

# SAGE SIGNALS

*The Voice of the Nevada Livestock Industry*

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE NCA MEMBERSHIP

## NCA October Roundup

*By Martin Paris, Executive Director, Nevada Cattlemen's Association*

With summer winding down, it's time to shift gears and get ready for fall cattle work and some cooler weather. Hopefully fire season is for the most part in the rear-view mirror. At the time of writing this article, Nevada has burned 414,755 acres across all types of land ownerships this year. That is roughly two-thirds more than we had on the board at the same point last year. As we know, the loss of our resource is devastating both economically and emotionally.

With that said, there are several efforts underway that get us a little closer to bringing back the lost art of active management. Last October I wrote that NCA intended to engage in the Roadless Rule process, and here's where that went. On Aug. 19 the Forest Service filed a proposed rule to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule in its entirety, along with a draft environmental impact statement. The comment window ran through Sept. 21, and the proposal reaches the roughly 45 million acres still governed by the rule. USDA's case leans on wildfire, and there is a real gap in the numbers. More than 40 percent of inventoried roadless acres carry high or very high hazard potential, while only about 5 percent have seen any fuels treatment since 2014.

The rescission does not order a single road built or a single tree cut. It moves the decision out of a blanket national prohibition and back to the local forest. That means getting equipment to a fuels project, maintaining a water development, rebuilding fence after a fire in country where a temporary road turned into a paperwork exercise. NCA filed comments in support on Sept. 15, our second on this docket after the scoping letter we sent last September. A final rule is expected late this year, and litigation after that is close to a certainty.

On a similar front, BLM's proposed rewrite of the grazing regulations may do more for fire on the ground than anything else on this list. Targeted grazing for fuels management gets its own authorization pathway under the proposal, which



*MorgueFile*

is a real change from arguing every fuels-driven turnout as a one-off, allotment by allotment. Temporary non-renewable AUMs come back as a usable tool, and that matters because a big grass year is exactly the year that becomes next summer's fire.

Flexible turnout dates are the other piece, giving an outfit the ability to get on the country when conditions call for it rather than when the calendar says so, which goes a long way toward keeping fine fuels in check. The proposal also preserves suspended AUMs rather than letting them quietly disappear, which is the difference between capacity that can come back when the country will carry it and capacity that is gone for good. We expect a final rule to be published in the coming months, which gets us one step closer to actual implementation of some much needed changes.

There is also legislation in queue at Congress, including the NCA-endorsed Strategic Grazing to Reduce Risk of Wildfire Act, S. 1981, led by Senator Cortez Masto with Senator Curtis of Utah. It cleared the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee unanimously in March and is waiting on floor time. The bill directs Interior and the Forest Service to work with allotment holders, states, tribes, and local fire departments on targeted grazing in high-risk country. A call to our delegation asking them to push for a floor vote is a few minutes well spent.

All of that active management takes hands, and help has been about the hardest thing to come by on most outfits. NCA sat down with Acting Secretary of Labor Keith Sonderling about agriculture labor challenges. We joined ag and food service business leaders in Las Vegas to talk about what it takes to keep cattle and sheep operations staffed in a state where the workforce is thin and the country is wide.

H-2A took up a good share of that conversation. The program was built around seasonal crop work, which leaves most cattle outfits on the outside looking in, and even for those who qualify, actually getting a worker on the ground is slow and cumbersome. The Securing Agriculture's Workforce Act would open the program to year-round employment and clean up the process. Acting Secretary Sonderling spoke to the Department of Labor's involvement in the legislation and committed to bringing the issue to the President. We appreciate the Secretary taking the time to meet with us, and we look forward to continued work with the Department of Labor on practical solutions to address critical ag labor needs.

Last but not least, the 91st Annual Convention and Tradeshow runs Nov. 12-14 at the Elko Convention Center. I encourage you to attend the convention and the committee meetings. That is your opportunity to voice your opinion and help set the policy that guides the Nevada Cattlemen's Association forward. Registration packets have been mailed out, and registration along with the trade show and sponsorship packet is also available online at [nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings](http://nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings). Get your booth and sponsorship forms in early.

Till next time.

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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Dave Baker, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

## Politics: To Divide or Unite

It is almost time to vote again, and I hope everyone will take the time to do so. In the 2024 presidential election, 65.3% of the nation's citizen voting-age population voted. In the 2022 midterm election, that number was 52.2%.

For candidates, the challenge is often less about convincing people that they have the best ideas and more about getting their supporters to the polls. Unfortunately, one of the most effective ways to do that is by using what are called "wedge issues."

Wedge issues are controversial topics that politicians emphasize because they divide people. They can split opposing coalitions, motivate a candidate's own supporters or put the other side in an uncomfortable position. Instead of finding issues where a large majority of people agree, wedge issues take advantage of our differences—cultural, moral, religious, economic or otherwise.

