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INSIDE WLJ

CONSERVATION — Montana program working to conserve prairie habitat. Page 5

CHECK...CHECK...CHECK — Follow this summer management checklist to protect assets. Page 8

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"Wyoming is home to a precedent-setting lawsuit between a producer and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding grazing rights issues. Conflict between ranchers and the BLM over these sorts of issues is nothing new, but what is unique about this case is that the dispute was settled through some brokering by top officials in the Bush administration's Department of Interior," wrote Sarah L. Roen in the July 7, 2003, *WLJ* issue.

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USFS proposes plan to protect old-growth forests

— Open for comments

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has proposed an amendment to land management plans across the National Forest System to develop a consistent management framework for conserving, stewarding and monitoring old-growth forests.

The primary objective of the amendment is to enhance the long-term resilience of old-growth forests, address threats such as climate change and wildfire risks, and ensure the health and productivity of these forests for future generations.

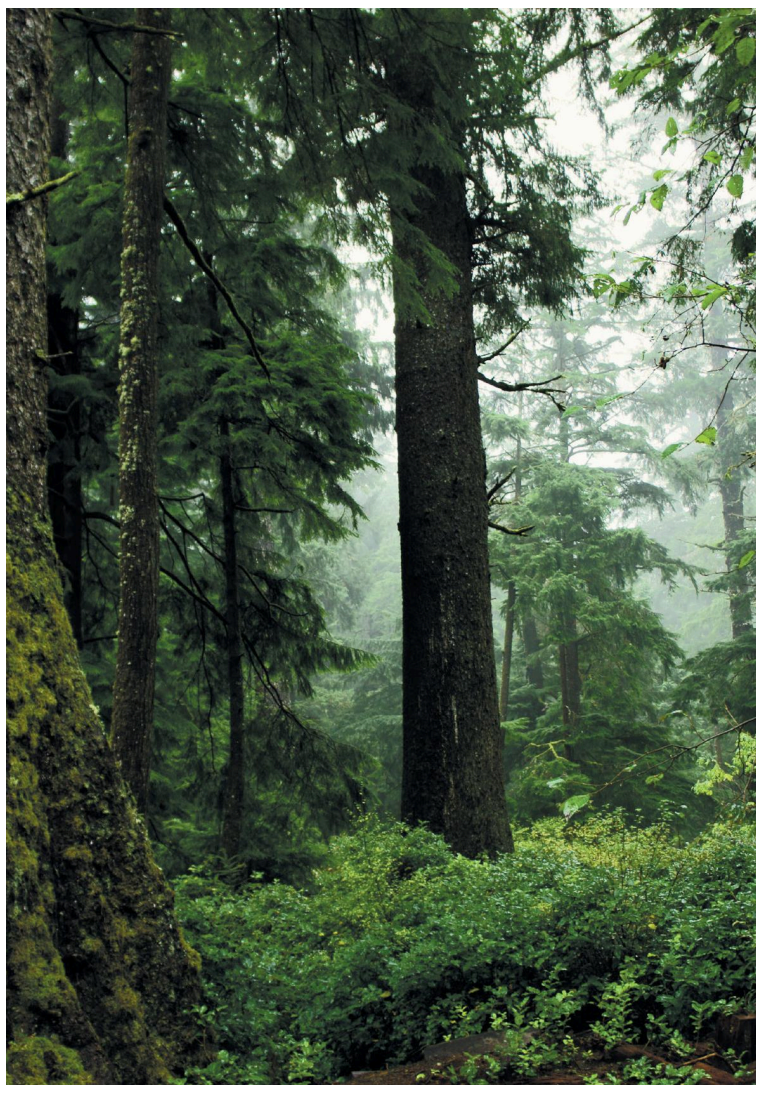
"Old-growth forests are important to our ecosystems by capturing carbon, and contributing to clean air, soil, water and diverse habitats," USFS Chief Randy Moore said. "Old forests also provide other benefits like subsistence and cultural uses, outdoor recreational opportunities and sustainable local economic development.

He continued, "The proposed old-growth amendment will provide guidance that can be adapted locally to support multiple uses, including proactive stewardship of old forests to reduce wildfire risk and create long-term resilience in a changing climate."

According to a previous technical report, old-growth forests are characterized by old trees and unique structural attributes, such as large tree size, large dead woody material accumulations, multiple canopy layers and distinct species composition. The report said the forests provide numerous ecosystem services and hold significant social, cultural, and economic values, and recreational experiences. Definitions for old-growth forests vary across regions and forest types, reflecting their diverse ecological conditions and developmental processes, the report said.

A recent inventory by USFS and Bureau of Land Management revealed the agencies oversee over 32 million acres of old-growth forests and

See OLD GROWTH on page 8



David Patte/USFWS

The U.S. Forest Service has proposed a plan to manage and conserve old-growth forests. Pictured here, an old-growth forest in Oregon's Oswald West State Park.

Supreme Court rules to overturn Chevron doctrine

— Ag applauds ruling

In a significant ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the 40-year-old precedent of Chevron deference, sharply curtailing the power of federal agencies to interpret the laws they administer. The decision in Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo is expected to have far-reaching effects across the country as courts will now rely on their interpretations of ambiguous laws.

"Chevron is overruled. Courts must exercise their independent judgment in deciding whether an agency has acted within its statutory authority," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the majority opinion.

In a 6-3 decision, the justices overturned their decision in the 1984 case Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc., which dictates that courts should defer to administrative agencies' interpretation of ambiguous statutes they administer.

Roberts expressed concern over the extensive power granted to administrative agencies.

"Perhaps most fundamentally, Chevron's presumption is misguided because agencies have no special competence in resolving statutory ambiguities," Roberts wrote. "Courts do. The Framers, as noted, anticipated that courts would often confront statutory ambiguities and expected that courts would resolve them by exercising independent legal judgment."

Justice Elena Kagan, in her dissent, argued in favor of maintaining the Chevron deference.

"This Court has long understood Chevron deference to reflect what Congress would want, and so to be rooted in a presumption of legislative intent," Kagan wrote. "Congress knows that it does not—in fact cannot—write perfectly complete regulatory statutes. It knows that those statutes will inevitably contain ambiguities that some other actor will have to resolve and gaps that some other actor will have to fill. And it would usually prefer that actor to be the responsible agency, not a court."

Justice Neil Gorsuch filed a concurring opinion stating, "Today, the Court places a tombstone on Chevron no one can miss."

Gorsuch highlighted that this decision signals a return to traditional interpretative rules that have guided the federal judiciary since the nation's inception.

"And all today's decision means is that, going forward, federal courts

See CHEVRON on page 8

BLM proposes northwest CA land management plan

— Manages 380,000 acres

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released its proposed Northwest California Integrated Resource Management Plan for public lands managed by the Arcata and Redding field offices.

The plan will guide the management of more than 382,000 acres of public land and 295,000 acres of subsurface minerals for the next 15-20 years. The areas included in the plan encompass Butte, Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity counties.

"Together, we have developed a plan that reflects stakeholder values, allowing for informed decisions and conservation reflective of the BLM's multiple-use mission," said BLM California Acting State Director Gordon Toevs in a news release.

The management plans have not been updated since the '90s. The proposed plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) address changing use patterns, recreation uses, wilderness management, wild and scenic rivers, and areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC).

Conservation groups praised the plan's preferred alternative for designating more ACECs. The alternative would designate 26 areas of critical environmental concern, covering nearly 88,000 acres. Livestock

See CA GRAZING on page 3

Boxed beef prices pick up ahead of holiday

The market eased into the week ahead of the Fourth of July holiday. Cash trade was hesitant to move forward with packer demand uncertain in advance of the holiday weekend. Numbers on the board stayed mostly steady over the week.

Live cattle futures closed mixed over the week. The August contract lost 53 cents to close at $185.92, and the October contract gained $1.10 to close at $186.85.

"Futures discount to cash prices and the cash cattle market's reluctance to break currently is a simple and accurate explanation as to the market's resilience," wrote Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Wednesday.

Cash trade through Wednesday totaled about 5,000 head. Live steers sold from $189-195, and dressed steers sold for $308.

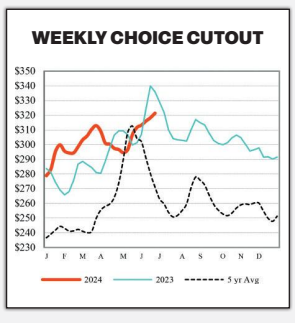
"It's a tough call to say whether any developments in the cash market will surface later Wednesday afternoon, because more than anything the question remains: How desperately do packers need cattle?" ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, asked in her Wednesday midday comments. "And if cattle aren't sold later Wednesday, will packers come back to the table on Friday or simply wait to buy more cattle next week?"

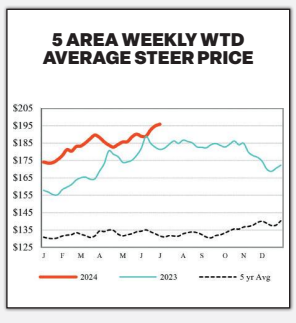
Cash trade for the week ending June 30 totaled 68,879 head. Live steers averaged $195.89, and dressed steers averaged $313.49.

