



Dear Friends,

I have been asked to write the opening letter for our Malpai Borderlands Group annual newsletter this year and tell a little about how ranching in our area along the U.S. – Mexico border has changed during the last 16 years since the MBG was started.

Some things don't change that much. We are always concerned about receiving adequate rainfall to furnish enough forage and water for our livestock and are also concerned with the fluctuating beef market when we are ready to sell our cattle. The biggest change that I've seen in the last few years has been caused by the increase in illegal immigration and drug smuggling. Not only the increase in the amount of human traffic passing through our ranches, but also the kind of the people that are coming into this country by the thousands. This traffic disrupts the feeding patterns of both livestock and wildlife, which makes good ranch management much more difficult than in past years.

This whole community suffered a huge loss when rancher and Malpai board member, Rob Krentz, was killed in March by a person believed to have made his escape south into Mexico. This tragic event consumed the thoughts and actions of everyone in our area, and much of the nation, as we wondered why and how this could happen. Rob was a wonderful person and friend to all of us and he will never be forgotten. We have set up a Rob Krentz Scholarship Fund that will go to help some student receive a college education.

This event brought about the biggest change in our area because it has changed the way that we carry on our lives, and it has affected the way that we manage our ranches. We no longer can afford to view the strangers that we see crossing our land with the trust that we once had. We now lock up our homes and vehicles even when we are close by. We view most unknown human activity with suspicion.

The national attention these events have brought to this area has resulted in visits from people in political or law enforcement positions who are trying to help us find solutions to our problems. We've tried to show these folks, either on mule-back or in vehicles, portions of the border that would help locate good surveillance points and we have suggested ways for better communications and cooperation between agencies. We appreciate the help and concern these folks have shown and offer a special thanks to the Arizona and New Mexico Cattle Growers for their efforts and support for the border counties.

Yes, there have been some negative changes, but other things in the Malpai Group's 16th year are good. Most of the Borderlands has received good rains this summer and our feed prospects are good to excellent. The cattle market has reached an all time high, at least for a short time - we hope it stays up. Who knows what the next few years will bring, but you can bet we'll still be ranching and caring for the open spaces in this area and thanking the Lord that we are able to live and work in this wonderful country.

The Malpai Borderlands Group will undoubtedly face a few more challenges along the way but we will carry on with our problem solving approach, and hope that you folks will continue to support our efforts to sustain the open space nature of our land. Many of our financial supporters have come upon hard times themselves, but many still support what we are trying to achieve. We certainly understand this is a difficult time and really appreciate the support we receive. We cannot accomplish this without your help and we sincerely thank you for your wonderful cooperation and financial backing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warner Glenn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Warner Glenn

MALPAI GROUP GOAL STATEMENT

Our goal is to restore and maintain the natural processes that create and protect a healthy, unfragmented landscape to support a diverse, flourishing community of human, plant and animal life in our borderlands region. Together, we will accomplish this by working to encourage profitable ranching and other traditional livelihoods which will sustain the open space nature of our land for generations to come.

ACCREDITATION WITH THE LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

In 2009, the Board of Directors of the Malpai Borderlands Group made a decision to begin the long process of getting accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance. The Board believes that the voluntary accreditation of land trusts is preferable to further government regulation and wishes to support this private effort. Furthermore, by going through this process, it is a great way for our organization to evaluate the way we work. The Malpai Borderlands Group has always strived to be efficient and to carry out its work in a lawful and ethical manner. Assessment by a third party is a great way to evaluate whether or not we are living up to those standards and to identify areas that need improvement.

In January the Malpai Group completed a Guided Organizational Assessment of our organization. This effort was facilitated by land trust consultant Donna Erickson and is the first step toward accreditation. The assessment covers 88 specific practices in the categories of organizational strength and land transactions. The process also directs the Malpai board and staff to identify the organization's greatest strengths and its greatest challenges in both categories and list steps to be taken to address those challenges.

We are very pleased that we scored highly in almost all of the practices that were evaluated in the assessment. We are now focused hard in a couple of areas where there is still work to be done in order to get up to speed. These include backing up and safely storing our important files and putting our financial procedures into written form. At this point, we feel we are well on our way to our goal of having the Malpai Borderlands Group fully accredited by the end of next year.



