

# OREGON CATTLEMAN

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE OREGON CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2026



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## **VOICES ON THE HILL: MEMBERS ADVOCATE IN WASHINGTON D.C.**

- Wolf Delisting
- Wildfire Fuels Reduction
- Public Lands
- Farm Bill

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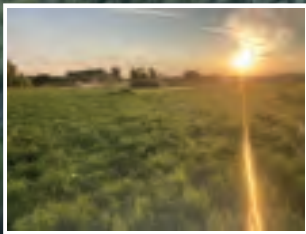


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"Enjoy the view"

Photographed at Meadow Lake Ranch in Klamath County by Diana Wirth, OCA President



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# 2027 Priorities

**Diana Wirth** | 541-891-2295  
OCA President

In late April, the Oregon Cattlemen's Association Delegation traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the Public Lands Council meeting and advocate on behalf of our members and ranchers across the state. Presenters at the PLC meeting included representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, the Congressional Western Caucus, the Department of the Interior, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, professional staff from the House Natural Resources Committee, and Brian Nesvik, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Director.

## New Era in the West

One of the standout themes at PLC was the growing momentum to unlock public lands, ease grazing restrictions, and restore vacant allotments to productive use. Since our trip, the Bureau of Land Management announced the full rescinding of the Conservation and Landscape Health Rule.

The previous administration's self serving philosophy of aggressive land withdrawals had swift and significant negative impacts on public lands ranchers and many other stakeholders. During the comment period on the rescission of the Biden era rule, more than 140,000 public comments were submitted.

Rolling back that rule is a major win for Western states. It restores multi use balance and removes the administrative chokehold that had effectively "dammed up" federal grazing lands.

## A Special Trip

Over the course of our visit, we completed ten legislative appointments. We met with a White House AG Policy Liaison at the White House complex, a USDA Under Secretary of Natural Resources & Environment, and our state senators and representatives, or legislative staff. Early on, as a delegation, we determined in our legislative appointments that we would emphasize two critical issues: wolf delisting (HB 845 Pet and Livestock) and



wildfire fuels reduction (Fix Our Forest Act).

We also had several chances to advocate for the passage of the long overdue Farm Bill. The last full Farm Bill passed in 2018, and according to many in Washington, D.C., the primary holdup this time has been disagreements over SNAP benefits—imagine that.

This year, John Williams, Chair of the OCA Wolf Committee, joined us. With HB 845 at the top of our agenda, his presence was a natural fit. It was his first time in D.C. and sharing that experience with him was a delight. Although our schedule was tight, we still managed to hit the high points, including a Capitol tour hosted by Representative Bentz's staff.

I've been to D.C. several times with different delegations, but this group was exceptional at working together on your behalf. John Williams and Skye Krebs tag teamed the wolf issue with precision and clarity. John O'Keeffe brought deep expertise on wildfire policy, championing support for the Fix Our Forests Act. In addition, we shared wildfire fuels reduction documents prepared by Dennis Sheehy. Mary Schadler covered public lands, aerial spraying, and Farm Bill priorities. Jane O'Keeffe served as our seasoned recorder, producing excellent summaries of each meeting and keeping us on the right track. She is a wealth of Washington, D.C. knowledge.

If you haven't participated in the D.C. legislative trip, consider this your official invitation for 2027.

## Looking Ahead

It's hard to believe June marks the halfway point of the year. With the primary season behind us, we now move full steam ahead toward our Fall PAC Event and the general election. The OCA will focus on serving our membership through candidate interviews, endorsements, PAC discussions, and the development of legislative concepts with our representatives and senators in Salem.

The OCA deeply values its relationships with Oregon legislators. Our well known lobbyist, Rocky Dallum, often says, "OCA punches above its weight in Salem." He's right – and it's because our members show up and participate. But it also happens because so many legislators understand the importance of the cattle industry to Oregon's economy and long term strength. Our partnership with them is critical to our mission.

As we head into summer, we are sharpening our legislative priorities for the upcoming long legislative session. We want your input as these discussions take shape. That leads me to ask: what's your priority? What issues are you facing in your day to day operations or with regulatory agencies? How can

OCA support you?

June also brings our General Membership Mid Year Meeting on June 26th in Madras, Oregon. Planning is well underway, and we look forward to spending time in Jefferson County, enjoying the hospitality of our District IV affiliates. The mid-year general membership meeting is a wonderful opportunity for members to gather together and discuss legislative priorities. Please join us – it wouldn't be the same without you.

## In Closing

The OCA is entering a period of meaningful transition. Change can feel uncertain, but it is also the doorway to innovation, renewed purpose, and long term strength. This moment gives us the opportunity to sharpen our vision, modernize our approach, and build an organization even more responsive to the needs of Oregon's ranching community. If we meet this chapter with unity, optimism, and a willingness to lead, we can turn change into momentum – and momentum into lasting success. Together, we will continue shaping a future where the cattle industry remains strong, respected, and essential to Oregon's identity and economy. DW •



Left Page from left to right: OCA representatives in D.C. - Mary Schadler, Oregon PLC Chair, Diana Wirth; OCA President; John Williams, OCA Wolf Committee Chair; Jane O'Keeffe; John O'Keeffe, Past OCA President; and Skye Krebs, NCBA Vice President  
Right page photo courtesy of NCBA - "NCBA's 2026 Legislative Conference where boots and cowboy hats covered Capitol Hill."



# Honing in on political engagement & advocacy

**Rocky Dallum**  
OCA Lobbyist

It's almost summertime in Oregon! A few things will materialize in the coming months for OCA, our political engagement, and our advocacy efforts. With the primary behind us, we'll move toward candidate engagement in the general election. Our state agency work continues as we track and respond to various regulatory processes and proposals. Both the political and agency work should give a better picture of how things might shape up in 2027.

