconino, and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. What additional resources does the U.S. Forest Service need to expeditiously complete the environmental impact study for 4FRI?

Answer. The final Record of Decision on the phase one environmental impact study for 4FRI was signed April 17, 2015. The selected alternative includes mechanical treatment on approximately 430,000,000 acres, and just under 600,000 acres of prescribed burning, in addition to spring and stream channel restoration, road decommissioning, and aspen and grassland restoration. This summer, the Kaibab and Coconino will begin preparing timber from the EIS for harvest, and both forests expect to issue task orders and contracts under the 4FRI project beginning in late 2016. 4FRI is now shifting from a planning focus to an implementation focus. The Forest Service continues to work toward full staffing for successful implementation of the EIS.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW MEXICO; ON BEHALF OF DAVID SANCHEZ, VICE PRESIDENT, NORTHERN NEW MEXICO STOCKMAN'S ASSOCIATION

February 9, 2015

Hon. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Subject: February 11, 2015 Agriculture Hearing Rural Economy

Honorable Representative Lujan Grisham,

Greetings, the purpose of this letter is to identify and communicate Rural Economic issues and concerns for the upcoming Agriculture House Committee [hearing] on the Rural Economy. Northern New Mexico Stockman's Association represents twenty thousand farmers and ranchers in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. These farmers and ranchers are examples of the economic engines of rural America. Their origins in agriculture are the longest standing in record for the history of American Agriculture. The information in this letter and the attached documents are being submitted for the upcoming subject hearing on Rural Economy. The most important issue we can raise for the hearing that impacts the rural economy of our state is the availability of land and natural resources which directly sustain agriculture families economically and also socially.

Important fact's to reference with regard to "agriculture land mass" is the percentages of private property *vs.* Federal lands in the rural counties. We would like to make example of just one county in our state "Rio Arriba" in this economic scenario, only 22 percent of the land mass is private property and the majority of the land is being controlled by Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The huge agriculture dependency on Federal lands is at the heart of the economic and social issues for the people of New Mexico. The Social and Economic sustainability of our people is directly tied to land and access of natural renewable resources. Historic Grass Root Industries such as ranching and farming have sustained the Hispanic and Native American populations since the late fifteen hundreds (Livestock Grazing).

We would like to identify a critical economic dilemma for the Committee hearing: Grass Root industries such as farming and ranching are diminishing at an alarming rate in northern New Mexico. The income losses from these industries make it impossible for these families to remain economic or socially viable. Our county governments and school districts are also suffering from the lack of economic activity and the diminishing Payment In lieu of Taxes revenue from the Federal Government. The Forest Service Agency is a major contributor to this economic dilemma and has stifled the ability of the two minority groups in this region "Hispanic and Native Americans" agriculture families to remain economically and socially sustainable. At this point in our correspondence we would like to identify and submit as evidence for the subject hearing the: ***Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects of Livestock Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests: A Pilot Study***, by USDA Forest Service, General Technical Report RMRS-GTR-113, September 2003, **authors Carol Raish, Alice M. McSweeney. Report attached.**

This Pilot Study examines current and historic economic, social, and cultural aspects of livestock operations owned by ranchers dependent on Federal lands U.S.

Forest Service Federal grazing permits. The study focuses on both the economic and non-economic contributions of livestock ownership to local families and communities. The Pilot Study also identifies harsh economic actions by the U.S. Forest Service agency against minority ranching families in the reduction of Federal Grazing Permits as depicted on page 5, under the "American Period", right column, paragraphs 7 and 8, Example: "On the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests there were 2,200 individuals holding permits in 1940, which by 1970 had been reduced to fewer than 1,000 (de Buys 1985)". "One community had herd reductions of 60 percent, while the ranchers of another lost permits for 1,000 cattle in a period of a few years (de Buys 1985)". Also identified in the Pilot Study on page 6 is the 1968 Hassell Report this report also identifies economic conditions in the rural economy: **"Problems remain in the area, and many of the situations discussed in the Hassell Report (1968) have not improved. Severe poverty, disappearance of traditional life ways."** The Pilot Study reports on economic conditions on Page 5, 6 and provides shocking information on the negative impacts the U.S. Forest Service has had on the two minority classes of people in northern New Mexico "economically and socially".

The second USDA report we would like to bring to the attention of the Committee for the Hearing is the recent *Forest Service Compliance Review Report Civil Rights Program Review* (copy attached), which was released in June 2013 by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Civil Rights, through the Office of Compliance, Policy, Training, and Cultural Transformation (OCPTCT). The report determined that the U.S. Forest Service were non-compliant with several civil rights requirements and that there had been inconsistent implementation of USDA/Forest Service regulations toward minority ranchers Hispanic and Native Americans. The report identifies several program areas of noncompliance which includes at page 5, the process used in **"Terminating or suspending grazing permits."** This report much like the Pilot Study referenced above identify the negative actions by the U.S. Forest Service Agency against the same "minority groups" of people that has caused great economic detriment.

In closing, the economic state of the rural counties in the State of New Mexico is below the national poverty levels. The rural agriculture community has a very clear and complete dependency in the USDA Forest Service Federal Lands and USDA programs. The reports provided give a narrative of the current and historic economic and social issues with regard to USDA's role in the economic and social well being of northern New Mexico Families. We need a vigorous effort by our Representatives in Congress to return the Federal lands as an economic productive engine revitalizing the economy of rural New Mexico. Utilizing natural and renewable natural resources is healthy for the entire ecosystem. Northern New Mexico Stockman's Association has communicated the Forest Service agency issues, and the current economic social state to Secretary Vilsack. We feel at this time it is justified to ask for a "Congressional Hearing" for northern New Mexico families on the many Forest Service Grazing issues, and the economic status of northern New Mexico. Secretary Vilsack has ignored the formal cries for help from a destitute people.

Sincerely,



DAVID SANCHEZ,
Vice President, NNMSA.

CC:

Congressman BEN RAY LUJÁN;
CARLOS SALAZAR, NNMSA President;
TED TRUJILLO, Attorney;
ALMA ACOSTA, U.S. Congressional Staff;
RUDY ARREDONDO, NLFRTA;
JAMIE CHAVEZ, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural.



United States
Department
of Agriculture

Forest Service

Rocky Mountain
Research Station

General Technical
Report RMRS-GTR-113

September 2003



Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects of Livestock Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests: A Pilot Study

Carol Raish

Alice M. McSweeney



Abstract

Raish, Carol; McSweeney, Alice M. 2003. **Economic, social, and cultural aspects of livestock ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests: a pilot study.** Gen. Tech. Rep. RMRS-GTR-113. Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 89 p.

The ranches of northern New Mexico, composed of land and livestock, are integral components of family and community life. This pilot study examines current economic, social, and cultural aspects of livestock operations owned by ranchers with Federal grazing permits (permittees) on the Canjilon and Española Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. This research develops preliminary results and tests survey methods that will be used in a planned larger study. Information gathered from the study is intended to help agency managers administer forest lands with increased effectiveness by promoting greater cultural understanding. It will also be valuable as a public information tool because many residents of the State, especially those newly migrated to both urban and rural areas, are unfamiliar with the primarily Hispanic culture and traditions of northern New Mexico. The study focuses on both the economic and noneconomic contributions of livestock ownership to local families and communities. It explores the ways in which ranching maintains traditional values and connects families to ancestral lands and heritage. Acknowledging the importance of small livestock operations to area families and communities is crucial for understanding their way of life and resolving disputes over public land and resource use.

Keywords: Northern New Mexico, permittees, ranching, livestock, ancestral lands, values, tradition, heritage

Authors

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Cover photo: Corral on the road to Gallina, NM, 1993. Alice M. McSweeney.

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Cultural Heritage Research Project Leader, Joe Tainter, provided unfailing guidance, support, and critical review throughout all aspects of the project. We owe him our deepest thanks. Many other Forest Service employees also contributed greatly to this research by giving their time, effort, and good counsel. These include Don Case and Jerry Elson, both now retired from the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests, respectively, as well as Gene Onken and Lori Osterstock, District Rangers on the Canjilon and Española Ranger Districts when the study was designed and developed. Cipriano Maez, Range Technician from Canjilon, and David Manzanares, now with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and formerly of the Española Ranger District, provided indispensable assistance and advice. Donald Serrano, currently Española Range and Watershed Staff, and District Ranger John Miera continued after David Manzanares left the District. Refugio Martínez, formerly Canjilon District Ranger, assisted us at both the Canjilon and Española Districts.

This study has benefited considerably from the comments and suggestions of several reviewers from different universities and organizations; both Clyde Eastman and John Fowler of the Department of Agricultural Economics, New Mexico State University, participated from the beginning of questionnaire development through preparation of the final report. Their guidance has been essential to the success of the research. Rudy King, Rocky Mountain Research Station Statistician, deserves special thanks for his excellent work throughout the project concerning statistical methods and techniques. Additional valuable review comments were prepared by Lori Osterstock, Region 3 Acting Director of Ecosystem Analysis and Planning/Watershed and Air Management; María García, Española Deputy District Ranger; and David Stewart and Ber Brown, Director and Assistant Director of the Region 3 Rangeland Management Staff. We also express our appreciation to David Sánchez and Joe Romero of the New Mexico Cattlegrowers for their helpful comments, reviews, and advice.

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Cultural Heritage Research Work Unit and also the generous financial assistance provided by Deborah Finch, Project Leader of the Ecology, Diversity, and Sustainability of Soil, Plant, Animal, and Human Resources of the Rio Grande Basin Ecosystem Management Project. It has been our pleasure to work on this project for the past several years; we dedicate it to the ranching families of northern New Mexico.

Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects of Livestock Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests: a Pilot Study

Carol Raish

Alice M. McSweeney

Contents

Summary and Management Implications	1
Introduction and Historical Background	2
Spanish and Mexican Periods	3
American Period	4
Methods	7
Study Site Selection	7
Data Collection	7
Data Entry and Analysis	10
Prior Research	11
Ranchers and Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts	13
Longevity of Residence and the Ranching Tradition	13
Personal and Family Portraits	13
Ranching Operations	15
Issues and Concerns	20
Working on Forest Service Managed Land	22
Livestock, Community, and Family	24
Land Use and Ownership	27
Summary and Conclusions	31
References	32
Appendix A: Questionnaire	34
Appendix B: Example Letters	45
Appendix C: Questionnaire Results in Tables	49

Summary and Management Implications

The ranching tradition in northern New Mexico is long standing, enduring across many generations. Livestock ownership and ranch life are powerful forces that bind families and communities, continuing a heritage that began with Spanish colonization. Owing to the history of land use and ownership in the region, many contemporary ranchers rely to a considerable degree on public land to graze their animals. Rules and regulations governing use of these lands have the potential to significantly affect the viability and survival of local livestock operations.

Controversy continues over the use of Federal lands and land management agencies in northern New Mexico, as well as in the Western United States as a whole, which often arises from agency officials' imperfect understanding of local sociocultural values and attitudes toward land use. Although Forest Service permittee relations have improved in recent years, problems still exist. This is exemplified in northern New Mexico where distinctive custom, culture, and tradition contribute to misunderstanding and conflict.

This pilot study is the first part of a longer term research program that will address the problem by gathering information on contemporary land management and use issues among ranchers with Federal grazing permits. This study, limited to two Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, develops preliminary results and tests survey methods that will be used in the next phase of the research with all permittees on the two Forests. The work is intended to assist managers in addressing land management and use issues now and in the future. It will also be valuable as a public education tool because many residents of the State, especially those newly migrated to both urban and rural areas, are unfamiliar with the primarily Hispanic culture and traditions of northern New Mexico.

Acknowledging the importance of small livestock operations to area families and communities is crucial for understanding their way of life and resolving disputes over public land and resource use. The study focuses on gathering information on both the economic and noneconomic contributions of livestock ownership to local families and communities. It explores the extent to which the use of public land for grazing and other purposes provides opportunities for community interaction and maintenance of traditional culture.

Those permittees with whom we spoke consider the ranching way of life vital to maintaining their cultural heritage and traditional values, as well as to passing those values on to future generations. There is a strong sense of responsibility to land, livestock, family, and community, with land often viewed as part of the family, not as something to sell. Keeping land in the family and upholding traditional values are regarded more highly than material possessions or monetary gain.

Changing attitudes and values among the general public have the potential to negatively impact the rural ranching way of life in northern New Mexico, with its ties to traditional lands and heritage. The effects of population growth and urbanization on land values, property taxes, water availability, and attitudes concerning ranching and other traditional rural economic activities require in-depth study. These trends add to the difficulties the permittees discussed with us concerning "making ends meet" and keeping their lands in agricultural use. This becomes increasingly difficult as neighboring lands are sold and subdivided. The ranchers struggle with the problems, challenges, and benefits of working on both private and public land and fear losing their permits, ranches, and rural cultural traditions, which are so heavily dependent upon land and livestock ownership.

Introduction and Historical Background

The ranching tradition in northern New Mexico (fig. 1) is deeply rooted in history, with responsibility toward land and livestock enmeshed in family values. Livestock ownership and ranch life are powerful forces that bind communities and families. Continuing this way of life on ancestral lands serves to preserve the culture and heritage of the past for future generations. Due to the history of land ownership in the region, many

ranching operations rely on public lands as a necessary source for livestock grazing. A substantial amount of these lands were formerly granted to or used by local communities and the ancestors of current permittees. Regulations and management decisions concerning these lands significantly affect the operation of ranching throughout the area.

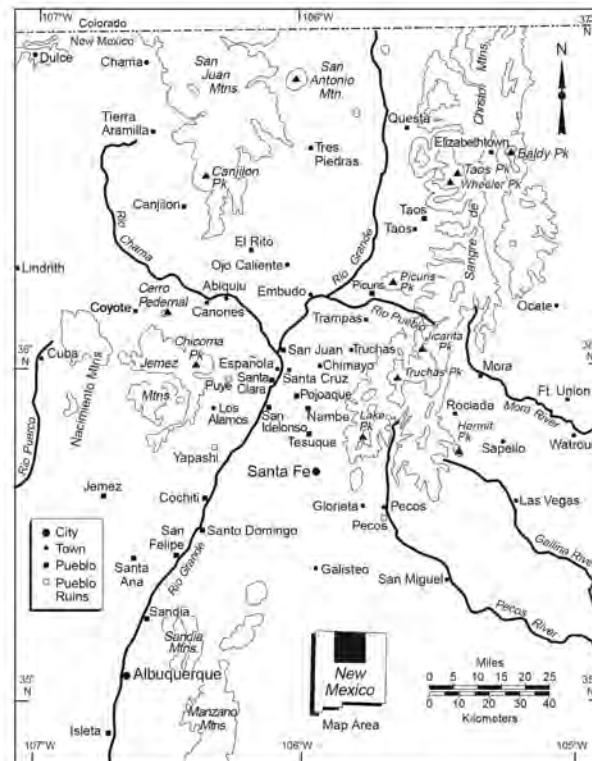


Figure 1—North-central New Mexico, adapted from de Buys (1965).

Today controversy continues over the role of Federal lands and land management agencies in the Western United States, where considerable amounts of land are under Federal control. The State of New Mexico is no exception. In the State's six north central counties (Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe, and Taos), the general area of concern for this study, approximately 34 percent of the land is Federally controlled. Together, the USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the USDA Forest Service (USFS) manage 52 percent of the land in Rio Arriba County and 53 percent in Taos County (Eastman and others 2000).

Much of the debate over Federal land use occurs because land managing agencies have not adequately emphasized and monitored sociocultural attitudes toward land valuation and use. The Española/Canjilon study addresses this problem by exploring contemporary land management, valuation, and use issues within their cultural context among ranchers with Federal grazing permits (permittees) on National Forest lands in northern New Mexico.

Understanding the importance of livestock operations to area families and communities is crucial to comprehending and resolving disputes over public land and resource use. This study examines the economic, social, and cultural aspects and contributions of the generally small livestock operations on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests of northern New Mexico. For this discussion, cattle ranches with less than 100 head (or approximately 135 animal units yearlong—AU_Y) are classified as small. Those ranches with 40 head (approximately 54 AU_Y) or less are considered extra small. The number of animal units (AU_s) is about 1.35 times the number of mature cows on a cow/calf ranch. An AU_Y is the amount of forage consumed by 1 AU in 1 year (Torell and others 1998).

The study focuses on gathering information on both the economic and noneconomic contributions of livestock ownership to local families and communities. In other purposes allows communities to maintain social cohesion and traditional culture. Local attitudes toward land management agencies and policies are examined. Some comparisons to previously collected information from the general area are also made.

Research on the two Districts serves as a pilot study to test the research design and data collection methods that will be used in a larger study planned to include livestock operations and grazing permittees on all Ranger Districts of the two Forests (Raish 1999). Results from the present study are used to evaluate and refine research questions for the larger study by developing new topics and questions, and by deleting

inappropriate topics. Although this pilot study provides valuable information to assist managers in addressing land management and use issues, it represents only those who were interviewed for this initial portion of the project. These data cannot be generalized to non-participating permittees from the two Districts, to the two Forests, or to northern New Mexico as a whole. Methodological aspects of the study are discussed in detail in a separate section of this report.

To understand the problems and issues of livestock grazing on public lands in New Mexico, it is necessary to explore the historical background of land valuation, use, and ownership in the area. Because contemporary problems and controversies often have their roots in the past, this orientation clarifies the role of historical practices and events in shaping current practices, issues, and disputes. In the remainder of this section we discuss not only the history of the area, but in some cases how that history helped mold our methods for the current and future phases of our research.

Spanish and Mexican Periods

Many of the small livestock operations in northern New Mexico are owned by Hispano families, regional residents since well before United States conquest in 1848.

The Hispano ranching tradition began with Spanish colonization in 1598 but did not become fully developed until after the reconquest of 1692 through 1696 (Earls 1985; Simmons 1979; Wozniak 1995). When Juan de Oñate colonized what is now New Mexico in 1598, he brought European domesticated plants and animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, and horses (Baxter 1987; Hammond and Rey 1953). In addition to their domesticates, the Spanish introduced new technologies and subsistence strategies into the existing Native American agricultural system. The settlers changed indigenous farming practices, which had relied on extensive floodwater farming using water control and soil retention techniques, to more intensive irrigation agriculture from major watercourses (Earls 1985; Wozniak 1995).

During the 1600s, Pueblo Indian populations in the region declined mainly because of introduced diseases and famine, caused by a series of severe droughts and destruction of food stores by raids from nomadic Indian groups. As the Puebloan population declined, the tribute and labor requirements of the colonists became increasingly onerous. These conditions, along with forced relocations and missionization, led to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. During this rebellion, the vast majority

of the Spanish were forced out of the Upper Rio Grande for 12 years. The settlers returned between 1692 and 1696 when Diego de Vargas initiated and completed the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico (Simmons 1979).

Hispano populations rose throughout the 1700s to approximately 25,000 by the later part of the century. Even so, the significant population declines of the Puebloan groups left a sufficient amount of land for both groups to farm and ranch along the main waterways and their tributaries (Simmons 1979). After the reconquest, the economic, political, and religious systems of New Mexico were different from the prerevolt systems. The new generation of Spanish colonists were accomplished agriculturalists and stock raisers who generally worked their own land and maintained relatively cordial relations with the Pueblo Indian groups as both used the land in similar ways (Simmons 1979). The descendants of these people are the Hispanic villagers and farmers of northern New Mexico.

During the Spanish Colonial (1598 to 1821) and Mexican (1821 to 1848) periods, land ownership and use were confirmed by land grants from the Spanish Crown or Mexican government. There were various types of land grants, but community grants, in which groups of settlers used portions of the grant in common, are of particular interest because they are a major land ownership issue in the area today (Eastman and others 1971; Harper and others 1943). Within community grants, settlers received individually owned building sites and agricultural plots of irrigated land, which were often quite small, averaging from 5 to 10 acres (Van Ness 1987). They tended to grow even smaller as they were divided for purposes of inheritance. The farmers also used the village grazing lands, timberlands, and community pastures as common lands (Eastman and others 1971). Because kinsmen often worked their fields cooperatively and herded their animals together, they were able to subsist on the small-sized, scattered agricultural plots.

Throughout the Colonial period, a subsistence, agro-pastoral economy based in small, scattered villages existed along the Rio Grande and its tributaries. Raids from nomadic Apache, Navajo, Ute, and Comanche limited range expansion and travel for commerce and trade (Clark 1987; Van Ness 1987). Thus, the villagers' main goal was production for local subsistence, not competition in a commercial market. The community of Cañones (Kutsche and Van Ness 1981; Van Ness 1987) provides a good description of ranching and farming in the Hispanic villages. Both animal and plant production formed parts of a mixed farming system, with sheep and goats most frequently used as food.

Livestock were used for plowing, threshing, transporting produce, and manuring fields. The community stock were individually owned but cooperatively grazed. They were moved into the higher elevation pastures during the spring and summer and returned to the village after the harvest to graze and manure the stubble fields.

Livestock numbers were not great for the first 2 centuries after the conquest. In these early years sheep were more numerous than cattle, in part due to sale and loss of the latter to nomadic Indian groups (Gonzales 1969). In the early 1800s, the number of sheep increased as the Spanish population expanded eastward onto the plains, across the Sandia and Manzano Mountains, and westward from the Rio Grande Valley. This movement coincided with the growing trade in wool and sheep during the Mexican period (Eastman and others 2000).

Although concentrations of sheep and cattle near villages produced some scattered areas of overuse during Spanish Colonial times (Baxter 1987; Scurlock 1995), herds were generally small in proportion to the land base (Rothman 1989). Thus, relatively small populations of subsistence farmers and their animals successfully used the resources of the region during the long period of Spanish control (Raish 2000).

Areas of overutilization increased during the Mexican period as commercial sheep production increased (Scurlock 1995). However, the large majority of operations remained small and subsistence-oriented during this period. As an example, Rothman (1989) describes use of the Pajarito Plateau west of Santa Fe in the following way. Throughout the 1800s, local Hispanic and Pueblo residents of the nearby valleys used the plateau as common property, bringing their small herds to the plateau for summer grazing. They also harvested from the abundant timber resources for personal use and small-scale business ventures and planted some summer crops. The small size and noncommercial nature of these operations ensured that sufficient grass and forest resources remained for all who needed them.

American Period

Both patterns of land ownership and use changed substantially after United States conquest of the region during the Mexican-American War of 1846 through 1848. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States agreed to recognize the property rights of the resident Hispano population. To obtain valid land titles according to U.S. law, however, land grantees had to petition for title confirmation, at first through the Surveyor General to the Congress and after 1891

to the Court of Private Land Claims (Griswold del Castillo 1990). To accomplish this, claimants often had to hire an attorney, file their claim, and locate required supporting documents. As stated by Eastman (1991:103): "...landholders were turned into claimants who had to incur a substantial expense to have their property respected." Money was scarce in the subsistence economy of the region, so many landholders signed over portions of their land to pay legal fees. Thus, even successful claimants lost substantial amounts of land because legal fees often accounted for from one-third to one-half of the land involved (Eastman 1991). In addition, many land claims were rejected; approximately 24 percent of the acres claimed in New Mexico were confirmed compared to about 73 percent in California (Ebright 1987, discussed in Raish 2000).

The Surveyor General and the Court of Private Land Claims refused to confirm grants for various reasons. Boundaries were sometimes vague, original titles may have been lost, and communal ownership of pasture and woodlands ran counter to 19th century American concepts of private ownership (Eastman and others 1971). Often, the court confirmed house lands and irrigated farmland but did not confirm community pastures and woodlands, also part of the grant, which had always provided the Hispano villagers with their main grazing and fuel wood resources. Lands from unconfirmed claims became part of the public domain.

Ebright (1987), Griswold del Castillo (1990), and Eastman (1991) argue that, in many cases, the U.S. government did not honor the intent of the treaty and related documents that land grants in the ceded territories should be recognized. The government adopted an approach that some consider legalistic and restrictive toward land claims in the State (Griswold del Castillo 1990). Although fraudulent claims definitely should have been rejected, many potentially legitimate claims were also rejected, often on the basis of documentation that was incomplete or inconsistent. Claims from residents who had occupied their land for generations were denied because of lost or inconsistent documents (Eastman 1991). Villagers also lost considerable amounts of confirmed land because they could not pay property taxes under the American system of monetary tax payments, which differed in significant ways from prior systems of payment in agricultural products. Unscrupulous land speculation by both Anglos and Hispanos, which was often upheld by the courts, also resulted in land loss (de Buys 1985, discussed in Raish 2000).

Land grant loss remains an issue of bitter controversy to this day, with initiatives presented at regular intervals to Congress recommending further study of

the problem. Most recently, the General Accounting Office (GAO) has undertaken a study of community land grants in New Mexico (GAO 2001) at the request of several members of the New Mexico Congressional delegation. It remains to be seen what, if any, action will result from this effort.

Today much of the former grant land in northern New Mexico is managed by Federal agencies, primarily the USDA Forest Service (USFS). Many of these lands came into Federal control after being degraded in one form or another by large commercial ranching or timbering operations that occurred after alienation from the original Hispano owners (Eastman and others 1971; Rothman 1989). Nonlocal corporate interests generally owned these enterprises (Wildeman and Brock 2000). When the commercial operations were no longer profitable, the land was often sold to the government. In this way, the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests include all or portions of various former land grants that were mainly used as community range and woodland by local villages (de Buys 1985; Eastman and others 1971; Gonzales 1969). Of these Forests, 22 consist of confirmed Spanish and Mexican land grants with additional land coming from claimed but unconfirmed grants (de Buys 1985; Hurst 1972). Currently, many local ranchers have grazing permits on the two Forests, but since they are often descendants of former grantees, many resent government restrictions and payment to use land they consider part of their ancestral heritage.

The Forest Service began to address problems of land condition in the early part of the 20th century. Beginning in the 1920s and accelerating from the 1940s through the 1960s, livestock ranching on the two Forests changed significantly as the economy changed and the Forest Service introduced range improvement programs, many of which were thought by local stock raisers to be harsh and poorly explained. There was a continuous decline in the number of grazing permits and the number of animals permitted. On the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests there were 2,200 individuals holding permits in 1940, which by 1970 had been reduced to fewer than 1,000 (de Buys 1985).

With declines in the numbers of animals permitted to graze on the two Forests, the small subsistence ranchers suffered increasing limitations on their herd sizes over the years. One community had herd reductions of 60 percent, while the ranchers of another lost permits for 1,000 cattle in a period of a few years (de Buys 1985). Free-use permits, issued for animals such as milk cows and draft horses, were phased out by 1980. Also during this period, there were massive declines in the numbers of sheep and goats under permit. By 1980,

there were no goats on either Forest and no sheep on the Santa Fe (de Buys 1985; Van Ness 1987).

These significant changes came about both as a result of Forest Service direction and changing economic conditions, as the region shifted from a subsistence-based to a cash-based economy. Land losses and herd size cutbacks undoubtedly pushed many people into the cash-based economy of wage work (West 1982). Over the years there was a notable trend toward permit consolidation, which led to fewer permittees with larger herds. Although there were definite issues of rangeland health, the livelihoods of many villagers were affected by reductions in permittee numbers, sheep permit reductions, loss of free-use permits, and restrictions on goats. This is reflected in statements from the residents of Cañones that Forest Service administration favored large-scale ranching and was often not compatible with the subsistence needs of local communities (Kutsche and Van Ness 1981).

