

A case study on grazing public land when cattle are used for vegetation management



Josh Davy – UC Farm Advisor

Leslie Roche – UC Davis

Kenneth Tate – UC Range Specialist

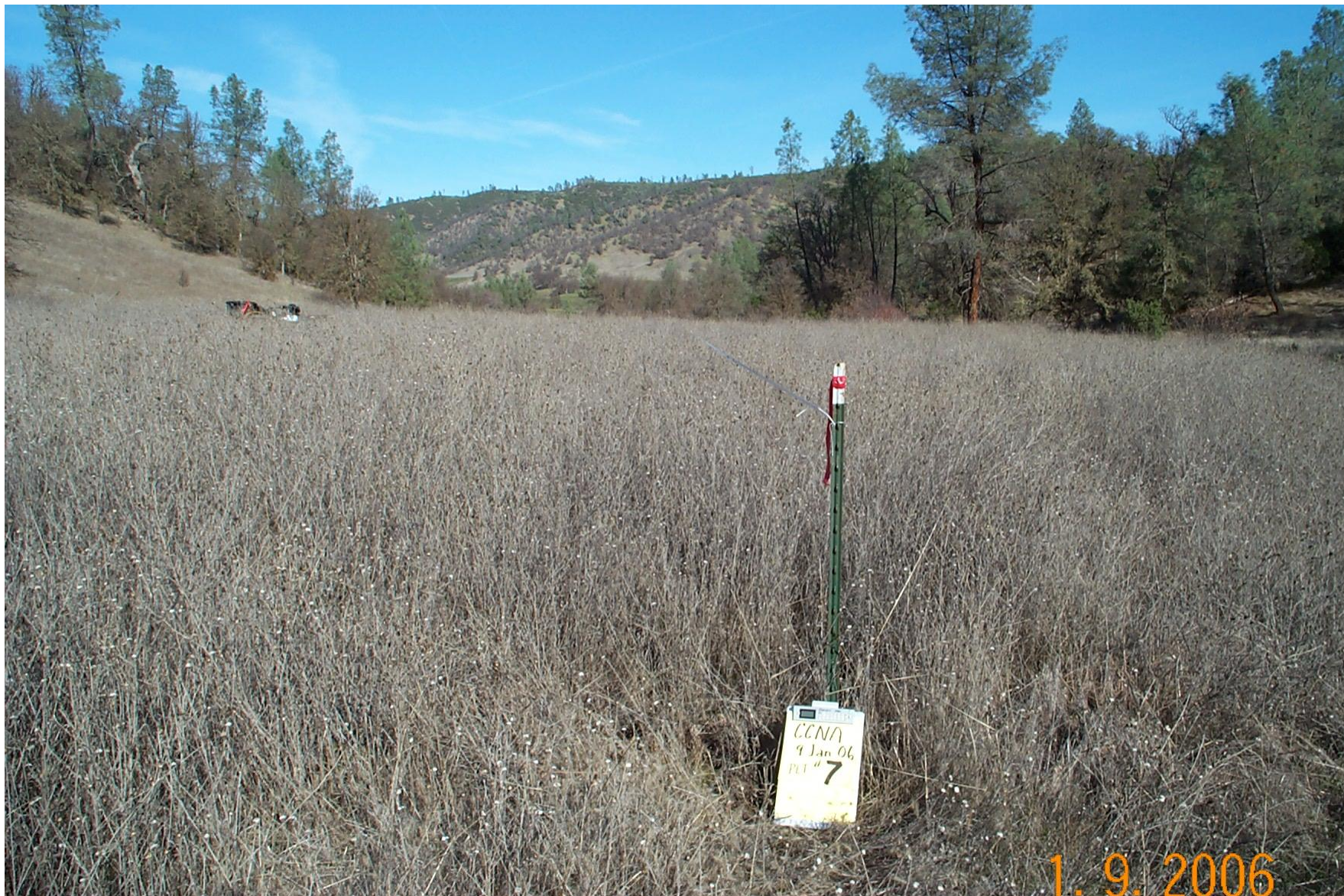
Dennis Nay - NRCS

- Purchased by BLM
 - Grazing deferred from 2001 – 2005/06



Near complete Meduahead





1. 9. 2006

Grazing begins

- Cattle brought in 2005/06
- Cattle grazed in a rotation which was a stipulation by BLM

Constraints

- Not a small plot project
- Real world factors dictated grazing practices
 - Water availability
 - Forage quality
 - Fencing contours the terrain...pasture size
 - etc



Monitoring

- Began the first season
- 2006-2011
- Continued for 6 years
- Monitored the same permanent points
 - Spring – species composition
 - Fall – RDM for utilization
- 13 different transects
- Cages placed along each transect to simulate no grazing



