



THE PITCHFORK RANCH

MEETEETSE, WY
\$67,000,000



BEN ANSON
PROPERTIES WEST REAL ESTATE



96,115 TOTAL ACRES

13,886 DEEDED ACRES

31,600 STATE LEASE ACRES

5,645 BLM ACRES

44,984 FOREST SERVICE ACRES

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SALES ASSOCIATE

PROPERTIES WEST REAL ESTATE

307-921-2926

BENANSON307@GMAIL.COM

Location and Weather

The Pitchfork is located 17
miles west of Meeteetse, WY

47 Miles S from Cody, WY

153 Miles SW from Billings, MT

475 Miles NW from Denver, CO

Average Temperatures (High/Low)

Jan- 35 / 7

Mar- 44 / 15

May- 60 / 31

July- 78 / 44

Sep- 68 / 34

Nov- 42 / 14

Annual Precipitation: 14 inches



Overview

As someone who has worked on the Pitchfork Ranch for the entirety of my professional career and managed the Ranch for the past four years, it is my great honor to offer this exceptional property to the public. The Pitchfork, founded in 1878, has a deep history in northwest Wyoming and a reputation that spans the country.

A working cattle ranch at its core, it's rare to see a contiguous piece of land this size on the market. The ranch encompasses 96,115 total acres. There are 13,886 deeded acres on the ranch that are dispersed amongst State and BLM leased acreage. This land connects to two Forest Service permits which amount to 44,984 acres. State land makes up 31,600 acres and BLM ground is the remaining 5,645 acres.

It is said that a cow won't travel more than a mile from water, and on a ranch like this it is almost impossible to find anywhere that is more than a mile from water.

Additionally, abundant springs on the ranch stay open year around. The Pitchfork headquarters is spring fed, with one line for house water and one line for yard water.

Extensive work has been done to maintain the facilities that the Pitchfork has to offer. Eight houses are located at ranch headquarters, along with quality working facilities and several barns. The Pitchfork is one of the only properties on the upper Greybull River plumbed with natural gas, to keep utility bills at a manageable cost.



Being sold as a turnkey operation, the ranch is fully stocked with a quality cow herd and all the equipment to operate. Located in a high desert and mountain environment, the cows have been culled extensively to be able to thrive here. Last year, with no hay supplementation, both the steers and heifer calves weaned at over 600 pounds. Emphasis has been put on weaning weight in these cattle as well as carcass merit.

With over 1,100 acres under irrigation, 660 acres under 2021 Zimmatic pivots, the ranch can not only feed its cattle but can operate as a hay enterprise as well. With all the irrigated ground being over 6,400 feet in elevation, grass meadows best suit the environment. All of the fields are planted in a well-established orchard grass, alfalfa, and meadow brome mix.

The Pitchfork started marketing its beef directly to consumers in 2021 and has built a loyal clientele. This provides much needed cash flow in parts of the year when most cow/calf operations see little income. The ranch also started a horse sale in 2022 with the intentions of bringing people to the ranch to promote the beef program. Through the years this sale has blossomed into one of the premier ranch horse sales in the United States.