Our discussions with local community leaders showed that an examination of the contemporary role of ranching in northern New Mexico requires an assessment of the economic impact of these prior reductions in AUMs. One suggestion was to compare current economic conditions and an economic situation that might exist had animal numbers not been reduced. This matter is important because, if land base and animal numbers had not been reduced, the economy of northern New Mexico might today be quite different. With retention of former animal numbers and a sufficient land base, ranches might currently operate at a higher level of production. There might be less necessity for secondary employment, allowing more time and effort to be devoted to the livestock operation. An increase in profits would provide the freedom and incentive to carry out innovations and improvements, leading to greater credibility and financial returns to support industries and the community as a whole. Data to model such a scenario do not currently exist. Future phases of the research will be directed toward obtaining this information, if feasible.

Discontent over Federal grazing policies, lost grant lands, and general economic decline in the region led to protest movements in the 1960s. The most well known of the protest groups, the *Alianza Federal de Mercedes* (later called the *Alianza Federal de los Pueblos Libres* or simply the *Alianza*), was led by Reies

López Tijerina. A series of incidents involving the group included an attempt at a so-called "citizens arrest" at the courthouse in Tierra Amarilla that led to violence. There was also a takeover of the Echo Amphitheater campground, which brought national attention and news coverage. Two of the main goals of the group's actions were to bring the problem of land grant loss to national attention and to address grievances concerning management of grazing on the National Forests (de Buys 1985).

The violence of these protests caused the Forest Service to reexamine its policies in northern New Mexico, resulting in *The People of Northern New Mexico and the National Forests*, commonly known as the Hassell Report (Hassell 1968). The unpublished report recommended 99 measures, of which 26 related to grazing, to improve economic and environmental conditions in the area. Some measures were implemented, and some progress was made. In addition, the Forest Service developed a special policy for managing the National Forests of northern New Mexico.

The Southwestern Policy on Managing National Forest Lands in the Northern Part of New Mexico, or the Northern New Mexico Policy, was oriented to stressing the importance of valuing the Hispanic and Indian cultures of the Southwest (Hurst 1972). Policy implementation, which was periodically reviewed, was based on the recommendations of the Hassell Report (1968). After the last review in 1981, the agency decided that a separate policy statement was no longer needed and that further implementation would be through regional and Forest mission statements and plans (Hassell 1981). Difficulties with implementing recommendations of the policy are discussed by Raish (1997).

Problems remain in the area, and many of the situations discussed in the Hassell Report (1968) have not improved. Severe poverty, disappearance of traditional life ways, and environmental degradation are still major concerns. Unfortunately, the authors have found that many Forest Service employees some three decades later are unaware of the Hassell Report (1968) and the conditions that led to its development. Although there have been recent efforts to develop regional cultural awareness programs and hire managerial level employees from the region, a need remains for training in the cultural traditions and social values of northern New Mexico. Significant misunderstandings persist, and the potential for conflict remains.

Methods

Study Site Selection

The present study is designed to provide much-needed information concerning the culture and economic practices of the region for agency employees, policymakers, and the general public. Two Ranger Districts were chosen for the initial study, Española on the Santa Fe National Forest and Canjilon on the Carson National Forest. The Española Ranger District was selected first for this initial study because it is a good example of livestock operations in northern New Mexico and, in particular, on the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. After discussions with range staff, the study was broadened to include the Canjilon Ranger District of the Carson National Forest to give representation to that Forest also (D. Case, personal communication, 1997). Although carefully selected, these two Districts cannot be assumed to represent the two Forests or the general area in any statistical sense.

At the time of research design development, there were nine active grazing allotments on the Española Ranger District, ranging from approximately 7,000 to 73,000 acres. On the Santa Fe Forest as a whole, allotments typically range from approximately 4,000 to 100,000 acres. Virtually all the Española allotments have more than one permittee, ranging from two through 16. Of the active allotments on the Santa Fe, 70 percent have more than one permittee, with a range of two through 20. Of the 17 listed grazing associations on the Santa Fe, six occur on the Española District.

Of the 55 people with Forest Service permits on the Española District, 30 (55 percent) have permitted head numbers from one to 25, 11 have 26 to 50 (20 percent), and 14 have 51 to 100 (25 percent). Española exemplifies the common allotment pattern of the northern New Mexican Forests, typified by small herd sizes, shared allotments, and organized grazing associations (Raish 1999). This pattern is consistent with the general area, having small and extra small cattle operations (as defined earlier) comprising 87 percent of the ranches in Rio Arriba County and 96 percent in Taos County (Eastman and others 2000). Multiple-permit allotments (referred to as community allotments), small

herd sizes per permittee, and grazing associations of permittees show continuing communal range use in northern New Mexico.

The Canjilon Ranger District, with its 57 permittees, was recommended for study by range staff on the Carson. At the time of data collection in 1999, Canjilon had 10 active grazing allotments ranging from approximately 300 to 43,000 acres. Five of the allotments (50 percent) have more than one permittee (ranging from two through 25), with five having one permittee. The District's grazing associations occur on the allotments with the most permittees. The majority of herds range from four to 250 animals with six operations having 100 or more head of cattle (sheep operations are larger and are discussed in following sections of this report). The largest herds per permittee occur on the allotments with only one permittee. Of the 71 allotments on the Carson, 40 percent have more than one permittee, ranging from two through 25. There are 24 grazing associations on the Carson (Raish 1999). Canjilon provides contrast with Española, having more single-permittee allotments with larger herd sizes, while still having many of the relatively small-sized livestock operations typical of northern New Mexico (Raish 1999).

Information on range figures from the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests was obtained from range data tables provided by Jerry Elson, Range and Wildlife Staff (retired) on the Santa Fe National Forest; Sylvia Valdez, Resource Assistant on the Santa Fe National Forest; Don Case, Range, Wildlife, Fish, Soil, Air, and Water Staff (retired) on the Carson National Forest; and Lorraine Montoya, Resource Assistant on the Carson National Forest.

Data Collection

Development of the Questionnaire and Discussion Questions—Following the format of prior studies in the region (Eastman and others 1971, 1979; Gray 1974), data collection is organized around a written questionnaire, supplemented by a personal interview (appendix A). The questions are grouped to elicit the following categories of information:

- a. Background information on the permittee and his/her family.
- b. Background information on the livestock operation.
- c. Contribution of the livestock operation to the household economy.
- d. Contribution of the livestock operation to maintaining the cultural and traditional values of the family.
- e. Contribution of the livestock operation to the family's participation in the social network of the community.

The questionnaire consists of 52 questions divided into seven sections. Two sections request demographic information and descriptive information on livestock operations. Questions on age, education, employment, primary language spoken in the household, and years of residence in the area provide demographic data. Information on livestock operations consists of questions concerning the number of years the permittee and his or her family have owned livestock and have had Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management grazing permits. The number and type of animals owned are also requested. A third section deals with costs and benefits of owning livestock with questions focused on the costs of the livestock operation and on the economic contribution of the livestock to family income. In addition, use of the animals and their by-products for household consumption and exchange with relatives and neighbors is included.

The remaining four sections emphasize social and cultural contributions of livestock ownership, including the reasons for owning livestock, community activities related to owning livestock, a rancher's preferred means of saving money, uses of the money earned from the livestock operation, and plans to use the livestock operation as a retirement activity. Questions also elicit information on the role of livestock ownership in selecting a place of residence, the social and business activities that result from livestock ownership, and whether a permittee grazes cattle with relatives or neighbors or both.

A section on family goals requests respondents to prioritize statements concerning increasing family income, increasing the quality of life, maintaining traditional lifestyles and values, and having greater respect within the community. Another question asks respondents to prioritize family goals for the livestock operation, such as making more money from the operation, increasing the family's quality of life, avoiding being forced out of ranching, and increasing the size of the operation. The section on land ownership and use attitudes contains questions concerning the merits of

hiring local versus nonlocal workers, selling land to local versus nonlocal buyers, and managing Federal lands primarily for the benefit of local residents or for users and tourists from other parts of the country. Other questions deal with ranchers' willingness to sell inherited land and their views on what factors constitute land ownership.

Consultation with expert researchers in the field, as well as published information on prior research and information-gathering strategies, are used to assess content and face validity of the questionnaire questions (Babbie 1990, 1995; Eastman and Gray 1987; Eastman and others 1971, 1979; Fowler and others 1994; Liefer 1970). Drs. Clyde Eastman (retired) and John Fowler, Department of Agricultural Economics, New Mexico State University, reviewed a draft of the questionnaire and suggested revisions, which were made. With their permission, relevant questions from prior surveys undertaken in their research are incorporated into the present questionnaire. Dr. Don Case, Forest Range, Wildlife, Fish, Soil, Air, and Water Staff Officer (retired) on the Carson National Forest, who holds a Ph.D. degree in rural sociology, also reviewed the questionnaire. In addition, the following Forest Service range personnel examined and commented on the instrument: David Stewart, Range Administration, Southwest Regional Office; George Martinez, Rural Community Assistance Program Manager, Southwest Regional Office; Jerry Elson, Range and Wildlife Staff Officer (retired), Santa Fe National Forest; David Manzanares, Range and Watershed Staff, Española Ranger District, Santa Fe National Forest (currently with the Natural Resources Conservation Service); and Cipriano Maez, Range Technician, Canjilon Ranger District, Carson National Forest.

Reliability of the questionnaire is increased by the use of questions/measures that have proved reliable in prior studies. Reliability will also be assessed by using the present study on the two Ranger Districts as a basis of comparison to the responses from the planned larger study to be conducted on all Ranger Districts of the two Forests (discussed in Babbie 1990, 1995). The rationale for selecting all the permittees from the Española and Canjilon Districts as an alternate population with similar characteristics for the pilot study is discussed in the previous section. Because all permittees from the two Districts are offered the opportunity to participate in the pilot, and all permittees from the two Forests will be offered the opportunity to participate in the proposed larger study, there is no need to test a sampling design.

The pilot is being used to assess the clarity and internal consistency of the questions, as well as their relevance and complexity (Babbie 1990, 1995). Many of the questions have been used in prior studies and have proved useful and reliable (Babbie 1990, 1995; Eastman and others 1971, 1979; Fowler and others 1994; Liefer 1970). Reviewers have already commented on these issues in their examinations of draft instruments. Their suggestions have been implemented. These issues are discussed in greater detail in following sections of this report.

The six discussion, or personal interview, questions constitute an informal, more ethnographically oriented portion of the study (Spradley 1979). They are designed to allow respondents to discuss their own views, feelings, and problems. Respondents can provide other information if they wish, focus on only one or two questions, or skip a question or parts of a question. No responses to these questions are examined using statistical data manipulation techniques; they are not used in a formal attitude survey or assessment. These questions are intended to give a personalized picture of the ranchers and their varying views and concerns, serving as a background for the formal study.

Questionnaire and Discussion Question Administration—For approximately 1 year prior to beginning data collection, Raish spoke with Forest and District personnel, community members, and grazing permittees at association meetings discussing the proposed project and soliciting input from those who would be involved. At the time of data collection, there were 55 permittees with active grazing allotments on the Española District and 57 on the Canjilon District for a total of 112. All permittees were offered the opportunity to participate in the project.

Before beginning data collection, Raish and McSweeney mailed each permittee a cover letter (appendix B) in English and Spanish explaining the project along with a copy of the questionnaire, so that people would have an opportunity to review it. The review questionnaire is in English, but our letter states that the questionnaire is available in Spanish and the discussion or interview questions are also available in Spanish. We then called each permittee with a listed telephone number to determine if he/she wished to participate in the project. We scheduled times and places at the convenience of the permittee to personally administer the questionnaire and discuss the interview questions for those who wished to participate. We chose to personally administer the questionnaire to maximize response rate, clarify questions, and

assess "problem" or inappropriate questions that should be removed for the planned larger study. Prior discussions with community members and Forest Service staff also indicated that response to a mailed questionnaire would probably be extremely low. Those permittees without listed telephone numbers were sent a stamped, addressed envelope and a form to return to us indicating interest. Of the six with no listed telephone number, one participated in the project.

McSweeney and Raish administered the questionnaire and conducted the interviews together in the vast majority of cases with Raish going through the questionnaire with the respondents. Owing to scheduling conflicts, Raish conducted a few of the sessions alone. We used this strategy to minimize possible problems caused by different interviewers interpreting or clarifying questions in different ways, which might lead to bias in responses. The entire questionnaire and interview process generally lasted from 1.5 to 2.5 hours. Our following discussion of ranch life is based on the information we received from those who participated in the study and does not represent any other permittees.

In all, 62 (55 percent) permittees from the two Districts participated in the project by completing questionnaires. All but three of these also participated in personal interviews. The group consisted of 29 (53 percent) from Española and 33 (58 percent) from Canjilon. Nonrespondents included persons who declined to participate, those with listed telephone numbers whom we were unable to reach after several attempts, and those without listed telephone numbers who did not respond to the written request to participate.

We are in the process of using the information from this initial study to revise and redesign both the questionnaire and the discussion questions to improve clarity, relevance, and simplicity and eliminate redundancy in the information collection instruments for the proposed larger study. For example, project participants answered the majority of the questions in a straightforward manner with little hesitation. Many of the questions elicited supplementary comment, providing additional information to the responses. As will be noted in subsequent discussions, a few questions did require some explanation and clarification on the part of the interviewers. One question in particular, involving amounts of money spent on range improvements (30), proved too complex and time consuming to be answered within the framework of the interview process. Thus, this question will not be discussed in the report. Alternative means of obtaining this type of information will be developed for the larger study.

Data Entry and Analysis

All interview notes from the discussion questions taken by both McSweeney and Raish were transcribed and entered into the computer anonymously (preserving the anonymity of the respondents) as were the questionnaire responses. The questionnaire coding system was developed with an eye toward preserving as much response variability as realistically possible and including clarifications and other information provided by the ranchers during questionnaire administration. Raish coded all responses to questionnaire items and entered them into the database. Although only one researcher coded all questionnaire responses and performed all data entry, variability and errors can occur as the data recording process proceeds. Thus, a 10 percent "grab" sample of six questionnaires was recoded to determine if code selections remained the same on the second coding. The sample consisted of three Española and three Canjilon questionnaires including those from early, middle, and late in the data coding process. The recoding identified nine of the 103 variables (derived from the 52 questions) as showing coding problems on one or more of the sampled questionnaires. Thus, these problem variables were reexamined on all questionnaires. In addition, all data entries were proofed

for typographical errors and other data entry mistakes of this nature.

Responses derived from the discussion questions provide a background for issues and concerns, presenting the kind of personal, although anonymous, information that lends credence, reality, and a human face to the more "numbers-oriented" data gathered from the questionnaire. These discussion questions are identified as interview questions with their number as they appear throughout the report. The 52 questions on the questionnaire cover attitudes and values as well as direct descriptive and demographic information. These questions are also identified throughout the text by their corresponding number.

The demographic data, information on livestock operations, and descriptions of the economic, social, and cultural contributions of livestock operations derived from this study are summarized using basic descriptive statistics. These include percentages of occurrence for the discrete variables (rounded to the nearest whole number within the text), with frequencies and measures of central tendency and dispersion presented for the continuous variables. Data tables containing this information are located in appendix C. Preliminary comparisons between selected responses from the present study and those from earlier studies are made to assess possible changes in the role of livestock operations over time.

Prior Research

There is a considerable body of work that provides a valuable framework for assessing and understanding the economic, social, and cultural role of livestock operations in the communities of the north. Both McSweeney (1995) and Atencio (2001) have interviewed ranchers concerning their views and attitudes about the ranching way of life and its role in maintaining traditional culture and heritage. Anthropological community studies (such as Kutsche and Van Ness 1981), land grant studies (such as Briggs and Van Ness 1987), and specific studies of livestock operations (such as Eastman and Gray 1987; Fowler and others 1994) have been undertaken.

Since the 1970s, there has been increasing research on land grants and land grant problems in New Mexico. These works describe land grant history, examine the role of community grant lands in village subsistence practices, and explore the economic effects of land grant loss. A summary discussion of land grant studies ordered by legal, historical, anthropological, or political orientation is given in Briggs and Van Ness (1987). Such studies provide the necessary background for understanding public land use disputes, given that much of the Federal land is former grant land.

Various studies (discussed in Eastman and others 2000) describe contemporary community organization, traditional culture, farming, and stock raising in north-central New Mexico, including the ways in which communities have responded to changing governments and patterns of land ownership (Gonzales 1969; Knowlton 1961, 1967; Kutsche 1983; Sanchez 1940; Swadesh 1974; Van Ness 1976, 1987). Excellent community-specific studies include those of Leonard and Loomis (1941) on El Cerrito, and Kutsche and Van Ness (1981) on Cañones. Forrest (1989) examines the effects of Depression Era and New Deal programs on the Hispanic villages of the area. Part II of Weigle's 1975 reprint of the 1935 Tewa Basin Study consists of an extensive bibliography of studies on Hispanic New Mexico (Weigle 1975).

The Tewa Basin Study itself "...was among the first and most ambitious of government efforts to explore sociocultural and environmental variables," providing "an indispensable foundation for any discussion of

social change and rural culture in northern New Mexico" (Weigle 1975:viii). The study provides information on 32 Hispanic communities of the area during the mid-1930s, including information on farming and raising livestock.

In addition to these studies, specific studies of ranching operations have been conducted, primarily by economists, rural sociologists, and anthropologists from New Mexico State University. Their work examines the economic benefits of small farms and ranches, the attitudes and values of ranchers and farmers, and the economics of community grazing on both private and public lands (Eastman and Gray 1987; Eastman and others 1971, 1979; Fowler and others 1994; Gray 1974). Statewide agricultural economic research by Fowler and associates (Fowler and others 1994; Fowler and Torell 1985) also contains sections that pertain to the northern region of the State.

As Eastman and others (2000) discuss, contemporary ranching operations in northern New Mexico are generally small. Even in prior years, when people were more dependent upon agriculture, the majority of operations were small. Several descriptions of communities in the 1930s drawn from the Tewa Basin Study serve as good examples of this long-standing pattern (Weigle 1975). The village of Cundiyo was described as having 21 families with 175 cattle, ranging from one to 19 per family. Seventeen families owned 31 horses. There were also 12 sheep and three goats in the village. Corn was the most important crop; other crops included beans, chili, squash, and fruit. Each owner worked his or her own land with neighbors cleaning irrigation ditches together and helping each other during planting, harvesting, and house building. No one hired outside help (Weigle 1975, discussed in Eastman and others 2000).

During the study, the village of El Rito comprised 210 families. The average farm had 8 acres with sizes ranging from 2 to 71 acres. Main crops were beans, wheat, and alfalfa. According to the study, the farmers and ranchers had more range for livestock than other communities in the area using both private grant land and permits on the Carson National Forest. Villagers owned 607 head of cattle and 500 horses. The largest

herd numbered 78 cattle and eight horses with the average family having one team of horses and three head of cattle. Three ranchers had a total of 3,260 sheep, and one family owned 300 goats. The sheep grazed part of the year on the Forest, while the goats ranged yearlong on the private grant land (Weigle 1975, discussed in Eastman and others 2000).

The community of Truchas was divided into three scattered groupings of dwellings consisting of approximately 200 families. The principal crop at the time of the study was wheat with other crops including peas, potatoes, and beans. The farmers also cultivated substantial amounts of alfalfa and owned 200 head of cattle, 200 horses, 50 sheep, and 1,100 goats. One man owned a herd of 200 goats. Cattle herds ranged from one to 20 with an average of three head. Only about 60 families owned cattle. Animals grazed on private grant land (Weigle 1975, discussed in Eastman and others 2000).

In 1967, Kutsche and Van Ness conducted ethnographic research in the village of Cañones, which at that time had 30 households. The primary crops were alfalfa and pasture, along with grain and garden vegetables. As the authors stated: "Since forage is so scarce, it is economic for landowners to devote most of their irrigated land to their livestock, which requires relatively little labor, and to spend their own time earning wages elsewhere" (Kutsche and Van Ness 1981:36, discussed in Eastman and others 2000). Cattle were grazed under permit on the National Forest during the 5.5 months grazing season and were on private pasture and feed during the remainder of the year. Eighteen families had no cattle, while one had two cows, six had between five and eight, four had between 10 and 20, and one had over 20. There were also 10 sheep and one goat in the village, and 10 families owned

27 horses. The 1967 study showed a trend away from dependence on farm produce toward full-time outside employment combined with stock raising and a kitchen garden. This trend has increased in recent years as demonstrated by 1980 figures that showed a higher proportion of adult males commuting to work than in previous years—four to Española and two to Los Alamos (Kutsche and Van Ness 1981).

Other research, also conducted primarily in the 1970s and 1960s on small-scale cattle operations, demonstrated that although domesticated animals were important components of household economy, most of the small operators no longer depended on their crops and animals for their full support. They generally had outside jobs or were retired. The function of the livestock herd was not purely economic. They were used as a partial subsistence and back-up resource and as a means of saving for hard times or special expenses. The animals also added to economic security by providing meat no matter what the market price or the condition of family finances (Eastman and Gray 1987).

In addition to the economic considerations, the animals served important social and cultural functions. The small-scale producers stressed the importance of the good quality of life that ranching provided them and their families. They spoke in terms of preserving a working relationship with the land that could be passed on with pride to their children. Owning animals was important to them as a way of reaffirming ties to their ancestral lands and heritage. In many cases, the extra buffer that the animals provided allowed the family to stay in the ancestral, rural community and continue at least a part of the traditional lifestyle (Eastman and Gray 1987). These trends continue in the region today and are essentially the pattern found by this study.

Ranchers and Ranching on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts

Longevity of Residence and the Ranching Tradition

Information derived from our interviews demonstrates the long tenure of local residents and their depth of knowledge concerning land ownership and use patterns in the region. Of those we spoke with, 97 percent were born in northern New Mexico (question 1; appendix C, table 1), 94 percent of the families had been residents of the area since their grandparents' time or earlier (question 2; appendix C, table 2), and 86 percent reported great-grandparents or even earlier relatives living in the communities of the north, with many having ancestors in the area in the 1700s and 1600s (appendix C, table 2). Commitment to remaining in their local communities is strong among these ranchers, with 85 percent stating that they would remain in the home community even if they no longer owned livestock (question 13; appendix C, table 13). However, several commented that they could not imagine a life without livestock nor living in the city without animals. Several said they had passed up jobs or promotions or had gone into certain lines of work to remain near their ranches and land. Several also commented that they or other family members had returned home from elsewhere as soon as they had the opportunity. The desire to raise their children near their land and heritage and away from the troubles of the city was often repeated. The appeal of the small home community and the rural life is strong.

The ranching tradition itself is also one of long duration, with 94 percent of the permittees reporting that livestock ownership and ranching go back in their families for at least several generations (to their grandparents' time), and 73 percent had ancestors in the ranching business, ranging from great-grandparents back to the time of Oñate (question 18, 19; appendix C, tables 18 and 19). The longevity of the tradition is also demonstrated by the fact that slightly over 70 percent have had their Forest Service grazing permits over 50 years and/or received them from their fathers or grandfathers.

Just 3 percent have had the permit less than 10 years (question 21; appendix C, table 21a).

As one would expect from their long tenure in the area, many of the families are associated with active or former land grants and are well versed in the history and loss of these lands; 58 percent either currently use land grant lands for various resources, have used them in the past, or know that their family used land grant lands at some point in the past. Approximately one-third (34 percent) have never had any association with land grants. The remainder do not use such lands now and are unsure if their families did in prior years (question 20; appendix C, table 20).

The contemporary ranching operations of the area that have access to private grant lands use a combination of privately owned or leased lands, grant lands, and public lands as their range. Those with no access to private grants rely on privately owned or leased lands and public lands. Eastman and Gray (1987) and Eastman (1991) note there are only 14 community grants remaining in private ownership with significant amounts of grazing land (owing to the previously discussed loss of land grants and portions of grants). Land losses seriously limit the grazing areas available to many ranchers. As an example, the community of Cañones, near the Santa Fe National Forest, lost community grant lands to speculators who finally sold the land to the Federal government in 1937. Thus, 89 percent of the Cañones valley is managed by the Forest Service, and the town is surrounded on three sides by National Forest (Van Ness 1987). Because of these land losses, local stock owners are forced to rely on grazing permits on the National Forest for their cattle.

Personal and Family Portraits

Almost half (48 percent) of the men and women who shared their stories, information, and concerns ranged in age from 50 to 65, with about one-quarter in the category from 36 to 49 (26 percent) and one quarter over 65 (24 percent) (question 4; appendix C, table 4).

About 52 percent of the families use both Spanish and English in the home, with 34 percent using Spanish as the primary language and 13 percent using English. About 2 percent use Tewa as their primary language (question 3; appendix C, table 3). Many reported that Spanish was the primary or only language used within the home when they were young, but now they use both languages in the home and did so when their children were growing up. Several lamented that the younger generation seem to prefer English. The prevalence of television and the primary use of English in schools were seen as influences.

The importance of a good education was stressed repeatedly by the permittees and was a top priority for them with respect to their children. In fact, when responding to a question concerning the importance of passing on land as a means of providing for their children's future, several voluntarily commented "as well as providing them with a good education." Some 45 percent reported spending money earned from the livestock operation on special expenses such as college tuition for the children (question 33; appendix C, table 32c), and 90 percent of the respondents themselves have a high school education or higher (53 percent high school, 15 percent some college, 11 percent college degree, 11 percent graduate school) (question 5; appendix C, table 5). Of the spouses, 96 percent also have a high school education or higher (50 percent high school, 29 percent some college, 13 percent college degree, 4 percent graduate school) (question 6; appendix C, table 6).

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the employment categories for the 50 ranchers whose responses to question 8 (If employed outside the home or ranch, what is your job title or description?) could be classified as to job type. Preretirement job types are included for those

who are currently retired. Aside from those who reported their primary job as rancher/farmer (16 percent), the other most prevalent occupations were skilled trade/technician (26 percent), educator (14 percent), and business owner or manager (14 percent) (question 8; appendix C, table 8). Forty-five of the spouses have jobs classifiable as to type, with 87 percent of those engaged in paid work, while 13 percent list themselves as full-time homemakers. A wide range of jobs was given with the most popular being clerical (22 percent), business owner/manager or those who assist with the family business (16 percent), health care professional (11 percent), and daycare or home care provider (11 percent) (question 11; appendix C, table 11).

The ranchers reported working 40 or more hours per week off the ranch in 40 percent of the cases. Another 45 percent are now retired from prior off-ranch work (question 9; appendix C, table 9). Almost 58 percent of the 52 spouses reporting employment hours work at least 20 hours per week outside the home or ranch, and 25 percent are retired from outside jobs; almost 6 percent work under 20 hours per week, have varying hours, or do paid work at home (question 12; appendix C, table 12). The slight difference in percentages between the homemaker categories given for job type (13 percent) and work hours (12 percent) results from differences in the number of spouses reporting information for the two questions.

These figures confirm what studies from the 1960s and 1970s also showed—that the majority of small ranching operations in the north are not full-time operations (Eastman and Gray 1987; Kutsche and Van Ness 1981). Our study shows that 85 percent of the ranchers have other employment or are retired from other employment. The majority of their spouses also work outside the home or are retired from outside jobs (83 percent). Information collected by Fowler and associates in the early 1990s (Fowler and others 1994) showed that Statewide 75 percent of extra small and small ranches had people employed off the ranch, bringing in 44 percent of family income. Thus the trend toward off-ranch employment is Statewide as well as being common in the north-central area.