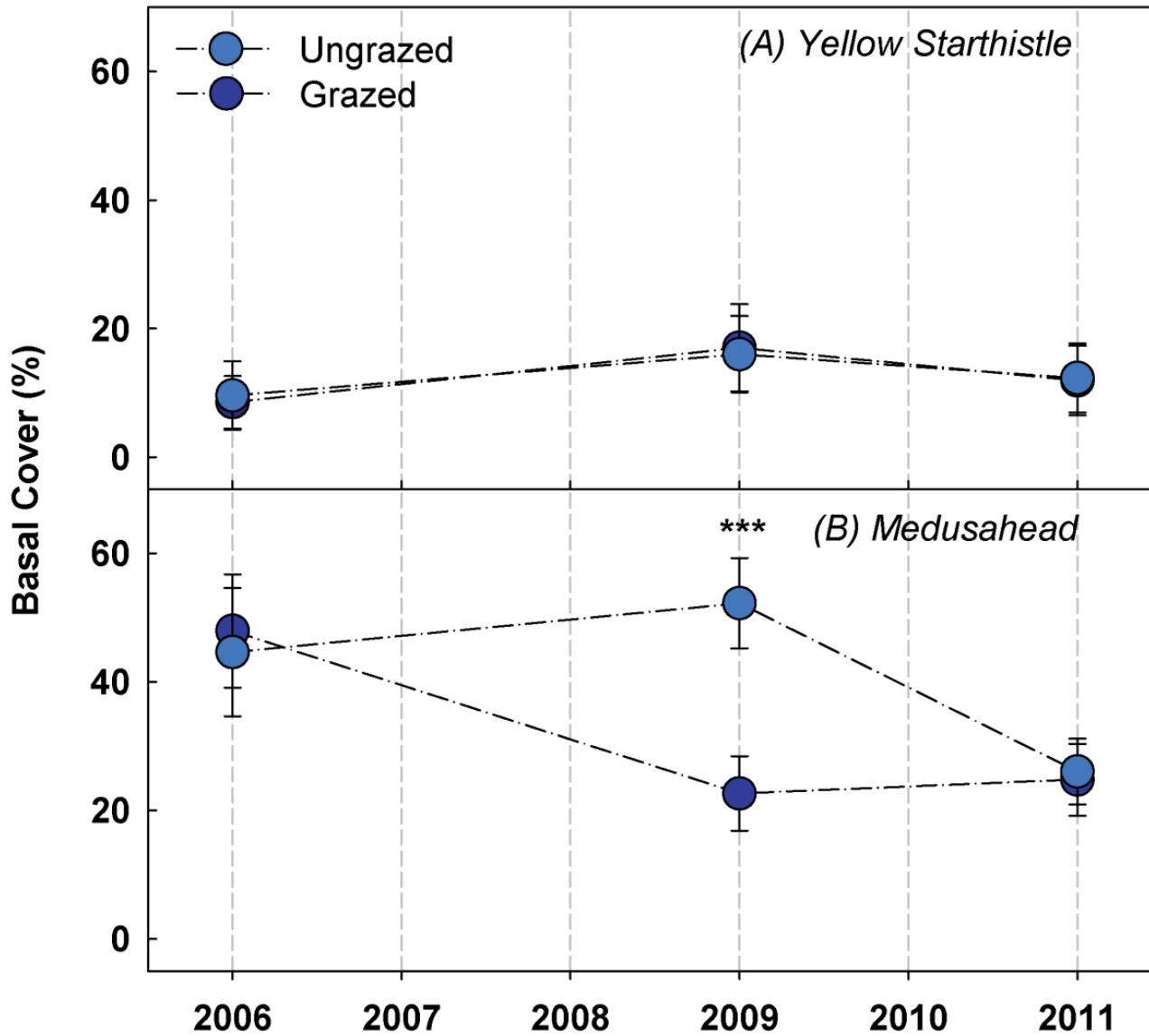
Yellow starthistle – yet no change?