Last month's primary election had impacts beyond setting up the general election (results weren't available at the time of publication for this month's magazine). Given the geography and political leanings of most legislative districts, the winner of many primaries is almost certain to be elected in November. Last month's primaries determined whether some caucuses would become more progressive, moderate, or conservative. More importantly, some races reveal whether we'll be working with a known incumbent or a new legislator. Of course, the Governor's race brings the most intrigue (something we will write more about in the coming months). Now that candidates are known, OCA will begin meeting with them, getting to know them, determining where to direct our PAC resources, and educating incumbents and new candidates

alike on our concerns and priorities.

State agencies keep our members busy during the off-session years as well, and this year has been no different. Several agency processes activated OCA and our entire ag community. As reported last month, the Oregon Department of Energy released recommendations for achieving climate goals, including reducing meat consumption and electrifying diesel fleets: both impractical and costly for consumers and businesses alike. OCA also met with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture to express concerns over proposed resilience attributes developed in response to the Governor's Executive Order last fall (EO 25-26). In addition to limited participation among working landowners like ranchers, we expressed concern about proposals that would not consider how to keep ranchers ranching and would not recognize our members' stewardship and contributions to conservation. We also had the opportunity to meet with the EPA's Regional Director, meet with several legislators on priorities, and brainstorm with other organizations on emerging issues and legislation. OCA is also participating in ODA's rulemaking advisory committee,

which is tasked with updating the brand inspection program and associated fees.

Finally, we have to remind you all of the potential qualification of Initiative Petition 28, the proposed ban on animal killing in Oregon. As of publication, petitioners were close to the qualification threshold, with several more weeks of good weather and metro-area festivals and events to gather signatures. OCA is engaged with Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregon Dairy Farmers Association, Oregon Hunters Association, and others, preparing to launch an opposition campaign if/when IP 28 qualifies and gets a ballot number. Your PAC contributions have been critical to preparing, as OCA's CattlePAC has made a sizeable donation to cover start-up costs, professional consultants, and other key tactics.

Thank you for all your engagement, whether through campaigns and elections, educating the OCA team on these issues, or contributing to CattlePAC. Our work this summer will lay the foundation for protecting your interests and telling your story in the Capitol next year. •

# News and updates from the OCA headquarters

## Jem Connelly

OCA Membership Services Manager

Howdy y'all,

This editorial comes from your Member Services Manager, Jem Connelly, holding it down in the Salem office. It has been my pleasure to get to know you, the Ranchers, over this past year. As a reminder, The Post has a section for industry events. If you know of local cattle events, we want to know too. This includes events for county-wide associations; the OCA office wants to know about your picnics, fundraisers, and dinners.


OCA is always interested in making digital access to our resources easy. Part of this looks like the tutorial you received on accessing both the membership portal and the OCA app, available in the Apple store and on your desktop—an updated Android version is coming soon!

I am very excited to announce a new upcoming addition to your membership portal. Encouraged by several recent requests for historical data, I have been working on a historical section full of articles and images of OCA throughout its history. OCA has celebrated milestones of Silver Jubilee (25 years), Half-Century (50 years), and Centennial (100 years) as an association in action. With plans to release this new resource about the time you are receiving this magazine, you will be able to read articles published in local Oregon newspapers celebrating the Oregon Cattlemen and their contributions to society. You may even spot an old relative. OCA events have been known for their productivity in policymaking and business, while also hosting a rigorous schedule of social events. OCA has been entrusted with many historical documents and maintains a small archive. Thanks to the work of those who came before me, much of this is already pre-sorted by year. I simply had to be the hand that scanned and arranged everything by decade, hopefully with enough key search terms for you to search or understand what is there. If you have additional details or historical pieces to add to this digital collection, I would love to hear about them.

OCA accepts applications for membership all year-round, but the renewal season is now closed. Thank you to all who have already renewed or joined for this year. OCA is excited to have your presence! Check with your friends to make sure they are still getting the Oregon Cattleman magazine, as this publication is only sent to 2026 OCA members.

Mid-Year is happening in Madras on June 25-26, 2026. This is a general membership meeting, which means we want YOU, our members, to be there. This is an opportunity to voice your opinion, to promote issues and find solutions, and a chance to be involved in the conversation. Mid-Year is also a great opportunity to get to know the OCA leadership.

Wishing you all a good nap after calving season, and may the rain come when you need it most. - Jem •



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# Lobbying in Washington D.C. for wolf delisting in the lower 48

**John Williams** | 541-263-0485  
Wolf Committee Chair

One issue is preventing proper wolf management in most of Oregon: the federal listing of the wolf as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). I had the opportunity to attend the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association/Public Lands Council Legislative conference in Washington, D.C., in April.



One of the major emphases of those groups is the delisting of the wolf in the lower 48 states.

I was honored to be part of a small group of OCA members who attended and participated in the lobbying effort on behalf of Oregon producers. Since it was my first time, I had a lot to learn about being effective in “moving the needle” on our issues. There were several issues we prioritized, but the wolf delisting and the fire funding were always at the top of the list. Thankfully, I was part of a group of individuals who had been there several times and were gracious enough to offer advice such as “you don’t have time for the back story, just get to the meat of the topic” and “you only have a couple of minutes”. We had appointments with every member of the Oregon delegation, plus a meeting with a White House policy staffer, and an undersecretary in

the USDA.

