



THE POST RIDER

Marias River Livestock Association, 72 Sweetgrass Hills Rd, Sweet Grass, MT 59484

Helle, A Story that Needs Not Only Told But Heard

Wednesday, July 8th Luann Wallewien pulled up to the Nine Mile Corner and I climbed in thankful for the company and ride to Great Falls to support a fellow livestock producer. About 50 other livestock producers were there to sit on the wooden benches of the Federal Courtroom while District Judge Brian Morris listened to attorneys stumble through trying to explain the facts involved in sheep grazing US Forest Service allotments. When there is little you can do, just be there.

John Helle lamented in a phone conversation the next day how impersonal the Emergency Injunction Hearing was sitting behind a wooden fence on a hard bench, not allowed to speak to explain or educate while watching attorneys at podium state your case to the judge. John wondered if the Judge even saw their faces and understood how all this affected his family.

John's concern was not only for his family and business but the livestock and environment. His wife Karen was concerned that the court did not understand that the sheep need water and there are bum lambs to feed and move along with the big band. It is not a quick or easy process to move bands of sheep up and down the mountains. And therein lies the issue. People don't understand.

Even though the Helle family works very hard to tell their story and tell it in a way that reaches beyond their neighbors and friends and out to the people who may never follow a band of sheep up the mountain trail to summer grazing: Who do not understand the good that grazing public land does in fire prevention and enhancing the forage for wildlife use: How the livestock management practice they use actually improve the habitat for ungulates.

Helles wish to reach people who do not understand the Equal Access to Justice law and how it enables some groups to gain funding for court battles that truly hurt the agricultural families. Helles want them to understand the struggles ranchers have to pay their own court cost and surviving the emotional struggle.

At the time of writing this article the outcome of the hearing was not know, but regardless of the hearing outcome the Gallatin Wildlife Association vs. US Forest Service lawsuit to stop the sheep grazing on the Gravelly Mountains that the Helle Rebish/Konen family have used for over 60 years will continue. May the Good Sheppard prevail. **PAGE 3 Has the COURT DECISION ON THE INJUNCTION**

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Tom, John and Evan Helle stand outside the Federal Courthouse in Great Falls after the hearing, July 8, 2015. Gallatin Wildlife Association had filed a Preliminary Injunction to stop grazing of domestic sheep on two of the seven allotments in the Gravelly Mountains this summer claiming their members would suffer immediate and irreparable harm. These allotments have been in use by this family for more than 60 years and historically for nearly 150 years.



Butch Gillespie, Vice Pres. MRLA introduces Bill Pelton at Gentle Hand Livestock Conf in Valier MT

**Gentle Hand Livestock Conference
Homesteader Days, Valier MT**
photos by Trina Jo Bradley

Curt Pate (to right) speaks about the importance of proper cattle handling. Advocates for any method that reads the animal, is respectful and humane. Good handling requires being able to read the animal, apply pressure and then release it in a timely manner.



Local kids were excited to examine, touch and feel Ernie the Bison. The special mount was created and displayed by Don Woerner, DVM from Laurel, MT who was sponsored by Marias River Livestock Association at Homesteader Days in Valier, MT



Tahnee Szymanski, MT Assistant State Veterinarian gave a great presentation on livestock disease issues and how we can learn from what has happened with Avian Influenza and the PEDv. Tahnee's presentation helped producers think of the simple actions we can take to help ensure disease doesn't encounter a open door & welcome mat on our ranches.

Fourteen people earned their BQA Certificate at the Gentle Hands Livestock Conference sponsored by Marias River Livestock Association and WestFeeds.

BQA Certification is a way to show buyers and consumers that you are interested in providing quality care for your animals and are putting forth effort to learn the current best practices. Make sure as you list your animals on the video auctions or run them through the Auction Houses that you mention your BQA certification.

Thank you to all the presenters.

Thank you to Paul Turner, Marvin Kimmet, Butch & Doreen Gillespie, Ann Morren and Trina Jo Bradley for helping with set up and tear down, registration and photos.



Bill Pelton is the Beef Quality Assurance Coordinator for Montana. Bill and Curt casually discussed why BQA is important to both producer and consumer. Times are changing and all food production is under the microscope.

Message from John Helle

“Maggie,

We defeated the injunction!

Thanks for all your support! I will forward the ruling. I want everyone to know how much I appreciate the support. I know it made a difference especially for our family.

Regards

John”

People wanting more information on Gallatin Wildlife Association vs US Forest Service/ US Fish & Wildlife and Helle Livestock and Rebish/Konen can go to www.MariasRiverLivestock.com and click on the “Blog” on the menu bar across the top or go directly to www.mariasriverlivestock.wordpress.com. The actual court document in on the wordpress blog site.



Helle supporters in front of the Federal Courthouse, Great Falls, MT
Margaret Eller, Sara Downey, Elaine Allested, Shirley Halverson, Caroline Roeder, Kevin Halverson (in back) Claire Helle, Luann Wallewien, Jim Eller

Yellowstone and State Take a Look at New Management for Bison.

The National Park Services and the State of Montana have signed an MOU, agreeing to jointly prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider changes to the management of the Yellowstone National Park Bison and the disease brucellosis. The comment period was from March 13, 2015 to June 15, 2015. Below is the comment that Marias River Livestock Association submitted.

