

Maricopa County Assessor's Office Internal Policy and Procedures

Title: High Density Grazing

Policy Category: Agriculture

Initiating Division: Real Property

Reviewed by: Joe Propati, Chief Appraiser

Approved by: Joe Propati

Number: RPAG-00001

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Revision:

Revision Date:

This designation of agricultural use is utilized to distinguish a ranching operation that is not able to qualify for natural grazing due to a couple of range management issues. A.S.R. 42-12151 defines High Density as "land and improvements devoted to high density use for producing commodities". The Department of Revenue has provided a more defined description. The department states High Density is, "the intense use of a relatively small area of land for the production of a high-yield crop or commodity, wherein comparatively large amounts of labor and capital are required per unit of land".

In recognizing the issue of the growth in Maricopa County and the issues of Open Range Ranching in areas where significant residential growth has occurred. The Assessor's office has established this ranching designation in order to protect the ranching business and public safety. With the rapid growth in the county, the ranching businesses have begun struggling with maintaining the acreage required for natural grazing. There are now large residential areas that have been developed which have broken up the open space for the cattle to roam in order to feed on the vegetation and access water.

The approval process for this agricultural designation is the same as any other designation. There are a few specific requirements for High Density Grazing that is not the same as natural grazing. These requirements are as follows:

The Property Owner must fence the perimeter of the property which will adequately contain the livestock within the boundaries with a minimum of 3 strand barbed wire w/metal push stakes. Also the owner must have a valid lease agreement on file by an approved high density grazing operation.

The Approved Grazing Operation must file an agricultural application in a timely manner as prescribed by law or County Assessor's policy. The operation must be an active ranching economic unit with at least a minimum of 12,800 acres in the agricultural program. The operator must have been an established grazing operation for at least 7 out of the last 10 years with a minimum of 5 years within Maricopa County. The operation must also carry minimum liability insurance coverage. The operator must also be actively in business in the approved area of the leased properties and place livestock on the parcels based on generally approved range management practices. There shall not be any complaints filed against the operation in the last three years prior to approval. Also, the operation shall provide water and feed (if required) and not allow livestock to be mistreated or malnourished. The ranching operation must provide adequate response time to any emergency or animal loose calls. The ranching operation must maintain a minimum of 40 head of cattle as defined by the Department of revenue's guidelines.

A Ranching Operation that desires to become an approved High-Density Grazing operation must come into the Assessor's Office and apply for consideration. A representative for the Agricultural Unit shall meet with the applicant and explain the approval process and other key information prior to approval.

ATTACHMENT
High Density Grazing – Internal Policy and Procedure

The following are the official Approved high Density Grazing Providers as of 6/01/06 as well as the areas by Book (and Map where applicable) that these providers have been approved to operate.

Agricultural Operator's # is in Red

Books 201 (portion) – 210 Fargo Cattle Company **445**

Books 211 – 215 Black Canyon Ranch **2415**

Books 216, 217 & 219 S&P Ranches **2417**

Books 218 & 220 Hershey Ranch **68**

Books 300 – 301 West Cactus Lane Ranch **2417**

Books 302 – 303 Dobson Family Farms **64**

Book 304 has Multiple Providers

Maps 1 – 4 West Cactus Lane Ranch **2417**

5 – 22 Hershey Ranch **68**

23 – 37 West Cactus Lane Ranch **2417**

(portion of 34) Pam Shelly **1322**

38 – 58 Two Box Ranch **68**

59 – 61 Cactus Lane Ranch **2417**

62 – 68 Pam Shelly **1322**

69 – 88 West Cactus **2417** (Slash D Ranch **2009**)

89 – 94 Pam Shelly **1322**

85/86 Mountainwood **1587** (By prior agreements only)

Books 400 – 402 Two Box Ranch **68**

Books 502, 503(portion) & 504 Butterfield Stage Ranch **2416**

Books 503(portion) & 201(portion) **2440 (Open at this time)**