

## **SUU Mountain Ranch Resource Management Plan (RMP)** ***Desired Condition Statements***

Crafted 22 January 2009 by the Mountain Ranch Resource Advisory Council (RAC)

### **ACCESS & ADMINISTRATION**

- Resource management decisions are holistic and not driven by singular resource or issue.
- University as well as external and partner funds are found and utilized to provide for the implementation of the Resource Management Plan (RMP).
- Staff is hired to manage the RAC, RMP implementation, and other Mountain Ranch activities.
- SUU gains access to and management—if not actual ownership—of USU parcel.
- Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and RMP activities complement, if not assist in improving, existing facilities.
- RMP is well informed and implementable and partners on and off campus are an integral part of assisting the RAC to implement the RMP.
- Access and use is increased with a focus on serving the SUU community through engagement with “a natural place.”
- Mountain Ranch and RAC are a cornerstone of the University’s Outdoor Initiative.
- Use of Ranch promotes land stewardship through education.
- Education is a focal point for all management activities.
- Ranch boundary will be clearly marked and fenced around perimeter (where possible).
- Acceptable uses across the property are marked by signage.
- Property will not be sold!

### **ACADEMIC & RESEARCH**

- All academic units on campus know about the Ranch and its resources and all are given the opportunity to access it for academic and research purposes.
- Academic use is active and consistent with other RMP activities & uses.
- College of Science units & programs are enhanced by RMP & RAC activities.
- SUU Cedar Mountain Science Camp is enhanced by RMP & RAC activities.

- Non-SUU partners are provided the opportunity to access and use the Ranch for academic and research purposes that complement SUU plans, interests, and uses.
- Cooperative research opportunities with other agencies & institutions that are consistent with RMP activities & uses are encouraged.
- Opportunities for externally-funded research activities consistent with the RMP are encouraged.
- Long term academic facility(ies), such as a field camp or research station, is considered.

## **FOREST**

- Recent logging activities and resulting “clean-up” is finalized before any further active management occurs.
- A mutually beneficial formal relationship with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (DFFSL) for a “demonstration forest” is achieved. Demonstration forest activities provide benefit to SUU, DFFSL, the public, and other academic & government entities.
- Regularly implement progressive forest management practices, which complement other RMP uses and activities, to support the objectives of a “demonstration forest.”
- The Mountain Ranch is a destination and model for agency partners to display and see forest management practices.
- Forest management is financed through funds from proactive partnerships and aggressive grant writing.
- Manage for aspen regeneration and maintenance/health, where appropriate, with full stocking and productive grass/forb understory.
- Manage for species diversity (over and understory).
- Reduced risk of catastrophic wildfire, particularly minimizing risk to existing facilities and infrastructure.
- Fire is reintroduced as a management tool.
- Wildlife is valued and accounted for in planning and management decisions.
- Adjacent property owners are included in a Community Wildfire Protection Planning process.
- All stands are in low/moderate risk categories for major forest health issues including Douglas Fir beetle, Fir Engraver beetle, Ips beetle and mistletoe.
- All forest management activities will be in accordance with the RMP’s Forest Stewardship Plan, which is signed by University officials, DFFSL’s Area Forester and other necessary State staff.
- Forest management activities will enhance wildlife habitat & livestock forage and reduce wildfire and insect risk, with any revenue from management activities reinvested into the Mountain Ranch property.
- All stands will be in Forest Resource Condition Class (FRCC) I or II.
- Fuel breaks are established to protect neighboring properties.

## **RANGE/GRAZING & DEVELOPMENTS**

- RAC will continually strive for improvement of range quality and ability to minimize/control livestock impact (water development, fencing, erosion control, access control, grazing plant types, etc.).
- Thriving sheep program that is revenue generating and self-supporting (even profit generating). Any revenue generated is reinvested into sheep program and ranch.
- Maintenance and improvements of range and associated infrastructure are funded by sheep program revenues and proactive partnerships with agency and non-profit partners. (Positively expand the pot of available funds!)
- Progressive herd management is practiced and recognized as a model.
- Mountain Ranch's "healthy" range condition is recognized as a model of exemplary management.
- Water and riparian systems across the landscape are prioritized, restored, and enhanced;
- Wildlife is valued and accounted for in range planning and management.
- Academic Agriculture Program and sheep program are mutually beneficial and actively lend to the other's success. Both take full advantage of ranch.
- All cattle guards and pasture fencing are maintained as necessary and funding is available to do so.
- Range management complies with the RMP's grazing management plan.
- Remember and incorporate the history and original purpose of the Mountain Ranch: academic use & benefits and sheep program.

## **RECREATION**

- Appropriate recreational opportunities are created across the "Recreation Opportunity Spectrum" (ROS) to serve the SUU community.
- Trespass recreation is managed/controlled.
- Risk Management and liability issues are understood and incorporated.
- SUU-affiliated recreation use (e.g. ORPT, SUU Outdoors, etc.) is prioritized over non-SUU activities.
- Maintain Blowhard Trail through the ranch.
- All existing trails and other recreation opportunities, along with other potential recreational opportunities, are identified and mapped.
- Access to and use of existing main dirt road is clarified with private property owners and USDA Forest Service. Road is maintained with partners for optimal and appropriate access and use.
- Recreation use is managed to not interfere with other priority uses (e.g., academic, grazing, stewardship).
- Recreation opportunities created are maintained (trails, roads, gates, climbing routes, etc.).
- Nature and exercise trails behind Mountain Center are restored/enhanced.
- Exercise caution regarding over-use.