It is important to remember the bison are Yellowstone National Parks wildlife until they step into the state of Montana. Montana does not have power to manage the bison until they are here. They cannot be hunted by tribes or sportsmen until they are on US Forest Service land, State land or Private Property.

The Department of Livestock can only vaccinate the bison that are captured and the Park Service does not wish to vaccinate bison as they believe wildlife should have as little human intervention as possible. Park Managers and Livestock Producers have very different management theories, ideas and goals.

Comment on the Yellowstone Bison Management Scoping 3/13/2015 to 6/15/2015

Marias River Livestock Association (MRLA) in conformance with the membership’s policies supports Draft Alternative 1 which sets the population goal at 3,000 or less and continues the separation of bison and livestock by space and time. The Association supports the hazing back of bison during the month of May.

The Association supports the continued suppression of Brucellosis via vaccination, culling the bison herd and also through other methods such as birth control that would help prevent abortions that spread the disease. Continued research should be invested in to find other means to reduce the prevalence of brucellosis in both bison and elk.

While MRLA supports hunting by the Tribes and the hunts managed by MT FWP it has not had sufficient results in the past to keep the GYA Bison population to the goal of 3,000 or less, therefore MRLA supports continued shipment to slaughter and processing.

MRLA in no way supports further expansion of bison tolerance zones outside of the Yellowstone National Park border until reduction in bison and elk seroprevalence is seen.

STEVE DAINES
MONTANA

SUITE SRC-1
RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-2651

United States Senate

COMMITTEE
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND
TRANSPORTATION
ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES
INDIAN AFFAIRS

June 15, 2015

Mr. Marvin Kimmet,
PO Box 801
Cut Bank, Montana 59427

Dear Mr. Kimmet,


Thank you for contacting me to express your support for Representative Rob Bishop's (UT-01) amendment to H.R. 1735, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016*, that would prohibit the Obama Administration from declaring the Sage Grouse an endangered species for up to 10 years. I value your point of view, and you will be pleased to know we agree. Such a designation would inhibit the military's ability to train on vital lands and negatively impact troop readiness, while drastically restricting land use on federal, private, and state lands throughout Montana.

More broadly, I strongly believe Montana is best equipped to manage and protect our state's resources and wildlife, while protecting our economy and jobs. Sage Grouse cannot tell the difference between federal, state and private land, and efforts to protect it can't be dealt with in a checkerboard-like fashion. We need to empower Montanans to find solutions that best fit our state's needs, not Washington, D.C. bureaucrats. I am happy Representative Bishop's amendment also recognizes the need for states to take the lead in Sage Grouse conservation efforts.

The House passed H.R. 1735 on May 15, 2015, with Representative Bishop's amendment intact. The Senate is currently considering companion legislation, and I am working to include a similar amendment. You will also be happy to know that I helped Senator Cory Gardner (CO) introduce S. 1036, the *Sage Grouse Protection and Conservation Act*. This measure would delay the listing of Greater Sage Grouse under the Endangered Species Act for six years and likewise allow states to take the lead in Sage Grouse conservation plans. I will continue to champion this measure and other similar measures as they move through the legislative process.

Again, thanks for contacting me. It is my number one priority in Congress to represent the values and interests of the people of Montana, and your input is very helpful as I do. I invite you to visit my website, www.daines.senate.gov, for updates about activities in Washington that affect our lives in Montana or to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you again in the future.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines

United States Senator

SD/sm

The Cowtank

Barbara Bockelman

When we thought
 No one was around,
 We girls sought
 The cowtank
 By the pens
 Near the road
 On a summer afternoon.

We made certain
 The coast was clear,
 Then slipped off our clothes,
 Taking one last look
 To be sure
 No one was near.

Then we'd put our legs
 Over the metal rim,
 All set for a cooling swim.
 There we posed
 Grandly unclothed,
 Until we slipped
 Into the slobbery water
 To sit upon
 The rough cement bottom.

We'd splash around
 Standing up
 To let the breeze
 Cool every inch and pound.

But the biggest splash of all
 Came when we heard this call:
 "HELLO THERE LADIES!
 HOW'S THE WATER TODAY?"

Marias River Livestock Membership Application

DATE _____

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
 Marias River Livestock Association
 Carrie Sue Lerum
 PO Box 56
 Galata, Mt 59444

Active Membership is per individual not per ranch or corporation.
 This a new membership ____
 This is a renewal ____

____ **Active Member \$50**
Any individual 18 years of age or older, active in the livestock production industry in the counties of Glacier, Liberty, Pondera, or Toole, Montana is eligible for active membership in the Marias River Livestock Association

____ **Youth Member \$10**
Youth are under 18 years of age and interested in learning about livestock production, promoting the livestock industry and willing to volunteer 5 hours a year.

____ **Associate Member \$50**
An individual, firm, corporation or partnership, no matter where it's or his/her place of business or residence may be eligible for non-voting Associate Membership

HAWKS ANGUS

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*Adrian & Janet
 Cory & Belinda*

FX

*55 Oilmont Rd
 Galata, Montana
 406.432.5355*

AND The Winners Are...

For the 3rd consecutive year, MRLA has sponsored two breeding project awards at the Marias Fair.

The purpose of these awards is to encourage knowledge and interest in a continuing breeding project, that will serve to become the foundation of a current or future breeding herd. It is the goal of Marias River Livestock Association to encourage our youth to become the next generation of Livestock producers.

