

Opinion from America's Outback

FARMLAND DISAPPEARING

Our government is unraveling. Too many of us have government jobs. Just down the road to the north is Salt Lake City, which used to be 50 percent rural and 50 percent urban. It is now 90 percent urban and 10 percent rural. Our farmland is disappearing. Housing is taking the ground that farms used to operate on. In about 15 years there will be solid housing from Salt Lake City to Nephi, Utah, and beyond. And on the southern end of the state, around St. George, the same thing is happening. We have a bumper sticker on our car that says No Farms, No Food. What's going to happen to our grandchildren who know nothing of the changes that have taken place in the last several years and of the freedoms that have been taken away? I would like to see more articles about the changes that have taken place and what we, the people, can do about it, since it is our country. And how we can turn our farms and lands over to our children as an inheritance so they can keep doing what we have always done for generations.

JULIANA PROBERT, SCIPIO, UTAH

Check www.rangemagazine.com for special reports and other issue-oriented stories.—Ed.

Thank you for your defense of ranching.

RON GROSSMAN, MARICOPA, ARIZONA

We are having our own problems with Forest Service but we read *RANGE* and see we're not alone. What can we do? Actually, we feel we are getting them to back off a little. Sure do appreciate all you do.

JEAN S. HARSHBARGER, NEWCASTLE, WYO.

STIRRING EMOTIONS

I really enjoyed "Call of the Cow Country," and I have to tell you, Harry Webb's story that

CRYING WOLF

I heard this photograph was taken north of Kamia, Idaho, in 2011 but do not know who took it. Very seldom do you see this many wolves in one location.

WALT OSTRANDER, NORTH FORK, IDAHO

The winter issue included "Opinions on Wolves" and Rene Anderson's close encounter with a wolf while elk hunting in Idaho. One opinion held forth that wolves are shy, elusive animals that pose no threat to humans. The facts say different. In addition to the three humans killed by wolves in Alaska, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia between 2007 and 2010, a three-year-old girl was killed by a wolf in Minnesota in 1989 and a two-year-old boy was killed by a wolf in Michigan in 1981. A wolf control officer in New Mexico has gone so far to say that his worst fear is that wolves will attack and kill children.

Even if one disregards the attacks on humans by wolves, the economic cost of overpopulated wolves is enormous. For example, since 1985 the state of Wisconsin has paid out in excess of \$1 million in taxpayer funds for deaths and injuries to livestock, pets, hunting hounds and llamas. Additionally, your readers should be aware that the wolf-recovery team in New Mexico and Arizona is considering a plan to release Mexican wolves into western Texas and southern Colorado and Utah. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has denied that such a plan is in the works but released documents clearly show that a rationale is being built to support the release of wolves outside of their historic range. This is a bad idea that needs to be derailed.

EARL STAHL, NEENAH, WISCONSIN

Wolves still dominate the news around the killing fields of Wallowa County, Ore. The black alpha has really been on the rampage, but nothing can be done—like treat him like he treats us—because the shooting of the alpha male and another wolf is in litigation, a filing by four environmental groups. So what's new?

I truly enjoy *RANGE*. It is everything I believe in. Keep it coming. We need all the good information out there to fight wilderness expansion, the Endangered Species Act, and all those politicians who keep forcing regulations and eminent domain on the West.

ROCHELLE DANIELSON, ENTERPRISE, OREGON



Via the Internet and a RANGE reader. Note said: "Wolf killed in Elliston, Mont., second week of rifle season." Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' nongame/threatened and endangered bureau chief, Lauri Hanauska-Brown, said, "The biggest wolf we have recorded is 115 pounds." Even though the wolf has been delisted from the endangered list, FWP says "There is heightened sensitivity due to ongoing litigation."



If anyone wonders where the moose, deer and elk herds of north Idaho have gone, this photo taken last fall near Weippe offers a clue.

Alma, N.M., is a four-hour drive from Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque or someplace Texas. I thought little barred-up windows and doors were to hold bad guys until local law enforcement could transport them to Albuquerque. But no! Children stand inside while waiting for the school bus! That beautiful designed, expansive (obviously government) complex outside Albuquerque is not White Sands office. They breed wolves here for "wild release," at \$1 million per pup. Most any dyslexic knows that even if a wolf puppy never sees a human silhouette, it has breathed humanity with its first breath. No wonder schools are chain-link fencing playgrounds.

Approximately 20 years ago, elk and wolves were "reintroduced" into the area, with great success. Wolves have since decimated this world-class area deer population, while outlandish elk populations stand by as next-in-line wolf smorgasbord, meanwhile eating ranchers' hard-earned bounty.

