

SENATE FILE NO. SF0007

Rangeland health assessments.

Sponsored by: Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands
and Water Resources Interim Committee

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to agriculture; creating the rangeland
2 health assessment program; providing for rangeland health
3 assessments; requiring matching funding; granting
4 rulemaking authority; making conforming amendments;
5 providing an appropriation; and providing for an effective
6 date.

7

8 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

9

10 **Section 1.** W.S. 11-2-207 is created to read:

11

12 **11-2-207. Rangeland health assessments.**

13

14 (a) The rangeland health assessment program is hereby
15 created. The director shall provide for the cooperation
16 and participation with the University of Wyoming, state

1 agencies, county governments, federal agencies and private
2 landowners in the assessment of the condition of the health
3 of Wyoming grazing lands. The rangeland health program
4 shall include, but not be limited to:

5

6 (i) The necessity for a rangeland health
7 assessment for a particular area of Wyoming grazing lands,
8 including the impact on state, federal, local and private
9 property;

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11 (ii) The rangeland health assessment shall be
12 done only with the voluntary cooperation and participation
13 of all participants, including the private landowner, the
14 state grazing lessee and the federal grazing permittee or
15 lessee;

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17 (iii) The rangeland health assessment shall be
18 conducted on federally managed lands only under a
19 memorandum of agreement with the federal land management
20 agency and with the participation of that federal land
21 management agency;

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23 (iv) The rangeland health assessment shall
24 include, as necessary, establishment of rangeland

1 monitoring, compliance with federal agency standards and
2 guidelines and participation in the incorporation of
3 assessment outcomes into any federal or state decision
4 affecting livestock grazing;

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6 (v) The rangeland health assessment shall
7 include any protections necessary for the management of
8 soil erosion and vegetation loss.

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10 (b) The director is authorized to contract with the
11 University of Wyoming and other qualified state and local
12 governmental agencies to conduct rangeland health
13 assessments as provided pursuant to subsection (a) of this
14 section. The contract shall provide for matching funds as
15 determined by the director, to conduct the rangeland health
16 assessments and to establish priorities for the
17 distribution of available funding.

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19 (c) The director is authorized to adopt rules and
20 regulations necessary to implement this section.

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22 **Section 2.** W.S. 9-4-218(a) (intro) and by creating a
23 new paragraph (vi) is amended to read:

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1 **9-4-218. Federal natural resource policy account**
2 **created; purposes.**

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4 (a) There is created an account known as the "federal
5 natural resource policy account." Funds within the account
6 may be expended by the governor on behalf of the state of
7 Wyoming and its local governments, to take any of the
8 actions specified in this subsection in response to federal
9 land, water, air, mineral and other natural resource
10 policies which may affect the tax base of the state,
11 wildlife management, state species, recreation, private
12 property rights, water rights or leasehold rights. Funds
13 also may be expended for preparing and participating in
14 environmental impact statements and environmental
15 assessments, including analysis of economic or social and
16 natural or physical environmental effects on the human
17 environment. Funds also may be expended for coordinating
18 and participating in rangeland health assessments pursuant
19 to W.S. 11-2-207. The governor may expend funds from the
20 federal natural resource policy account for:

21

22 (vi) Development of rangeland health assessments
23 in compliance with W.S. 11-2-207.

24

1 **Section 3.**

2

3 (a) There is appropriated four hundred twenty
4 thousand dollars (\$420,000.00) from the general fund to the
5 department of agriculture for the period beginning with the
6 effective date of this act and ending June 30, 2012. This
7 appropriation shall only be expended for the purpose of
8 providing for the coordination and participation by the
9 department of agriculture in rangeland health assessments
10 as follows:

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12 (i) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) to the
13 department of agriculture to develop the rangeland health
14 assessment program;

15

16 (ii) Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00)
17 to the department of agriculture to participate in and to
18 contract for rangeland health assessments;

19

20 (iii) Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00)
21 to the department of agriculture to be expended to contract
22 with the University of Wyoming to assist in the education
23 and promotion related to the coordination and participation
24 in rangeland health assessments.

1

2 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this
3 appropriation shall not be transferred or expended for any
4 other purpose and any unexpended, unobligated funds
5 remaining from this appropriation shall revert as provided
6 by law on June 30, 2012. This appropriation shall be
7 included in the department of agriculture's 2013-2014
8 standard biennial budget request.

9

10 **Section 4.** This act is effective July 1, 2010.

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(END)