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# KING RANCH® INSTITUTE

FOR RANCH MANAGEMENT



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On Our Cover:

*"White-out" by Joe Lowery*

[www.joelowery.com](http://www.joelowery.com)

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# “Capitalizing on What Hunters Want”

From the Director, Dr. Clay P. Mathis

**A**nother Holt Cat® Symposium on Excellence in Ranch Management has come and gone, and we are looking forward to the exciting new year ahead. The symposium was a great success, and I would like to thank everyone who attended and made it possible. We had a great set of speakers who made symposium both enjoyable and educational. With dynamic discussions and presentations, symposium was a great resource for many ranchers. As we start a new year, let's have a look at some of the main points discussed during symposium, points that I hope will help you as a rancher.

The 2011 Holt Cat® Symposium on Excellence in Ranch Management was focused on Business Management of Hunting Enterprises on Working Ranches. The intent of the event was to help ranch managers create, or more likely, refine a hunting enterprise. The target was not hunting only ranches, but livestock operations that are diversified to include a hunting enterprise. Managers of some of the largest ranching operations in North America showed their experiences and recipes for success in the arena. However, the foundation was set by Carter Smith, Executive Director of Texas Parks and Wildlife. Smith stated that hunter numbers in the United States are expected to remain flat at 12.5 million people, but they spend \$23 billion per year on hunting. This essentially defines the size of the monetary pie that exists. As a ranch manager interested in cashing in on the biggest possible piece of the hunting expenditures pie, it is important to understand what it is the hunter really wants. Is it the sport of winning the challenge with a trophy, connection with nature, or cherished time with family and friends? According to Smith it could be one or all three of these, but mostly hunters want great hunting memories. I recently returned from a deer hunt with my father and son and can attest that there are few things more important to this hunter than quality family time spent together.

As a ranch manager, how is it that you best capitalize on what hunters are looking for? You start with an inventory of what you already have in terms of wildlife, habitat, and available labor and amenities. This is a point made by Erik

Jacobsen of Ag Reserves Incorporated (ARI). Under his management umbrella are ranches from Florida to Canada. There is a different business model for each of the ARI hunting enterprises, but according to Jacobsen the key components need

to developing a hunting business model for a ranch are: 1) understanding your resources; 2) understanding existing regulatory constraints; 3) selecting a hunting enterprise management structure that is practical; 4) determining the hunting enterprise options (i.e., lease access, full service guided hunts, outsource to an outfitter, etc.); and 5) building a plan. There is no “best” hunting enterprise model for working ranches because resources, habitats, regulations, and ranch goals are so variable. Nonetheless, when building or refining a hunting enterprise on your operation Dave DeLaney, of King Ranch, Inc., recommends you base your hunting program on long-term stewardship, not on short-term financial gains. He also suggests that you search to optimize the combined ranching enterprises of livestock, wildlife, and other ranch activities. Maximization of wildlife and livestock enterprises is not likely achievable, so managers must find an optimal compromise between livestock and wildlife enterprises to best achieving the goals of the ranch as a whole.

Several speakers at the symposium emphasized the importance of monitoring wildlife populations and establish-

*Continued on page 10*



*“...base your hunting program on long-term stewardship, not on short-term financial gains.”*

**W***wagon tracks*

*Photo by JoAnne Meeker*



# A Large-Scale Vision

*Fifteen ranches and 30,000 cows are key to Simplot's efforts to produce quality beef – and other Ag products – for a growing population.*

**By Kindra Gordon**

**B** “Bringing Earth’s Resources to Life” is the tagline touted on the website for J.R. Simplot Company – one of the largest privately held food and agribusiness companies in the world. Today, the company includes a diverse array of venues: food plants, fertilizer and seed operations, mining, ranches and feedlots, livestock feed products and retail stores.

