

Good afternoon, I'm Kris Stewart with Stewart's Ninety-Six Ranch in Paradise Valley, Nevada. We are Nevada's oldest single family run ranching operation, having started business the same year as Nevada joined the Union. In July of this year, the Martin fire destroyed nearly a third of our private lands as well as our entire BLM grazing permit. This seriously jeopardizes our economic viability. We have watched for decades as wildfire has destroyed friends and neighbors throughout the West.

No matter what the ignition source of the Martin or other fires, the root cause is five plus decades of disastrous federal land management.

Our story is perhaps unique because our use of the lands in and around Paradise Valley for grazing predates federal land management agencies control of these resources by many decades. In fact, when Taylor Grazing was introduced in 1934, our ranch was deemed to be using the resource properly and was subject to no cut in numbers or duration of annual use. In fact, our operation was considered a model of best practices grazing through the mid-1970's. Then, the modern environmental movement used its influence on and within agencies and every sector of government to change our relationship with land managers from engaged partner to adversary.

Today, a set of permits that historically ran 5000-5500 head of cattle from March through October now run 1800 from May through September. None of these changes has improved the condition of the range and in fact, precipitated the conditions which allowed the Martin fire to happen and destroy over 340,000 acres including most of the prime greater sage grouse habitat in our State.

When we completed our monitoring of use some two weeks before the Martin fire, our measurements indicate that we had used but 18-20% of usable forage and by the BLM's own admission, fuel loads had been allowed to grow to 200-1000% of normal. Once the fire started, it was simply too late. Fire crews did an amazing job, but within 24 hours of ignition, we had lost everything.

We sat and talked, cried, and determined that we were not going to allow this to happen to even one more ranching family without telling our story and trying to make a change in how the federal land management agencies view livestock grazing – a practice that we know through over 150 years of practical experience as well as exhaustive scientific study – is healthful, natural and absolutely essential

to maintaining and restoring a healthy ecosystem on rangeland worldwide. One of our County commission members asked us to write up our story and he took it back to DC, even as the Martin fire continued to burn. Unable to make his plea to the House Natural Resources committee, then Senator Dean Heller took to the Senate floor and first told our story in DC. Next, we headed to DC in September. We met with the Chief of the USFS, the acting director of the BLM, 9 members of the House Natural Resource Committee and committee staff, as well as both senators from Nevada. Lastly, we secured a White House meeting with the help of our friend Demar Dahl. The meeting was polite, and we left our information including an 8 point plan aimed at reducing fire danger in the West, restoring health to range and forest lands and boosting the economies of the rural west which I developed with my husband Fred and a staffer in Mark Amodei's office whose family background is ranching. We also left an album of before and after pictures of our ranch and range with the White House. In truth, the staffer didn't ask a single question and we left DC feeling great about our agency and legislative meetings but wondering how effective we had been with the White House itself.

We got our answer six days later when I received a call from president Trump. We spoke for 11-12 minutes. He was very engaged and knowledgeable and he liked my whole plan. He promised help. I complained about Nevada being denied FEMA assistance after the fire and he said he would speak with them. He also told me that he did not see Republicans holding the house and asked that after midterms, please come back, meet with some higher level people and get ready for an Executive Order by Christmas. Indeed, I went back after midterms and was able to meet with Undersecretary of Interior Tim Williams as well as higher level White House staff and a director of policy for the National Security Council. This gentleman attended our meeting because the President, displeased with FEMA policies that denied Nevada even a single dollar of federal emergency funds after our disasters, asked this gentleman in charge of mitigation after catastrophic events to find a way "to help those people". He asked me for appropriate contacts in Humboldt and Elko counties – which I provided and both Counties are working on grants that will help us rebuild and replant after the fires. Under-secretary Williams and Director Crozer from the White House confirmed that the President was focused on reforms in federal land management that would reduce wildfire risk using livestock grazing as a primary tool, restore forest and range health

through use of grazing and other proactive strategies, and boost the economies of the rural west using these reforms to strengthen industry and communities who rely on sustainable agriculture and forestry.

I also met with three key legislative allies, those being Mark Amodei, Liz Cheney and Kevin McCarthy to insure that we could keep pressure on the agencies as well as the administration.

On December 11th, House Leader McCarthy phoned me to make sure we were still on track for an EO by Christmas and to redouble his commitment to meaningful reforms.

On December 21, the White House delivered on President Trump's promise and released our executive order. It is a broad, and brief action, setting the table for secretarial actions to rewrite policy and reforms at the BLM, USFS and USFWS.

The hard work now begins. As soon as the shutdown lifts, Leader McCarthy will meet with Agency and Administration officials to convene working groups to tackle this huge undertaking. We need to be ready.

