

Writing Targeted Grazing Into Your RFP: A Guide for Public Agencies

Scope language, qualification criteria, and evaluation guidance for procuring prescribed grazing services — from Rent A Goat®

Why this guide exists

Prescribed grazing is now standard practice — LA County Fire runs a goat program, Laguna Beach has grazed its fuel breaks since the 1990s, and roughly a third of BLM fuel-treatment acres in California involve grazing. But procurement templates haven't caught up: RFPs written for mowing contracts screen out qualified grazing operators or leave scope dangerously vague. This guide provides the language that produces comparable, responsible bids. Use the statutory term "prescribed grazing" — it's the phrase in NRCS practice standards and California SB 675 (2024), which added prescribed grazing to grant-eligible fire-prevention activities.

Scope-of-work language that works

- **Define the outcome, not the method:** "Reduce standing vegetation to a maximum height of 4 inches across the mapped treatment area" beats "provide goats." Include maps, acreage, and vegetation types.
- **Specify the standard:** reference PRC 4291 defensible-space standards or your agency's fuel-modification spec, including brush-spacing requirements on slopes.
- **Address timing:** state the completion-by date (typically before June 1 for fuel work) and whether repeat passes within the season are in scope.
- **Site conditions:** disclose water availability, access points, gate widths, slopes over 30%, protected habitat, and public-access considerations. Bidders price the unknown defensively.

Qualification requirements to include

- General liability insurance with the agency named as additional insured (state your limits); workers' compensation for herders.
- Temporary electric-fencing capability and a containment plan, including for public-adjacent sites.
- Daily on-site or on-call herder supervision; animal-care standards including water, minerals, and veterinary access.
- Predator management plan (livestock guardian dogs) where applicable.
- References from comparable public or commercial projects; government-contracting experience is worth scoring points, not a hard bar.

Evaluation guidance

Score on: demonstrated experience with comparable terrain and vegetation (weight this highest), containment and public-safety plan, animal-welfare practices, timeline realism against herd capacity, references, and price. Be wary of per-acre prices quoted without a site visit — vegetation density varies enormously, and lowball sight-unseen bids produce change orders. Require a pre-bid site walk.

Documentation to require

- Pre- and post-treatment photos of each treatment unit.
- Daily grazing logs or cell-rotation records showing coverage.
- Completion report suitable for grant compliance (acreage treated, dates, standard achieved).

Funding note

CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grants explicitly list "seasonal and temporary prescribed grazing using temporary infrastructure" as an eligible activity, and SB 675 created a local-assistance grant pathway for prescribed grazing. Grazing line items are grant-fundable — write them in.

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