What drove me was never forgetting why we were there: each rancher dealing with wolves needs the right to protect their family, ranch, and livestock. Also, never forget the economic loss, the stress, and the emotional toll that the ESA listing of the wolves takes on us, day after day after day. At each meeting, we started with the basic elevator speech introducing the topics, but I felt, and I saw it happening time and time again, pivoting the conversation to what the senator, representative, or staffer really wanted to focus on. Having conversations about our topics helps us move the needle with each office.



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Sometimes we were able to meet with the senator or representative themselves, sometimes with the staff. All the folks in the various offices were courteous, attentive, listened, took notes, and recognized that the wolf was having a real impact on the ranching community. What should be done about it varies widely. I appreciated the staffer who told us right off that we would not agree on the delisting issue. However, they wanted to spend our time productively, so they brought up their support for funding Wildlife Services and asked for more information so they could help us with that issue.

I was encouraged by everyone who made sure I took time to see the sites, be a tourist for a little while. Thanks to Diana and Representative Bentz's office, I received a staff tour of the Capitol Building. What an experience; learning about the Capitol is a mix of where the House and Senate do business, and the grandeur and historical parts connect us to the beginning of our nation. To see the early chambers of the Supreme Court and the Senate chambers where this great nation began. I took a couple of hours and walked from the hotel to the National Mall—my destination, the Washington Monument. On my

way, I walked past the IRS building, the Department of Commerce, part of the Smithsonian, and an entrance to the White House. Add that to having already seen the buildings around the Capitol, such as the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress, and I got a quick view of some of the important sites. I was humbled to see where so many of the decisions are made that impact our daily lives.

But did we make a difference? We must be optimistic that something someone said made a difference. We heard more than once that they understood the situation; they understood that something needed to be done. There are several opportunities for delisting to occur: the passage of HR845; an update to the ESA that would include a clear pathway for wolf delisting; or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's appeal in court, removing the injunction and reinstating the wolves as recovered. Our preference is the legislative solution. Skye Krebs said more than once, "The wolves are an ESA success story, they are recovered, let's take the win and delist them". We will continue to seek a solution that delists wolves, allows management to return to the state, and lets us protect our livestock, our way of life, and our industry.

Oh, and one last thought, if you are going to visit Washington, D.C., learn to use Uber. •



Left page: John Williams at the Whitehouse complex, talking about wolf delisting.

Right page: From left to right Diana Wirth, OCA President; Mary Schadler, Oregon PLC Chair; Skye Krebs, NCBA Vice President; John O'Keeffe, Past OCA President; Jane O'Keeffe, and John Williams, OCA Wolf Committee Chair



# Discussions had at PLC Legislative Conference in D.C.

**Mary Schadler**

OCA Public Lands Council Committee Co-Chair

I had the opportunity to attend the Public Lands Council (PLC) and National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) legislative conferences in Washington, D.C., in April, along with OCA members John and Jane O'Keeffe, Skye Krebs, OCA President Diana Wirth, and Wolf Committee Chair John Williams.

The week began with the PLC Legislative Conference and a full day of speakers, including John Crockett of the United States Forest Service, Brian Nesvik of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Brenda Younkin of the United States Department of the Interior, and Jessica Fantinato of USDA APHIS Wildlife Services. Each speaker discussed changes the administration is working to implement within their respective agencies.

Among the topics discussed was the rollback of the United States Forest Service Roadless Rule, which would allow for more localized travel management decisions rather than top-down mandates. The Forest Service also discussed its reorganization efforts, which are intended to better manage resources within budget constraints while moving decision-making closer to the land they manage.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is taking a fresh look at the refuge



system and considering grazing as both a use and a management tool to help achieve land management objectives. USFWS is also working on new regulations regarding ravens.

The Bureau of Land Management stated that it will not issue blanket drought letters this year and that drought-related issues will instead be handled locally. BLM is also developing a strategic hiring plan that includes adding law enforcement and range staff in the coming weeks. Both BLM and the Forest Service expressed their commitment to working together on the Grazing Action Plan and making the regulatory changes necessary to achieve it, including aligning their rules and practices as much as possible.

We also had the opportunity to hear from staff representing the United States House Committee on Natural Resources, the Congressional Western Caucus, and the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources regarding the current political climate in Washington and the legislative priorities their committees continue to advance.

The day concluded with a rooftop reception at the NCBA offices. It was a beautiful spring evening, and the rooftop was near capacity with cattle producers from nearly every state, along with many of the legislators who represent them.

The following two days were spent meeting with members of Oregon's congressional delegation and their staff. In each meeting, we remained focused on two primary issues: wildfire and wolves. We highlighted the importance of landscape-scale land management to both prevent catastrophic wildfires and effectively combat them when they occur. We also stressed the need for the delisting of gray wolves.

Although both the Fix Our Forests Act and the Pet and Livestock Protection Act have passed the House, we encouraged each senator and representative to do everything possible to help move these bills through the Senate and onto the President's desk.

It was a productive week spent representing Oregon cattle producers in our nation's capital and reinforcing the importance of continued engagement in the policy process. The relationships built and conversations held during these meetings are

critical to ensuring that the voices of Oregon ranchers and rural communities are heard as decisions are made that directly impact public lands grazing, wildfire management, and predator control across the West.

Shifting gears, on May 12, 2026, the Bureau of Land Management published a proposed rule amending grazing regulations for all states, excluding Alaska. This proposed rule is the result of PLC's repeated calls on the administration to revise grazing regulations to provide greater flexibility within the permit structure, eliminate the singular burden placed on grazing permittees for the impacts of all multiple-use activities, and address a number of process-related issues that have made grazing permits more difficult to process over the last 30 years.

The proposed regulations address each of these concerns. The 60-day comment period will close at midnight on July 13. It is important for each of us to submit comments regarding the impact these proposed changes could have on our operations and our interactions with BLM.