It is essential that real working ranchers and foresters have seats at those tables. This is where your organization can be most helpful. While it is great that some of you are included in groups like this, the truth is that no one from an agency, federal, state or local government has the same level or depth of experience in what really works out on the range like the ranchers that work this land everyday. I appreciate all you do, and all that our industry alliances like NCA and PLC do, but honestly, we need real ranchers to get this plan right. And by right, I mean right for the resource on a long-term basis. Good ranchers have to think in these terms. Rangeland is not a use directed term, it is an actual type of ecosystem found all over our planet and for range to be healthy, it must be grazed effectively. Only real ranchers know what really works with real cattle or sheep out on real rangeland, period!

Please use all of your influence to get real ranching Nevadans involved in this process. That does not mean managers of ranches owned by SNWA or big Gold...It means ranchers who live and die with the real conditions on the range and in the marketplace. Please help us do the right things for Nevada and the West. Help us with this effort by lending your support to real ranchers being involved in this

effort. I can tell you that I will keep calling, knocking on doors and if I have to, pushing my way into these working groups and meeting rooms, whether I am initially wanted or not, because I know that I and other real ranchers have the experience, the honesty and the gut check this process requires.

I've provided you with a summary of our story. I hope you'll read it and if you want to learn more about holistic range management, give me a call so that I can send you a copy of Alan Savory's Holistic Management. If you'll spend 3 hours with that book, you will realize that effective levels of livestock grazing, are not only the most healthy and natural way to reduce fire danger and restore soil and ecosystem health, but an absolutely essential part of rangeland management.

In the meantime, we remain ready to head back to DC as soon as the shutdown breaks and start the long and arduous process of writing the real language of reform that our State and the West so richly deserves.

Thanks for your time today.

Save the Great American West

A common sense plan to save our environment and our way of life.

In the early morning hours of July 5, 2018, the Martin fire erupted in Paradise Valley, NV. Over the next several days it consumed hundreds of thousands of acres, killed countless wildlife and destroyed what was prime habitat for the threatened sage grouse. By the end of the first day, we had lost our entire BLM grazing permit and over 6200 acres of our private land.

The Ninety-Six Ranch is Nevada's oldest family operated ranching operation. We started business in the same year that Nevada joined the union, back in 1864. Through 155 years and five generations, our family has thoughtfully and carefully managed the lands entrusted to it.

No matter what the ignition source of the Martin Fire, the truth is that the root cause of the fire and so many others like it, is five plus decades of completely disastrous land management by federal agencies including BLM, USFS and USFWS.

The Ninety-Six Ranch use of its grazing lands predates federal agency management by many decades. Our records indicate that in the 154 years preceding the Martin fire, our lands have never burned like this. This is no accident; it has been due to careful and diligent management on our part. Today, we graze at levels less than 30% of historic levels. By the BLM's own admission, fuel levels on our permits were allowed to grow to 200-1000% of normal. We and many other permittees have discussed and warned of the impending fire danger with the agency's personnel for decades, but no changes have been made to our amount of use or seasons of use. Just before leaving our BLM permit in June 2018, our own monitoring indicated that we had used but 18-20% of allowed forage. Even with extreme fuel loads and fire danger, we were not allowed to stay longer because our use dates had past.

Each year, more of the West burns and currently, is burning up at a faster rate than ever before in recorded history. Federal land managers have allowed land management to become political and a bureaucratic nightmare rather than a common sense, science based exercise. Ranchers like our family are the true environmentalists on this land. We have a vested interest in its overall health. The fences, water developments and other range improvements that we build and maintain provide measurable benefits for wildlife, recreation as well as for our livestock. As a matter of fact, the improvements that we have built and maintain provide measurably benefits to every species with whom we share the resource. Our cattle move through range and remove dangerous fuels from it. Additionally, their hood effect necessarily disturbs the soil, removes crusts that impede the integration of water (from rain and snow) and natural fertilizers which they also deposit. Our use is positive and productive; not negative, as rabid environmental groups like Western Watersheds and even staff at State and Federal agencies might have you believe. In almost any other environment, the holistic grazing of livestock would be a welcome contribution to maintaining overall range health. Only in the US, where environmental activism has taken on

an almost religious fervor and all things related to guided human use are dismissed as unnatural and bad; are the real, substantial and measurable benefits of livestock grazing not touted and seen for what they are... necessary, common sense and backed up by sound science.

This fall, the BLM and other federal agencies sought substantial supplemental funding to restore and rehab the lands burned in the Martin Fire and elsewhere. We applaud the fact that the Trump administration has recognized proper and proactive range and forest management as key to reducing fire danger in the West and warned that future emergency funds after natural disasters caused by poor federal and state management of these resources may be reduced or withdrawn unless proactive strategies are employed to better manage the resource.