That large-scale vision can be traced back to one man – and the potato. In the early 1920’s a young J.R. “Jack” Simplot channeled his entrepreneurial spirit into many endeavors and found great success with potatoes – something his home state of Idaho has become quite well-known for. (See sidebar for more history.)

Cattle feeding was eventually added to the Simplot repertoire as an innovative way to utilize large quantities of potato by-products generated by Simplot food processing plants. Then, to become vertically integrated and supply those cattle to the feedlots – and control the quality of the genetics – ranches also became a part of the Simplot legacy.

Today, Stephen Scribner, 60, serves as general manager of ranches for Simplot – which includes 15 ranches and 30,000 cows, and they are currently at full capacity. Presently, their size ranks them second out of the top 10 cow/calf operations in the U.S.

Scribner, who grew up in a ranching family in northern California and had managed a large cow/calf and yearling operation in the West for 23 years, joined Simplot in 2008 and calls himself very fortunate to be part of the team that is headed by Simplot Land & Livestock president Tom Basabe. Their

headquarters are located in Grand View, Idaho.

Scribner notes that the advantages of being large include: economy of scale, spreading risk and sheer volume. But there are two sides to every coin, and he acknowledges the disadvantages can be the vastness of operations, remoteness and the logistics to effectively manage.

As an example of the challenges Simplot’s managers must overcome is the variety of lands their ranches utilize, including United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and private lands that range from mountains, to meadows, to high desert, to irrigated pastures and grasslands.

## Quality Genetics

For Simplot to be successful in the beef industry, Scribner says, “We have focused on producing a quality beef animal that first performs positively in our high desert environment and



then goes on to feed well through Simplot feedlots. We have done this with genetic selection of quality bulls and A.I. sires. We raise all our own replacement heifers with our focus being on a moderate frame black baldy/black cow as our ideal animal. The cow has to thrive in the high deserts and mountains of southern Idaho, eastern Oregon, northern Utah and Nevada.”

Simplot ranches selectively use Charolais bulls as terminal sires in their herds. “Simplot is actively selecting those sires that will best enhance the feedlot performance of those calves. Our goal is to produce a healthy product in a sustainable way that is desired by the consumer,” explains Scribner.

King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management graduate John Hay interned with Simplot Land & Livestock during the summer of 2010. Hay worked closely with Scribner in setting up maternal and terminal herds for each of the Simplot ranches. Through the effort Hay says, “We were able to project increased quality of their overall cowherd and terminal side that added up to a sizeable increase in pounds produced and income returned.”

Hay, who is now working with his own cow/calf operation in California and with his dad and uncle on their cow/calf, sheep and stocker entities, says the opportunity to work with Scribner was very valuable. He says, “Steve is one of the most astute cattlemen I’ve been around. He understands the industry very well, not only from the production side, but the political, business and financial sides as well.”

Scribner also saw the internship as beneficial and says, “We have begun a relationship with the King Ranch® Institute that we hope to grow in the future. I view the exposure of bright young people to Simplot as a positive for all parties as we have great opportunities for individuals. I am particularly interested in business management and advanced ranch management courses KRIRM has put together for our employees to attend in the future.”

## Future Focus

Simplot’s size and status today is an indication they have found the strategies to overcome the industry’s challenges – but they are not resting on their laurels. Scribner adds, “We are constantly working to improve our present operations both in quality and cost effectiveness rather than just maintain operations.”

Along with that, they are poised to grow. Scribner says, “We will continue to methodically expand our land base and grow our operations as opportunities present themselves.”

Looking to the future, he says, “The beef industry is in a great place with prices, export demand and low cow inventory. We should all be striving to be at maximum cost-effective inventory. We should not forget that \$1.60 calves could be \$1.00 calves one day, and so we still need to manage input costs.”

As well, Scribner points out that the world population is growing and more demand is being put on grains to go directly to human consumption. Of this he concludes, “Cattle are ruminant animals that produce high quality protein from plant material that can’t be utilized by people. Therein is our industry’s opportunity to be both productive and sustainable for the future.”