Additional information on the proposed regulations, the comment period, and instructions for submitting comments can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/12/2026-09387/revision-of-regulations-for-grazing-administration-exclusive-of-alaska>


As always, Kelly and I are grateful for the opportunity to represent all of you. Please reach out if we can be of any help. •

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# Two OCA members on the Rules Advisory Committee for future of Brand Dept.

**Jake Seavert** | 541-910-3979

OCA 1st Vice President & Animal Health, Brand & Theft Committee Chair

Branding season is winding down for the 2026 spring calving herds, and many of us are finally turning cattle out onto greener pastures. Along with the usual concerns about water and snowpack, there's another topic riding high this year: the future of the Brand Department within ODA. We've been gathering feedback from folks across the state, and we'll keep doing so as we sort out what comes next.

The Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) has officially been assembled, with two OCA members – Silas Skinner and Tom Doman – representing us at the table. Their first meeting on the 13th was productive. One early point of agreement was raising the sheep

brand fee from \$30 to \$40. The RAC also discussed forming a new Brand Advisory Committee that would include representation from groups such as OCA, sale barns, and livestock marketing organizations. The committee will likely be capped at 11 members.

Another topic on the docket was transportation certificate books. Right now, ODA loses money printing and shipping them, even though they're wholesaled at \$3.50 per book. Since printable certificates are already available for free on the ODA website, the RAC is considering a price increase, with \$10 per book floated as a possible new rate.

The group also began digging into the long debated two bar rule. They're looking at how states like Nevada and Idaho assign brands, including whether certain characters – such as U, O, C, and D – could be used more effectively. The idea behind shifting from a two bar difference to a one bar difference is to open up more brand options while reducing the risk of blotched or confusing marks. If that change moves forward, a brand review committee would be created to evaluate and approve characters and ensure consistency across registrations.

Overall, the meeting moved quickly, and we expect more details and hard numbers at the next session on the 24th. It's a public meeting, and anyone is welcome to attend, though only RAC members may comment. If you have thoughts, questions, or concerns, reach out to Silas or Tom so they can bring your input forward. And if you haven't yet shared your perspective on the brand program, you're welcome to contact Tom or me – we're serving as co chairs of the Animal Health & Brand ID Committee.

Until next time, keep your powder dry and your thirst quenched. Happy trails. •

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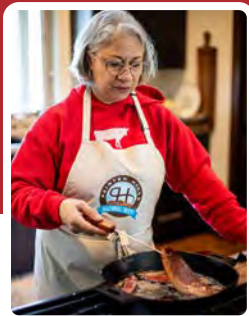
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# Oregon AgFest 2026: A Celebration of Beef and Bounty

**Gabrielle Homer**  
OCW President-Elect

Another successful Oregon AgFest was held at the end of April in Salem, Oregon. A record-setting 24,000 attendees on the first day alone learned about the vital role agriculture plays in our daily lives. Representing the beef industry, the Oregon CattleWomen (OCW) hosted an informative booth focused on Oregon ranching, beef by-products, and—of course—sampling delicious pepperoni.

On the cooking stage, my niece and fellow OCW member Cassidy Homer and I, along with help from some of our OCW Collegiate members, performed ten cooking demonstrations over the two-day event. We saw fantastic engagement from all ages, proving that folks are as hungry as ever for beef education.

## Collaboration at the Core

During our “Beef Day at the Capitol” in February, we explored partnerships with other Oregon commodity representatives to truly highlight the breadth of Oregon agriculture in our demos. Back in my kitchen, I started with a list of “Oregon Bounty” and crafted multiple recipes designed for the stage. The challenge? No stovetop or oven—only electric appliances.

Challenge accepted. With help from many sources, we presented a wide variety of menu items, all prepared in 30 minutes or less. We focused on busy families looking for easy, budget-friendly recipes with beef at the center of the plate. As it turns out, all we

had to do was fire up the electric grill with some top sirloin steaks, and the crowds gathered to watch and learn.

## A Statewide Success

The 2026 AgFest demonstrations were a true celebration of collaboration. We are grateful to the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, Oregon Potatoes, Oregon Raspberries and Blackberries, Oregon Beef Council, Painted Hills Natural Beef, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture for their contributions. These recipes have also been featured prominently on the KGW8 Fresh From Oregon website, highlighting our beautiful beef for a statewide audience.

The standout dish—the one that had people waiting hours for a taste—was the Steak and Oregon Dungeness Crab Wrap. This crowd favorite captured the essence of Oregon, from the Pacific Coast to the High Desert. We are already looking forward to continuing this success in 2027!

## Featured Recipe: Steak & Oregon Dungeness Crab Wraps

Yields: 1 serving

### Ingredients

4 oz Oregon steak (top sirloin or preferred cut)  
1 tbsp Olive oil  
2 oz Oregon Dungeness crab (pre-mixed with mayo, cream cheese, Nashville hot seasoning, lemon juice, and garlic)  
1 Tortilla (spinach or flour)  
1 handful Mixed greens (spinach or spring mix)  
¼ Avocado, sliced  
¼ cup Tillamook Triple Cheddar cheese

### Instructions

1. Prepare the Beef: Sauté the steak in olive oil to your preferred doneness. Let it rest briefly, then slice into thin strips.
2. Prepare the Filling: In a small bowl, mix the crab with the creamy base and seasonings until well combined.
3. Assemble: Layer the tortilla with mixed greens, sliced steak, the crab mixture, avocado, and cheese.
4. Roll and Serve: Roll the tortilla tightly and enjoy the best of Oregon land and sea!