About 10 percent of the respondents describe themselves as full-time ranchers and farmers or retired from this occupation (question 7; appendix C, table 7). This category is defined as fully supported by agricultural work as opposed to the previously mentioned 16 percent who report their primary, but not necessarily only job, as rancher/farmer. Many of them told us they only work outside the ranch as a way to supplement their incomes and remain in the ranching business. They look forward to a time when they can afford to retire and

Table 1—Primary employment categories reported by permittees.

Employment category	Number	Percentage
Skilled tradesperson/technician	13	26
Rancher/farmer	8	16
Educator (school administrator, Superintendent, principal, teacher)	7	14
Business owner/manager	7	14
Other professional/scientist	5	10
Heavy equipment operator/Truck driver	5	10
Law enforcement officer/Firefighter/security officer	4	8
Laborer/maintenance worker	1	2
Total	50	100

devote all of their time to the ranch and livestock. Retaining their livestock operations for their families and future generations is tremendously important. About 94 percent put the majority of money earned from the ranch back into the operation to maintain and improve it, and 92 percent plan to run their cattle operation as a major activity after they retire from other jobs (question 33; appendix C, table 32c; question 36; appendix C, table 35).

Over 75 percent feel that they might not be able to afford, do not know whether they could afford, would have problems affording, or would not have the land to run a livestock operation if they waited until retirement to begin ranching (question 37; appendix C, table 36). Because they view ranching as a serious endeavor, many also questioned the idea of beginning a livestock operation without the benefit of background, knowledge, and experience. A rancher told us that the land and livestock play a major part in his family's life and he is using income from his other job to maintain the ranch and pay off his debts, looking forward to the day when he can retire and get on with ranching full time.

The people we spoke with view their ranching as a career and an integral part of their lives, and many consider it their primary occupation. Often, working another job is more of a necessity than a choice. There has been an unfortunate tendency among some agricultural economists to classify small ranching operations by value-laden terms such as "hobbyist" (for example, Gentner and Tanaka 2002). Implying that working these ranches is merely a hobby can be pejorative and offensive to many, for whom small-scale ranching is part of a long-standing tradition that maintains communities and cultural heritage. The classification "hobbyist" indicates ignorance of the broader social, cultural, and economic values of small-scale ranching (Barlett 1986; Eastman and others 2000).

In her work, Barlett (1986) reviews the prevalence and historic importance of part-time farming worldwide. She is one of the first researchers to suggest that choosing part-time farming is a rational economic decision that incorporates, but does not solely depend on, a complex package of benefits that may not be exclusively economic. The benefits from these operations in aggregate make a substantial contribution to national well-being (Eastman and others 2000). Our work with the permittees shows that using the terms "part-time," "hobbyist," or "lifestyle farmer" in reference to

these ranchers is both inaccurate and misleading. It in no way encompasses the role and importance of ranching in their lives or their contributions to their communities.

Ranching Operations

In many cases the ranching operations of the late 1990s reflect a mixture of contemporary and traditional aspects and forms. Eastman and others (2000) note that the overwhelming preponderance of cattle over sheep reflects contemporary work patterns as well as Forest Service influence. A recent study of New Mexico acequias (irrigation ditches) by Eastman and others (1997) found that the most common crops on the small, irrigated farms were alfalfa and pasture and that cattle were the most common livestock. There are practical reasons why this is so, especially for people who have off-farm employment. An alfalfa pasture and cattle operation lend themselves well to evening and weekend care. Sheep operations, on the other hand, require more intensive labor and management and do not lend themselves so well to part-time work. There are currently no sheep operations on the Santa Fe and five on the Carson, two of which fell within our study area.

Ranch Size—The majority of ranches throughout New Mexico are extra-small and small cow-calf operations with from one to 99 head (table 2), as is the case in Arizona and is consistent with national figures (Ruyle and others 2000). This size ranch constituted 70 percent of New Mexico's 8,313 ranches in 1996. Other major types of ranches include yearling-stocker operations and sheep operations (the following discussion of ranch types and characteristics in the State is based on 1996 figures from Torell and others 1998, unless otherwise cited). Cow-calf operations consist of a base cow herd, their calves, generally some yearling heifers and steers, replacement heifers, and the bulls needed to support the herd (Ruyle and others 2000).

Table 2—Comparison of cattle ranch sizes between northern New Mexico and the State as a whole, 1996 (adapted from Fowler 2000; Torell and others 1998).

Ranch size category	North-central New Mexico		All New Mexico	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Extra small and small (1-99 head)	1,488	82	5,802	70
Medium (100-499 head)	263	15	1,892	23
Large (500 or more head)	53	3	619	7
Total	1,804	100	8,313	100

Yearling operations, excluding cow-calf ranches that purchase some weaned calves when conditions are favorable, typically buy calves to put on leased pasture. These animals are fed until they are large enough to be sent to a feedlot (Fowler 2000). The majority of the State's yearling operations are located in the northeastern, plains portion of the State, which comprises the most productive rangeland, allowing for larger operations. This area produced 30 percent of the State's beef cows and contained 28 percent of the livestock operations in 1996.

Southeastern New Mexico, also a plains grassland area but with less precipitation than the northeast, accounted for 22 percent of the State's ranches, producing 23 percent of the beef cows and 38 percent of the sheep. The northwest is the other region of the State with large sheep operations, providing 36 percent of the State's sheep, 20 percent of the beef cows, and containing 22 percent of the ranches. The southwestern region of the State, including the Chihuahuan Desert of southwestern New Mexico, receives considerably less precipitation than other areas and is less productive. This area produced 12 percent of the beef cows and contained 6 percent of the ranches.

In the north-central mountain area of the State, small cow-calf operations made up 82 percent of the listed 1,804 ranches in 1996. This area also had the fewest large (500 or more head) ranches of the various ranching areas of the State, with large ranches making up 3 percent of the total; Statewide, they accounted for 7 percent of the total. In New Mexico 30 percent of ranches were considered to fall in the medium and large categories with at least 100 head. In northern New Mexico, however, only 18 percent of the ranches fell within these size categories. Thus, northern New Mexico had considerably fewer medium-to-large ranches and more extra small and small ranches than the State as a whole (Fowler 2000; Torell and others 1998).

This size pattern also occurs on the ranches we studied on the two Districts (generally extra small and small cow-calf operations with a few larger ranches). Herd sizes range anywhere from five to 550, with size determined by economics, available land, and grazing permits (question 23; appendix C, table 23a). With the few large and very small operations removed, herd sizes range from eight to 160 (based on 56 of the 62 cases). The average herd size is 54 animals. There is one large ranch with over 500 head and 10 medium-sized ranches having at least 100 head (table 3). These 11 constitute 18 percent of the total of 62, the same as the northern New Mexico percentages for 1996 discussed previously. As is the case for the area in general, 82 percent

Table 3—Cattle ranch size on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts.

Size category	Number	Percentage
Extra small (40 head or fewer)	28	45
Small (41-99 head)	23	37
Medium to large (100-499 head)	10	16
Large (500 or more head)	1	2
Total	62	100

of the ranches in our survey are classed as extra-small or small with one to 99 head.

A few of the ranchers also have some sheep, ranging from three to 28, which they pasture on private land. There are also two large commercial sheep operations, which graze under permit on the Canjilon District. These two have between 650 and slightly more than 750 head (question 23; appendix C, table 23a). Many people commented on the loss and decline of sheep operations and how they missed their family's sheep. Once the prevalent livestock of northern New Mexico, sheep were outnumbered by cattle in the last half of the 20th century due in part to government influence, increased threat of predation, and lack of time for their more intensive management.

Livestock Management and Breed Selection—Preferences vary in livestock management techniques among the different ranching operations, often conditioned by terrain, tradition, or government regulations. A variety of grazing systems, the details of which are beyond the scope of this discussion, are in use. Some of these incorporate traditional herding methods. According to one rancher, "There have been changes in the way people manage livestock from past years and changes in society. People have gotten away from tradition... Years back, there was a more personal way of management using herders for the animals." He spoke of intermixing new animals with older animals that are accustomed to an area, thereby utilizing the animals' natural behavior patterns as a way to facilitate herding management.

Listening to explanations of the various breeds of livestock, and the particular characteristics of each, is reminiscent of a university lecture in animal science. The basis for breed choice demonstrates a well-thought-out combination of experience, reasoning, and study. The rancher wants cattle that are adaptable to the land, able to thrive efficiently, and genetically suited to

produce offspring that will sell. Breeds are chosen for qualities of disposition, low birth weight, weight gain, and maternal characteristics. Stockmen place great importance on the type of bull to ensure calving ease for the heifer or cow. A cow should possess good maternal characteristics in order to provide the health and safety of her calf. The right choice of breeds determines how well the calf will develop and gain weight prior to weaning. Many ranchers feel that locally raised cattle do better than cows from other places because the former are acclimated to their surroundings. As a permittee explained, these cows are "accustomed to the ranch, find their way home better, survive better, and wander less."

A variety of breeds have been introduced or developed since the Spanish first brought cattle into New Mexico; many are represented in the herds of today. Although there are purebred cattle on a number of ranches, the trend in northern New Mexico is to the crossbred herd. Economics, practical management, and confidence in hybrid vigor may affect preference for the latter. Permittees must consider specific environmental conditions related to potential health hazards to avoid producing cattle that will be susceptible to high altitude diseases or problems resulting from exposure to intense sunlight. In addition, a breed of cattle that requires more forage than the land can produce will be replaced by a more suitable breed.

Animal Losses—Discussions with the ranchers revealed great respect and affection for their animals. This is not surprising considering that the animals are interconnected with family tradition and long association with the land. A few of the ranchers expressed this as being "born with the livestock."

Yearly losses of livestock represent both emotional and economic hardships. "The loss of one cow is a big thing. One cow represents a big investment." Although losses can vary tremendously from year to year, permittees reported average losses of two cows (4 percent) per year from an average herd size of 54 (table 4; question 24; appendix C, table 24a). Reported cow losses for 1 year ranged from 0 to 10; calf losses ranged from 0 to 12. Causes of these losses include the death of mother or infant from complications at birth, predation by wild animals, disease, injuries, poisoning from toxic plants, lightning, or old age. Other reasons for loss include rustling,

malicious killings, and predation by packs of domestic dogs. While wild animals such as coyote, cougar, and bear represent a hazard on more remote allotments on forest land, the domestic dog poses a greater threat on pastures located close to the home ranch or on allotments located adjacent to more populated, urban interface areas. Although the financial loss may be the same, it seems easier to accept an animal's death from natural causes or accident than to find one shot for target practice.

About 64 percent of the permittees reported problems with theft or vandalism on their allotments (question 24; appendix C, table 24g). Theft, a major cause of animal loss on forest allotments, is even worse in areas with greater access to roads. "So many people use the forest that things just seem to walk off," a rancher told us. Another related how he lost four calves out of 40 to poaching or rustling, all cases that he has proven. Rustling has been a problem on allotments in southern Colorado, too. A New Mexico rancher lost 20 pairs there in 1 year. Although there seems to be less rustling in recent years according to our informants, this form of theft continues.

Vandalism is also a serious problem on the allotments. Ranchers describe coyotes as a "normal" problem and are far more disturbed by the activities of the "two-legged coyotes." For example, on one allotment a calf was found with an arrow in its head. The calf had to be sold for butchering. Another, in similar condition, appeared to have been used for target practice. Several permittees reported stories of cows and calves that were shot during early hunting season, when cattle are still on the forest.

Predation by wild animals or domestic dogs can also be a source of animal loss, as it is throughout the State. Fowler and others (1994) report 71 percent of the

Table 4—Average number of cows lost during a typical year.

Number of owners ^a	Number of cows lost by owners	Number of cows lost by owner groups
19	0	0
5	1	5
17	2	34
4	3	12
6	4	24
5	5	25
2	6	12
1	8	8
1	10	10
Total 60	130	

Average number of cows lost per owner, 2.17 (130 divided by 60).

^aTotal number of owners discussing lost animals.

ranchers in the State indicated that predation was a problem for their livestock operations in 1991. In our survey, 51 percent of the respondents reported problems with predation (question 24; appendix C, table 24g). The smaller number found in our study may relate to the fact that many fewer sheep operations were included in our sample than were represented in the Statewide survey. Sheep and lambs are subject to a higher predation rate than cattle.

In many of our discussions regarding predation, permittees contrasted the behavior of coyotes versus domestic dogs. In the experience of one rancher, most losses of both cows and calves occur at calving time from attacks by dogs, coyotes being less of a problem. He told us that once a calf sucks from the cow, coyotes would not bother with them. Another commented that coyotes are not a problem unless there are infant calves; coyotes are less likely to bother the larger calves. There was also a contrast drawn between the more remote forest allotments and those closer to towns and growing suburban areas, with domestic dog activity more prevalent in the latter areas.

Poisonous plants were also mentioned as a cause of animal loss. Larkspur, a toxic plant that grows at high elevations on many allotments, is a serious problem. Avoiding it is a matter of timing. Larkspur is at its worst from late spring until around mid June. Therefore, it helps to delay taking the cattle to those areas where larkspur occurs until after the plants have bloomed. A few reported cows or calves found dead by a stream or water hole. It is possible the cause was from ingestion of plants containing cyanide. Toxins or noxious plants in purchased hay may also result in losses. In one unusual case many cow deaths were attributed to hay thought to be contaminated by elk urine. Whatever the reasons for loss, animal deaths have a serious impact upon the success and economic viability of the extra-small and small ranches of the area.

Costs and Returns: Time, Effort, and Income—Often, the hours many ranchers put in with their livestock in addition to their other employment add up to two full-time jobs. Ranch work requires considerable time and effort. Nearly 70 percent described working every day or a portion of every day on the ranching operation with the animals. In fact, when asked how many days per year they worked on the ranch (question 22; appendix C, table 22), many laughed at such a naïve question and quickly responded “every day, of course!” One told us he gets up every morning in winter at 3:00 to drive up to the ranch and feed the animals before going to work at his full-time job in Santa Fe.

Ranches are not only costly in terms of time and effort; they are costly in terms of financial resources as well. Of the 58 respondents willing to answer a question concerning how much it costs them to own livestock, only 9 percent reported spending less than \$1,000 per year on their operation, while 19 percent reported spending between \$1,000 and \$5,000 annually, and 48 percent spent over \$5,000 (table 5; question 31; appendix C, table 30). About 24 percent did not report a dollar figure but stated that their expenses were very high, hard to estimate, or that the operation took all the profit, sometimes costing more than it brought in. Specific expenses are discussed in greater detail in following sections.

Two questions (32, 34) were designed to elicit information on percentage of annual income derived from livestock operations and on family dependence on livestock for income (question 32 and 34; appendix C, tables 31 and 33). Direct questions concerning income are sensitive by their nature but can yield valuable information. However, problems with wording of the two questions, which were not discovered until well into the interview process, produced results that may be misleading. For example, question 32 asks directly for an estimate of the percentage of income derived from the ranching operation but does not specify gross or net income. In addition, many respondents either could not, or were unwilling to, specify a percentage. This group either gave a dollar figure that could not be converted to a percentage or commented on the general lack of profitability of the enterprise and described where the money from the enterprise was being spent.

Question 34 asks people to select from a series of responses describing their dependence on their ranches for family income and their level of involvement in the operation. The two-part nature of the responses to the question may have confused some respondents, leading to inaccurate information. Thus, results from these two questions are not discussed further in this report. The means and utility of determining direct

Table 5—Money spent annually on livestock operations.

Amount	Number	Percentage
Less than \$1,000	5	9
Between \$1,000 and \$5,000	11	19
More than \$5,000	28	48
Expenses are high and hard to estimate/takes all the profits/costs more than it brings in, and so on.	14	24
Total	58	100

income information are being reevaluated and redesigned for the proposed larger study.

Virtually all of those we spoke with consider the ranch an investment, a form of savings, and a tradition, with 79 percent wishing to save or invest money by buying land in the area, improving the ranch, or doing both (fig. 2; question 38; appendix C, table 37). Some 11 percent would select a savings account or other monetary investment, while 10 percent would save or invest in other ways and combinations. Eastman and others (2000:543) discuss use of extra-small and small ranches as both an investment and a form of savings in the following way:

While the ranch may produce little or even a negative operating income, the assets have a high value which is expected to increase. Most northern ranchers own their homes, land, and cattle, and these constitute a significant investment and form of savings, which often has very high value. Managed properly, operating losses often provide income tax write-offs against other income. Thus, small operators stand to benefit from a reduced tax burden while their assets increase in value.

The ranchers often view their animals as *banks-on-the-hoof*, which can be used...for emergencies, for periods of unemployment, or for special needs such as college tuition for the children. They also add to subsistence security by providing meat for the family no matter what the supermarket price is or the condition of family finances. In some years, a profit is made when animals are sold.

Despite the fact that livestock are not the primary means of support for the large majority of families, the animals do make a substantial contribution to household economy, with 58 percent of interviewees reporting that they use money from the ranch for basic living expenses, including 48 percent who use livestock money for household and family emergencies, and 45 percent who use it for special expenses, such as college tuition for the children and for household improvements (question 33; appendix C, tables 32a, 32b, and 32c). Selling livestock in an actual emergency, however, is not a popular strategy, with almost 64 percent stating that they have not sold livestock to meet an emergency in the past 5 years (question 35; appendix C, table 34). Several observed that selling in an

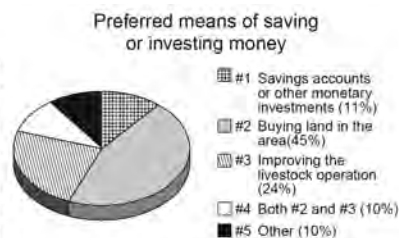


Figure 2—Preferred means of saving or investing money.

emergency is not an economically sensible course of action and would be strongly avoided. Keeping the herd together and selling surplus animals at the appropriate times seem important. Almost 15 percent of the interviewees have sold animals to cover an emergency one or two times within the 5-year period, 13 percent sold three to five times, and about 3 percent sold more than 10 times during the period or sold some stock every year. Sales often result from serious family illness or accident.

In addition to monetary gains, the animals provide a variety of other resources. Families butcher an average of 2.6 animals per year for household consumption by either the immediate or extended family or for use as gifts for friends and more distant relatives (table 6; question 25 and 28; appendix C, tables 25 and 28). In many cases, those we spoke with included all animals butchered (for whatever purpose) under the rubric of animals butchered for household consumption. Thus, it is often not possible to sort out how many animals were actually used in the home versus those provided to friends or more distant relatives.

Of the 55 respondents who discussed sharing live animals, approximately 38 percent share with family, other relatives, and friends. They less commonly share butchered animals (question 27; appendix C, table 27). About 35 percent stated that they give away between one and four live animals during a typical year, while 4 percent report giving more than four. Several remarked that live animals might be given but are then butchered for meat. Permittees said that live animals are most often given to friends, relatives, and children to start herds. Another common reason for giving live animals is as a donation for charity events. Others remarked that they used to give live animals but that the family is too big now or that friends and family have their own animals.

Table 6—Average number of animals butchered during a typical year.

Number of permittees*	Number of animals butchered	Total number of animals butchered by permittee groups
5	0	0
10	1	10
23	2	46
10	3	30
8	4	32
1	5	5
2	6	12
0	7	0
2	8	16
0	9	0
1	10	10
Total	62	161

Average number of animals butchered per permittee: 2.6 (161 divided by 62).

* Total number of permittees discussing butchered animals.

Use of animal by-products has apparently declined in recent years, as 79 percent reported no use of by-products such as milk, hides, or wool (question 26; appendix C, table 26). About 8 percent use milk and milk products such as cheese, with the remainder using combinations of milk, hides, and wool. Of the 26 people who made additional comments on the use of animal by-products, about half remarked that their families had a milk cow when they were growing up and made cheese and butter but that now there is no time for milking and maintaining a milk cow.

Use of animals and meat for bartering and trading for goods and services is apparently not a common practice among those with whom we spoke (question 29; appendix C, tables 29a and 29b). Of the 55 interviewees who discussed the topic, almost 73 percent reported that they do not trade or barter with their animals, and a little over 83 percent (out of 60 respondents) stated that they do not barter or trade meat. Several commented that they do not barter, preferring to sell animals and keep things on a cash basis. Of those who do use animals for bartering, most trade calves for goods, work, and services.

Use of extra-small and small ranches as a means of maintaining family traditions and cultural heritage is the focus of following sections.

Issues and Concerns

Because so many ranching operations in the region rely to some extent on public land (primarily National Forest land for those in this study), regulations and management decisions affecting these lands

significantly impact the operation and future of ranching throughout the area. The degree to which a ranch relies on leased and permitted land under different ownerships strongly affects the complexity of ranch management. Regulations, fees, and enforcement can vary between agencies and within the same agency from location to location. The managing agency defines grazing seasons and stocking rates, which are often limited by competing uses and values such as recreation or riparian restoration. Restrictions imposed by the Endangered Species

Act (ESA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) also come into play and often affect the timing and construction of range improvements such as water developments and fencing. Such restrictions can adversely affect ranch operations and economic viability (Ruyle and others 2000).

The costs of grazing on public land can also be subject to change and to considerable scrutiny. Some people believe that ranchers are paying less than fair market value for grazing fees, while others argue to the contrary, stating that the additional costs associated with the grazing fee more than make up for the difference. Some of these additional costs include boundary fence maintenance, water source development and upkeep, brush control, and road/trail repair. Expenses associated with grazing on public land resulting from theft, vandalism, and disruption of operations by public access increase operational costs for public land ranchers. As populations, urbanization, and recreational uses increase, these costs will rise (Ruyle and others 2000). Such problems and issues are as common in northern New Mexico as they are in other parts of the region.

When the permittees were asked to discuss their most serious issues and concerns related to their livestock operations, they highlighted a dozen or so categories, many of which were intertwined with working on public land (interview question 6). A few issues such as drought, brush encroachment, rustling, predation by coyotes, neighbors' dogs, and the need for communication with agency personnel were stated simply and with little comment. Others that were mentioned with more frequency and seemed to be of greater concern were explained in detail. These issues were included

in the broader topics of unstable cattle prices; high costs of the livestock business; water sources; vandalism; inadequate law enforcement; government regulations; competition from elk; allotment upkeep; and environmental conflict.

The expenses of running the business and keeping the operation afloat are concerns of many, extinction being their greatest fear. As respondents explained, costs of feed and hay are high in relation to the market value of cattle, and there is not enough private land to hold the animals until the prices go up. Cattle production is affected by drought. Other problems include fluctuating beef prices and having to transport livestock so far for sale. Some expressed the need to have a processing facility nearby that would enable them to market their product more effectively. Problems arise from economic conditions one has no control over, a rancher told us. "The price of cattle has been low for quite a while," he continued. "People in other countries can produce cheaper than we can here, but we do not know what the quality is. The trade policy [NAFTA] has caused problems for U.S. producers. The consumer will have to decide between quality and quantity."

To others, water is their biggest problem, the specifics varying according to type of allotment. One permittee expressed the need for irrigation on Forest land in dry years, others for reservoirs to keep the cattle from moving back down to the village. Another permittee was concerned with the limiting of livestock use of streams for drinking water. If the windmills were repaired, a rancher explained, they could spread out the cows for better distribution on allotments.

A particularly disturbing problem on the allotments involves vandalism and carelessness, subjects that encompass anything from cut fences to target practice on wells to the shooting of cattle. The carelessness of people leaving gates open is a problem on many allotments causing difficulties with trespass and exposing cattle to danger if they get out. Fence cutting by hunters and wood haulers is also a problem, even on private land. One rancher said the worst example of vandalism has been people killing their cows. Many observed that law enforcement is lacking. "People shoot signs off fences and break fences down. Four-wheelers cut gashes through the land and are destroying the land." Some respondents felt that the Forest Service does not have enough personnel to patrol the land and control abuse.

Other problems involve government restrictions, the possibility of losing permits, increases in permit fees, or reductions in time or livestock numbers on the allotment. Loss of permits would ruin many of the ranchers in the area because they depend upon public land

for grazing. An increase in permit fees to equal those on private lands would be prohibitive. "People think if you have animals, you have money. They do not know how much money you have to spend," said one rancher. "You must pay a lot of money just to keep your traditions going." With livestock numbers so small, another explained, it is not a very profitable business. Owing to the dry conditions of recent years, use of allotments has been delayed, and the cattle must be fed more at home, increasing operating costs.

Another frequently mentioned difficulty involves the activity of elk on forest allotments and on private land. A herd of elk can do considerable damage to fences, contributing to work and expenses. More seriously, elk compete with cattle for forage. Respondents felt that "rest rotation" (a type of grazing system) does not work well on allotments where there is an abundance of elk. There is no control over the behavior of game animals; therefore the elk still eat the grasses when the pasture is meant to be "at rest." "The elk are putting us out of commission," a rancher said. Elk are also getting into winter feed supplies of pasture and hay on private land. "The Game and Fish Department [New Mexico Department of Game and Fish] should be held accountable," stated a permittee, "after all, the rancher is!"

The San Antonio Mountain Elk Project—a joint research effort among the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), the Carson National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management Taos Field Office, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation—should shed light on the activities of elk in the area. The study was conducted from 1998 through 2001 with analysis currently in progress. The project area includes portions of the San Juan Mountains, the San Luis Valley, and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. The study examines elk demographics, spatial and temporal distribution of elk, and resource conflicts involving elk (Smallidge, personal communication, 2002).

Negative publicity, environmentalists, and "livestock unfriendly" people constitute a formidable problem for a majority of the ranchers. Several think that fear of cattle is behind some of the public's criticism of livestock in the Forest. There is concern over negative publicity put out about ranching and farming, and about apparent antilivestock bias expressed by certain newspapers. There should be more educational information published through universities to help the public understand the role of the rancher in food production and the importance of the ranching tradition in the State, according to many with whom we spoke.

When we asked the ranchers about the most serious problems they face in their livestock operations today,

many listed the environmental movement as a major concern. Some simply mentioned "environmentalists" in roles of harassment, interference, or criticism. Others spoke of "environmentalist pressure" on government agencies. Some are concerned because they feel that the Forest Service bows to influence and pressures from environmental groups and the monetary resources they represent. Criticism from environmentalists and fear of the actions of some of the more radical groups are of serious concern to the ranchers we interviewed. They feel resentment toward these "outsiders" who are trying to dictate how they should care for the land, and frustration that their own knowledge seems to be ignored. The following paragraphs contain some of the ranchers' thoughts on this complex subject.

Ranchers refer to pressures from environmental groups who do not understand life in northern New Mexico. They feel that some environmentalists do not understand that people here still need wood for heating and cooking. "Environmentalists just have information from books. They have not lived on the land, and they do not do labor work. We have lived it, and they have not." Environmentalists have little understanding of ranching, an interviewee told us. He thinks communication needs to improve between the two groups. He believes it is important to get along with one's neighbors and to try to understand them. You have "got to know him," he said, referring to the neighbor. "It makes all the difference."

"Local people," another said, "have been using this land for grazing livestock for many generations without destroying it. Why, therefore, should new people be complaining?" "We're environmentalists ourselves. We're not extremists." Many of the ranchers expressed the fear that environmentalists are trying to drive them out. They have always thought of themselves as "on-the-ground, front-line people" taking care of the land. Now they feel alienated from the environmental community. "Some good comes from the environmental movement. It's the extreme politics that cause the problem. The environmental threat is always hanging over us."