The first year award is for a bred yearling heifer and the second year award is for a cow calf pair that is owned by the youth and intended for the development of a future breeding herd.

Selection is based on a two part criteria. One part is based on how well the animal scores in the Marias Fair breeding classes. This helps determine the overall quality of the animal as a future herd replacement. The more important part is how well the youth does in an interview. This interview helps determine the youth's overall knowledge of their project, as well as future goals and aspirations. It also recognizes the youth's involvement in the Livestock industry.

Marias River Livestock Association works hard to promote a healthy competitive and positive future for our livestock industry. Our youth is a very important component of that. We thank everyone in our four county area for their support.



Pictured is Garrett Fritz, Winner of the Cow/Calf Award and Troy Harmon assisting by holding the calf Presenting the Montana Silversmith Buckle is Carrie Lerum and Lindsey Habets who conducted the interviews.

The team that coordinates this award is Carrie Sue Lerum, Lindsey Habets and Janet Hawks. They work with the extension offices, order buckles and conduct interviews. They also arrange for a presentation during the Marias River Stampede Rodeo where the 4-Hers get to be recognized for their accomplishments. We appreciate their work along with the work of all the 4-H leaders and parents who are involved in helping to develop leaders in the agriculture community through 4-H.

Winners Cont. pg 11

Evening Coffee Talk about Montana's Bison Conservation Plan

August 11th 6:00PM
Ringside Ribs, Shelby, MT

Lauri Brown, FWP and
Richard Stuker, FWP Commissioner
will come and answer questions about the
current alternatives proposed in the Scoping .
Comment Period ends Sept. 11, 2015

Yellowstone Bison Comment cont. from pg 3

Goal #3 of the Adaptive management plan states "Prevent the transmission of brucellosis from bison to cattle." If possible this should be expanded to prevent the transmission of brucellosis from wildlife to cattle, thereby including elk, bears or other animals that may possibly carry and shed the virus in body fluids or waste.

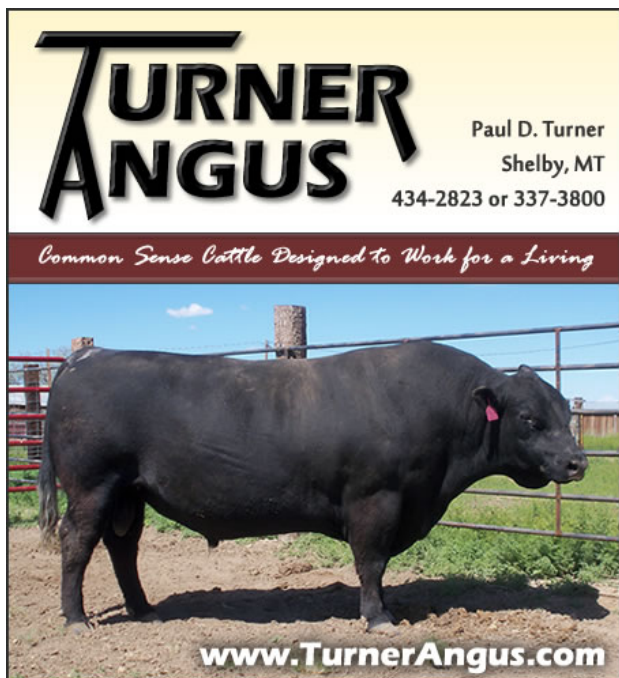
MRLA also would like to see further action on the Yellowstone Bison Management Plan held until the National Academy of Science finishes conducting their study, "Revisiting Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area." Also at the last IBMP meeting April 23, 2015 there was updates on ongoing research that should be considered in the Scoping by the Park Service such as the Bison Grazing Study being done by the NPS and Syracuse University.

When Rick Wallen presented this it was stated that bison could harvest forage repeatedly in an area and in the second year of the study it may be determined if the plant population is changed. Wallen stated that in a National Park where the goal is providing habitat for wildlife this may not be a concern, but MRLA believes it would be a concern for private landowners, State Lands, BLM and Forest Service.

The ongoing Glucagon for birth control in bison as a means of preventing the spread of the disease to other bison, other wildlife or livestock should also be completed and the information considered for the NPS Scoping on bison management.

In reading about the difficulty that Grand Canyon National Park is having with bison destroying the cultural significant sites and difficulty reducing the bison population with the hunting their EIS should also closely be considered.

Maggie Nutter
Representing Marias River Livestock Association



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We'll see you November 2015 at our
11th Annual Production Sale

BULL BUCKS 2015 Participating Producers

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www.apexangus.com

Bobcat Angus – Sale Nov 2015
www.bobcatangus.com

Curry Cattle Inc – 279-3561
Replacement Angus females

Diamond D Angus – Sale Nov 2015, Spring Private Treaty
www.diamonddangus.com

Diemert Ranch Herefords – 432-3412
www.ngrbulls.com/diemert_ranch_herefords.htm

Enneberg Angus Ranch – 845-4901

Flesch Angus – Sale March 2015
www.fleschangus.com

Gillespie Show Cattle – 337-2943 or 949-4453
www.gillespieshowcattle.com

Hawks Angus – Sale March 2015
www.hawksangus.com

Holden Hereford – Sale March 2015
www.holdenherefords.com

Kicking Horse Ranch Gelbvieh – Sale March 2015
www.kickinghorseranch.com

Superior Livestock Video Auction – 450-4586
www.superiorlivestock.com

Tomsheck Angus – 937-3726
www.blackranchesinc.com

Turner Angus – 434-2823
www.TurnerAngus.com

MARIAS RIVER LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION MID-YEAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING JUNE 1, 2015

The Marias River Livestock Association held their Mid-Year Membership Meeting on Monday, June 1, 2015 at Ringside Ribs Restaurant in Shelby, MT. Maggie Nutter called the meeting to order. Secretary, Carrie Sue Lerum read the minutes from the last membership meeting in November and she passed out the Treasurer's Report to those members in attendance.