For some perspective, from 1864 until the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in June of 1934, our family ran cattle, sheep and horses out on the same lands we graze today. Our numbers were moderated by the weather, water and available feed. We went out earlier and stayed out longer. In the early days, our range was much more a grassland than a true sagebrush steppe. We built reservoirs and spring developments that are still in use today, but would never, ever be allowed to be constructed today. Following passage of the Taylor Grazing Act, our use and numbers were modified, not by political forces, but by careful study and informed negotiations with the federal agencies in charge of grazing and land management. Our operation settled into Taylor grazing with about 5,000 head of cattle on the permits. By that time we had given up our sheep and major horse operation, but were still allowed over 100 head of ranch horses on the range in addition to our cattle numbers. We went out in late March or early April and came home ahead of the early snows in October. We worked in consultation with range managers from both the BLM and USFS for many decades, and maintained one of the best set of grazing permits in the West. Our permits were the "go to" places to see for foreign groups and range scientists from all over the U.S. Nevada "range camp" was often held at our ranch or on our permits. That all began to change in the 1970's and by the time Bruce Babbitt came into power at the department of Interior, we had little to no say in how the range we depended on would be managed, and we quickly became the enemy, rather than the engaged partner we had always been. Today, the same permits that we have grazed for 154 years, run only about 1,800 head of cattle and 18 horses and we are limited to a strict April to September schedule that requires regular rest for pastures regardless of conditions on the ground.

The Taylor Grazing Act limited use to an effective number of cattle on the range, the cuts that have occurred since that time have largely been driven by politics rather than good science. We are also forced to rest fields after a year of use or when the agencies do minor work in them; when in fact, even brief annual use to reduce fuels makes far more sense from a scientific and practical point of view. The truth is that timing, not the amount of livestock is the key to good range health in our brittle environment, and that targeted livestock grazing in areas with gullies or stream breakdowns is often the best method for restoring stream bank health. Livestock hoof effect, used naturally and effectively for thousands of years the world over, is a practical tool that is ignored and underused by modern land management agencies, especially those managers in

the United States, where constant legal challenges from environmental groups to any change or improvement on the range is the status quo.

By the time we are now able to turn out on our BLM in April, cheat grass is up and starting to head out. If we could turn out just as snow is melting off with significantly increased numbers, we could beat the cheat grass back and probably kill it in many places within a few years. The key is to get cows to it before it makes a seed head. The other key season is in late fall and early in winter when the mature cheat grass has gotten some moisture on it and softened up. This adjustment would take a huge change of attitude on the part of the federal agencies. They would need to acknowledge that livestock grazing can and should be a major part of range health and range conservation practices and that use dates should correspond to conditions on the ground, not arbitrary dates set in Washington D.C. by bureaucrats who neither live out-West nor understand the complexities of resource they manage.

After the Martin Fire, we are left with over a half-million acres of charred black ground, scattered with burned up animals that were not fast enough to escape. A cheat grass monoculture will quickly establish itself on this range as it has following almost every major wildfire in the Great Basin. Our five generations of experience tell us that we could help beat back the cheat grass scourge that is coming by making a large turn out early in spring 2019. Our permit could potentially handle 6,000 head of cattle, all eating young cheat grass shoots while the invasive plant is tender and palatable to the cattle. Nothing else will be above ground growing at that time of year after this fire, just the invasive and very destructive cheat grass plant! If we did that, otherwise displaced cattle and ranching operations could be used to effectively help restore soil and plant health, and we would pay for the opportunity to do so. Then, because effective holistic grazing requires operators to be agile, use good timing and adequate numbers, we would hop back off that ground by about mid-April, in time for remaining or reseeded perennials and native bunch grasses to rebound from the fire. The key to all of this is enough numbers, and the right timing and proper duration. Nobody knows the range like the cattlemen who use it every day. Even the best BLM or USFS range manager may only see a specific permit a few times a year. Ranchers see this ground daily. We have a vested interest in doing the right things for the long-term. We are the true environmentalists out on the range. If we do not get back out on this ground as soon as the snow melts, we will encourage the growth of a cheat grass monoculture and in so doing, we will ensure a 4-5 year fire cycle on this ground. It will never recover properly without aggressive, well timed livestock grazing. We have been informed by the local BLM office that no applications will be allowed after March 1, in order to protect sage grouse. That means, no reseeding or weed abatement after March 1, on ground that is literally charred black earth with zero habitat for sage grouse.

Before the Martin Fire our BLM and USFS permits were considered prime Sage Grouse habitat, today, there is not a single living sage grouse left on our BLM permit. Yet, some managers looking to utilize federal sage grouse dollars, want to manage exclusively for the bird, rather than for overall range health. This is non-sense and a complete waste of money, period. The birds