Anything that will cheerfully eat me is not my friend and I'm grateful my ancestors didn't save the dinosaur or the saber-toothed tiger. Is this a great country, or what?

SYLVIA FASCIO, GERLACH, NEVADA

really stirred my emotions was “A Horse Called Satan.” I feel such a responsibility to my horses, and always have. Once I sold a mare to a friend, and it did not turn out well for my horse, so I was heartstruck at Harry’s discovery that his beloved horse had led such a miserable life.

It is so relevant right now, with the slaughterhouse situation, and the mustang dilemma—and our human equation in caring for and about these loyal creatures. It is fact for me that a good death is far preferable to a bad life—for both humans and animals. The human situation is one thing, but as human beings, we should be able to figure out better solutions for the horses on this planet, and if that means providing a humane end for the horse, both for its sake, and the health of the range, it is our moral obligation to provide that. Horses have served mankind well for centuries, and still do. I hope we figure out how best to serve them—and in a hurry!

JANE LAMBERT, STEVENSVILLE, MONTANA
The first edition of Jane Lambert’s book, “Charlie Russell, The Cowboy Years,” sold out. (See RANGE, Winter 2012.) A second edition will be available in early spring.—Ed.

1944 VERSUS 2011

My younger brother sent this photo to me, and it really hit a sensitive spot as I remember the sacrifices of my parents, uncles and aunts, and other friends who “joined up” in World War II or helped with the “homefront.” Being



a young kid then, it’s left a lifelong impression on those who gave all in World War II. The photo tells it all.

It’s been 70 years since the deadly attack on the U.S.A. at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. On that “day of infamy,” more than 2,400 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, along with many civilians, had their lives shortened and that was the beginning of America’s involvement in WWII.

DR. LYLE MCNEAL, LOGAN, UTAH

You have a great magazine but our upcoming youth may not be aware of some of the legal

(Continued on page 46)

THE WAY I SEE IT

WHO’S WHO?

EXPLANATIONS FOR SILLY. BY LEE PITTS

Recently I was trying to explain to an urban relative the confusing genealogy of donkeys, mules, hinnies and burros, and it all reminded me of the classic comedy routine made famous by Abbott and Costello, “Who’s On First?” For you youngsters, Abbott and Costello were a great comedy team and their version of “Who’s On First?”—which kept confusing the names of ballplayers as answers to questions—was voted the funniest comedy routine of the 20th century. One comedian would ask, “Who’s on first?” and the other would answer, “No, Who’s on second. What’s on first.”

Or something like that. If you’re under 30 and have never seen it, you can watch the routine on YouTube. For you oldsters like me over 50, I’m told that YouTube is like a television station on something called the Internet.

The conversation was between myself and a shirttail relative we call Silly because, quite frankly, he is. So you can imagine the difficulty I had explaining the genealogy of the mule to him. Our conversation went something like this.

Silly: “I don’t understand the difference between a donkey, a burro and a mule.”

Me: “First of all, you must understand that a mule is a hybrid. Kind of like the Prius.”

Silly: “But I thought a Prius is a car.”

Me: “Of course it is, Silly. But think of it as a crossbred, or hybrid, that gets better mileage, is more complicated, and liberal Democrats like them because they have a smaller carbon footprint. That describes both the Prius and the mule, only in the mule’s case you get the hybrid by crossing two members of the Equidae family.”

Silly: “Didn’t we grow up with the Equidae family? I think I dated one of the Equidae sisters and, come to think of it, she did act like she was a little inbred. Remember?”

Me: “No, Silly, the two members of the

Equidae family are the horse and the ass, sometimes referred to as the donkey. Donkeys were derived from the Nubian wild ass.”

Silly: “Yeah, I think I saw that movie on HBO. It was a riot. Was Will Ferrell in it?”

Me: “I don’t think so. I mean, no, a Nubian wild ass was an animal. If you cross a jack, or jackass, which is a male ass, and a female horse, a mare, you get a mule, which is usually infertile.”

Silly: “Yeah, thank goodness the Equidae sister was too.”

Me: “Pay attention. Because they cannot reproduce on their own, it is said of the mule, ‘It has neither the pride of ancestry nor the hope of posterity.’”

Silly: “Sounds like our cousins out in Bakersfield.”

Me: “Can we stick to mules please? Anyway, you can do it the other way around and breed a female ass, which is a jennet, with a

male horse, and you get a hinny, which is smaller than the mule. Understand?”

Silly: “About which part?”

Me: “Any part.”

Silly: “No.”

Me: “Let’s start over. First, you take a member of the ass family, which can also be known as a burro. Think of the burro as an unimproved member of the ass family.”

