



Stecklings Safe

On Feb. 26 a U.S. appeals court reversed a lower court's order calling for the destruction of young genetically modified sugar beet plants, or stecklings. "Injunctive relief is not now needed to guard against any present or imminent risk of likely irreparable harm," the court found.

Holding Steady

February alfalfa hay prices held steady compared to last month, says Wyoming NASS, but fell slightly behind last year. Other hay prices were above both last month and last February. Alfalfa hay, unchanged from last month but down one dollar from last year, came in at \$90 per ton. Other hay, at \$90 per ton, was up five dollars from last month and up \$10 from last year.

Pines Dwindling

A new study that examined data from 12,600 research plots in the Cascades and the Rockies in computer models that compared historical and current conditions such as growing season, snowpack runoff, soil wetness and summer temperatures found that lodgepole pine may be gone from most of the Northwest by 2080.

Winter Lingers

In the February Wyoming Crop Weather Report, Wyoming NASS says Campbell and Weston county producers are feeding more hay than usual due to cold temperatures and snow cover, raising concerns for hay supplies this spring. Converse and Uinta counties also reported uncharacteristically cold temperatures throughout the month.

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Wyoming stakeholders concerned about wild horse reforms

Many who have a stake in wild horse management in Wyoming agree that the Feb. 24 announcement of "fundamental reforms" to the BLM's wild horse and burro management strategies don't bode well.

At a time when there are 12,000 extra horses running on the West's rangelands, the BLM has said they will reduce gath-

ers by 24 percent over the next two years while waiting for the results of a study by the National Academy of Science (NAS) – a study that's received a \$1.3 million dollar allocation at a time when the U.S. House has cut the BLM's budget by \$2 million.

"This doesn't bode well for the range and forage resources, for wild-

life resources or for sage grouse," says National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board member Renee Taylor of Casper.

While Taylor has served on the board as one of two livestock industry representatives, she says her position has been eliminated and she's not sure when the new appointment will be made to

take her place. The BLM has replaced her livestock industry position with a position that calls for an "equine specialist with special knowledge of equine behavior."

Of the reduction in gathers, Taylor says, "It's very contradictory, because the BLM is committed to sage grouse con-

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Property rights

Harriet Hageman discusses effect of Wild Lands, biodiversity

Casper – In a lecture given the week after the BLM issued guidance to field managers describing how the agency is to use Secretarial Order 3310, commonly referred to as the Wild Lands project, Cheyenne attorney Harriet Hageman labeled the intent of the order, and its accompanying "rewilding" projects, as a taking of private property rights.

Hageman, the 2010 Casper College Distinguished Alum, spoke at Casper College on March 1 for the 10th Annual Doornbos Lecture Series. Along with private property, Hageman addressed wolves in Wyoming, Wyoming water law and the effect of federal regulations on natural resource industries.

Regarding the Wild Lands project, Hageman specifically mentioned an article titled "The Rewilding of North America," published in a 2005 edition of *Nature* magazine.

"The idea is, because we have vast open spaces in the Rocky Mountain West, i.e. Wyoming, they will bring in all the endangered species from all over the world and release them here," she explained. "They will simply move the people off and bring in lions, elephants and cheetahs."

She pointed out the article's statement that "large tracts of private land hold the

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Spent grains from local brew pub help fill marketing niche

Jackson – Of selling natural beef to restaurants in Jackson, Kate Mead of Mead Ranch Natural Beef says it's been a great learning experience.

"You don't know that much about your cows until you see what they look like inside," she says of the Mead Ranch cowherd.

Mead Ranch Natural Beef started after restaurants in Jackson began asking Mead for local beef to sell. She says that's when she created an LLC and began trying to figure out how to do that with a portion of the calves from the commercial herd.

"We had one year when we sold a bunch of our commercial calves and had some steers left that the buyers cut back, so I bought them and started fattening them," she says of the company's beginning. "They stay on our meadows, not a feedlot, and in those days, as we still do today, we fed them grain and continued them on grass."

However, she says after three years of finishing them on a corn-based ration the feed costs were killing profits with only a small bunch of 50 head. She considered grass fattening, but soon concluded it would take too long to finish a steer on grass in Teton County.

That's when the ranch's hired man of 25 years suggested Mead use spent grains from a local brew pub to finish the steers.

"The brew pub had spent grains they'd take from their brewing process and dump into a wagon. Every week or so some pig farmers from Star Valley would come pick it up, and Olaf said we should at least get a wagon load and try it," says Mead of the mixture of hops, oats, barley and rye, some imported from as far as Germany and Holland.

"We started picking it up every day, and that became our replacement for the

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Kate Mead began Mead Ranch Natural Beef with steers from the Mead family's commercial cowherd after she saw a need from local Jackson restaurants. Christy Martinez photo

Things to consider: natural service versus AI

With the record-high bull sale averages reported across Wyoming this winter, some producers are considering whether implementing a full or partial AI program would be a more cost-effective alternative. Willie Altenburg of Genex explains what producers need to think about when making the switch.