They are effective because they are emotional and personal. That also makes them good fundraising issues. People are more likely to contribute money when they feel strongly about an issue, particularly when they believe something important is at stake.

And today, there is another powerful reason to use wedge issues: social media. A controversial statement or post is much more likely to get people to stop scrolling, comment, share it or argue about it than a discussion about a complicated budget issue. Research on congressional Facebook posts has found that posts expressing political disagreement generated substantially more engagement than posts that did not take a side.

That creates a powerful incentive. If something makes people angry, it gets attention. If it gets attention, it gets shared. And if it gets shared, even more people see it. Before long, an issue that may have little to do with the day-to-day business of governing can dominate the political conversation.

There is a cost to this strategy. When politics constantly focuses on divisive issues, there is less room to talk about complicated problems that actually need to be solved. Infrastructure, healthcare costs, economic growth, water, energy and long-term government spending may not generate the same excitement as a controversial social issue, but they have a much greater impact on our everyday lives.

It is also important to remember that campaigning and governing are two different

things. The issues that are most effective for getting votes are not necessarily the issues that occupy most of a legislator's time once they are in office. Much of governing involves less exciting work—budgets, regulations, infrastructure, constituent services, economic development and working through complicated legislation. These subjects may not generate many Facebook comments, but they are the things that government actually has to deal with.

In fact, surveys show that many Americans believe important issues and the policies government officials are working on receive too little attention, while disagreements between Republicans and Democrats receive too much.

As the political debate becomes more divisive, the opposing party is increasingly portrayed as extreme or even dangerous. Compromise can be portrayed as weakness or betrayal. Voters tend to sort themselves into groups where they hear more opinions that agree with their own, and social media can magnify those differences.

Over time, this can lead to something even more concerning: people who are primarily interested in competent government and solving problems can become frustrated and cynical. Some eventually decide that politics is not worth paying attention to at all.

Unfortunately, there is an incentive for political parties to keep wedge issues alive. If an issue is effective at motivating voters, raising money and generating attention on social media, there may be little incentive to compromise and actually solve it. Once an election is over, however, most politicians still have to get back to the business of governing—and that usually means dealing with the less exciting, non-wedge issues that affect the country every day.

As an industry representative, I think it is important to understand this dynamic. We need to be able to have productive conversations with elected representatives from both parties. Our job is to explain the issues affecting our industry, build relationships and work toward practical solutions. That becomes much harder when every political disagreement turns into a battle between opposing camps.

I wish we could spend more time focusing on the things that unite us rather than the things that divide us. Unfortunately, the reality is that wedge issues work. They motivate voters, raise money and attract attention. But winning an election and governing are two different things.

Recognizing that difference is important. We should not allow the issues that generate the most attention on Facebook or during a campaign to become more important than the issues that actually need to be solved.

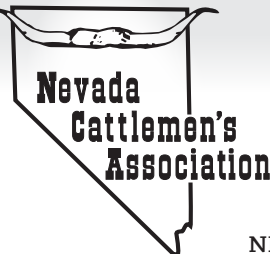
Thanks for your time, and please take the time to vote.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

*We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between Aug. 26 and Sept. 25, 2026.*

*(New members are in bold.)*

- Harvest Pillar, Jaden Grande
- **Bryan Preston**
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, Chris Rose
- Nevada Association of Conservation Districts, Kevin Piper
- Scales Unlimited, Inc., Robert Luna
- Snyders' Pinenut Livestock Supply, Patrick Snyder
- Triangle S Cattle Company, Patrick Prickett
- US Fish and Wildlife Service, Susan Abel



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# Resolutions at the 91st Annual Convention & Trade Show

*By: Martin Paris, Executive Director, NV Cattlemen's Association*

Every resolution NCA passes has a shelf life, and that is on purpose. Policy written for the conditions of one year does not always fit six years down the road, and an association that never cleans house ends up hauling around positions nobody in the room remembers voting for. So the book gets worked through on a rotation. This year the resolutions approved in 2023 are set to expire.

When they come off, NCA no longer holds standing policy on those subjects. That matters more than it sounds like it does. When a comment letter goes to BLM or a bill lands in Carson City, the resolution book is what I point to when I say this is where our membership stands.

The 91st Annual Convention and Tradeshow runs Nov. 12-14 at the Elko Convention "E" Center. If one of these hits close to your operation, the committee meetings at convention are where edits can be made and new policy can be considered. A short summary of each expiring resolution is included below. The full text of any of them is available through the office.

