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A voluntary partnership with private landowners

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National GLCI Steering Committee Visits Wyoming

By Kindra Gordon

Two buses filled with grazing enthusiasts visited the Hardy Ranch in Wyoming in early September to learn about their grazing management.

Board members of the National Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) steering committee met Sept. 7-8 in Casper, WY, for their annual fall business meeting. Member producers representing nine industry organizations including the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Forage and Grassland Council, American Sheep Industry, the Dairy Industry, National Association of Conservation Districts, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Farmers Union, Society for Range Management, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society were on hand for the event.

Established in 1991, the primary mission of GLCI is to ensure that high quality technical assistance is available for privately owned grazing lands. Supporters of GLCI seek to offer this assistance on a voluntary basis and hope these efforts will increase the awareness of the importance of grazing land resources.

That grazing technical assistance offered to private landowners was showcased during a tour of the Hardy Ranch north of Douglas, WY. The tour was organized by Wyoming Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Wyoming Private Grazing Lands Team to kick-off the national GLCI steering committee gathering in the state.

This family operation includes sheep, cattle, wildlife and mining sharing the rangeland. Gene Hardy and his daughter and son-in-law Michelle and Shaun Musselman and their two young children are in their second year of implementing improvement practices to their range through an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract with assistance from NRCS.

Through water developments, fencing, and rotational grazing, the Hardy Ranch hopes to increase carrying capacity by about 30%. "NRCS has been great to work with, and in the end we will have a better ranch for the next generation," said Shaun Musselman.

Hardy Ranch also operates a 6,500 acre ranch in northwest Nebraska where they run most of their cowherd.

During the business meeting of the GLCI national steering committee, the group heard reports from leadership from several government agencies and their efforts on range and pasture lands man-

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Wyoming Visit *(continued from page 1)*

agement and research including the Agricultural Research Service, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. NRCS State Conservationists from Texas, Missouri, Florida and California were also on hand to participate in the meeting.

For upcoming events, GLCI will host a Grazing Symposium on Tuesday, Jan. 29, in Louisville, KY at the joint meeting of the Society for Range Management and the American Forage and Grassland Council.

GLCI is also making plans to host its 4th National Conference on Grazing Lands Dec. 13-16, 2009 in Reno, NV. Previously GLCI has hosted this conference in Las Vegas, NV; Nashville, TN; and in 2006 in St. Louis, MO.

Shaun Musselman of Wyoming shows how dogs are a great partner in rounding up livestock.

GLCI Activities Report

What has GLCI accomplished in the past? Here are just a few statistics from Fiscal Year 2006:

- ✓ NRCS has helped farmers and ranchers develop more than 30,600 grazing land conservation plans covering more than 30 million acres.
- ✓ Over 750 grazing land demonstration projects, involving 880 farms and ranches were carried out nationwide.
- ✓ Over 1,800 education and awareness activities (grazing land workshops, field days and tours) were conducted with over 105,000 individuals participating in events.
- ✓ Over 1,700 grazing-related articles were published reaching more than 9 million households.
- ✓ Over 1,100 NRCS employees allocated the majority of their time to providing technical assistance to private landowners and activities related to grazing.

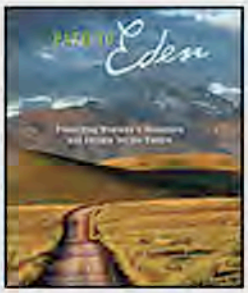
Specific accomplishments and activities from 2007 include:

- ✓ The national GLCI booth and GLCI specialists have attended annual meetings of all GLCI membership organizations as well as several wildlife organizations including Pheasants Forever and Quail Unlimited.
- ✓ New Hampshire and Massachusetts have both formed new state GLCI groups.
- ✓ Pennsylvania has created a DVD series with producers talking about their success with different grazing scenarios. The first DVD featured grass-based dairy producers. A second DVD featured beef producers, and plans are in the works to produce a third DVD for horse producers on grazing management practices.
- ✓ Michigan hosted a successful tour for "decision makers" including lenders, congressional aids and other government leaders to help educate them on the importance of grazing and agriculture in general.
- ✓ Wisconsin has published a 55-page booklet detailing the educational workshops, tours and research projects made possible through the Wisconsin GLCI.