"Costs are one thing. We get close when you compare a \$3,000 bull to AI synchronization projects. Sometimes the bull beats AI, and sometimes AI beats the bull on cost. Ultimately, you still have to have the bull for cleanup. We never completely displace the bull with AI.

"One thing producers always bring up in discussions about AI is the genetic benefit that can be obtained through AI. The improvement

of genetics, and being able to use highly proven bulls for calving ease, or improved growth, is something that is a big benefit. There is access to proven bulls through AI that ranchers can't access with natural service," says Altenburg.

He adds that these improvements are often more intangible, and therefore harder to record in a spreadsheet format.

"How do you measure the impact of calving ease? Do you save eight or 10 percent more calves? What is a replacement heifer worth? What about if she has six more calves over her productive lifetime with those genetics? It's hard to put dollar amounts on those traits, but they're a very important benefit of an AI program," says

Altenburg.

He lists utilizing professional help as another thing to consider when looking at an AI program.

"This area has really changed. Twenty years ago I told producers to go to AI school and do it themselves. They were breeding five to 10 cows a day for two weeks back then. Today we want everything bred and done in one to three days.

"It's still good to go to AI school and learn about synchronization, and the different systems, but anymore I recommend getting a professional tech to come in and help. If you're going to breed 100 heifers in three days, I don't think many producers have the arm, or the confidence in his arm and tech-

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Wyo ag operations hold steady

The number of farms and ranches in Wyoming in 2010 was unchanged from 2009 at an estimated 11,000 operations, according to Nancy Hussey with the Wyoming Field Office of USDA NASS.

Total land in farms and ranches was 30,200,000 acres, also unchanged from 2009. Wyoming ranks first in the nation in average size of farms and ranches at 2,745 acres. Montana ranks second at 2,068 acres. In Wyoming, there were 5,200 farms (47 percent) with less than \$10,000 of agricultural sales in 2010, unchanged from last year. This group accounted for 1,300,000 acres, or four percent of the total land.

A farm is defined as "any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year."



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best immediate potential for studies.”

“They’re targeting private property for this idea,” she said. “When I first read it, I thought it was insane, but it isn’t. You should hear the number of people who are talking about bringing animals from Africa and releasing them in the western United States.”

Hageman said the Wild Lands project shows a plan to take property throughout the country and return it to “wild-life corridors.”

“What the map shows is huge swaths of Wyoming and the western United States with a simulated reserve and corridor system to protect biodiversity,” she noted, adding, “The word ‘biodiversity’ is about taking away private property rights.”

She pointed out that the map says the corridors were drawn “as mandated by the Convention on Biological Diversity, The Wildlands Project, UN and U.S. Man and Biosphere Program and various UN, U.S. heritage programs and NAFTA.”

“There are people paying massive sums of money to figure out how to make the United States look like this to protect biodiversity ‘as mandated’ by the Convention on Biological Diversity,” she noted of the lines drawn on the map.

Hageman added that vast swaths of the land for the project are private lands, and that the UN can have a hand in projects like this through treaties with the U.S. that can trump the U.S. Constitution, even though they shouldn’t.

“We don’t have a federal government that fights back and says this isn’t even a discussion we’re going to have,” she said. “The project is foundational to the UN Biodiversity Treaty, which was never ratified by the U.S. Senate, and it calls for approximately 50 percent of United States to be set aside as Wild Lands, where no human can enter.”

In a public relations release from the UN, it was said of Wild Lands that “step by step, and piece by piece, the Wild Lands project is coming to fruition, and much has been accomplished over the last 10 years toward that goal, and the pace is stepping up.”

Although Hageman said the information and planning hasn’t been as public in the Obama administration, at least so far, she said it was really stepped up under the Clinton/Gore administration.

“Keep in mind that whenever there are decisions that affect public lands, they also affect private lands, especially the private lands nearby,” she said. “When multiple use is taken out of the equation on federal lands the pressure on private lands is increased, in terms of what we need to produce.”

“A society that cannot feed itself cannot survive,” she said of the increased pressure on private lands. “The most extreme example of that is Sudan, which imports 90 percent of its foodstuffs, and has

over the last two generations. They’ve been in civil war for 40 years, and the primary cause of the fight in that country has to do with the fact that they can’t feed themselves.”

Hageman mentioned a proposal by The Wilderness Society that would like to turn five to six million acres of federal land in California into wilderness. California already has 14 million acres of designated wilderness, which is 13.78 percent of the state. Six million more acres would make that 19 percent, and Hageman said if parks, monuments and wildlife reserves are added

“The word ‘biodiversity’ is about taking away private property rights.” – Cheyenne attorney Harriet Hageman, speaking on Wild Lands projects in the United States

that figure jumps to 27.5 percent of the state that’s been taken out of production.