## Animal Health and Livestock Issues

- 1.11 — Urges producers to follow accepted livestock and business management practices in the handling of their animals and their land.
- 1.13 — Encourages the Nevada Department of Agriculture to keep its labs equipped to offer new disease testing with current technology.
- 1.15 — Encourages BQA certification among producers, dairies, and auction yards, and supports the ban on slaughtering downer animals.
- 1.25 — Urges western state agriculture departments to accept a scan of the 15-digit EID number as proof of bangs vaccination status, without requiring a look at the tattoo.
- 1.27 — Supports electronic ID for disease traceability but urges the federal government to pay for mandated EID devices.



## Private Lands, Wildlife & Environmental Management

- 2.10.a — Urges NDOW to do more to make hunters aware of private property postings and the rules on camping in riparian areas and at water sources.
- 2.11 — Urges agencies to hold wildlife populations to the numbers set in their own approved plans.
- 2.12 — Urges agencies to manage for elk and mule deer on equal footing.
- 2.14 — Asks agencies to keep granting OHV access for the construction and maintenance of range improvements.
- 2.15 — Strongly urges agencies not to introduce elk until habitat suitability has been established and suspended AUMs have been reinstated.
- 2.32 — Urges agencies to control predators and work with landowners at the landscape level for sage grouse conservation.
- 2.35 — Supports legislation that puts the burden on the trespasser to know the ownership status of the ground he is standing on.

## Public Lands

- 3.20 — Demands the Nevada Attorney General vigorously defend the state's water sovereignty.
- 3.21 — Affirms the private property rights of livestock

## NEVADA CATTLEMEN'S NEWS

grazing as a matter of historical custom and culture.

- 3.22 — Urges county governments to get involved in the federal land use process and to seek input in it.
- 3.23 — Urges our congressional delegation to vet any changes to public lands with the states that will be affected.
- 3.24 — Opposes Rangeland Reform '94.
- 3.25 (NEW PROPOSED) — Supports collaborative efforts to improve Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat and opposes actions to list the species as endangered under the Endangered Species Act.
- 3.29 — Requests that agencies reinstate AUMs that were reduced or revoked without due process.
- 3.30 — Strongly urges both the seeding of fire-resistant species and the use of grazing as a tool in fire rehabilitation.
- 3.32 — Encourages collaboration with livestock operations to head off conflict before residential development is approved.
- 3.35 — Asks that gathered wild horses and burros be

cared for with funding from outside the WH&B budget, and that the full authority of the Act be used to bring numbers down.

- 3.55 — Supports accountability for and reform of the Equal Access to Justice Act.
- 3.60 — Supports Nevada's sage grouse plan as the preferred plan for conservation of the bird.

### Research and Education

- 4.1 — Urges funding for and control of noxious weeds in Nevada.
- 4.2 — Asks for the development of mediation systems to resolve public lands conflicts.
- 4.3 — Calls for preserving the agricultural research properties at UNR, and failing that, keeping the proceeds inside the College of Agriculture.

### Legislative Affairs

- 5.8 — Urges a streamlined process and efficient inspection for new, small harvest facilities, and opposes discontinuing the inspection program at a meat processing facility of any size.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NCA 91st Annual Convention & Trade Show

— November 12–14, 2026 —  
Elko, Nevada  
Elko Convention "E" Center  
700 Moren Way  
[www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings/convention-and-trade-show](http://www.nevadacattlemen.org/events-meetings/convention-and-trade-show)

### Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show

— February 2–4 2027 —  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Nashville Music City Center  
201 Rep. John Lewis Way S

### Great Basin Bull Sale

— February 13, 2027 —  
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## UPCOMING SALES

### **OCTOBER 16**

Consignment Deadline:  
October 8

WVM Headquarters  
Cottonwood, CA

### **NOVEMBER 6**

Consignment Deadline:  
October 29

Embassy Suites  
Amarillo, TX

### **DECEMBER 2**

Consignment Deadline:  
November 18

Atlantis Casino  
Reno, NV

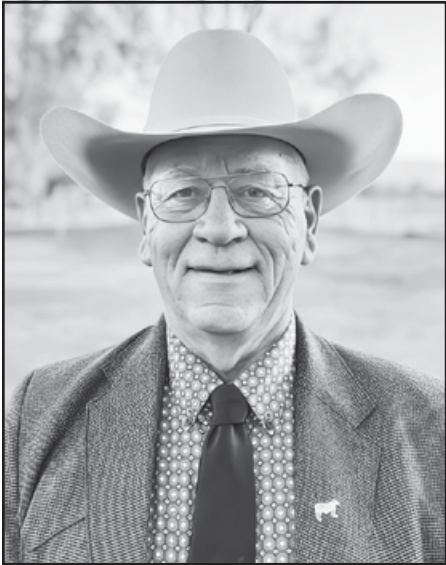
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# Nevada Rancher Named New PLC President As Annual Meeting Closes



Ron Cerri

PLC Photo

COPPER MOUNTAIN, CO (September 17, 2026) – The Public Lands Council (PLC) closed out their 58th Annual Meeting by announcing Nevada rancher Ron Cerri as the new PLC President. Cerri owns and operates a cow-calf operation in Orovada, Nevada. He has previously served as a member of the PLC Board of Directors, President of Nevada Cattlemen's Association (NCA), Nevada State Grazing Board Central Committee and as a Humboldt County Commissioner.

