



Tahoe National Forest

631 Coyote St.
Nevada City CA 95959

Information Regarding Hart property Cattle Trespass in 2001

Dr. Barry Meyers-Rice of UC Davis recently set up a web site on www.sarracenia.com regarding cattle drift outside the Canyon Creek allotment onto private property belonging to the Hart family. On this web site the Forest Service is accused of valuing grazing cattle over the biological value of wildland sites and the wishes of private landowners. At issue are the unique *Darlingtonia californica* plants that grow in a seep on that private property, damage to those plants and their habitat from cattle drift, and what is being termed as misplaced Forest Service priorities.

What We've Done

We would like to let you know what we have been doing regarding this issue. Since the forest was notified about the cattle drift onto private property in late summer of 2001, we have met several times with the private landowner and the Nevada County Land Trust. The Nevada County Land Trust holds a conservation easement for the Hart property. Forest staff have visited the site to gain an understanding of why the cattle have been drifting off the allotment onto private property, specifically to the *Darlingtonia* site. Our staff met with the livestock owner and shared concerns about this unique plant community. The forest discussed several options for eliminating the drift problem with the permittee, and we notified them that we will modify their annual operating permit to emphasize control of livestock. In addition, the forest has encouraged the landowner and the livestock owner to work together on this problem.

This is important because Nevada County is a closed range county. This means the cattle owner has responsibilities for the behavior of the cattle they own. We continue to ask the livestock owner and landowner to work together to find solutions even as we take administrative action through the annual operating permit. If the permittee does not comply with this direction, other measures will be taken. We do not have cattle on this allotment at this time. Cattle do not enter this allotment until June at the earliest.

If you have further need to contact the Forest Service regarding this site, please contact Kathy Van Zuuk, (kvanzuuk@fs.fed.us) Nevada City Ranger District Ecologist.

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