In addition to the UN and the environmental groups, Hageman said another threat to private property rights are the reports and papers published non-stop, such as one entitled *Are Wyoming range practices working across purposes with wildlife habitat goals*, published by the Environmental Defense Fund.

“These organizations have massive amounts of money, both private and federal, that they get to study ways to take your private property away,” she stated. “They publish beautiful reports that describe how bad grazing is, and they don’t limit the discussion to federal property or state lands. The purpose of these documents, which are funded by the federal government and your tax dollars, is to stop grazing in the western United States.”

Hageman also talked about a woman who has written extensively about the “myth of the Western cowboy” and the “myth of agricultural production.” Her most recent report is titled *Western Grazing: The Capture of Grass, Ground and Government*.

Debra Donahue, a University of Wyoming law professor since 1992, believes it’s a myth that “ranchers are cowboys,” that “cowboys are independent, self-reliant, honest and hard-working” and that “public land ranching is crucial to the local rural western economies.”

She also writes that it’s untrue that public land ranching is crucial to maintaining a valuable culture and way of life, and that keeping public land ranchers in business maintains open space.

“She says it’s another myth that ranchers are good stewards of the land and all it’s creatures, and she says it’s a myth that grazing improves the land, and that ranching provides clean air, water and wildlife habitat,” noted Hageman.

Another article by Dona-

hue is entitled *Trampling the Public Trust* and is summarized with the statement: “Livestock production is a chief contributor to many significant and intractable environmental problems.”

“Interesting about this writing is that for almost every reference she relies upon her own previous writings. The article is well-documented with footnotes, but the myths are substantiated because she’s said it before,” said Hageman of the *Western Grazing* article. “This is the kind of publication we’re getting from people who are paid at the University of Wyoming.”

“I don’t believe in censorship – she can write what she wants – but I have the right to bring it to everyone’s attention,” continued Hageman. “She teaches in the law school, and this is what she teaches the kids coming out of law school.”

Hageman told the Casper College students in attendance at the lecture series that she has a hard time finding attorneys who want to do what she does.

“We need people who

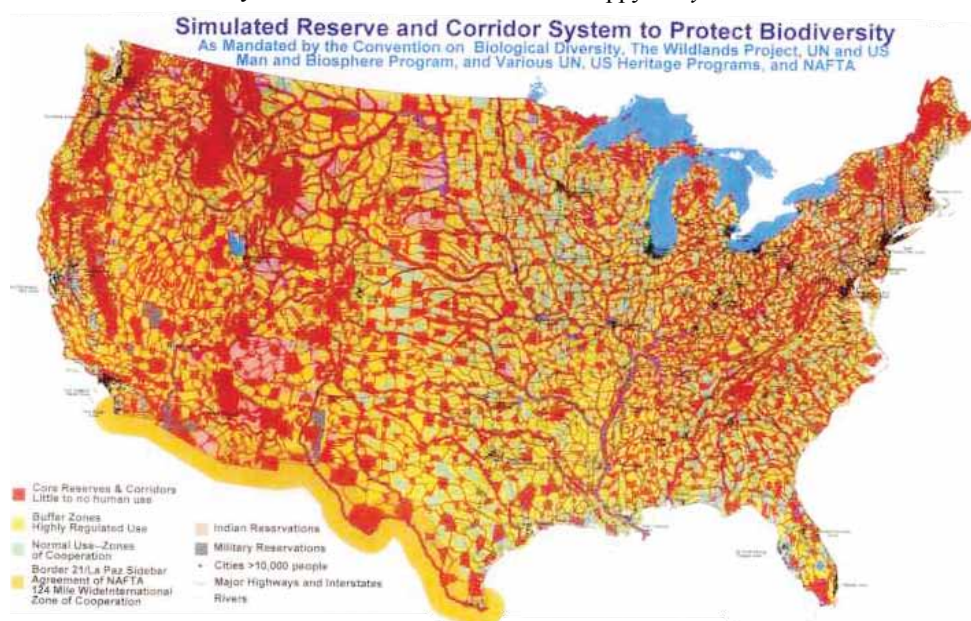
are willing to go out and work for our ranchers, irrigation districts, land managers and farmers,” she said. “I see myself as someone who’s in the ag industry, as an ag attorney, and I take great pride in the fact. We need other people like me. I need you to get an education, go on to law school and push back and tell them we won’t take this anymore.

Our liberties are too important to allow someone from Washington, D.C. to dictate how our property will be managed, and our liberties are too important to even allow someone from Washington, D.C. to say how our federal lands will be managed. Those decisions need to be made at the local level.”

She said she’d be happy

to help any student go on to get a bachelor’s and master’s degree with the intent of becoming an ag attorney.

Find another article on the Wild Lands project on Page 10 of this edition of the Roundup. Christy Martinez is managing editor of the Wyoming Livestock Roundup and can be reached at christy@wylr.net.



This map showing a plan to protect biodiversity in the United States has no regard for private property or private property rights, says Cheyenne attorney Harriet Hageman.

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