"My family came to America from Italy in the 1800s to do one thing: ranch. After generations of ranching, land management and conservation stewardship, it is an honor to be PLC President," said PLC President and Nevada permittee Ron Cerri. "We have come such a long way in the last few years, where we faced immense uncertainty in the industry. Due to PLC's work to defend permittees and the multiple use mandate, we are in a much more certain and stronger position today. I am looking forward to continuing this work as PLC President and helping to pass down our ranching lifestyle to future generations."

The 2026-2027 PLC officer team, approved by the PLC General Voting Delegates, assumed their new roles at the end of this year's Annual Meeting. Robbie LeValley of Colorado was named Vice President, and Dr. Dave Daley from California was named Secretary. 2024-2026 President Tim Canterbury will remain on the leadership team as Immediate Past President.

"Ron is a tireless advocate for the ranching industry and dedicates so much of his time to improving policies that impact ranchers on the ground throughout the West. His experience in ranching and public service will serve him well as he leads PLC and ranchers into the future," said PLC Executive Director Kaitlynn Glover. "As we close out the 58th annual convention of public lands ranchers, we head into the next year with strong leadership, clear policy, and unwavering commitment from every western state to the future of grazing in the West. Thank you to all attendees that made the trip and did the policy work that guides PLC's advocacy work."

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# Nevada Beef Council Update — October 2026

## Your Checkoff Dollars at Work

By Christie Van Egmond, Director, Retail & Foodservice Marketing

# Ensuring Retailers Continue to Champion Beef to Shoppers

**F**ood is a human need, core to our survival, and the most common way people obtain food is at their local grocery store, especially in urban areas. Consumers have an abundance of food choices at the grocery store, and the Beef Checkoff works to ensure that beef is at the forefront of shopping trips.

Over the latest 52-week period, beef delivered the strongest retail sales growth among the major proteins. Dollar sales increased 9.7% to \$47.1 billion, outpacing chicken, turkey, and pork, while volume also grew 2.1%.<sup>1</sup> The growth in both dollar sales and pounds, despite higher beef prices, indicates that consumer demand remains strong, but it's important that the Beef Checkoff continues to educate retailers to pass along to their customers the value of beef.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association, on behalf of the national Beef

Checkoff, recently launched the Beef Guide for Retail to help retailers ensure beef's visibility at the store-level, whether that's physically in their brick-and-mortar location, or digitally on their website and social media platforms. The new guide is a planning tool designed to help retailers better educate shoppers about beef cuts and preparation, and capitalize on seasonal opportunities to drive beef sales throughout the year.

The Beef Guide for Retail is a robust digital flipbook (that can also be downloaded and printed, if desired) that is filled with retail meat department category insights and consumer demand research insights. It also highlights beef's versatility, nutritional benefits, and value and alternative cuts that retailers can promote as affordable cuts to their customers thinking about their shopping budgets.

Launching with a fall-focused module, the guide features practical insights and activation inspiration tied to key seasonal occasions, including back-to-school, tailgating, comfort meals and holiday entertaining. Activation ideas include example social media posts, ads for digital apps and websites, and in-store point-of-sale. The guide will be updated quarterly with fresh data, merchandising inspiration for that season, and timely resources to support retail success.

Beef plays a powerful role in today's shopping decisions. The Beef Guide for Retail is an example of how the Beef Checkoff remains committed to creating innovative tools for retail professionals to help them continue to champion beef to their shoppers.



1. Circana, Fresh Meat Sales by Volume and Value, Data Ending 7/12/2026.

### Introduction: Beef Guide for Retail

Beef occupies more than one-third of the fresh meat case and represents more than 55% of total meat category value.<sup>1</sup>

### Beef as a Category Leader

Beef represents a substantial share of meat department space and delivers the largest share of meat category dollar sales — making it a **core category** for retail performance.