Oregon  
Cattlemen's  
Association

# Mid-Year Attendee Registration

June 25-26 | Inn at Cross Keys Station | Madras, OR

66 NW Cedar Street, Madras, Oregon 97741

## Attendee Information

Attendee #1

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendee #2

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES: \_\_\_\_\_

RANCH/COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

OCA members who are only attending the policy discussion meetings on Friday may register at no cost.  
*No meals included. Please call the OCA office to advise of your attendance.*

## Event Schedule


<b>Thursday</b>	<b>5:00 - 7:30 pm</b>	-	Social and Reception with OCA Leadership and Committee Chairs
<b>Friday</b>	<b>8:30 am</b>	-	Coffee with OCA Leadership
	<b>9:00</b>	-	Welcome OCA Members - President Diana Wirth
	<b>9:15</b>	-	Tootie Smith, FSA State Director - Program Updates from Washington DC, Q & A
	<b>10:30</b>	-	Committee Chairs Review Expiring Resolutions and Recieve Proposed Resolutions
	<b>Noon</b>	-	Lunch
	<b>1:00 pm</b>	-	Committee Chair Review (cont.)
	<b>3:00</b>	-	County President / Board Vice President Updates
	<b>4:00</b>	-	Conclude

## Member Registration \*

		How Many Attendees	Total Amount
<b>Full Registration   Thursday and Friday</b> .....	<b>\$50 x</b>	_____ =	_____
<b>Thursday only   Social &amp; Reception with OCA Leadership and Committee Chairs</b> .....	<b>\$25 x</b>	_____ =	_____
<b>Friday only   Includes Coffee, Lunch, and Snacks</b> .....	<b>\$25 x</b>	_____ =	_____
			<b>Total Due:</b> _____

\* Current OCA Membership is required to attend

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Registration Deadline **June 12, 2025**

Questions? Contact Jem Connelly at  
(503) 361-8941 or [jem.connelly@orcattle.com](mailto:jem.connelly@orcattle.com)  
[www.orcattle.com](http://www.orcattle.com)



# Making room at the table.

**Morgan Kromm** | 805-801-9960  
OCW President | orcattlewomen@gmail.com



Beginning ranchers are often told that hard work is the price of admission into this industry, and there is truth to that, considering that ranching has never been easy work. Long days, uncertainty, weather, markets, and sacrifice are all part of the lifestyle that so many of us love. For many beginning and first-generation ranchers today, hard work is not the only barrier to entry. Access is most likely the bigger one.

Many young people enter agriculture without having grown up on family land or with cattle, equipment, or an operation waiting to be passed down to them. That does not mean they lack passion, work ethic, or commitment to the industry. In fact, some of the most driven people in ranching today are individuals trying to build something from the ground up because they love the lifestyle enough to fight for a place in it.

At the same time, multi-generation ranches are the backbone of our industry and carry generations of knowledge, stewardship, and resilience. That history matters because there is so much value in the lessons, traditions, and management experience that established ranching families bring to the table. The future of the cattle industry does not depend on replacing that legacy. It depends on creating space for new people who want to become part of it.

One of the biggest challenges for beginning ranchers is simply finding a path forward. Land prices continue to rise. Purchasing cattle is expensive. Equipment costs can feel impossible. Even gaining enough experience and management responsibility to confidently run an operation can be difficult if someone is expected to remain in a labor role forever.

There are many talented ranch hands and employees who dedicate years of their lives to operations they care deeply about. They help calves hit the ground in the spring, keep them where they need to be all summer, feed them through the winter, and sacrifice holidays and weekends because livestock still need care. But eventually, many of them begin asking themselves a difficult question: "Is there a future for me beyond working for someone else forever?"

That question matters more than we sometimes realize.

If we want to keep good people in agriculture, there needs to be some level of opportunity, mentorship, and investment in the next generation. Not everyone needs to hand over an operation or dramatically change the way they ranch. Even small opportunities can completely change the trajectory of someone's future.

## Ways We Can Help Create Opportunity:

- Offer mentorship and include employees or younger producers in management conversations, not just labor.
- Create pathways for good employees to take on greater responsibility over time.
- Consider lease opportunities, custom grazing arrangements, or partnerships that help beginning ranchers gain experience.
- Help younger producers build industry connections and networks.
- Share knowledge about finances, grazing management, and business decisions.
- Encourage involvement in organizations and leadership opportunities.
- Support cattle ownership opportunities when possible, even on a small scale.
- Recognize that helping someone build a future in agriculture is one of the best ways to keep strong people in our industry.

I have personally experienced the impact of opportunity and mentorship. I manage an outside lease for Roaring Springs Ranch, and my boss, Stacy Davies, has created a program that allows some employees to purchase cattle over time while also helping them eventually take over a lease or find another

arrangement to move forward in the industry. For my husband and me, that opportunity created a way to begin building something of our own in a safe environment, despite not coming from a generational ranching background.

That kind of investment in people matters - not just financially, but personally. When someone believes enough in your work ethic and abilities to help create opportunities, it changes the way you see your future in this industry.

Programs and opportunities like that also benefit ranches and employers themselves. Employees who feel invested in, challenged, and valued are more likely to stay long-term. They gain management skills, develop greater pride in the operation, and become more capable leaders. In an industry where finding and keeping skilled labor is increasingly difficult, creating pathways for growth may

be one of the best investments a ranch can make.

As cattlemen, producers, and advocates for this industry, I believe we all have a role to play in encouraging the next generation. Sometimes that may look like formal mentorship. Sometimes it may look like helping a young producer find grazing opportunities, introducing them to industry contacts, or simply taking the time to teach instead of assuming they should already know.

