



Up Front

*Twenty years
in the turbulence.*

By C.J. Hadley

Years ago, Montana logger Bruce Vincent said: “If we’re going to figure out how to provide food, clothing and shelter for 10 billion people, then we bloody well better have our smart kids back on our farms, our ranches and in our logging jobs. It’s going to take some pretty smart kids doing some pretty creative things to provide for that mass of humanity without destroying the planet.”

Bruce is right. And for 20 years, *RANGE* has, indirectly, been trying to encourage rural youth not to scream for mercy and head for town. We admit to covering awful tales—of takings, overregulation, outrageous behavior and corruption. We have dealt with power-hungry bureaucrats, omnipotent politicians and too many liars. Bloodsucking nonprofits and some environmental litigators have destroyed rural lives based on flimsy and peculiar rationales, lost their cases in court, and then been paid high fees for losing—by American taxpayers. It’s close to profane that ranchers and farmers have been traumatized, brutalized, and deprived of money they don’t have to win frivolous cases, then had to chip in more money for the losers’ lawyers.

But there has been good news, too. We shared inspiring stories about people who care for country and critters while complaining the least and producing the most. And there were countless tales of success in spite of the onslaught.

Our new book, “Grit: Fighting for Western Land, Life and Liberty,” celebrates time already spent. Its 256 pages include compelling tales and special reports from *RANGE*’s two decades of reporting from the front lines. There are plenty of photos, even though “Grit” is not primarily a picture book. It is filled with detailed and well-researched stories of western endurance, strength of character and good management that you will not find elsewhere.

“Grit” covers conservation, water, wildlife, forestry, takings and enviros—issues that have already changed the West. It is painful at times but also energizing, because without these blazes of western passion, sparks of hope, and long rides in open country,

RANGE and I couldn’t have lasted so long.

Like cowboys, this new book pulls no punches. “Grit: Fighting for Western Land, Life and Liberty” will be available in mid-December. Please buy it for yourself and a friend. (We need to pay the printing bill.) If possible, sponsor a book for your local library or school. Retail price is \$40, but for friends of *RANGE* it’s only \$28 per book. And to help most—if you call 1-800-RANGE-4-U, it’s 50 percent off for 20-book/full-case buyers. (We can send a gift card in time for Christmas, with the book about two weeks behind that—unless you toss in \$10 extra per book for priority shipping.)



This extraordinary record of what’s happened in less than a generation has affected us all. What happens next might tilt the American West our way (in favor of sustainable resource production and new money to the Treasury), or theirs (in favor of nonuse, imports, and a larger national debt).

In the meantime, we are looking for Bruce Vincent’s smart kids to come back to our farms and ranches and to our logging jobs to start doing those pretty creative things that will save us and the planet. I don’t know about you, but after 20 years in these trenches I know those kids have what it takes to do it—and that’s stamina, talent, imagination and grit. ■

P.S. RANGE recently won a few awards from the Nevada Press Association. First place for Best Investigative Story: Tim Findley for “Dust Devils.” One judge said: “Enthralling and well researched. I was absorbed by the story.” First place for Best Overall Design: John Bardwell. “One of the best cowboy reads around.” And first place for Best Local Column: C.J. Hadley. “Great style and originality.” We thank NPA and the judges for the strokes.

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RANGE is an award-winning quarterly devoted to the issues that threaten the West, its people, lifestyles, lands and wildlife. No stranger to controversy, *RANGE* is a leading forum for opposing viewpoints in the search for solutions that will halt the depletion of a national resource—the American cowboy.

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