cannot and will not come back until a healthy sage brush ecosystem is restored. Even then, grouse are on decline world-wide and have been for over 500 years. The truth is that our sage grouse are an early type of wild chicken. Now ask yourself a simple question, what eats chicken? The answer...EVERYTHING EATS CHICKEN! Over 99% of the species that ever lived on earth are now extinct. As stewards of this grazing resource, I can tell you that we have done everything within our power to maintain and build the healthiest possible habitat for all wildlife, cattle and humans who use this range along with us. We know that our ranching operation and all those affected by the Martin Fire and other disasters like it, can contribute to restoring healthy plant and animal ecosystems to these lands, and from that starting point, perhaps Sage Grouse and all other species have a chance to re-establish. For nearly 6 months, we heard different stories, perhaps part of our lands would be reseeded, some might become a part of trial programs aimed at outcome oriented grazing, but one thing is sure, we, the primary users of this land and the primary custodians of this resource were by and large frozen out of any real decision making about its future. We were told that no decisions had been made, but when pressed, local BLM officials acknowledge that a rehabilitation plan was submitted to agency brass in D.C. even before the fire was officially out. When we asked for access to that plan, the answer was NO, because it is not yet a public document. I happened to get a quick glance at a map delivered to Washington as part of their initial rehab plan. It included vast aerial seeding, drill seeding and absolutely no outcome oriented grazing plans. The local BLM office admits to requesting only about \$1,000,000 to replace fencing and range improvements (wells, pumps, windmills, water pipelines and trough systems). Their \$1,000,000 request, will barely re-fence our allotment, let alone the 8 other Humboldt County operations who lost fence and range improvements, and the losses in Elko County have not even been mentioned. We now in fact know that the State BLM has only been allocated \$60,000 to repair/replace fencing related to these fires. At current government contracted prices, this equates to about 4 miles of new fence. We hear about major University studies at UNR, plans to reseed and keep us off the range for 3-5 years, and even a few thoughts of listening to our suggestions. If we wait and give Cheat grass a chance to take hold, we will be left with a cheat grass monoculture and more devastating wildfires will become the norm on this range instead of a singular disaster. If you have not already read **Holistic Management 3rd Edition, by Allan Savory**, please allow us to give you a copy. It contains all of the science and information necessary to understand range science, the history of livestock grazing and why our reforms make so much sense. It is a quick, interesting, and informative read. Its author employs common sense, sound science, and the only techniques necessary to restore our environment and reduce wildfire danger for the long-term.

On December 14, we were delivered a post-fire grazing agreement to digest and sign within 7 days. It contained NO outcome oriented grazing, no turn outs until fencing had been restored, no grazing until base shrubs (sagebrush) and native perennials are restored (3-5) years once area is successfully replanted or seeded. We objected to an unworkable plan that would ensure a cheat grass monoculture would establish on our range as well as a 7 day deadline for accepting the BLM's terms. After a call to DC to the Undersecretary of Interior and the acting director of the

BLM, the local field manager relented and told us that we could take all the time we needed and he would meet with us after the New Year.

The Martin Fire also took over 6,200 acres of private land in the center of what was prime sage grouse habitat. Hardscrabble is at the headwaters of Martin Creek, the creek that runs through the east side of Paradise Valley. That watershed has been wiped out. Our historic 1920 cabin burned, the creek boiled and the fishery lost. Rocks popped and cracked open. Cattle made their way there; looking for water, food and a way home, and in total we made 11 drives and brought home over 1,400 since the fire. Our fences and catch lots were destroyed. The local office of the USDA farm services office told us that any rebuild before their programs approved us would be denied cost sharing. In August, we, and 3 other ranches rebuilt the catch lots at Hardscrabble at our own expense. USDA says they cannot promise that we will be reimbursed. We have to control cattle, protect stream banks, and should do some significant earth moving to create levies and shore up the channel at Hardscrabble. But we are constrained by more government bureaucracy, even at the local level.

We have lost animals and more continue to die as a result of this fire. Smoke inhalation brought about dust pneumonia as we brought our cattle home last fall. The USDA limits claims to those deaths occurring within 30 days of the fire. That wasn't enough time to quantify losses suffered as a direct result of injuries sustained in the fire. Federal agency officials who have never seen a half million acres, let alone worked them day to day, demanded a level of documentation of lost fencing, animals and other structures that our family is not capable of without help. Assistance in documentation was requested and denied by the local office. FEMA recently rejected Nevada's requests for emergency assistance following the Martin and Sugar Loaf complex fires. So while victims of hurricanes and the California fires get aid and access to low interest loans, ranchers in Nevada get nothing. I alert you to these issues not to whine, but rather to let you know that we are but one small family operation affected by wildfire this season. 9 more operations in Humboldt County and more in Lander and Elko counties were also hit hard. This nonsense is going to keep happening, and each year we are going to lose valuable businesses that help feed the local economy. Each year, more families and communities all over the West are going to be offered up as sacrificial lambs at the altar of rabid environmental lunacy and politically driven federal bureaucracies unless we act now while we have an administration dedicated to common sense problem solving.

Everyone has heard the saying that doing the same thing again and again and somehow expecting a different result is the very definition of insanity, and that is true. Please join my family, fellow Nevadans, ranchers and foresters to reform our broken system and return health and prosperity to the Great American West.

Save the Great American West

An eight point plan to reduce fire danger, restore our environment and save our way of life.