Ranching has always depended on people helping people. Neighbors helping neighbors during branding season, wildfire season, or tough winters is part of what makes this lifestyle special. Creating opportunities for beginning ranchers is simply another extension of that same mindset.

The future of agriculture will depend not only on preserving ranching traditions but also on

ensuring there is still a way for hardworking people to enter this industry and build a life in it. Mentorship and access matter more than people realize. Sometimes, one opportunity is all it takes to keep a good rancher in the business for the next generation. •

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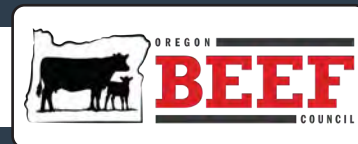
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# Baseball and Beef. It's What's for Dinner.

**Will Wise**

CEO of the Oregon Beef Council



How many Americans know the tag line “Beef, It’s What’s for Dinner”? A lot.

I recently read that over 88% of American consumers are familiar with this advertising tag line. That is a rock star level that we should all be proud of. When Beef, It’s What’s for Dinner (BIWFD) advertising is used in conjunction with sports marketing, it has a synergistic impact on sales. I also saw a statistic noting that over 82% of consumers are positively impacted by sports promotions.

When you think about beef and sports promotion opportunities, what comes to mind? One item that has been good for us has been the Oregon Beef Council Tailgater of the Game at all home football games for Oregon State. We have also worked with the Oregon Ducks and the Portland Trail Blazers on BIWFD radio spots and other promotions. The problem with those has been the cost. Are they good promotional platforms? Yes. But we need to stay within the budget.

One area that is getting more attention in Oregon and with State Beef Councils around the country is baseball. Summer is grilling season, and there are many good metrics for this promotional period for beef. In addition, costs for promotional spots during broadcast sporting events, such as 25/5 radio spots, are far less expensive in conjunction with baseball than some other options, such as football.

A 25/5 radio spot is also great for us because it uses 25 seconds of professionally produced radio ads that the beef checkoff pays for, which all State Beef Councils can use at little or no direct cost. The other 5 seconds in a 25/5 spot can be used for an Oregon-specific message, such as “Brought to you by the farmers and ranchers of Oregon and the Oregon Beef Council.” So, look for more BIWFD advertising in baseball. We run these on many platforms, and I also see other State Beef Councils using baseball in many creative ways to promote beef.

For example, with the Little League World Series hosted in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, the

Pennsylvania Beef Council (PBC) played a leading role last year in amplifying a national BIWFD partnership at the local level. They launched targeted promotions including a billboard along Route 22 heading into Williamsport, four digital displays, and a fabric tension display at Harrisburg International Airport. Running for four weeks, these placements generated approximately 1.1 million impressions.

Little League may be bigger than you might have guessed, too. The number of volunteers and youth athletes is huge. There are valuable opportunities to promote beef in baseball, from the Little League level to Major League Baseball. Do you follow the Seattle Mariners? Our neighbors to the north, at the Washington State Beef Commission, are now running BIWFD ads during Mariners broadcasts. Their executive director and vice-chairman attended an Oregon Beef Council meeting when they were first running ads with the Seattle Kraken, a relatively new NHL team. We don’t have this kind of budget, but we continue to support their work that significantly benefits all beef producers in the Pacific Northwest, and it is great that they share their impressive results with us.

We have upped our game with Oregon State baseball. The Oregon Beef Council runs 25/5 ads during radio broadcasts, and we had a special game-day promotion this year that included an on-field prize pack with a summer grilling theme for beef. We also worked out a complicated and valuable setup in which we could hand out beef information and beef jerky for fans to take into the game. It sounds minor, but that helped our promotion go much further. We continue to get a lot out of our partnership with Beaver baseball, and they have been a great team to work with in terms of winning games, going to the Regionals, Super Regionals, and the College World Series. •

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# Get ahead of fires this season with a wildfire response plan

**Dr. Katie Wollstein** | Rangeland Fire Specialist

**Dr. Juliana Ranches** | Beef Specialist

OSU Extension Service, Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center–Burns

**Jacob Powell** | Agriculture Extension Faculty for OSU in Sherman and Wasco Counties

Questions? Contact [katherine.wollstein@oregonstate.edu](mailto:katherine.wollstein@oregonstate.edu).

Spring is a busy time, and fire season can feel distant. Most livestock producers are familiar with the need to reduce fuels around homes and ranch infrastructure to limit fire impacts. Another important way to prepare for fire season is to have a clear plan for what to do if a wildfire threatens your property. While it can be uncomfortable to think about, a wildfire response plan can reduce losses and provide a roadmap for action in what can be a chaotic, rapidly evolving situation.



What is a wildfire response plan?

A wildfire response plan helps livestock producers think through what they will prioritize protecting, who will be responsible for specific tasks, where activities will occur on the ranch, and what resources

are available to aid wildfire responders. Ranches are often spread across large areas, with people, livestock, and equipment distributed across the landscape at any given time. A wildfire response plan helps ensure that family members, employees, and even fire responders are on the same page and

have shared information about the locations of important assets and priorities in the event of a wildfire.

A wildfire response plan identifies key features of an operation, such as the locations of assets, hazards, potential wildfire control locations, access routes for egress and/or mobilizing resources, water sources, and areas where livestock, people, or equipment may be moved or sheltered in the event of a wildfire (see Figure 2, Potential Components of a Wildfire Response Plan).