After it was grazed

Before it was grazed





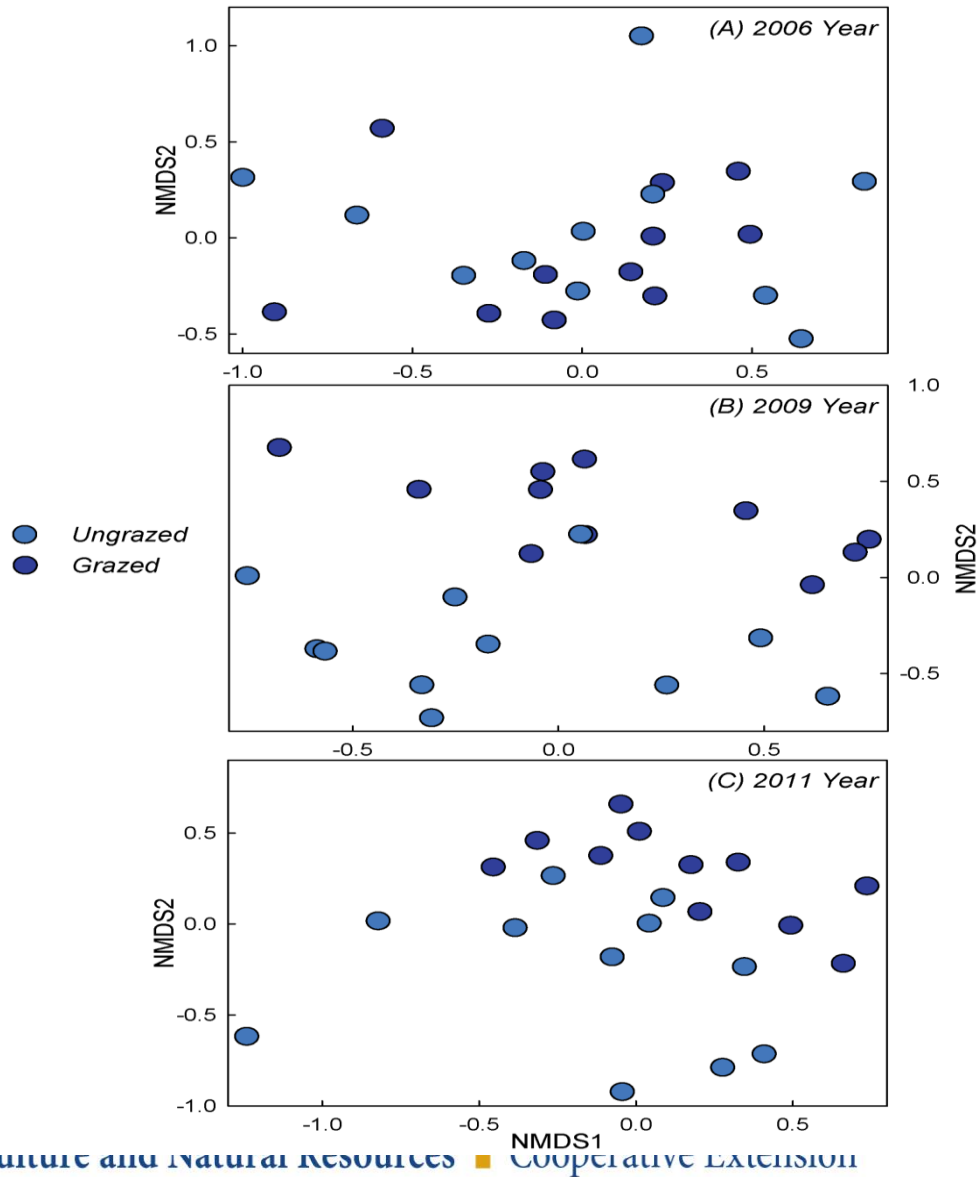
Grazed...what happened?

Grazing end doesn't change

Rains do change

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Late Spring % of average ppt	73	26	3	124	121	327
Total % of average ppt	156	40	55	52	81	92
Animal Unit Months	4276	2190	2187	2223	1911	2158
Cattle On-date	7-Jan	2-Jan	16-Jan	19- Nov	19- Dec	22- Nov
Cattle Off-date	11-Jun	27- May	22- May	23- May	2- Jun	25- May

What about the end?

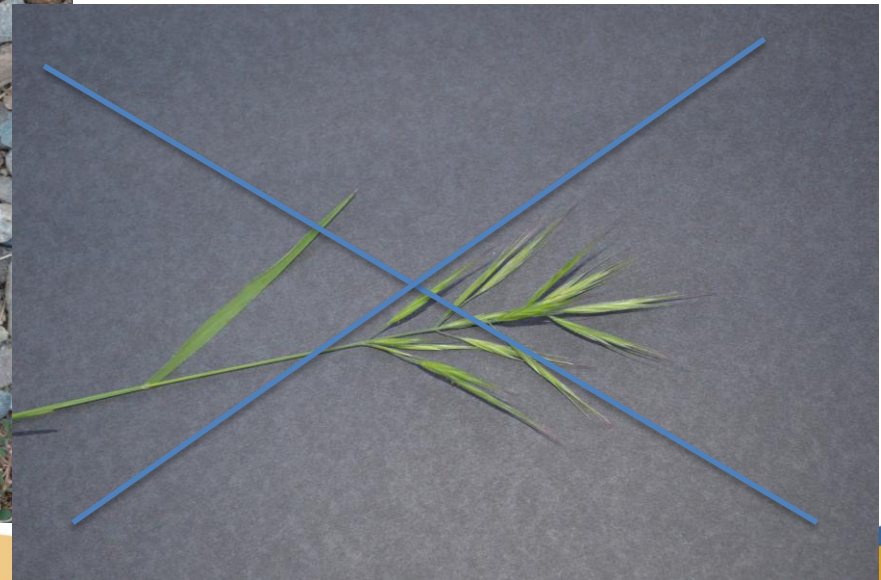


What differences? Not grazed - stickers



What differences?

Grazed



Final thoughts

- It's surprising how little we can control
 - End graze time, weather
- Some years simply won't see reductions in weeds, but give it a longer window
- Grazing strategies should be thought of as long term