Slaughter through Wednesday totaled about 353,000 head. Total slaughter for the week was projected to be about 500,000-520,000 head due to the holiday-shortened kill week. Numbers may be less than estimated due to a Kansas plant shutting down operations for several days after a roof issue. Total slaughter for a week earlier is projected at 609,000 head.

Boxed beef prices climbed higher ahead of the holiday. The Choice cutout gained

See MARKETS on page 5





LIVE STEERS	DRESSED STEERS	CME FEEDER
N/A	N/A	$256.44

WEEK ENDING: 07-03-24

PERIODICAL : Time Sensitive Priority Handling

COMMENTS

Dear John from John Deere



IPSEN

America celebrated its 248th anniversary since the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress. They boldly took a stand for what they believed in and created an opportunity for their generation and generations to come. They knew full-well what the ramifications would be if they were captured in the subsequent war. Five men who signed were captured and tortured before their death and nine men died from wounds or hardships from the Revolutionary War. So many of these men were mercilessly hounded throughout the following years by adversaries that many signers had to live in hiding and lost their fortunes, dying broke of their possessions. Many more watched their families suffer horrible fates. When they signed, they knew what they were signing up for, and they did it anyway.

It was a leap of faith that, in fact, united our country. Together, they pledged, "For the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of the divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

At the time, 2.5 million people made up 13 colonies and they pledged against the global powers that, on paper, should have destroyed them easily. With fate on their side fueled by heart and determination, they succeeded. Today, there's 50 states, 14 territories and 330 million people that make up the largest global economy. Countless inventions including the light bulb, modern flight, and the internet are at the core where the American Dream is derived from—everyone has opportunity.

At the root sits the common passion of our *WLJ* family: agriculture. It was the very first effort by the first settlers. A combination of knowledge and skill assisted by the Native Americans, these settlers had to learn quickly how to raise crops and store food for the harsh winters. Agriculture was at the very core of survival, and it still is today. When the Declaration of Independence was signed, nine of these men were farmers.

American agriculture carries many symbols, but none as bright as the green tractors working fields across America. The John Deere company was born in 1837 with a self-scouring steel plow and grew into one of the nation's largest agricultural companies. With production in the U.S. and Germany, they have maintained the American spirit and represented the core. In the last few months, they've made two blunders that have their loyal base scratching their heads.

In April, Deere launched a campaign to search for a chief tractor officer. This new position was specifically going to be a social media influencer "to help the iconic American brand celebrate farmers, contractors, groundskeepers, and brand fans." This campaign blew up social media platforms, especially TikTok where content creators vied for the position. The result: they made all of social media angry with their process and selection. Offering a salary of $192,300 per year to tell Deere stories while the company announced layoffs of 120 employees in June and another 60 employees from their Urbandale, IA, facility in August.

Now, the company has announced they are moving production of several models to a factory in Mexico. This move will take another 600 employee positions away from facilities in Illinois and Iowa.

In their second quarter earnings call, a spokesperson said, "Industry sales are expected to further decline in the back half of FY 2024. To better position Deere to meet future demand, we continue to take proactive steps to reduce production and inventory." This move is also on the heels of more than 1,000 workers that have already been laid off or given early retirement since 2023, according to multiple sources.

John Deere CEO John May reportedly hauled in $26.7 million last year while the company's net income is reported at $10.166 billion in fiscal year 2023. With the recent moves, Deere stock has pulled back by around 10% over the last six months while breaking the trust of its loyal fans across North America as many claim the recent moves are more out of greed and not from market indications.

With the microscope now on the iconic brand and a failed attempt at headline deflections, Midwest towns across America are angry and unemployed.

Agriculture will be the root of a country's ability to defend and thrive. Those who have food have control. America is in comparatively great shape, albeit we can metaphorically poke holes in several places in our armor. Deere has brought the microscope to them, and we'll see what news they create moving forward. For now, I'm a proud American who will be grilling beef, going to parades, and lighting fireworks. To our readers, please stay safe, hug your loved ones, and God Bless America. — **LOGAN IPSEN**

GUEST OPINION

DON'T GIVE UP ON BRIDGING THE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE

Say the words "rural-urban divide" and people roll their eyes. Nothing new about that, they harrumph. Hasn't there been a rural-urban divide since time immemorial?

There has, but for American agriculture it's more important than ever to try to bridge the divide. Colorado's experience with the reintroduction of wolves is a perfect example of why.

The 2020 reintroduction ballot measure passed by a 51-49 margin, with all the urban counties voting yes and most of the rural ones voting no. Naturally, the wolves have been released in rural counties, and the farmers and ranchers in those counties aren't happy about that.

Both sides have an argument. Wolves once lived in Colorado. They can be a vital part of the ecosystem, helping biodiversity, and the call of a wolf at night can be haunting. Wolves can also eat livestock, causing economic losses. The state has a compensation system but getting the compensation takes time and effort.

This isn't the first rural-urban issue affecting agriculture and it won't be the last. If each side could see and have some sympathy for the other's point of view, perhaps we might get policies both sides could live with rather than one side wins and the other loses.

So is the gap bridgeable, and if so, how?

Someone said something recently that hints at an answer. This man said he'd lived in both the urban and rural parts of his state and in his experience, the people in both with the most negative views about the other didn't know anyone personally on the other side.

This jibes with my experience. I've lived mostly in cities but I did have a country home for more than a decade and I know a lot of people on both sides. Some on both sides are pretty extreme in their disdain for the other, but they're not the majority.

Most of the people I know in both the city and the country are pretty reasonable. They'd benefit from exposure to each other, in the same way exchange students benefit from living for a while with a family in another country.

This is not to underestimate the difficulty of establishing bridges. Real differences between city and country have indeed long existed and seem to be widening. These include a different economic base, with rural America heavily dependent on agriculture, and a different racial and ethnic composition.

That latter difference is one of the things that stands out in a 2018 study by the Pew Research Center that's one of our most extensive looks at both differences and similarities. According to the Pew study, 56% of the people in urban counties were "non-white" compared to only 21% in rural counties. Immigrants were 22% of the population of urban counties, only 4% of rural.

The study is six years old and pre-COVID-19, but I suspect many of its findings remain valid.

It's also the case that rural Americans have less of many good things urbanites take for granted—schools, hospitals, shopping alternatives, white-collar jobs, broadband internet.

Yet for all the differences between city folk and country folk, there are some interesting similarities. Some similar problems, for one thing. In the 2018 Pew study, half of the urban respondents and nearly half of the rural ones said drug addiction was a major problem in their local community.

A striking similarity was the weakness of Americans' attachment to their local communities. Those feeling "very attached" were only 16% of rural and suburban residents and 17% of urban residents. The "somewhat attached" were just over 40% in all three. About 40% of Americans felt "not too attached" or "not at all attached" to their communities regardless of where they lived.

Another reason for optimism: Asked what kind of community they prefer, Americans across the board preferred rural to urban. Only 23% of the 2018 respondents chose urban while 36% said rural, with 42% choosing suburbs. When Pew asked the same question in 2021, only 19% preferred urban while 35% responded rural.

Give rural America more broadband internet, continued employer tolerance of telecommuting and some effective rural-development work and some of those urban and suburban Americans might even move to the country.

No doubt, bridging the rural-urban divide won't be easy. But it isn't a pipe dream. The way to start is to find more ways to get rural denizens and urbanites to know each other. — **Urban Lehner, DTN editor emeritus**

GUEST OPINION

THE PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS RULE IS OUT

USDA announced it will soon publish a proposed rule titled, "Fair and Competitive Livestock and Poultry Markets." The proposed rule is designed to implement the provisions in the over 100-year-old Packers and Stockyards Act that sought to protect America's farmers and ranchers against unfair practices in the marketplace.

We welcome this proposed rule and here's why.

For decades, the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921, and the Packers and Stockyards Division in charge of enforcing the act, have been deemed toothless tigers. There are two reasons for this. First, the USDA never wrote the rules and regulations needed to properly administer and enforce the protections the law was supposed to provide.

Second, without the guidance provided by rules, several courts had interpreted the law in such a way as to place the law's protections out of the reach of America's cattle and sheep farmers and ranchers.

You see, the Packers and Stockyards Act was intended to protect independent livestock producers from abusive buying practices by the concentrated meatpacking industry, which due to its high level of concentration, wielded considerable buying power.

The Packers and Stockyards Act makes it unlawful for meatpackers to use any unfair, unjustly discriminatory, or deceptive practice; or to give any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any particular person or subject any particular person to any undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage. It also prevents the manipulation or controlling of prices or the creation of a monopoly.

The first part of these protections is directed toward individual farmers and ranchers who may find themselves on the receiving end of unfair buying practices. The second part of the protections are intended to protect competition in the marketplace, similar to what the preexisting antitrust laws like the Sherman Act and Clayton Act were created to do for the marketplace.

But for decades, several courts have made it impossible for farmers and ranchers to seek protections against practices that adversely affected them because those courts stated that in order for an individual to seek protections against an unfair practice, even if the unfair practice put the individual out of business, the individual would first have to prove that the practice had caused harm to the competitiveness of the entire industry.

