

History of the Ranch and Lessons Learned
Birdwell and Clark Ranch

Ranching 2018 – Managing for Tough Times

May 16, 2018

Wheeler, Texas

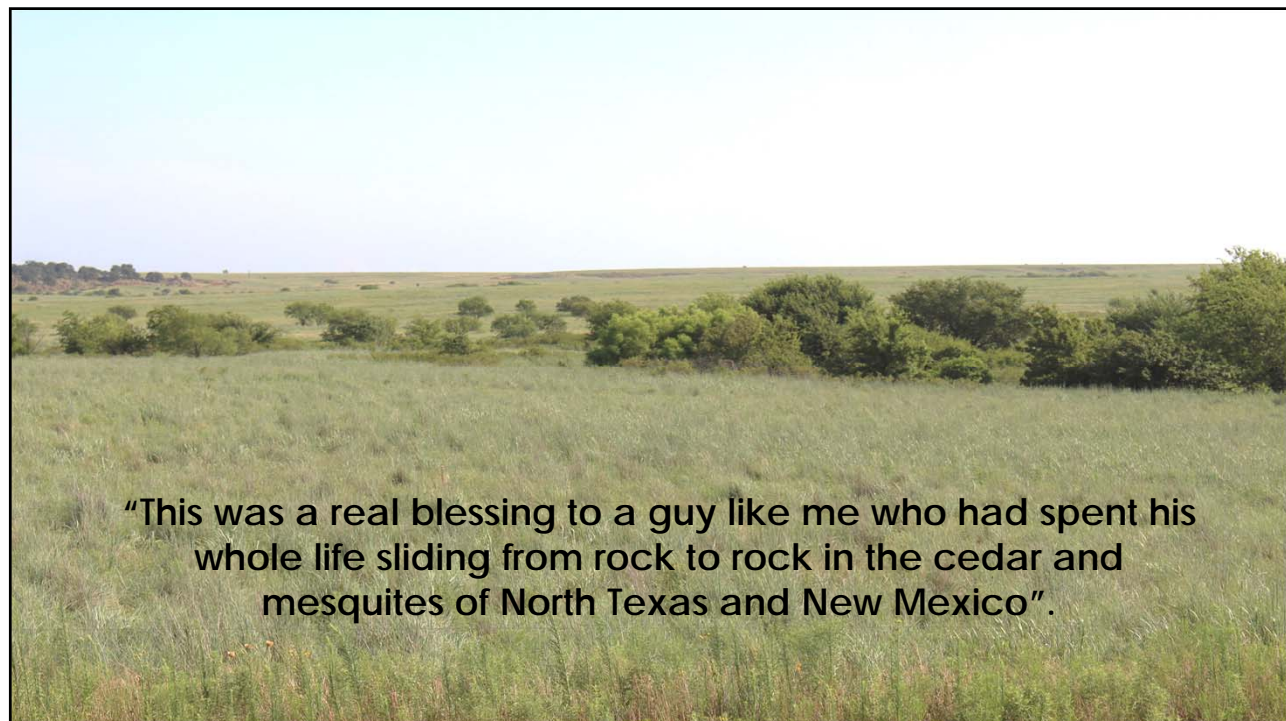
Located in
Clay County, Texas



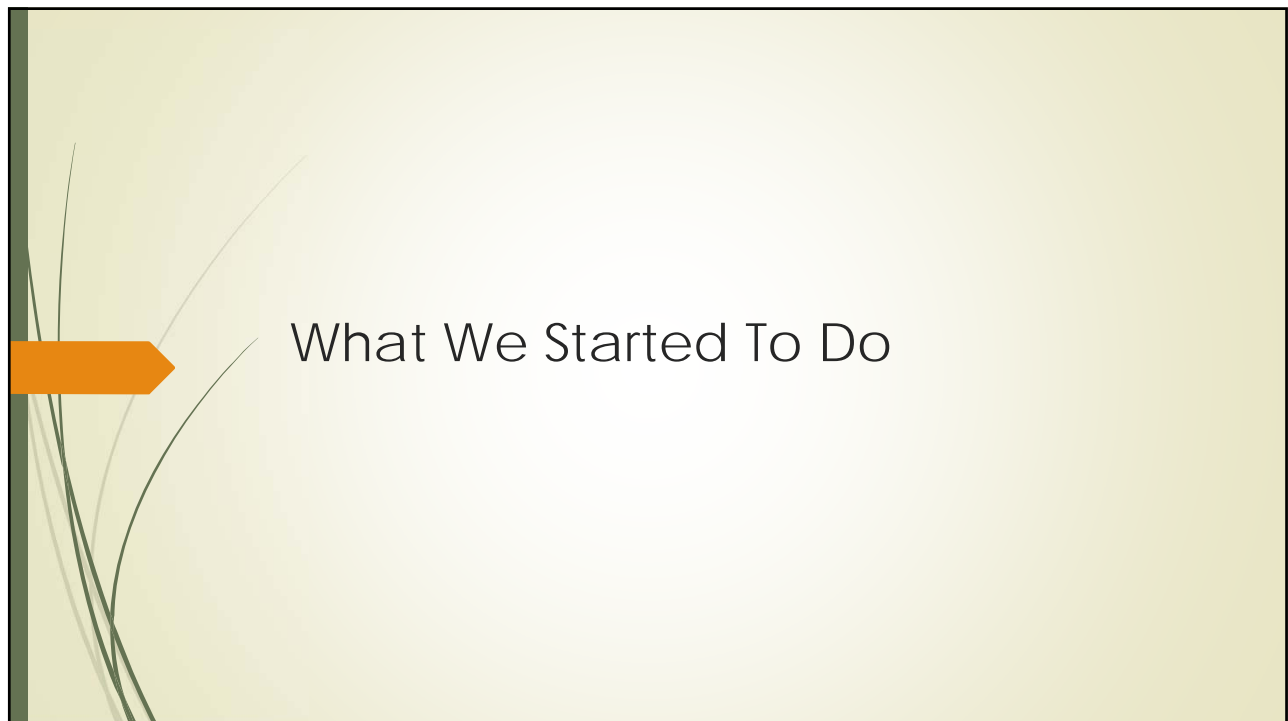


Formerly the Bryant Edwards Ranch

- Purchased in 2004
- Historic, respected ranch
- Traditionally in a cow/calf operation
- Tall native prairie grasses