"It's hard to be in this business in this day and age," another said. "You can't compete against big corporations and environmental issues." "We like the land," he said, in spite of accusations to the contrary. "Livestock and the environment can get along if both are managed correctly." There are those who "think ranchers rape the land," he stated, "but if you're smart you do not do that." He believes that most people who own land want to care for it. These landowners do not want to overuse their land or have trash lying around, in consideration for the welfare of animals as well as for

the land and aesthetics. A rancher summed up by saying, "We must take some responsibility ourselves. We need to invest in public lands, look at the benefit to the resource.... We need to take the initiative to continue to keep a good open line of communication with all the stakeholders. There are a lot of ranchers who take care of the land, care about the animals (wildlife). We must meet the challenge of the public!"

Working on Forest Service Managed Land

When asked about their views and attitudes toward working on Forest Service managed land (interview question 5), the permittees shared their problems, frustrations, and suggestions, as well as positive experiences. Working relationships of ranchers with agency personnel vary according to the location of their allotments, specific rangers, and personalities of the permittees. Having cattle on an allotment in the higher elevations may be an entirely different experience from an allotment adjacent to a busy highway or located close to a large town. Initially, there was a polite reserve to most of the answers, but as we talked the ranchers became more candid and less guarded. Their responses indicated good relationships with government personnel or described relationships that have improved in recent decades. Most of these were backed up with explanations of why a good working relationship exists and what circumstances have brought about favorable change. Some continued with difficulties they faced in spite of the good working relationship.

In recent years, attitudes and orientations appear to have changed among Forest Service personnel. Raish's discussions with Forest and District range staffs on both the Carson and the Santa Fe in 1996 indicate a strong awareness of the role and importance of small herds to local ranchers and communities. Forest Service personnel express a commitment to working with the permittees to improve range conditions within the framework of multiple-permittee allotments. In addition, many local people currently work both as rangers and in range positions on the two Forests, which seems to increase sensitivity to local problems and needs.

Forest Service range staffs at the regional level describe the difficulty of balancing community, cultural, and economic concerns with rangeland sustainability issues in today's climate of resource conflict and litigation. Much of Forest Service management, as they point out, is legislatively mandated and comes under the scrutiny of environmental, recreation, and commodity

interest groups. This complex management situation often leads to conflict between resource users and difficulties in implementing agency programs and improvements. Nonetheless, the importance of the ranching tradition to rural communities and the role of ranches and farms in maintaining open space and ecosystem integrity are strongly acknowledged (Brown and Stewart, personal communication, 2002).

The fact that a Forest Service employee was raised in the area is generally viewed as beneficial. The "local man" is viewed as having the advantage of being familiar with the land, may have been raised with livestock, and will be more likely to understand the people and culture of the District. He may be perceived as an ally and as a means of communication with the agency. Many ranchers commented positively about a local range technician, noting that he is knowledgeable and has their interests at heart. One permittee described relations between ranchers and rangers as "tremendously improved." "In prior years," he said, "the ranger was king. Now the rangers try to work with the people in the area instead of being dictatorial." Another who feels they currently have a good relationship with Forest personnel thinks the older generation found it harder to deal with the agency. Culture, language barriers, and personal memories of land loss contributed to the problem. In his opinion, the Forest Service is now beginning to listen more carefully to the ranchers and value their knowledge.

A few District Rangers were mentioned specifically as good people to work with; one in particular, with long tenure in the area, was held in great esteem. He was described as "a tremendous fellow," sincere, and willing to listen to local opinions. Many we spoke with felt he valued their presence as permittees on the forest and had a gentle way of dealing with people. Coming from a farm background, he was in tune with the area and the people and was highly respected and valued as an ally. "If you have good people who understand why you do things, it's so important," a rancher stated. "It's a way of keeping the peace."

In contrast, others that we interviewed, although usually courteous in their responses, felt that relations with the agency were not good or had deteriorated over time. There was some discomfort expressed over apparent unequal treatment from District to District. Most of the problems, however, were common throughout the area. The feeling was expressed that "the Forest Service doesn't understand the cattleman's culture and tradition," adding that "it's a hard thing to learn."

As in most rural communities, there is a tendency to place great value on long-term associations, on knowing a person and being able to trust that person.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of personal familiarity with the land, animals, and people. Several people mentioned that the Forest Service changes rangers too often. From the rancher's point of view, the frequent changeover in agency personnel promotes a continuous lack of communication and a deterrent to understanding. Rangers often move (usually to improve their careers) or are transferred before they can develop the personal relationships necessary to work effectively in the local community.

Resentment arises when a ranger unfamiliar with the area is given control over a person's home territory and way of life. This resentment is heightened when the prevailing attitude implies that scholastic learning counts for more than a lifetime of experience. Regulations are seen as rigid, and pressure from environmental groups seems to have a strong influence on the agency. Improvements and livestock management systems are often mandated, and some permittees feel that they must pay even if these improvements and systems are against their better judgment.

Timing of entry into the allotments, and movement and distribution of cattle, are of special concern and were mentioned frequently. Many of the ranchers gave examples of why they believe the old ways were less harmful and more beneficial to both land and livestock. One permittee commented that he is not comfortable with government management decisions that can be both costly to him and disruptive to the welfare of his cattle. Several felt that agency restrictions are often counterproductive to the management of their herds. "Moving the cows too much causes the cows to lose cycle, but the Forest Service says, 'This is the day you must go in.' The result is a loss of money because the cows can't be bred when they should be, and calving gets strung out. The old men moved the cows less. The new methods put a lot of stress on the cattle; everything gained may be lost in a 30-mile walk."

There was an often-repeated invitation to agency personnel to ride with the ranchers to observe and discuss the range. "Forest Service personnel are good but should be given more freedom to work out in the field," stated one rancher. According to several permittees, there are times when agency personnel do not know things because they are not out in the field. Another rancher described his relationship with the Forest Service as a partnership in caring for the land. He believes ranchers and agency share a common goal and should work together to protect the land. "Permittees are the eyes and ears of the Forest Service," one said, observing that the rancher spends more time in the National Forest than does the ranger, but theorizing that part of the reason is an "understaffed" agency.

Livestock, Community, and Family

Community and Family Cohesion—Livestock ownership and ranching are powerful forces that bind communities and families. Of those we interviewed, 85 percent herd with their relatives or with help from their relatives (question 16; appendix C, table 16), 81 percent herd with neighbors or with other community members, often in their grazing associations (question 17; appendix C, table 17). Some 87 percent attend grazing association meetings during a typical year (question 14; appendix C, table 14), as well as participate in many other ranching and agricultural events with neighbors (question 15; appendix C, tables 15a–f). These include brandings (100 percent), round-ups or moving the cattle on the allotment (94 percent), rodeos (66 percent), fairs and 4-H events (61 percent), and matanzas (occasions when families and neighbors gather to share in the butchering and processing of the meat) (68 percent). Percentages include those who reported attendance at the event with no number of events per year given, those who attended at least one event up through those who attended more than 10 per year, and those reporting “too many to count.” Matanzas are apparently less common now than in the past, time seeming to be a major factor in their decline. Of 45 people who commented on their activities, 18 stated that matanzas are less common now than when they were growing up and that they now butcher their own animals for their family.

Family Values and Livestock Operation Goals—When asked to prioritize family goals and values, 96 percent of the participants ranked a better quality of life and the continuance of traditional values as most important, with 55 percent choosing the former and 41 percent the latter. In contrast, the increase of family income was ranked as most important by only a fraction more than 3 percent of the participants, with less than 2 percent being concerned with increasing respect within their community (fig. 3; question 39; appendix C, tables 38a–d). This particular question was given considerable thought by most, partly as it dealt with their values and also because it required clarification of our wording.

The importance of their values was exemplified by such comments as, “numbering things is not realistic when those things are interdependent” and “acquisition of material things is not even a priority.” It seemed to us that the idea of gaining more respect in the

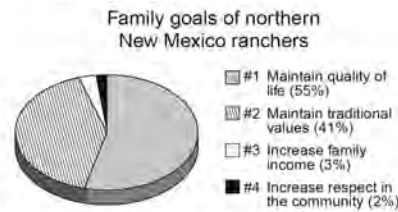


Figure 3—Family goals of northern New Mexico ranchers.

community struck the majority of participants as inappropriate to the question. For instance, one rancher stated, “Respect in the community is not a goal to seek, nor a value of importance.” Another asked, “How do you create respect? It’s the way you live that does that.” One summed up his response by adding, “If you have the way of life, time with your family, and the respect of your neighbors, you’ll have all you need.”

The next question (table 7; question 40; appendix C, tables 39a–d) asked for a ranking of goals for their livestock operations. Again, it was the family’s quality of life and the continuation in the tradition of the livestock business that took priority, with 90 percent of the participants ranking those choices as most important. Maintaining the family’s quality of life that results from owning livestock received the highest proportion (over 57 percent) and avoiding being forced out of livestock ownership, therefore securing family tradition, receiving the second highest (almost 33 percent). The remaining two choices—making more money above costs and improvement of the livestock

Table 7—Goals of permittee ranchers for their livestock operations.

Goals	Number	Percentage
Number 1 Maintain quality of life (resulting from livestock ownership)	35	57
Number 2 Avoid being forced out of livestock ownership	20	33
Number 3 Improve livestock operation (obtain more land, more animals, and better equipment)	3	5
Number 4 Increase overall income, profit, and purchasing power	3	5
Total	61	100

operation—although important considerations, were ranked as most important by about 5 percent each.

For example, one young couple we interviewed worked in Albuquerque for a while, but they didn't want to raise their children in the city. They preferred to buy cows and land than "cars and materialistic stuff," so they came back to live where their ancestors had homesteaded. They would not live anywhere else now and quoting her rancher father, she said, "We like that struggle." They say that money is not everything; they just need enough to live on. Another said, "It's in your blood for the rest of your life. If you're raised in this kind of atmosphere, you keep on doing it for as long as you can, not to make money!"

Eastman and others (2000) describe the value placed on the quality of life that ranching provides to livestock owners and their families. Eastman and Gray (1987) note that small-scale livestock producers have a hierarchy of goals that differ noticeably from those of large, commercial producers. Their studies found quality of life the highest-ranking goal, with income the last choice, which is consistent with the results of our study. Eastman and Gray (1987) describe the benefits of small-scale cattle ownership as providing a sense of security, gaining personal satisfaction from their work, and upholding family tradition. In general, these cattle owners show a tendency to avoid debt, a preference for proven methods of operation, a special attachment to their livestock, and a desire to retain their livestock in anticipation of retirement (Eastman and Gray 1987). Our study also confirms these values.

Role of Livestock in Teaching Children—History has been defined as "a narrative of events; a story; a chronicle," tradition as "the passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation," and heritage as "something other than property passed down from preceding generations; legacy..." (Morris 1978: 625, 1360, 617). History provides us with a description of the past as it leads up to the present, while the dynamic forces of tradition and heritage continue forward to influence the future. For most of the participants in this study, there is a firm set of traditional values they hope to impart to their children and a rich cultural heritage to be shared with future generations.

The participants were asked if they used land and livestock to teach their children about traditional values and heritage (interview question 2). The ranchers' responses stressed family bonding, responsibility to the land and livestock, and a balanced attitude toward money. The children, they told us, learn to care for and respect the animals as well as the land and its resources, factors that have shaped the lives of their parents and

grandparents. Time spent in the daily business of the ranch provides the children with an opportunity to experience the way of life that is their heritage and serves to strengthen family ties. The ranchers feel family life is enriched by the teaching of parent to child in the course of working together with the livestock on ancestral lands. "With ranching, you do not teach by the book; you teach by doing," was a rancher's observation.

Teaching the children family values and responsibility was a common theme throughout most of the discussions. Ranch life provides time to be spent together as a family, they explained. It is viewed as a way for the children to learn to work, to keep busy and out of trouble. Sons and daughters alike take part in the daily work associated with the ranch. Due to the traditional nature of the livestock business, there can be an opportunity for these children to learn from or about their grandparents, a great source of heritage and traditional values. In addition, many ranches involve the extended family, with uncles and aunts a part of every day life. Often, grown children who have moved away will return to help with gathering or branding. In many cases, a husband and wife or other family member participated as a team during the interview process. Several stressed the benefits of having the mother present to care for the children at home.

The ranchers seemed eager to discuss teaching family values, responsibility, and the love of animals. Even those without children of their own had shared their knowledge and time with nieces or nephews. Some extended their teaching to local children by serving in the community as 4-H leaders. The children in these communities are encouraged to participate in 4-H. In addition, many of the ranchers have grandchildren with whom they can share their love of land and animals. Many feel that ranch life serves as an example for the children, teaching them the value of hard work. They also feel that the ranch provides continuity with the ways of their grandparents and with their Spanish heritage.

For some, it is a form of recreation to be out riding horses, camping in tents, the evenings spent with the father telling the children about family history. It gives them something better to do than town life could offer. One rancher said he has known all the area and mountains around the area from going out with his father and now teaches his own children the same way. Another rancher said he used the land and livestock to teach his children about traditional values by working together, caring for the livestock, and caring for the land. He uses this time to tell them stories of his own childhood with his father and grandfather and relates the stories told to him when he was a boy. He also

teaches his children about the geography of the allotment, water conservation, soil erosion, and timber management.

Another said his children were with him since they could walk, at his side much of the time. In this way the children become involved with the work and are taught how things should be done, learning at first by observation and by helping with simple chores. "Teaching the children through this work is good for several reasons," a rancher states: "so they will learn about the past, so they will stay out of trouble, so they can see what's going on, so maybe they will want to continue [with the ranching way of life]." "The payoff is keeping the children off the streets," one father commented. He said he feels "deeply grateful" for the ranch that has kept his family close and his children out of trouble.

The ranchers tell us that their children learn to accept responsibility by working with the animals on the ranch. "It's the only way to raise kids, with the livestock, taking care of something beside your self," one says. Another rancher wants his children to understand what it is to buy an animal and then lose it. Many of the children are involved in 4-H projects, selling a steer or lamb to buy school clothes. A prize steer may pay for a year of college. Gifts of livestock keep the children in the business and help to keep up interest and tradition.

On one ranch, the family does a lot together because of the ranch work, but the work also keeps them apart, the father missing a lot of school and church ceremonies. It is stressful to family life during some months, he says, but the children go with him whenever possible. They learn the business and are introduced to new things and, through the livestock business, have had exposure to the outside world. They learn how to handle adversity. The children ask a lot of questions. They get to work together and to learn responsibility.

We were told that the traditional values of heritage, hard work, and responsibility come more easily to these children than to children in town. They learn what life is about. "For the children, the ranch opens their minds that money isn't everything. . . . Money could be gone in a day's time; land is better, especially if you have raised your kids to respect that land and become a part of it." Their oldest daughter is willing to sacrifice a big income in favor of a future running the ranch.

"Your children see what you're doing. They take part in all phases of the ranch. But, not until they are adults do they understand what you've done or tried to teach them. You plant those seeds in the children, and harvest the results as they grow. You only reap what you sow." The children of this rancher learned their biology during the butchering of livestock. They know

where their food comes from. "They learn the value of life, how precious, how instantaneous, when they see the animal drop. But, they must learn to do this properly, and to value the animal's life. The animal gave his life to feed them. They get first-hand experience with the land, not just as a visitor."

Many of the ranchers encourage their children to pursue an education beyond high school. They are obviously proud of their college graduates as well as those in other careers. In one rancher's opinion, "It is important to give your children a good education as well as land." Another considered education and good family values as "the best way to provide for the future of your children." Some measure of apprehension existed about sending the next generation out to jobs or an education because the future of a ranch often depends upon the continued interest and participation of younger generations. The values and heritage instilled in childhood are necessary ingredients for survival of the family ranch.

Role of Land and Livestock in Maintaining Traditional Culture and Family Values—The traditions and culture of the ranching families of northern New Mexico are deeply rooted in history, with responsibility toward land and livestock enmeshed in family values. The well being of the community is also an integral part of life, necessary to survival. Preserving the culture and heritage of the past gives a sense of identity in the present and the hope of extending their traditions and way of life into the future.

Great importance is placed on ranching as a tradition that goes back for generations in a family. Most designated the 1800s or earlier as the origins of ranching in their families. They are proud of their roots and interested in family history. Respect for family is evident in the desire to retain their lands and way of life, entities entrusted to them by their parents. A few said they had given up other careers to return home and run the family ranch when a parent died or an aging father needed help.

We asked participants in this project to describe their feelings about the land and livestock and to explain the role these elements play in their family's life (interview question 1). One replied that he still lives in the house where his grandfather lived, on the land where his grandfather homesteaded. The grandparents were rich in culture but poor in possessions. He took a job closer to home when his father died because there was no one to look after the animals. Retired now, he works full time with the cattle and loves every minute of it. "When you have roots," he says, "they're hard to get away from."

Another states that, although the land is not a major part of his income right now, emotionally and culturally the land and livestock have made a positive effect on his family. "It teaches you to learn the value of money, to learn the land." Ranching is hereditary to this family; they were born and raised here. "Working and owning the same land all of your life is especially important if that land has been passed down from generation to generation. Livestock can be replaced [if necessary], the land can't. . . . There's nothing better to put your money into than land, to keep the land from being cut up and sold in pieces. There's not any more land being made!"

The roles of land and livestock in daily life are not to be taken lightly. They are closely connected to family and community. They are a reason for being, a way of life, the way these people were raised. Land, livestock, and people are interdependent. The Spanish word *querencia*, from the verb *agüerenciarse*, meaning to become fond of a place, may apply here. These ranchers express the feeling of being "at home in the place where they live and work and raise their families. This place provides them with the resources needed for survival, and, in turn, they feel a responsibility to care for that place. . . . It goes beyond the boundaries of legal ownership, beyond the promise of monetary return" (McSweeney 1995:112).

"Being familiar with your land is very important. You know your neighbors and who you can, or cannot, depend upon," a rancher stated. "You get to like your animals. They play a part in your daily life. There's a calmness about being among your animals. You grow into it."

Cattle are a cultural reason to live in the area as much as a financial reason, the acquisition of money often less important than how and where the ranchers live. One describes their way of life as a tradition brought forth from the grandparents with roots that tie their people to the land. He realizes that if he did not have these ties to the land and livestock, he would be more mobile and could advance more in his other job. However, he admits he would rather be his own boss as a full-time rancher provided he owned enough land, permits, and livestock. He says he has kept the grazing permit because of tradition. Another remembers that from the time he was growing up, he thought he would want to return to the ranch and raise his children there. The pay scale is not as important to him as his health and enjoyment of life. "There's a lot of things more important than income."

A rancher told us that he thinks of land as part of the family, not as something to sell. Another feels he should not sell land that has been passed down from father to son. When people ask him why he doesn't just get rid

of the cattle, he answers that he would feel bad giving up the livestock when his father gave them to him. It is a family tradition. A third said the land and livestock play a big role in keeping the family together. He loves the land and wants to protect it. If the land is not cared for, he told us, it will not provide for them. Being part of nature, the cycles of spring and fall, is his way of life. He said, "I will not sell an inch of land," and has taught his children to feel the same way. He does not want the monetary value of the land to go to their heads. Having worked so hard to acquire and keep his lands, he would hate for his children to sell them.

"It's not a hobby; it's a way of life!" states another rancher. He adds that he and his family hope to be in the cattle business for a long time. "Everything is related to the cow business. . . . Everything we do is so integrated [4-H, knowledge of the local people, and so forth]. It is very simple and very complicated at the same time." They say they will graze the land and hope to get financial gain, but not by abusing the land. They feel closely tied to this Forest and know it well, want their children to be able to use it, and want it to last for the next thousand years. They feel they are tied too closely to the land for people to take it away from them or tell them what to do. "It is difficult to talk about this," he says. In a way, the National Forest Service land is theirs, in a way not. It is a family thing.

A rancher recalls that his family (ancestors) had sheep and cattle back as long as they were in New Mexico. Another respondent tells us, "For many years the people here have used this land for subsistence. It has been part of the continuity and identity of the people here. Now there is the influence of new people. Mass migration from urban areas is causing the surrounding area to fill up." He feels that it is losing the flavor and tranquility so essential to them.

Land Use and Ownership

Those we interviewed consider their lands as critical to maintaining their heritage and way of life. This complex topic includes management, use, and ownership of land and other resources. In many cases, our discussions of these topics lent themselves to examining the issue of land grant loss and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War in 1848. Under the Treaty, the United States agreed to respect the property rights of the conquered peoples of the region (Griswold del Castillo 1990). As discussed previously, many residents lost long-used property during this period and bitterness over implementation of the Treaty continues to the present.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—When asked about their views on the implementation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, specifically regarding the loss of land grants or portions of land grants, ranchers gave varying responses (interview question 4). Views ranged from those of the land grant activists that “grant lands should be in the ownership of the original families” to those expressing the desire to see “the past left in the past.” One receives the impression, however, that most are well aware that the treaty was supposed to protect the property rights of the conquered people of the region. They also believe that in many cases property rights were not honored, causing land to be lost by the original owners, and that these losses significantly affected the ability of their ancestors to support themselves as ranchers and farmers. Furthermore, they believe that this impact continues to the present day.

To some, the land grant issue was a remote idea, too distant in the framework of time or in relevance to present day life. To others, the treaty and resulting land loss are pertinent topics impressed upon them by fathers and grandfathers. One grandson said his feelings are hard to describe except as a “silent rage.” A few declined to comment on the basis of the subject’s controversial nature. Several ranchers simply stated that the provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo had “never been honored” from the beginning. One of the more emphatic responses stands out as exemplified by the following comments: “There is discrimination by the Federal government against the native communities. . . . [They] throw bones to divide and conquer, to control the people. The U.S. government is going to run out of places to run and hide. . . . How can the U.S. step in to help other countries and [at the same time] mistreat its own people?”

As one of the ranchers discussed with us, there were some mistakes made when New Mexico became a Territory and then a State. “The people here,” he told us, “did not have an understanding of the system nor the economic means to avoid exploitation. They lacked information on U.S. law.” To make matters worse, the information they did receive was passed on in a language that was foreign to many of them. There was a treaty between the U.S. and Mexico, but “the U.S. government failed to protect the rights” of its new subjects. The people we spoke with have strong feelings on the subject and generally indicated support for the various efforts that have been and are being introduced into Congress to reexamine the problems and issues surrounding implementation of the treaty.

Views and Attitudes Toward Owning Land—The ranchers were asked to give their opinions concerning

who has the right to own land and make decisions concerning its use (interview question 3). Many had a difficult time responding to this request. It seemed obvious to them that he who has the means has the right to purchase and own land in this country. “The right to own land is protected by the US Constitution,” said one. “This is the United States,” another answered. “Everybody has the right to own land. We may not like it, but that’s the way it is.” A few of the responses were prefaced with the idea that land once purchased becomes the property of the buyer, to be dealt with as the owner so chooses as long as the law is not broken in the process.

Many of the ranchers expressed the responsibility of a landowner to care for the land in their possession. One rancher believes that people have a right to own land plus a duty to respect it. He also comments on the responsibility he feels toward “public lands,” even though he realizes it is government-owned land on which he only has a lease. Another said, “People are responsible to keep the land as it is as opposed to using or destroying it for personal gain. For example, building houses in mountain areas limits the habitat for wildlife. Everybody wants views. When there is a conflict between humans and animals, the animals always lose.”

For generations these lands have been used for agriculture. The tendency for ranch land to be sold and subdivided rather than to continue as agricultural land is a great concern for many. It takes just one ranch to sell for the process to begin, with one ranch sale affecting the next, with land being divided and taxes increasing, and with mounting demands on the limited water supply. The ranchers noted that some of the new people adapt to life in the rural communities, but many want to alter the place to suit their own notions of civilization. The contrast created with the addition of extreme affluence transforms what was once viewed as quaint to the perception of a less than desirable appearance of poverty. The potential for change brought about by this attraction of place is what one rancher meant to convey when he said, “A place this beautiful is a curse!”

According to the ranchers, other cultures enter the picture as new people move into the community. Some come to change things; some fit in. People who share their traditions or values are all right, they say, but there are others with the money to buy whatever they want, whose intentions are to subdivide the land for profit. “The problem is people coming in to change the traditions of the place. Some of these new people are friendly and blend in; others look down on you.” Many of the newcomers do not understand the rural way of

life, complaining about the use of wood as fuel or about the presence of livestock. "People want to move in here and change everything. They come here because they like our way of living. Then they want to change things."

It is not easy for these people to continue in the old way of life with the outside world moving ever closer. A rancher sums up by saying, "Those willing to work and willing to learn are the ones who should own land. You should give members of the community first chance to buy lands. It's not just a case of land passed on. You must also teach the children the way of life and how to care for the land. Once you lose your identity, your culture, and language, you are nothing."

We attempted to capture these and related sentiments in a series of 12 statements, which participants were asked to rate according to their level of agreement: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree (question 41–52; appendix C, tables 40–51). These statements were derived from land attitude questions that proved useful in studies undertaken by Eastman and others (1971). Many respondents added qualifying remarks that provide valuable insight into their views and attitudes and are included in the following discussion. Participant comments also provided feedback on statements that were poorly worded, confusing, or perceived as irrelevant. These will be revised or deleted for the larger study.

The pride of owning and personally working land that has been in the family for generations, and the desire to retain that land, were almost universally agreed upon. This was demonstrated by responses of strongly agree or agree to questions 41 (over 98 percent), 43 (almost 89 percent), and 45 (over 98 percent) (appendix C, tables 40, 42, and 44). When presented with the statement that passing on land to one's children is the best means of providing for their future, nearly 84 percent were in agreement (strongly agree or agree), with minimal dissent (question 52; appendix C, table 51). However, much consideration was given to individual circumstances, attempting to balance what would be best for the land as well as what would be best for the children. One rancher said he could agree to a certain extent, explaining that passing on land would be best "only if the child were interested in the business and able to manage it."

Although the ranchers stressed the importance of land for their children's future, 57 percent also agreed with the alternate statement that having money in the bank or other types of investment was the best means of providing for their children's future (question 48; appendix C, table 47). This contradiction reflects an awareness of the role and importance of money in contemporary society, as well as the fact that some

respondents could not realistically choose between the two statements. This may be the reason that 21 percent gave a neutral response to the statement. Having both land and money are evidently seen as interdependent.

The many qualifying remarks elicited by this statement reflect a strong regard for family values as well as a practical outlook on life and may help to explain the discrepancy. In their comments regarding the importance of money, alternatives were presented such as education, good family values, land, and livestock. Despite practical concerns, such as inheritance taxes on real estate or the possibility that, without sufficient money, land might have to be sold to put the children through college, the theme of their comments remained consistent that "money isn't everything; values are important." One told us that it was more important to teach children how to earn money running the ranch rather than to give them money. A practical point of view was stressed that both land and money are necessary in combination and also the idea that if land were not passed along, the children would have to start over. "A person can borrow against the land, but once the land is gone, the price [of that land] will only go up. Money disappears rapidly; land is the most important because they're not making any more of it."

The importance of land also appeared in the way ranchers view its role in community life, as well as in family life. This is expressed by responses to the statements concerning land ownership and management. A recurrent theme of these discussions focuses on a landowner's responsibility to neighbors and community. Even though nearly 89 percent of those we interviewed agreed with the statement that a person should be able to manage his or her land however he or she chooses (question 51; appendix C, table 50), their comments on the statement demonstrate an attempt to balance community responsibility with freedom of ownership. Some of their considerations include being in agreement with the people around you, managing your land as you see fit as long as neighbors and land are not harmed, and maintaining rural traditions.