ROBERT N. KRENTZ

The year 2010, unfortunately, will always be remembered here as the year when we lost our good friend, colleague and Malpai Borderlands Group board member Rob Krentz. On March 27, while checking livestock and wildlife waters in one of the pastures on his ranch, Rob was shot, apparently without provocation, by an unknown person. Tracks of the killer went into Mexico. The area where Rob's body was found has been part of a corridor that has been used by drug smugglers. It appears that it may have been a case of Rob simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Those of us who live here know that Rob was in the right place – on his ranch, doing what he was supposed to do. We were and are shocked, outraged and saddened by his loss. However, the fact that something horrible happened here did not surprise us. Rob himself had predicted that such a thing was likely to occur to someone here and we had all been asking for more enforcement for this neglected part of the border. It took the murder of one of us to finally get it.

Much has been written and broadcast about the way that Rob Krentz died. Not as much has been written about the way he lived. Rob epitomized what the Malpai Borderlands Group is about. If any one thing could be said to characterize Rob, it was his generosity. He had a hard time saying no whenever asked to lend a hand and often went out of his way to help others when he saw the need, asked or not. This generosity extended to strangers as well as to friends and neighbors. Rob was a religious man and he really believed in being "thy brother's keeper". He was also strongly dedicated to the ranching tradition and to the stewardship that has kept the Krentz Ranch going for over 100 years. The Krentz family demonstrated their commitment to the goals of the Malpai Borderlands Group

by conveying a conservation easement on their ranch to the Malpai Group in 2003. That means that their beautiful ranch which runs from the Chiricahua Mountains into the heart of the San Bernardino Valley, will never be subdivided.



Rob Krentz had another passion besides ranching. A graduate of the University of Arizona, he believed very strongly in the importance of education. Rob saw all three of his children attend college (two graduated from New Mexico State University) and he sat on the school board for the one-room school in Apache, Arizona for over two decades. If there was an FFA field day, a 4H competition, or anything involving kids and education going on, no one was ever surprised to see Rob involved. He also believed in education being a life-long endeavor. Rob was a recent graduate of Project CENTRL, the Center for Rural Leadership, and he demonstrated his leadership by serving as President of the Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers Association and as Chairman of the Whitewater Draw Natural Resource Conservation District, in addition to his service to the Malpai Borderlands Group. It is fitting that the Malpai Borderlands Group has chosen to honor the memory of Rob Krentz by establishing a scholarship that bears his name.

The Rob Krentz Memorial Scholarship will be given annually to help further the education of a students from high schools in the Malpai Borderlands region who demonstrate outstanding promise in subjects related to native rangeland conservation. Donations may be made to the Scholarship Fund either by mail: Malpai Borderlands Group, P.O. Drawer 3536, Douglas, Arizona, 85608, or by logging onto our website at MalpaiBorderlandsGroup.org.



NEW BOARD MEMBERS IN 2010

Carl Edminster

Carl is retired from a 38 year career with the U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. His last position was as Program Manager for the Station's Forests and Woodlands Ecosystem Research Program. Prior to that, Carl was the Team Leader for the Southwestern Borderlands Ecosystem Management research unit in collaboration with the Malpai Borderlands Group and Project Leader for the Fuels management research units in the Flagstaff Station. He began his career as a Forestry Technician, became Research Forester, and then Project Leader for the Subalpine and Montane Forests research unit. Carl was a member of the Arizona Governor's Forest Health Advisory Council and the Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership. Carl lives in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Frank Robert Krentz

Frank was born and raised on the family ranch in Southeastern Arizona, the son of Rob and Sue Krentz. He attended grade school at Apache, Arizona, and graduated from Animas, New Mexico, High School. A fifth generation rancher who is trying to encourage support for the beef industry, Frank Krentz continues to work and live on the ranch that his family has owned for over a hundred years. Throughout school Frank strived to take on challenges and to work with others and showed that he had the characteristics and charisma to bring out the best in people. Whether it was captain of the football team, president of his FFA chapter, or vice president of his student council, Frank has always been a leader who is willing to face challenges. While at New Mexico State, Frank received his Bachelors in Ag Business and Economics with honors, and went on to receive his Masters in Ag Business. In addition to the MBG board, Frank currently serves on the board of directors of the Whitewater Draw NRC and the Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers Association.

