



Press Release

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CCA Members Win NCBA Environmental Stewardship Award

Denver, Colo., July 20, 2009 – During the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Summer Meeting in Denver, Colo., California Cattlemen's Association members **Darrell, Callie, Ramsey and Dallice Wood** of Leavitt Lake Ranches, of Vina and Susanville, were honored as the Region VI winners for the 2009 National Environmental Stewardship Award.

Nominated for the award by CCA and the California Rangeland Trust, the Wood family was noted at the award ceremony for their innovative approaches to land management and conservation.

Owned and operated by Darrell Wood, his wife Callie, son Ramsey and daughter Dallice, Leavitt Lake Ranches has family ranching ties dating back to the 1860s.

In the early 1980s, Darrell and Callie set a goal to acquire ranches that had been owned by Darrell's family. At that point, they began buying cattle, leasing property and gradually buying the former family property.

Today, between the winter range annual grasslands of the Vina Plains and the summer range on high elevation meadows of Lassen County, they own more than 3,500 acres of private land, manage 25,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management permits and lease another 11,000 acres, for a total of 39,670 acres.

Together, the family runs 600 mother cows, 400 yearlings and farms 600 acres of alfalfa and 900 acres of irrigated pasture. The cattle herd is made up of spring and fall calving herds of registered and commercial Angus cattle.

The Wood family has implemented a number of practices aimed at protecting and improving the land upon which they make a living. A few of these include working in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy on a restoration plan for the Vina Plains, vernal pools project; improving irrigation systems, constructed cross-fencing, installed livestock water developments, conduct seeding, decrease streambank erosion and

implement an overall prescribed grazing plan; improving riparian conditions along Pete's Creek and restoring the hydrology of the surrounding meadow.

“The members of Wood family have been leaders in finding new ways to expand their ranching operations while paying close attention to conservation and protecting our state’s natural resources,” said **CCA President Tom Talbot, DVM**. “They exemplify the best efforts undertaken by many of California’s progressive cattle producers, and I am pleased to see Darrell, Callie, Ramsey and Dallice recognized for their work by receiving this prestigious award.”

In addition to their many other projects, the Woods have partnered with USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program; Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program; Wetlands Restoration Program; Grasslands Reserve Program; Nutritional Balance Analyzer Program and Texas A & M University. They also have working relationships with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Partners for Wildlife Program; The Nature Conservancy; Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited.

The Environmental Stewardship Award has recognized the outstanding stewardship practices and conservation achievements of U.S. cattle producers for almost two decades. Regional and national award winners are honored for their commitment to protecting the environment and improving fish and wildlife habitat while operating profitable cattle operations.

The 2009 Environmental Stewardship Award Selection Committee consists of past award winners, university faculty, federal and state government agencies, conservation and environmental organizations. The program is administered by the National Cattlemen’s Foundation and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

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Founded in 1917, the California Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) represents California’s 1.78 billion- dollar beef cattle industry on legislative and regulatory affairs and remains the number one voice for the industry today. CCA is an affiliate of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, which represents America’s cattle farmers and ranchers.