Next, each board member gave a report about what our members concerns are from each county they represent. Maggie reported that Pondera County members are worried about the drought and grizzly bears. Jeff Habets has resigned as the Pondera County director, so MRLA is currently trying to fill that position.

Paul Turner reported that members from Toole County have concerns about Fish & Game, worker visas, and no grazing on public lands.

Bob Thompson stated that Liberty County is trying to stay updated on grizzly bears to wolves, sage grouse, COOL, and adding an extra dollar beef check-off.

Next, Marvin Kimmet represented Glacier County's issues about grizzly bears and bison. He also received positive feedback on MRLA's newsletter.

Butch Gillespie informed the audience that some milk produced in Montana is testing high in Sulfa. The milk industry is actively trying to problem solve this issue. The Board of Livestock is having a meeting on June 3.

Janet Hawks encouraged those in attendance to log on and listen to the Board of Livestock meeting. Following the board member's reports,

Maggie introduced Jack Holden who is a Director for Montana Stockgrowers. He reported on national and state issues that Stockgrowers are currently working on including but not limited to National Waters of the US, MT Board of Livestock, Sage Grouse, and CSKT. Jack encouraged member to come to the MT Stockgrowers Mid-Year meeting in Bozeman.

Janet Hawks gave a Wool Growers update on legislative issues for Dave McEwen who was unable to attend. Wool Growers supported the McKay bill and they successfully got the Dubois Sheep Station going. They also secured funding for the MT State Wool Lab.

Maggie then invited our members to attend the Interagency Grizzly Bear Council Meeting on June 16th and 17th at Many Glacier. The public is able to give a 2 minute comment and to share their bear stories.

Cont. pg 10

Your Local Voice for Agriculture

As an organization it is good to frequently look at your purpose and goals, then assess the actions you are taking and evaluate if it all matches up.

In January the Board met and planned the major events for the year looking to see that each one fit a purpose defined in the Marias River Livestock Association By-Laws. In March again we met with Art Taft who helped us look at our defined purposes and find focus.

The first four "Purposes" of MRLA all seem to be about communicating to vastly different groups the value of agriculture/livestock production.

1. Education of the public of the benefits of agricultural production and the problems facing livestock producers and those operating businesses linked with livestock production.
2. Promoting legislation that is favorable to persons engaged in agriculture.
3. Informing members of Marias Livestock Association of local, State and Federal issues that may affect their livestock operations in a timely manner.
4. Promoting interest in livestock production and agricultural business to the youth of our communities.

Basically what we are about is gathering information and then dispersing it to the right people at the appropriate time. We bring well educated people who are involved in specific topics to speak to our membership and public. We maintain a website, Facebook page, and now a blog to keep you informed in a timely manner.

During the legislative session and during the interim we attend meetings and hearings to share information that is in agriculture's best interest with legislators and policy makers.

MRLA has developed a Two Year Breeding Program Competition at the Marias Fair with the number of 4-Hers participating in the program growing each year. Lindsey Habets has done an excellent job in developing a strong interview process that allows the youth to share their knowledge of their program.

As you look through this issue of the Post Rider we hope that you see the many ways we are sharing important information with the people who need to hear it.

Hence we strive to be YOUR local voice for Agriculture.

Irrigation in the Summer

Sustains Our Farms and Ranches

By Lisa Schmidt

The right amount of moisture and the right timing will make or break a farmer's crop, but irrigation benefits reach far beyond a farmer.

When hungry water-skiers and fishing pals pull out of the water, burgers and fries are on the grill because of irrigation.

Montana farmers raise about 275 million pounds of seed potatoes on 10,000 irrigated acres each year, about 10 to 15 percent of the national seed potato crop. Most of the alfalfa that is raised in the state is under irrigation so livestock producers can count on a consistent feed source and families can enjoy a great steak whenever they want. Even better, many of Montana's best recreation opportunities come from irrigation reservoirs that were built to help feed hungry settlers consistently, with far less risk of starving during dry years like this one.

Among the most popular for boat enthusiasts, water-skiers, fishing pros and campers are the Clark Fork Reservoir, Hungry Horse Reservoir and Tongue River Reservoir.

Walleyes Unlimited declares Lake Francis, near Valier, one of the best-kept, premier walleye fishing secrets in the state. Besides fishing, tourists and locals enjoy water-skiing, knee-boarding, tubing, sail-boarding, jet-skiing and swimming from the two docks at Lake Francis. Two campgrounds provide a great place to relax near the water, too.

Lake Francis is a part of the Pondera County Canal and Reservoir Company (PCCRC) irrigation system that was built in the early 1900's as a means of attracting settlers to the arid West. In fact, Jeff Habets would probably still be raising tulips in Holland if a priest had not told his great grandfather about the new irrigation project in 1913. That news brought Habets' grandfather to Conrad, Mont., as a 2-year-old. What is now the PCCRC kept the family there.

