

Project Eligibility Requirements

Certain rangelands managed to enhance carbon storage in the soil are eligible for inclusion in the CCX Rangeland Soil Carbon Management Offsets program provided each of the following conditions are met (1-4):

1. The project takes place on rangeland, which is defined by the NRCS as:

“Land on which the historic plant community is principally native grasses, grasslike plants, forbs or shrubs suitable for grazing and browsing. In most cases, range supports native vegetation that is extensively managed through the control of livestock rather than by agronomy practices, such as fertilization, mowing, or irrigation. Rangeland also includes areas that have been seeded to introduced species (e.g., clover or crested wheatgrass) but are managed with the same methods as native range³⁴.”

2. The project is in a geographic area for which data on soil sequestration rates for rangeland are available to CCX. Figure 9.x maps these areas.

3. Project involves rangeland management practices that include use of **all** of the following tools:

- a. Light or Moderate Stocking rates;
- b. Sustainable Livestock Distribution which includes:
 - i. Rotational grazing
 - ii. Seasonal use.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Field Office Technical Guides publish guidelines for managing the controlled harvest of vegetation with grazing animals. Stocking rates and livestock distribution criteria are defined according to County and State in the NRCS “Prescribed Grazing Specification” code. In most regions Rangeland that can be classified as degraded prior to inception of the project is eligible for different crediting rates. Degraded rangeland indicators specific to soil carbon storage are listed below and include soil surface loss or degradation and heavy stocking rates (exceeding carrying capacity of project land).

4. The project owner can demonstrate that its rangeland holdings outside of the Project are sustainably managed.

Documentation of Rangeland Management Practices

Conformance with the above eligibility requirements may be documented using the following methods (to be confirmed via site visit by CCX-approved verifier):

- Photographs of project site (e.g. aerial, remote sensing)
- Ranch records of stocking rates and grazing rotation patterns
- Records from agricultural extension agents or other agencies performing a monitoring function.

³³ CCX staff are working with verification and rangeland experts to develop a full verification protocol.

³⁴ In many cases, Rangeland refers to areas in the Western part of the U.S., while the general term “Grazing Lands” is used in regions East of the Mississippi. The use of the term Rangeland in this protocol is a land use designation and not a geographic designation. Land that fits the above definition of Rangeland *may* be eligible for CCX Rangeland Soil Offsets whether it is nominally referred to as Rangeland or Grazing Land provided that appropriate crediting rates can be established.

NRCS indicators of degraded rangeland related to below-ground carbon storage

The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has established indicators of degraded rangeland that are published in *“Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health”* (U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2005). Eligibility to earn CCX Rangeland Soil Carbon Management Offsets based on restoration of degraded rangeland requires that the included rangelands must fall under the NRCS designation “Extreme” or “Moderate to Extreme” for indicators 1 and 2, and “Slight to Moderate, Moderate, Moderate to Extreme or Extreme” for indicator 3 to qualify as degraded. The applicable indicators are summarized below. A project site may qualify as degraded if any of the following indicators are present.

Indicator: Bare Ground

Indicator	Degree of Departure from Ecological Site Description and/or Ecological Reference Area(s)	
	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme
Bare Ground	Much higher than expected for the site. Bare areas are large and generally connected.	Moderate to much higher than expected for the site. Bare areas are large and occasionally connected.

Indicator: Soil Surface Loss or Degradation

Indicator	Degree of Departure from Ecological Site Description and/or Ecological Reference Area(s)	
	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme
Soil Surface Loss or Degradation	Soil surface horizon absent. Soil structure near surface is similar to, or more degraded, than that in subsurface horizons. No distinguishable difference in subsurface organic matter content.	Soil loss or degradation severe throughout site. Minimal differences in soil organic matter content and structure and subsurface layers.

Indicator: Annual Production

Indicator	Degree of Departure from Ecological Site Description and/or Ecological Reference Area(s)			
	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme	Moderate	Slight to Moderate
Annual Production	Less than 20% of potential production for the site based on recent weather.	20-40% of potential production for the site based on recent weather.	40-60% of potential production for the site based on recent weather.	60-80% of potential production for the site based on recent weather.