# A Rich History

J.R. ‘Jack’ Simplot began his colorful career at the age of 14 when he quit school and went into business on his own in 1923, near the small farming community of Declo, Idaho. Young Jack put his energy into many endeavors, and by the early years of World War II, the J.R. Simplot Company had become the largest shipper of fresh potatoes in the country and was selling millions of pounds of dehydrated onions and potatoes to the military.

When wartime shortages made it difficult to buy fertilizer, Jack built a manufacturing plant in Pocatello, Idaho, and produced his own. That kind of ingenuity and determination continued during the early 1950s as the Simplot Company created and marketed the first commercially viable frozen french fries in the world.

Jack passed away in May 2008, but will be forever remembered as the founder, leader and inspiration of the Simplot company. Today, scores of dedicated employees contribute to the success of the global company which includes food plants, fertilizer operations, mining entities, seed operations, livestock feed production and retail stores as well as ranches and feedlots. Simplot also has a global presence with business entities in Mexico and Central America, Canada, China, Korea and Australia.

For the future, Simplot is focused on sustainability. In his statement on the company’s website, current Simplot president and CEO Bill Whitacre says, “Producing more with less of our earth’s resources is not only good for business but it is truly the right thing to do. Being a sustainable company means developing technologies and systems that have the potential to decrease the land, energy and water needed to produce the enormous amount of food required to feed a growing world population. It also involves social sustainability, which is our role in supporting a safe work environment and in investing in our communities. We approach sustainability as a core value in everything we do. It is how we do business, ensuring a long-term, generational company for the future.”

# Oil & Gas Lectureship March 12-14

By Kindra Gordon

**W** “Well worth the time and money to attend,” is how Tommy Gilmore describes the value he has gained from the W.B. “Dub” Yarborough Lectureship on Oil & Gas held annually by the King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management (KRIRM).

The upcoming lectureship will be March 12-14, 2012 in Kingsville, TX, with instruction provided by Judon Fambrough, a lecturer and attorney at the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University. Fambrough has more than three decades experience specializes in property rights, including oil and gas, wind power, hunting leases and landowner liability.

Gilmore, raises registered Hereford cattle on 450 acres near Floresville, TX, and will be attending the oil and gas lectureship for the fourth consecutive year. He has oil and gas activity on his property and owns mineral rights on a portion of the land, while some of the mineral rights were separated from the surface rights 80 years ago. Gilmore is also a retired U.S. Air Force colonel, and will graduate from the KRIRM program in December – his graduate project focused on grazing and drought planning.

In addition to his cattle, Gilmore has a pipeline being constructed on this property, with drilling and seismic companies interested in doing more on his land. As a result of these experiences, Gilmore says, “You really have to know what your rights are to protect your operation.”

He credits Fambrough’s lectureship with providing the knowledge – and leverage – to help determine who the reputable individuals and companies are to work with in oil and gas development. And of his participation at the lectureship, Gilmore says, “I learn something new every year.”

Gilmore adds, “Whether you plan to negotiate oil and gas leases yourself or if you plan to hire a lawyer, you still need to know the right questions to ask to protect your



property and the legacy of your operation for future generations. The information Judon presents is very beneficial for anyone who has oil and gas on their property – whether you have the mineral rights or not.”

## Real Cases Studied

Fambrough, an oil and gas attorney, began teaching a course on oil and gas law at Texas A&M in College Station in 1980. Today he travels the state extensively giving talks to landowners about oil and gas leasing and pipeline negotiations. He has taught the Oil & Gas Lectureship for the KRIRM for the past five years. During the three-day course, he reviews the relevant statutory and case law developed by the Texas Appellate Courts regarding the exploration and production of oil and gas in the state. He applies the principles garnered from these sources and his personal experiences to the negotiation of an oil and gas lease to best benefit a mineral owner.

