

## **Boies Ranch wins a favorable court ruling**

By Larry Hyslop



Robin and Steve Boies

Along with the BLM, the Boies Ranch won a recent victory over Western Watersheds Project (WWP) out of Hailey, Idaho. This story began in 2006, when the Hubbard/Vineyard public land grazing allotment was evaluated for a renewal of the ranch's grazing permit. By 2008 the BLM had issued the first Hubbard/Vineyard Decision. That decision was remanded back to BLM for a rewrite after WWP pulled out of settlement negotiations mandated by the Administrative Law Judge.

In 2008, the BLM published a second multiple use decision on the Hubbard/Vineyard. As part of the permit renewal, certain range improvements to control cattle movement and help disperse cattle through spring developments, were planned. WWP appealed the second decision. After review, the judge granted WWP a stay to stop any range improvements, but upheld the rest of the Hubbard/Vineyard decision.

Thus began a legal tug of war, although the BLM was the major party in the court case, Boies Ranch entered the case as an intervener. The judge had all three parties submit a series of supporting documents and on January 31 of this year, the judge issued a summary decision resoundingly affirming the BLM decision and revoking WWP's stay.

Jeff Moore is the Assistant Field Manager for Renewable Resources in the BLM's Tuscarora Field Office. For most of this process, he was the Rangeland Management Specialist with responsibility for the Boies Ranch. Without knowing precise amounts, Jeff said it is fair to say the BLM spent huge amounts of money and time on this lawsuit. Redoing the allotment evaluation and EA was a three-year process. BLM personnel also had to create piles of legal documents.

It was a long, frustrating process for Robin and Steve Boies, one that cost them substantial time, energy and finances. "It was difficult because there were range improvements on the allotment that we couldn't move on," explained Steve, "not to mention the waste of time, money and human capital for both us and the BLM."

“It felt like a big weight coming off my shoulders when I heard of the good news. It said to me that the last eleven years working with our collaborative process was worth all the effort. The team made a difference” Robin explained. The ranch is part of the Shoesole Resource Management Group (theshoesole.org). The Shoesole team supported Robin and Steve during the difficult process and some members wrote declarations used in the litigation supporting the BLM decision.

WWP could still continue the argument. They have seven years to file a case in federal court, but Robin and Steve are celebrating none the less.

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