LRR B - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Idaho	Oregon	Washington
Ada	Baker	Adams
Bannock	Crook	Asotin
Bear Lake	Deschutes	Benton
Bingham	Gilliam	Chelan
Blaine	Jefferson	Columbia
Bonneville	Morrow	Douglas
Butte	Sherman	Franklin
Camas	Umatilla	Garfield
Canyon	Wasco	Grant
Caribou	Wheeler	Kittitas
Cassia		Klickitat
Clark		Lincoln
Elmore		Okanogan
Fremont		Spokane
Gem		Walla Walla
Gooding		Whitman
Jefferson		Yakima
Jerome		
Latah		
Lemhi		
Lewis		
Lincoln		
Madison		
Minidoka		
Nez Perce		
Payette		
Power		
Teton		
Washington		

LRR C - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

California		
Alameda	Marin	Santa Clara
Butte	Merced	Santa Cruz
Calaveras	Monterey	Solano
Colusa	Napa	Sonoma
Contra Costa	Orange	Stanislaus
Fresno	Sacramento	Sutter
Glenn	San Benito	Tehama
Kern	San Diego	Ventura
Kings	San Joaquin	Yolo
Lake	San Luis Obispo	Yuba
Los Angeles	San Mateo	
Madera	Santa Barbara	

LRR E - Counties that Qualify for Rangeland Soil Carbon Management Offsets

Colorado	Idaho	Montana
Alamosa	Adams	Beaverhead
Archuleta	Benewah	Broadwater
Boulder	Boise	Carbon
Broomfield	Bonner	Cascade
Chaffee	Boundary	Deer Lodge
Clear Creek	Clearwater	Flathead
Conejos	Custer	Gallatin
Costilla	Idaho	Glacier
Custer	Kootenai	Granite
Douglas	Shoshone	Jefferson
Eagle	Valley	Judith Basin
El Paso		Lake
Fremont		Lewis and Clark
Garfield		Lincoln
Gilpin		Madison
Grand		Meagher
Gunnison		Mineral
Hinsdale		Missoula
Huerfano		Park
Jackson		Powell
Jefferson		Ravalli
Lake		Sanders
Larimer		Silver Bow
Mineral		Stillwater
Ouray		Sweet Grass
Park		Teton
Pitkin		
Rio Grande		
Routt		
Saguache		
San Juan		
Summit		
Teller		

LRR E - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

New Mexico	Oregon	Utah
Colfax Rio Arriba Taos	Grant Union Wallowa	Cache Carbon Daggett Duchesne Morgan Rich Summit Utah Wasatch

LRR E - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Washington	Wyoming
Ferry Pend Oreille Stevens	Big Horn Hot Springs Lincoln Park Sublette Teton Uinta

LRR F - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Montana	North Dakota		South Dakota
Blaine	Adams	Ramsey	Aurora
Chouteau	Barnes	Ransom	Beadle
Daniels	Benson	Renville	Brown
Hill	Bottineau	Richland	Brule
Liberty	Burke	Rolette	Buffalo
McCone	Burleigh	Sargent	Campbell
Phillips	Cass	Sheridan	Charles Mix
Pondera	Cavalier	Sioux	Corson
Richland	Dickey	Stark	Davison
Roosevelt	Divide	Steele	Douglas
Sheridan	Dunn	Stutsman	Edmunds
Toole	Eddy	Towner	Faulk
Valley	Emmons	Trail	Hand
Wibaux	Foster	Walsh	Hughes
	Golden Valley	Ward	Hyde
	Grand Forks	Wells	Jerauld
	Grant	Williams	McPherson
	Griggs		Perkins
	Hettinger		Potter
	Kidder		Sanborn
	LaMoure		Spink
	Logan		Sully
	McHenry		Walworth
	McIntosh		Ziebach
	McKenzie		
	McLean		
	Mercer		
	Morton		
	Mountrail		
	Nelson		
	Oliver		
	Pembina		
	Pierce		

