

# California's Forest and Range Assessment Steering Committee

## FRASC Sustainable Rangelands (3-13-2014)

### Panelist Questions

- 1) Sustainability can be a difficult thing to define with consensus. Can you share with us your thoughts on sustainable rangeland management in California – what it looks like on the ground and for those who depend on rangelands as the source of their livelihood?
- 2) What are the biggest threats to sustaining rangelands in California? Are the primary forces economic, regulatory, or natural resource-based? How can California create an economic and regulatory environment that sustains rangelands?
- 3) If sustainability of rangelands is our goal, how will we know if current rangeland management practices are sustainable? What information can we use to assess whether range management is sustainable or not? What current efforts exist in California to assess rangeland health and sustainability? Can rangeland management in California support an effort analogous to the certification of sustainable timber management by the Forest Stewardship Council?
- 4) Past rangeland management practices have at times favored cattle production over conservation of healthy ecosystems. The consequences have been over grazed lands with diminished carbon sequestration, water quality, soil integrity, and in the end, diminished forage productivity. How is modern rangeland management conserving and restoring ecosystem services on rangelands, and how is the modern cattle industry balancing cattle production with a healthy environment?
- 5) Can conservation easements play a role in supporting the sustainability of rangelands in terms of cattle ranching as a lifestyle and rangelands as suppliers of important ecosystem benefits? How can conservation easements be structured to achieve both goals?