Now this is a standard commonplace in antitrust enforcement, and it's known as the competitive injury standard. It's intended to protect the competitiveness of the entire industry.

But it's an untenable standard when, for example, a meatpacker refuses to accept delivery of a farmer or rancher's cattle until weeks after a price for the cattle had been negotiated, forcing the farmer or rancher to incur additional production costs that would have been avoided if timely delivery had been allowed.

So, even though this would be an unfair practice that caused economic harm to the affected farmer or rancher, it would not likely cause industrywide harm to the market. And, therefore, the farmer and rancher could not obtain a remedy under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

But now, and finally, the USDA is proposing a rule to make it clear that an individual farmer or rancher can seek protections against unfair practices in certain situations without having to prove competitive injury or industrywide harm.

Here's what the proposed rule provides.

First, it generally states that a farmer or rancher subjected to an unfair practice that causes or is likely to cause substantial injury, and which the farmer or rancher cannot reasonably avoid, and which cannot be justified as a beneficial practice, will be actionable under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

Second, the proposed rule attempts to protect the marketplace itself from unfair practices by making it clear that practices that are collusive, coercive, predatory, restrictive, deceitful or an exclusionary method of competition that may negatively affect competitive conditions are also actionable under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

And now, hold onto your hats. There will be stiff and violent opposition to this proposed rule by the multinational meatpackers and their lobbyist friends. They'll claim the sky will fall, that food prices will rise because packers will have to expend legal costs to protect themselves against farmers and ranchers, and that this proposed rule will be a trial lawyer's dream as they'll have the green light to file lawsuit after lawsuit against the big packers.

This is, of course, bologna. The rule finally draws lines in the sand that multinational meatpackers will know not to cross. The effect will be a much needed and long-awaited balance between the tremendous market power wielded by the largest meatpackers and the individual farmer and rancher's right to market their livestock in a competitive marketplace free of unfair market practices. — **Bill Bullard, CEO, R-CALF USA**

WLJ

Letters to the editor: Letters for publication must be no longer than 675 words, must refer to an article that has appeared within the month, and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. Letters may be shortened for space requirements. Send a letter to the editor by emailing editorial@wlj.net or mailing it to Western Livestock Journal, Attn: Editorial Dept., 6021 S Syracuse Way, Ste #103, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

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www.wlj.net • 303-722-7600 • Fax 303-722-0155

Member PC

PRESIDENT
LOGAN IPSEN
New Plymouth, ID
916-947-2392
logan@wlj.net

EDITORIAL@WLJ.NET
ANNA MILLER
Managing Editor
720-372-2353 • anna@wlj.net
CHARLES WALLACE
Contributing Editor
805-814-2017 • charles@wlj.net

ADVERTISING@WLJ.NET
KIRBY BRINCEFIELD
Operations Manager
720-716-3363
kirby@wlj.net
MIKE OLDCORN
Advertising Coordinator & Graphic Design
720-370-9095
mike@wlj.net
TRISTAN MARTIN
Advertising Coordinator & Graphic Design
720-372-1763
tristan@wlj.net

FIELD REPS
DEVIN MURNIN
Director of Field Services
Billings, MT • 406-696-1502
devin@wlj.net
JARED PATTERSON
Caldwell, ID
208-312-2386
jared@wlj.net
TY GROSHANS
Akron, CO
970-818-6016
ty@wlj.net

CIRCULATION@WLJ.NET
HANNAH JACKSON
Circulation Manager & Copy Editor
720-370-8275 • hannah@wlj.net

CLASSIFIED@WLJ.NET
TOM WHITE
Classifieds Manager
720-370-7977 • tom@wlj.net

PUBLISHER EMERITUS
PETE CROW
Publisher Emeritus • pete@wlj.net

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THE VIEWPOINT

with Angelo Raftopoulos

This exclusive column found only in WLJ features unique perspectives from some of the nation's top producers, marketers, animal health experts, economists and more.

In the rugged northwest corner of Colorado, Diamond Peak Cattle Company stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of the Raftopoulos family. Angelo Raftopoulos, the third generation to manage this sprawling 300,000-acre operation, has seen the ranch evolve and adapt through the decades, balancing tradition with innovation.

The roots of Diamond Peak Cattle trace back to Angelo's grandparents, Georgia and George, who immigrated from Kaloskopi, Greece, and started a sheep operation in 1924. The ranch evolved under the stewardship of Angelo's father, John, who after graduating from veterinary school in 1978, shifted his focus to cattle.

"My dad was always more interested in cattle," Angelo told *WLJ*. "He started growing the cow herd, which was a significant shift from the sheep my grandparents had."

This decision was pivotal, transforming the ranch into a significant cattle operation. Following a business split in 2012 between Angelo's father and uncle, who maintained the sheep operation, Angelo's family continued to grow the cattle business.

In 2001, John purchased 500 commercial Angus replacement heifers from the N Bar Ranch in Montana, making these heifers the core of the Diamond Peak commercial herd. John implemented a comprehensive AI program, enhancing the genetic quality of the herd and establishing the renowned Queen of Diamonds herd. The success of the AI program led John to market his registered and commercial bulls, initially through private treaty, and eventually through the Diamond Peak Cattle Company Annual Bull Sale established in 2008 to meet the growing demand for quality high-altitude Angus bulls.

Succession of ranch

Angelo, who grew up immersed in ranch life, always knew he wanted to continue the family tradition. After earning a degree from Colorado State University, he returned to the ranch, ready to take on the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

When participating in the day-to-day activities and strategic decision-making processes, John and the family began planning for succession in 2016, culminating in a seamless transition in 2023.

Angelo and his brother's proactive approach, inspired by observing their father and uncle's transition, helped them avoid common pitfalls that can lead to the loss of generational ranches. "We watched our dad and brother go through it, and we really liked the way that they went through it," Angelo said. "We had in the back of our minds that we're going to just try to do it a little different."

This process involved dividing the operations, with Angelo eventually purchasing the name and continuing under Diamond Peak Cattle, while his brother operated under Queen Anne Cattle Company. The succession plan aimed to maintain family relationships and ensure the ranch's longevity.

"The succession plan is definitely something that every operation needs to have figured out long before they think that they do," Angelo said. "When you look at all the generational ranches and family places that have been sold, it mainly comes down to that they didn't have a good succession plan. Of course, it doesn't always go the way that you think it does, but at least for both of us, we knew that's what we needed to do to keep this place alive."

Today, Angelo, along with his wife, Katie, and their daughter, Charlotte, continue to uphold the values and traditions that have defined Diamond Peak Cattle. As they navigate the complexities of ranching, they remain committed to preserving their family's legacy and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come.

Wolf reintroduction

As the ranch continues to thrive, it also faces new and unprecedented challenges. The reintroduction of wolves to Colorado poses a significant threat to livestock operations throughout the region. For Angelo and other ranchers, the return of these apex predators is a cause for concern.

"My whole life, we never had to deal with anything like this," Angelo said. "My dad's life, he never had to deal with any wolves because they'd already been eradicated before."

Now, as wolves make a comeback, Angelo said the ranch must adapt to this new reality. Angelo said the extensive size of the ranch, coupled with the terrain and the use of rotational grazing, is not conducive for wolf presence. He is acutely aware of the potential impact on both livestock and wildlife.

"It's not just livestock that will take a hit," Angelo emphasized. "Our great elk herds, known for their numbers and health, are also at risk."

Until this year, Angelo managed the family's hunting operation for a decade. The hunting operation is located in the northwestern portion of Colorado in game management units 2 and 201, where they "have pulled some really big bulls, 350 class bulls out of there."

Like many ranchers in the northwestern portion of the state, Angelo said he is apprehensive about wolf reintroduction and how Colorado Park and Wildlife (CPW) is handling the situation. He said he is given a map of wolf activity monthly that is the same as on the CPW website and wishes the agency could provide more information.

The uncertainty surrounding the wolf population's growth and behavior makes it difficult to predict the future. "In four or five years, we're going to have a lot of wolves around," Angelo speculates, underscoring the need for adaptive strategies.

As Angelo, Katie and Charlotte look to the future, they remain dedicated to preserving the legacy of Diamond Peak Cattle. Encroaching urban development, federal land management policies and environmental changes all impact the ranch's operations. As they navigate the complexities of modern ranching, they remain committed to preserving their family's legacy and ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come. — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor**



Mill Iron Photography

Angelo, Katie and Charlotte Raftopoulos.

BLM opens protest period for land plan

CA GRAZING
(from page 1)

grazing on allotments that overlap the ACECs would be reduced.

"This example in northwestern California can help illuminate the path forward as the new Public Lands Rule is rolled out, emphasizing ACEC designations as a way to conserve lands and counterbalance extraction and development," said Laura Cunningham with Western Watersheds Project.

Plan details

BLM analyzed four alternatives in the final EIS: a no-action alternative and three action alternatives.

Under Alternative A, management in the areas would remain unchanged.

Alternative B would emphasize resource connectivity and resiliency while allowing resource uses such as livestock grazing. BLM would manage the lands for multiple use and maintain corridors of undeveloped areas to provide connectivity for wildlife and fisheries.

Management activities that promote habitat connectivity would be given priority consideration. More than 20,000 acres of lands with wilderness characteristics would be managed to prioritize the characteristics over other multiple uses.