Contact your state GLCI coordinator to see what they've been up to! For more about GLCI visit www.glci.org.

STATE SPOTLIGHT

Montana: Path to Eden DVD designed for new landowners



A new DVD from the Rural Landscape Institute has been developed to assist new landowners in transitioning into Montana's rural way of life. Titled the "Path to Eden," the DVD is designed to help landowners be better able to make informed decisions central to Montana's communities, wildlife, natural resources and ranching heritage.

The DVD was created to address the many new and absentee landowners who have relocated to Montana in the past decade - and to help them understand the responsibility and challenges that accompany owning property in rural Montana. Pertinent topics such as community relations, wildlife management, noxious weeds, water rights, historic preservation, and responsible construction are all addressed by Path To Eden.

Developers of the DVD, which was created with donations from 19 organizations including the Montana GLCI, say there hope is that through working together the Eden that is Montana can be maintained for generations to come.

The 26-minute film includes introductory and closing comments by Tom Brokaw, himself a Montana landowner, who donated his time to the project. To request your copy of the Path to Eden DVD visit www.pathtoeden.org or call 406-522-7654. A suggested donation of $10 is requested to order the DVD. A resource booklet titled "Living Eden" is also available and offers a 10-step guide to help communities engage with new landowners and encourage them to become good neighbors.

OHIO: ONLINE HORSE DIRECTORY DEVELOPED

A new online directory is being developed with information about hay suppliers, equine veterinarians and other horse-related products and services by county within Ohio. The directory is part of an Ohio State University (OSU) department of animal sciences effort to offer targeted resources to those working with or within the state's sizeable horse industry.

For example, the department's new quarterly equine newsletter has news about upcoming horse-related events in the state, as well as equine-related educational information. The newsletter is available at horse.osu.edu/equineenews/.

Balancing Cattle and Wildlife Habitat in Texas

Submitted by Lori Valadez, TX NRCS Public Affairs Specialist

More than 90 wildlife and livestock managers attended a wildlife habitat management clinic, Managing Habitat with Stocker Cattle in the Golden Triangle, in Cotulla, TX on July 27, 2007.

Dr. Joe Paschal, livestock specialist with Texas Cooperative Extension, presented information on locating and selecting stocker cattle.

When asked, "Can livestock and wildlife share the same home without conflict?" many would say "no" viewing livestock as taking resources needed by wildlife.

"The purpose of this program was to dispel this myth and educate land managers how to utilize livestock grazing to enhance wildlife habitat," said Kathryn Menke, district conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Cotulla.

"Drought is inevitable in this region and flexibility is the key to survival," Menke said. "This flexibility can be gained by grazing stocker cattle that are bought with the intent to move or sell them again in a matter of months."

A historical perspective of the landscape, ecosystems, rainfall patterns, habitat needs of wildlife and livestock, research, and real-life examples of different grazing strategies used by clientele to achieve wildlife habitat goals were all topics covered in a presentation made by Garry Stephens, NRCS biologist.

This program was sponsored by the Cotulla Field Office of the NRCS, the Texas Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI), and the La Salle County Soil and Water Conservation District, with cooperation from Texas Cooperative Extension.

GLCI Symposium Jan. 29 in Louisville

GLCI will host a special grazing symposium on Tuesday, Jan. 29 during the joint meeting of the American Forage and Grassland Council and the Society for Range Management in Louisville, KY. The panel of speakers will highlight practical grazing advice for all livestock producers. Speakers and topics will include:

- Pat Pfiel, FL, discussing managing rangelands and balancing for bird habitat
- Rod Baumberger, SD, sharing practical grazing management ideas for horse acreages
- Troy Bishopp, NY, sharing how he finishes stockers on grass
- Howard Straub, MI, discussing grass-based dairy operations
- Targeted grazing and using sheep to combat weeds will also be discussed

Bob Drake, chairman of the National GLCI Steering Committee will moderate the session. For more about the conference being held Jan. 26-31 visit www.rangelands.org/louisville2008.

