

For: State and County Offices

New Grazing Allotment Policy

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

Current Federal Regulations (7 CFR Part 718) prohibit the combination of Federal and State land with privately owned land into the same tract or farm. Current tract and common land unit (CLU) policy requires common ownership (3-CM and 8-CM) across a tract and/or CLU. In addition, tracts, farm numbers, and acreages in FSA’s Geographic Information System (GIS) must match those in the Farm Records System (FRS).

These current regulations and policies are problematic for grazing allotments in the western United States. Many of these grazing allotments consist of multiple owners (Federal, State, and private) and multiple permittees within the same allotment. Many areas consist of open grazing or common use grazing allotments with no physical or visible ownership lines within the allotment. Many grazing allotments consist of checkerboard ownership patterns and the ownership boundaries are **not** physically present or visible. Current policy requires that all ownership boundaries are to be digitized in the CLU layer. Not only is this impractical, it would require unnecessary time and resources to be used for a future GIS-based acreage reporting solution.

The new policy and procedure provided in this notice applies only to grazing allotments/rangeland in the western United States. The policy changes in this notice address:

- accommodating grazing permits in FRS
- reporting acreage on acres that are grazed randomly by multiple permittees
- delineating nonexistent boundaries on the CLU layer.

Disposal Date	Distribution
May 1, 2009	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

1 Overview (Continued)

B Purpose

This notice provides new policy and procedure about grazing allotments as they relate to:

- farm, tract, and CLU
- GIS
- FRS
- GIS/FRS reconciliation
- acreage reporting.

2 Farm, Tract, CLU, and GIS

A Farm, Tract, and CLU Policy

Federal, State, and privately owned land shall now be combined into single farms, tracts, and CLU's based on grazing allotments by county. Individual grazing allotments in a county shall consist of 1 farm, 1 tract, and one CLU regardless of ownership of the land. If an allotment spans multiple counties, the allotment shall be split into a separate farm, tract, and CLU in each county.

Note: Any area or areas within a grazing allotment "fenced out" shall be a separate tract and a separate farm.

B CLU Digitizing Policy

In the CLU layer, grazing allotments must be present, but will be one farm, one tract, and one CLU per county. Individual ownership boundaries within grazing allotments do **not** need to be digitized with the exception of "fenced out" areas. Any "fenced out" land needs to be digitized and assigned a separate farm/tract/CLU number. If an allotment spans multiple counties, the allotment shall be split into a separate farm, tract, and CLU in each county.

C Digitizing Grazing Allotments That Do Not Currently Exist in CLU

Grazing allotments that do **not** currently exist in a county's CLU layer shall be digitized in either of the following ways:

- digitize the entire allotment by hand using the ArcGIS CLU Maintenance Tool editing tools

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2 Farm, Tract, CLU, and GIS (Continued)

C Digitizing Grazing Allotments That Do Not Currently Exist in CLU (Continued)

- merge pre-existing allotment layers into each county’s CLU layer by following this table.

Note: This option shall **only** be done by the State GIS specialist.

Step	Action
1	Gather various available allotment layers, such as BLM, Forest Service, State, etc., that exist for each county.
2	If the allotment layers are only available at the State level, clip each layer to a county boundary file.
3	Fix any topology issues, such as overlaps, that exist between allotment layers and the ArcSDE CLU layer. In some cases, allotment acreages will be affected. Existing CLU’s should not be changed unless they are incorrect.
4	If desired, combine the cleaned allotment layers into 1 layer.
5	In the ArcGIS CLU Maintenance Tool, use the merge tool on the Utilities Toolbar to add the allotment data into the ArcSDE CLU layer. If step 4 was: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• completed, the merge tool will need to be used only once• not completed, repeat step 5 until each allotment layer has been merged into CLU. <p>Note: It is possible to keep the allotment name or number in most cases, if desired.</p>

D Grazing Allotments That Currently Exist in CLU

If grazing allotments are already drawn in the CLU layer, State and County Offices may:

- choose to delete them and follow subparagraph C
- continue to use what has already been digitized if the acreages are correct.