The dependable source of water has kept them in business in an area that receives an average of 14 inches of rain annually, especially in dry, dusty years such as this one. Jeff and his wife, Lindsey, partner with Jeff's parents, Ernie and Shirley Habets, to raise cattle, alfalfa and malt barley.

"Without irrigation, we wouldn't be able to have cattle," Habets said. "We wouldn't be able to raise hay and the irrigation water is our stockwater year around."

Their ranch sits at the end of one of PCCRC's ditches so the family collects the waste water into a 14-foot deep

reservoir and then pumps water to troughs for the livestock. Built on federal, state and private cooperation, PCCRC is the largest Carey Land Act irrigation projects in the state at 80,400 acres, but far from the only one. Jeff Habets is far from the only beneficiary. Each U.S. farmer in the U.S. feeds about 155 people.

Montana's Golden Triangle is the nexus for much of the world's bread, noodles, beer and beef. PCCRC producers do not tap an underground aquifer, but they count on scant moisture plus snowpack from the nearby 7,000-foot peaks of the Rocky Mountains that is stored in two reservoirs to raise spring wheat, durum, malt barley and high-quality seedstock cattle consistently, with far higher yields and far less risk of crop failure than dryland producers.

In fact, even if PCCRC shareholders irrigate only 65,000 acres within the project, they generate somewhere in the neighborhood of \$30 million for the local economy each year. Irrigated barley averages 100 bushels per acre while dryland barley averages about 50 bushels. Irrigated wheat averages about 80 bushels per acre, while dryland wheat is likely to yield about 45 bushels per acre in north-central Montana.

Alfalfa fields, where seedstock producers raise cattle that will be big enough to perform in a variety of pasture conditions when they are sold throughout the world, yield about five tons per acre on irrigation compared to half that on dryland acres.

A common rule of thumb in local business is to calculate that a single dollar spent in a community will generate \$7 as it passes from business to business. Using the "seven times" rule, agricultural income from PCCRC alone compounds itself in the local business community to double local income by \$105 million each year compared to dryland production in the best years, when plenty of rain comes at exactly the right time.



Jeff and his wife, Lindsey, partner with Jeff's parents, Ernie and Shirley Habets, to raise cattle, alfalfa and malt barley.

Irrigation cont. from pg 9

Wildlife and the environment benefit, too.

“We have some of the best duck and pheasant hunting in the whole state. The PCCRC system has great habitat because of the ditch banks for cover and all of the grain grown in the area,” Habets said. “It’s second to none.”

Antelope, mule deer and whitetail deer are common sights, too.

It is easy to overlook one of the fundamental building blocks of the world’s food supply, but as bee populations decline – sometimes scientists are unsure of the reasons, but they are sure they should be worried – irrigation throughout Montana provides a steady, reliable source of pollen for bees.

In 2014, 74 commercial bee operations and 5600 bee hive locations were registered in Montana, making the state second in the nation for honey production, only behind North Dakota. Pondera County hosts the greatest density of bees within Montana because of irrigation. Irrigation also provides great habitat for bee nests. The Natural Resources Conservation Service lists ditch banks, ponds and riparian areas as prime bee nesting habitat.

Irrigation efficiency helps, too.

“By using drip or spray irrigation instead of flooding, producers can avoid drowning ground-nesting pollinators and larvae,” according to a 2012 NRCS Pollinators Fact Sheet.

Water is the most precious commodity in the world – just ask people who live in California or the Sahara Desert. Montana irrigators invest in techniques and equipment that help them use the least amount of water for the most food.

Pivot sprinklers with low-hanging nozzles spread just enough water for the crop while reducing the amount of evaporation. Moisture probes monitor when and where to irrigate.

“In the last 20 years, flood irrigation has become obsolete,” Habets said. “We have spent a lot of money to improve our efficiency, just like everyone else. We used to irrigate 80 acres, now we irrigate 250 with the same water.”

That means the Habets family alone feeds more than three times as many people. In a world that expects to grow from 7 billion people to 11 billion people within the next 40 to 75 years, a consistent, efficient food production system will be essential.

Irrigation will be a part of the solution.

Irrigation system east of Valier with water spray framing Middle Butte of the Sweetgrass Hills.



Membership Meeting cont. from pg 8

At this time, Ervin Calson and Kendall Adins was invited to speak about the linnii Initiative. He gave insight on how they are progressing and what their long term goals are for bison to be roaming along the Rocky Mountain Front and into Canada.

The Marias River Livestock Association board discussed and proposed new policy:

Bison

MRLA is supportive of domestic bison industry. MRLA is opposed to free-roaming bison on all State, Federal and private lands.

Butch Gillespie moved and Paul Turner seconded to accept this policy. Motion carried.

Natural Resources

MRLA opposes further regulation by government agencies of water, energy and land use. John Fritz moved and Doreen Gillespie seconded to accept this policy. Motion Carried.

Natural Resources-Water

MRLA opposes Water of the United State regulation as currently passed/put in place by the EPA. Marvin Kimmet moved and Bob Thompson seconded to accept this policy. Motion carried.

Livestock

MRLA is opposed to any individual waiving Montana administrative rules (related to livestock) without the Board of Livestock’s approval.

Butch Gillespie moved and Rick Schock seconded to accept this policy. Motion carried.