Dr. Raymond M. Turner

Ray has supported our work as a board member and researcher for many years. Ray has decided to step down as a regular member of our board, but we will continue to draw on his knowledge and experience as an emeritus board member. He has studied the plant ecology of the Sonoran Desert region since the 1950's, particularly patterns of change in our natural communities. Ray has been a leader in the use of historic photographs to understand landscape changes since his ground-breaking book of repeat photography *The Changing Mile* was published in 1965. Ray is continuing his search for old photos, and exploring the country to repeat them, with energy and enthusiasm that we all aspire to.

THE EFFECTS OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS: LAND, LEVERAGE, AND LEARNING IN MIXED PUBLIC-PRIVATE RANGELANDS

Nathan F. Sayre, Department of Geography, University of California-Berkeley

The use of conservation easements to protect wildlife habitat and open space on private lands has increased dramatically since 1990, especially in the Southwest. Not surprisingly, there is also growing scrutiny of the effectiveness of conservation easements, and some skepticism that they are an adequate or worthwhile means of protecting the environment. Stimulated by questions from a foundation which supports the Malpai Group, I began a study to evaluate the effects and effectiveness of conservation easements held by the Malpai Group. The study is based on interviews with ranch families who have completed easements and some that have not, as well as with employees of the many state and federal agencies that manage land and other resources in the area.

There is an obvious difficulty in the charge to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation easements: they are intended to prevent change, not cause it. How do you measure the absence of change? It is difficult to demonstrate "what would have happened" without the easements. The point of Malpai's easements is, first and foremost, to prevent subdivision and a change in land use to residential development. In this the easements have all been successful so far.

The results of my study have led to the somewhat unexpected conclusion that conservation easements may influence how people think about, understand, and make decisions regarding the land they own in ways that are highly relevant to conservation and supported by the latest scientific knowledge about semiarid rangelands. Indeed, they may achieve exactly what decades of other measures have failed to achieve: enduring, effective reductions in the number of livestock ranchers *expect* to graze on their public and private lands. This is not a result that was expected; Malpai Group easements say nothing about livestock management, but in 6 out of 11 cases they have been instrumental in inducing voluntary stocking rate reductions of 30-67 percent.

Malpai's easements are unique in containing a clause that links the easements' protection of private land to the ranchers' continued leasehold to graze on state and federal lands. If a rancher loses his or her grazing leases for reasons beyond his or her control, the easement may be removed from the ranch's private lands by mutual agreement of the rancher and the MBG. I hypothesize that this clause has increased *in both directions* the leverage that ranchers and public lands agencies can exercise on each other, holding both parties to a higher standard of management performance and cooperation than would otherwise occur. By eliminating subdivision as a land use option on private land, MBG's easements realign the incentives of private ranchers toward long-term stewardship

of public and private range alike. And by keeping the specter of subdivision in the realm of possibility, they also affirm the fact that the public lands are interdependent with the private lands by whatever criteria of ecological well being one might apply. In short, the easements might be expected to have the effect of putting all parties, so to speak, on their best behavior: ready to cooperate and to learn.

For example, one rancher is explicit in affirming that she learned new management practices as a result of a conservation easement: not because it required her to do so, but through the processes it involved. The Malpai Group conducted monitoring on their ranch, and the resulting conversations opened up new perspectives on fire and grasses. It appears that being involved with conservation easements can help people learn in ways that regulations cannot, precisely because they are voluntary and adaptable to the social, economic and ecological variability found on rangelands. My results suggest that the important effects of easements go well beyond merely the legal contractual obligations, but also influence relationships and processes whereby people change their “mental models” of the land.

COOPERATIVE GRASSLAND RESTORATION PROJECTS *Don Decker, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Peter Warren*

Every year the Malpai Borderlands Group works with Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist landowners with grassland restoration and ranch improvement projects which are designed to sustain the productivity of our native grasslands and to improve conditions for livestock and wildlife. Sometimes each of these projects seems small in relation to the land management needs across our 800,000 acre region, but the cumulative effect of years of work is making a difference.

