



Ranchers Stewardship Alliance: Partnering for Vibrant Prairie Communities



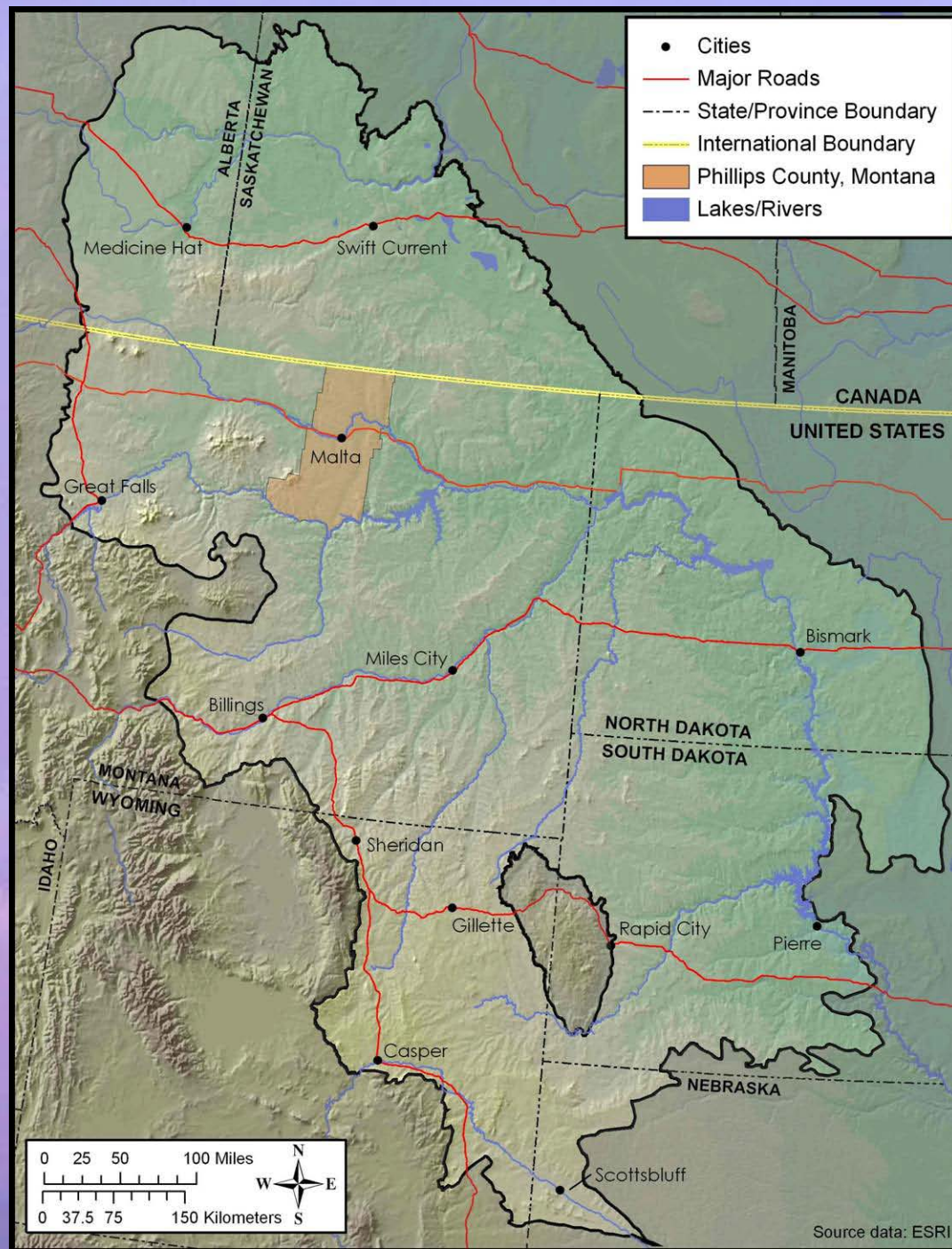
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Presented by Dale Veseth

