



Finger Lakes National Forest Hector Grazing Association

The Hector Cooperative Grazing Association is one of the oldest public grazing associations in the country. The organization was incorporated in 1946 and currently partners with the Forest Service to utilize public land for grazing on the Finger Lakes National Forest. From 1939 through 1971, the cooperative made use of other land resources by harvesting timber, leasing hay lots, and cutting and selling Christmas trees, posts and firewood.

In 1941, sheep were the primary livestock grazed by the cooperative association. Subsequently, horses were grazing along with beef and dairy cattle. Cattle were primarily cow and calf pairs, or dry heifers. The initial number of members were 138 but dropped to 64 in 1992. Currently, there are 35 dues paying members.



A 10-Year Grazing Agreement between the Forest Service and the Hector Cooperative Grazing Association allows livestock grazing on 4,800 acres of the Finger Lakes National Forest.



The Agreement allows livestock grazing (cow / calf operations) to occur from May 15 through October 15. All cattle are to be removed from pastures no later than November 1st annually.



The Agreement outlines Rules of Management in an effort to improve land use, to correlate multiple uses of the Finger Lakes National Forest and to promote and protect natural resources and the livestock industry.



The Hector Grazing Association is able to credit the annual Forest Service grazing fee in return for rangeland improvement work such as fence and corral construction as well as pasture mowing. The fee charged by the Association to members covers operation, maintenance, and other costs of livestock management.