Fambrough says, “My goal is to take the complex issue of oil and gas leases and make it simple, understandable and manageable for landowners. I want landowners to recognize the red flags and how to avoid – or fix – them, as well as how to use the rules to their benefit.”

During the lectureship, Fambrough emphasizes the history behind the present laws. He says, “I want landowners

to understand where the law came from so they can better grasp what the language means in the context of the lease.

Fambrough acknowledges that oil and gas leases can be “fraught with problems and land mines from the mineral owner’s perspective.” He says the most common mistake he sees is when landowners focus solely on the bonus money and don’t look at the terms of the agreement. “There’s a saying that the only the needy and greedy take the first offer. Many mineral owners take the first offer,” he says.

To secure the best agreement he says, “People need to understand what is negotiable and what to negotiate.”

Fambrough continues, “Landowners may enter one or two oil and gas leases in their lifetime. It’s a one shot deal and you’ve got to look at the long run, not just the short

term. Some mineral leases will outlast the mineral owner. There are many clauses to think about before signing an oil and gas lease. You need to understand what you are getting into.”

## Register Now

The lectureship format includes ample discussion time as well as the opportunity to ask questions. Participants will also tour an actual oil drill site. Registration is \$400 and includes all materials, equipment, meals and transportation to and from the drill site.

Fambrough notes that the course will emphasize Texas oil and gas law, but says there are universal truths that would apply in any state – so it offers value to anyone. He reports that some landowners from several northern states have attended the lectureship in the past.

Fambrough concludes, “This is an opportunity to get a perspective you cannot get anywhere else – a lawyer would charge you a whole lot more than this to sit down and go over this information. So it’s well worth the price of admission.”

To register for the course and view the full agenda visit <http://krirm.tamuk.edu/oilandgas.html> or call (361)593-5401.



*KRIRM Alumni Tommy Gilmore and Conner Wilson attend a tour of a drill site during the 2009 Oil & Gas Lectureship.*



*Left: Attendee Y.N. Strait studies minerals on the drill site tour.*

*Right: Instructor Judon Fambrough explains the log taken on the well at the drill site we were visiting. The log helps identify the completion point of the well.*

# Welcome, New Students!

By Ashley Charanza

Every fall semester is an exciting time for King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management (KRIRM) as it welcomes a new group of students into the program. This year, Jeff Duncan and Travis Moore are the newest faces of KRIRM.

Duncan, born and raised in Lander, Wyo., comes to KRIRM with a desire to improve his business management skills and learn how to be a more effective leader.

“They tell me you get out of it what you put into it,” said Duncan, “so I’m going to learn everything there is to learn while I’m here.”

As a young child, Duncan always dreamed of being a ranch manager. He and his best friend would draw maps and pictures of the ranches they dreamed about. The desire to be a ranch manager has never left, he said.

Growing up on Wyoming ranches gave Duncan the chance to spend many summers raising and showing cattle, and riding horses. During his college career at the College of the Ozarks in Branson, Mo., Duncan worked for various agricultural entities including a dairy, feedlot and processing plant.

Duncan was soon drawn back to Wyoming, and he worked for True Ranches, LLC for seven years. In 2010, Duncan and his family moved to Cody, Wyo., where he worked as a cowboy on Hoodoo Ranch. Duncan was soon promoted to foreman in charge of a 1,000 head feedlot of the Carter Unit.

“I love the ranching lifestyle,” said Duncan, “but I also want to be a leader in the industry.”

It was at Hoodoo Ranch that Duncan’s boss, JD Radakovich, an alumnus of KRIRM, told him about the Institute and the Master of Science in Ranch Manage-

ment.

“Knowing that I was committed to becoming a ranch manager, [Radakovich] told me that this is the best place to learn how to do that,” said Duncan.

Duncan knew that KRIRM would be the right step for his career and family. He made the commitment to KRIRM and was on his way to south Texas to begin the program that will shape him into the leader he wants to be.

