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"Guess what day it is!?"

Happy July 4th!

Looking through all the photos of this last week, I see a common factor; bright sunshine, and lots of dust! It has been very hot, and dry all week.

Only one afternoon was spent at the lake this week though, as everyone was hooked to either horsemanship or heading out and moving cattle. This is a great shot of Wayne hovering over the water. Great shot Jeremy! Other than this afternoon, Jeremy (below) was hooked to the cattle work.



Any chance we could, we rode off road through the trees to stay somewhat in the shade. The cattle were reluctant to move from their shady forts in the shrubs, but once started, they were very good. This guy found a great spot!

Each day we rode through the cattle looking for any health issues. We'd stir them up from their slumber in the deepest darkest shrubs, look them over for any hoof, eye, or any other general problems, and



when they'd check out fine we'd move them to another new patch of fresh grass on the mountain.

"Foot Rot" is what I'm finding, which is an infection between their toes from a puncture wound. Usually at the end of the day was when we'd run into them, and then the ride was on! One steer to be moved out of the mountains to be loaded into a trailer isn't very easy. The buddy system works best (bringing several buddies with him), but not always. They may not be particularly close with any of the extra steers, and split up in opposite directions. So then any time you come across a new bunch, you drop your last extras and pick up some new ones. They can be moved further while they get acquainted! We'd find other lame steers on the way and add them with us. Keep in mind, there are 184 steers on the mountain, each day we brought down one or two to be doctored. The last day we ended up with 6 steers, starting with 1 lame one at the top of the ridge! Quite the adrenaline rush until you can close the trailer door and drive them home.



What's cool is with all of our riding, we have been able to catch any problem early and our guys at home can rope and doctor them right away. I'm looking out at them in our home meadow as I write and can't tell there was even any issue.



The wildlife even shaded up during the days. We spotted this cow elk twice this week.



Friday everything came together for everyone. We had a good size group to move our last 26 steers from our Ferguson Pasture over to the McKillop Pasture. All the horsemanship learned was used in getting the job done with fluidity and grace. We moved the cattle a good 5 miles through dense timber, up slopes, down slopes (all timbered), through gates, crossing old logging roads to our destination point of a water tank near the top of the ridge in McKillop Pasture. The day was hot, but blessed with a cool breeze here and there. Everyone took part between riding the flanks, and the drag. We were even able to stop on an open patch of grass we found at the top of a knoll, and eat lunch, the cattle ate too! Though a lot of the trek was uphill, everyone took care and let the cattle rest frequently. The horses didn't mind either! This was also the day we brought in the 6 steers to be doctored. There was a short moment when we arrived at the water tank, that we all sighed relief after a job well done. Short it was as I found the first steer that was hurtin' with foot rot. Everyone put their game faces back on and we went back to work.



The steers loaded easily into the trailer that Nathan met us with, and we took the time to enjoy our horses, and the country by riding home. To quote Jeremy, "This has been the greatest day." Yes it was.

Have a safe 4th of July weekend!

Dori