Alternative C is similar to Alternative B in that it would manage for multiple use and community access, but it would prioritize BLM lands to provide recreational opportunities and access. The alternative would provide more flexibility in managing resources with resource uses such as grazing. Management would prioritize active vegetation management to protect infrastructure against large disturbances like fire or drought.

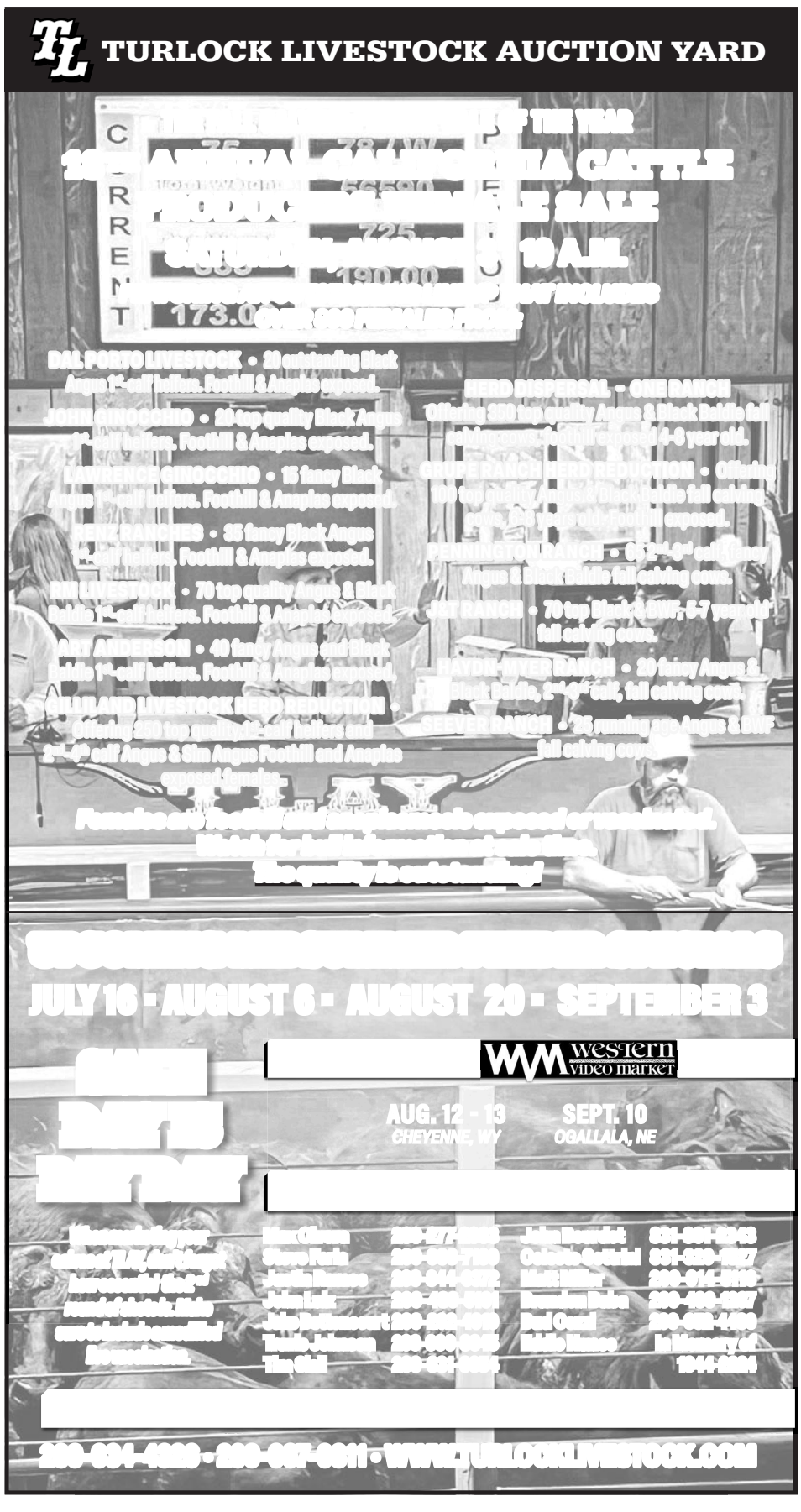
The alternative would create recreation management areas to promote recreational opportunities. More than 5,800 acres with wilderness characteristics would be managed to prioritize the protection of the characteristics. The remaining 28,000-plus acres would be managed to minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics but emphasize other multiple uses.

Alternative D, BLM's preferred alternative, would create opportunities for more resource uses such as recreation and vegetation management, in addition to emphasizing habitat connectivity. The agency said the alternative would strike a balance between creating resource uses and maintaining ecological function.

Alternative D would provide recreation and access opportunities in a similar way to Alternative B, in addition to designating 26 ACECs. BLM would also identify 62 eligible river segments as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System,

A total of 11,570 acres with wilderness characteristics would be managed to prioritize the characteristics, and the remaining nearly 22,000-plus acres would emphasize other multiple uses while minimizing impacts on wilderness characteristics.

Draft plans were based on input given in June 2022 during public scoping meetings, and through a public comment period held last fall. Any written protests must be received by July 22 and can be submitted at tinyurl.com/2np738nb. Following the resolution of any protests and Gov. Gavin Newsom's (D) 60-day consistency review, the approved plan will be announced on the BLM National NEPA Register. — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**



MARKET NEWS

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

WLJ compiles its market reports, ODJ stories and statistics from USDA and independent marketing organizations.

MARKET AT A GLANCE	This Week: 7/3/2024		Week Ago	Year Ago
Choice Fed Steers	191.56	▼	192.06	180.00
CME Feeder Index	256.44	▼	259.04	230.26
Boxed Beef Average	N/A	▲	323.33	319.87
Average Dressed Steers	N/A	▲	306.00	N/A
Live Slaughter Weight*	1,392	▼	1,393	1,343
Weekly Slaughter**	609,000	▼	620,000	644,000
Weekly Beef Production***	515.7	▼	525.8	521.8
Hide/Offal Value	11.98	▲	11.96	13.92
Corn Price	4.02	▼	4.21	5.67

*Average weight for previous week. **Total slaughter for previous week. ***Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef

WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads	Price	PRIME Loads	Price	BRANDED Loads	Price	CHOICE Loads	Price	SELECT Loads	Price	UNGRADED Loads	Price
June 28	6,577	318.44	224	340.53	1,172	326.91	1,875	318.42	737	302.95	2,569	288.91
June 21	7,102	316.38	281	335.38	1,228	323.96	2,113	316.18	743	301.37	2,736	287.03
June 14	7,396	310.19	258	331.99	1,240	320.37	2,181	308.04	847	298.94	2,870	280.86
June 7	6,872	312.08	257	333.12	1,368	317.13	2,036	311.96	696	300.01	2,516	282.15

Cutouts — FED BOXED BEEF

DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT	50% LEAN	90% LEAN
July 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
July 3	329.84	304.38	293.48	100.43	377.93
July 2	330.39	306.48	290.02	104.59	370.39
July 1	329.18	306.41	290.10	102.78	392.00
June 28	326.32	304.50	294.86	106.51	379.30

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle

	6/28	7/1	7/2	7/3	7/4	High*	Low*
Jun.	19350	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19633	15310
Aug.	18543	18428	18510	18610	N/A	19975	16853
Oct.	18488	18415	18565	18688	N/A	18688	16668
Dec.	18590	18555	18765	18890	N/A	18890	17005

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle

	6/28	7/1	7/2	7/3	7/4	High*	Low*
Aug.	25930	25738	26110	26390	N/A	26390	21608
Sep.	25965	25795	26133	26330	N/A	26460	21920
Oct.	26000	25818	26145	26360	N/A	27095	22268
Nov.	25985	25795	26128	26340	N/A	26625	24910

*High and low figures are for the life of the contract.

FED CATTLE TRADE	Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES			
Live FOB Steer	234	1,378	191.56
Live FOB Heifer	188	1,371	192.19
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	113	803	315.00
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK			
Live FOB Steer	881	1,460	192.06
Live FOB Heifer	1,704	1,223	192.16
Dressed Del Steer	15	945	306.00
Dressed Del Heifer	42	851	214.00
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR			
Live FOB Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Live FOB Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Steer	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Heifer	N/A	N/A	N/A

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: JUNE 30, 2024

	Domestic	Imported
Forward Contract	23,793	1,655
Formula	279,824	2,716
Negotiated Cash	75,819	243
Negotiated Grid	49,474	2,887
Packer Owned	10,278	N/A
Total	**439,188**	**7,501**

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES	
Delivery Month		Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,859
Jul. '24	88,208	Neg. Sales 21+ days	1,034
Aug. '24	91,837	Formula sales	3,651
Sep. '24	101,809	Forward contract sales	32
Oct. '24	106,806	Domestic sales	5,841
Nov. '24	151,187	NAFTA Exports	111

CANADIAN LIVESTOCK PRICES & FEDERAL INSPECTED SLAUGHTER FIGURES

Alberta Direct Sales (4% shrink)	Price	Weekly Change
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs	190.63	-1.28
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	189.68	-1.42
Ontario Auctions		
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs	N/A	N/A
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs	N/A	N/A
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs	117.10	-3.19

*Price comparison from one week ago.

