

# Grazing Land Conservation Initiative



## What is it?

The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) is a nationwide collaborative process to improve the management and health of the Nation's grazing lands. The Initiative is organized by livestock producers, as well as conservation, scientific, and environmental organizations.

**The mission of GLCI is to provide high quality technical assistance to private landowners on a voluntary basis, and to increase the awareness of the importance of grazing land resources**

GLCI is founded on the principles of:

1. Voluntary action by those who own and manage grazing lands.
2. A respect for private property rights.

GLCI emphasizes high quality, technical assistance, expanded grazing land research, education, and a better informed public.

## Why is it important?

While private grazing lands make up nearly 34 percent of the Florida's land area; it is disappearing at an alarming rate. Between 1987 and 1997 the amount of private grazing land in Florida dropped by 15 percent.

**Privately owned grazing lands are essential to environmental, social, and economic stability.**

Sustaining these lands is critical to the health of Florida's environment and economy. These lands also provide important wildlife habitat, enhance water quality, maintain water supplies, and provide many recreational opportunities.

## Who is involved?

The Florida Grazing Lands Coalition is comprised of organizations dedicated to sustaining America's grazing land resources. The partnership is represented by:

**Florida Cattlemen's Association  
Sunshine State Milk Producers  
Society for Range Management  
Florida Farm Bureau Federation  
The Nature Conservancy  
Archbold Biologic Station  
South Florida Water Management District  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences**

## How can it help me?

Florida's Grazing Land Coalition can be effective in addressing challenges, such as:

- Developing effective strategies to address water quality concerns.
- Address air quality regulations, which threaten to limit or eliminate, prescribed burning in some areas.
- Develop and implement strategies to increase the number of qualified technical specialists in IFAS, NRCS, and other State and Federal Agencies.



Nationally the GLCI is working on the following issues:

- Restore NRCS staffing to provide more on the ground technical assistance to landowners and managers.
- Increase research in soil, water, plant, and wildlife science.
- Establish short courses for both producers and agency personnel in soil, water, plant, animal, and wildlife management.
- Provide practice-based incentive payments for conservation based on developing, implementing, and maintaining a comprehensive conservation plan over a ten-year period.
- Ensure confidentiality of private and confidential business information between the landowner and the state and federal government, not subject to open records access.

A strong working coalition can help develop strategies to address these concerns.

**A broad-based coalition can get results when a single organization may fail.**

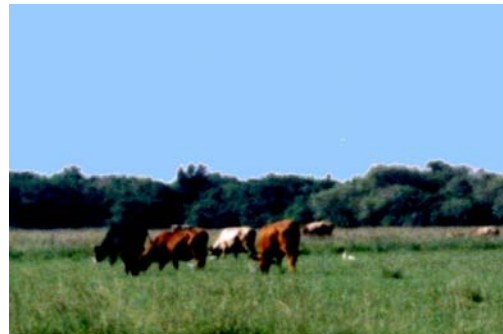
### **What is being done?**

Since it's beginning, the GLCI has been successful in persuading Congress to provide \$75 million to provide technical assistance on America's grazing lands. In addition, Congress included private grazing lands in the last Farm Bill as a result of GLCI efforts.

Last Year, over 45,000 people received technical assistance on 19 million acres across the nation. In Florida, technical assistance in conservation planning was provided on 338,547 acres of private grazing land. NRCS, UF/IFAS, Extension Service, and private land managers provided training to 550 individuals on the application of grazing management technology. This is just the beginning of what can be done.

### **What have other states done?**

In Georgia, the local coalition acquired and allocated \$114,000 in cost share funds on a project called "Grazing in Georgia for Conservation, Economic, and Livestock Production Efficiency". In Louisiana, California, and Wyoming GLCI funds were used to help the NRCS hire more grazing land specialists to provide technical assistance to grazing land owners and managers.



### **How much will it cost me?**

It will cost you nothing to support GLCI. In fact, because you are interested in the health of our Nation's grazing land you have already passed the membership test.

### **Okay, you've sold me, what now?**

Continue to support projects that foster outstanding grazing management initiatives and an appreciation of private grazing lands.

- You can show your support by contacting the leadership of your organization and express your interest in the Grazing Land Conservation Initiative.
- Ask them who your GLCI representatives are and how to contact them.
- Let your GLCI representatives know what actions are needed in Florida.

### **For more information contact:**

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