The idea of having to sell land was met with little enthusiasm, as summed up by the comment, "[You] shouldn't sell any land, it's too hard to come by these days." Nonetheless, the pros and cons of selling land locally or to "outsiders" were discussed in two of the statements. When asked if an owner should make it a top priority to sell to someone within the local community (question 50; appendix C, table 49), 75 percent agreed. Several felt that land should be kept within the community so traditions would be maintained. Others were concerned that selling land outside the community

might result in suburban development, rising taxes, and loss of agricultural land.

Almost 67 percent were unwilling to make price the top consideration in selling land (question 46; appendix C, table 45). Comments on the statement indicated that considerable deliberation went into balancing the good of the family with the good of the community. Such thoughts encompassed the desire to sell to someone who would not develop the land, but also the need to think of the good of the family (in terms of getting a good price for the land). A couple of people expressed it as wanting the most for your money but realizing that sometimes the person with the most money is not best for the land. Most alluded to selling to family and neighbors before "outsiders." There was concern that sale to nonlocals could lead to "people coming in [to a community] and wanting to tell locals how to manage the land when locals have managed it well for years."

An attempt was made to explore further landowners' feelings of responsibility to community by seeing if they preferred to hire workers from the locality over workers from other areas (question 44 and 49; appendix C, tables 43 and 48). In support and loyalty to community, much was said in favor of using local workers. About 71 percent agreed that landowners should make it a top priority to hire local workers, while almost one-quarter chose to remain neutral on the subject. Discussion on this topic was instructive, surfacing issues other than a simple desire to offer employment to local community members. The majority of those who commented mentioned that although they would like to hire local people, competent, willing, and affordable workers could be hard to find here as elsewhere throughout the United States. "[One] must be realistic when it comes to business," avoiding decisions that are detrimental to the business and the livestock.

Perhaps reflecting the apparent difficulty of finding workers within the community, of the 59 respondents who answered the question, 56 percent agreed to a related statement that landowners should hire the most

qualified workers without regard to where they come from (question 49; appendix C, table 48). About 15 percent were neutral on the subject, and almost 29 percent disagreed. This statement also elicited discussion on the importance of hiring qualified, dependable people and further remarks on the difficulty of finding local workers. On the other hand, several observed that landowners should hire local kids to give them the opportunity to learn ranching or that local people would be the most qualified. Countering the notion of hiring workers at all, reference was made to the old-fashioned custom of neighbors pitching in to help each other.

Another dimension of land use that was explored involves the integral role of public land in ranching operations. Some 97 percent agreed with the statement that public land should be managed with greatest consideration for long-time, traditional users (question 47; appendix C, table 46). The remainder were neutral; none disagreed. They expressed their desire to care for the land and the importance of that grazing land to their livelihood in their comments on the statement.

The contrasting view that public land should be managed with equal consideration for the use and enjoyment of all U.S. citizens (question 42; appendix C, table 41) was met with 50 percent agreement and 36 percent disagreement by the 58 people who responded. This was apparently a difficult question to answer because it embodies the mandate of the Multiple Use Act, with which most respondents are familiar. Thus, it would be like disagreeing with the law, which may have prompted the 50 percent agreement response. However, there were stipulations (along with the agreements) that users should respect and preserve the land, not vandalize, destroy, or damage it. In earlier work, McSweeney (1995) also found that the northern ranchers show an attachment to the Federal lands that extend beyond the boundaries of their ranches. They spoke of these lands as being part of their history, expressing a responsibility toward the forestland almost as though it belonged to them.

Summary and Conclusions

The continuing controversy over the role of Federal lands and land management agencies in northern New Mexico, as well as in the Western United States as a whole, often relates to imperfect understanding of sociocultural values and attitudes toward land use on the part of public agency officials. Although Forest Service-permittee relations have improved in recent years, problems still exist. This often appears to be the case in northern New Mexico where distinctive custom, culture, and tradition, in addition to a history of U.S. conquest, contribute to misunderstanding and conflict. Acknowledging the importance of small livestock operations to area families and communities is crucial for understanding their way of life and resolving disputes over public land and resource use.

The pilot study begins to address this issue by gathering information on contemporary land management, valuation, and use issues among ranchers with Federal grazing permits on National Forest lands in northern New Mexico. The study focuses on gathering information on both the economic and noneconomic contributions of livestock ownership to local families and communities. It explores the extent to which the use of public land for grazing and other purposes provides opportunities for community interaction and maintenance of traditional culture. The work is intended to assist managers in addressing land management and use issues now and in the future. It will also be valuable as a public education tool because many residents of the State, especially those newly migrated to both urban and rural areas, are unfamiliar with the primarily Hispanic culture and traditions of northern New Mexico.

The ranching tradition in northern New Mexico is one of depth and generations. The vast majority of grazing permittees on the two Districts we studied were born in the area into families who have been ranching in the region long before the advent of public lands. Those we spoke with consider the ranching way of life vital to maintaining their cultural heritage and traditional values, as well as to passing those values on to

future generations. Ranches and land ownership are integral components of family and community life that feature prominently in the present and future plans of their owners. Many of the ranchers have structured their careers or taken special jobs so that they could remain in the area to be near their land and cattle, some even passing up promotions to remain near the ranch or of returning home when their families needed help running the livestock operation. The large majority plan to run their ranches as their main activity after retiring from other jobs and would like to be fully supported by the cattle venture.

Keeping land in the family and upholding traditional values are regarded more highly than material possessions or monetary gain. The tremendous social, cultural, and economic importance of these operations argues for future research designed to move the study of these types of agricultural enterprises out of the realm of purely economic study into disciplines that can assess the full range of their contributions.

Changing attitudes and values among the general public have the potential to negatively impact the traditional rural ranching way of life in northern New Mexico. For example, the effects of population growth and urbanization on land values, property taxes, water availability, and attitudes concerning ranching and other traditional rural economic activities require in-depth study. These trends add to the difficulties the permittees discussed with us concerning "making ends meet" and keeping their lands in agricultural use. This becomes increasingly difficult as neighboring lands are sold and subdivided.

The ranchers struggle with the problems, challenges, and benefits of working on both private and public land, and they fear losing their permits, ranches, and rural cultural traditions. The work and attitudes of these people demonstrate their concern for the welfare of both private and public land and their deep commitment to family, community, and heritage. The continuity of their long enduring traditions is inextricably linked to the history, heritage, culture, and future of the State.

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Appendix A

OMB APPROVAL NUMBER 0596-0144

QUESTIONNAIRE: LIVESTOCK OWNERSHIP AMONG USDA FOREST SERVICE GRAZING PERMITTEES IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

Please help us gather information about the importance of livestock ownership by answering the following questions. All questions apply to the permittee. For purposes of this questionnaire, livestock refer to cattle and sheep.

Family Information

Please provide the following information about yourself and your family.

1. How many years have you lived in north central New Mexico?

2. How many years or generations has your family lived in north central New Mexico?

3. Circle the primary language spoken in the household. (Please circle one response.)

Spanish English Both Other

4. Please circle your age range.

20-35 36-49 50-65 over 65

5. Please circle your highest level of completed education.

Grade School High School Some College College Degree Graduate School

6. Please circle your spouse's highest level of completed education.

Grade School High School Some College College Degree Graduate School

7. Circle the letter that best describes your job. (Please circle one letter.)

- A. Self-employed as a full-time rancher or farmer
- B. Self-employed other than as a rancher or farmer
- C. Employed full-time outside the home or ranch
- D. Employed part-time outside the home or ranch
- E. Retired
- F. Other (Please describe.)

8. If employed outside the home or ranch, what is your job title or description? If you have more than one, please list them in order of importance.

9. How many total hours per week do you work outside the home or ranch?

10. Circle the letter that best describes your spouse's job. (Please circle one letter.)

- A. Self-employed as a full-time rancher or farmer
- B. Self-employed other than as a rancher or farmer
- C. Employed full-time outside the home or ranch
- D. Employed part-time outside the home or ranch
- E. Retired
- F. Other (Please describe.)

11. If employed outside the home or ranch, what is your spouse's job title or description? If your spouse has more than one job, list them in order of importance.

12. How many total hours per week does your spouse work outside the home or ranch?

Community Activities Related to Owning Livestock

13. If you did not own livestock, would you live in the same community? If no, why not?

14. Approximately how many grazing association meetings do you attend during a typical year?

15. Please give the number of the following events that you and your family participate in during a typical year?

- Brandings
- Round-ups
- Matanzas
- Rodeos
- County Fairs
- Others (Please list.)

16. Do you run your livestock together with relatives who do not live in your household?

17. Do you run your livestock together with neighbors who are not relatives?

Description of your Livestock Operation

Please answer the following questions about your livestock and land, and the way you manage your herd.

18. How many years have you had livestock?

19. How many years or generations has your family had livestock?

20. How many years or generations have you and your family grazed on lands that were associated with community grant lands?

21. How many years have you and your family held a grazing permit on Forest Service-managed land? On BLM-managed land?

FS _____ BLM _____

22. How many days do you or other members of your family work on your livestock operation during a typical year?

23. Please provide the following information about your herd. How many head of each type do you own during a typical year?

Cows	_____	Ewes	_____
Bulls	_____	Rams	_____
Yearlings	_____	Lambs	_____
Calves	_____	Working Horses	_____

24. How many head are lost during a typical year, and how do you think they were lost?

Kind of Animal	Number Lost	Reason for Loss

Costs and Benefits of Owning Livestock

25. How many animals do you butcher for your household use during a typical year?

26. What animal byproducts (hides, wool, and milk) are used by your household during a typical year? Estimate how much or how many of each.

27. How many live animals do you give to relatives and friends during a typical year?

28. How much meat (and byproducts such as hides, wool, and milk) do you give to relatives and friends during a typical year?

(Meat)_____

(Byproducts)_____

29. During a typical year, how many animals and how much meat do you trade for other goods and services?

(Animals)_____

(Meat)_____

30. Please estimate how much money you spend and how much labor you put into making improvements on your federal (Forest Service and BLM) allotment(s) and your base property.

	Your Cost in Dollars	Days of Labor*
New Fence		
Fence Reconstruction		
Corrals and Pens		
Spring Development		
Stock Tank Development		
Water well development		
Brush or Weed Control		
Road Building and Reconstruction		
Other (List)+		

*(Permittee and Unpaid Workers); +Example: Hired Workers

31. Please estimate how much it costs you to own livestock during a typical year. Consider costs to operate and maintain vehicles, equipment, stock tanks and pumps, horses, veterinary expenses, feed costs, association fees, permit fees, etc.

32. Please estimate the percentage of your income that comes from the livestock operation in a typical year

Role of Livestock

33. In the past five years, in which of the following areas have you spent money gained from the livestock operation? (Please circle all appropriate letters.)

- ☐ A. Basic living expenses
- ☐ B. Household and family emergencies
- ☐ C. Special expenses such as trips or children's college tuition
- ☐ D. Household improvements
- ☐ E. Buying more livestock or upgrading the livestock operation
- ☐ F. Investments
- ☐ G. Other (Please list.)

34. Circle the letter of the statement that best describes the way you and your family depend on your livestock for family income. (Please circle one letter.)

- A. We depend on our livestock for our full income. We are full-time ranchers.
- B. We depend on our livestock for part of our income. We are part-time ranchers, but would like to be fully dependent on our livestock for family income.
- C. We depend on our livestock for part of our income, and would not want to depend on our livestock for our full family income.
- D. We are retired, but still depend on our livestock for part of our income.
- E. Other (Please describe.)

35. In the past five years, how many times have you sold livestock to meet emergency household or family needs?

36. Do you plan to manage your livestock as a major activity after you retire?

37. If you had no livestock before retiring, could you afford to buy them after retiring?

38. If you could pick one of the following means of saving or investing money, which would you choose? (Please circle one letter.)

- A. Putting money in a savings account or other form of money investment program
- B. Buying land in the area
- C. Buying more livestock or improving the stock operation in other ways, such as investing in range improvements.
- D. Other (Please describe.)

Family Goals

39. Please order the following statements about your general family goals by putting 1 in front of the most important, 2 in front of the second most important, etc., with 4 being least important.

- _____ To have more net income and be able to buy more material goods
- _____ To have a better quality of life and spend time with my family
- _____ To continue living the way my parents and grandparents did (maintain traditional values)
- _____ To have more respect in the community

40. Please order the following statements about your goals for your livestock operation by putting 1 in front of the most important, 2 in front of the second most important, etc., with 4 being least important.

- _____ To make more money above costs each year from the livestock operation in order to increase the family's overall income and material goods
- _____ To maintain the family's quality of life that results from owning livestock (spend time outdoors together, keep the children out of trouble, etc.)
- _____ To avoid being forced out of livestock ownership (the family has had livestock for generations)
- _____ To improve the livestock operation by obtaining more land, better equipment, and more animals

Views about Owning and Using Land

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the letter of the appropriate response.

41. One of the greatest sources of pride for a landowner is owning and working the same land all his/her life.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

42. Public lands, such as national forest or BLM-managed lands, should be managed with equal consideration for the use and enjoyment of all U.S. citizens.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

43. Land that has been in the family for generations should not be sold.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

44. Landowners should make it a top priority to hire local workers.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

45. True land ownership includes personally working the land (or having members of the family work it), raising one's own crops and livestock.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

46. When selling land, the owner owes it to his/her family to sell to the person who offers the best price even if that person is not from the local community.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

47. Public lands, such as national forest or BLM-managed lands, should be managed with greatest consideration for long-time, traditional users.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

48. Having money in the bank or other investments is the best means of providing for your children's future.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

49. Landowners should hire the most qualified workers without regard to where they come from.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

50. When selling land, the owner should make it a top priority to sell to someone within the local community.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

51. The legal owner of a piece of land should be able to manage it however he/she chooses.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

52. Passing on land to your children is the best means of providing for their future.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

The questions for the interviews are the following:

1. Please describe your feelings about the land and livestock operation you own and what role they play in your family's life.
2. Do you use your land and livestock to teach your children about traditional values and their heritage? If so, how do you accomplish this?
3. Please give your opinion concerning who has the right to own land and make decisions concerning its use.
4. What are your views on the implementation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed in 1848 by the United States and Mexico?
5. Describe your experiences and feelings concerning working with the government (Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management) on your allotment(s).
6. Please discuss the most serious problems you face in your livestock operation today. How would you solve these problems?

Appendix B



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Rocky Mountain
Research Station

2205 Columbia SE
Albuquerque, NM
87106

December

Mr. _____

Dear

My name is Carol Raish, and I'm a research social scientist with the Rocky Mountain Research Station, U.S. Forest Service. My co-worker, Alice McSweeney, is a range scientist and manager of Los Pinos Ranch. Our backgrounds include long-term research interests in the importance of livestock and ranching. My prior work focused on studying the contributions of domesticated animals to farmers and ranchers worldwide, while Alice's included a series of interviews with ranchers from northern New Mexico concerning their views on land and nature.

With the sponsorship of Forest Service Research, we are inviting all grazing permittees on the Española and Canjilon Ranger Districts to participate in a study to demonstrate the importance of livestock ownership and grazing on federally managed land to the families and communities of north central New Mexico. Eventually, the project will be expanded to include all permittees on the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. We need your help to describe the important cultural, social, and economic contributions of livestock to the people of the area. Participation is completely voluntary and anonymous.

Rocky Mountain Research Station will publish the final report from the project. You may have heard it discussed at one of your association meetings. Information from the study will be used to educate both the Forest Service and the public concerning the role and importance of the ranching tradition in north central New Mexico, resulting in greater respect and understanding of local history, culture, and values. Participants will receive the draft report for comment and a copy of the final publication.

We are providing you with a questionnaire designed to gather the information for this study. Please look it over to see if you would like to participate. If so, we would like to meet with you to fill out the questionnaire during a personal interview. After completing the questionnaire, you will have an opportunity to discuss any issues or problems related to your livestock operation that you might want to bring up.



Within the next couple of weeks, one of us will call you to see if you would like to be part of the project. If so, we will set up a time and place at your convenience (for example, your home, office, a local restaurant, the ranger station, etc.) to meet with you, which should take about 1 to 1 1/2 hours. We are including a copy of this letter in Spanish and will provide a questionnaire and interview in Spanish, if you prefer. We hope you will decide to help us gather this important information. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

CAROL RAISH, Ph.D.
Research Social Scientist

ALICE M. McSWEENEY, M.S.
Los Pinos Ranch

Enclosures



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Rocky Mountain
Research Station
Albuquerque Lab

2205 Columbia Dr., SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106
Phone 505-766-2384

Date: February 23, 1999

Estimado (a) Señor(a):

Me llamo Carol Raish y soy una socióloga con la Estación de Investigaciones Rocky Mountain del Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos. Mi colega, Alice McSweeney, es una científica que estudia los campos y bosques. Además ella está a cargo de dirigir el Rancho Los Pinos. Nuestra experiencia incluye investigaciones a largo plazo sobre la importancia de la ganadería y los ranchos. Mi trabajo se ha centrado en estudiar las contribuciones de los ganados para los granjeros y rancheros en todo el mundo, mientras que Alice ha llevado a cabo entrevistas con los rancheros del norte de Nuevo México tocante sus opiniones respecto a la tierra y la naturaleza.

Con el patrocinio de la Estación de Investigaciones del Servicio Forestal invitamos a todos los dueños de permisos para pastear ganado en el distrito forestal de Española y Canjilón a participar en un estudio que demuestre la importancia que la ganadería y el pasteo en terrenos administrados por el gobierno federal representan para las familias y comunidades del norte de Nuevo México. Con el tiempo, este estudio se abrirá a los dueños de permisos en las florestas nacionales de Santa Fe y Carson. Necesitamos su ayuda para describir las importantes contribuciones culturales, sociales y económicas del ganado para la gente de la región. Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria y anónima.

La Estación de Investigaciones Rocky Mountain del Servicio Forestal va a publicar el reporte final de este proyecto. Tal vez, usted ya habrá oído hablar de ello en alguna reunión de su asociación. La información que resulte de este estudio se usará para educar tanto al Servicio Forestal como al público sobre las contribuciones e importancia de la tradición ganadera en la parte norte-central de Nuevo México. Queremos que esto tenga el efecto de crear una mayor respeto y entendimiento de los valores, la cultura y la historia local. Las personas que participan en el estudio recibirán un reporte preliminar para que den su comentario y parecer. Más tarde recibirán una copia en forma final.

Aquí incluimos nuestra encuesta (cuestionario) creada para juntar información para este estudio. Háganos el favor de revisarlo para determinar si le gustaría participar. Si decide participar, nos gustaría reunirnos con usted para llenar el formulario y a la vez hacerle una entrevista en persona. Después de haber completado la encuesta, usted tendrá la oportunidad de comentar sobre cualquier asunto o problema concerniente a su negocio de ganadería que usted tenga a bien discutir.

En las siguientes semanas, una de nosotras, lo llamará por teléfono para determinar si gusta ser parte de este proyecto. Si decide participar fijaremos un día y hora que sea conveniente para juntarnos con usted (la entrevista bien podría darse en su casa, oficina, un restaurante o en la estación forestal). La entrevista tardará de una hora a una hora y media. Aquí incluimos una copia de nuestra carta en español y también le aportaremos la encuesta y entrevista en español si así lo prefiere. Esperamos que usted nos ayude a juntar esta información valiosa. Gracias por su tiempo.



Caring for the Land and Serving People

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Appendix C

Table 1—Permittee length of residence (PLENRES – Ques. 1).

PERMITTEE LENGTH OF RESIDENCE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	0	0	0
02	0	0	0
03	0	0	0
04	2	3.2	3.2
05	60	96.8	96.8
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) 0-5 years

(02) 6-10 years

(03) 11-20 years

(04) Over 20 years but less than entire life

(05) Entire Life

Table 2—Family length of residence (FLENRES – Ques. 2)

FAMILY LENGTH OF RESIDENCE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	1	1.6	1.6
02	3	4.8	4.8
03	5	8.1	8.1
04	20	32.3	32.3
05	9	14.5	14.5
06	9	14.5	14.5
07	5	8.1	8.1
08	4	6.5	6.5
09	5	8.1	8.1
10	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(03)-(10) Grandparents and earlier = 93.6%; (04)-(10) Great-grandparents and earlier = 85.6%

*Key

(01) One (generation), I came here as an adult

(02) Two, my parents came here.

(03) Three, my grandparents came here.

(04) Four, my great-grandparents came here.

(05) Five, my great-great grandparents came here.

(06) Six, or seven, or more, my great-great-great grandparents came here.

(07) No generational count, family came in 1800s.

(08) No generational count, family came in 1700s.

(09) No generational count, family came in with Offate, with Reconquest, or in 1600s.

(10) No generational count, family is American Indian.

Table 3—Primary language spoken in household (LANG – Ques. 3).

PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOUSEHOLD*	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	21	33.9	33.9
02	8	12.9	12.9
03	32	51.6	51.6
04	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) Spanish

(02) English

(03) Both

(04) Other

Table 4—Age range of permittee (AGE – Ques. 4).

AGE RANGE OF PERMITTEE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	1	1.6	1.6
02	16	25.8	25.8
03	30	48.4	48.4
04	15	24.2	24.2
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) 20-35

(02) 36-49

(03) 50-65

(04) Over 65

Table 5—Permittee's highest level of education (PERMED – Ques. 5).

PERMITTEE'S HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	6	9.7	9.7
02	33	53.2	53.2
03	9	14.5	14.5
04	7	11.3	11.3
05	7	11.3	11.3
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) Grade School

(02) High School

(03) Some College

(04) College Degree

(05) Graduate School

Table 6—Permittee's spouse's highest level of education (SPOUSED – Ques. 6).

SPOUSE'S HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION*	NUMBER OF SPOUSES	PERCENT	ADJUSTED PERCENT*
01	3	4.8	5.4
02	28	45.2	50.0
03	16	25.8	28.6
04	7	11.3	12.5
05	2	3.2	3.6
15	6	9.7	
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.1

*Key

(01) Grade School

(02) High School

(03) Some College

(04) College Degree

(05) Graduate School

(15) No Spouse, Spouse Deceased, Permittee Divorced

*Based on the 56 spouses reporting education information (62 minus 6 = 56), which deletes category 15

Table 7—Permittee's job description (PERMJOB – Ques. 7)

PERMITTEE'S JOB DESCRIPTION*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	5	8.1	8.1
02	4	6.5	6.5
03	17	27.4	27.4
04	4	6.5	6.5
05	26	41.9	41.9
06	0	0	0
07	3	4.8	4.8
08	2	3.2	3.2
09	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (09) Full-time rancher/farmer or retired from full-time ranching/farming = 9.7%

*Key

(01) A. Self-employed as a full-time rancher or farmer

(02) B. Self-employed other than as a rancher or farmer

(03) C. Employed full-time outside the home or ranch

(04) D. Employed part-time outside the home or ranch

(05) E. Retired (Retired from outside job, now employed full-time or part-time as a rancher)

(06) F. Other (Please describe.)

(07) Retired from outside job, but still works part-time outside home or ranch and part-time as rancher

(08) Self-employed as a full-time rancher with self-employed part-time work outside of ranch

(09) Retired from full-time ranching

Table 8—Permittee's job category (PJBOCAT – Ques. 8).

PERMITTEE'S JOB CATEGORY*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	5	8.1	10.0
02	7	11.3	14.0
03	0	0	0
04	7	11.3	14.0
05	13	21.0	26.0
06	5	8.1	10.0
07	0	0	0
08	8	12.9	16.0
09	4	6.5	8.0
10	1	1.6	2.0
TOTAL	50	80.6	100.0
MISSING	12	19.4	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key

(01) Professional/Scientific/Managerial

(02) Education System/Teacher/Principal, etc./School Superintendent/School Administrator

(03) Health Care Professional

(04) Business Owner/Manager

(05) Skilled Trade/Technical/Clerical

(06) Heavy Equipment Operator/ Truck Driver/Van Driver

(07) Artist/Artisan

(08) Agricultural

(09) Law Enforcement/Fire Department/Security Officer, etc./Security Access Specialist

(10) Laborer/Maintenance

Table 9—Total hours per week worked outside the home or ranch-permittee (PWORKHRS – Ques. 9).

TOTAL HRS. WORKED PER WEEK OUTSIDE HOME OR RANCH*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	0	0	0
02	2	3.2	3.3
03	14	22.6	23.3
04	10	16.1	16.7
05	5	8.1	8.3
06	1	1.6	1.7
07	1	1.6	1.7
99	27	43.5	45.0
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(03)-(04) Work 40 or more hours per week off the ranch = 40%; (99) Retired = 45%.

*Key

(01) Less than 20 hours

(02) 20 hours or more but less than 40 hours

(03) Full time, 40 hours per week

(04) More than 40 hours per week

(05) Do not work outside the home or ranch

(06) Seasonal work

(07) Hours vary

(99) Retired from outside work

Table 10—Permittee's spouse's job (SPOUSJOB – Ques. 10)

PERMITTEE'S SPOUSE'S JOB*	NUMBER OF SPOUSES	PERCENT	ADJUSTED PERCENT+
01	0	0	0
02	5	8.1	9.4
03	20	32.2	37.7
04	6	12.9	15.1
05	12	19.4	22.6
06	0	0	0
07	7	11.3	13.2
08	1	1.6	1.9
15	9	14.5	
TOTAL	62	100.0	99.9

*Key

(01) A. Self-employed as a full-time rancher or farmer

(02) B. Self-employed other than as a rancher or farmer

(03) C. Employed full-time outside the home or ranch

(04) D. Employed part-time outside the home or ranch

(05) E. Retired (Retired from outside job, now employed full-time or part-time as a rancher)

(06) F. Other (Please describe)

(07) G. Does not work outside the home or ranch

(08) H. Self-employed as rancher and assists with family business

(15) No Spouse, Spouse Deceased, Permittee Divorced

+Based on the 53 spouses reporting job information (62 minus 9 = 53), which deletes category 15

Table 11—Permittee's spouse's job category (SJOBCAT – Ques. 11)

PERMITTEE'S SPOUSE'S JOB CATEGORY*	NUMBER OF SPOUSES	PERCENT	ADJUSTED PERCENT+
01	4	6.5	8.9
02	4	6.5	8.9
03	5	8.1	11.1
04	7	11.3	15.6
05	10	16.1	22.2
06	0	0	0
07	1	1.6	2.2
08	5	8.1	11.1
09	6	9.7	13.3
10	1	1.6	2.2
11	2	3.2	4.4
15	9	14.5	
TOTAL	54	87.1	99.9
MISSING	8	12.9	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key

(01) Professional/Scientific/Managerial

(02) Education System/Teacher/Principal, etc./School Superintendent/School Administrator

(03) Health Care Professional

(04) Business Owner/Manager/Assists with Family Business

(05) Skilled Trade/Technical/Clerical

(06) Heavy Equipment Operator/Truck Driver/Van Driver

(07) Artist/Artisan

(08) Daycare Provider/Home Care Provider

(09) Homemaker

(10) Law Enforcement/Fire Dept./Security Officer/Security Specialist

(11) Housekeeping/Maintenance

(15) No Spouse, Spouse Deceased, Permittee Divorced

+Based on the 45 spouses reporting jobs classifiable as to type (62 minus 17 = 45), which deletes categories 15 and "missing"

Table 12—Total hours per week worked outside the home or ranch-spouse (SWORKHRS – Ques. 12)

TOTAL HRS. WORKED PER WEEK OUTSIDE HOME OR RANCH-SPOUSE*	NUMBER OF SPOUSES	PERCENT	ADJUSTED PERCENT+
01	1	1.6	1.9
02	7	11.3	13.5
03	21	33.9	40.4
04	2	3.2	3.8
05	6	9.7	11.5
06	0	0	0
07	1	1.6	1.9
08	1	1.6	1.9
15	9	14.5	
99	13	21.0	25.0
TOTAL	61	98.4	99.9
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Combined categories: 57.7% work 20 hours or more outside the home or ranch, 25% are retired, 5.7% work under 20 hours/ have varying hours/do paid work at home, 11.5% do not work outside the home

*Key

(01) Less than 20 hours

(02) 20 hours or more but less than 40 hours

(03) Full time, 40 hours per week

(04) More than 40 hours per week

(05) Do not work outside the home or ranch

(06) Seasonal work

(07) Hours vary

(08) Does paid work at home and part-time outside home – 40 hours total

(15) No Spouse, Spouse Deceased, Permittee Divorced

(99) Retired from outside work

+Based on the 52 spouses reporting employment hours (62 minus 10 = 52), which deletes categories 15 and "missing"

Table 13—Permittee views on remaining in the same community without owning livestock (COMRES– Ques. 13)

COMMUNITY RESIDENCE (WITHOUT LIVESTOCK)*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	13	21.0	21.3
02	24	38.7	39.3
03	3	4.8	4.9
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	5	8.1	8.2
06	2	3.2	3.3
07	4	6.5	6.6
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	2	3.2	3.3
10	4	6.5	6.6
11	2	3.2	3.3
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01)-(05) and (10)-(11) Would live in the same community even if did not have livestock = 85.2%

*Key

(01) Yes, or Yes, I like it here.

