

Professional Issues Breakfast

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

7:00 am – 8:30 pm

Hyatt Pavilion VI

Presentation and Discussion 21st Century Biological Ranching

Question: What happens when you herd a bunch of goats on a degraded riparian area?

Answer: Grass grows and water flows...! Implementing innovative management practices and establishing agency relationships make a positive difference on the land.

Presenters

Kelly Boney *Outlaw Land Improvement Company, Inc. Rancher, Goat Herder, Consultant, San Jon, New Mexico*

Tuda Libby Crews *Rancher, Ute Creek Cattle Company, Inc. Bueyeros, New Mexico*

Kelly Boney is a third generation Boney to live on the land homesteaded by her granddad over 100 years ago. Kelly enjoyed the typical farm and ranch childhood; showing cattle, driving tractors, riding horses and somewhere along the way she developed a deep love of the land and the animals that depend on it. After Kelly graduated from Eastern New Mexico University as the Outstanding Agriculture Student with a BBA she returned to the ranch to do what she loved to do raise cattle and live the ranch lifestyle. To improve the cattle herd Kelly learned how to artificially inseminate, pregnancy test and perform embryo transfer. Throughout the years she and her dad, Elmer, have developed a herd of cattle that perform well with minimal supplemental feed, gain well on grass and are raised naturally without antibiotics and hormones. The Boney's market their beef, and most recently their goat, and lamb meat under the Lazy LB label; whose name is derived from her granddad's livestock brand.

As the cattle improved, the range land health steadily declined; mesquite, cactus and junipers began to dominate the landscape. Kelly began looking for answers and before long a dear friend suggested using goats for land restoration and as a source of supplemental income. In February 2003 the first goats were purchased and the restoration work began. Kelly named the business Outlaw Land Improvement Company, Inc. after her first bottle kid, "Billy the Kid". The goats and Kelly have worked with Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Water Associations, Exxon, and private landowners to improve watersheds, riparian areas and ranches throughout eastern New Mexico. Kelly understood the importance of the herd being acclimated to the area they worked; thus she limited their travels to keep the goats close to home and familiar with the vegetation, terrain and climate to perform better for their customers.

Outlaw Land Improvement Company, Inc., Kelly and the work her and the goats have been highlighted in many news publications including; New Mexico Magazine, New Mexico Woman, Small Farmer Journal,

Albuquerque Journal and the High Plains Journal. Their work is documented in several New Mexico State University publications, studies and documentaries. Their accomplishments with Salt Cedar and riparian restoration work on Ute Creek was featured on the ABC affiliate KVII in Amarillo Texas. To better understand her business and to further the restoration work on the ranch Kelly sought training in Holistic Management. After taking several courses she decided to further her training and become a Certified Educator and will complete the certification process this fall.

Tuda Libby Crews and Jack Crews focus on land stewardship, low-stress cattle handling, and best management conservation practices. They established partnerships with numerous agencies and organizations in order to improve stock water distribution and implement a rotational grazing system. For the last five years, Crews' have worked diligently on managing Salt Cedar in riparian areas to restore water flow in Ute Creek and enhance wildlife habitat. Innovative stewardship practices include Tuda's twenty-three acre wild bird sanctuary at Bueyeros. They are recognized in New Mexico for range management excellence & ranch leadership achievement.

With seven generations of her family on the land, Crews' deep roots compel and motivate her to support Harding County's rural revitalization. She believes enhancing the rural quality-of-life can help sustain her family ranch for (at least) the next two generations. Jack and Tuda are parents to Libby Crews Wood of Wilson, WY and Ted J. Crews of Phoenix, AZ. Their grandchildren Bella Wood, and identical twins, Bennet and Seth Crews, grace their lives.

UTE CREEK CATTLE COMPANY



...where people, cattle and conservation are in symphony with nature, and livable communities matter.