



Postal service plan could hurt rather than help

The U.S. Postal Service is studying a plan to move processing of some mail out of western Kansas to Salina, where supposedly it will be more efficient to sort this outbound mail, saving all of \$130,000 a year.

This is a bad plan, one which likely will hurt the service more than it will help. While the service may save a few thousand dollars on wages — only about 1 1/2 man years, including benefits — the damage to what's left of the business is hard to calculate.

Our guess is the service could lose as much as it saves, maybe more. Damage done to the goodwill and loyalty of its best customers here could be immense.

The service says it actually is offering better service with this plan, despite the fact that truck times at most towns will be moved up two to three hours to get the mail to Salina for sorting. But that's only true for mail leaving the area for other parts of Kansas or farther east.

Most businesses have a vast majority of their customers in the area around their front door: Their hometown, their county and the counties around them. The pattern looks a lot like the areas around our two "sectional center facility" post offices, in Colby and Hays.

Today, businesses have until nearly the end of the day to post business mail. If times are moved up two hours, in some northwest Kansas towns, the mail will be going out by 2 p.m., usually no later than 3 p.m.

That's a huge loss of the work day, and any mail that's not ready for the one daily truck is going to lose 24 hours if it's staying within the section.

For almost any business, whether it's a newspaper or a hardware store, the bulk of the out-of-town mail stays in the area. Not that many

bills or advertising fliers or whatever will be going out of the area compared to what stays in.

We know the Postal Service can't afford to run two trucks a day from our towns. But if it persists in pushing back the pickup times two to three hours, it can only give mailers one more reason to find other ways to send business information, bills and the like: either electronically, or with some other carrier.

In the end, we're willing to bet, the result will be not a savings, but a net loss to the Postal Service. That would be a shame, because the service has many good, dedicated employees out here who have worked long and hard to build up the business. They deliver mail on time, to the right place, rain or shine, and they do it with a smile.

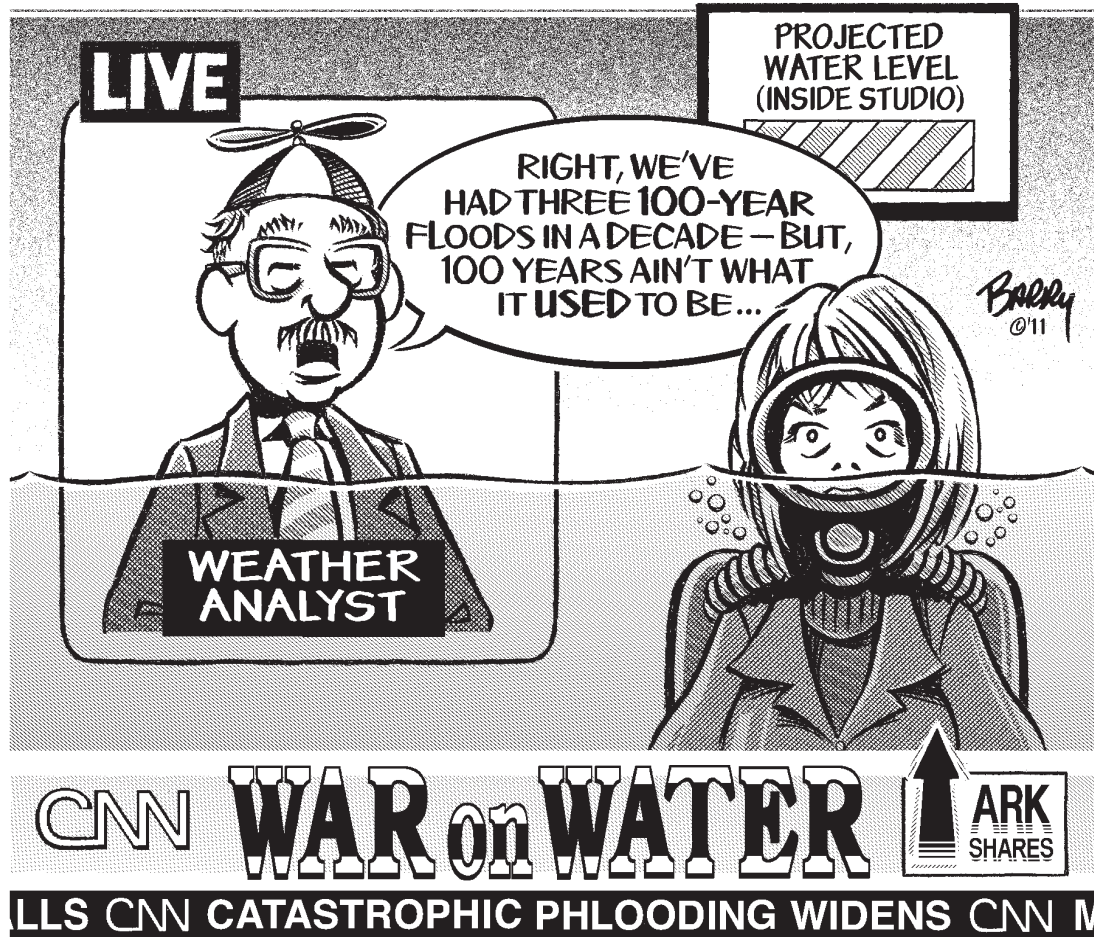
One bad decision from headquarters could wipe that all away.