(02) Yes, this is my home. My family and I have always lived here/or wanted to return home.

(03) Yes, I have always lived here. Can raise kids here without having them get into trouble.

(04) Yes, land keeps you in the community, wouldn't want to leave for a job somewhere else.

(05) Yes, I live where I live to be near the land—have passed up jobs to stay and look a job (in the area) to stay near the ranch.

(06) Don't know, would stay if I could find a job. Would have to find a job somewhere.

(07) No, there is no income without the livestock. I would have to go someplace else to make a good living/get a job.

(08) No, it is too crowded here – would move where it is not so crowded.

(09) Probably not, would live in the city – but couldn't imagine living in city and not having animals. Want to live in the country.

(10) Yes, can't imagine not having livestock and working the land. They are so important. What would I do if I didn't have livestock?

(11) Yes, I want to live in the country, away from the traffic and violence of the city.

Table 14—Number of grazing association meetings attended in a typical year
(ASSOCMTS— Ques. 14).

NUMBER OF GRAZING ASSOCIATION MEETINGS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	6	9.7	9.8
02	1	1.6	1.6
03	12	19.4	19.7
04	23	37.1	37.7
05	12	19.4	19.7
06	4	6.5	6.6
07	2	3.2	3.3
08	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(03)-(07) Attend grazing association meetings = 87%

*Key

(01) Not in an association

(02) None

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Many meetings—no number given

(08) Not active now, used to be more involved

Table 15a—Number of brandings participated in per year (BRANDS – Ques. 15)

BRANDINGS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	0	0	0
02	5	8.1	8.1
03	29	46.8	46.8
04	20	32.3	32.3
05	7	11.3	11.3
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 15b—Number of round-ups participated in per year (ROUNDS – Ques. 15).

ROUND-UPS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	4	6.5	6.5
02	6	9.7	9.7
03	10	16.1	16.1
04	20	32.3	32.3
05	19	30.6	30.6
06	3	4.8	4.8
07	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02)-(07) Attend/participate in round-ups = 93.5%

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 15c—Number of matanzas participated in per year (MATANZAS – Ques. 15)

MATANZAS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	20	32.3	32.3
02	5	8.1	8.1
03	25	40.3	40.3
04	7	11.3	11.3
05	3	4.8	4.8
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02)-(07) Attend/participate in matanzas = 67.7%

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 15d—Number of rodeos participated in per year (RODEOS – Ques. 15).

RODEOS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	21	33.9	33.9
02	14	22.6	22.6
03	16	25.8	25.8
04	8	12.9	12.9
05	2	3.2	3.2
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02)-(07) Attend/participate in rodeos = 66.1%

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 15e—Number of county fairs participated in per year (COFAIRS – Ques. 15).

COUNTY FAIRS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	24	38.7	38.7
02	15	24.2	24.2
03	19	30.6	30.6
04	3	4.8	4.8
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	0	0	0
07	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02)-(07) Attend/participate in county fairs = 61.3%

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 15f—Number of other events participated in per year (OTHREVS – Ques. 15).

OTHER EVENTS PARTICIPATED IN PER YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	59	95.2	95.2
02	0	0	0
03	1	1.6	1.6
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	0	0	0
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) None

(02) Yes, attend the event—no number given

(03) 1-2

(04) 3-5

(05) 6-10

(06) More than 10

(07) Too many to mention

Table 16—Permittees and relatives who herd livestock together (RUNRELS – Ques. 16).

PERMITTEES HERD LIVESTOCK WITH RELATIVES' LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	45	72.6	73.8
02	9	14.5	14.8
03	7	11.3	11.5
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (03) Herd livestock together with relatives or with the help of relatives = 85.3%

*Key

(01) Yes

(02) No

(03) No, but relatives often help out

Table 17—Permittees and neighbors who herd livestock together (RUNEIGHS – Ques. 17).

PERMITTEES HERD LIVESTOCK WITH NEIGHBORS' LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	50	80.6	80.6
02	12	19.4	19.4
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) Yes

(02) No

Table 18—Number of years permittee has had livestock (YRSTOCKP – Ques 18).

NUMBER OF YEARS PERMITTEE HAS HAD LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	20	32.3	32.3
02	9	14.5	14.5
03	18	29.0	29.0
04	15	24.2	24.2
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) Virtually entire life, since childhood.

(02) Since teen years

(03) Since adulthood

(04) Since adulthood—took them over from family, father and/or grandfather, or still in business with them.

Table 19—Years or generations that permittee's family has had livestock (YRSTOCKF – Ques. 19).

YEARS OR GENERATIONS PERMITTEE'S FAMILY HAS HAD LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	0	0	0
02	4	6.5	6.5
03	13	21.0	21.0
04	18	29.0	29.0
05	6	9.7	9.7
06	4	6.5	6.5
07	8	12.9	12.9
08	3	4.8	4.8
09	3	4.8	4.8
10	2	3.2	3.2
11	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(03)-(11) Grandparents and earlier = 93.5%; (04)-(11) Great-grandparents and earlier = 72.5%

*Key

(01) One (generation), I am the first to have livestock.

(02) Two, my parents had livestock.

(03) Three, my grandparents had livestock.

(04) Four, my great-grandparents had livestock.

(05) Five, my great-great grandparents had livestock.

(06) Six or seven, my great-great-great grandparents had livestock.

(07) No generational count, family has had livestock since the 1900s.

(08) No generational count, family has had livestock since the 1700s.

(09) No generational count, family has had livestock since Oñate's time, the Reconquest, or the 1600s.

(10) No generational count, family has had livestock since "the beginning," family has "always" had livestock.

(11) Other.

Table 20—Years or generations that permittee and family have grazed livestock on community grant lands (LAGRANTS— Ques. 20)

YEARS OR GENERATIONS ON COMMUNITY GRANT LANDS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	21	33.9	34.4
02	4	6.5	6.6
03	2	3.2	3.3
04	2	3.2	3.3
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	3	4.8	4.9
07	4	6.5	6.6
08	3	4.8	4.9
09	3	4.8	4.9
10	1	1.6	1.6
11	7	11.3	11.5
12	3	4.8	4.9
13	0	0	0
14	2	3.2	3.3
15	1	1.6	1.6
16	1	1.6	1.6
17	1	1.6	1.6
18	1	1.6	1.6
19	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) Family does/did not use land grant lands = 34.4%; (02)-(13) and (15)-(16) Family uses land grant lands now or has used them in the past = 57.5%

*Key

(01) Family does not/did not graze livestock on grant lands.

(02) Family used to graze livestock on grant lands, but not any more. Grant was lost, became public land, or they sold out, etc.

(03) Family is in a grant but is inactive or uses the grant lands for purposes other than grazing such as fuel wood gathering or gathering of vigas.

(04) Family grazes livestock on grant lands or lands that were grant lands but no length of time given.

(05) One (generation), permittee is the first in the family to lease grant lands.

(06) Two, parents grazed livestock grant lands, permittee does also.

Table 20. (Cont.)

(07) Three, grandparents grazed livestock on grant lands, permittee does also.

(08) Four, great-grandparents grazed livestock on grant lands, permittee does also.

(09) Five generations, great-great-grandparents grazed livestock on grant lands, permittee does also.

(10) Six generations, great-great-great-grandparents grazed livestock on grant lands, permittee does also.

(11) No generational count, family has grazed livestock on grant lands since the 1800s.

(12) No generational count, family has grazed livestock on grant lands since the 1700s.

(13) No generational count, family has grazed livestock on grant lands since Oñate's time or the 1600s.

(14) Unsure, have heard that family grazed livestock on grant lands in the past.

(15) Graze livestock in conjunction with the Pueblo.

(16) Family has grazed livestock on grant lands forever, back to the ancestors.

(17) Don't know.

(18) Not that I know of.

(19) Probably did, everyone did.

Table 21a—Number of years permittee and family have held a grazing permit on Forest Service land (FSPERM – Ques. 21).

NUMBER OF YEARS PERMITTEE HAS HAD A FOREST SERVICE GRAZING PERMIT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	0	0	0
02	0	0	0
03	22	35.5	35.5
04	4	6.5	6.5
05	6	9.7	9.7
06	2	3.2	3.2
07	4	6.5	6.5
08	3	4.8	4.8
09	3	4.8	4.8
10	4	6.5	6.5
11	3	4.8	4.8
12	4	6.5	6.5
13	5	8.1	8.1
14	2	3.2	3.2
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(03)-(05) and (11)-(13) Have had the Forest Service permit over 50 years and/or received the permit from their father or grandfather = 71.1%; (06) Have had the Forest Service permit less than 10 years

*Key

(01) None (NOTE: All respondents to this survey should have a Forest Service permit.)

(02) Sublease on Forest Service land.

(03) Since permits began in the area.

(04) Father had the permit and passed it down.

(05) Grandfather had the permit and passed it down.

(06) Less than 10 years

(07) 10-20 years

(08) 21-30 years

(09) 31-40 years

(10) 41-50 years

(11) 51-60 years

(12) 61-70 years

(13) 71-80 years or more

(14) Father or grandfather had a permit and lost it. Current permittee got another one.

Table 21b—Number of years permittee and family have held a grazing permit on Bureau of Land Management land (BLMPERM— Ques. 21).

NUMBER OF YEARS PERMITTEE HAS HAD A BLM GRAZING PERMIT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	47	75.8	75.8
02	1	1.6	1.6
03	2	3.2	3.2
04	2	3.2	3.2
05	0	0	0
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	3	4.8	4.8
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	0	0	0
10	2	3.2	3.2
11	1	1.6	1.6
12	1	1.6	1.6
13	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

- (01) None
- (02) Sublease on BLM land.
- (03) Since permits began in the area.
- (04) Father had the permit and passed it down.
- (05) Grandfather had the permit and passed it down.
- (06) Less than 10 years
- (07) 10-20 years
- (08) 21-30 years
- (09) 31-40 years
- (10) 41-50 years
- (11) 51-60 years
- (12) 61-70 years
- (13) 71-80 years

Table 22—Number of days permittee (or family) works on livestock operation in a typical year (WRKDAYs— Ques. 22).

NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED ON LIVESTOCK OPERATION*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	43	69.4	69.4
02	1	1.6	1.6
03	4	6.5	6.5
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	4	6.5	6.5
07	2	3.2	3.2
08	2	3.2	3.2
09	1	1.6	1.6
10	1	1.6	1.6
11	1	1.6	1.6
12	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

- (01) Every day, all the time, 365 days a year.
- (02) Every day in winter, every week-end in summer
- (03) Every day in winter, two or three times a week in summer
- (04) Every day in winter, twice a month (two weekends) in summer
- (05) Less than one third of the year
- (06) Around one third of the year
- (07) Around one half of the year
- (08) Around three quarters of the year
- (09) Two or three times a week all summer
- (10) Less than one-quarter of the year
- (11) Goes to ranch most weekends
- (12) Around two-thirds of the year

Table 23a—Number of cows owned (COWFREQS – Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF COWS	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
05	2	3.2	3.2
06	1	1.6	1.6
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	1	1.6	1.6
10	2	3.2	3.2
11	2	3.2	3.2
12	1	1.6	1.6
13	2	3.2	3.2
14	1	1.6	1.6
15	2	3.2	3.2
20	1	1.6	1.6
25	2	3.2	3.2
28	1	1.6	1.6
30	4	6.5	6.5
35	1	1.6	1.6
38	1	1.6	1.6
40	3	4.8	4.8
42	1	1.6	1.6
43	1	1.6	1.6
50	2	3.2	3.2
51	2	3.2	3.2
52	1	1.6	1.6
54	1	1.6	1.6
60	2	3.2	3.2
85	1	1.6	1.6
66	1	1.6	1.6
68	1	1.6	1.6
70	2	3.2	3.2
72	1	1.6	1.6
75	2	3.2	3.2
76	1	1.6	1.6
80	1	1.6	1.6
81	1	1.6	1.6
84	1	1.6	1.6
90	1	1.6	1.6
100	1	1.6	1.6
110	1	1.6	1.6
115	1	1.6	1.6
130	2	3.2	3.2
135	2	3.2	3.2
160	1	1.6	1.6
260	2	3.2	3.2
550	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 23b—Number of bulls owned (BULLFREQS— Ques. 23)

NUMBER OF BULLS	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	3	4.8	5.2
01	13	21.0	22.4
02	10	16.1	17.2
03	8	12.9	13.8
04	10	16.1	17.2
05	4	6.5	6.9
06	2	3.2	3.4
07	3	4.8	5.2
08	1	1.6	1.7
10	1	1.6	1.7
14	1	1.6	1.7
15	1	1.6	1.7
30	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	58	93.5	100.0
MISSING 97	4	6.5	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 23c—Number of yearlings owned (YEARFREQS— Ques. 23)

NUMBER OF YEARLINGS	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	20	32.3	32.3
01	1	1.6	1.6
02	3	4.8	4.8
03	5	8.1	8.1
05	3	4.8	4.8
06	4	6.5	6.5
07	1	1.6	1.6
08	4	6.5	6.5
10	5	8.1	8.1
11	1	1.6	1.6
12	2	3.2	3.2
15	2	3.2	3.2
18	2	3.2	3.2
20	5	8.1	8.1
35	3	4.8	4.8
100	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 23d—Number of calves owned (CALFFREQS – Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF CALVES	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	1	1.6	1.6
02	2	3.2	3.3
03	1	1.6	1.6
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	1	1.6	1.6
08	3	4.8	4.9
10	3	4.8	4.9
12	2	3.2	3.3
13	1	1.6	1.6
17	1	1.6	1.6
19	2	3.2	3.3
20	2	3.2	3.3
24	1	1.6	1.6
25	1	1.6	1.6
27	1	1.6	1.6
30	1	1.6	1.6
32	2	3.2	3.3
33	1	1.6	1.6
35	2	3.2	3.3
36	1	1.6	1.6
40	1	1.6	1.6
42	1	1.6	1.6
45	5	8.1	8.2
50	2	3.2	3.3
51	1	1.6	1.6
55	2	3.2	3.3
60	2	3.2	3.3
63	1	1.6	1.6
64	1	1.6	1.6
68	1	1.6	1.6
70	1	1.6	1.6
80	2	3.2	3.3
95	1	1.6	1.6
100	1	1.6	1.6
101	1	1.6	1.6
105	1	1.6	1.6
124	1	1.6	1.6
125	1	1.6	1.6
130	1	1.6	1.6
150	1	1.6	1.6
495	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 97		1	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 23e—Number of ewes owned (EWEFREQS – Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF EWES	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	52	83.9	83.9
03	1	1.6	1.6
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
08	1	1.6	1.6
10	1	1.6	1.6
20	2	3.2	3.2
28	1	1.6	1.6
650	1	1.6	1.6
759	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 23f—Number of rams owned (RAMFREQS— Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF RAMS	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	55	88.7	88.7
01	4	6.5	6.5
02	1	1.6	1.6
13	1	1.6	1.6
40	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 23g—Number of lambs owned (LAMBFREQS— Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF LAMBS	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	54	87.1	88.5
01	1	1.6	1.6
03	1	1.6	1.6
06	1	1.6	1.6
08	1	1.6	1.6
20	1	1.6	1.6
25	1	1.6	1.6
700	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 23h—Number of horses owned (HORSEFREOS— Ques. 23).

NUMBER OF HORSES	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	2	3.2	3.2
01	3	4.8	4.8
02	14	22.6	22.6
03	12	19.4	19.4
04	9	14.5	14.5
05	10	16.1	16.1
06	5	8.1	8.1
07	4	6.5	6.5
08	1	1.6	1.6
10	1	1.6	1.6
15	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 24a—Number of cows lost during a typical year (COWLOST – Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF COWS LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	19	30.6	31.7
01	5	8.1	8.3
02	17	27.4	28.3
03	4	6.5	6.7
04	6	9.7	10.0
05	5	8.1	8.3
06	2	3.2	3.3
08	1	1.6	1.7
10	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24b—Number of bulls lost during a typical year (BULLOST – Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF BULLS LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	56	90.3	93.3
01	4	6.5	6.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24c—Number of calves lost during a typical year (CALFLOST – Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF CALVES LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	14	22.6	23.3
01	4	6.5	6.7
02	11	17.7	18.3
03	11	17.7	18.3
04	6	9.7	10.0
05	5	8.1	8.3
06	2	3.2	3.3
07	2	3.2	3.3
08	1	1.6	1.7
10	3	4.8	5.0
12	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24d—Number of ewes lost during a typical year (EWELOST— Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF EWES LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	56	90.3	93.3
01	1	1.6	1.7
02	1	1.6	1.7
30	1	1.6	1.7
38	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24e—Number of lambs lost during a typical year (LAMBLOST— Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF LAMBS LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	56	90.3	93.3
03	1	1.6	1.7
06	1	1.6	1.7
25	1	1.6	1.7
50	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24f—Number of cows or calves lost during a typical year (COCALOST— Ques. 24).

NUMBER OF COWS OR CALVES LOST	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	53	85.5	88.3
01	1	1.6	1.7
02	1	1.6	1.7
03	3	4.8	5.0
13	1	1.6	1.7
141	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 24g—Reason for loss of livestock (REASLOSS – Ques. 24).

REASON FOR LOSS OF LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	5	8.1	8.2
02	4	6.5	6.6
03	2	3.2	3.3
04	0	0	0
05	2	3.2	3.3
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	9	14.5	14.8
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	5	8.1	8.2
10	5	8.1	8.2
11	7	11.3	11.5
12	2	3.2	3.3
13	1	1.6	1.6
14	4	6.5	6.6
15	1	1.6	1.6
16	1	1.6	1.6
17	1	1.6	1.6
18	1	1.6	1.6
19	2	3.2	3.3
20	1	1.6	1.6
21	3	4.8	4.9
22	1	1.6	1.6
23	1	1.6	1.6
24	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(1), (05)-(07), (9), (11)-(13), (19), (21)-(23) Animals lost to theft or vandalism or killed by hunters = 63.9%, (02), (09)-(11), (13), (16)-(19), (21), (22) Animals lost to predation = 50.8%

*Key

- (01) Theft, Vandalism
- (02) Predation (Dogs, Coyotes, Mountain Lions, etc.)
- (03) Natural Causes (Diseases or Accidents)
- (04) Wandered Off
- (05) Hunted (Killed by Hunters)
- (06) Natural Causes, Hunted
- (07) Natural Causes, Theft, Vandalism
- (08) Poisonous Plants
- (09) Theft, Predation
- (10) Natural Causes, Predation
- (11) Natural Causes, Theft, Predation
- (12) Natural Causes, Theft, Poisonous Plants
- (13) Theft, Predation, Poisonous Plants, Hunted
- (14) Unknown
- (15) Doesn't know why animals being lost – not going to make assumptions
- (16) Poisonous Plants, Predation, Natural Causes
- (17) Natural Causes, Predation, Unknown Causes
- (18) Predation, Poisonous Plants
- (19) Theft, Predation, Unknown Causes
- (20) None lost
- (21) Natural Causes, Theft, Predation, Poisonous Plants
- (22) Unknown Causes, Predation, Theft, Poisonous Plants
- (23) Unknown Causes, Theft
- (24) Natural Causes, unknown causes

NOTE: Accidents such as lightning strike or stuck in a bog are included with natural causes.

Table 25—Number of animals butchered for use in a typical year. (HSUSEFREQS – Ques. 25).

NUMBER OF ANIMALS BUTCHERED	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	5	8.1	8.1
01	10	16.1	16.1
02	23	37.1	37.1
03	10	16.1	16.1
04	8	12.9	12.9
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	2	3.2	3.2
07	0	0	0
08	2	3.2	3.2
09	0	0	0
10	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

Table 26—Animal byproducts used by permittee household during a typical year (BPRODS– Ques. 26).

ANIMAL BYPRODUCTS USED BY HOUSEHOLD DURING A TYPICAL YEAR*	NUMBER OF HOUSE-HOLDS	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	49	79.0	79.0
02	2	3.2	3.2
03	2	3.2	3.2
04	5	8.1	8.1
05	2	3.2	3.2
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key

(01) None

(02) Hides

(03) Wool

(04) Milk

(05) Hides and Milk

(06) Wool and Milk

(07) Wool and Hides

Table 27—Number of live animals given away in a typical year (LIVANFREQS – Ques. 27).

NUMBER OF LIVE ANIMALS GIVEN AWAY	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	34	54.8	61.8
01	7	11.3	12.7
02	4	6.5	7.3
03	6	9.7	10.9
04	2	3.2	3.6
05	0	0	0
06	0	0	0
07	1	1.6	1.8
08	0	0	0
09	0	0	0
10	1	1.6	1.8
TOTAL	55	88.7	100
MISSING 97	7	11.3	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01)-(10) Those who report sharing live animals with family or friends = 38.1%; (01)-(04) Those who share between 1 and 4 live animals = 34.5%; Those who share more than 4 live animals = 3.6%

Table 28—Amount of meat and byproducts given to family and friends in a typical year (MPROD— Ques. 28).

AMOUNT OF MEAT AND BYPRODUCTS GIVEN TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN A TYPICAL YEAR*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	13	21.0	21.3
02	0	0	0
03	4	6.5	6.6
04	0	0	0
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	6	9.7	9.8
07	2	3.2	3.3
08	0	0	0
09	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
13	1	1.6	1.6
14	1	1.6	1.6
15	3	4.8	4.9
16	5	8.1	8.2
17	2	3.2	3.3
18	0	0	0
19	18	29.0	29.5
20	1	1.6	1.6
21	1	1.6	1.6
22	1	1.6	1.6
23	1	1.6	1.6
24	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) None
 (02) A cow
 (03) A side of beef
 (04) A quarter of a beef
 (05) A half calf butchered as meat
 (06) 20-50 lbs of meat
 (07) 51 to 100 lbs of meat
 (08) 101-200 lbs of meat
 (09) 201-300 lbs of meat
 (10) 301-400 lbs of meat
 (11) 401-500 lbs of meat
 (12) More than 500 lbs of meat
 (13) Several yearlings
 (14) A few steaks
 (15) Yes, give meat—no amount given
 (16) Meat listed as discussed under live animals which are then butchered
 (17) It depends/varies
 (18) 6 calves butchered as meat
 (19) Meat given to relatives counted under animals butchered for household use (Ques. 25)
 (20) Butcher yearling and lambs
 (21) Not meat, some byproducts
 (22) Gives family members good deal on animals, then butchers
 (23) Meat from 7 animals
 (24) Gives away meat, lamb, and pets. Donates meat and animals.

Table 29a—Number of animals traded for goods and services in a typical year
(BARTFREQS – Ques. 29)

NUMBER OF ANIMALS TRADED	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
00	40	84.5	72.7
01	7	11.3	12.7
02	2	3.2	3.6
03	3	4.8	5.5
04	0	0	0
05	2	3.2	3.6
06	0	0	0
07	0	0	0
08	1	1.6	1.8
TOTAL	55	88.7	100.0
MISSING 97	7	11.3	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

Table 29b—Amount of animals and meat traded for other goods and services in a typical year (BARTMEAT – Ques. 29)

AMOUNT OF ANIMALS OR MEAT BARTERED*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01.	50	80.6	83.3
02	0	0	0
03	0	0	0
04	1	1.6	1.7
05	0	0	0
06	0	0	0
07	0	0	0
08	1	1.6	1.7
09	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	0
15	0	0	0
16	0	0	0
17	0	0	0
18	0	0	0
19	1	1.6	1.7
20	5	8.1	8.3
21	1	1.6	1.7
22	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) None
 (02) A cow
 (03) A calf
 (04) A side of beef
 (05) A quarter of a beef
 (06) A half calf butchered as meat
 (07) A sheep
 (08) A lamb
 (09) Around 50 lbs of meat
 (10) 60 to 100 lbs of meat
 (11) 101-200 lbs of meat
 (12) 201-300 lbs of meat
 (13) 301-400 lbs of meat
 (14) 401-500 lbs of meat
 (15) More than 500 lbs of meat
 (16) Several yearlings
 (17) A few steaks
 (18) Yes, trade meat—no amount given
 (19) It varies/depends
 (20) Usually trades live animals
 (21) Barter meat from animals listed under direct count of animals bartered
 (22) Gives a calf or meat

Table 30—Costs of owning livestock (LVCOST— Ques. 31).

COSTS OF OWNING LIVESTOCK*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	5	8.1	8.6
02	11	17.7	19.0
03	7	11.3	12.1
04	8	12.9	13.8
05	4	6.5	6.9
06	3	4.8	5.2
07	1	1.6	1.7
08	2	3.2	3.4
09	3	4.8	5.2
10	2	3.2	3.4
11	5	8.1	8.6
12	4	6.5	6.9
13	1	1.6	1.7
14	2	3.2	3.4
TOTAL	58	93.5	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
MISSING 99	1	1.6	
TOTAL MISSING	4	6.5	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key

(1) Less than \$1000

(2) \$1000-\$5000

(3) \$5001-\$10,000

(4) \$10,001-\$15,000

(5) \$15,001-\$20,000

(6) \$20,001-\$25,000

(7) \$25,001-\$30,000

(8) \$30,001-\$50,000

(9) More than \$50,000

(10) Very expensive, takes all the profits, (paying off loans now)

(11) Very expensive, hard to estimate, doesn't know

(12) Sometimes costs more than the operation brings in

(13) Breaks even but gets good meat

(14) Listed various expenses, but no total figure

(97) Missing

(98) No response, declined to respond

(99) Unknown, don't know, no opinion

Table 31—Percentage of permittee's income that comes from livestock operation (INCPER— Ques. 32).