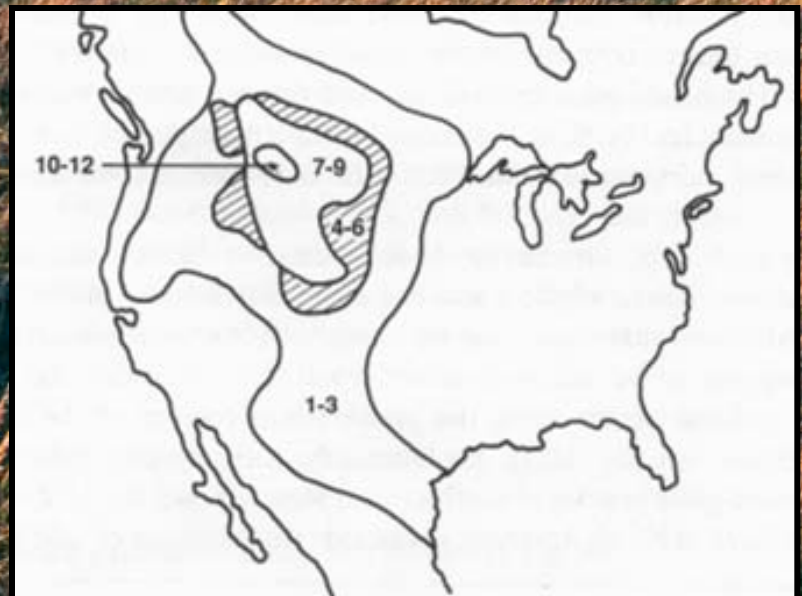
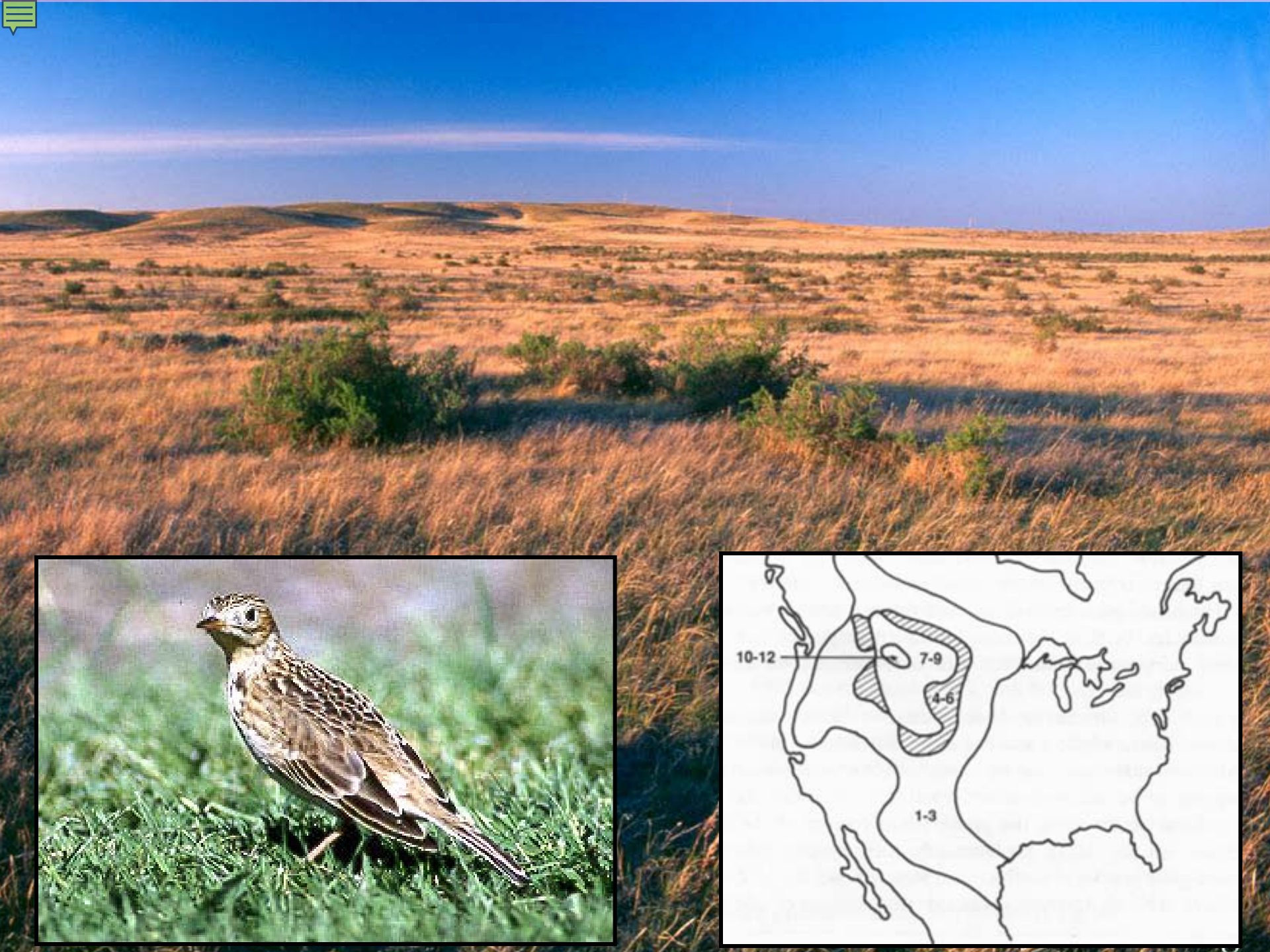
**At "Bridging the Gap: Collaborative Conservation
from the Ground Up" September, 2009**