For these reasons, a plan can be as simple as a map of the property with these features marked (Figure 1). The map could be shared with family, employees, neighbors, and fire responders. In a 2025 pilot workshop, managers at the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center noted that the process of making

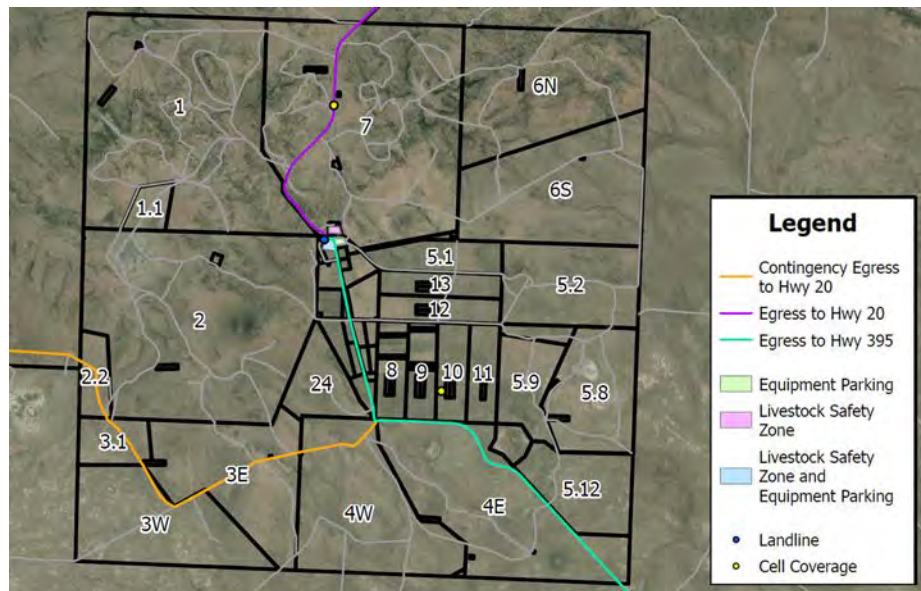


Figure 1. Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center created a map of the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range as part of their Wildfire Response Plan. The map includes egress routes to be used depending on the location of a fire, as well as areas to where livestock and equipment may be moved to minimize losses in the event of a wildfire (map credit: Cameron Duquette, TNC).

the plan—thinking through where resources are located, how water systems function, and where animals could be moved—was as valuable as the final product. The completed plan will serve as both an internal and external communication tool during wildfire incidents at the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range.

## Planning for livestock

For many operations, evacuating large numbers of livestock is not realistic. A livestock plan should consider both evacuation and shelter-in-place options.

A key strategy is identifying safety zones, which are pastures or areas with low fuel loads, good road access, and reliable water where animals may be moved in the event of a fire. These areas are less likely to carry fire and can provide temporary refuge for animals and equipment. Maintaining these zones throughout fire season is essential.

Your plan might also include:

- Evacuation options for high-value animals
- Backup feed and water in safety zones (7-to-10-day supply)
- Backup medications or other emergency supplies needed for your livestock
- Identification (branding or tagging) to aid recovery if animals are displaced
- Insurance coverage for potential losses

## Supporting fire response

During a wildfire, responders may come from outside your area and be unfamiliar with your operation. Clear, visible information about the locations of hazards, bridge load limits, and water sources (ponds, tanks, and troughs) can greatly support fire response efforts.

Most engines and water tenders can draft from ponds or troughs, but they typically require firm road access and adequate turnaround space. Identifying and maintaining these access points in advance can make a big difference. These locations can also be included on a map in your wildfire response plan.

## Long-term planning

A wildfire response plan is not just for emergencies; it can also guide day-to-day management decisions. By mapping assets and identifying vulnerabilities, producers can prioritize actions that reduce risk, such as:

- Creating or maintaining fuel breaks
- Improving road access
- Strengthening water systems and backup power
- Targeting fuel treatments near critical

infrastructure

Over time, producers also build familiarity with how wildfire response works in their area, including how to communicate with incident personnel and access reliable information.

While wildfire risk can feel daunting, preparation makes a difference. Developing a wildfire response plan can help protect your operation and support effective fire response. Start where you can and build over time. •

### Potential components of a Wildfire Response Plan

#### Contacts & communication

- ✓ Key personnel, neighbors, responders, landowners, utilities, veterinarian, insurance
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities (e.g., livestock movement, communications)

#### Maps of property and allotments

- ✓ Buildings, infrastructure, and equipment
- ✓ Roads, gates, access routes, and turnarounds
- ✓ Consider listing gate or other lock codes to ensure fire responder access
- ✓ Evacuation routes and safety zones (people, livestock, equipment)

#### Livestock information

- ✓ Type, numbers, and likely locations
- ✓ Evacuation options and shelter-in-place areas

#### Hazards & critical infrastructure

- ✓ Fuel, propane, and compressed gas tanks
- ✓ Power shutoffs and special procedures

#### Water & firefighting resources

- ✓ Water sources (capacity, access, pump type)
- ✓ Firefighting equipment and locations
- ✓ Backup systems (e.g., generators)

#### Supplies

- ✓ Feed, water, and emergency resources
- ✓ Plans for hauling or backup provisions

#### Priorities for protection

- ✓ Structures, water systems, fencing, and other key assets

#### Reporting procedures

- ✓ Who to contact in different scenarios (dispatch, medical, utilities, etc.)

# Past OCA Presidents

*Thank you for your passion and dedication towards creating a better tomorrow for Oregon's cattle industry!*

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# Oregon Cattlemen's Association

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for 2026



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**Through your membership with the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, you are now eligible to become an Oregon Aglink member and take advantage of the many benefits Oregon Aglink provides - at no additional cost to you!** Aglink offers cost-saving benefits to its members including access to a state-wide package of medical, vision, and dental plans. Learn more at [aglink.org](http://aglink.org)



**Nutrient Management and Planning Tool (NMPT)** is now available to OCA members. If you are looking for a pasture/nutrient management spreadsheet, OCA has a new tool for you. Simply visit the OCA website at [www.orcattle.com](http://www.orcattle.com) and select the **NMPT Link in the top right corner of the home page**, then proceed create your password and begin logging your data. Your information will not be viewed by anyone but you.



