

San Bruno Mountain State and County Park Conservation Grazing Pilot Program Solicitation



GENERAL INFORMATION

San Mateo County Parks (SMC Parks) is pleased to announce the opportunity for cattle operators to graze at San Bruno State and County Parks. Cattle reintroduction on the mountain will support the long-term goals of conserving and enhancing critical habitat for the federally endangered Mission blue and Callippe silverspot butterfly species, as described in the park's Habitat Conservation Plan (SBMHCP). The goal of this SBMHCP Conservation Grazing Pilot Program is to test the effectiveness of this as a tool to reduce shrub encroachment and improve grassland habitat for the butterfly species that rely on this mountain as some of the last remaining habitat available to them. Additional goals include fuel reduction for fire prevention and invasive plant management.

Since the inception of the SBMHCP in 1982, cattle grazing has been identified as an important management tool for habitat enhancement, and while cattle grazing occurred on the Mountain in the 1960s, it has not been used since due to the lack of required infrastructure & funding. However, other management options such as controlled burns, extensive mowing, and manual or chemical vegetation management have also been difficult or infeasible to use on a large scale due to the costs, steep terrain, urban interface, and other factors. Grazing has become a more critical tool for achieving the HCP's conservation mandates, which requires ongoing habitat management to support the presence of these protected butterflies.

The Conservation Grazing Pilot Program aims to reintroduce cattle grazing for a three-year trial period on the Northeast Ridge and Southeast Slope of San Bruno Mountain (see attached map). The butterflies' host plant species are currently negatively impacted by competition from non-native and invasive grasses and forbs, as well as native and non-native shrubs. Active populations of both butterflies and their host plants are found in the grassland habitat in the anticipated grazing units. Pending the results of this pilot period, more widespread and long-term implementation of grazing at San Bruno Mountain will be considered.

The San Bruno Mountain Grazing Strategy was developed by Rangeland Conservation Science in August 2023, and SMC Parks is now working to develop necessary fencing, water, and other infrastructure and begin the initial 3-year livestock grazing operation. To learn more about the Conservation Grazing Pilot Program, visit <https://www.smcgov.org/parks/conservation-grazing-pilot-san-bruno-mountain>

GRAZING UNITS

Northeast Ridge

Location: located along Guadalupe Canyon Parkway to the north and Mission Blue Drive to the south

Size: approximately 76 acres

Stocking rate on average year: approximately 111 animal unit months (AUMs)

Grazing regime: flexible, grazing likely in either winter/spring or spring/summer

Southeast Slope

Location: located northwest of Bayshore Blvd

Size: approximately 115 acres

Stocking rate on average year: approximately 157 animal unit months (AUMs)

Grazing regime: flexible, grazing likely in either winter/spring or spring/summer

The following conditions apply to both grazing units:

Infrastructure: SMC Parks staff are working to establish perimeter and interior fencing; develop water sources, water storage tanks and livestock troughs, and all related water pipelines, and other infrastructure needed for livestock grazing operations such as corrals to provide adequate access for cattle processing and shipping/receiving. While the cost of infrastructure will be covered by SMC Parks, the location, specifications, and materials used in the installation of this infrastructure will be determined in collaboration with the grazing lessee to ensure they meet grazing operation needs.

Predation: Mountain lions and coyotes have been sighted on San Bruno Mountain, though there has been no recent predation activity given the absence of livestock.

Natural resource management considerations: Vegetation at these sites include a diversity of native and non-native grass, forb, and shrub species. SMC Parks is primarily interested in using grazing management activities to limit shrub encroachment into grasslands, reduce annual grass thatch accumulations, and reduce current shrub population cover. At the same time, the HCP requires SMC Parks to maintain suitable habitat and host plants for federally endangered Mission blue and Callippe silverspot butterfly species, including several lupines (*Lupinus spp.*) and California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*). SMC Parks staff and consultants will monitor these plant populations and butterfly species to ensure grazing management is commensurate with habitat protection objectives. There are several high priority invasive exotic plants at this site, including French broom, Scotch broom, Portuguese broom, Himalayan blackberry, Klamath weed, mustard, radish, thistles, fennel, and others. The selected tenant may be asked to coordinate with District staff or contractors on management of invasive species.

LESSEE SELECTION PROCESS

SMC Parks would like to invite all interested cattle operators to a pre-bid site visit at San Bruno Mountain to scope the Northeast Ridge and Southeast Slope grazing units, discuss infrastructure designs, and other grazing operations details. Interested operators will then submit grazing proposals, and SMC Parks will select an operator for the three-year grazing license. At the conclusion of the Request for Proposal process, the selected operator will be required to sign the County's standard Grazing License agreement ("Grazing License"). The schedule below reflects anticipated lessee selection process dates.