**One-Third of the Case. More Than Half the Value.**

Fresh beef delivers outsized value for the space it occupies — taking up more than a third of the fresh meat case, but delivering 57% of total value in protein sales. This helps retailers turn limited case space into meaningful sales dollars.<sup>1</sup>

57% Beef, 26% Chicken, 11% Pork, 5% Turkey

50% Beef's value isn't new. Beef has represented over 50% of the meat case's value for over five years — about 2x the value of the next closest animal protein.<sup>2</sup>

**Beef in the Basket**

| Metric                    | Value    |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Avg. basket with beef     | \$110.36 |
| Avg. basket without beef  | \$47.62  |
| % of basket spent on beef | ~16%     |

Beef is associated with higher total basket spend, as baskets containing beef include additional purchases across the store.<sup>3</sup>

**What Does This Mean for Your Meat Case?**

Beef's share of case space and category value can help prioritize assortment, displays, and promotional focus.

## NEVADA BEEF COUNCIL

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# BLM Invites People to Help Shape the Future of America's Public Lands, Make Your Voice Matter

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Land Management is encouraging adventurers, problem solvers, public lands enthusiasts, and community champions to join its Resource Advisory Councils; engaging forums where everyday people help shape decisions that keep America's public lands healthy, accessible, and thriving. Serving on a council is a chance to collaborate, share ideas, and make a real difference in how millions of public acres are managed for current and future generations.

The BLM published a national call for nominations in the Federal Register today to fill current and upcoming vacancies on 20 statewide and regional Resource Advisory Councils and two statutory councils. The nomination period is open 45 days, until Oct. 26, 2026, and anyone can nominate themselves or someone else. It's a unique opportunity to bring your perspective to the table, work alongside diverse voices, and help guide the stewardship of public lands we all care about.

"Resource Advisory Councils are a cornerstone of our mission to manage public lands for current and future generations," said BLM Director Steve Pearce. "These councils bring local voices and expertise to the table, ensuring decisions consider the needs of the American public. If you've been seeking an opportunity to have a voice in how America's public lands are managed, this is your chance."

The BLM is looking for individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and interests, including:

- Ranchers and holders of federal grazing permits
- Energy and mineral development representatives
- Recreation users
- State and local elected officials
- Tribal governments
- Wild horse and burro interest groups
- Environmental organizations
- Academics and members of the public-at-large

Resource Advisory Councils are required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and operate under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to ensure balanced representation. Resource Advisory Council members meet virtually at least once per year, providing advice on initiatives, regulations, and policies that impact millions of acres of public lands.

For more information and to apply visit our Resource Advisory Council page at <https://www.blm.gov/get-involved/resource-advisory-council>.

## Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Welcomes New Ely District Ranger

(September 19, 2026) – The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest welcomes Wendy Markham as the new district ranger for the Ely Ranger District. In this role, she will oversee the people and resources needed to manage more than 1 million acres of National Forest System lands in eastern Nevada, which support a wide range of natural resource and recreation programs.

"Wendy has been an important part of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest for the past decade," said Forest Supervisor Jon Stansfield. "Her deep understanding of our forest, our communities, and the landscapes we care for makes her an outstanding choice to step into this leadership role. We're fortunate to have her experience and steady hand guiding the Ely Ranger District."

Markham began her Forest Service career in 2009, accepting her first permanent seasonal position as a recreation technician on the Lassen National Forest's

Hat Creek Ranger District in Hat Creek, California. Over the next six years, she worked on the district as a recreation technician, recreation crew leader, and office automation clerk.

In 2016, Markham joined the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest as the Santa Rosa Ranger District's visitor services information assistant in Winnemucca, Nevada. She later served on the district as the support services specialist and as the recreation and lands special-use permit administrator for the Northeast and Central Zones. Most recently, she worked for four years on the Mountain City–Ruby Mountains–Jarbridge Ranger District in Wells, Nevada.

Throughout her career, Markham has completed numerous details, including serving as lead visitor services information assistant and recreation officer on the Hat Creek Ranger District, deputy district ranger on the Mountain City–Ruby Mountains–Jarbridge Ranger District in Elko, Nevada, and district ranger on the Ely Ranger District and the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area in Las Vegas.

"I'm looking forward to building strong relationships with our employees, partners, and local communities," Markham said. "Our shared stewardship is what keeps these public lands resilient, and I'm excited to continue that work together."

Markham holds a certificate in rangeland management and ecology from the University of Nevada, Reno, and a public administration degree from California State University, Fresno. She has extensive wildfire experience, having spent seven years as a plans section chief on incident management teams, overseeing incident planning, tracking situation and resource status, and managing demobilization. She now serves as an agency administrator, guiding wildfire response to align with agency policy and local priorities.

For additional information, please visit the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest website <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r04/humboldt-toiyabe>, or participate in the conversation at Facebook and X.

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# PLC Honors Awardees from WY and NV During 58th Annual Meeting

WASHINGTON (September 23, 2026) – During their 58th Annual Meeting, the Public Lands Council (PLC) honored two individuals who have made significant contributions to the federal lands ranching community. Association of National Grasslands (ANG) President Ty Checketts was selected for the 2026 President's Award and rancher Joe Guild from Nevada, was selected as the 2026 Friend of PLC.