There is an alternative. The service could compromise on the truck times, limiting the change to only an hour in any town. That would minimize the damage.

The real answer to the service's financial problems, however, will have to come from Congress, which is sitting on a request to relieve the service of legal requirements that it pay billions in extra pension costs every year.

No one believed that the service owes this money. It's been agreed for years that the Postal Service is overpaying its workers' pensions. But the money is being used to reduce the federal deficit, in effect taxing mailers to pay for federal programs.

Now that the service is nearly broke, however, this policy makes no sense. Congress must act before senseless cuts like this one ruin what's left of a great — and vitally needed — organization. — Steve Haynes



Cemetery caretaker recognized

Letter to the Editor:
Tony Gienger needs to be recognized for his superb work at the St. Francis Cemetery. I think he goes way beyond his job description. I have no idea what Tony's salary is, and maybe the

— Letters to the Editor —

board pays him competitively with this area but I would confidently wager that it is far less than what he is worth. We should all take that kind of pride in our work!

Dale Hill
St. Francis

Attorney general enjoys meeting

To the Editor:
I am grateful for those who joined me for my town hall meeting in St. Francis this past week. It was a good discussion and, as

always, I came away with a better understanding of what Kansans expect from the Office of the Attorney General. Thanks for helping me stay focused on the critical priorities of public safety, economic growth and personal liberty!

Derek Schmidt
Kansas Attorney General

Across the County

Stocking Rates and Carrying Capacities

By
Marty
Fear



County Extension Agent

Last week I spent some time discussing creep stocking rates and warned cattle producers to be familiar with the mature weights of their cows to avoid overstocking pastures. Overstocking pastures can be harmful to the grasslands and decrease the productivity for future use.

So for this week's column I will discuss figuring those stocking rates and carrying capacities. But first, some definitions: Stocking rate is defined as the number of animals per unit area over a given period. Carrying capacity is the maximum number of animals that a site can support over a certain period of time without causing damage to the site.

Animal unit month or AUM is the amount of feed required to sustain a 1,000-pound cow and her calf (up to 6 months of age) for one month. If the cow weighs more than 1,000 pounds then we use an animal unit equivalent or AUE.

For example, if the average weight of the cow is 1,284 pounds then the animal unit equivalent would be 1.284. This is the same as saying that each one of our cows will eat as much as 1.284 cows.

So how much will a cow eat? A 1,000-pound cow will eat about 26 pounds a day of forage or approximately 80 percent of her body weight per month.

An example: Let's say we have 75 head of cows with calves that average 1,284 pounds. Each cow will eat 1,027 pounds (1,284 pounds x 80 percent) of forage per month. Our herd of 75 cows will

eat 77,025 pounds (1,027 pounds x 75 head) of forage per month. For a 3-month grazing period (June-August), the herd would require 231,075 pounds (77,025 pounds x 3 months) of forage.