Did you know that the American West is currently being destroyed by wildfire at a greater rate than ever in recorded history? Rural communities, ranching families, and the Nation's food production are being put at risk because of disastrous decisions by federal land managers.

In response to the Martin fire, which burned over a half million acres across Northern Nevada, and destroyed their entire BLM grazing permit and over 6,200 acres of their private land, the Stewart family of Paradise Valley, NV make the following recommendations regarding grazing and federal land management reforms, so that no other ranching family or community will suffer like they have. Their ranch is Nevada's oldest family run operation, and their 155 year old business and way of life is threatened by the results of the fire; which, regardless of ignition source, was caused by five decades of disastrous federal land management.

1. Immediately restore all suspended AUMs on all grazing permits Nationwide. This includes permanently suspended AUMs. Our estimates are that this action would nearly double the number of animals eligible to graze the range and consume dangerous, excess fuels from the public lands. (Require federal agencies to give specific, proven science based reasons for any AUMs not eligible for this action, and require the agency to prove that their action is in best overall interest of the resource)
2. Allow foresters to log and remove dead and dying trees from our National forests. (Would reduce fire danger and slow the spread of pine beetle infestation)
3. Extend the term of each grazing permit from 10 to 20 years, thus allowing ranchers the surety to finance necessary range improvements such as fencing, water development, and additional livestock over more realistic and sustainable repayment periods.
4. Restructure every grazing permit, so that grazing is allowable 12 months out of each year, giving both ranchers and land managers an effective tool to reduce excess fuel loads in real-time. Make extended season, change of season or amount of use **triggers** mandatory when fuel loads exceed ten percent over normal maximum, or when producer has utilized less than 90% of allowable forage with normally permitted numbers during regular grazing season. Require local land managers to trigger out of season turn-outs whenever conditions pose a threat to overall range health. Give ranchers a local arbitration board made up of agency personnel and local producers to appeal any rejection of proposed out of season turn-outs.
5. Limit or eliminate NEPA reviews in areas where activity such as grazing or logging are already permitted. Categorize dangerous fuel reduction activity and development under emergency and public safety rather than general grazing or logging, thus eliminating most legal challenges to this necessary activity.
6. Level the playing field by amending the EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE act to either limit its use and funds for already well-funded environmental groups, or allow ranchers, loggers and their respective communities the same access as the Environmental groups have to these funds. The current loop-hole in the law allows groups like the WWF, Sierra Club and Western Watersheds to use tax payer dollars to

fund their unrelenting legal assault on the working families of the West through suits against federal land management agencies.

7. Require that every grazing and logging permit issued include a dangerous fuels reduction plan, and insure that every plan has mandatory triggers which federal land managers may not deviate from or contest.

8. Require federal agencies to allow permittees to develop and maintain water resources on permits where the permittee already owns water rights, or where a new development is in the best interests of the overall range and state law allows the development. Further, lift restrictions on use of supplemental minerals and attractants, water hauling and other products or measures which would better disperse livestock grazing and make better overall use of the range resources.

Our goal is proper range management that restores and maintains soil, plant and animal community health, reduces fire danger, and allows the rural west to prosper. As part of our suggested reforms, we acknowledge that most but not all livestock producers/grazers and loggers are quality operators. We accept the need for safeguards, rules, as well as warning systems that give every producer notice of improper action so that the actions may be discontinued or corrected. If these rules are not followed, we accept that these safeguards can and will be used to remove consistently irresponsible operators from the range.

For too long we have listened to the federal agencies tell us that they want to work with us, but the truth is, for many decades, we have been treated like the enemy, rather than an engaged partner. Most local agency personnel have good intentions, good hearts and good ideas, but they don't have the longevity or authority to change the system. Like it or not, the institutional bureaucracy that threatens industries, communities, and small businesses like ours is still very much alive and well at the BLM, USFS and USFWS.

The Washington D.C. swamp still needs to be drained at these agencies and we would like to think that our proposals could be the start of that clean up. We believe that this is an idea and a plan that President Trump can get behind. It is the only practical, environmentally friendly solution when real science and common sense lead the discussion.

A return to holistic grazing at effective levels all over the West will save our environment, grow jobs, benefit communities that rely on ranching and forestry, save precious lands and habitat, and restore sanity to federal land management.

Please, help us with this effort. Reducing wildfire in the West will save lives, habitat, homes and communities.

Our home, which is also Nevada's oldest family ranching operation, has been changed forever by this fire. The lands that we have so loved will never be restored to what they were in our lifetimes or perhaps ever. Even after 155 years in business, no mortgage and money in the bank, we truly do not know how we will operate in 2019 and beyond. We've made a plan to survive

2019 by buying hay and planning to run big numbers inside, using our normal hay fields as pasture. While we will survive, earning anything close to a profit will be impossible and therefore, is unsustainable for any long period of time.