Silly: “I thought we weren’t going to talk about our Bakersfield relatives?”

Me: “Urggh! Okay. We’ll do it your way. Think of the Bakersfield relatives as the members of the ass family. Those relatives are more crude, less cultured and refined than we are, and are probably either in prison or in politics. Now you take them and breed them to our relatives in Missouri, in this case represented by the magnificent horse. Now, what would you get?”

Silly: “A social climber? A socially transmitted disease? I give up. But which one drives the Prius?” ■

Lee Pitts lives in Los Osos, Calif. Check page 5 for some of his classic books.

A mule has neither the pride of ancestry nor the hope of posterity.

LETTERS

(Continued from page 11)

issues you print. Please send a gift subscription to our newer FFA chapter in Dufur.

DARREL WOLFF, DUFUR, OREGON
FOR JAIME, JESIE, JADINE AND JANIA

IT'S A TOUGH LIFE

This photo was taken by my daughter on Jerry Shelton's ranch in Hastings, Okla. We



are very dry. Stock ponds are drying up. (The bull was saved and is back at work.)

CHAS GRIFFIN, HASTINGS, OKLAHOMA

My family came to Idaho in a covered wagon over 150 years ago and settled where the Curlew National Grasslands are now located. The settlements of Holbrook, Arbon Valley and Stone were grubbed and scratched out

with thousands of hours of backbreaking manual labor. Families worked together, cooked together, celebrated successes together, and when sickness and hard winters came, they did what was required to protect and preserve life together. My great-grandparents were exceptional stewards of the land. The West was settled by people who had GRIT!

Groups like Western Watersheds Project and people like Judge Lynn Winmill spit on the memory and dedication of my family and the tough people who settled the West. Today "bottom dwellers" like them live off the backs of taxpayers and hardworking Americans. They are leeches. They contribute nothing...they wake up every morning knowing the federal government and taxpayers will cut them a check for what they call work.

BRIAN BAILEY, EAGLE, IDAHO

I enjoy pictures and stories from Jean Laughton ["My Ranching Life," Winter 2012], as I grew up in that country and went to school with most of the folks mentioned.

KENT BARNEY, MEADVIEW, ARIZONA

I love your magazine! Keep it up!

BRAD COULSON, ANKENY, IOWA

PIG LOVER

Still looking for another photo of a little pink pig with black lamb. [RANGE calendar photo by Linda Dufurrena, 2003.]

LAURA H. QUESENBERRY, BRISTOL, VIRGINIA
Our mag's mostly about cows, sheep, dogs and horses, but we'll flex our universe!—Ed.

What a deadbeat! Forgive me for being so slow to renew. Busy! Calves are good, at least the ones the wolves couldn't catch.

KEN YECNY, SHERIDAN, MONTANA

Wouldn't buy your magazine if it were free.

A FAN FROM BOISE, IDAHO

Thanks for the \$5 off for the early bird subscription renewals. I would rather have RANGE continue to spread the truth so I'll pay full price.

GENE THOMAS, KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON

We put this mule with a message in the Hells Canyon Mule Days Parade last year. Pictured is Warren Matthews of Harney County Mule



Company of Princeton, Ore. This is the only known "antlered mule" in the country.

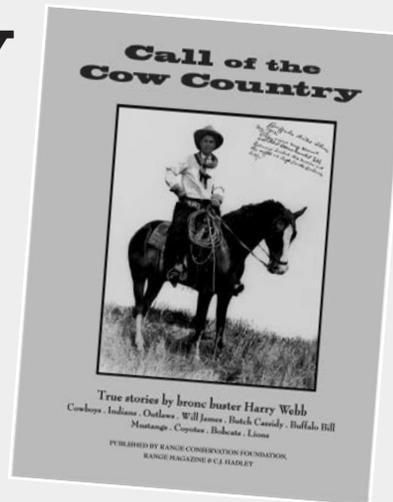
CATHY KAECH, VIA EMAIL FROM OREGON

Raw & Real Stories of the West

Call of the Cow Country

Harry Webb was a cowboy, bronc buster and wrangler. He rode in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. He knew liars, murderers, fine folks and plenty of mean critters. And, fortunately, he wrote it all down. His stories are told in the language of the day—authentic and historically accurate. This volume of 30 first-person accounts begins with Harry running away from home to pursue his dream of cowboying. This began an eight-decade journey and you'll want to tag along for the ride. In his own words, "Cowboying was a hell of a way of life any way you looked at it—good, bad and plain hell."