San Bruno Mountain Pre-Bid Site Visit – October 6th and 14th 2025

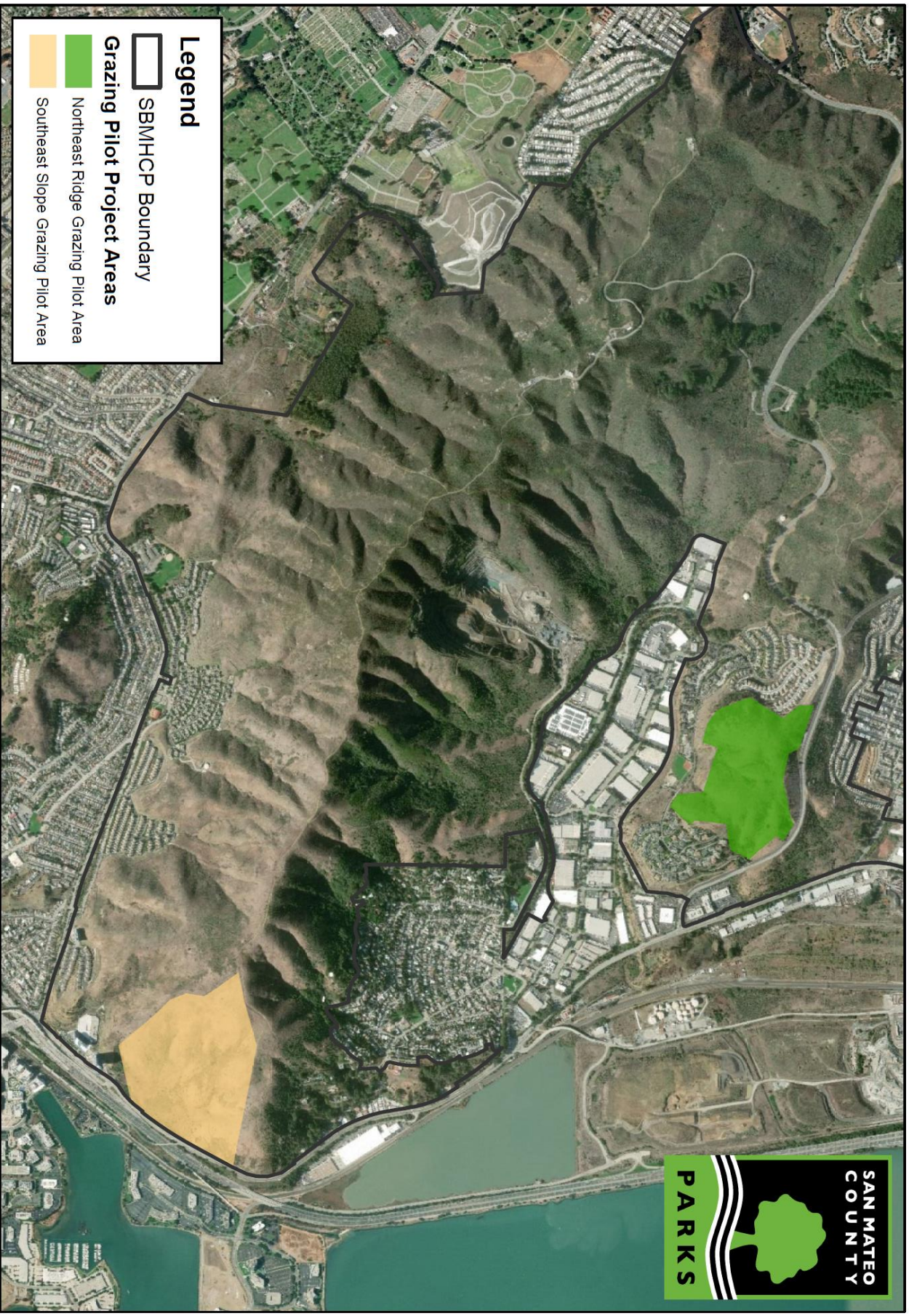
Grazing Proposal Submission Deadline – November 2025

Lessee Selection – December 2025

Finalize / Sign Grazing License – January 2026

Start Grazing Trial – March 2026

All interested grazing operators, please contact Taj Katuna, Natural Resource Specialist, via email at tkatuna@smcgov.org by Sept 30, 2025 to receive an invitation to the Pre-Bid Site Visit on October 6th or 14th. If neither of these dates work for you, please let us know and we can arrange a separate site visit.



San Bruno Mountain State and County Park: Grazing Pilot Program Areas