Checketts owns and operates the historic Fiddleback Ranch with his family in northeastern Wyoming. Along with his duties as ANG President, Checketts is a member of the Wyoming Stockgrowers, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and serves as a PLC Board member. He is a constant presence on policy talks surrounding grazing on national grasslands and working to prevent catastrophic wildfires.

"The President's Award goes to someone each year that has gone above and beyond the call of duty to advocate for grazing permittees. Ty Checketts is the strongest voice and advocate for those who ranch on national grasslands, but he also does so much work to help all federal lands ranchers," said PLC Immediate Past President Tim Canterbury. "Checketts has testified in Congress and led engagement with state and local officials for years, which is a costly endeavor to

spend time away from your operation, even though the impact for ranchers across the West is clear. Checketts is well deserving of the President's award, and I am proud to serve with him on the PLC Board of Directors."

Guild is a rancher and lawyer that got his start working in natural resource and water law, before founding his own consulting business supporting other ranchers in the industry. Joe manages a cow/calf operation on 25,000 acres on national forest land and is also part of a ranch management team with both cows and sheep on one million acres of land. He is a past president of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association, former Treasurer of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and a longtime member of PLC.

"There is no better friend to PLC than Joe Guild, he has been in western policy battles we have faced for years and is always working to do more to advocate for and protect the American rancher," said PLC President Ron Cerri. "He has spent his career standing up for livestock producers in court and our nation's capital, while managing multiple livestock operations. I do not know where we would be as an industry without Joe's leadership because he has really set us up for the successes we are seeing today, due to his extensive body of work. Thank you, Joe for everything you have done for PLC and the western grazing community."

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# New NRCS Video Explains Role of Qualified Individuals Who Collect and Submit Soil Samples and Reports

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Are you a Qualified Individual (QI) for the Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activity, or CEMA, for Soil Health Testing (CEMA 216) or curious how to become one? A new video can help answer questions by walking through the process on Nevada's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/gX2n4YLXLto>).

USDA's NRCS is looking for QIs to perform soil health testing for farmers, ranchers and forest landowners who are participating in the new Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP). As part of this program, the participant agrees to perform soil health testing in the first and last year of the contract, at a minimum, to establish a starting baseline and to record the resulting changes. This



CEMA 216 and the Regenerative Pilot Program here: [tinyurl.com/95b9e9xp](https://tinyurl.com/95b9e9xp)

is called a Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activity, or CEMA.

A QI is a trained, reputable, competent professional who ensures proper soil sampling, packaging, lab submission, and data interpretation. QIs may be certified professionals, degree holders, or experienced technicians. NRCS provides funding as part of an RPP contract to help offset the cost of the soil health testing conducted by the QI.

If you, or anyone in your network, are interested in becoming a QI, please email NRCS Nevada State Soil Scientist Chris Savastio with questions and to specify the geographic area you would be able to cover: [chris.savastio@usda.gov](mailto:chris.savastio@usda.gov). Read more about

## BLM Delivers on Call for More Wild Horse Fertility Control with \$30 Million USDA Investment and National Roundtable

WASHINGTON – The American people have asked for more fertility control in wild horse and burro management, and the Department of the Interior is prepared to deliver. Today, at the National Wild Horse and Burro Roundtable, the Bureau of Land Management announced a \$30 million investment from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expand and accelerate fertility control efforts nationwide.

“The passion shown by the American people for safeguarding the Spirit of the West continues to guide and energize this work,” said Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum. “Their steadfast support has driven major action to ensure wild horses and burros remain a cherished part of our national heritage. This progress is also made possible through the strong commitment of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, whose partnership reinforces the shared responsibility of caring for these iconic landscapes and the animals that define them.”

Most herds grow by 15 to 20% every year, far faster than drought strained western rangelands can provide for sufficient forage and water. When herds grow beyond what the land can sustain, horses face real and immediate risks, including struggling to maintain weight and strength, starvation, dehydration, and long distance travel in search of food and water that can leave animals weak or injured. Removing wild horses and burros from the range is the safest way to get overpopulated wild horse and burro populations

to a size that the range can support. Once herds are at sustainable levels, expanding fertility control will help stabilize herd growth, reduce the need for future gathers, and protect wild horses and burros from these conditions. The USDA investment will allow the BLM to increase field capacity, train and deploy more fertility control applicators, and expand vaccine delivery across remote herd areas.