■ "I had parted some heavy grass by a swift-running ditch and had bellied down for a drink when Mose set up a furious barking alongside my head. It was the first time I had ever heard him bark. Raising up, I parted the grass with my shovel only to hear it struck with the rattler's fangs. There was no doubt but that Mose had saved me from a fatal bite in the face."



30 stories by Harry Webb
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Paintings by J.N. Swanson
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other ways. Several have subscribed, so I give new copies to new customers. This helps spread the word of rural America to more people. This tax-deductible advertising creates a win/win situation.

TERRY E. BROWN, TERRY'S NURSERY
YREKA, CALIFORNIA

THE OTHER COAST

An Air Force buddy sent me a subscription and I sure enjoy it. I'm a 77-year-old horse-shoer. I lost my wife of 53 years last August.

DAVE SECHRIST SR.
TUNKHANNOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

This is a good publication about the rural western way of life and the war that is being waged against it. The leftists are attempting to destroy not only our livelihoods, but our entire culture.

ADAM WRITER (USMC)
HAMPSTEAD, NORTH CAROLINA

My wife and I read *RANGE* cover to cover.

TOM EMERSON, WHITMAN, NEBRASKA

I was born north of Cadillac, Mich. When I was 12, my mother had sinus trouble so bad a surgeon in Grand Rapids told us she should change climes. We moved to Arizona and she got complete relief. I wound up working for the Double 7 ranch. They had a contract to supply horses for Uncle Sam when the U.S. still had a cavalry. When they couldn't throw us kids off, they were green broke and then they were delivered to Fort Custer, Mich. The camp was closed after World War II.

RONALD CADDELL, STOTTS CITY, MISSOURI

PLEASE DON'T CHANGE

I hesitate to subscribe for two years because I just got burned by another magazine—which just went digital. I beg you to keep publishing but please, please don't go just digital. Many of your subscribers don't even have a computer.

TISH LUKE, GRANBY, COLORADO
Tish, as long as I'm around, RANGE will smell of ink.—CJ

I read *RANGE* from front to back. If we could get rid of the environmentalist, our country would be a lot better off.

DEAL SPRIET, BAKER CITY, OREGON

Love your stuff.

MITCH KESTIK, FREDONIA, ARIZONA
We love our readers.—Ed.

Decades ago professional environmentalists (PE's) started a new industry to recover species, recover watersheds and preserve viable populations of everything imaginable. They introduced species into areas they might never have been, make air and water cleaner, and preserve entire landscapes where destructive and unwashed humans could not get at them. The PE's have repackaged their agenda over time to freshen its appeal. The latest is "sustainability." It's a good buzzword to take to state legislatures, Congress, colleges, schools and government agencies to convince the masses that to sustain planet earth we have to severely limit our use of natural resources and need more regulations and laws to achieve it.

Those new laws came in the form of a Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, expansion of wilderness designations, and in the Endangered Species Act. More species and habitat were added to the list, more public lands withdrawn from multiple uses, more regulations on production tools from the seeds we plant to the size of holding areas for our livestock.

Have the PE's reached their goal of complete command and control in the hands of government? Another year or two like the last three and I'd say yes; but then again there seem to be a few clouds gathering that might cause a perfect storm to rain on their parade.

Forests, farms, mills and mines will not be sustainable unless the people who own and manage them are profitable. Profit is the great motivator and incentive. People produce items for markets if they can sell at a price that exceeds the cost of production.

Those who equate profit to greed subscribe to a philosophy that P.J. O'Rourke describes as that of "sniveling brats."

Isn't it ironic that the PE industry produces nothing, but profits by employing guilt, fear and deceit to separate "caring" people from money? Litigation and demands for regulations have shut down the nation's

wood-products industry and ushered in a politically correct policy of no forest management. The result is a buildup of dead and dying trees that burn up in uncontrollable wildfires.

People who have no job, no money, or no house don't care if they kill the last deer in the forest if it will feed their family for a week. Sane people will not care if it's the last grizzly bear in Idaho if it gets in their pigpen or too close to their children. They will kill it because it is their right to protect their lives and property. It is an immoral government that prevents or prosecutes citizens for exercising their rights.

Natural-resource users feed, clothe and shelter a growing population. They provide safe and affordable

food and wood and minerals that have minimal ecological impacts. They compete with other land uses in a climate of economic crisis that is politically conflicted.

People will not work without pay or profit or work a job that pays less than government dole, food stamps and free health care. All Americans should help repeal laws that encourage government waste, fraud and abuse, put us trillions of dollars in debt, and obstruct our chances for a better life.

It's a race against time. Can we stop it? ■

Sharon Beck ranches in Cove, Ore.



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