Aside from his love of the outdoors, a ranching career appealed to Duncan because he knew it is was right for his family. Ranches offer flexibility, he said, which contributes to a better quality of life, making a ranch the perfect place to raise a family.

“The ranching industry has allowed me to pursue and enjoy my passions in life—family, outdoors, animals, and hunting and fishing,” he said.

After graduating from KRIRM, Duncan hopes to be a manager of a large and diversified ranch. Ultimately, he will make his way back to the mountain west where his heart is, he said.

“My goal is to be able to enjoy the work and traditions of a ranch life and still be a leader and manager.”

KRIRM’s other new student, Travis Moore, was also



*New Students: Travis Moore and Jeff Duncan*





fortunate to be part of the ranching lifestyle at an early age. Moore was raised on two of the largest ranches in the United States—Deseret Cattle and Citrus in St. Cloud, Fla., and King Ranch, Inc. in Kingsville, Texas.

While growing up on these ranches, Moore learned about hard work and dedication, he said. The best memories Moore has of growing up were working with the cowboys and foremen.

“They instilled a passion in me for agriculture, ranching specifically, which shaped my goals in life and my career path,” he said.

After graduating in 2006 from Texas A&M University with a bachelor’s in animal science, Moore and his family moved back to St. Cloud, Fla. Moore worked as a foreman for Deseret Cattle and Citrus in charge of 4,200 cows, body condition management, pasture management, inventory control, and infrastructure. Working on a ranch after college was the perfect job and what Moore always wanted, he said.

Even though Moore enjoyed working at Deseret, his interest with KRIRM was still strong, which was sparked when KRIRM was founded in 2003. Moore decided attending graduate school would be best for his career once he had a few years of work experience. A few visits with graduate students at KRIRM was all it took for Moore to realize that KRIRM was the right place.

“Once I decided that I needed to go back to school to have more upward potential,” he said, “the Institute appeared as though it would provide me with the tools and knowledge I would need to accomplish that.”

*Current KRIRM students: Jeremy Gingerich, Travis Moore, Jeff Duncan, Jason Van Tassell and Caleb Roach.*

In the first few months at KRIRM, Moore was reminded of the difficulties of school, but is positive those challenges are worthwhile.

“I believe those difficulties are meant to stretch you mentally and physically in order to gain knowledge and confidence,” said Moore.

Just like Duncan and his family, the ranching lifestyle is appreciated by Moore’s family. Moore said that ranching allows his family the chance to enjoy nature and the outdoors without the worry of busy streets and traffic in town. The lifestyle is also helpful in teaching Moore’s children life’s lessons and values.

“We want to raise our kids so that they learn to work hard for their possessions and learn responsibility,” said Moore.

Duncan and Moore, along with second-year students Jeremy Gingerich, Jason Van Tassell, and Caleb Roach, have exciting times ahead at KRIRM. With various projects underway, the students have busy schedules, but much to learn.

## Commit to Lifelong Learning



## Upcoming Events

### January 3-6, 2012

Gus T. Canales Lectureship  
on Prescribed Burning

### January 9-12, 2012

Richard Mifflin Kleberg, Jr. Family  
Lectureship on Grazing Management

### March 12-14, 2012

W.B. "Dub" Yarborough Lectureship  
Oil & Gas

### May 14-16, 2012

Richard Mifflin Kleberg, Jr. Family  
Lectureship on Equine Management

### August 6-9, 2012

John B. Armstrong Lectureship on  
Systems Thinking

### September 21-22, 2012

B.K. "Kley" Johnson Lectureship on  
Current Ranching Issues: Human  
Resource Management for Ranchers

### October 25-26, 2012

Holt Cat® Symposium on Excellence  
in Ranch Management

*Continued from page 3*

ing appropriate harvest rates. Whether you are interested in maintaining or increasing a particular species on your ranch, these measures are critical. You should develop population targets, metrics to monitor the populations, and measure your performance. Many ranches do an exceptional job monitoring and measuring performance to make hunting enterprise decisions, but one of the greatest examples is Vermejo Park Ranch (VPR) in New Mexico. General Manager Mark Kossler explained how VPR has used historical harvest numbers, Boone & Crocket score, and net income to identify that their elk hunting enterprise is optimized when they harvest 5% of mature bull elk. Since they closely measure and monitor the elk population and evaluate performance against these measures, they can make great management decisions. It really does not matter if you're interested in selling elk hunts or quail, monitoring populations and developing practical harvest targets may help you be a better steward wildlife populations and other ranch resources for the long term.