PERCENTAGE OF INCOME FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATION*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	4	6.5	6.6
02	1	1.6	1.6
03	5	8.1	8.2
04	6	9.7	9.8
05	5	8.1	8.2
06	3	4.8	4.9
07	5	8.1	8.2
08	0	0	0
09	2	3.2	3.3
10	1	1.6	1.6
11	2	3.2	3.3
12	2	3.2	3.3
13	8	12.9	13.1
14	4	6.5	6.6
15	2	3.2	3.3
16	8	12.9	13.1
17	3	4.8	4.9
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key

(01) None

(02) Less than 5%

(03) 5%-10%

(04) 11%-20%

(05) 21%-30%

(06) 31%-40%

(07) 41%-50%

(08) 51%-60%

(09) 61%-70%

(10) 71%-80%

(11) 81%-90%

(12) 91%-100%

(13) Don't make much money; most/all goes back into the livestock operation.

(14) Don't make money on the livestock operation but save money on meat.

(15) Don't really make money on the livestock operation; it is an investment and a tradition; like money in the bank.

(16) Gave a \$ figure that cannot be connected to a %.

(17) Don't make much money off it; paying off loans and putting money back into the operation.

(98). No response, declined to respond.

NOTE: Tabular material not used in analysis because of inconsistent responses stemming from wording problems in the question.

Table 32a—Money from livestock operations spent on basic living expenses (LIVEXPS— Ques. 33)

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON LIVING EXPENSES*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	36	58.1	58.1
02	26	41.9	41.9
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32b—Money from livestock operations spent on emergencies (EMERGENS— Ques. 33)

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON EMERGENCIES*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	30	48.4	48.4
02	32	51.6	51.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32c—Money from livestock operations spent on special expenses (SPEXPS— Ques. 33)

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON SPECIAL EXPENSES*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	28	45.2	45.2
02	34	54.8	54.8
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32d—Money from livestock operations spent on household improvements (HSEIMPS— Ques. 33)

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON HOUSEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	28	45.2	45.2
02	34	54.8	54.8
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32e—Money from livestock operations spent on improving the livestock operation (MORLVST— Ques. 33).

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON IMPROVING LIVESTOCK OPERATION*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	58	93.5	93.5
02	4	6.5	6.5
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32f—Money from livestock operations spent on financial investments (INVESTS— Ques. 33).

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	8	12.9	12.9
02	54	87.1	87.1
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 32g—Money from livestock operations spent on other expenses (OTHREXPS— Ques. 33).

MONEY FROM LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS SPENT ON OTHER EXPENSES*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	3	4.8	4.8
02	59	95.2	95.2
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

*Key
(01) Yes
(02) No

Table 33—Permittee dependence on livestock for family income (LVDEPEND– Ques. 34).

MANNER IN WHICH PERMITTEE DEPENDS ON LIVESTOCK TO CONTRIBUTE TO FAMILY INCOME*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	6	9.7	9.8
02	17	27.4	27.9
03	2	3.2	3.3
04	21	33.9	34.4
05	4	6.5	6.6
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	1	1.6	1.6
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	1	1.6	1.6
10	4	6.5	6.6
11	2	3.2	3.3
12	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key

(01) A. We depend on our livestock (and farming) for our full income. We are full-time ranchers and farmers.

(02) B. We depend on our livestock for part of our income. We are part-time ranchers, but would like to be fully dependent on our livestock for family income.

(03) C. We depend on our livestock for part of our income, and would not want to depend on our livestock for our full family income.

(04) D. We are retired, but still depend on our livestock for part of our income.

NOTE: The category "E. Other (Please describe,)" had the following responses:

(05) We do not depend on our livestock for family income; we use them for physical and mental well-being and to maintain traditions and family values, etc.

(06) We are retired but still put most of the livestock money back into the operation.

(07) The children use the livestock money for their expenses and for tuition, etc.

(08) We put the livestock money back into the operation because we have other income.

(09) We are full-time ranchers but do not depend on our livestock for our full income.

(10) We do not get income from the livestock.

(11) We do not get income from the livestock, keep them for butchering.

(12) We are retired from other professions but depend on livestock for majority of income.

(98) No response, declined to respond.

NOTE: Tabular material not used in analysis because of inconsistent responses stemming from wording problems in the question.

Table 34—Number of times livestock has been sold in the past 5 years to meet emergency needs (SELLVSTK— Ques. 35).

NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK SOLD*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	9	14.5	14.8
02	8	12.9	13.1
03	0	0	0
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	1	1.6	1.6
07	1	1.6	1.6
08	2	3.2	3.3
09	35	56.5	57.4
10	1	1.6	1.6
11	2	3.2	3.3
TOTAL	61	98.4	
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(05), (06), (08), and (09) Do not sell animals in emergencies = 63.9%

*Key

(01) 1 or 2 times

(02) 3-5 times

(03) 6-10 times

(04) More than 10 times

(05) Try hard not to sell animals in emergencies, use money from other sources.

(06) Not economically sensible to sell animals in emergencies, would be a poor choice to do this.

(07) Other family members sometimes sell animals in emergencies.

(08) Don't think so, have not had to do this.

(09) No, have not sold livestock.

(10) Have sold livestock all of the 5 years, no number given.

(11) Have sold livestock twice a year, though not an emergency.

(98) No response, declined to respond.

Table 35—Does permittee plan to manage livestock after retirement (RETIRE – Ques. 36).

PERMITTEE'S PLANS FOR MANAGING LIVESTOCK AFTER RETIREMENT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	49	79.0	79.0
02	3	4.8	4.8
03	8	12.9	12.9
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (03) Plan to continue managing their livestock after retirement; do not plan to retire from livestock management = 91.9%

*Key

(01) Yes

(02) No

(03) Manage them now and plan to continue to do so, do not plan to retire (from ranching).

(04) Up to other family members who are partners in the operation.

(05) Not sure.

Table 36—Can permittee afford to purchase livestock after retirement (RETMON— Ques. 37).

COULD PERMITTEE PURCHASE LIVESTOCK AFTER RETIREMENT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	6	9.7	9.8
02	28	45.2	45.9
03	2	3.2	3.3
04	5	8.1	8.2
05	5	8.1	8.2
06	9	14.5	14.6
07	2	3.2	3.3
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	1	1.6	1.6
10	2	3.2	3.3
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 99	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02), (04), (06), (07), and (10) Would not be able to afford, don't know if they could afford, would have problems affording, or would not have the land to run a livestock operation = 75.5%

*Key

(01) Yes

(02) No

(03) Possibly, if the price were right.

(04) Possibly not, would be very hard.

(05) Yes, but wouldn't buy livestock because wouldn't have the background, knowledge, desire, or land to run a livestock operation.

(06) No, wouldn't have the land.

(07) Don't know

(08) Yes, but not as many

(09) Have to make the effort to afford it.

(10) Probably not, probably wouldn't want to

(99) Unknown, don't know, no opinion.

Table 37—Permittee's chosen means of saving or investing money (SAVINGS— Ques. 38).

CHOSEN MEANS OF SAVING MONEY*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	7	11.3	11.3
02	28	45.2	45.2
03	15	24.2	24.2
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	1	1.6	1.6
06	6	9.7	9.7
07	2	3.2	3.2
08	1	1.6	1.6
09	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(02), (03), and (06) Buy land, improve the ranch, or do both = 79.1%; (04), (05), (07)-(09) Other investments = 9.6%

*Key

(01) A. Putting money in a savings account or other form of money investment program

(02) B. Buying land in the area

(03) C. Buying more livestock or improving the stock operation in other ways, such as investing in range improvements

NOTE: The category "D. Other (Please describe.)" had the following responses:

(04) Investing money in a personal business

(05) Means of saving depends on the amount available

(06) B and C

(07) A, B, and C

(08) A and C

(09) Discussion of problems with all the means of saving.

Table 38a—Order of general family goals: Priority order for having more income and being able to buy more material goods (INCOME – Ques. 39).

ORDER OF FAMILY GOALS – INCOME*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	2	3.2	3.3
02	11	17.7	18.3
03	24	38.7	40.0
04	23	37.1	38.3
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 38b—Order of general family goals: Priority order for having a better quality of life (QUALITY – Ques. 39).

ORDER OF FAMILY GOALS – QUALITY OF LIFE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	33	53.2	55.0
02	22	35.5	36.7
03	5	8.1	8.3
04	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 38c—Order of general family goals: Priority order for maintaining traditional values (TRADVAL – Ques. 39).

ORDER OF FAMILY GOALS – TRADITIONAL VALUES*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	25	40.3	41.0
02	24	38.7	39.3
03	10	16.1	16.4
04	2	3.2	3.3
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 38d—Order of general family goals: Priority order for having more respect in the community (RESPECT— Ques. 39).

ORDER OF FAMILY GOALS – RESPECT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	1	1.6	1.8
02	3	4.8	5.0
03	21	33.9	35.0
04	35	56.5	58.3
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 39a—Order of goals for livestock operation: Priority order for increasing overall income and material goods (PROFIT— Ques. 40).

ORDER OF GOALS FOR LIVESTOCK OPERATION— PROFIT*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	3	4.8	4.9
02	8	12.9	13.1
03	14	22.6	23.0
04	36	58.1	59.0
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 39b—Order of goals for livestock operation: Priority order for maintaining family's quality of life resulting from owning livestock (FAMLIFE— Ques. 40).

ORDER OF GOALS FOR LIVESTOCK OPERATION— FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	35	56.5	57.4
02	17	27.4	27.9
03	6	9.7	9.8
04	3	4.8	4.9
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 39c—Order of goals for livestock operation: Priority order for avoiding being forced out of livestock ownership (FORCEOUT— Ques. 40).

ORDER OF GOALS FOR LIVESTOCK OPERATION— AVOID BEING FORCED OUT*			
	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	20	32.3	32.8
02	21	33.9	34.4
03	14	22.6	23.0
04	6	9.7	9.8
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 39d—Order of goals for livestock operation: Priority order for improving the livestock operation by obtaining more land, better equipment, and more animals (IMPROVOP— Ques. 40).

ORDER OF GOALS FOR LIVESTOCK OPERATION— IMPROVEMENT OF OPERATION*			
	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	3	4.8	4.9
02	15	24.2	24.6
03	27	43.5	44.3
04	16	25.8	26.2
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key
 (01) First
 (02) Second
 (03) Third
 (04) Fourth
 (98) No response, declined to respond

Table 40—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "One of the greatest sources of pride for a landowner is owning and working the same land all his/her life" (PRIDE – Ques. 41).

PRIDE IN WORKING THE LAND*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	47	75.8	77.0
02	13	21.0	21.3
03	1	1.6	1.6
04	0	0	0
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 96.3%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

Table 41—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Public lands, such as national forest or BLM-managed lands, should be managed with equal consideration for the use and enjoyment of all U.S. citizens" (PLAND – Ques. 42).

MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	11	17.7	19.0
02	18	29.0	31.0
03	8	12.9	13.6
04	15	24.2	25.9
05	6	9.7	10.3
TOTAL	58	93.5	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	3	4.8	
MISSING TOTAL	4	6.5	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 50%; (04) and (05) = 36.2%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 42—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Land that has been in the family for generations should not be sold" (NOSEL – Ques. 43).

SALE OF FAMILY LANDS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	45	72.6	73.8
02	9	14.5	14.8
03	5	8.1	8.2
04	2	3.2	3.3
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 88.6%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 43—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Landowners should make it a top priority to hire local workers" (LOCAL – Ques. 44)

PRIORITY TO HIRE LOCAL WORKERS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	23	37.1	37.1
02	21	33.9	33.9
03	15	24.2	24.2
04	2	3.2	3.2
05	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (02) = 71%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

Table 44—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "True landownership includes personally working the land (or having members of the family work it), raising one's own crops and livestock" (OWNER— Ques. 45).

PERSONALLY WORKING THE LAND*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	35	56.5	56.5
02	26	41.9	41.9
03	0	0	0
04	1	1.6	1.6
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (02) = 98.4%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

Table 45—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "When selling land, the owner owes it to his/her family to sell to the person who offers the best price even if that person is not from the local community" (PRICE— Ques. 46).

SELLING TO SOMEONE FROM OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	1	1.6	1.7
02	6	9.7	10.0
03	13	21.0	21.7
04	23	37.1	38.3
05	17	27.4	28.3
TOTAL	60	96.8	100.0
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(04) and (05) = 66.6%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 46—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Public lands, such as national forest or BLM-managed lands, should be managed with greatest consideration for long-time, traditional users" (USERS – Ques. 47).

MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS FOR TRADITIONAL USERS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	40	64.5	64.5
02	20	32.3	32.3
03	2	3.2	3.2
04	0	0	0
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (02) = 96.8%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

Table 47—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Having money in the bank or other investments is the best means of providing for your children's future" (FUTUR – Ques. 48).

PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN'S FUTURE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	VALID PERCENT	PERCENT
01	13	21.0	21.3
02	22	35.5	36.1
03	13	21.0	21.3
04	12	19.4	19.7
05	1	1.6	1.6
TOTAL	61	98.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 57.4%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 48—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Landowners should hire the most qualified workers without regard to where they come from" (LABOR— Ques. 49).

HIRING OF MOST QUALIFIED WORKERS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	6	9.7	10.2
02	27	43.5	45.8
03	9	14.5	15.3
04	17	27.4	28.6
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	59	95.2	100.0
MISSING 97	1	1.6	
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
MISSING TOTAL	3	4.8	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

*Key (01) and (02) = 56%

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 49—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "When selling land, the owner should make it a top priority to sell to someone within the local community" (SALE— Ques. 50).

SALE OF LAND TO LOCAL COMMUNITY*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	21	33.9	35.0
02	24	38.7	40.0
03	10	16.1	16.7
04	4	6.5	6.7
05	1	1.6	1.7
TOTAL	60	86.8	100.0
MISSING 98	2	3.2	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 75%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Table 50—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "The legal owner of a piece of land should be able to manage it however he/she chooses" (LNMAN- Ques. 51).

LANDOWNER MANAGEMENT RIGHTS*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	34	54.8	54.8
02	21	33.9	33.9
03	2	3.2	3.2
04	5	8.1	8.1
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	62	100.0	100.0

(01) and (02) = 88.7%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

Table 51—Permittee's level of agreement with statement "Passing on land to your children is the best means of providing for their future" (INHER- Ques. 52).

LAND IS BEST WAY TO PROVIDE FOR CHILDREN'S FUTURE*	NUMBER OF PERMITTEES	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT
01	33	53.2	54.1
02	18	29.0	29.5
03	8	12.9	13.1
04	2	3.2	3.2
05	0	0	0
TOTAL	61	95.4	100.0
MISSING 98	1	1.6	
TOTAL	62	100.0	

(01) and (02) = 83.6%

*Key

(01) A. Strongly Agree

(02) B. Agree

(03) C. Neutral

(04) D. Disagree

(05) E. Strongly Disagree

(98) No response, declined to respond

Rocky Mountain Research Station
Natural Resources Research Center
2150 Centre Avenue, Building A
Fort Collins, CO 80526



The Rocky Mountain Research Station develops scientific information and technology to improve management, protection, and use of the forests and rangelands. Research is designed to meet the needs of the National Forest managers, Federal and State agencies, public and private organizations, academic institutions, industry, and individuals.

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January 6, 2014

CERTIFIED MAIL and *ELECTRONIC VERSION*

Jodi Gillette, Senior Policy Advisor
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 Email: JGILLETTE@WHO.EOP.GOV

Tom Vilsack, USDA Secretary
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
 Washington, DC 20250
 Email:

Subject: USDA Civil Rights Compliance Review Report

Dear Ms. Gillette and Secretary Vilsack:

The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention the attached report produced by the USDA Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation, entitled: *FOREST SERVICE COMPLIANCE REVIEW REPORT CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM REVIEW Conducted At: Regions Two and Three April 1- June 14, 2013 Onsite: April 15-19 Colorado and New Mexico Report Date: June 2013*. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR), Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation (OCPCT), Compliance Division (CD) conducted a CR Program Compliance Review of the Forest Service (FS) grazing and recreational programs. The Report was approved by the office Director and provided to us by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

The Report's Executive Summary concludes at page 4 regarding the performance of the Forest Service (FS) agency as follows: "This review found that both Regions Two and Three were non-compliant with several CR requirements; inconsistent implementation of USDA/FS regulations, procedures and other mandates." The Report identifies several program areas of noncompliance which includes at page 5, the process used in "Terminating or suspending grazing permits."

The Report's Introduction, Purpose and Scope of Review identify the FS program areas of required compliance reviewed in the context of Federal laws and overall FS agency regulations. The Scope also identified the specific review of the FS agency's policies with regard to minorities at page 6, 2nd paragraph: "The following were included in a review of the Agency's grazing land management and recreational accessibility policies for Hispanic and Native American (American Indians)". The issue of access to grazing permits is of vital importance to the minority Hispanic and Native American ranchers in Colorado and New Mexico and has long been a source of conflict with the FS over complaints of discriminatory practices. See *David Sanchez v. Forest Service*, No. FS-12-5775 and *Jarita Mesa Livestock Grazing Association, Alamosa Livestock Grazing Association, et. al. vs. The United States Forest Service, et al.*, USDC District NM, No. CIV 12-0069 JB/KBM.

The review compliance process identified in this Report interviewed several FS District office staff/employees in Regions Two and Three. Also interviewed as program participants were "Grazing Permittees" from the various National Forests and Ranger Districts in Regions Two and Three. The

Report's Conclusion notes evidence of discrimination on page 18; 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence: "*Many of the program participants raised concerns of discriminatory treatment toward minority participants, resulting in many of them having their grazing permits either terminated or suspended*". Thus, it is clear that the impetus for the review compliance process by the OCPCTC came from the minority grazing permittees themselves and not the non-minority group permittees.

The OCPCTC office Report details 36 Findings and lists the attendant corrective actions which support the merit of our long-standing complaints that discrimination against minorities was and is systemic in the entire FS agency in Regions Two and Three. The FS agency noncompliance with Federal laws and its own overall agency regulations has had a long-standing negative impact on the social, economic and cultural status of Hispanic and Native American ranching participants referred to in this report. It is important for the White House Administration and USDA to recognize that there are Native American and Hispanic families living at or below poverty level guidelines throughout New Mexico and Colorado. It is equally important to recognize that the minorities referenced in this report are dependent on the Federal lands that makeup approximately seventy percent of the land mass of our counties. For example, Region Three alone "*covers 1.8 million acres*". The dependency and use of this Forest Lands and its natural resources by Native Americans and Hispanics predates the establishment of the US Forest Service in 1905 by several centuries, going back to the founding of the livestock industry in 1598 by early Spanish colonists. This area has also been recognized by Congress as the "Northern Rio Grande Heritage Area" for the presence and contributions of its many native communities. Yet the long discriminatory practices of the US Forest Service against these native ranchers has sharply reduced and crippled their livestock economy and their very existence as land based peoples.

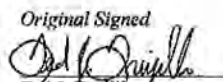
In conclusion, the Report by the OCPCTC office identifies the root causes for the FS Agency's inability to comply with Federal Laws and overall agency regulations. The FS Agency's failure to comply with Federal law and regulations has led to numerous confrontations between the agency and the minority participants identified in the Report. This long history of the FS Agency decisions to terminate, suspend and reduce the participants' grazing permits has devastated the social and economic sustainability of Hispanic and Native American families in the state of New Mexico and Colorado. The cumulative impact of these adverse FS decisions extends to our School Districts, Counties and State. As stated above, the *David Sanchez v. Forest Service, No. FS-12-5775* and *Jarito Mesa Livestock Grazing Association, et al. v. USFS, USDC District NM, No. CIV 12-0069 JB/KBM*, prompted this civil rights compliance review of the various FS agency's identified in the Report. We feel that the numerous findings by the OCPCTC office are thorough and justified. However, we are concerned that the Report will not have the proper corrective action to eliminate discrimination in the US Forest Service, Regions 2 and 3, unless a directive to that effect from your offices to the appropriate USDA offices is forthcoming. At this point we also find it necessary to request from USDA the documents and overall evidence that supports the findings and executive summary decision in the Report collected by the OCPCTC Staff, via a separate FOIA request to follow. We also request to be included directly in the overall corrective action process with USDA.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

 David P. Sanchez (Point of Contact)
 Board of Directors
 Northern New Mexico Stockman's Association

Sincerely,

Original Signed

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Cc: President Barack Obama, White House
 U. S. Representative Michelle Lujan-Grisham, US House Agriculture Committee
 U.S. Senator Tom Udall
 U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich
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 U.S. Representative Steve Pierce
 Thomas Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
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 Joshua Madalena, Governor, Jemez Pueblo
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Point of contact for NNMSA: David P. Sanchez, Chairman of the Issues Committee, P. O. Box 855,
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FOREST SERVICE

COMPLIANCE REVIEW REPORT

CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM REVIEW

Conducted At:

Regions Two and Three

April 1- June 14, 2013

Onsite: April 15-19, Colorado and New Mexico

Conducted By:

**Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural
Transformation**

Report Date:

June 2013

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Dates of Review: April 1 - June 14, 2013
April 15 - 19, 2013, Colorado and New Mexico

Review Conducted By: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR)
Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation (OCPCTC), Compliance Division

Team Members: Geraldine Herring, Chief, Compliance Division
Daruss Golden, Co-Team Lead
Sheila McKie, Co-Team Lead
Henry Bourgeois, Team Member
Albert Amisah, Team Member

Approved: Ronald Branch Date: 6/24/13
Ronald D. Branch, Acting Director, Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Background	6
Purpose and Scope	6
Methodology	7
Program Description: Grazing and Special Use Programs	7
Demographic Data: States, Regions and Districts Visited	8
Findings, Summary of Documentation and Corrective Actions	9
Civil Rights Training and Technical Assistance	9
Public Notification and Outreach	10
Data Collection and Analysis	12
Program Participation	13
Program Accommodation and Facility Accessibility	14
Compliance Reviews	15
Assurance Agreements	16
Conclusion	17
Corrective Action Plan	19
Appendix A	20
Demographics for Colorado	21
Demographics for New Mexico	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the period April 1 through June 14, 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation (OCPTCT), conducted a Civil Rights (CR) Compliance Review of the Forest Service (FS) Region Two in Colorado and Region Three in New Mexico.

The Review Team (Team) evaluated the following aspects of the CR program of FS Regions Two and Three:

- The technical assistance and training provided to program participants to determine compliance with applicable CR laws and regulations;
- The public notification and outreach program;
- The system for collection and analysis of data necessary to determine compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;¹
- Trends and patterns of participation in the Grasslands Program and Recreation Program at the San Juan, Carson, and Cibola National Forests;
- The accommodations and facilities accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- The effectiveness of the Agency's CR compliance review program; and
- The Agency's Assurance Agreement process.

This review found that both Regions Two and Three were non-compliant with several CR requirements; inconsistent implementation of USDA/FS regulations, procedures and other mandates.² They include the following:

- Failure to educate program participants on their civil rights program responsibilities and to provide technical assistance in accordance with Departmental Regulation (DR) 4330-002;³
- Failure to collect demographic data on program participants in order to determine the extent to which members of minority groups are beneficiaries of Federally assisted and conducted programs;⁴

¹ 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d -- 2000d-7

² Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," 65 FR 50121-50122; and U.S. Department of Justice, Policy Guidance Document, "Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964--National Origin Discrimination Against Persons With Limited English Proficiency" (65 FR 50123-50125).

³ DR 4330-002, *Nondiscrimination in Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance from USDA* (March 3, 1999); reference § 7c (6) Chapter 7.

⁴ 28 C.F.R. § 42.406 Data and information collection.

- Failure to provide a non-discrimination statement to program participants in a Federally assisted program in accordance with *FS Civil Rights Handbook 1709.11, 20.3 #3*;
- Failure to update FS regulations;
- Terminating or suspending grazing permits; and
- Lack of a written LEP plan or framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance for eliminating or reducing LEP as a barrier to accessing USDA programs and activities.

Finally, this Report details the findings and lists corrective actions to be taken on all noted deficiencies.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR), Office of Compliance, Policy, Training and Cultural Transformation (OCPTCT), Compliance Division (CD) conducted a CR Program Compliance Review of the Forest Service (FS) grazing and recreational programs in Regions Two and Three on April 1 thru June 14, 2013. The on-site review was from April 14–19, 2013, in Colorado and New Mexico.

The review determined whether of Regions Two and Three complied with CR laws and regulations in the administration and delivery of Federally assisted and conducted programs, services, and activities.

Purpose and Scope of Review

The review evaluated the CR programs and the FS Recreational Special Uses and Grazing Management programs to determine compliance with the Agency's regulations. In addition, the review determined the Agency's compliance with CR laws, USDA Departmental Regulations, procedures and policies pursuant to Title VI (Federally Assisted Programs) and Title VII (Equal Employment Opportunity).

The following were included in a review of the Agency's grazing land management and recreational accessibility policies for Hispanics and Native Americans (American Indians);

- Evaluating program delivery services in accordance with Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Evaluating the CR training provided to FS program participants and staff;
- Assessing the grazing permits process;
- Evaluating the implementation of the limited English proficiency (LEP) policies and procedures;
- Evaluating minority access to the National Forests in accordance with recreational, travel and land management regulations and policies; and
- Reviewing the travel and land management policies and practices as they relate to the overall accessibility.

The regions visited were:

- Region Two – **San Juan National Forest**, Southern Colorado (Durango, Colorado), Columbine Ranger District (Bayfield, Colorado), and Pagosa Ranger District (Pagosa Springs, Colorado);

- Region Three – **Carson National Forest**, Northern New Mexico (Taos, New Mexico) and Jicarilla Ranger District (Bloomfield, New Mexico);
- Region Three – **Cibola National Forest**, Central New Mexico (Albuquerque, New Mexico), Grants Mt. Taylor Ranger District (Grants, New Mexico), and Sandia Ranger District (Tijeras, New Mexico); and
- Region Three – **Southwestern Region Headquarters**, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Methodology

The review was conducted in three phases:

1. Pre on-site preparation, planning, data collection and review;
2. On-site evaluation,⁵ data collection and observation; and
3. Off-site analysis and report preparation.

The on-site evaluation and data collection were conducted at selected District Ranger Offices within the San Juan, Carson, and Cibola National Forests.

The Team interviewed approximately 100 FS managers and employees; and contacted over 135 program participants including more than 50 participating by telephone. Also, the Team conducted a Focus Group of 10 present and former program participants.

Program Description: Grazing and Special Uses Programs

The FS manages 191.6 million acres of national forests and grasslands that comprise the National Forest System (NFS). The Agency's Special-Uses Program authorizes use of the land that provides a benefit to the general public while preserving the National Forest.

Under the Special-Uses Program, each year FS receives thousands of individual and business applications for authorization to use NFS land for such activities as water transmission, agriculture, outfitting and guiding, recreation, telecommunication, research, photography and video productions, and granting road and utility rights of ways. FS reviews each application to determine how the request affects the public's use of NFS land. Normally, the NFS land is not made available if the overall needs of the individual or business can be met on non-Federal lands. FS issues a special-use authorization such as a permit, lease, or easement which allows occupancy, use rights, or privileges of NFS land and is granted for a specific use of the land for a specific period of time.

The authorizations are granted based on: (1) a need to occupy, use, or build on NFS land for personal or business purpose; (2) a fee being charged or income being derived from the use; and (3) activity involving people or organizations with 75 or more participants or spectators. Permit holders pay an annual rental fee based on the fair market value for the uses authorized.