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Friday, July 1, 2024

Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario
501-600 lbs	314.90	N/A	292.26
601-700 lbs	291.94	N/A	272.53
701-800 lbs	268.53	N/A	258.07
801-900 lbs	242.50	N/A	230.86
Heifers:			
401-500 lbs	294.98	N/A	261.43
501-600 lbs	279.69	N/A	257.29
601-700 lbs	254.26	N/A	241.97
701-800 lbs	245.87	N/A	222.69

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS

Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume.

Species	Current Week	Previous Week	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
	6/17/2024	6/10/2024		
Feeders	23,180	31,244	697,155	586,684

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE

July 2, 2024

Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary

Receipts EST: 8,900 **Week Ago EST: 7,700** **Year Ago Act: 7,500**

Columbus, NM

Compared to last week, steer calves and yearlings sold 3.00 higher. Heifers 3.00 higher. Trade active, demand good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-700 lbs.

Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
300-400 lbs	275-285
400-500 lbs	255-265
500-600 lbs	235-245
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
300-400 lbs	335-345
400-500 lbs	305-315
500-600 lbs	275-285

Santa Teresa, NM

Compared to Monday, steer calves and yearlings sold 3.00 higher. Heifers 3.00 higher. Trade active, demand good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-700 lbs.

Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2	
300-400 lbs	275-285
400-500 lbs	255-265
500-600 lbs	235-245
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2	
300-400 lbs	335-345
400-500 lbs	305-315
500-600 lbs	275-285

(slide 10 cents on steers and heifers basis 300 lbs. All sales fob port of entry.)

Selected Auctions — Week Ending July 3, 2024

Feeder prices for steers & heifers reflect medium and large 1 cattle, unless otherwise noted; * Indicates medium and large 1-2

DATE / MARKET		200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS / SLAUGHTER BULLS	PAIRS / REPLACEMENTS	
June 28 Blackfoot, ID	N/A					240-284 230-267	225-275 215-246	210-248	125-157.50 150-186		NORTHWEST
June 27 Burley, ID	422		347-382 352	307	324-325	292-303 248	249 231	217	115-163 170-179		
No report available Emmett, ID											
June 29 Eugene, OR	1,000		230-297* 163-276*	240-266* 190-254*	220-258* 185-265*	216-248* 170-244*	168-199*	170-208* 160-206*	105-144 140-167	1,800-2,950	
No report available Madras, OR											
No report available Vale, OR											
No report available Davenport, WA											
June 27 Toppenish, WA	1,940		325*	380*	297.50-345* 259-311*	265-310* 251-278*		217.50* 215*	135-160 172-180.50		
June 27 Orland, CA	1,653			220-330 200-288	200-310 180-276	200-289 180-264	190-258 170-239	180-238 160-228	135-153 135-177	1,900-3,275 2,200-2,550	FARWEST
June 26 Escalon, CA	N/A								75-117 90-142		
No report available Famoso, CA											
No report available Galt, CA											
July 2 Turlock, CA	1,199		150-280 140-260	150-280 140-60	141-271 127-255	127-255 115-230	120-210 112-200	118-200 110-180	122-148 124-158.50		
No report available Salina, UT											
July 1 Iowa	4,725		395 370-392.50	330-381 317.50-345	302-346 271-305	280-318 246.50-294	247-289 239.50-278.50	227-274 211-249.75	110-146 100-176		NORTH CENTRAL
No report available Miles City, MT											
No report available Bassett, NE											
No report available Ericson, NE											
No report available Imperial, NE											
No report available Kearney, NE											
No report available Lexington, NE											
No report available Ogallala, NE											
June 27 Valentine, NE	1,060									3,000-3,300 1,500-3,700	
No report available Herreid, SD											
No report available Torrington, WY											
June 27 Willcox, AZ	1,102	202.50 283-290	247-300 247-350	262.50-320 260.50-295	282-316.50 222.50-272.50	247.50-278 223-245			120-170 135-183	1,950-2,350 1,400-1,800	SOUTH CENTRAL
July 1 Colorado	869			296		265-272		184-223 160-226	114-177.50 138.50-194	2,000-2,700	
June 26 La Junta, CO	706		358-402.50 292-345	311-339 271-327	280-294 261-279	254-285 250-259	241-251 236-246	229-246	129-151 140-175	2,150-2,835 1,925-2,625	
No report available Loma, CO											
No report available Dodge City, KS											
No report available Pratt, KS											
No report available Salina, KS											
No report available Clovis, NM											
No report available El Reno, OK											
No report available McAlester, OK											
July 2 Oklahoma City, OK	2,431	337.50	389 324-346	319-359 280-316	281-347 262-299	268-305 250.50-275.50	246-282 230-254.50	239.50-267 220-230			
June 28 Cuero, TX	1,418	356-417.50 283-410	330-395 287-340	303-360 272-355	260-324 245-312.50	247-283 218-308	236-270 180-232		95-153 155-179	1,900-2,150 1,200-2,050	
June 27 Dalhart, TX	1,383		384 355	334-366 287-295	290-305 255-285	281-300 239-247.50	255-256 210-240	227.50-242 175-209	112-151 150-181		
June 27 San Angelo, TX	815			287	292 257-262		251 210-218		129-148 142-180	1,725-2,500 2,200	
June 27 Tulia, TX	646			277	292-310 240-260	275 225-246	247-266 233-237	215 199	125-140 155-160		
June 28 Alabama	8,491	370 330-375	318-367 304-365	308-347 260-305	270-322 245-277	235-280 230-278	250		125-160 143-189	1,300-2,800 800-2,925	EAST
No report available Lexington, KY											
July 1 Joplin, MO	6,620		345-400 340-370	320-345 295-332.50	295-317.50 269-298	270-315 247-265	253.25-276 234-247	237.25-262 227.75-238			
July 1 Tennessee	6,508	270-370*	240-335*	245-316*	220-278*	210-267*	198-240*	234.75 170-220.50*	125-168 132-201	1,750-4,100 940-2,800	
July 1 Virginia	2,447		300-315 233-296.50	277-316 192.50-294	208-307 220-267	245-288 227-244	231-251 191-220	185 170			

CANADA

No report available Lethbridge, Alberta											

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A deep dive into the Mexican red meat market

With U.S. red meat exports reaching record levels in Mexico, the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) held the inaugural U.S. Red Meat Symposium in Mexico City June 13-14 to examine its economic and political climate, highlight the market's continued growth potential and explore emerging opportunities for U.S. red meat. USMEF Chair Randy Spronk and Secretary/Treasurer Dave Bruntz participated, along with key USMEF staff from the Mexico and the Denver headquarters, to emphasize the industry's commitment to this critical market.

"Mexico is a very important customer for us, especially with its potential for undervalued cuts," Spronk said. "The turnout for this symposium was outstanding, we even had to limit the number of importers who could attend. I expect it will become a recurring event for the industry."

An important component of the symposium was the face-to-face networking opportunities for U.S. suppliers and Mexican importers, including product displays and samplings. Also featured were influential speakers who offered assessments on U.S.-Mexico trade relations, Mexico's agricultural production and digital trends in the meat industry.

"There's uncertainty on exporters' minds related to the recent presidential election, while importers were asking about our cattle cycle," said USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom. "But mostly, buyers and sellers were talking about demand. Some may see Mexico as a mature market, but it is still a growing market. As reflected by the market tours, presentations and trade discussions these past two days, there are new and emerging opportunities here for our products."

Jonn Slette, the director of USDA's Agricultural Trade Office in Mexico City, also sees Mexico as a growth market.

"I would say that Mexico is still a developing market. Over 60% of Mexicans are still at or below the poverty line and as they move into the middle class, that's where our growth is going to be," Slette said.

Funding support for the symposium was provided by the National Pork Board, the Beef Checkoff Program, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board, Nebraska Beef Council and USDA's Market Access Program. — **USMEF**

MT program aims to put 500K acres under conservation leases

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) has received tentative approval to enroll 10 eastern Montana properties in a newly launched state program to conserve prairie habitat.

The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission on June 20 voted unanimously to authorize the Prairie Habitat Conservation Lease Program's first batch of agreements and signaled its support for the program's larger objective of putting 500,000 acres of eastern Montana prairie into 40-year conservation lease agreements.

The program aims to protect the habitat for a variety of prairie species, ranging from mule deer and pronghorn to waterfowl, sage grouse and other grassland birds. The leases are also intended to support ongoing agricultural operations, public hunting and other forms of wildlife-related recreation. The program "may also help with avoiding potential federal listings of imperiled native species," according to an FWP memo to commissioners.

The first round of leases encompasses more than 52,000 acres. The largest lease involves a $1.4 million payment for the landowner's agreement to place an 11,600-acre property south of Malta under a 40-year conservation agreement. The Montana Land Board must sign off on that lease and seven of the others because the properties are over 500 acres or the lease agreement tops $1 million—criteria that trigger the Land Board's approval per a law legislators passed in 2021.