The good news is that we have made great progress in Washington DC. During our first post-fire visit in September, we met with the chief of the USFS, the acting director of the BLM, 9 congressional offices and 2 senate offices. We also met with White house staff. Six days after our return home, I received a call from President Trump. He liked my plan and promised help. He told me then that he did not expect that republicans would hold the house and any action would have to be accomplished is executive action. He asked that we return after mid-terms and continue telling our story. I did so, and met with higher level White House staff, National Security Council staff, Undersecretary of Interior, and three key congressional offices. During those meetings I was able to confirm that the administration remains focused on the goal of reducing wildfire in the West through more proactive strategies aimed at prevention, as well as proper funding for suppression. I was given a confirmation that an executive action was being prepared and that it would be issued at Christmastime as the President promised me during our call. I was also able to secure meetings for Humboldt and Elko county officials with National Security Council staff responsible for mitigation after catastrophic events, so that they could work together to secure funding through federal grants for rehab of resources destroyed during the Martin and Sugarloaf fires. Finally, I was able to meet with three key legislative offices so that pressure would be kept on agency and administration officials to see our efforts through. House Leader Kevin McCarthy called me December 11, and confirmed that he is in sync with President trump and is ready to help us make our reforms a reality in 2019-2020.

As promised, President Trump issued an Executive Order on December 21, 2018 aimed at setting the table for specific reforms to regulation and policy on forests and rangeland managed by the federal government. His actions represent a perfect first step in our efforts to reform federal land management.

Our next steps are perhaps the most important in this entire process. They must include getting real ranchers, foresters and land management experts at the table to assist in rewriting forest and rangeland use and health language. Presently, only a small number of agency personnel and industry lobbyists have been involved in this process, and neither have the “boots on the ground” knowledge and expertise to get this job done right. If left to these two groups, our chance at meaningful reform may slip away as agency bureaucrats and lobbyists twist and trade for their own interests rather than real reforms that will benefit the resource by reducing fire danger, restoring range and forest health and boosting the economies of the rural West.



This photo shows a dead Ninety-Six Ranch heifer outside of Hardscrabble pasture, July 6, 2018. She along with other livestock and countless wildlife of all kinds were killed by the Martin fire.



Our campaign is self-funded and truly grass roots. We are moving forward with this effort because in plain terms, we don't want one more ranching family to suffer the way we have.

We want to keep our campaign simple, straightforward and free of political correctness. It's a big, but simple idea...restore sanity to federal land management and start by restoring grazing and forestry rights that have been suspended due to nothing but politics, bad science and bureaucratic bullshit.

Help us Save the Great American West. Log on today and lend your name to our campaign.
www.savethegreatamericanwest.com

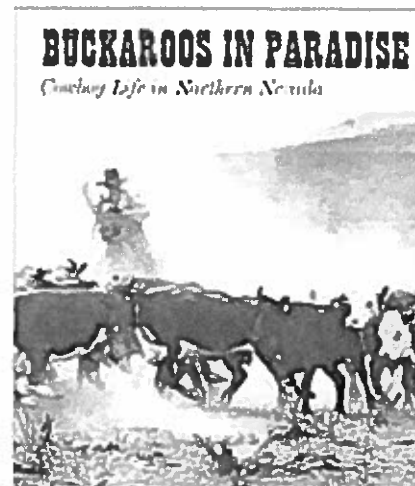
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Some Quick facts about the Ninety-Six Ranch

William Stock Farming Company, now commonly known as the Ninety-Six Ranch was Founded/Homesteaded 1864 by William Stock, a young German immigrant credited with being one of Paradise Valley, Nevada's first permanent settlers in 1863.

The Ninety-Six Ranch is Nevada's oldest family ranching operation and is currently managed by the founder's great-grandson and his family. They operate on more than 17,000 private acres in and around Paradise Valley, NV. Currently owner/operators are Fred W. Stewart, his wife Kris and daughter Patrice Stewart. Fred's mother, Marie also continues to live on the ranch.