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,
Carrie Sue Lerum, Secretary/Treasurer

Mountain View Co-op
 Hosting first annual
**Big Sky Blue Ribbon
 Cattle Clinic**

Aug 22, 2015

Geared for young people 8-18 years old
 who wish to learn more about showing cattle.

Speakers include PayBack Feed Reps
 Rachel Endecott, MSU
 Gillespie Show Cattle
 & Rose Cattle Company
 For more info call
Allie 406-403-4732

PROPERTY RIGHTS CONFERENCE

AUG. 7 & 8, BILLINGS, MT

United Property Owners of Montana has organized the 2nd Annual Montana Property Rights Conference to be held in Billings on August 7 and 8. The Conference features two national speakers Christina Sandefur from the Goldwater Institute, who will be giving a presentation on Arizona's Private Property Rights Protection Act, and Reed Hopper from the Pacific Legal Foundation, who will be discussing PLF's efforts to prevent the Obama administration from imposing new EPA regulations on the agricultural community through the proposed rule known as "Waters of the United States."

In addition to the national speakers, the Conference will feature over a dozen Montana-based experts on topics ranging from free-roaming bison, to BLM-private land exchanges, to the new threat to property rights presented by National Heritage Areas. *Register today at www.MontanaPropertyRightsConference.com*

Winner continued from pg 6



Pictured is Brett Stoltz, Winner of the Bred Heifer Award. Presenting the Montana Silversmith Buckle is Carrie Lerum and Lindsey Habets who conducted the interviews.

It is a lot of work to care for and train an animal then bring it to the fair. We are proud of these youth for the excellent jobs they have done in preparation of the animals and educating themselves in the breeding and development of a breeding herd. We also thank their parents who have invested considerable time and money in the project.

Due to the success of this project Marias River Livestock Association hopes to be able to expand the Breeding Program Awards in the future.

MONTANA PROPERTY RIGHTS CONFERENCE

August 7th & 8th in Billings, MT

Join local & national experts to discuss...



**REGULATORY
 TAKINGS**



**FREE
 ROAMING
 BISON**



**WATERS OF
 THE U.S.**

REGISTER TODAY AT:

www.MontanaPropertyRightsConference.com

Save The Date

Aug 5 & 6 - Interagency Bison Council Meeting, Lapwai ID
www.ibmp.info

Aug 7 & 8 - Property Rights Conference, Billings MT
www.propertyrightsconference.com

Aug 11 - 6:00pm Evening Coffee Talk-BISON-
 Ringside Ribs, Shelby, MT

Aug 22 - Big Sky Blue Ribbon Cattle Clinic, Livestock
 Pavillion, Fair Grounds, Great Falls MT
www.mountainviewcoop.com

Aug 29 - Montana Columbia Sheep Breeders Association
 Annual Show & Sale, Fairgrounds, Lewiston, MT

Sept 11-12 - Women Stepping Forward in Agriculture, Big
 Horn Resort, Billings, MT registration open now
www.womensteppingforward.org

Sept 12 - NEW! Montana Black and White Sale, selling all
 breeds of rams and ewes by private treaty. Harlowton

Sept 16 - 2nd Annual Ewe Sale, Miles City 1000 ewes to sell

Sept 17 - Miles City Ram Sale, Thursday 300 rams sell.

Sept 16-18 Crown of the Continent Roundtable Conf,
 Missoula MT www.crownrandtable.org

Oct 10-17 - NILE, Billings, MT

Oct 23-24 - Montana Farmers Union Convention

Nov 2 - Non-Lethal Predator Control workshop- Wildlife
 Services. Location to be determined in Pondera or Glacier
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Thank You

Thank you to the MRLA members who stepped
 up and helped these last few months.

Thank you to Trina Jo Bradley and Ann Morren
 who helped with the registration for BQA at the
 Gentle Hand Livestock Conference in Valier.

Thank you to Marvin Kimmet, Paul Turner and
 Butch and Doreen Gillespie for helping to set up
 and tear down the Bison Display and the tables
 in the Valier Civic Center.

Thank you again to Trina Jo who has taken
 photos at many of our events.

Thank You to Pam Enneberg who traveled to
 Bozeman with Maggie Nutter to the National
 Academy of Science's Revisiting Brucellosis in
 the Greater Yellowstone Panel Meeting.

Thank you to Lindsey Habets, Janet Hawks and
 Carrie Lerum who do all the coordination and
 work on the Two Year Breeding Project at the
 Marias Fair.

Thank you to Luann Wallewien who hauled
 Maggie Nutter to the Federal Court House in
 Great Falls and thank you to Dave and Lenora
 McEwen and Gene Curry who also attended the
 Preliminary Injunction hearing on Helle's Sheep
 Grazing.

Your participation is truly appreciated.



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News Nibbles

This is Red Lodge area sheep rancher, Donna Cole's, exasperated response to the article in the Billings Gazette about Grizzlies spreading out in the area.

"They sure are Maggie. Black bears as well. I had the most depredations I've ever had last year due to bears. A Griz went through our sheep and ended up getting trapped at the neighbors after killing about eight of their sheep. It was a third time offender and had been trapped in WY and relocated in MT. There was a sow and two cubs causing trouble on the other side of Red Lodge. They were trapped and relocated and we're back within six weeks. Now they seem to be everywhere. Dealing with the impact of the wolves, and now these bears that don't seem to be afraid of anything. Add the environmentalists that want to stop federal grazing and save the wolves and save the bears.....maybe they should walk a day in our shoes!"