For the last five years we have worked in the San Bernardino Valley to place small rock erosion control structures throughout the watershed. This watershed improvement work has involved four ranches and has been supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Arizona State Land Department. Each structure is small, but we have now built over 3,000 of them along more than fifteen miles of drainage channels. In the bottom of the valley, the fifteen-foot deep gully that was cut decades ago where Black Draw crosses the San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge has stopped down-cutting and is starting to fill in. It appears that our work is beginning to contribute to this recovery.

Another example is brush control work to reverse the encroachment of mesquite and other shrubs into the grasslands. This year we helped landowners complete three projects using a combination of mechanical and

chemical brush control to improve grass conditions on almost 1,000 acres. Each of these projects helps restore grass cover and stabilize the soil, so that year by year grassland conditions will improve, benefitting livestock and watershed management.

This year we are starting a fire planning project with the support of the State Forestry Departments in Arizona and New Mexico which, as background for a regional fire plan, will evaluate land cover changes across the entire Malpai area using satellite data. For the first time, this will give us a region-wide look at how the land is responding to the work we have done over the last fifteen years. Although we can't predict exactly what this study will show, we expect to learn something about what factors contribute to the resilience of the land to the recent drought which will guide our work in the future.

FIRE REGIMES IN THE U.S-MEXICO BORDERLANDS *Jed Meunier Graduate Program in Ecology, Colorado State University*

For the past several years I have been fortunate enough to conduct my dissertation research in a very special place; the U.S-Mexico Borderlands. These borderlands are what fire ecologists term “pyrophytic” which literally means “fire loving” and by definition include fire adapted landscapes. However, there are few places in the Rocky Mountain region where fire has been employed as a management tool



R. Knight and R. Ruiz in the Sierra Pan Duro

so extensively as in the Malpai region. It seems a rare example of fire adapted human and plant communities working in concert.

My dissertation includes fire-regime comparisons across the border between Mexico and the U.S. where my fieldwork has been in the northern-most Sierra Madre, just south of the international border. In Mexico, attitudes and policy regarding wildfire favor fire suppression; however, few resources are available to fight fires. In addition, other factors, such as unstable land policies and remoteness, have delayed or in some cases prevented land-uses such as logging and grazing. My research utilizes this combination of factors and takes advantage of divergent land-use histories on either side of the border to disentangle climatic and land-use drivers of fire-regimes.

I have collected over 800 tree-cores and more than 170 fire-scar samples (partial tree sections) from study sites in the Sierra San Luis and Sierra Pan Duro spanning elevation and land-use history gradients. These data allow me to reconstruct and compare tree recruitment and fire events as they relate to climate, both among sites in the northern Sierra and to adjacent mountain ranges in the U.S. Southwest for the past 300-400 years. Of particular importance is an understanding of these relationships for the 20th century, a period of profound changes in both climate and fire.

While policies in Mexico may not be “pyrophytic” the landscape certainly is. My study sites in the Sierra San Luis and Sierra Pan Duro demonstrate frequent fires for the past 300 years including at least one fire in every decade save one (1990’s) since 1730. What is interesting to note is the preponderance of fires in the 20th century with the last widespread fires occurring in the year 2000. While I am just now completing the time consuming process of cross-dating my samples and have much analysis and writing ahead of me, I find myself reflecting on my time working in the borderlands. My research is possible due to the differences between two sides of the international border. I think about the irony of Mexico’s fire suppression policies and frequent contemporary fires, and the Malpai communities’ diligence toward restoring fire following a history of fire suppression. It seems worthwhile to try and find ways for convergent land-uses to transcend the border, to learn from our past mistakes and perhaps avoid our fire management mistakes in Mexico.

