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“We’d Eat It!” Projects - Turning Cows Into Weed Managers

Upcoming

April 2008 Vandenberg Airforce Base,: Cows, and Black Mustard

June 2008 Madison Valley Ranchlands Group: Cows, Bison, Canada Thistle and Spotted Knapweed - June 2008

July 2008 Boulder County Parks and Open Space, Colorado: Cows, Calves, Heifers and Late-Season Diffuse Knapweed and Dalmation Toadflax

Completed and On-going

Marin County, 2006 to Present

Under a grant funded by the Rathmann Family Foundation I have been working with the Lunny family of Point Reyes National Seashore, Mike and Sally Gale of Chileno Valley Beef and John Wick and Peggy Rathmann of Nicasio Native Grass Farm to teach cows to eat Distaff, and Italian thistle. In 2006 we trained 65 of the Lunny cows, heifers and steers and 5 cows purchased for the project by the Gales. In 2007 twelve of the Lunny cows returned to the Nicasio Native Grass Farm along with 120 untrained animals. Within a month, all were grazing Italian and distaff thistle as part of a Management Intensive Grazing System.

Boulder County Parks and Open Space “Wed Eat It!” - 2007

The County’s Small Grant program funded this project to teach cows to eat late-season diffuse knapweed. Cow began eating the weed on the afternoon of the 4th day of training and grazed it in a 2.11 acre test pasture, and a 40 acre pasture.

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, 2004-2005

This National Park Service Grant funded me as I discovered the steps to teach cows to eat weeds. With the help of Tehabi student interns, in 2004 I taught 19 heifers to eat Canada thistle, leafy spurge and spotted knapweed and held a field day to share the process and outcomes with local ranchers. In 2005 I returned to watch as cows taught their calves to eat these weeds and to test them in pasture on leafy spurge. The final report on CD included video and the handbook and materials developed for the project.



Goats! For Firesafe Homes in Wildland Areas

Joint Fire Science Program, \$240,000 grant - 1997-2002

For 6 years I managed goats at Camp Williams National Guard Training Facility just south of Salt Lake City as part of a multi-year project to determine the best ways to manage them for fire danger mitigation. The final product was a CD Handbook describing how to pick a site to use goats, how to manage them at work and at home, and how to create a successful business and contract for prescribed grazing. Videos on the CD give details on how to set up a fence, how to manage the kidding process, and results of an actual fire that ran through the research site.

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Video Projects

We'd Eat It! DVD, 2008

This is the latest version of the DVD about how to train cows to eat weeds. It includes video from the training projects below along with interviews of ranchers who have participated in projects.



The Economics of Behavior 2006 - 2008

This is a Western Region SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) grant in cooperation with Utah State University to develop 4 videos describing how applying animal behavior principles can increase productivity and profitability while protecting or improving landscapes. I am responsible for filming and editing the videos which will be distributed with a CD of discussion questions, handouts, and planning materials to 750 NRCS and Extension professionals throughout the West.

Selected Training and Education Projects

BEHAVE Facilitators Network

(Behavioral Education for Human, Animal, Vegetation and Ecosystem Management)

Beth Burritt of Utah State University, and I put this "train-the-trainers" program together to increase understanding of animal behavior principles. It includes a notebook of fact sheets, reference materials and information on how to put on workshops, CDs and DVDs with PowerPoint slides for presenters to use, and videos to enhance their presentation. The network currently includes State Facilitators in 7 western states and in Mexico, and over 100 trained facilitators. For more information visit http://www.behave.net/BFN/BFN_facilitators.html.

Tehabi Internship Program, 1998 - 2002 (Program continues today)

Ben Bobowski of the National Park Service and I were recognized by the Bureau of Land Management with the 2001 "Excellence in Interpretation or Environmental Education" for creating this internship program and its curriculum. Tehabi is an internship program focusing on the technical aspects of management and the coping strategies needed to "survive" and even "thrive" in an agency culture. The program emphasizes collaboration among students, managers and educators and the community. Results include enhanced transfer of institutional memory, completion of on-the-ground projects, and an applicant pool with the necessary skills and confidence to hit the ground running. To date it has brought over \$1 million together to support student development.

Backyard Field Institute, 1993 - 1999

I developed the curriculum for and ran this semester-long program for Grand Junction, Colorado 6th graders to teach them how to care for themselves and their environment while learning about the natural history of their public lands. Students learned winter survival, orienteering skills, what plants and animals made their homes in the area, and how pre-historic people lived. For graduation, I took my 50 student classes on a two-night camping trips so they could practice their new skills and have some fun too.



Storm King Fourteen Memorial Trail, 1994-1995

I was the Public Affairs Officer on duty when 14 firefighters were killed on Storm King Mountain near Glenwood Springs, Colorado in 1994. After working with the media and the public in the immediate aftermath of the fire, I spent the next year coordinating with the community and the firefighters' families to create a memorial trail and interpretive signs. My goal was to prevent future tragedies by helping visitors understand what had happened on the site. I was recognized with a Meritorious Service Award by the National Association for Interpretation and a Special Act Award by the Bureau of Land Management for my work.

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Past Employment

Bureau of Land Management 1991-2003

Public Affairs Officer 1991 - 1996

Primary local, state-wide and national media contact for BLM's Grand Junction District office. Encouraged public participation in and understanding of land management issues by organizing presentations, public hikes, cleanups, potluck dinners, and dedication events for from 50 to 300 people and including Washington-level dignitaries. Developed maps, brochures, newsletters, and web sites.

Academic Liaison 1997 - 2003

Posted at Utah State University to enhance exchange of information between academics, students and the agency. Developed a student internship program and ran a \$240,000 research project on the use of goats for vegetation management.

Other Positions

Copy and Campaign Developer, Larry Cobb and Associates Ad Agency
Office and Security Manager, CACI, Inc.

Administrative Assistant to the Chief, Kodiak, AK Police Department

Beta Tester for first P.C. clones, Compaq Computers

Underwater Boathull Cleaner, self-employed in Houston TX

Volunteer Work

Co-Coordinator - Kokopelli's Trail, 1989

I received a National Conservation Award from the Department of the Interior for my work leading a group of volunteers creating a 150 mile mountain bike trail from Grand Junction, Colorado to Moab, Utah. I created signing, t-shirts, hats, coordinated work days, media events, and meetings as well as the Grand Opening Ceremonies.

Education

Thunderbird School of Global Management, 1981

Masters of Business Administration in International Management

University of Colorado, 1979

Bachelor of Arts - Russian

Graduated in 3 years



What I Do For Fun

After years of snowboarding (I was an instructor one year), biking, and hiking, I've added a new passion. I'm part of the Cabila Bellydance Troupe and began performing with them in December of 2007. Making dance costumes now fills the time I used to spend quilting and crocheting.