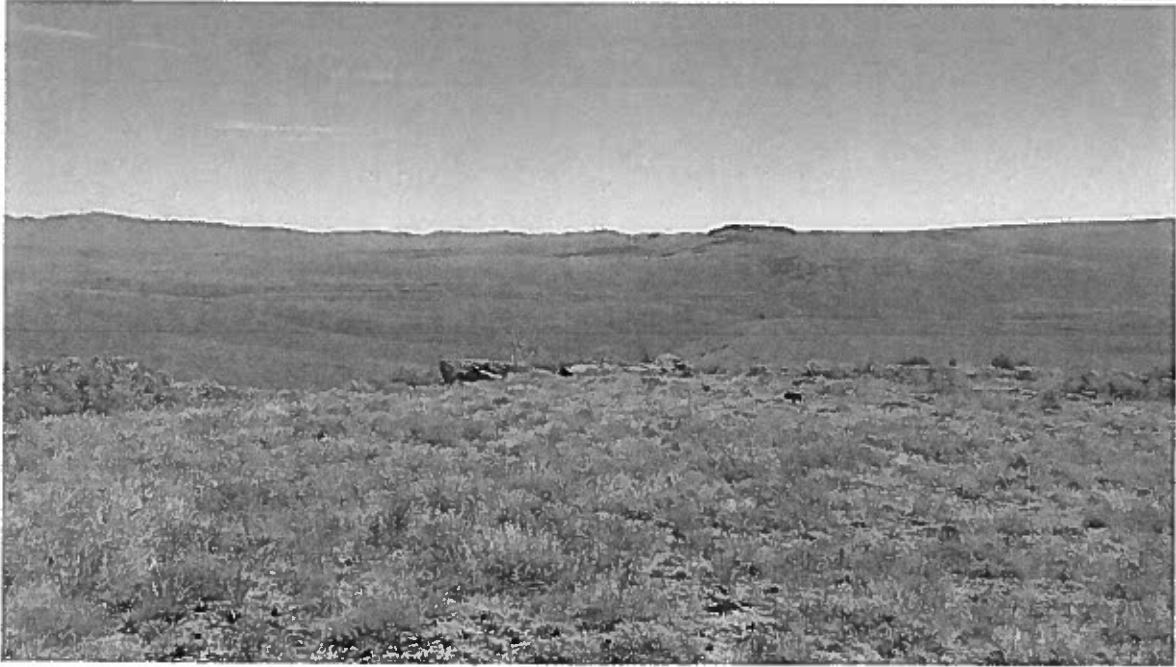


United States Library of Congress and Smithsonian completed a program focused on the Ninety-Six Ranch entitled *Buckaroos in Paradise, Cowboy Life in Northern Nevada* between 1978 and 1981. It is widely considered the best documentary coverage of Great Basin ranch life ever compiled. The Stewart family, led by Leslie Stewart, worked directly with LOC and Smithsonian curators, contributed hundreds of rare artifacts as well as thousands of photos and the entire Leslie J Stewart film library to the LOC as a gift to the American people under the creative commons license. Leslie, a lifelong rancher, teacher and son of the Great Basin passed away in 2006. In 2017, LOC staff graciously completed digitizing his classic documentary films of ranch

life in Northern Nevada into a high definition format and all are now available free of charge online at LOC. Leslie's granddaughter Patrice Stewart, represents the fifth generation of the family to live on and manage the ranch.



Here, while still a high school student, she discusses conservation before Governor's Sagebrush Ecosystem Forum. Her website and conservation plan can be seen at savethesagegrouse.org

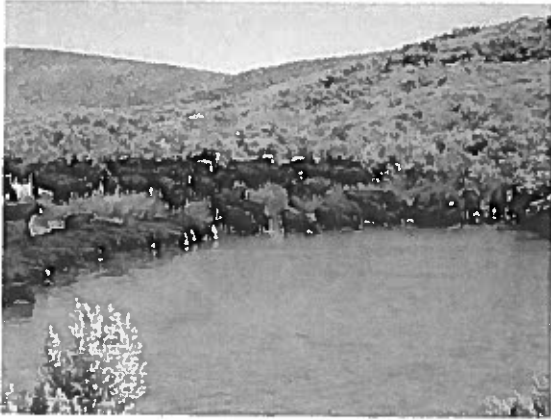




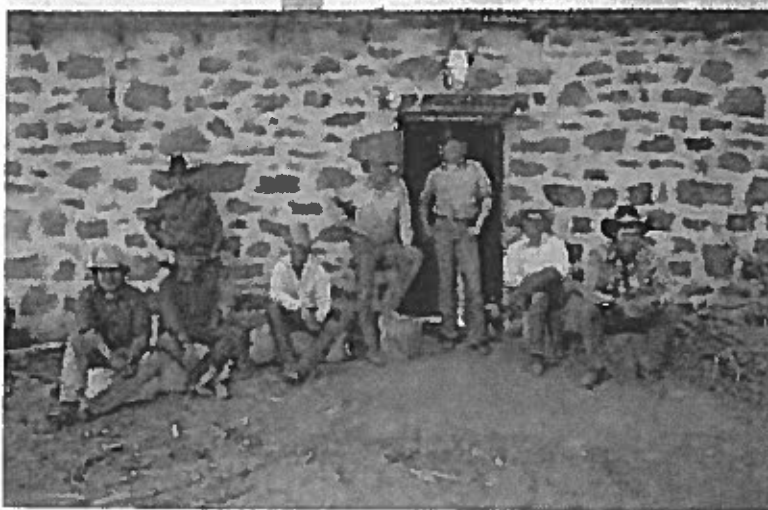
Under the management of Fred and Kris Stewart, the Ninety-Six Ranch has developed and runs a high quality All-English commercial cow-calf herd numbering 750-1200 depending on weather, market and overall conditions. Through experience they have moderated the size of their maternal herd to thrive in the difficult high desert environment of Northern Nevada. The maternal base of their herd is Hereford built out of bulls from the Lilla Bell operation, also of Paradise Valley, Nevada. Bell is noted as being the first woman to graduate in animal science from Cal-Poly SLO, former president of the Polled Hereford Association and has devoted her life to raising Hereford cattle designed to thrive in difficult high desert environments like Northern Nevada. To this impressive base, Stewart's have added Shaw bred Red and Black Angus bulls. Their operation is all-natural, and their moderately sized, high quality calves have qualified for beef shipment to Japan and Korea, and are always included in both Certified Angus and Hereford branded programs.