ARGENTINA GRASSLAND EXCHANGE

Three years ago the director of The Nature Conservancy’s Patagonia grasslands conservation program, Carlos Fernandez, came to our Ranching Today workshop. He saw so many similarities between our work and what they are trying to do in Argentina that this year he arranged an exchange between their partners and Malpai. The exchange was organized around two key events: one, the Argentina land trust Fundacion Neuquen, just hired their first executive director, Mike Eddy; and second, two major land owners agreed to donate conservation easements to the Fundacion Neuquen in the Rio Calefufu/Collon Cura conservation area in Neuquen Province, Argentina. Last April Peter Warren spent a week in Argentina to help conduct a week-long workshop in land trust operations, including many ideas from the Malpai Group. Then in September, Mike and his wife were able to come to this year’s Ranching Today where we were able to share, and learn, ideas from the experiences we have had in trying to protect working landscapes. Mike Eddy summed up why this means so much to all of us:

“For me, being part of the 4th generation of a ranching family, to see a group of ranchers working together and living on the land was a unique opportunity, and I am sure it

will be of great help for the work our Foundation is doing in Argentina. Although we are in different latitudes, I found many similarities between your grasslands and the conditions where your group is ranching, with our situation in Patagonia. We also are exposed to threats of different kinds, and it is becoming very difficult to continue the same way of life our parents lived. We are convinced that if we don’t get involved it will be impossible for the next generation to do it. We hope to be able to replicate some of the work you have done so successfully, and are very grateful for your hospitality and generosity.”

This kind of exchange is important because there are many



Ranching Today visitors

threats and challenges that are shared between grassland conservation efforts, whether in Arizona, Argentina, Mongolia or Kenya, and the

experience we develop in one area often translates directly to innovative strategies in other parts of the world.

AN OUTSIDER’S PERSPECTIVE

Kyle Buckingham



As a recent college graduate, sometime around May of this year I decided that I needed to get out my comfortable Seattle bubble and embark on an adventure. So after talking to a number of professors and friends who were doing volunteer work around the U.S., I narrowed my options down to areas on the U.S./Mexican border. My original intention for coming to Arizona was to see how international immigration interacted with the local environment. A friend I had known in school was working with No More Deaths, a humanitarian aid group that aids migrants in the desert near Tucson, and recommended that I spend a few weeks with them. I then contacted a professor from school who gave me the email of the Malpai Borderlands Group and in a matter of days Wendy Glenn had figured out how I could come volunteer for a couple of weeks.

My experience at both organizations varied drastically but each helped to shed light on the same border situation. The five weeks that I spent at No More Deaths included living in a tent, sleeping on the ground, waking up at 4:30 a.m. to the sound of coyotes and then trekking 10-15 miles a day through the desert heat. At camp there was no running water

or electricity, and everything I ate or drank was always hot or at best lukewarm. Over the five weeks I spent at camp I became sour at the migrant trash on the trails, the border patrol ATV tracks, and the ugly border wall, but I became attached to the incredible sense of community that held the camp together. I'm still amazed that strangers from opposite sides of the world could come to camp and tackle problems of life and death together without any prior experience.

This feeling of community was echoed over the next two weeks that I spent with the Malpai Group. Wendy and Warner Glenn were some of the most hospitable people I've ever met. Each day I got three square meals and a comfortable bed. Life was good! But after two weeks of organizing files and occasionally taking horseback rides with Warner, I once again found myself getting frustrated at the border problems that threaten the livelihood of the community and its environment, on both sides of the border. The toll of drug trafficking was noticeably much higher on the residents of Douglas than to the west where No More Deaths operated, and this was reflected in a thread of stories of theft and vandalism that plagued the countryside. But the ranchers of the Malpai area share a very close bond and through the strength of their community they overcome incredible difficulties in their stride.

All in all, I'm extremely grateful for the patience of Wendy and Warner and many others along the way who helped me realize this opportunity. In a month or two I will be heading to Wuhan, China to teach English to elementary school students and I hope I can learn as much from them as I have from the communities in Arizona.



Bobcats can't plan ahead – you can
 Leave a Legacy for the Future—
 Include the Malpai Group in your estate plans!
 Contact us to find out how simple it can be to leave a bequest that will protect our working wilderness for generations to come.



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These foundations are among those that have helped us since Malpai Borderlands Group began:

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The Malpai Borderlands Group sincerely appreciates the support received from all of these Foundations through the years.



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