Most ranches in the U.S. have a population of huntable wildlife species. With millions of hunters spending billions of dollars each year, opportunities will remain to enhance the profit-

ability or the recreational value of ranches viewed primarily as cattle operations. A well-planned and executed hunting enterprise in most parts of North America has significant potential to build value to the ranch as a whole. We know this because examples of the successful co-management of livestock and hunting enterprises exist in almost every state.

It is always enlightening for me to learn the approaches that managers have taken to simultaneously steward land, livestock, wildlife and human resources to meet long term ranch goals. We at KRIRM are very grateful to all the speakers who shared their thoughts, philosophies, and experiences at the 2011 Holt Cat® Symposium.



A workbook titled "Business Management of Hunting Enterprises on Working Ranches" was developed for the 2011 Holt Cat® Symposium to guide ranchers through the business plan development process for a hunting enterprise. If you are interested in a copy of this workbook, please visit our website at <http://krirm.tamuk.edu> and look under logo merchandise, or call us at (361) 593-5401.

# Master the Art and Science of Ranch Management

*With a Master's Degree in Ranch Management*



KRIRM is the only Master's level program in ranch management; we bring our students and top experts in the ranching industry together. We are now accepting new student applications.

*Photo by JoAnne Meeker*



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At the King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management we teach a multi-disciplinary, systems approach to ranch management and develop skills in our students for managing large ranches. The KRIRM curriculum compliments our student's practical experience by further building their abilities in ranching operations and business management. Our alumni have found careers in ranch management, academia and with land management agencies.

We will accept applications through March 31<sup>st</sup>. New students will begin classes in August, 2012. Please call or email us for more information about earning a Master's Degree in Ranch Management.

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## KRIRM Graduate Students Benefit from Endowed Fellowships

**O**ur Master's program at the King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management is unique for many reasons. Aside from being the only ranch management Master's degree available in the world, we also focus on recruiting high quality students with the leadership qualities and experience to develop into successful ranch managers for large ranching operations. Through our endowed fellowships, we provide the student an opportunity to pursue their master's degree in ranch management at KRIRM with minimal expense to the student.

These endowed fellowships include: Bass Fellowship, Clement Family Fellowship, 6666 Fellowship, Hilliard Fellowship and the Tio Kleberg Fellowship. The fellowships provide the student with financial assistance for tuition, fees and other expenses during their tenure with the Institute.

Fellowships like these allow KRIRM to actively recruit mature and experienced students who can be developed for managing large, complex ranches.

We are currently accepting applications to our master's program. We encourage recent B.S. graduates to obtain at least 2 years of work experience in the ranching business before applying to the Institute. If you are interested in applying, or would like more information, you can visit our website at <http://krirm.tamuk.edu/mastersprogram.html> or

call us at (361) 593-5401. Selected applicants will begin classes in August 2012.

### **Bass Fellows:**

Jason Van Tassell, JD Radakovich, Clint Richardson

### **Clement Family Fellows:**

Jeff Duncan, Jennifer Johnson Livsey, Delane Atcitty, David Genho

### **6666 Fellows:**

Caleb Roach, Conner Wilson, Sean Kelly

### **Hilliard Fellows:**

Jeremy Gingerich, Brent McCann, Les Nunn

### **Tio Kleberg Fellows:**

John Hay, Doug Wilmeth, Matt Etheridge