MEET YOUR NATIONAL GLCI STEERING COMMITTEE

The National GLCI Steering Committee is made up of nine industry organizations with producer members from each of these organizations serving on the National GLCI Steering Committee. At present they include:

National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Bob Drake, Oklahoma, Chair
Bob Lee, Montana
Bob McCan, Texas (alternate)

American Farm Bureau Federation
Flavius Barker, Tennessee, Vice Chair
Steve Kouplen, Oklahoma

American Forage and Grassland Council
John Spain, Arkansas
Dave Forgey, Indiana
Bill Tucker (alternate)

American Sheep Industry
Aggie Helle, Montana
Margaret Soulen-Hinson, Idaho

Dairy Industry
Howard Straub, Michigan
Duane Hertzler, Pennsylvania

National Association of Conservation District
Gretchen Sammis, New Mexico
Rooter Brite, Texas, Secretary-Treasurer
Joe Sicking (alternate)

National Farmers Union
Gerald Jaeger, Wisconsin
Eunice Beal, Minnesota (alternate)

Society for Range Management
Keith Bartholomay, North Dakota
Pat Pfiel, Florida

Soil and Water Conservation Society
Tim Munns, Utah
Rod Baumberger, South Dakota
Ron Harnack, Minnesota (alternate)

To contact these individuals visit www.glci.org and click on "Who's Involved." Emeritus steering committee members include: **Frank Philp**, WY, **Bud Purdy**, ID, **Chip Merrill**, TX, **Jack Cutshall**, LA

UPCOMING GRAZING EVENTS

Dec. 13 -- Alabama Forage Conference, Troy. Contact Don Ball at 334-844-5491 or Eddie Jolley at 334-887-4564.

Dec. 18-19 -- 2007 California Alfalfa & Forage Symposium, Portola Plaza Hotel, Monterey. Contact Dan Putnam, 530-752-8982 or dhputnam@ucdavis.edu.

Jan. 7-8 -- Heart of America and Mid-Missouri Grazing Conference, Holiday Inn Select, Columbia, MO. For more information, visit www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/.

Jan. 26-Feb. 1 -- Joint Society for Range Management and American Forage and Grassland Council Conference, Louisville, KY. Visit www.rangelands.org/events.shtml.

Feb. 4-6 -- 2008 National Alfalfa Symposium and Mid-America Alfalfa Expo, Kearney, NE, sponsored by Hay & Forage Grower and the Nebraska Alfalfa Marketing Association. Visit www.hayandforage.com for details.

Chair's Corner *By Bob Drake, Oklahoma*

A huge thank you to Everet Bainter, Wyoming State Rangeland Management Specialist with NRCS, and Dennis Sun, chair of the Wyoming Private Grazing Lands Team, for hosting the fall business meeting and tour for the National GLCI Steering Committee. They organized a top-notch event.

Thanks also to all of the steering committee members for participating in our continuing efforts to provide voluntary technical grazing assistance to private landowners.

During our September meeting in Wyoming we were pleased to have several important folks join us to offer updates from their respective agencies and organizations. They included:

- Jim Dobrowolksi, Cooperative Service Research Education Extension Service
- Robert Bolton, Bureau of Land Management
- vert Byington, Agricultural Research Service
- Janette Kaiser, US Forest Service
- Kristi Maczko, Sustainable Rangeland Roundtable
- Dennis Thompson, NRCS

We also thank the NRCS state conservationists who serve on our advisory committee and have had a long partnership with GLCI. In attendance in Casper, WY, were Don Gohmert, TX; Roger Hansen, MO; Niles Glasgow, FL; Ed Burton, CA; and Karen Sullivan of New York representing state conservationist Ron Alvarado. Also in attendance and representing GLCI's advisory committee were Tom McDonnell, American Sheep Industry; Tom Sommer, NRCS; and Hezekiah Gibson representing United Farmer's USA.

Plans are already beginning to form for the 4th National Conference on Grazing Lands in Reno, NV, in 2009. The California Rangeland Resolution has a partnership of 60 organizations who are committed to stewardship on privately owned rangelands, and they are stepping forward to take the lead on hosting this great event.

The national GLCI Steering Committee will hold its annual spring business meeting Feb. 25-26 in Washington, DC. For more about GLCI efforts visit www.glci.org.

To have your GLCI activities or upcoming events highlighted in this newsletter, contact Kindra Gordon at phone 605-722-7699 or kindras@gordonresources.com.

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Visit the GLCI homepage at http://www.glci.org

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