Wes Klein will be speaking at the Property Rights Conference Aug 7&8, in Billings MT. During the Montana Farm Bureau Mid-Year Meeting in Sidney Wes Klein, North Dakota Farm Bureau Director, came and spoke about how they defended private property rights when a Northern Plains National Heritage Area was formed/ legislated for North Dakota. There are groups that are currently looking at having legislation drawn up for a Heritage area in the Great Falls and Butte areas. While this may be a great move for the tourism industry, Heritage Areas are an infringement on Private Property rights just as Monuments are. We don't want to be caught sleeping on this and need to let our Congressmen know that we do not approve of any Heritage Areas and if one is formed then we certainly do not approve of any private property being included in it without the owners consent.

The MT FWP once again is exploring the possibility of Free Roaming Bison in the State of Montana. There are four alternatives to choose from including the no action alternative. The important thing to remember is that "No Action" by the MT FWP will not necessarily prevent free range/roaming bison in Montana. The two strongest movements in the state right now are the American Prairie Reserve and the linnii Initiative being enacted by the Blackfeet Tribe and supported by Wildlife Conservation Society and Glacier National Park. Just saying "No" to Fish Wildlife and Parks will not stop the Non-Governmental Organizations from continuing in their efforts. This makes it all the more important to stay informed and engaged. Walking away or ignoring the issue will not make it go away.

Letter from Ryan Rauscher, FWP Biologist

A retired college professor of mine and perhaps one of the best mule deer biologists of his time once told me during class, "Go with the DATA! If you don't have the data, get it." I've tried to follow that mantra in my career. With that in mind, below is some freshly available data for your consideration.

Recent elk management discussions have focused on shoulder seasons for those hunting districts over objective. A shoulder season is defined as any firearm season that occurs outside the 5-week general firearms season. There is more in the definition, but I think you get the idea of early hunts or late hunts.

I manage 3 elk hunting districts, 2 of which were over objective in 2013. Both of these hunting districts, HD 401 and HD 441, required b-licenses for antlerless elk. For the 2014 season, antlerless elk could be harvested on a general elk license and also on a 004-00 elk b-license.

This is a brief update of survey data and harvest data for those hunting districts.

In HD 401, elk populations have been growing approximately 15% per year for the past several years. The objective for HD 401 is 350 elk (+/- 20%). Post season surveys in 2013 counted 641 head of elk. These are primarily cow/calf groups as bulls are known to move in and out of Alberta but cow groups generally remain in the Hills.

Elk harvest in HD 401 has averaged 35 antlerless elk for the previous 10 years. Post season elk surveys in 2014 again counted 640 elk. It is important to note however that population growth did not occur for the first time in 6 years. Elk harvest in 2014 was estimated at 99 antlerless elk, an increase of over 280%. I believe this is due primarily to landowners having new tools to manage elk.

I anticipate harvest to increase as access improves with continued movement toward objective.

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

Is currently looking for comments on Proposed Guidelines for Elk Shoulder Seasons

This applies to the whole state of Montana. If you have concerns with the elk population in your area please take the time to comment.

<http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/publicComments/2015/guidelinesForElkShoulderSeasons.html>

US House and Senate Intervene for Livestock Producers Opposed to Fresh Meat Imports from Argentina and Brazil

The last few weeks have been quite the stir. June 30, 2015 we heard the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the new rules that would allow chilled and frozen fresh beef from defined areas in Brazil and Argentina to be imported into the US. Then on July 9, 2015 the House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee placed an amendment on the Agriculture Appropriations bill that would stop the importation until certain circumstances are met.

1. The USDA must conduct a comprehensive risk evaluation of importing meat from Argentina and Brazil and 2. USDA would need to make additional site visit to beef slaughtering and processing facilities in Argentina and Brazil and then submit a report to the Committee on Appropriations within 90 days after each site visit. Thankfully on Thursday, July 16, the Senate Appropriations Committee also add provisions to halt the implementation of the new importation rules. Both of these amendments must now pass the full House and Senate.

Dr. Silvia Keindel, Senior Staff Veterinarian, Regional Evaluation Services staff, National Import Export Services, stated that even though the Federal Register states that the rule is effective August 31, 2015 the US will not see imports of Brazilian or Argentinean beef in September. Keindel, who was part of the team that traveled to Brazil and Argentina to assess their farms, laboratories, slaughter plants and the processes in place to insure food safety, states that both countries have many procedures and paperwork to complete before exporting beef to the US. Dr. Keindel expressed complete confidence in the science behind the new rules.

The rules allowing importation of chilled and frozen beef from Brazil and Argentina were published in the Federal Register on July 2nd to take effect August 31, 2015. The amendments placed on the respective Appropriations Bills by the subcommittees must now pass the full House and full Senate. The likelihood of the House and Senate passing these bills before the new importation rules go into affect are slim.

Tony Corbo, Food and Water Watch, states there is yet another hoop to be jumped through.

“While the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) rules cleared the importation of fresh beef from Brazil and Argentina based on animal health (which we disagree with) , fresh beef imports could not take place until

the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) cleared the Brazilian and Argentine slaughter inspection systems as being equivalent to ours. That still needs to happen regardless of the amendment to the FY 2016 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

It is often customary for agencies to wait for the legislative process to be completed before they implement controversial policies. I believe that both APHIS and FSIS will wait to make any moves until the Congress finishes the legislative process.”