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- This map of Montana displays the distribution of five wildlife species and various land cover types. The background is a topographic map with colors representing different land uses: tan for rangeland, green for deciduous and evergreen forests, pink for urban areas, white for cropland, blue for water, and grey for barren land. Wildlife distribution is marked with colored icons: red hexagons for Sage Grouse, green squares for Black-footed Ferret, pink circles with a bird silhouette for Mountain Plover, yellow circles with a bird silhouette for Grassland Birds, and blue circles with 'PD' for Black-tailed Prairie Dogs. The species are distributed across the state, with Sage Grouse and Black-footed Ferrets primarily in the western and central regions, and Black-tailed Prairie Dogs more widespread in the western and southern parts. Mountain Plovers and Grassland Birds are found in various locations, including the northern and central regions.
-  Sage Grouse
 -  Black-footed Ferret
 -  Mountain Plover
 -  Grassland Birds
 -  Black-tailed Prairie Dogs

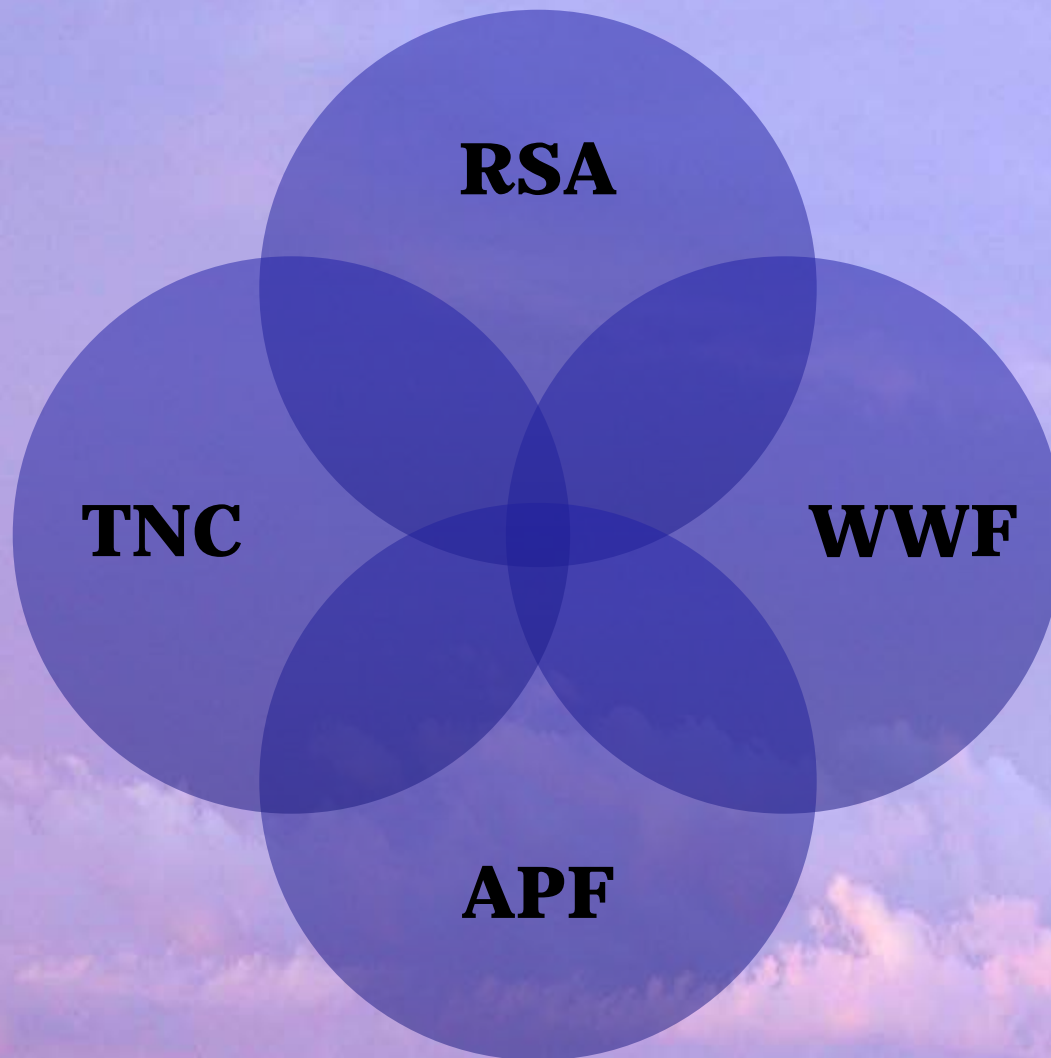
-  Rangeland
-  Deciduous Forest
-  Evergreen Forest
-  Urban
-  Cropland
-  Water
-  Barren

Montana Glaciated Plains

-  Sage Grouse
-  Black-footed Ferret
-  Mountain Plover
-  Grassland Birds
-  Black-tailed Prairie Dogs

-  Rangeland
-  Deciduous Forest
-  Evergreen Forest
-  Urban
-  Cropland
-  Water
-  Barren