All 10 properties will allow some degree of public hunting during commission-approved hunting seasons, generally September through December, according to Ken McDonald with FWP's wildlife division. The leases will be funded by a variety of sources, including Habitat Montana, the Migratory Bird Wetland Program and the Pittman-Robertson fund, which funnels federal taxes on firearms, archery equipment and ammunition toward state-led wildlife restoration projects.

Three people spoke in favor of the program during the commission's remote meeting, although one commenter noted that he does have some reservations about the agency's shift away from perpetual easements.

Montana Wildlife Federation Conservation Director Jeff Lukas said his organization originally opposed the transition to termed leases due to concern that adopting time-limited leases does not provide the "bang for the buck that permanent conservation leases do for a similar cost."

However, Lukas continued, "Temporary leases are better than no leases at all, [and] we support using Habitat Montana funds for these leases when these funds would otherwise be unused."

Ben Lamb with the Montana Conservation Society said he appreciated that the program would protect habitat, increase public access and help farmers and ranchers "make sure the home place is kept in the family."

"That can really be a game changer for a lot of traditional families," he said, adding that he appreciated that the program allows for faster approval and more certainty on its outcome than the permanent conservation easements that have been the norm in Montana.

"As someone who was really skeptical in the beginning and is now fully on board, I just want to say what a tremendous job the agency has done in something that looks like it could be a really good benefit to everybody—and hopefully lead to more conservation easements in the future," Lamb said.

In a process similar to the one commissioners used, future lease agreements will go before the commission for approval. — **Amanda Eggert, Montana Free Press**

SD wetland case sent back to 8th Circuit

The wetlands case of South Dakota farmer Arlen Foster will be heard again by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit. The Supreme Court granted Foster's petition for a rehearing after overturning the so-called Chevron doctrine.

The 8th Circuit had upheld the decision of a federal judge in the U.S. District Court for the District of South Dakota that granted Chevron deference to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) denial of a rehearing requested by Foster in 2020.

The Miner County farmer has been fighting USDA's wetland determination on a 0.8-acre tract of land for more than 15 years.

Foster presented new evidence to USDA in 2020 that showed a tree belt installed on his farm by his father in 1936 causes large snow accumulations in the field. An annual spring melt has created a perpetual puddle the agency has deemed to be a protected wetland.

Chevron deference has been granted to federal agencies for about 40 years. Following the Supreme Court's decision, courts will no longer be able to defer to agency interpretation of statutes when laws are ambiguous.

As a result, the 8th Circuit has been ordered by the Supreme Court to reconsider Foster's case on the legal merits of the law.

In addition, the Supreme Court granted petitions in eight other non-agriculture cases connected to the Chevron decision, according to the court's orders.

Jeffrey W. McCoy, a senior attorney at the Pacific Legal Foundation who is representing Foster, said he's hopeful the 8th Circuit will side with Foster.

"We are very happy that the Supreme Court has sent the case back to the 8th Circuit to reconsider its decision without deferring to the NRCS's interpretation of the statute," McCoy told DTN.

"We are confident that when the court of appeals reads the plain language of Swampbuster without having to defer to the agency, it will determine that Arlen is entitled to a review of his current wetlands determination."

The NRCS denied Foster's request for a new assessment of the wetlands determination. Foster appealed to the 8th Circuit after the district court denied his motion for summary judgment. USDA rejected Foster's request because the new evidence did not represent a "natural" change to the physical geography of the land.

Foster also requested a review in 2017. At that time, the NRCS asked him to "supply additional information" not previously considered by the agency. Foster complied, although he was not required by law to do so.

Swampbuster Act provisions prohibit the draining of water from a wetland if farmers are to take part in farm programs. — **Todd Neeley, DTN environmental editor**

Corn prices near $4

MARKETS
(from page 1)

about $6 to close at $329.84, and the Select cutout gained about $2 to close at $304.38.

"Expectations are that the rib and loin will weaken some in July seasonally, but this week's expected smaller-than-a-typical-July 4th slaughter thanks to a plant being dark, has supported values well past a normal seasonal top," Fish said.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures were a few dollars higher over the week. The August contract gained a little under $3 to close at $263.37, and the September contract gained over $2 to close at $263.62.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index lost $2.60 to close at $256.44.

"Between the added support of the live cattle contracts trading higher amid slightly lower corn prices, feeders are trading higher with ease heading into Wednesday's noon hour as fundamentally the market is incredibly well supported," Stewart said.

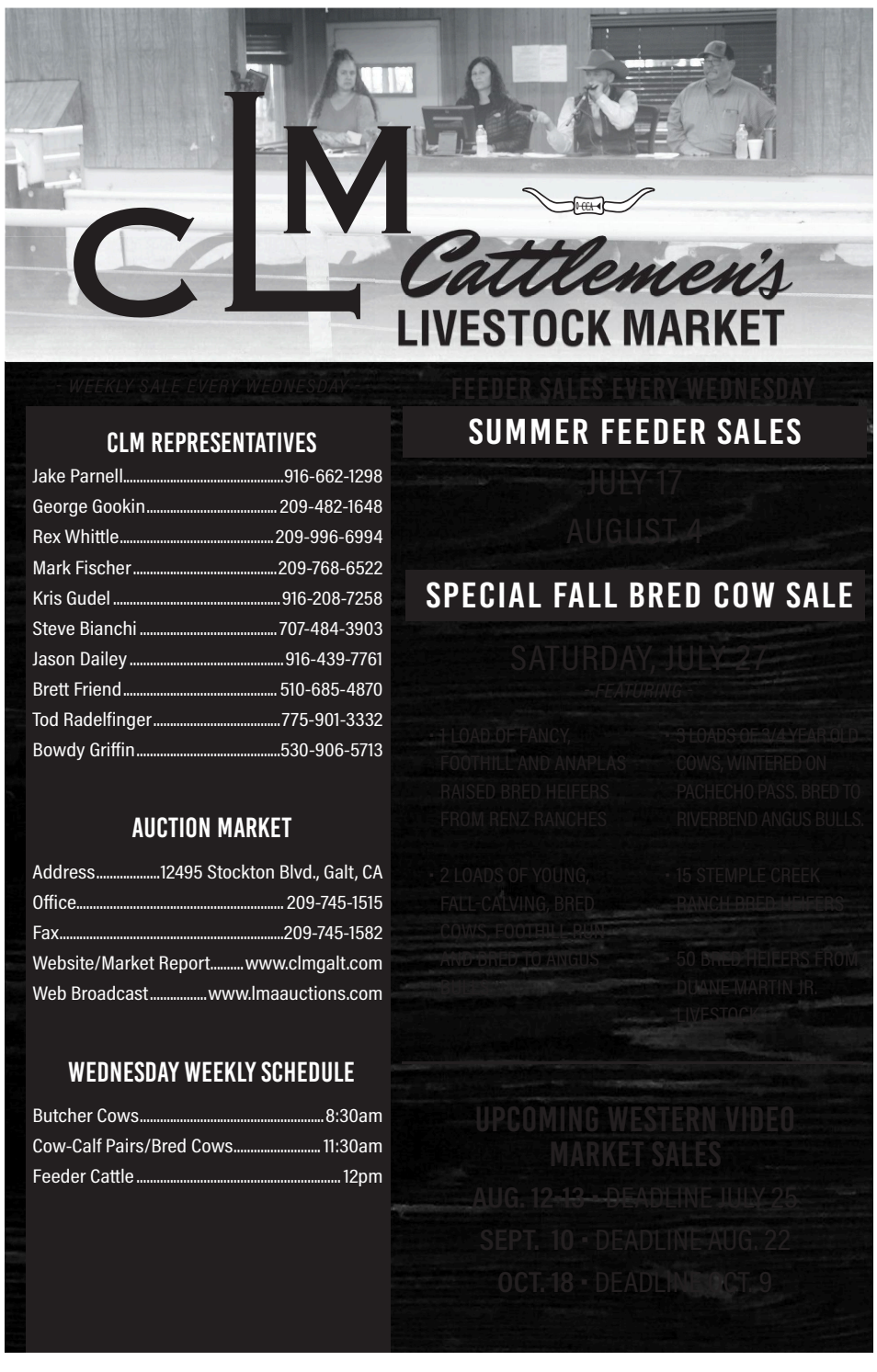
Corn futures continue to hover around the $4 mark. The July contract lost 10 cents to close at $4.03, and the September contract lost 17 cents to close at $4.05.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 6,620 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers sold steady to $4 higher. Feeder heifers sold from $10 lower to $4 higher.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards sold 2,700 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, steers and heifers sold $4-8 higher with instances of up to $15 higher. Buyers were aggressive for all classes of cattle. Benchmark steers averaging 771 lbs. sold from $264-275, averaging $269.99.

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Regional Cattle Auction in Worthing sold 2,298 head on Monday. A lower undertone was noted. Benchmark steers averaging 778 lbs. sold from $267-284, averaging $275.05. — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**

(Editor's note: This report was prepared using information available as of Wednesday afternoon due to an earlier press schedule ahead of the Fourth of July holiday.)