Some advocates claim the BLM has “ignored cheap fertility control options for 20 years,” but that is not true. The BLM used 921 fertility control treatments in fiscal year 2025 and is actively expanding the tool. Fertility treatments alone cannot shrink an already overpopulated herd, and slowing growth requires treating about 75% of mares every single year, something not feasible across most of the vast, rugged western landscapes. Fertility control is most effective once gathers reduce herds to sustainable sizes. Gathers are still generally required to successfully treat horses with fertility control.

Today's roundtable, held at the Main Interior Building, brought together diverse groups of stakeholders from across the country with a goal to deepen collective understanding of how the program's statutory, policy, budgetary, and staffing responsibilities intersect, and to identify areas of shared interest that can strengthen humane, sustainable herd management.

Participants included representatives from Humane World for Animals, American Wild Horse

Conservation, Return to Freedom, Beaver County, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and Intermountain West Joint Venture, the Wild Horse and Burro Working Group of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Reducing long-term costs is another important benefit of expanded fertility control. Caring for tens of thousands of unadopted wild horses and burros in off range corrals and pastures is the largest expense in the program's budget, and each animal that remains in holding represents a significant cost to taxpayers. By slowing herd growth, fewer animals will need to be removed from the range, which means fewer horses entering long term care and lower overall program costs. Every horse adopted or purchased by a responsible owner helps reduce this burden, saving an estimated \$15,000 in lifetime care.

Members of the public can play an important role in supporting these efforts. Adoption or purchase of a wild horse or burro provides an animal with a safe, caring home and reduces the number of horses that require long-term holding. Sharing accurate information about humane management, participating in public comment opportunities, volunteering with fertility control partners, and reporting any activity that might put an animal at risk all help protect wild horses and burros and support sustainable herd sizes on the range.

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|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|------|------|
| 7.4 | 0.5 | 40 | 67 | 22 | 0.51 | 0.29 | 2.32 |

**SCC FRONTLINE 99N35**  
Frontline x 99H4



| CED | BW   | WW | YW | TM | REA  | IMF  | STAY |
|-----|------|----|----|----|------|------|------|
| 6   | -0.3 | 30 | 60 | 17 | 0.57 | 0.45 | 3.27 |

**DMR TOP GUN 60N20**  
Top Gun x 60J19



| CED | BW  | WW | YW | TM | REA  | IMF  | STAY |
|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|------|------|
| 6.8 | 0.1 | 47 | 78 | 21 | 0.74 | 0.66 | 2.66 |

**WAT CROSSFIRE 30N50**  
DMR/WAT Crossfire 99H23 x 30J8



| CED | BW  | WW | YW | TM | REA  | IMF | STAY |
|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|-----|------|
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# Building on Strength

By Colin Woodall, NCBA CEO

Today, the cattle producers are in a position of strength. That strength did not come easily. It was built through years of drought, herd liquidation, rising input costs, tight margins and constant uncertainty. Through it all, farmers and ranchers continued investing in their operations, improving their herds and finding better ways to produce beef.

Those investments are paying off through strong cattle prices and exceptional beef demand. The quality and safety of U.S. beef has never been better.

None of this happened by accident.

The leaders of this industry made deliberate decisions to improve genetics, nutrition, animal health and management. Producers adopted technologies and production practices to produce more efficiently, use resources more effectively, and deliver a more consistent product. We see the results in the marketplace. The clearest measure of our success is historic consumer demand despite high prices. Americans are paying more for nearly everything, yet they continue to choose beef. That shows us consumers value the nutrition, quality and eating experience beef provides.

Our industry has learned that quality drives demand.

Strong markets create opportunity but they should also create perspective. Cattle markets, weather, input costs, animal health threats and global markets all shift. Conditions that look favorable today can change quickly. The question is not how long strong prices will last but what we do with this opportunity while we have it.

This is the time to strengthen operations, improve balance sheets, invest and prepare for the next shift in the market cycle. The fundamentals that brought us here have not changed. Quality, efficiency, animal health and sound business management all matter. Above all, the consumer matters. Our future depends on consumers continuing to believe beef is worth buying, and today they clearly do.

We must continue delivering the safety, quality, consistency and value that consumers expect every time they purchase beef. We also must understand that

expectations extend beyond the product in the package. Consumers want confidence in how their food is produced. They care about food safety and animal well-being. They want to understand who raises their food and how it reaches their table.

Cattle producers have a strong story to tell.

Every day on farms, ranches and feedyards across America, producers care for livestock, manage natural resources and provide safe, nutritious protein for families. Our job is to ensure consumers understand our commitment behind every pound of beef.

We also cannot ignore the impact of public policy which can impact profitability. The past year has demonstrated how quickly decisions made in Washington, D.C., can influence markets, disrupt business planning, and create uncertainty across the cattle and beef supply chain.

That is why cattle producers need a strong and consistent voice.

NCBA is that voice.

