

Stocking rate guidelines

Over the years, range scientists have developed stocking rate guidelines for various ecological sites and forage crops based on clipping data and cattle preferences. For example, a loamy ecological site on the Northern Rocky Mountain Foothills-South that has a similarity index of 65% would have a stocking rate of .38 AUMs per acre. Table 1 and Table 2 provide basic stocking rate information for a 13-19 inch precipitation zone in the Northern Rocky Mountain Foothills-South.

NOTE: Specific stocking rate information is documented in the Montana NRCS Ecological Site Descriptions, found on the Montana NRCS website.

Table 1. Approximate stocking rates for native ecological (range) sites in the 13-19 inch precipitation zone in the Northern Rocky Mountain Foothills-South, expressed in AUM's/Ac.

AUMs per acre X acres of a ecological (range) site = total AUMs

	Range Sites	Overflow	Silty/Loamy	Loamy Steep	Sandy	Clayey	Droughty Steep	Shallow	Shallow-Gravel	Droughty
Similarity Index	(76-100%)	.78	.55	.33	.45	.46	.15	.24	.26	.36
	(51-75%)	.55	.38	.23	.32	.33	.10	.17	.18	.26
	(26-50%)	.35	.25	.15	.20	.21	.07	.11	.12	.18
	(0-25%)	.19	.14	.08	.11	.12	.04	.06	.06	.1



(Photo courtesy of Ekalaka NRCS)