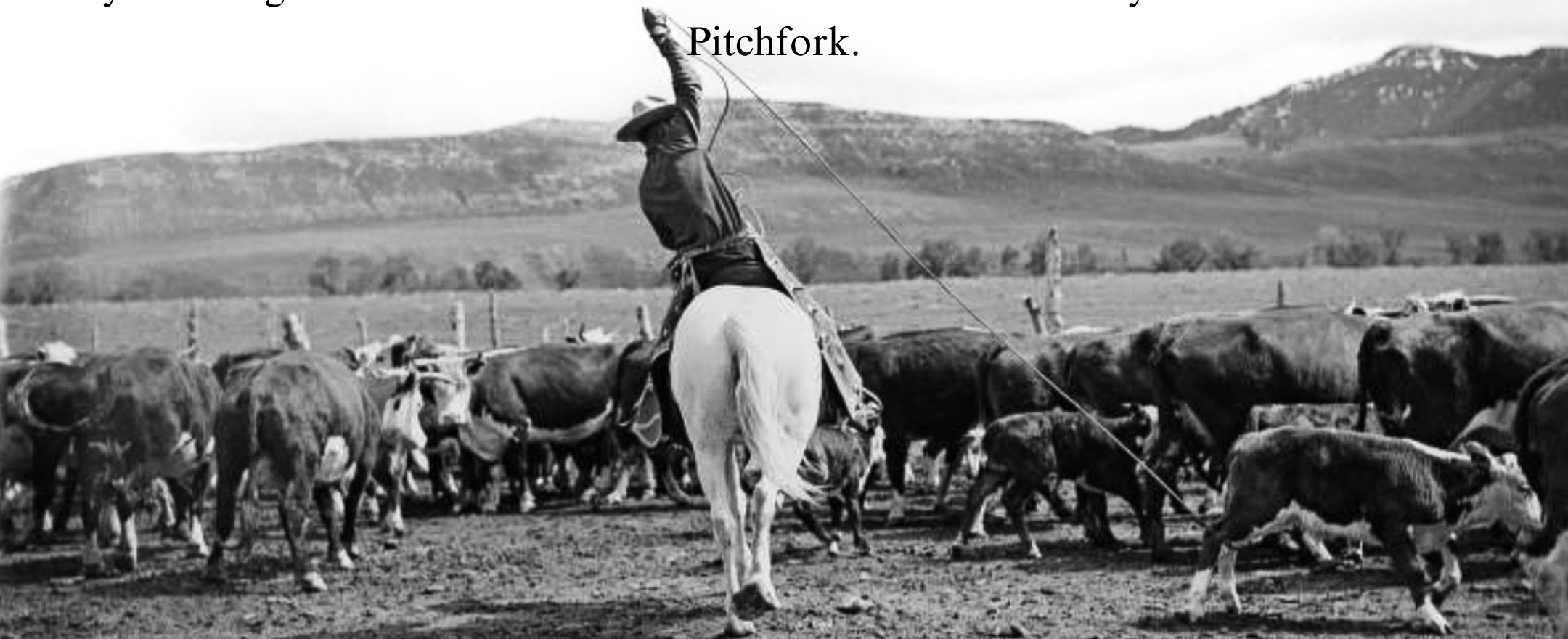
The Pitchfork Ranch has an active and growing social media presence with over 85k engaged followers. I would encourage anyone interested to look up these accounts. For more information about the sale of the Pitchfork Ranch please reach out to me and a more extensive description can be sent.



History

The Pitchfork Ranch was founded by Otto Franc in 1878. This makes it one of Wyoming's oldest ranches continuously operating under the same name. After Franc's untimely death, the ranch was sold to L.G. Phelps in the early 1900s. The ranch gained prominence from the 1910s-1940s as the famous western photographer, Charles Belden, married into the Phelps family. The ranches activities were well documented during this time and Belden's pictures of the ranch were featured in many prominent publications. These included Time Magazine, National Geographic, Scribner's, Colliers, The Cattleman, The American Hereford Journal, National Wool Grower, Breeder's Gazette, The Chicago Daily News, Denver Post, and many others.

The ranch stayed in the Phelps family until current ownership purchased the property in 1999. Since that time the Pitchfork has remained prominent in the community and is featured in several local museums. Much more history on the ranch is available through a quick google search, but the hard to find publication "Brand of a Legend" by Bob Edgar and Jack Turnell has the most extensive history available about the Pitchfork.