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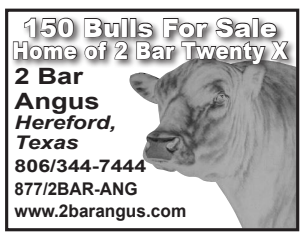
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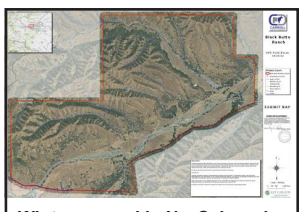
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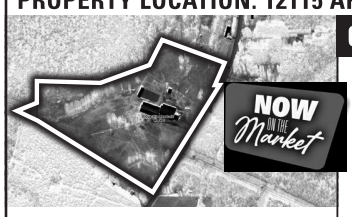
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LEGAL LEDGER

Input open for Oregon CAFO plans

The Oregon Department of Agriculture is requesting feedback on its proposed rules for confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Senate Bill 85 was signed into law in July 2023, which created new rules for Oregon CAFOs. The Oregon Cattlemen's Association has opposed the law. The department said the rules intend to clarify what operations require a CAFO permit and address permit consideration in ground water management areas and critical ground water areas. The department estimates there are 362 small and medium operations on a CAFO permit, and 17 of the smallest permitted operations will not constitute CAFOs under the new definitions. To submit comments, email rulemaking@oda.oregon.gov with the subject line "SB 85 Rules" by July 22 at 5 p.m. There will also be a virtual public hearing held via Teams on July 15 at 1 p.m. PDT at tinyurl.com/4wayvxuu.

Prop 12 appeal rejected

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has rejected an appeal by the Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA) to reverse California's Proposition 12 measure. The industry group argued the measure was unconstitutional, but the court ruled the proposition does not discriminate against out-of-state pork producers because it treats all private companies the same. IPPA also argued Prop 12 is a violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act because it favors California producers, but the court said the law does not require preference to producers based on their location.

Denmark to tax ranchers for GHGs

Denmark announced it will begin taxing its ranchers for the greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted by their livestock. The country will be the first to impose a carbon tax on its farmers and will begin taxing in 2030. "We will be the first country in the world to introduce a real CO2 tax on agriculture," said Taxation Minister Jeppe Bruus in a statement. "Other countries will be inspired by this." According to an Associated Press report, Danish ranchers will be taxed 300 kroner ($43) per ton of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2030. The tax will increase to 750 kroner ($108) by 2035. However, an income tax reduction will make the actual cost 120 kroner ($17.30) and increase to 300 kroner by 2035.

Bill prohibits federal funding for lab meat

A group of representatives has introduced the REAL Meat Act of 2024 to prohibit federal funding for cultivated meat research or production. "Fake cell-cultured meat not only poses a health risk to the human body, but it also threatens the livelihoods of America's hard-working ranchers, livestock farmers, and butchers," said Rep. Warren Davidson (R-OH-08), a bill sponsor. The legislation would prohibit federal funding from going to cell-cultured research and advancement, promotion, production or purchase for federal nutrition programs.

NV gather to remove 1,300 feral horses

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plans to remove more than 1,300 feral horses and 350 burros from the Blue Wing Complex located near Lovelock, NV. The complex has four herd management areas and five herd areas that encompass more than 2,283,300 acres of public and private lands. The areas have an appropriate management level (AML) of 333-555 wild horses and 55-90 burros. Approximately 1,900 feral horses and 476 burros reside within the complex, nearly three times the AML. BLM plans to remove the animals by using the helicopter-assisted method. Removed animals will be prepared for the agency's Adoption and Sales Program.

John Deere announces mass layoffs

Deere & Co. announced on July 1 the company would lay off more than 800 workers in the Midwest. The company told Fox Business, "We can confirm Deere leadership recently communicated that rising operational costs and declining market demand requires enterprise-wide changes in how work gets done to achieve our goals and best position the company for the future." The company also suggested it would move operations to other areas with lower labor costs, such as Mexico. Deere plans to lay off 503 employees at an Illinois plant beginning in September, along with more than 300 workers at plants in Iowa by the end of August.

Report: Livestock damage habitat

A report released by the Center for Biological Diversity contends livestock grazing has damaged nearly 60% of the critical habitat for the western yellow-billed cuckoos in Arizona and New Mexico. "If yellow-billed cuckoos are going to survive, agencies have to start taking their duty to protect the wild places these birds rely on seriously," said Chris Bugbee, Southwest conservation advocate at the Center. "That starts with keeping cattle out of designated critical habitat." The report urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to exclude livestock grazing from grazing in designated cuckoo habitat within livestock grazing allotments.

VIDEO AUCTION

June 27, Hudson Oaks, TX
Superior Livestock Auction hosted their video auction live on June 27 from the Superior Livestock Auction Studio in Hudson Oaks, TX. Cattle producers sold 18,649 head of calves, yearlings and bred stock, totaling 162 lots from 13 states for this offering.
Strong buyer participation from several bidders throughout the auction resulted in 60 different successful buyers. Cattle were sold on contract to deliver immediately through February 2025.
Feeder steers from Regions 3/4/5/6 opened the auction and were met with an aggressive buyer base. There was a steady trend across most weight classes, however, lighter weights under 700 pounds were $8-10 higher. Feeder heifers from the same regions were softer at $4-6 lower than the last test. Feeders and calves from Regions 1/2 were only lightly tested. Beef-dairy crosses were well and fully steady with the last auction. Regions 3/4/5/6 calves on cows and weaned calves were upwardly trending at $7-12 higher.

SALE CALENDAR

Sale Calendar is a service to our advertisers. There is a minimum advertising requirement to be eligible to be listed in the Sale Calendar. Contact your fieldman for more information or to have your date added to the Sale Calendar. We will only run auction sale dates or private treaty start dates.

ALL BREEDS

Sep. 15 – Visalia Livestock, Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 5 – Turlock Livestock All-Breeds Bull Sale, Turlock, CA
Oct. 6 – Cal Poly Bull Test Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA

ANGUS

Aug. 24 – Riverbend Ranch, Female Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Sep. 5 – Vintage Angus, Bull Sale, LaGrange, CA
Sep. 6 – Byrd Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Sep. 7 – EZ Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Farmington, CA
Sep. 8 – Heritage Bull Sale, Wilton, CA
Sep. 9 – Rhoades Angus, Bull Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 10 – O'Neal Ranch, Bull Sale, Madera, CA
Sep. 11 – Teixeira Cattle, Bull Sale, Pismo Beach, CA
Sep. 12 – Donati Ranch & O'Connell Cattle, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Sep. 13 – Tehama Angus, Bull Sale, Gerber, CA
Sep. 14 – Arrelano Bravo, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 17 – Poss Angus, Female Sale, Scotia, NE
Sep. 18 – Bullseye Breeders, Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 19 – Rancho Casino/ Dal Porto Livestock, Bull Sale, Denair, CA
Sep. 20 – Dixie Valley Angus, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 21 – Jorgensen Land & Cattle, Female Sale, Ideal, SD
Sep. 24 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 26 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 28 – K Bar D Ranch, Female Sale, Redmond, OR
Sep. 28 – Gohr Cattle, Show Heifer Sale, Madras, OR
Sep. 28 – Marcy Livestock, Female Sale, Gordon, NE
Sep. 29 – Traynham Ranches, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Klamath, OR
Oct. 4 – Elwood Ranch, Fall Bull Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Oct. 5 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID

HEREFORD

Sep. 5 – Sierra Ranches, Bull Sale, LaGrange, CA
Sep. 9 – Genoa Livestock, Bull & Female Sale, Minden, NV
Sep. 28 – Gohr Cattle, Show Heifer Sale, Madras, OR
Oct. 5 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID

RED ANGUS

Sep. 21 – McPhee Red Angus, Production Sale, Lodi, CA
Sep. 22 – Stegall Cattle, Bull Sale, Colusa, CA

SIMANGUS

Sep. 18 – Bullseye Breeders Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 25 – Eagle Pass Ranch, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA
Sep. 26 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 29 – Traynham Ranches, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Klamath, OR

COMMERCIAL

Jul. 8 — Superior Livestock Auction Week in the Rockies, Snowbird, UT
Jul. 8 — Western Video Market Reno Sale, Reno, NV
Jul. 22 — NLVA Summertime Classic, Billings, MT
Jul. 27 — Cattlemen's Livestock Market Annual Female Sale, Galt, CA
Jul. 29 – Aug. 2 — Superior Livestock Auction Video Royale Sale, Winnemucca, NV
Aug. 3 — Turlock Livestock Auction Special Female Sale, Turlock, CA
Aug. 12 — Western Video Market Cheyenne Sale, Cheyenne, WY
Aug. 19 — NLVA Early Fall Preview, Billings, MT
Aug. 19 - 23 — Superior Livestock Auction Big Horn Classic, Sheridan, WY
Aug. 24 — Mobile Cattle Marketing Female Sale, Petaluma, CA
Sep. 16 — NLVA Fall Premier Special, Billings, MT

HORSE

Jul. 12 — High Desert Quarter Horse Sale, Redmond, OR
Aug. 17 — Memory Ranch Foal Sale, Wells, NV
Sep. 21 – Snaffle Bit Futurity Sale, Reno, NV