The Beef Industry is looking at this situation in very cautious way. Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) is highly contagious virus that affects pigs, sheep and cattle. Facts such as, the recent loss of 48 million birds in US due to Avian Influenza, the poultry industries complaint that the USDA did not act quick enough and the May 2015, report from the United States Governmental Accountability Office (GAO), “Federal Veterinarians- Efforts Needed to Improve Workforce Planning” basically stating the U.S. isn’t ready for FMD, have beef producers looking hard for ways to stop the importation of fresh meat from these countries.

Due to the critical nature of The USDA new importation rule, a GAO review, requested by bipartisan members of Congress, is currently ongoing at APHIS for the USDA APHIS site review visits and risk analysis process used to determine the risk estimation of “low risk” for the possible introduction of FMD into the U.S. from these regions through the importation of fresh beef.

To insure the continued safety of the United States beef, pork and lamb industries please encourage Senators Steve Daines

<http://www.daines.senate.gov/connect/email-steve> and John Tester

https://www.testers.senate.gov/?p=email_senator to support the House and Senates Appropriation Subcommittees verbiage which will help to stop the importation of fresh meat. Let them know your concerns about the risk of importing Brazilian or Argentinean fresh meat.

National Academy of Science Looks at Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area

Excerpt from NAS website

In this update of Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area (NRC, 1998) an NRC-appointed committee will comprehensively review and evaluate the available scientific literature and other information on the prevalence and spread of *Brucella abortus* in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) in wild and domestic animals and examine the feasibility, time-frame, and cost-effectiveness of options to contain or suppress brucellosis across the region. The study will examine factors associated with the increased occurrence of brucellosis transmission from wildlife to livestock and the recent expansion of brucellosis in non-feedground elk, including whether evidence suggests that brucellosis is self-sustaining in elk or if reinfection through emigration from feeding grounds is occurring.

....

Throughout the study, the committee will meet with wildlife managers, animal health officials, land managers, native peoples, and other stakeholders, including the members of the public, to understand the implications of brucellosis control efforts on other goals and activities in the region and nationally. The committee will examine the societal and economic costs and benefits of implementing various measures to reduce or eliminate the risk of brucellosis transmission to cattle and within wildlife relative to the costs and benefits of allowing the persistence of brucellosis in the GYA. In a consensus report, the committee will summarize the findings and conclusions of its analysis and based on the scientific evidence, describe the likely effectiveness and trade-offs of options that could be used to address brucellosis in the GYA.

In addition, the report will describe and prioritize further research needed to reduce uncertainties and advance the knowledge base on brucellosis vaccines, vaccine delivery mechanisms, and diagnostics.

Pamala Enneberg, MRLA Member stated after attending NAS Panel Meeting in Bozeman, July 1 & 2, 2015:

“We are living in exciting times to see the National Academy of Science look into options to contain or suppress brucellosis. New advancements in technology, science, and research can be implemented to improve the standards now in place from 1998. The cost benefit to the Agriculture community of eradicating brucellosis is worth our time and support during this study. The conference was eye opening to see the diversity of groups and their corresponding opinions on how brucellosis, bison, elk, cattle, public, and private lands should be handled. One opinion being bison should be free to roam the entire state as

elk are treated with no human handling or interaction.

This will affect you. Make your voices heard by attending one of the two remaining conferences or with a written letter to the National Academy of Science panel. We need to make sure the panel understands the Ag community’s values and position.”

Send your comments titled “Revisiting Brucellosis in GYA” to Study Director: Peggy Tsai ptsai@nas.edu

Errol Rice, Executive Vice President of Montana Stockgrowers Association, bravely stated support for continuing a search for ways to move forward in effort to eradicate brucellosis as is supported by the Montana Stockgrowers Membership formed Policies. He also eloquently explained how the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) had been very costly to Montana livestock producers.

Some MSGA Policy as voted on by membership.

CH 016 - REGIONALIZATION OF LIVESTOCK FOR BRUCELLOSIS CONTROL - 2007 (Revised 2014)

... Priorities Regarding Brucellosis and Bison in Yellowstone Area

Recommendation

1. Eradication of brucellosis in the Yellowstone’s National Park bison and GYA elk for a clean and healthy environment that benefits both livestock and wildlife;
2. Support for private property rights as they pertain to land use including grazing rights;
3. Request that any increased monitoring or testing of livestock in the Greater Yellowstone area be approved by the state veterinarian and funded out of the APHIS Yellowstone Park Brucellosis funds;
4. Continue to support the GYIBC recommendations that call for the removal of bison from the state of Montana prior to calving, thereby reducing the increased environmental contamination from calving activities.

CH 032 - ELK BRUCELLOSIS - 2011 (Revised 2012)

... THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED MSGA work with and encourage Yellowstone National Park, the MT Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the MT Department of Livestock to find and utilize effective means to decrease and eventually eliminate the presence of brucellosis in the Yellowstone and nearby elk herds;

JOINT AH/LU 002 – IBMP- 2006 (Revised 2012)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED MSGA supports the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and Dept. of Interior and the States of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming working to develop and implement a Brucellosis Management Plan in the Greater Yellowstone Area and continue with a long term goal of elimination designed to fully protect the livestock industries and human health in these three states; ...

Thank You! WestFeeds for helping to sponsor
Kurt Pate and Bill Pelton at the
Gentle Hands Livestock Conference in Valier, MT

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