Cattle

Like many ranches across Wyoming, the Pitchfork ran horned Herford cattle through much of the 1900s. At this time, they also ran sheep on the ranch. The sheep have long been pushed out due to predator issues, but the cattle have evolved genetically. In the 1970s, Saller cattle were introduced to the Pitchfork as a means of limiting brisket disease in the cow herd due to elevation. In 2019 a decision was made to introduce Sim-angus genetics to into the cow herd. As of today, the bull battery at the Pitchfork is predominantly Simmental influenced along with four top notch Hereford bulls. Roughly 65% of the cow herd at the Pitchfork now has Simmental influence as well. All the bulls ran on the Pitchfork have been PAP tested, with many of the cows being PAP tested as well. In 2023 the Pitchfork was blessed with a phenomenal amount of precipitation and both the steer and heifer calves weened at over 600 pounds.

In 2020 the Pitchfork also started a beef marketing program. Some of the best heifers from the Pitchfork herd are selected every year to enter the beef program. These cattle consistently quality grade as prime and choice with a high percentage of yield grade 2s. A middle cut of these cattle was sent to JBS to collect carcass data in the fall of 2023 with 52% grading prime, 74% qualifying as CAB and 68% yield grade 2s. The beef program has built up a clientele amongst the community and is now able to ship nationwide through their partners at Range Market.



Carrying Capacity and Rangeland

The high desert landscape of the Pitchfork provides hearty grasses for cattle to graze on year around. The entrance to the ranch is right at 6,400 feet elevation and is the lowest spot on the property. The summer grazing allotments for cattle often see pairs getting to 11,000 feet elevation. Current management has placed an emphasis on pasture usage and rotation. Through careful monitoring, 2023 is the first year that the cow herd has made it through winter and spring with no hay being fed. That being said, the cattle had available protein all winter and were supplemented with cake to help with pasture distribution.

The Pitchfork is owner rated to carry 1300 cows. The ranch has two Forest Service allotments in the summer, one allotment is for 925 cow/calf pairs from July 10th-August 28th, and the other allotment is for 127 cow/calf pairs from July 1st-September 30th. Outside of these fixed dates the cattle run on a combination of deeded ground along with BLM and state leases. The cattle spend the majority of their life on rangeland but are usually brought in to irrigated meadows in the month leading up to shipping in the fall.



Wildlife, Hunting and Fishing

The Pitchfork is well known for its abundant wildlife. Since the implementation of the Hunt Management Areas by the Wyoming Game and Fish the ranch has been enrolled in the “Access Yes” program. Last year the ranch turned in over 140 landowner coupons, meaning that over 140 deer, antelope, or elk were harvested on deeded lands. The ranch allows for two landowner coupons for each one of these species, with antelope and elk having a choice between two areas. The areas are as follows:



Deer- Area 116
Elk- Area 61 or 62
Antelope- Area 110 or 82



World class animals are taken out of these areas every year, with antlered deer and elk being an especially difficult draw. The Pitchfork not only is home to these animals but provides access to hundreds of thousands of acres where they can be found. The Pitchfork also has a healthy moose population. In addition, the ranch is home to grey wolves, black bears, and mountain lions for trophy game hunting. Ducks and turkeys can be found in abundance as well. Many grizzly bears frequent the property, but there is no season on them yet.

The Pitchfork has gained notoriety with one of the greatest conservation success stories in the US. Through most of the 1900s it was thought that the black footed ferret was extinct. That is until a neighboring rancher's dog showed up with one on their doorstep in 1981. Since that time the Wyoming Game and Fish along with US Fish and Wildlife Services have worked tirelessly to preserve the ferrets. In 2016 the black footed ferret was officially reintroduced to the Pitchfork and have grown in population since that time.

The Pitchfork is also home to the purest strain of Yellowstone cutthroat trout found in the US. The Greybull River and its tributaries provide some of the best fishing in the state for the Yellowstone cutthroat, along with a healthy population of mountain whitefish. The Pitchfork controls access to over 7.5 miles of the Greybull River and has many miles of tributaries that hold fish as well. There are ongoing projects with the Wyoming Game and Fish to keep this fishery pristine while improving irrigation diversions.