**Geographic
Area**

Goals

Strategies

**Natural
Alliances**

Conflict

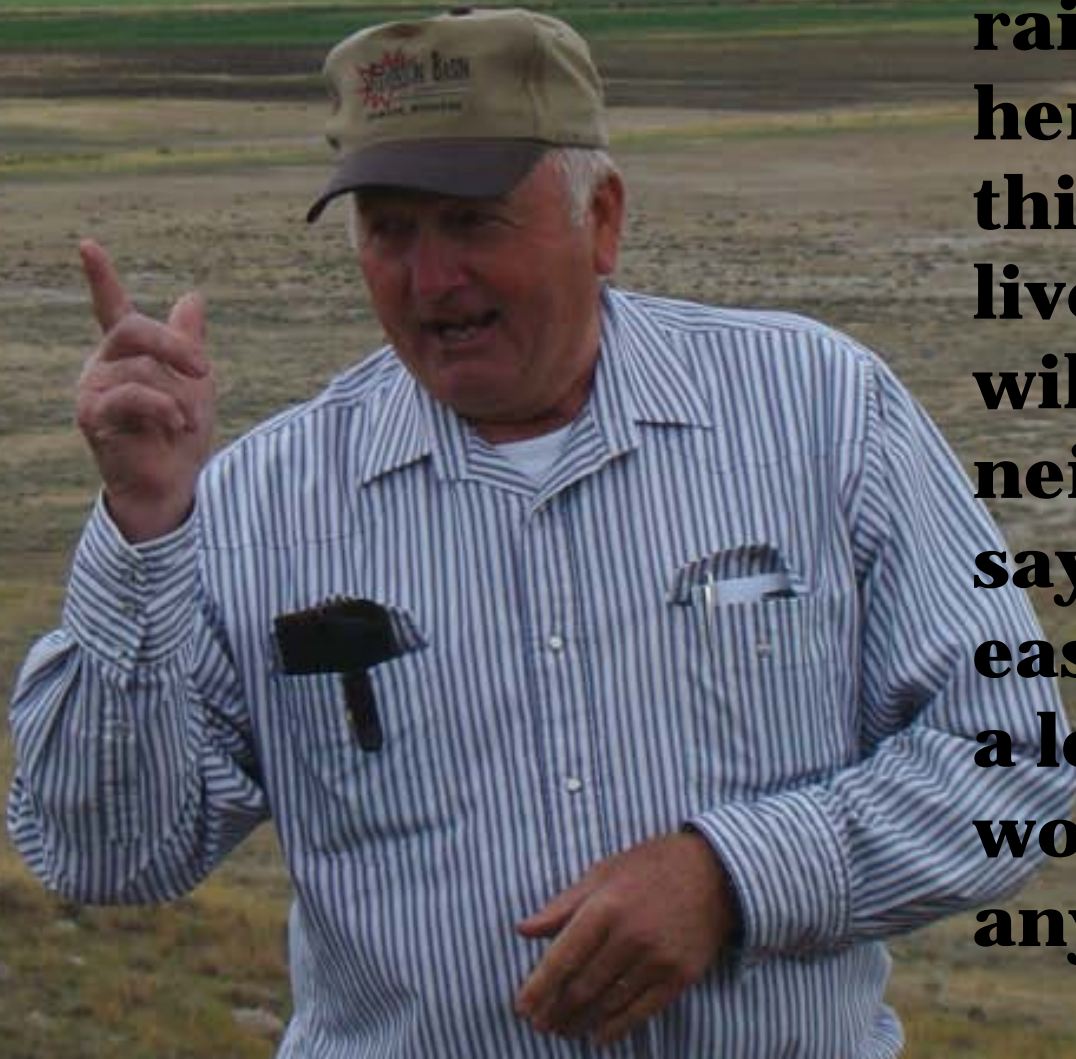
Crisis

Co-Existence

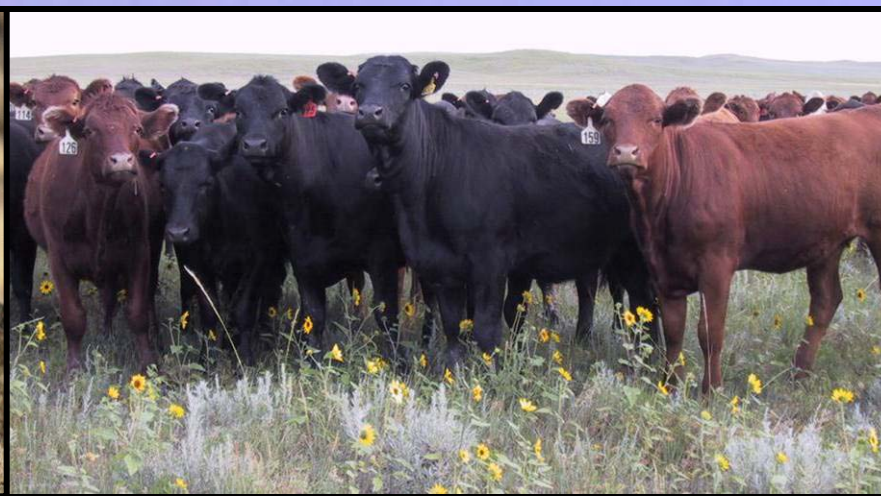
Collaboration

Cooperation





“I thank God for the chance I’ve had to care for this land, to raise my family here, to be part of this community, to live surrounded by wildlife and good neighbors. I’m not saying it’s been easy. Sure it’s been a lot of work, but I wouldn’t trade it for anything. Not ever.”



Ranchers Stewardship Alliance

Our mission is to promote the ecological, social and economic conditions that will sustain the biodiversity and integrity of America's northern mixed-grass prairie for present and future generations.

