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Livestock

Cattlemen encouraged by focus on monuments

By **CAROL RYAN DUMAS**
Capital Press

President Donald Trump's executive order last week calling for a review of national monuments created under the Antiquities Act in the past 21 years is welcome news to cattle ranchers who rely on public lands grazing.

"We are very excited he has made this a priority and is going to look at the abuse of this act," said Marci Schlup, associate director of the Public Lands Council and National Cattlemen's Beef Association federal lands.

The review by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke involves monuments designated since 1996 in excess of 100,000 acres or monuments that were expanded without adequate public outreach and coordina-



Courtesy of Bob Wick, BLM

Pilot Rock is seen in Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument near Ashland, Ore. President Donald Trump has called for a review of how presidents have used the federal Antiquities Act during the past 21 years to set aside national monuments.

tion with stakeholders.

"The Antiquities Act allows a president to designate large swaths of land with a stroke of a pen. There is no oversight

by Congress or approval by Congress and most of the time input is not given from local stakeholders," Schlup said.

Former President Bill Clin-

ton's designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah reduced grazing allotments from 106,000 AUMs (animal unit months) to 35,000 AUMs.

"So it really has had a significant impact on the ranchers and the local economies," she said.

Trump's action is a great first step, but Congress needs to act as well, she said. PLC and NCBA are encouraged that the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on the issue on Tuesday, she said.

"It's really reassuring that this soon in the president's administration this has been brought to light and Congress is paying attention as well," she said.

A lot of good information came out during the hearing,

she said, adding that she's optimistic about the issue.

"We need Congress to pass legislation that reins in the Antiquities Act and curbs the abuse that we're currently seeing," she said.

On Tuesday, Rep. Raul Labrador, R-Idaho, introduced a bill that would require approval by Congress and any state with a proposed national monument before a presidential designation. It would also require public input.

In introducing the bill, Labrador commended Trump for "highlighting excessive presidential power that ignores the states and the people closest to the land," but said "we must change the law to achieve lasting reform."

His bill is a companion to one introduced by Sen. Mike

Crapo, R-Idaho, in January. It is similar to a measure introduced by Senate Energy Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska.

Labrador noted that 16 presidents have designated 157 monuments that include 840 million acres of land and marine habitat since the Antiquities Act was passed in 1906.

Former President Barack Obama alone designated more than 30 national monuments including more than 550 million acres of land and water, Schulp said.

"These shouldn't be pen-stroke designations. There should be input and consent from Congress," she said.

And there should be input from local stakeholders and the people who live in the communities that will be impacted, she said.

80 years later, great-grandkids follow in rancher's footsteps

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

SPOKANE — Bill Bennett first showed a steer at the Junior Livestock Show of Spokane in 1937. Eighty years later, his great-grandchildren are following in his footsteps.

"I was actually only 9 years old," said Bennett, now 89, as he sat in a chair watching youths from around the region show their cattle.

Two of his great-grandchildren, Anna Geddes, 11, and Kaine Geddes, 9, showed steers this year. They are part of the Footloose 4-H club in Connell, Wash.

Anna and Kaine said they showed to mark the 80th anniversary of their great-grandfather's first time at the event.

"I talked them into it," Bennett said with a smile.

Did he give them any helpful tips?

"I always give them advice but they won't take it," he said with a grin.

Anna said her great-grandfather told them to smile, keep their head up and do their best.

Bennett ranches near Connell and raises Hereford and Angus cattle with his son, grandson and granddaughter at the BB Cattle Co.

His father at one time owned the largest shorthorn cattle herd in the world, with 600 cows, Bennett said.

The first animal Bennett showed was a shorthorn steer



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Anna Geddes, 11, and Kaine Geddes, 9, with their great-grandfather, Bill Bennett, a Connell, Wash., rancher, before showing their steers May 4 at the Junior Livestock Show of Spokane. Bennett first showed a steer at the event 80 years ago.

that weighed 690 pounds.

His favorite memory is having a grand champion steer at the show in 1945, as well as grand and reserve champion pens of five.

"We've showed a lot of steers here," he said. "I went ... until they wouldn't let me come any more."

It's important for youths to show animals, Bennett said.

"It makes them grow up (and learn) responsibility," he said, noting children in his family learn at a young age to show animals.

Anna said her favorite part is having fun.

Her least favorite part is halter breaking, teaching an animal to respond to cues and move its head in a desired direction.

"It's easier to get hurt,"

she said. She speaks from experience. "I didn't really get hurt-hurt, but I still got drug around."

Halter breaking is also Kaine's least favorite part.

"They can spook easily sometimes," he said.

Anna and Kaine hoped to get \$1.30 per pound for their animals.

"That \$1.30 compares to the 10 cents per pound I got for mine," their great-grandfather said.

It makes Bennett feel good to have the kids follow in his footsteps.

"I like to have them be successful," he said.

Air emissions exemption for farms overturned

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

A rule exempting livestock farms from reporting certain air pollutant emissions to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been overturned by a federal appeals court.

However, the decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit is most likely to affect large livestock operations or those with disproportionately high emissions, experts say.

In 2008, the EPA exempted most farms from reporting ammonia and hydrogen sulfide emissions from animal waste to EPA under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, or CERCLA.

The EPA had determined that requiring such emissions reports from farms is "unnecessary because, in most cases, a federal response is impractical and unlikely."

The agency issued a similar exemption to the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-know Act, or EPCRA, which requires reporting of those pollutants to state and local governments.

However, the EPCRA exemption didn't apply to large facilities, such as those with more than 1,000 cattle or 10,000 sheep.

The Waterkeeper Alliance,

an environmental group, filed a lawsuit against the exemptions while the two agriculture groups — the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association and the National Pork Producers Council — challenged the provision that excluded large confined animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, from the exemption.

The appellate court has now agreed with Waterkeeper Alliance that EPA's exemptions were invalid, ruling that concerns about efficiency "don't give the agency carte blanche to ignore the statute whenever it decides the reporting requirements aren't worth the trouble."

In response to toxic levels of emissions, the EPA could require livestock operations to make changes to their waste management practices, the ruling said.

Even though the EPA estimated the exemptions will save farms \$68 million in compliance costs and more than 1 million hours of work over a decade, those savings don't justify the rule, the court said.

Since the rules are invalid, the farm industry's objection is rendered moot, the ruling said.

Due to the ruling, concentrated animal feeding operations releasing more than 100 pounds per day of ammonia or hydrogen sulfide must re-

port the emissions, said Tarah Heinzen, an attorney at Food & Water Watch, an environmental group tracking the case.

Most CAFOs don't emit enough hydrogen sulfide to trigger the requirement, but bigger facilities will likely have to report ammonia emissions, she said.

It's unlikely many operations will install air emission monitoring devices to comply with the reporting requirements, she said. CAFO operators can calculate emissions based on the number of animals and their type of waste storage system, Heinzen said.

Gaining more information about emissions is necessary for the EPA to better regulate pollutants, Heinzen said. "It should increase the total universe of information about emissions quite a bit."

While the reporting requirement is most likely to apply to large CAFOs, smaller operations with manure management practices that increase emissions may also be required to report, said Jonathan Smith, an attorney with Earthjustice who litigated the case for Waterkeeper Alliance.

At this point, it's unclear how EPA will enforce the emissions reporting requirement due to the ruling, he said.

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