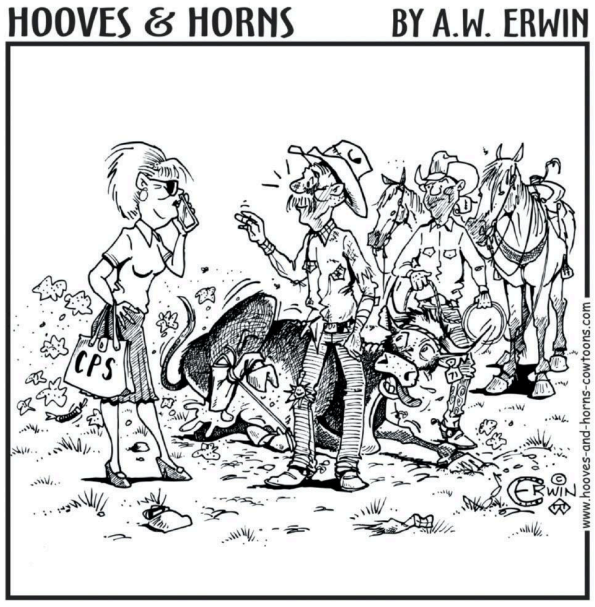
COMING EVENTS

(Send calendar of events information to editorial@wlj.net.)
Sept. 17-19 – Registration is now open for the Public Lands Council's 56th Annual Meeting that will be held in Grand Junction, CO. Details: tinyurl.com/2car3wwv.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

(In an effort to serve the next generation of livestock producers, WLJ's Youth Opportunities calendar lists internship and scholarship information for agricultural- and livestock-focused students, listed by application deadline. If you have an internship or scholarship to announce, please email it to editorial@wlj.net.)
Sept. 15 – The Montana Stockgrowers Association is accepting internship applications for its 2024 Annual Convention, scheduled for Dec. 4-6 in Billings, MT. Details: mtbeef.org/careers.

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Western Livestock Journal

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Old-growth forests represent 18% of managed forests

OLD GROWTH
(from page 1)

approximately 80 million acres of mature forests across 200 types. Old-growth forests represent 18% and mature forests account for 45% of the more-than 178 million acres under their management.

DEIS

The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) outlines several action alternatives for the amendments to land management plans (LMPs) to address old-growth forests, each aimed at enhancing the management and protection of old-growth forests.

The preferred alternative, Alternative 2, proposes strategic, plan-specific amendments based on a detailed review of existing LMP content and forested conditions. This alternative would add specific components to each LMP, including goals, desired conditions, objectives, standards, guidelines and monitoring requirements.

Alternative 2 does not propose a single national definition for old-growth forests; instead, it allows for applying regional or local definitions to accommodate the varied ecological conditions across the National Forest System. This approach offers flexibility for the local development of adaptive strategies for old-growth forest conservation, the agency said. It allows line officers to amend or revise plans based on the best available science, including Indigenous knowledge.

Alternatives 3 and 4 represent more and less restrictive approaches, respectively, with varying impacts on forest management flexibility and conservation effectiveness. Alternative 3 restricts all commercial timber harvest in old-growth forests to provide further protection. Whereas, Alternative 4 allows timber production to be a primary driver for vegetation management in old-growth forests.

Reactions

The Public Lands Council (PLC) said the DEIS targets not only timber production, "but it also has a chilling effect on efforts to mitigate catastrophic wildfire, efforts to address pinyon-juniper encroachment, and more." PLC plans to submit comments on the DEIS.

Environmental groups said while the DEIS is a step towards protecting old-growth forests, it needs to go further to protect trees from logging, as only a fraction of the forests remain.

"We look forward to engaging in this process to ensure the amendment not only retains but increases, the amount of old-growth forests across the country," Sierra Club Forest Campaign Manager Alex Craven said. "Shifting our approach to national forests from resources meant for extraction to natural wonders worth preserving is long overdue."

Michael O'Casey, deputy director of Forest Policy and Northwest Programs for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), said hunters and anglers have been crucial in shaping management decisions for the National Forest System, and they support the agency's modified proposed action for maintaining forest diversity and active stewardship.

"The sporting community understands the importance of forest diversity, including old forests, and TRCP is encouraged that the agency's modified proposed action supports active stewardship, which will ensure key forest management tools remain available," O'Casey said.

Congressional Western Caucus Chairman Dan Newhouse (R-WA-04) opposes the DEIS, stating it harms rural communities and increases forest fire risks by limiting timber harvesting and proper management tools. He pledges to ensure forest managers retain the necessary tools and to work to prevent the amendment from being implemented.

Comments can be made by Sept. 20 online at tinyurl.com/2p9urfk6 or by mail to: Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination, 201 14th Street SW, Mailstop 1108, Washington, D.C. 20250-1124. — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor**

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Summer management checklist to protect assets

The U.S. beef cow herd has been in liquidation since the last cycle peak of nearly 32 million head in 2019, to the present just over 28 million head. This is the lowest beef cow inventory since the early 1960s. This long-term liquidation has primarily been the result of drought but also largely influenced by a lack of profitability, until last year.

The lack of profitability has correspondingly influenced a low rate of heifer retention in recent years. At present, it appears as though cow herd numbers have stabilized and data does not indicate that restocking or expansion is taking place at this point.

Currently the forces opposing expansion include age of producers, interest rates, labor availability, and the outlook for a return of the La Niña weather pattern. In addition, the cost of taking on cow or bred heifer inventory with the increase of female prices is a hindrance.

Cyclically, the market is one year into the cycle of higher prices. In the current market the value of cattle is historically robust and should remain so for several calf crops to come.

Summer has arrived. Consider the following in your summer management plan in order to protect your assets and/or add value in the weeks and months ahead:

- Fly and tick control.
- Anaplasmosis control.
- Water supply.
- Remove bulls from breeding pastures in a timely fashion to control the length of calving season.
- Cut native grass hay meadows by early July for the best trade-off of quality and quantity.
- Manage pastures and prepare for drought. Many Oklahoma pastures are still in drought recovery. A dryer (La Niña) weather pattern is predicted for the next several months. Manage accordingly. Scout pastures now to identify weeds and plan your weed control program for next year.

Dehorning, castration and a vaccination program leading to premiums for health are all management practices that add value to calves. As well, assurance of specific cattle handling and health product use like those verified through Beef Quality Assurance can be documented to add value. Cattle health is the foundation of specific marketing programs buyers seek to reduce risk.

While a variety of programs exist, most all start with a first round of vaccinations when calves are two to four months of age while still nursing cows. The first round of vaccinations for all would include the first dose of clostridial and respiratory vaccines.

With current prices, these management practices have more value than ever. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**

NCBA: Congress is back in charge

CHEVRON
(from page 1)

will do exactly as this Court has since 2016, exactly as it did before the mid-1980s, and exactly as it had done since the founding: resolve cases and controversies without any systemic bias in the government's favor," Gorsuch wrote.

Loper Bright case

The case originated when Loper Bright Enterprises, a family-owned fishing business, challenged a National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regulation requiring fishing companies to pay for the costs of monitoring compliance with federal regulations.

This rule was established under the authority granted by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The act mandates that petitioners and other vessel owners accommodate federal observers on board to monitor compliance with numerous federal regulations. Loper argued NMFS had overstepped its bounds by requiring them to pay the salaries of these government-mandated monitors, saying they occupy valuable space on their vessels and oversee their operations.

According to court documents, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled in favor of the government, citing the Chevron deference. A petition for writ of certiorari was filed with the Supreme Court in November 2022. The case was argued on Jan. 17 and the justices considered this case along with Relentless v. Department of Commerce to address the Chevron question.

Reactions

The Supreme Court's decision not only impacts the fishing industry but also has broader implications for how federal agencies implement and interpret regulations across various sectors.

Travis Cushman, deputy general counsel for the American Farm Bureau Federation, said the most significant outcome of the case is restoring the balance of power at the federal level. "The crucial change is that agencies will no longer determine the extent of their own authority," Cushman said. "So many regulations that we believe—whether it's USDA, EPA, or Labor—push the bounds of what Congress intended, and this will force those agencies to really evaluate how much authority they have to regulate and allow us to challenge them when they've gone too far."

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), which filed an amicus brief in the case, applauded the decision, stating it puts Congress "in the driver's seat for crafting policy."

"Our elected officials in Congress should be making our laws, not unelected bureaucrats at federal agencies," said NCBA President Mark Eisele. "Cattle producers have experienced numerous instances of federal agencies enacting overreaching regulations on our farms and ranches, exceeding their authority granted by Congress."

Environmental organizations lambasted the decision, saying it chips away at environmental regulations and protections.

"The conservative justices are aggressively reshaping the foundations of our government so that the President and Congress have less power to protect the public, and corporations have more power to challenge regulations in search of profits," Earthjustice Senior Vice President for Programs Sambhav Sankar said. "This ruling threatens the legitimacy of hundreds of regulations that keep us safe, protect our homes and environment, and create a level playing field for businesses to compete on."

Southern Environmental Law Center's Litigation Director Kym Meyer expressed concern, stating, "Today's ruling sidelines agency expertise, shifting power to judges who lack the specialized knowledge of agency staff immersed in the science, financial principles, and safety concerns critical to federal agencies." — **Charles Wallace, *WLJ* contributing editor**