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Comments: Forest Service's proposal in its Rangeland Management Directives to expand livestock grazing on public land, is problematic and should be dropped. Domestic cattle and sheep are currently authorized to graze about 8 million acres of National Forest Wilderness in the lower 48 states, mostly in critical watersheds particularly unsuited to grazing. Directing vacant allotments to be fully restocked would result in unsustainable use; if an allotment is left unused, it's likely because it's unsuitable for grazing.

Livestock grazing produces significant negative impacts to ecosystems: degraded soils, spread of invasive species, damage to native vegetation, destruction of riparian and other important habitats, reduced forage for and displacement of native wildlife, erosion, water pollution. If the Rangeland Management Directive proposes grazing, it must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and evaluate and address the negative impacts. The Directive must also ensure that the grazing permit holders compensate for the cost of environmental degradation caused by grazing, and that the cost is not passed to the public.

Given the Biden administration's goal to protect 30% of U.S. land and coastal seas by 2030, FS should reverse it's proposed expansion of grazing and seek reduce this use of public lands, by encouraging voluntary grazing permit retirement.