LRR G - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Colorado	Montana	Nebraska
Adams	Big Horn	Arthur
Arapahoe	Carter	Banner
Bent	Custer	Blaine
Cheyenne	Dawson	Box Butte
Crowley	Fallon	Boyd
Denver	Fergus	Brown
Elbert	Garfield	Cherry
Kiowa	Golden Valley	Dawes
Kit Carson	Musselshell	Garden
Las Animas	Petroleum	Garfield
Lincoln	Powder River	Grant
Morgan	Prairie	Holt
Otero	Rosebud	Hooker
Prowers	Treasure	Keya Paha
Pueblo	Wheatland	Kimball
Washington	Yellowstone	Knox
Weld		Logan
		Loup
		McPherson
		Morrill
		Rock
		Scotts Bluff
		Sheridan
		Sioux
		Thomas
		Wheeler

LRR G - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

New Mexico	North Dakota	South Dakota	Wyoming
Chaves De Baca Guadalupe Lincoln Mora Quay San Miguel Santa Fe Torrance	Billings Bowman Slope	Bennett Butte Custer Dewey Fall River Gregory Haakon Harding Jackson Jones Lawrence Lyman Meade Mellette Pennington Shannon Stanley Todd Tripp	Campbell Converse Crook Goshen Johnson Laramie Niobrara Platte Sheridan Weston

LRR H - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Colorado	Kansas	
Baca	Barber	McPherson
Logan	Barton	Meade
Phillips	Butler	Mitchell
Sedgwick	Chase	Morris
Yuma	Cheyenne	Morton
	Clark	Ness
	Clay	Norton
	Cloud	Osage
	Comanche	Osborne
	Cowley	Ottawa
	Decatur	Pawnee
	Dickinson	Phillips
	Edwards	Pottawatomie
	Elk	Pratt
	Ellis	Rawlins
	Ellsworth	Reno
	Finney	Republic
	Ford	Rice
	Geary	Riley
	Gove	Rooks
	Graham	Rush
	Grant	Russell
	Gray	Saline
	Greeley	Scott
	Greenwood	Sedgwick
	Hamilton	Seward
	Harper	Sheridan
	Harvey	Sherman
	Haskell	Smith
	Hodgeman	Stafford
	Jewell	Stanton
	Kearny	Stevens
	Kingman	Sumner
	Kiowa	Thomas
	Lane	Trego
	Lincoln	Wabaunsee
	Logan	Wallace
	Marion	Washington
	Marshall	Wichita

LRR H - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Nebraska	New Mexico	Oklahoma
Adams	Curry	Alfalfa
Buffalo	Harding	Beaver
Butler	Lea	Beckham
Chase	Roosevelt	Blaine
Cheyenne	Union	Caddo
Clay		Canadian
Custer		Cimarron
Dawson		Cleveland
Deuel		Comanche
Dundy		Cotton
Fillmore		Custer
Franklin		Dewey
Frontier		Ellis
Furnas		Garfield
Gosper		Grant
Greeley		Greer
Hall		Harmon
Hamilton		Harper
Harlan		Jackson
Hayes		Jefferson
Hitchcock		Kay
Howard		Kingfisher
Jefferson		Kiowa
Kearney		Logan
Keith		Major
Lincoln		McClain
Merrick		Noble
Nuckolls		Oklahoma
Perkins		Pawnee
Phelps		Payne
Polk		Roger Mills
Red Willow		Texas
Saline		Tillman
Seward		Washita
Sherman		Woods
Thayer		Woodward
Valley		
Webster		
York		

LRR H - Counties that Qualify for Exchange Soil Offsets for Rangeland Management

Texas	
Andrews	Hutchinson
Archer	Jack
Armstrong	Jones
Bailey	Kent
Baylor	King
Borden	Knox
Briscoe	Lamb
Brown	Lipscomb
Callahan	Lubbock
Carson	Lynn
Castro	Martin
Childress	Midland
Clay	Mitchell
Cochran	Montague
Coke	Moore
Coleman	Motley
Collingsworth	Nolan
Concho	Ochiltree
Cottle	Oldham
Crosby	Palo Pinto
Dallam	Parmer
Dawson	Potter
Deaf Smith	Randall
Dickens	Roberts
Donley	Runnels
Ector	Scurry
Fisher	Shackelford
Floyd	Sherman
Foard	Stephens
Gaines	Stonewall
Garza	Swisher
Gray	Taylor
Hale	Terry
Hall	Throckmorton
Hansford	Tom Green
Hardeman	Wheeler
Hartley	Wichita
Haskell	Wilbarger
Hemphill	Yoakum
Hockley	Young
Howard	