Water Rights and Hay Producton

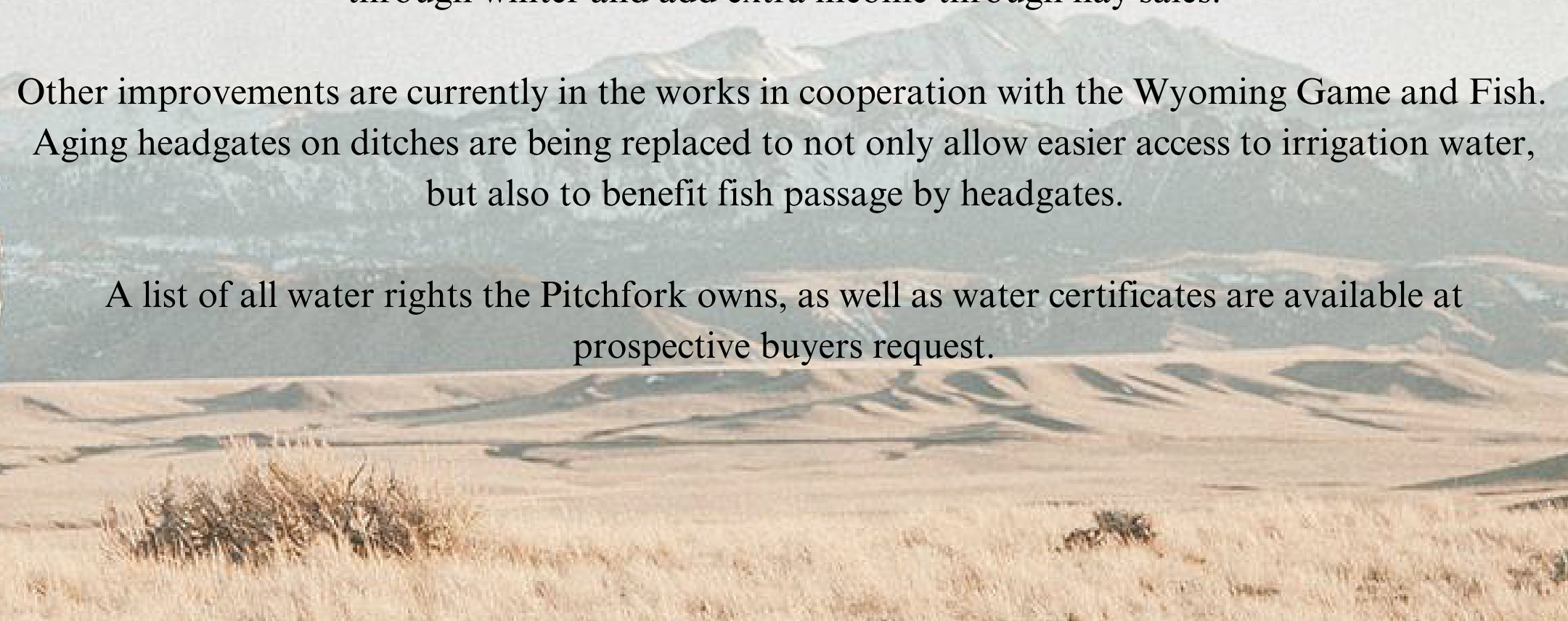
In Wyoming's arid landscape water rights are essential to any agricultural enterprise. The Pitchfork Ranch is fortunate enough to have excellent water rights, with a multitude of territorial water rights as well as stored water rights. In drought years this rarely puts any strain on irrigated ground.

Numerous improvements have been made to the irrigation infrastructure over the years. The most important of these improvements are 7 Zimmatic Pivots that were installed in 2022. These pivots function off one pipeline with a territorial water right feeding the pipeline. Six of the pivots are gravity fed, with the other pivot having a 10hp motor. The pivots can irrigate roughly 660 acres. In 2022 one cutting of hay on the pivots produced 2 tons per acre, in 2023 with fertilizer the pivots produced 3.4 tons per acre in one cutting.

In addition to the pivots, the Pitchfork currently has 448 acres under flood irrigation. With just over 1100 acres in hay production the ranch has been able to keep enough hay to get the cattle through winter and add extra income through hay sales.