Now we need to determine how much forage our pasture produces annually. This will depend on a number of factors including precipitation, soil, grazing history, plant community, etc.

The rancher can determine how much their land produces by clipping a small area of known size and multiplying by the correct factors to determine the pounds per acre. However, this can be complicated and if you do not have this information handy then we can estimate based on the location of your pasture. It is important to remember that these are estimates using uniform grassland.

Let's say we have 640 acres that is estimated to produce 1,500 pounds per acre of on a yearly basis. That would give us 960,000 pounds of forage annually. The recommendation is to take half of the forage and leave half. So that will give us 480,000 pounds (half of 960,000) of forage.

Although, the cattle will only utilize about half of the 480,000 pounds. The other half will be lost to trampling, laid on, defecated and urinated on. So now we are down to 240,000 pounds (half of 480,000) of forage.

Now we must figure our carrying capacity: so we take 240,000 pounds (26 pounds x 30 days) and that equals 307.7 animal unit

equivalents. Now, recall that our animal unit equivalent per cow was 1.284. We adjust that to 96.3 to account for our 75 head. Now we multiply 96.3 times the number of months our cows will be on this pasture. We plan to have our cows on pasture for 3 months, so 3 months x 96.3 animal unit months gives us 288.9 animal unit equivalents required by our cowherd. Our pasture produces 307.7 animal unit equivalents so we have enough pasture to satisfy our 75 head cowherd for 3 months.

Now, to calculate our stocking rate we need our total acres and the animal unit months required by the cow. So we take 640 acres and divide by 307.7 animal unit months which equals 2.08 acres per animal unit month. Each cow on pasture for 3 months will require approximately 6.24 acres (2.07 x 3).

Determining the correct carrying capacity and stocking rates can be very helpful in managing grassland and ensuring the productivity of it for future use. There is no "hard, fast" answer for stocking rates, these are only estimations. So, one must remember that available forage can change quickly with environmental conditions.

Contact the Cheyenne County Extension office at 332-3171 or cfear@ksu.edu with questions or comments. Until next week — Marty

Casey's Comments

By
Casey
McCormick



mccormickcasey@rocketmail.com

Decoration Day, as Memorial Day used to be called, is an important time to reflect on those who have paid the highest price for being an American. A visit from a family member got me thinking a bit more about those who sacrifice a part of their lives to provide for our freedom.

We have a nephew, Tyler Larson, who is beginning boot camp with the U.S. Marines in San Diego, Calif. Kayleen, his mom, stopped by our house to share her first letter from her son.

Actually it was four letters. The first was a hand written note from Tyler, saying he was okay and getting used to doing all manner of daily duties with all the other recruits.

"We eat, bathe and brush our teeth all at the same time," he said.

The other pages were type written. One was a general statement as to what the soldiers would be doing for the next few months. Then there was a letter from Ty-

ler's platoon commander and another from the Gunnery Sergeant in charge of his unit. Each told of the challenging road ahead for the new Marines. But they also said that they would be well cared for.

Sitting around our table, looking at the letters, I believe a feeling of reassurance could be felt by Kayleen and the rest of us.

That same sense of reassurance can be shared by a grateful nation. For as long as we have brave men and women who are willing

to make the sacrifice and they in turn have the leadership, tradition and history of our military, we can all rest assured that our freedom is well protected.



GOD SAYS

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:1-2

Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 11 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Roger Meitl
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8:30 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

United Methodist Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Morita Truman
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11 a.m.
Communion 3rd Sunday

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
www.sfccfamily.com
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion -
Every 2nd Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
785-890-5718 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor Jerry Nowack
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

Solid Rock Baptist Church
412 S. Denison
Welcomes You!
Pastor Allen Coon
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Prayer Meeting, Wed
7:30 p.m.

First Christian Church
Pastor Jeff Landers
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Bible Fellowship 9:15 a.m.
Church Service 10:15 a.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC
202 N. College
Pastor Glenn Isernhagen, Interim
332-2928
Worship 9:30 a.m.
Communion 1st Sunday
of the month



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