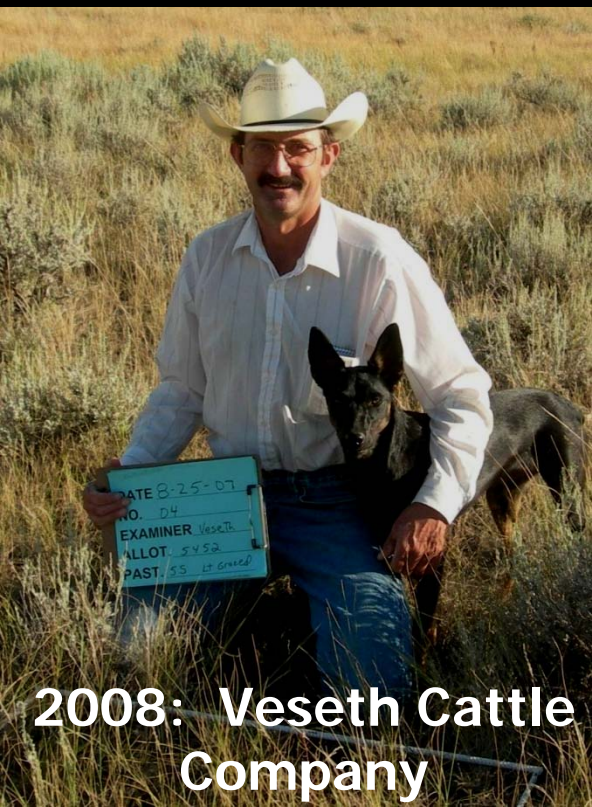


We support cost-effective, sustainable conservation that features private and public cooperation in a working landscape stewarded by profitable family ranches and thriving rural communities.

We employ collaboration, education, innovation and sound science to conserve and enhance the natural resources and pastoral heritage of the northern Great Plains.



**2006: Mule Tracks
Cattle Company**



**2008: Veseth Cattle
Company**

National Cattlemen's Beef Association Environmental Stewardship Awards



2004: Barthelmess Ranch Corporation



Phillips County:

99% weed-free,
and working to
stay that way!





The Nature Conservancy's Matador Ranch Grassbank:



A Tool for Collaborative Conservation of Ranchlands



Matador Grassbank 2003-2009

Conservation Accomplishments

- No sodbusting on 10-16 ranches each year
- Weed prevention on ~300,000 acres annually
- University-certified range management on over 120,000 acres of private lands annually
- ~5,000 acres of prairie dog towns and ~40,000 acres of sage grouse habitat areas protected annually
- *And most importantly, understanding and goodwill!*





BEHAVE, Utah

Blackfoot Challenge, Montana

Carrus Landsystems, Utah

Center for Whole Communities, Vermont

Country Natural Beef, Oregon

Madison Valley Ranchlands Group, Montana

Malpai Borderlands Group, Arizona

Quivira Coalition, New Mexico

Sandhills Task Force, Nebraska

Goals of the RSA

- Engage in **collaborative conservation** and community building.
- Encourage ranching and other traditional livelihoods which will **sustain our native grasslands and rural communities** for generations to come.
- Collect, implement and disseminate **accurate information** on the ecology and sustainable management of the northern grasslands.
- Promote understanding and **respect for ranching** and the critical role it plays in conservation.





2009 NRCS Cooperative Conservation
Partnership Initiative Project:

Environmental Defense Fund
Ranchers Stewardship Alliance
The Nature Conservancy
World Wildlife Fund



A background photograph showing several people, likely ranchers, working with cattle in a grassy field. One person is kneeling and tending to a calf lying on the ground, while others stand nearby. A blue propane tank is visible on the right side of the image.

Irons in the Fire

Cost-effective Conservation

Grassbanking, Cooperative Conservation, Consensus

Prairie Stewardship

Internships, Beginning Rancher Program, Education and Outreach, Active Stewardship and Adaptive Management

Land Protection

Conservation Easements, Management Agreements, Successional Planning





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