If nonvisible ownership lines have been digitized, such as checkerboard ownership patterns, all the polygons within one allotment shall be merged into one CLU using the merge polygon tool on the Maintenance Toolbar in the ArcGIS CLU Maintenance Tool.

3 Farm Records and Reconciliation

A Farm Constitution

Currently, grazing allotments in FRS are most likely split into several farms and tracts per county based on ownership. Farms and tracts existing within the same grazing allotment per county shall be combined into 1 tract and 1 farm according to 2-CM. However, if an allotment spans multiple counties, the allotment shall be split into a separate farm, tract, and CLU in each county.

Exception: Any areas within a grazing allotment “fenced out” shall be a separate farm and tract.

B Owner/Operator/Other Producer Policy

All owners of land in the county within a grazing allotment in one farm, one tract, and one CLU shall be recorded as owners in FRS. The operator of the grazing allotment farm shall meet the definition of an operator according to 3-CM. All other producers associated with the grazing allotment farm shall be recorded as other producers on the farm.

C GIS/FRS Reconciliation

The farm and tract acreage for each grazing allotment in FRS must match the GIS-calculated acres. The grazing allotments in GIS must be attributed with the correct farm and tract numbers as recorded in FRS.

4 Calculating Acreage Based on Animal Units (AU's) and Acreage Reporting

A Determining Each Permittee's Acreage on an Allotment

Each permittee will have a 100 percent share in a certain amount of acreage within the grazing allotment.

If each permittee's acreage is **not** known, the permittee's AU's must be used to calculate each permittee's acreage.

Divide each individual permittee's AU's by the total number of allotted AU's on the permit to calculate each permittee's percentage share of the total allotted AU's on the permit.

Multiply each permittee's percentage share of the total allotted AU's on the permit by the total number of acres in the grazing allotment to calculate the number of permittee's allotted acres in the allotment.

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4 Calculating Acreage Based on Animal Units (AU's) and Acreage Reporting (Continued)

B Example

A grazing allotment consists of 40,000 acres and is leased to 40 permittees. Each permittee is allotted 100 AU's.

$40 \text{ permittees} \times 100 \text{ AU's/permittee} = 4,000 \text{ total AU's allotted in this particular allotment}$

$100 \text{ AU's} \div 4,000 \text{ AU's} = .0250$

$0.0250 \times 40,000 \text{ acres} = \mathbf{1,000 \text{ acres}}$

In this example, since all permittees have 100 AU's, each permittee has a 100 percent share of 1,000 acres.

If the permittees have different allotted AU's, use these calculations to determine each permittee's acreage with a 100 percent share. The sum of all the permittees' individually allotted acreages must equal the total acreage of the entire allotment.

C Loading Acreage/Shares on FSA-578

The acreage calculated for each permittee identified on the permit must be loaded on FSA-578 with 100 percent share. During the acreage reporting process, a subfield or subfields shall be added for each individual permittee to allow appropriate shares to be allotted accordingly.

5 Action

A County Office Action

County Offices shall:

- follow the contents of this notice when dealing with grazing allotments in western States
- adjust any and all existing records or data about grazing allotments following the contents of this notice
- contact their appropriate State specialists with questions or concerns about this notice.

5 Action (Continued)

B State Office Action

State Offices shall:

- ensure that County Offices are made aware of the contents of this notice
- ensure that County Offices update existing records according to the contents of this notice
- contact the appropriate National Office contact, as listed in subparagraph C, with any questions or concerns about this notice.

C National Office Contacts

For:

- calculating acreage, contact Scotty Abbott at either of the following:
 - e-mail at **scotty.abbott@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-7997
- acreage reporting, contact Jantrice Williams at either of the following:
 - e-mail at **jantrice.williams@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-3637
- for farm/tract records, contact Ginny Haynes at either of the following:
 - e-mail at **ginny.haynes@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-690-2798
- GIS, contact either of the following:
 - Dan Culli at either of the following:
 - e-mail at **daniel.culli@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-690-1942
 - Todd Anderson at either of the following:
 - e-mail at **todd.anderson@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-9106.