Their 155 year old operation is celebrated as Nevada's only Sesquicentennial Ranch, and as a treasure within the State and the greater Great Basin region for its history and adherence to buckaroo traditions.

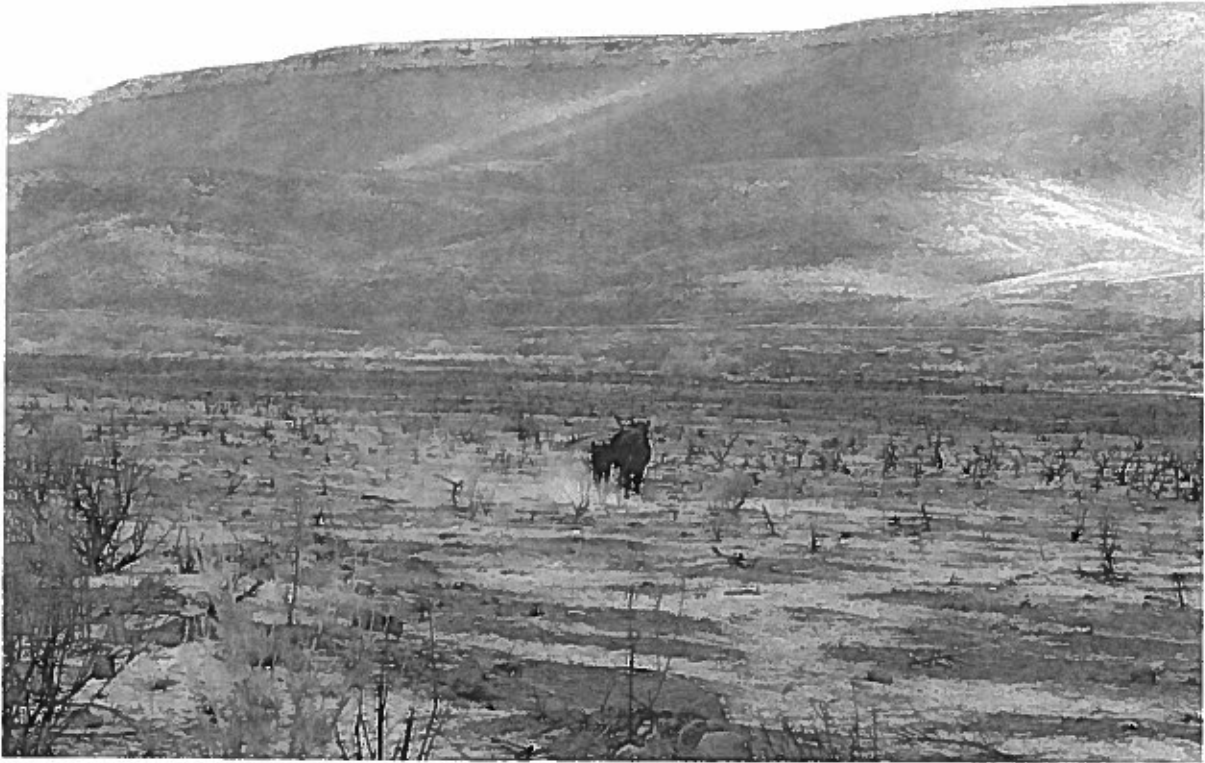


In the summer of 2018, much of the Ninety-Six Ranch range was destroyed in the Martin fire, currently the largest single fire in modern U.S. history. The fire took all of the William Stock BLM allotment as well as grazing lands permitted to 8 other Humboldt County ranching operations. Damage also spread through Lander and Elko Counties. Also destroyed was the Stewart's 6200 acre private range at Hardscrabble, noted as being one of the finest privately managed small German Brown fisheries in the nation and home to a historic 1920 stone cabin which was featured on the back cover of a LOC publication called **Buckaroos in Paradise, Cowboy life in Northern Nevada.**



Very sadly, after such a rich history, the family is unsure how they will operate next year. They plan to encourage Congress and the Trump administration to enact long overdue reforms to range and federal land management aimed at reducing wildfire risk, restoring the range and making sure that other ranching families like them do not suffer in the future.





Ours are the real faces, pictures and stories of wildfire devastation fueled by disastrous federal land management. The Stewart family