

RUMINANT DIGEST # 20

FOREST SERVICE:

Well we had our meeting with the Forest Service and really had a good meeting. The Forest Service seemed very willing to make a few concessions and it looks like we are going to get the materials needed to build our corrals in the Dry Fork and the materials to put in a water tank west of Lick Creek, on the divide, which will help pull the cattle off the creek banks. At our meeting I produced letters requesting the materials for that particular improvement 7 years ago. I explained to the Forest Service that the problem was not a ranch management problem, but an inefficiency problem with the government. I have contended for years that it is not right that the Forest Service can give us a set of standards to meet, then as the landlord can't give us the tools to meet the standards. A very common problem with government. As one fellow livestock grazer stated "Dealing with the Forest Service is like being stoned to death with popcorn, it still kills you in the end".

SUMMER TRIP PLANS:

For the people who came last summer and have experienced the magic of the Dry Fork, this is what our rotation looks like for this coming summer. The first trip (July Cattle Drive) will see the herd being trailed to the Double Springs pasture in the Dry Fork. This probably means two nights at the Rocky Bottom. Last year we tried to go from the Rocky Bottom to the Double Springs pasture in one day and we got our butts kicked. We got part way there and had to drop the herd, then ride onto the Dry Fork camp (Kerns Cow camp). This year we will kick part way up the North Slope of the Dry Fork, go back to the Rocky Bottom, spend the night and then clean it the next day. It will still be an all day ride.

Then on the July Beef Roundup we will start at the Kerns Cow camp in the Dry Fork and ride to the Double Springs pasture and gather the yearlings and kick them into the horse pasture. The following day we will trail the yearlings from the Dry Fork to Lake Creek, where we will then ride onto the Lake Creek camp and spend the night. The next day we will gather the yearlings in Lake Creek and trail them to Sardine Lake of the Bear Trap pasture where they will be dropped, and hopefully stay for the next several weeks. Yes that is a hell of a plate full for one trip!

On the August Beef Roundup we will again start in the Dry Fork with the goal of gathering all the cows and calves and trailing them to Lake Creek where they will be dropped. I am guessing it will take at least 3 days just to get the cattle gathered in the Dry Fork. The cattle that come out of the Dry Fork will again be trailed up the Garland Gulch trail that we took last year with the herd. It is going to take lots of horse flesh as these two Beef Roundups are going to be extremely challenging. But then, what in reality isn't challenging? Remember that these two trips will cover most of the 100,000 acres we have on the mountain. We do still have some room on both of the Beef Roundups.

Then in the fall we will gather and trail the yearlings down the Little Horn canyon to the valley like we attempted to last year. If you remember from last year's Sept trip report, we didn't get to the valley with one animal, we were completely skunked. Our intention is to not have a repeat performance.

The Clean Up ride will then conclude the summer with hopefully a good gather of the cows and calves and getting them to the valley. Our biggest hope is that Trent and I then don't have to spend the next 6 weeks gathering the cattle that we are short. The terrain and challenges are much more than can be relayed in the written word. You need to experience it in order to completely understand it. That is why we are the only trip of it's kind anywhere!

GOVERNMENT INTERFERING AGAIN!

This little story has a twist in it, as this time, it's the state government who is interfering with the private sector. I received a phone call last week from the state liquor division stating that I needed a liquor license in order to have beer and wine available during the cattle drives. I explained to them I was not selling it, but it was available in the evenings. I was told that the guests were providing a service and I was providing alcohol which constitutes a sale so therefore, needed a license. I then asked if every outfitter in the state had a liquor license and was told if they have beer or wine they better have one! I then asked the question, If I go over to my neighbors and wrestle calves all day at his branding, and he puts out a cooler of beer after the branding are we not trading a service for alcohol and the rancher would need a license also. I was told that yes, the rancher would need a liquor license too. I don't care what the law says I really don't think the state has any intention of opening this can of worms and it is some over zealous state employee just trying to do what the law dictates, and of course they happened to leave their common sense at the breakfast table instead of bringing it to work with them. We are exploring the option of an exclusion at this point in time but might have to buy a license for this year. I have of course contacted my local legislatures but they can't do anything until the next session. I actually think this is sort of funny!!

GUARDIANS FUND RAISER:

As most of you are aware I am very involved with the Guardians in trying to maintain our rights to graze public lands. I don't need to tell any of you, that if I lose that right, I am out of business in 15 minutes. This of course means no cattle drives and I probably become a greeter at Wal-Mart!

In order to help fund the Guardians (www.guardiansoftherange.org) we have an annual fund raiser in Sheridan. We have a live and a silent auction. The live auction can be viewed on proxibid.com. Go to proxibid and then click on the charity benefit auction button and we will come up. The auction is May 11th starting at 6:15pm MST. Following is a listing of some of the items we have that might interest you. Proxibid charges us 2% sales commission and any of our past guests who would like to buy directly from us to save us the 2% commission let me know and I will either have Brendon, Trent, or Taylor, get you on the phone so you can bid live that way.

Here is a listing of some of the items that might interest you.

We of course are donating two spots on any of our trips in 2013 that has availability.
www.doublerafter.com

SNS Outfitters is donating a trophy mule deer hunt #6 in Montana. www.huntwyo.com

We again have a trip to Las Vegas for two that has many first class offerings. This is a 3 night trip including tickets to see Jay Leno live. This is an unreal offering!

We have a Safari hunt to South Africa. There is a lot more to this trip than I can put here so you really need to email or call me for the details. This is for 2 for either 2012 or 2013 depending on the availability of dates.

We have a credit for \$4000 towards a bull at Paint Rock Angus next bull sale.

We have a very fancy pair of hand made chaps made by one of our 17 year old Guardian Members. Here is an example of how important public lands grazing is to a 17 year old who someday wants to be able to continue to ranch on his families ranch.

These are just a sampling of what we have. Hope you can help! Thanks

Looking forward to seeing many of you again this summer as it promises to be another action packed summer.

DANA

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