NCBA fights for policies that protect producer profitability, expand market access, and support growth of the U.S. cattle industry. Administrations will change. Political priorities will change. Our mission will not. We will continue working to ensure cattle producers have the freedom and opportunity to succeed.

The next decade will be consequential for our industry.

Technology will transform how we manage cattle and operate. Genetic advancements will drive productivity and carcass quality. Animal disease preparedness will become increasingly critical, while weather and resources will con-

tinue influencing production decisions. At the same time, there's an opportunity with the growing global demand for high-quality protein. Capturing those opportunities requires discipline, strategic investment and a long-term perspective.

Profitable years provide the best opportunity to prepare for the future. History shows that producers focused on sound business fundamentals are better positioned to withstand inevitable challenges when conditions change.

The industry's strength today is a direct result of the people who built it.

American beef has earned a global reputation for safety, consistency and quality. Consumers continue to choose our product, and producers are seeing returns that reflect years of hard work, investment and risk. Those accomplishments are worth celebrating, but they should never be taken for granted.

Success is not permanent. Markets will fluctuate. Policy challenges will arise. Unexpected events will test us. Yet those same periods of change often create opportunities for producers willing to adapt.

Resilience is a defining characteristic of the cattle business. Time and again, producers have overcome challenges and moved the industry forward. Continued success will depend on our ability to produce a superior product, create value for consumers, and build operations that can thrive in any environment.

The foundation is strong, built through hard work, innovation and a relentless commitment to improvement. Now we build on it. If we remain focused on quality, profitability and the consumer, the future of the U.S. cattle industry is exceptionally bright. The best days are still ahead.



Success is not permanent. Markets will fluctuate.

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test us. Yet those same periods of change often

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# Let's Pass the Baton

by Gene Copenhaver, NCBA President

Sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement, a clear invitation or an introduction to help a young leader build industry connections and gain confidence to step into leadership roles.

The long-term strength of the U.S. beef industry depends on the preparation of the next generation to carry and improve upon our legacies. Without a well-planned transition, we expose ourselves to the possibility of losing valuable farms and ranches across the country. If we want to safeguard the future of American beef production, we must prioritize succession planning today.

Just as we need strong hands and sharp minds to take ownership of our operations and cattle businesses, we also need the next generation's insight and perspective in our meeting rooms. As an industry facing challenges and opposition from many directions, we need strong voices to advocate for American cattlemen and women. That signals to me that we should intentionally encourage and equip emerging leaders to participate in policy conversations, serve within state affiliates and partner organizations, and help consumers understand that farmers and ranchers are responsible stewards of the land and produce a safe, nutritious food supply.

I know that it can be easy to leave our sons and daughters on the farm to care for the cattle and handle day-to-day challenges while the older generation attends important meetings like state cattlemen's conventions or CattleCon. But I urge you to rethink that approach. While it is valuable for the incoming generation to manage daily operations so we can network with fellow producers and vote on important issues, the decisions made in those rooms, where producers come together, will shape their future far more than our own. They deserve a seat at the table and to be heard in those conversations.

Sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement, a clear invitation or an introduction to help a young leader build industry connections and gain confidence to step into leadership roles. Having served as a volunteer leader for many years, I have seen firsthand how change is made by those who show up. That's why I believe the first step is giving the next generation the opportunity to be present. The next step is ensuring they have clear pathways into leadership.

I remember cattlemen who encouraged me to attend my first county cattlemen's meeting and I remember taking on responsibilities that felt greater than I was ready for. Their confidence helped me find my place and taught me leadership is learned by doing — not by waiting until you feel fully prepared. Looking back, those initial opportunities shaped my role within the cattle industry today.

In my conversations with young cattlemen and women throughout my travels this year, I am consistently impressed with their understanding of industry issues and their eagerness to be a part of the solution. Many of them grew up hearing the same concerns: farmers are aging out and the agriculture workforce is shrinking, while access to land becomes increasingly difficult. Rather than discouraging this generation, I clearly see that they are driven by a remarkable level of grit and determination. Because of that, they are ready to represent the cattle industry and defend the future of beef production.

I am excited and encouraged to see many young producers who are willing



to give their time, resources and talents to reinforcing the future of American beef production. As a leader and a parent, I want to support them in any way I can, and I believe mentorship is one of the best methods to prepare the next generation for success. Mentorship does not have to be complex. Invite a young producer to attend a county meeting, introduce them to industry leaders, or ask them to serve on a committee. Small opportunities often lead to meaningful contributions.

To those of you waiting for your turn to step into leadership, take that step today. Don't wait. Join your local cattlemen's association. Attend national events such as CattleCon, Summer Business Meeting or Legislative Conference. And to those of you who have carried the baton for a while, turn around and offer a hand to someone coming behind you who is ready to lead our industry forward.



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