

# Producer Stories

**Russell Reid**

**2009**

**Reid Land & Cattle LLC - Quincy, CA**

## From Upper Feather River Watershed Farmers and Ranchers



Reid Land & Cattle LLC is located in American Valley of Plumas County and is owned and operated by Russell and Beth Reid. Along with their children Tim and Katie, the family has worked together since 1984 to improve the resources and productivity of this unique small mountain ranch along Greenhorn Creek.

The Reid family has helped preserve the open landscapes and heritage of ranching in this rural community by integrating the small neighboring ranch acres and meadow lands in the valley, through grazing leases, as part of their cow-calf operation. They have found a niche market by utilizing embryo transplant technology assisting producers in raising and marketing Angus and Hereford Seedstock. It is an economically sound solution for both the Reid's and the seedstock producers.

*“If you take care of the grass, it takes care of the livestock”*

The ranch also raises top quality meadow & alfalfa hay. A summer rotational grazing system is implemented on the native meadows to alternate livestock grazing with hay production each year for a given field. Russell has found this to be a good combination to enhance the water resources and forage production on these small mountain-meadow operations.

Grass production and riparian health have improved since the implementation of these practices. The family has increased the carrying-capacity of the ranch by 40% which greatly improves the economic viability and helps ensure the future of one of the remaining working landscapes in this scenic mountain community.

### *Management Highlights*

- ◆ Utilizing rest and rotation systems to maximize forage production for livestock grazing and hay crops
- ◆ Install fencing to protect and manage sensitive riparian areas and allowing rotational grazing
- ◆ Install tailwater control structures to improve water use efficiency and reduce tailwater returns to Greenhorn Creek
- ◆ Harvesting of top quality planted fescue, clover and timothy and native grass hay contributes to the increased carrying-capacity of the ranch



University of California Cooperative Extension (<http://ucanr.org/waterquality>)

Upper Feather River Watershed Group (<http://www.ufrwg.org>)

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# A Leader in Local Agriculture Water Quality and Conservation

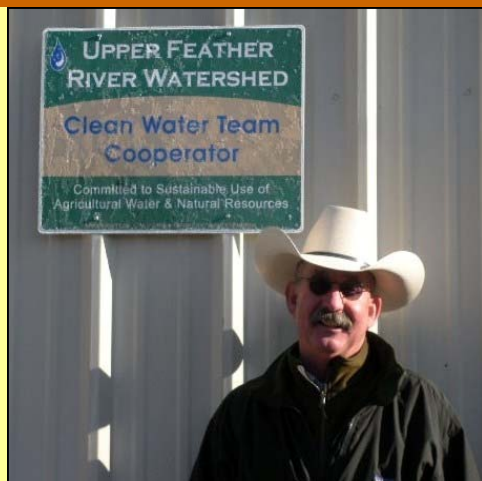
In addition to his ranching operation, Russell is a recognized community leader in numerous local organizations including the Plumas-Sierra Cattlemen's Association, Plumas-Sierra Farm Bureau, Chairman of the Upper Feather River Watershed Group and the Agriculture Department Chair at Feather River Community College in Quincy.

*"I have been fortunate enough to be in the unique position to contribute to the improvement of our ranch's water and meadows by combining my experience as an ag educator and as a rancher."*

Water quality regulations have become one of the newest challenges encountered by California farmers and ranchers. No strangers to challenges, the Reid Ranch and other producers in the watershed organized to address this state-mandated regulatory program.



The Reid Ranch was one of several recipients of the **Clean Water Team Cooperator Awards** presented by the Plumas-Sierra University of California Cooperative Extension following a funded three year agriculture water quality monitoring and ranch management study program.



## *A Leader in Agriculture Water Issues*

As Chairman of the landowner led Upper Feather River Watershed Group, Russell is an active coalition leader in the Irrigated Lands Program that focuses on farm and ranch water quality issues.



As an educator, Russell believes there is real value in providing education and outreach events such as local ranch field days and Ag workshops. These events are great opportunities for neighbors to get together to share experiences and knowledge; not only on water issues but for all the newest technology available to the livestock industry.