Other improvements are currently in the works in cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish. Aging headgates on ditches are being replaced to not only allow easier access to irrigation water, but also to benefit fish passage by headgates.

A list of all water rights the Pitchfork owns, as well as water certificates are available at prospective buyers request.



Pitchfork Inventories

An inventory list will be provided at prospective buyers request. All cattle, feed, and equipment are included in the sale of the ranch.



Conservation Easements

Most deeded acres on the Pitchfork Ranch are in a conservation easement with The Nature Conservancy. These easements allow all ranching activities to continue as usual, but limit development potential or possibility of subdivision. The easements have “building envelopes” attached to them where the owner is allowed 5 acres to build a desired structure. Livestock shelters are allowed without a building envelope.

In 2021 the ranch also entered into a similar agreement with the Farm Service Agency, utilizing their CRP-G program. This agreement lasts until 2036 and pays the ranch \$50,000 annually.

Road and Utility Easements

All the roads on the Pitchfork are private, however there is a public easement with the US Forest Service allowing access to forest service lands. A couple of oil fields have piggy backed onto this easement, however there are road maintenance agreements in place for use of the easement. Outside of the oil activity, timber sales, and one outfitter up the Greybull River, no other commercial activity is permitted over the road easement. The ranch also has utility easements with the power and gas companies.



Pitchfork Horse Sale

The Pitchfork Ranch was well known through the late 1900s for their horse program. They raised many quality ranch horses through this time and had a horse sale on the ranch in the 70s and 80s. Current management decided to revive the horse sale in 2022 with the help of Clark Management. Although the ranch no longer raises its own horses, the employees keep their own string of horses, and they are an integral part of day-to-day operation on the ranch. They felt the importance of revitalizing this tradition and it is now one of the premier ranch horse sales in the country. Along with employee horses, the sale features around 60 consignment horses annually. The current sale is three days long the weekend after Memorial Day each spring. Buyers are encouraged to come camp at the ranch and there is a dinner with Pitchfork beef and live music on Saturday night. Sale day is Sunday and takes place in the horse barn. Buyers are learning to show up early as seating is at a premium come sale day.



Infrastructure

The Pitchfork has 8 homes located at its headquarters. All houses have been kept up to date and lived in. The river house is 3500 square feet and was originally built in 1948. It has been extensively updated with 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. It also has an indoor swimming pool attached to it. The manager's house is a 2600 square foot log home with two bedrooms and two bathrooms, it also has a loft that could be used as an additional bedroom. The owner's house is a 5400 square foot stone house. It features 8 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms. Next to the owner's house is the Carriage house with 2 bedrooms and 2.5 baths upstairs and a three car garage underneath. Adjacent to the owners house there is also the old Pitchfork Post Office which has been converted into one bedroom and one bathroom. There are five manufactured homes at the Pitchfork headquarters all on permanent foundations. Four of these homes have attached garages. They all have three bedrooms and two of them have two bathrooms with the other three having one bathroom.



The ranch has numerous outbuildings. Two log barns build in the 1930s are still used today. The ranch has a heated shop with a grease pit, along with an office and two conference rooms attached. The horse barn has a heated tack room, tie racks and a 45 x 90' riding area. Next to the horse barn is a 50' round pen and a 150 x 250' roping arena. There are also two open faced sheds for equipment storage and an overhead cake bin.

There is a set of working pens at headquarters as well as several horse runs next to the barn. The main set of working pens for the Pitchfork sits about 2 miles east of headquarters. At the pens there is a one room log cabin that runs off a generator and gets used during shipping in the fall. The pens are all built out of 12' powder river panels.

The larger of the two Forest Service allotments has a one room log cabin that is used when cattle are up there in the summer, along with a log tack room.



Ben Anson
Sales Associate
Properties West Real Estate
Cell: 307-921-2926 Office: 307-864-2192
benanson307@gmail.com



Pitchfork Ranch



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