**OCA members get 15% off legal services for the following Schwabe attorneys:**

Maria Schmidlkofer | Attorney | 503-540-4265 • Farm & Ranch Succession • Estate Planning & Administration Business & Tax Planning. Elizabeth Howard | Attorney | 503-796-2093 • Water rights & wetlands • Public lands Fish, wildlife, & listed species. Lindsay Thane | Attorney | 503-796-2059 • Water rights & wetlands • Public lands. Shonee Langford | Attorney | 503-796-4261 • Water rights & wetlands. Tim Nicholson | Attorney | 503-796-2889 • Agricultural business & real estate law. Patrick Cleary | Attorney | 503-796-2853 • Agricultural business & real estate law. Rosalyn DiLillo Knock | 206-407-1579 • Water rights & water pollution.



Highstreet Insurance & Financial Services proudly offer you a "Land As Your Legacy" transition plan analysis at no cost. The key elements of the plan include: succession planning, business planning, risk management, financial in-dependence, and estate planning. **Contact Todd Tennant at 800-225-2521 or 541-969-9600 to arrange an initial consultation.**



At Central Oregon Ranch Supply, we provide feed, accessories and health care solutions for all of your animals while helping you maintain your property which has been our full-time job for more than four decades. OCA Members receive a discount of 10%-25% off retail, animal health, farm & ranch products. **Contact Michaeline Malott at the store: 541-548-5195**



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**OCA members receive a 2 cent per gallon discount on all bulk fuel purchases at Ed Staub & Sons bulk plant locations.** All grades of fuel and propane are available. Members are encouraged to set up a Premium Rewards Account (PRA) with Ed Staub & Sons, this entitles customers to a 5 cent discount on all cardlock gallons purchased at ESS sites and paid within PRA terms. **For more details contact the Burns office at (541) 573-2622.**



**OCA members will receive discount pricing with PetroCard. Contact Sales Rep Patrick Meyers at 971-209-4524 or email [pmeyers@petrocard.com](mailto:pmeyers@petrocard.com) for the members discount pricing.**



**Discount off Used Equipment and Rentals from United Rentals**

United Rentals is the world's largest equipment rental company, specializing in industrial and construction equipment, renting and selling new and used equipment. Used Equipment discounts are offered, to obtain the discount or inquire about equipment for sale **contact Dan Klobes at [dklobes@ur.com](mailto:dklobes@ur.com) or 971-713-9272.** Please ensure you inform Dan that you are part of the OCA discount program. **United Rentals is also offering a 10% discount to OCA members off rental rates for most items.** To obtain this discount or inquiries, email [OCA@ur.com](mailto:OCA@ur.com).



**Cattle Theft Reward: OCA offers up to a \$5,000 reward for information and evidence resulting in a conviction for theft, damage, or driving away cattle or property belonging to a member.**

**Stewardship Fund: OCA provides educational scholarships, wildlife assistance & actively sponsors local fairs, 4-H & FFA chapters.**

**County Dues: OCA returns 10% of your membership dues to your county association.**



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Announcing the new vaccine from Hygieia Labs:  
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Costing the industry more than \$10 million annually, Foothill Abortion — formally known as Epizootic Bovine Abortion, or EBA — has robbed profits from ranchers for almost 100 years as the leading cause of calf loss in affected areas of the Western United States.

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After years in development and testing, the new Foothill Abortion Vaccine is available from Hygieia Biological Laboratories. The Foothill Abortion Vaccine has been shown to protect more than 95% of animals from the disease when administered as directed. Administration is safe, simple and proven to give your heifers a strong start for greater productivity.

**Protect your investment and promote your profitability. Ask your local veterinarian if the Foothill Abortion Vaccine is right for your herd, or contact Hygieia Labs to learn more.**

Contact Jenna Chandler at Hygieia Labs for additional information.

Jenna Chandler, EBA Product Manager  
916-769-2442 | [jenna@hygieialabs.com](mailto:jenna@hygieialabs.com)

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T: 530-661-1442 | F: 530-661-1661 | [hygieialabs.com](http://hygieialabs.com)

# VIDEO ROYALE



## **MONDAY, JULY 27**

Superior Sunrise - 7:30 a.m.  
Video Auction - 8:00 a.m. (PDT)

## **TUESDAY, JULY 28**

Superior Sunrise - 7:30 a.m.  
Video Auction - 8:00 a.m. (PDT)  
28th Annual Superior  
Livestock Cowboy Golf  
Tournament - 5:00 p.m.

## **WEDNESDAY, JULY 29**

Superior Sunrise - 7:30 a.m.  
Video Auction - 8:00 a.m. (PDT)  
Customer Appreciation Dinner  
Featuring live music from  
Ned LeDoux, Kevin Davis and  
Waylon Thibodeaux - 6:00 p.m.

## **THURSDAY, JULY 30**

Superior Sunrise - 7:30 a.m.  
Video Auction - 8:00 a.m. (PDT)  
Social at Ormachea's  
Live music from Waylon  
Thibodeaux and Kevin Davis

## **FRIDAY, JULY 31**

Superior Sunrise - 7:30 a.m.  
Video Auction - 8:00 a.m. (PDT)

**JULY 27-31, 2026**

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**NED LEDOUX**



**WAYLON  
THIBODEAUX**



**KEVIN DAVIS**

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Fairfield Inn Winnemucca:  
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# CONSIGN BY JULY 10

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