⁵ On-site evaluations were conducted through the use of questionnaires. Interviewees were notified that their identities would remain confidential and their participation in the Civil Rights Compliance Review is protected from retaliation and reprisal by the *Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended*.

The three types of grazing permits are:

- **Temporary Grazing Permits** are generally issued for a short period of time to allow livestock to remain on the National Forest land.
- **Livestock Use Permits** are issued for a year or shorter for incidental use and are not intended to authorize commercial livestock production on National Forest lands. A common situation for issuing a Livestock Use Permit is to authorize Guide/Outfitter's stock during the period they are operating on the National Forest; and
- **Term Grazing Permits** are issued for up to 10 years to livestock producers throughout the West. When a Term Grazing Permit is issued to a newly qualified applicant, one must meet the base property ownership requirement to obtain a permit. This is met mostly through the purchase of existing base property that is recognized under an existing Term Grazing Permit. Individuals or businesses may inherit, obtain through foreclosures, or other means become owners of base property.

Demographic Data: States, Regions, and Districts Visited

According to the 2012 Census population data for the State of Colorado, 20.4 percent are Hispanic/Latino; 70.3 percent White; 3.7 percent Black; 2.7 percent Asian American; and 0.6 percent American Indian. In the State of New Mexico, 45.9 percent are Hispanic/Latino; 72 percent White; 2 percent Black; 1.3 percent Asian American; and 9.3 percent American Indian. The major American Indian tribes in Southwestern Colorado and Northern New Mexico are the Apache, Mountain Ute, Navajo, and Ute. (See Appendix A for a demographic breakdown of the sites visited.)

FINDINGS SUMMARY OF DOCUMENTATION AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

FINDINGS	RULE	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
- Based on interviews, Region Two staff indicated they completed all mandatory CR training on AgLearn for 2013 but found it to be ineffective. The employees interviewed did not remember specific course topics they received in the last year. The only face-to-face training or course discussed was one held in preparation for the fire season. - Many program participants interviewed stated they had not received CR training and were unaware of their CR compliance responsibilities. - Interviews with senior management officials disclosed they had not taken CR training in several years although the CR program is a critical element in their performance plans. - FS employees and program participants have not been provided limited English proficiency (LEP) guidance and training.	DR 4300-5, <i>Agency Civil Rights Programs</i> (January 14, 1998), requires the Agencies to conduct annual CR training and collect and maintain employee participation records. These records must be submitted to the CR Director to ensure and document that all employees have received the training. Further, mission areas and Agencies must support the CR training with funding, staff assistance, and on-site coordination of training delivery, and by encouraging employees to apply the principles learned in the workplace. Agencies must also take the necessary steps to ensure that CR professionals and officials who are responsible for integrating the CR requirements into programs and activities receive the technical training necessary to properly carry out their responsibilities. (See also DM 4330-001, <i>Procedures for Processing Discrimination Complaints and Conducting Civil Rights Compliance USDA Conducted Program and Activities</i> (October 18, 2000), Chapter 5.	- Design training modules that are interactive; related to the mission of the unit, and targeted for specific purposes for an effective CR program. - Develop and implement a 3-year CR training plan (Plan) for all employees and program participants, and incorporate the Plan in the proposed Regional Strategic Plan. The Plan should include the following: - Interactive discussions on subjects related to the CR responsibilities of employees and program participants, such as public notification, data collection, monitoring, reporting, and data maintenance to evaluate program participation; - Training modules that address the LEP guidance and requirements; - Time tables for implementation; - The types of program participants, including Special Uses and Grazing permittees (i.e., allotment owners) to receive training; and - The staff person(s) responsible for providing the training. - Submit the Plan to the Regional CR Director for approval prior to dissemination and

FINDINGS	Public Notification and Outreach	implementation. A copy of the approved plan should be sent to OASCR, OCTICT, Compliance Division.
- The non-discrimination statement was consistently omitted from key documents, such as the grazing permit applications. - The program brochures lacked diversity and included only images of White males and females. - There was no documentation that brochures were in an alternative language except for a children's coloring book in Spanish at one of the District Ranger Offices. - In most of the Ranger District Offices visited, the "And Justice for All" posters, CR policy statements, anti-harassment policy statements and EEO policy statements were not prominently posted in public areas. - FS staff indicated there was no LEP plan, guidance or informational materials available in the Regional and Ranger District Offices. - Many program participants indicated the FS	RULE 7 C.F.R. Section 15.5(d) requires Agencies and recipients to ensure that program participants/beneficiaries and other interested persons are informed of the CR requirements of Title VI. [See also 28 C.F.R. Section 42.106(d).] The information, including complaint procedures, must be prominently displayed on posters and in pamphlets or other materials that are distributed to the public to describe the recipient's programs. (See 28 C.F.R. Section 42.405.) Based on Federal law, each Agency shall prepare a plan to improve access to its programs and activities by eligible LEP persons. Agencies are required to examine the services they provide; identify any need for services to those with LEP; and develop and implement a system to provide those services and meaningful access to them. USDA Agencies must develop a written LEP plan (Plan) to provide timely and reasonable language assistance and for eliminating or reducing LEP as a barrier to accessing USDA programs and services. (See Executive Order	• Ensure that senior management officials demonstrate a commitment to CR by timely completing the mandatory CR and EEO training.
		CORRECTIVE ACTIONS - Include the required non-discrimination statement on all documents, and advise program participants of the meaning of the statement. All program participants should confirm their receipt of notification and understanding by signature and date. - Ensure that the Regional, Forest Supervisor, and District Ranger Offices, and program participants include the non-discrimination statement on all outreach and recruitment materials; news articles submitted to newspapers for publication; and any other written material that is distributed to the public. - Educate program applicants, who advertise on the website, about the importance of the non-discrimination statement and alternative communications methods as part of the Assurance Agreements and contracts. - Ensure that the Regional, Forest Supervisor, and District Ranger Offices, and the program participant offices prominently display the USDA's "And Justice for All" poster, and widely disseminate the "Complying with Civil Rights

did not provide interpreters or LEP materials to Hispanic/Latino ranchers and other participants who spoke little English. In addition, FS websites did not contain links to its services in other languages that were commonly spoken in the area. • Most of the websites for program participants did not contain the non-discrimination statements or information on alternative methods of communication. • Most program participants indicated that the outreach efforts by both Regions were minimal or non-existent. • FS representatives are required to meet with program participants and discuss the Annual Operating Instruction (AOI). According to the program participants, FS staff prepares the AOI and tells them "to take or leave it" with little or no discussion. • All program participants interviewed stated "the AOI is supposed to be a joint venture, but FS cuts and pastes the AOI and arbitrarily changes the allotment size from year to year." As a result, this delays entry dates and reduces the grazing period, thereby causing a loss of money. • Many program participants indicated the technical assistance meetings are intended by FS to threaten discontinuance of benefits and/or to announce cuts in services once afforded by permits and contracts.	13166A, <i>Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency</i> (August 11, 2000); DR 4330-005.) Also, the CR non-discrimination policy must be communicated to the public through all appropriate USDA public information channels in English and in languages appropriate to the local population, and in alternative means of communication (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.). Agencies must develop and implement a communications plan that includes an adequately funded outreach component to ensure that publications, documents, advertisements, and other program information materials are in appropriate format and language to accommodate all program participants. In regard to outreach efforts, the Agency is required to use positive images and examples of employment and program participation by minorities, women and other protected groups in pictures and other visual and audio public information materials.	<i>Requirements:</i> brochure. • Develop and implement a written Plan to address and identify the needs of the LEP populations served in the FS Regions. • Develop program literature and informational materials with images and photos that represent a diversity of participants. • Implement a language assistance service through both oral and written notice in primary languages spoken by a significant number of customers and potential customers in the service areas. • Provide interpreters when conducting a technical assistance review with the LEP program participants. • Require public notification and outreach strategies include the minority media and the program materials are available in languages appropriate to the community being served. Websites should provide available links to other languages commonly spoken in the area. • Provide a written report to the Regional CR Director regarding the status of the actions and activities identified in the Public Notification and Outreach Plan. • Utilize the technical assistance meetings as outreach opportunities to provide information and positive assistance on contracts, permits, and discuss CR issues.
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FINDINGS	RULE	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
Program participant data is not collected by race, color, and national origin.	7 C.F.R. Section 15.5(b) requires that recipients of Federal assistance ensure the collection and maintenance of program participant data in order to determine the extent to which members of minority groups are beneficiaries of Federally assisted programs. Further, the Agencies are required to install a system for the statistical evaluation, analysis and reporting in order to measure program participation and determine the extent to which underserved communities benefit from the programs and activities of the Agency. (See DR 4300-005.)	Establish a system to collect and maintain accurate data on potential and actual program participation in order to determine how effectively the programs are reaching protected groups and to provide input for management purposes. The demographic data must be organized and analyzed based on the Region and District Ranger Offices.
The program management officials and employees interviewed from either Region were unaware of the statutory requirement for collecting and maintaining program eligibility and participation data according to race, color, and national origin.	In accordance with the <i>Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill)</i>,⁶ the U.S. Congress requires an annual report of the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for each USDA program established for farmers and ranchers, according to race, ethnicity and gender, by county and State.	Develop data collection guidelines and procedures that address the population of recipients and program participants to ensure that adequate data is available and evaluated. The guidelines and procedures should be tailored appropriately for each type of program participant.
The Team randomly examined records and files representing the Recreational Special Use Program and the Grazing Program at the various sites which found no relevant data reflecting compliance with USDA's policies on data collection and reporting. Also, there were no files or records that addressed the issue or reflected the status of parity in program participation.	In accordance with the <i>Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill)</i>,⁶ the U.S. Congress requires an annual report of the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for each USDA program established for farmers and ranchers, according to race, ethnicity and gender, by county and State.	- Train FS program management officials and employees regarding the Departmental regulatory requirement to collect and maintain data on program participants according to race, ethnicity and gender. - Collaborate with Human Resources to build relationships that support sharing information regarding hiring data to create a more diverse workforce. (Reference the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's <i>Management Directive 715</i>.)

⁶ See *Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008* (June 18, 2008), "Transparency and Accountability for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers," Section 14006, *Public Law 110-246* (7 U.S.C. § 8701).

FINDINGS	RULE	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
• FS does not collect any program data regarding the potential, eligible and actual client populations served in both Regions. Therefore, it was not possible to provide a definitive analysis of the level of compliance with USDA's non-discrimination requirements.	7 C.F.R. Section 15.3 states that, "The regulations implementing Title VI prohibit recipients from denying program services or benefits to any person based on race, color, or national origin." Thus, the Agencies are responsible for enforcing the Title VI compliance responsibilities of all program participants.	• Establish a data collection system of all Title VI program participants in accordance with Section 3 above (<i>Data Collection and Analysis</i>).
• Most program participants interviewed were unaware of the Federally assisted program CR responsibilities.	Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2209.13 – <i>Grazing Permit Administration Handbook</i>, Chapter 90 – <i>Rangeland Management Decision-making</i> (June 8, 2007)	• Provide program participants with updated policies and procedures in written form.
• The regulations for penalties regarding allotments are not clearly articulated or consistent for fines and violations. The FS point of contact referred the Team to Handbook 2209-13-2012 chap. 16 pg. 34, which does not specifically define the penalties.	FSH 2231.22 – <i>Qualification Requirements</i>, 2231.22a – <i>Term Permits</i>. To qualify for a term grazing permit, an applicant must own base property and livestock (except leased breeding sties – <i>Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2234.17</i>) to be permitted	• Provide clarity and articulate the intent of the <i>Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (Grazing Act)</i> for program participants, of which many perceive as superseding the authority of FS regulations on rangeland management. The <i>Grazing Act</i> authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to establish grazing districts on Federal public lands, and it does not impact FS grazing regulations and policies.
• Most program participants stated the grazing regulations are outdated, and the prohibitive cost of property makes it difficult for program participants (such as allotment owners) to meet the grazing requirements.	FSH 2209.13, section 12.2 – <i>Qualification Requirements</i>. To qualify for a grazing permit with term status, an applicant must own base property and livestock to be permitted.	• Implement the FS regulations in a more consistent manner with program participants. There is an inconsistency in the implementation of the procedures in Regions Two and Three in contrast to the procedures administered by Headquarters.
• Many program participants indicated the terms and conditions in the AOI are not achievable, stating, "FS staff does not use	FSH 2209.13, section 12.21 – <i>Base Property Ownership Requirements</i>. Where base property is jointly owned, all of the owners	• Develop and implement a uniform application of the FS grazing permit validation procedures in

28 C.F.R. Section 42.401; 7 C.F.R. Section 15.3; DR 4330-2 Section 8(a) (March 3, 1999).

43 U.S.C. Section 315

the best science to develop the terms." As a result, program participants feel they are forced to do what FS staff dictates or they will not be allowed access to FS grazing lands for their livestock. Many program participants stated the FS staff uses "Gestapo" intimidation tactics, such as constant threats, suspension of permits, retaliation, and discrimination.	must apply for the term permit. In other words, an individual's permit application will be rejected if the base property identified therein is jointly owned and the other owners are not listed as applicants for the permit. FSH 2209.13, WO Amendment 2209.13-92-1(14.33) - Certificates of Brands, Require that an applicant submit a copy of the certificate of brand for the record. FSH, Chapter 96.3, Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) - To the extent feasible, the AOI should be developed with, and signed by the permittees.	accordance with FS regulations; Provide technical assistance to the program participants in developing the AOI to ensure an open, cooperative and inclusive process.
FINDINGS		
CORRECTIVE ACTIONS		
The three National Forest Offices that were visited by the Team fulfilled most of the requirements for reasonable accommodations and accessibility guidelines regarding persons with disabilities. However, the Team did find doors at some sites were not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The doors were extremely difficult (i.e., too heavy) to open; and there was an issue with the access ramp at two sites visited. - FS staff was unaware of either the disability requirements or the reasonable accommodations policy. - Most FS staff stated they were unaware of the reasonable accommodation process or	7 C.F.R. Part 15b states that, "Regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, prohibit recipients from denying benefits or services to persons on the basis of handicap." The regulation further states that the Agency is responsible for ensuring the compliance of its recipients and program participants with the applicable Federal non-discrimination statutes, regulations and policies. (Reference Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (Title VI); 28 C.F.R. Part 41; and DE 4330-002.)	- Conduct a facility accessibility survey and develop a transition plan with specific target dates for completion to address all identified barriers. - Educate FS staff about the disability issues and reasonable accommodations policy; and also ensure that they are aware of the designated Disability Program Manager responsible for the Region. The Staff should know who to go to if there is a reasonable accommodation issue, and the Disability Program Manager needs to be fully knowledgeable of their job responsibilities.

FINDINGS	RULE	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
the name of the Disability Employment Program manager. - Many FS stated the Facility and Program accessibility was in compliance with Section 504 and the ADA; several noted they needed to improve especially with respect to Section 508 accessibility. The Review Team determined the Agency's methodology for evaluating the CR compliance of the Regions Two and Three is insufficient. The Agency's methodology does not allow for a thorough and objective analysis of its program delivery services. a) The Agency's timetable for initiating a compliance review of its programs is not in accordance with their proposed fiscal year schedule. b) The Agency, in the alternative, utilizes FS Form 1700-6, which is a checklist and does not allow for appropriate analysis or comprehensive description of program activities. c) Based on interviews with FS recreation management officials, the Reviews are conducted by staff who are either directly responsible for the Recreational Special Use Permits and Range Management Programs or by the administrative staffs at the Forest level. Further, there is no evidence that the	7 C.F.R. Section 15.3 requires the Agency to review and monitor the activities and program service delivery mechanisms of recipients to determine whether they are complying with the appropriate CR laws and regulations.	- Develop and implement a compliance review and evaluation system that incorporates the requirements of the CR laws, regulations and policies. - Conduct compliance reviews according to set time schedules and in collaboration with the FS and USDA CR staff. - Ensure that the findings and corrective actions from the compliance reviews are incorporated into the appropriate management reports.

information obtained is used to produce a regional or forest-wide document that can be used for reporting, monitoring and follow-up. d) Most interviewees indicated that few compliance reviews were being done. However, the data requested from FS indicates that over the course of the last three years, the CR Office reported it had completed 202 desk audit reviews, and 214 compliance reviews. e) Many of the program participants stated that National Forest Service has not demonstrated their commitment to CR. f) Some FS employees emphasized compliance reviews should include clients of the program participants.		
FINDINGS	REQUIREMENTS	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
• Interpretations of the Assurance Agreements are inconsistent, and many FS staff did not understand the process or could not provide an office policy or procedure.	Departmental regulation requires the Agencies to obtain written Assurance Agreements from all recipients applying for Federal financial assistance, and to assure that the current agreements are maintained, reviewed, and monitored.	• Provide consistent, standard operating guidelines on Assurance Agreements and the regulations that govern them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall findings regarding FS Regions Two and Three, the Team has determined that FS is in non-compliance with many CR program requirements and responsibilities.

Many FS management officials and employees were unaware of the basic CR requirement to include the non-discrimination statement in the program brochures and contracts. The inconsistent use of the non-discrimination statement on its brochures and other public documents violates Departmental regulations that require all public documents include the non-discrimination statement.

During the interviews with FS management officials, employees and program participants, it was apparent that effective CR training is lacking in the different regional and district areas. For example, the lack of definitive responses from both employees and program participants, regarding CR training, shows training is not reviewed or regarded as an essential performance responsibility or obligation. Both management and non-management employees were unable to differentiate between CR and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training. More troubling was the disclosure by management officials that they had not received CR training in several years. It is essential that FS provide effective CR training to all employees to include conducting effective outreach methods; improving LEP guidance; providing reasonable accommodation; and ensuring equal opportunity in the delivery of program services for all participants. Additionally, FS should develop and implement a 3-year CR training plan for both employees and program participants.

The Agency's outreach efforts were minimal or non-existent. Public notification and outreach efforts to program participants were limited to a couple of programs with two local colleges. Based on interviews with program participants and the focus group, many felt FS omits them from the decision-making process when changes are implemented in the grazing program. For instance, many program participants pointed out that at the beginning of each grazing season, FS representatives are required to meet with them to discuss the Annual Operating Instruction (AOI). Instead of the process being a collaborative effort, the Team was repeatedly told FS staff prepares the AOI and tells the program participant "to take it or leave it" with little or no further discussion on the matter. The Team was further informed that the AOI is arbitrarily changed each year regarding the allotment size. As a result, this practice delays the entry dates and reduces the grazing period, thereby causing a loss of money for the program participant.

There were no LEP initiatives to provide outreach to the communities where English is a second language. FS must take reasonable steps to ensure LEP individuals receive the language necessary for meaningful access to USDA programs and activities. For example, the special use and grazing permits were written in English, but not translated in Spanish, which shows that neither the Regional Offices, nor Headquarters are serious about LEP services. The lack of required resources for LEP individuals does not support USDA's policy for ensuring equal access to FS programs. FS must improve its relationship and communications with the Hispanic program participants by providing them the requisite LEP services, technical assistance and outreach services to engage them fully and openly.

FS has no system in place for program management officials or employees to collect program participant data according to race, color, and national origin. This information would improve

the operation of the program; help design additional opportunities for program participation; monitor adherence to laws that require equal access for eligible persons; and develop effective compliance reviews of programs and participants. Many of the program participants raised concerns of discriminatory treatment towards minority participants, resulting in many of them having their grazing permits either terminated or suspended. It is essential that FS develop data collection guidelines and procedures to address the population of program participants.

The interpretation and understanding of the Assurance Agreements by program participants appears to be inconsistent. Many of the FS program staff did not clearly understand the process, nor could they provide documentation of office policies or procedures. Most program participants were unaware of their Federally assisted CR responsibilities. Therefore, FS management and program officials should provide program participants with consistent and standard operating guidelines on the FSH, FSM, Assurance Agreements, and current governing regulations.

Many of the findings in this report reflect the lack of CR monitoring by both FS Regional Offices and Headquarters. Although FS stated CR compliance reviews have been previously conducted, there was no definitive evidence provided to support the implementation of any substantial reviews.

Finally, there remains a critical need to emphasize and strengthen CR training and outreach initiatives so that both management and staff can carry out their duties more efficiently, both within and outside the organization, to address the disparities and barriers regarding program delivery to all program participants. The findings of this report will be alleviated and/or improved, if FS diligently adheres to CR laws and regulations including LFP; and updates and consistently implement its regulations, policies and procedures, as mandated.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

FS must develop a detailed Corrective Action Plan (CAP) within 60 days of receipt of this Report. The plan must include timeframes for completion and identification of the responsible person for implementation of the actions. The plan also must include any progress made in these areas since the review. The CAP should be sent to:

Department of Agriculture
Office of Compliance, Policy and Training
Attention: Geraldine Herring, Chief
Compliance Division
300 7th Street, SW, Room 620
Washington, D.C. 20024
Facsimile: (202) 690-2345

APPENDIX A

**Demographics for Colorado:
National Forest and Ranger Districts Reviewed**

State of Colorado

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
Colorado	20.4%	79.6%	70.3%	3.7%	0.6%	2.7%	0.1%	0.2%	2.1%	12.5%	8.7%

**Durango, Colorado
(San Juan National Forest)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
Durango, New Mexico	12.28%	87.72%	85.12%	0.59%	0.32%	0.63%	0.04%	4.09%	3.00%	7.30%	11.20%

**Bayfield, Colorado
(Columbine Ranger District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
Bayfield, Colorado	13.24%	86.76%	88.43%	.21%	4.07%	.26%	.04%	3.26%	3.73%	5.60%	2.90%

**Pagosa Springs, Colorado
(Pagosa Ranger District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
Pagosa Springs, Colorado	41.34%	58.66%	70.56%	.59%	2.87%	.29%	.12%	21.31%	4.40%	8.26%	11.90%

**Dolores, Colorado
(Dolores Ranger District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Dolores, Colorado</i>	10.90%	89.10%	90.38%	.32%	2.14%	.11%	.21%	3.10%	3.74	12.40%	16.30%

**Demographics for New Mexico:
National Forests and Ranger Districts Reviewed**

State of New Mexico

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>New Mexico</i>	45.9%	54.1%	72.0%	2.0%	9.3%	1.3%	0.1%	12.3%	3.0%	19%	14.4%

**Taos, New Mexico
(Carson National Forest)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Taos, New Mexico</i>	56.10%	44.90%	88.30%	.80%	7.30%	.90%	.10%	.00%	2.60%	21.50%	23.10%

**Bloomfield, New Mexico
(Jicarilla Ranger District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Bloomfield, New Mexico</i>	31.88%	68.31%	67.32%	62%	18.27%	.44%	.02%	9.81%	3.51%	24.80 %	20.90%

**Albuquerque, New Mexico
(Cibola National Forest, Southwest Region)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Albuquerque, New Mexico</i>	46.73%	53.27%	69.72%	3.29%	4.60%	2.65%	.11%	15.03%	4.61%	16.60%	13.50%

**Grants, New Mexico
(Grants Mt. Taylor District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Grants, New Mexico</i>	80.65%	49.35%	75.79%	.74%	1.48%	.37%	0.00%	18.30%	3.33%	16.60%	15.10%

**Tijeras, New Mexico
(Sandia Ranger District)**

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Island alone	Some other race	Two or more races	People Below Poverty	Families below poverty
<i>Tijeras, New Mexico</i>	52.08%	47.92%	57.43%	1.73%	16.91%	.85%	.22%	18.53%	4.33%	18.72%	17.27%

SUMMARY OF MY NOTES ON TELECONFERENCE WITH NORTHERN NEW MEXICO STOCKMAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERS – JUNE 11, 2013

Members attending were from 1) Espanola District, NM; 2) El Rito Ranger District, NM; 3) La Coyote Ranger District, NM; 4) Canjilon Ranger District, NM; and 4) Pagosa Ranger District, CO. They all have grazing allotments and raise cattle. Grazing permittees.

The Northern New Mexico Stockman Association was founded in 1990 to protect grazing rights of stock (cattle) owners.

Major concerns raised by the attendees who say that the following are only the tip of the iceberg:

1. Difficulty with Forest Service (FS) when selling grazing rights and transfers must be made
2. FS threatens us if we don't abide by their rules. FS is supposed to meet with us, but their attitude is "take it or leave it!"
3. FS has unilateral authority. No due process. We don't have input. "If you don't sign, you don't graze."
4. We must pay for environmental studies FS cooks up and this is to put us out of business.
5. FS shortens the grazing season without input from us
6. FS brings in people from other parts of the country to deal with issues of grazing about which they know nothing.
7. FS has its own style of management and doesn't listen to ranchers. We are under constant threat and it's always, "My way or the highway!"
8. In Rio Arriba, they terrorize our communities and some have turned into ghost towns.
9. FS retaliates against us by reducing or suspending our permits when we stand up for your rights.
10. FS puts fences around our allotments and water thus forcing our cattle to go long distances to water.
11. A fifth generation permittee Chacon accuses the FS of "treating him badly and because FS personnel don't know our system, they do injustices to us."
12. "FS orders us around when all what we want is to protect our rights."
13. FS terrorizes our people who go to pick herbs or collect wood in the forests by not allowing us to engage in these activities. They are constantly patrolling the forest.
14. FS manages the ranches in this way because they know we are poor and can't defend ourselves. Our appeals for justice don't go anywhere. (Compares FS to the Nazis and their Gestapo tactics)
15. People here are poor because BLM and FSW have gradually been taking our lands away.
16. FS conspires with environmentalist groups to get our ranchers out of business and destroy our way of life. FS really doesn't take care of the lands.
17. FS uses intimidation, constant threats, discrimination, and retaliation in their dealings with the ranchers.

18. Women don't stand a chance with the FS. One woman attendee said that she owns a large allotment and during a recent drought FS asked her to get her cattle out of the forest although no other rancher was told to do so. She said she paid her full permit,
19. FS makes arbitrary decisions. Most FS upper management people are white and they get their Hispanic employees to whip and pressure us to give up our lands. FS takes our water and lands to get rid of us.
20. FS takes wood collectors to federal courts in Albuquerque where they don't stand chance because they are poor and don't know how to defend themselves.
21. Under the Treaty (Guadalupe), water is free, but FS is not taking care of the woods.
22. There is no outreach and no communication with the ranchers. All they do is work in offices and drive around in their cars.
23. One permittee from El Rito said he got out of the ranching business because of El Rito's District management of permittees. An FS supervisor (Buck Sanchez) would never cooperate with the ranchers.
24. FS never attempts to do impact studies on small ranchers and frequent change in FS personnel makes it difficult to deal with them. "Everyone has failed to help us."
25. Dave Sanchez? said that FS has not demonstrated their commitment to civil rights. "The civil rights of our people have been violated."
26. Most Hispanic ranchers don't speak English well, but FS doesn't do any outreach nor do they have any LEP and other language access materials to share with us.

Recommendations:

1. Make FS understand that they are not the police. Don't make us prisoners in our own homes. FS wants to attend only to the rich folks.
2. FS hasn't recognized the grazing rights of the ranchers – fifteen generations of Indians and Hispanics. They must do so.
3. FS should insert directives in 2012 rules to prevent forcing grazers to sign contracts???
4. Because of our sense that it is futile to appeal anything, an independent board should be created to look into these matters.
5. Environmental impact studies should be conducted on land and local communities.
6. We are now recognized as a historic heritage site reducing us to mere museum pieces. FS should recognize that we are the best stewards of the land.