

Biennial Monitoring of Active Cattle and/or Sheep Grazing Allotments/Leases - 2024 Within Primary Conservation Area (PCA) of the NCDE

The following tables provide the baseline information for cattle and/or sheep allotments within the Primary Conservation Area (PCA). Table 1 provides the baseline information as of 2022 (the last monitoring report). Table 2 provides the baseline information as of 2024. **Black bold text with yellow highlight** in Table 2 identifies updates/changes from 2022 values (presented in Table 1). Updates/changes are explained for individual agency/units after the tables.

For clarification purposes, Federal agencies use the word “allotment”, MT Dept of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) and Blackfoot Tribe use the word “lease”, MT Dept. Fish, Wildlife & Parks uses “cooperative land use agreements”, and Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) uses “range units”. For the purposes of this reporting, “allotments/leases” will be used for all agencies.

Table 1. Grazing Allotments/Leases for 2022.

Land Manager	# of Allotments / Leases ¹	Type	Acres of Allotments / Leases ²	# of Allotments / Leases with Active Permittees	AUMs ³	Additional Information
Flathead NF	3	Cattle	33,460	3	497	
Helena-Lewis & Clark NF	26	Cattle	199,688	18	7,983	Five allotments are vacant and 3 allotments do not have active permittees. Updated information on acres for one allotment.
Helena-Lewis & Clark NF	1	Sheep	8,552	1	119	
Kootenai NF	3	Cattle	42,386	1	211	Updated information on AUMs
Lolo NF	1	Cattle	2,040	1	35	
Glacier NP	0	Na	0	0	0	GNP does not permit commercial livestock grazing allotments within the park boundary.
BLM Butte FO	8	Cattle	4,967	7	378	One active allotment does not have a current permittee. One inactive allotment was combined into an active allotment.
BLM Lewistown FO	18	Cattle	15,532	18	1,415	In 2020, one allotment was split into two.

Land Manager	# of Allotments / Leases ¹	Type	Acres of Allotments / Leases ²	# of Allotments / Leases with Active Permittees	AUMs ³	Additional Information
BLM Missoula FO	1	Cattle	3,341	1	61	
DNRC	na	Mostly Cattle	53,482	124	15,615	More than 90% are cattle, rest are sheep.
MFWP	na	Cattle	14,080	2	1,728	Lease acres are approximate. Updated information.
Flathead IR	28	Cattle or Horses	2,984			Updated information.
Blackfeet IR						BIR is fully leased. Number of leases and acres are not available.

¹ – Number of allotments/leases that could have a permittee.

² – Acres for the entire allotment/lease, which may or may not include other land ownerships than the agency issuing the allotment/lease.

³ – Number of Animal Unit Months permitted for allotment/lease, whether or not the allotment/lease is in use or not.

Table 2. Grazing Allotments/Leases for 2024.

Land Manager	# of Allotments / Leases ¹	Type	Acres of Allotments / Leases ²	# of Allotments / Leases with Active Permittees	AUMs ³	Additional Information
Flathead NF	3	Cattle	33,460	2	471	One allotment is currently vacant.
Helena-Lewis & Clark NF	26	Cattle	199,688	17	7,330	Three allotments are vacant; and six active allotments do not have active permittees.
Helena-Lewis & Clark NF	1	Sheep	8,552	1	119	
Kootenai NF	3	Cattle	42,386	1	148	Two allotments have vacant permittees. One of the permittees took a non use year. The AUMS for 2025 will increase back to 211.
Lolo NF	1	Cattle	2,040	1	35	
Glacier NP	0	na	0	0	0	GNP does not permit commercial livestock grazing allotments within the park boundary.
BLM Butte FO	9	Cattle	4,967	7	375	Two active allotments do not have a current permittee.

Land Manager	# of Allotments / Leases ¹	Type	Acres of Allotments / Leases ²	# of Allotments / Leases with Active Permittees	AUMs ³	Additional Information
BLM Lewistown FO	17	Cattle	14,804	17	1,308	
BLM Missoula FO	1	Cattle	3,341	1	61	
DNRC	na	Mostly Cattle	52,954	124	15,663	93.7% are cattle; 6.3% are sheep
MFWP	na	Cattle	14,080	2	1,102	Lease acres are approximate.
Flathead IR		Cattle or Horses	1,991			Updated information provided.
Blackfeet IR						BIR is fully leased. Number of leases and acres are not available.

¹ – Number of allotments/leases that could have a permittee.

² – Acres for the entire allotment/lease, which may or may not include other land ownerships than the agency issuing the allotment/lease.

³ – Number of Animal Unit Months permitted for allotment/lease, whether or not the allotment/lease is in use or not.

Flathead NF – One of three allotments is vacant as of 2024. The number of AUMs has decreased from 497 to 471 as a result.

Helena-Lewis & Clark NF – From 2022, one of the allotments has become vacant. One allotment went from two to one permittees. **The baseline is 26 allotments and 199,688 acres.**

Kootenai NF – The number of AUMs has decreased from 211 to 148. One permittee took a nonuse year, thus the decrease in AUMs. As there is not a standard or guideline on number of cattle AUMs, this is an update only.

MFWP – MFWP has cooperative land use agreements. The agency does not have an agreement without an active cooperator. The cooperator's "payment" is practices that do not degrade the land. The AUMs will vary over time. AUMs have been updated with the most accurate information.

BLM Butte FO – **The baseline is 8 allotments and 4,967 acres.** The number of AUMs was incorrect in 2022, and should have been 375, and is still 375 in 2024.

Flathead IR – CS&KT provided updated information. For 2024, there are 3.11 square miles (1,991 acres) on 18 "ag" leases that are grazed and 10 range units that are currently idle.

DNRC – DNRC leases are fluid compared to federal allotments and the number will significantly vary over time. The agency does not have a lease unless it is active. As a result, only the acres, number of leases, and AUMs will be provided for reports. DNRC provided the approximate percentage of cattle leases this year.

Monitoring report completed by:

Joe Krenzelok
GIS Specialist
Flathead NF and NCDE
joseph.krenzelok@usda.gov
406-758-5206