- Borderfed on north by Little Wichita River
- Crossed by seasonal draws and riparian areas
- Represented the opportunity of a lifetime

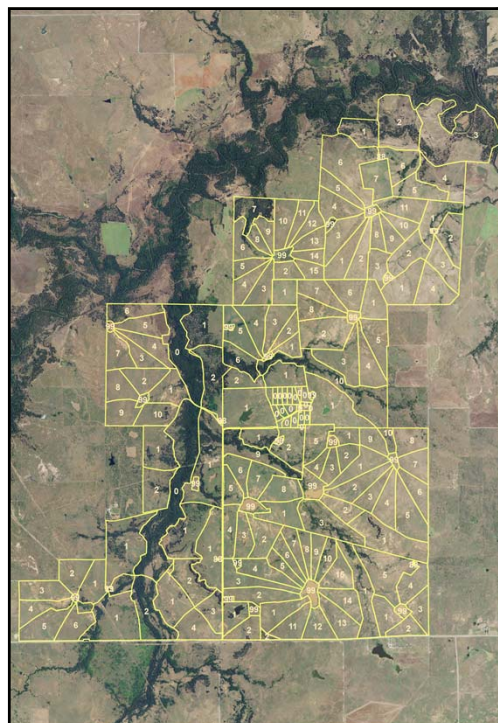






Stocker Operation

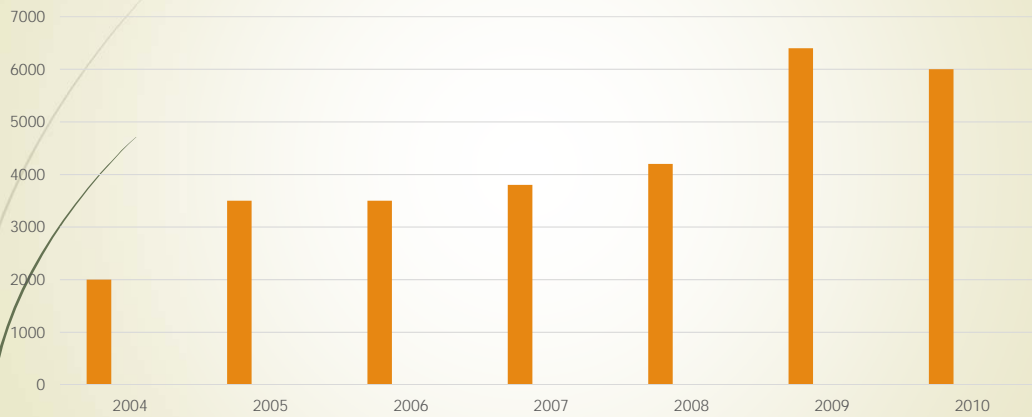
- Quickest, most economical way to make changes on the rangeland
- High Risk Cattle
- Low Stress Handling
- Health Protocol
- Feeding Protocol
- Moved to Grass 2 – 3 weeks after arrival at ranch



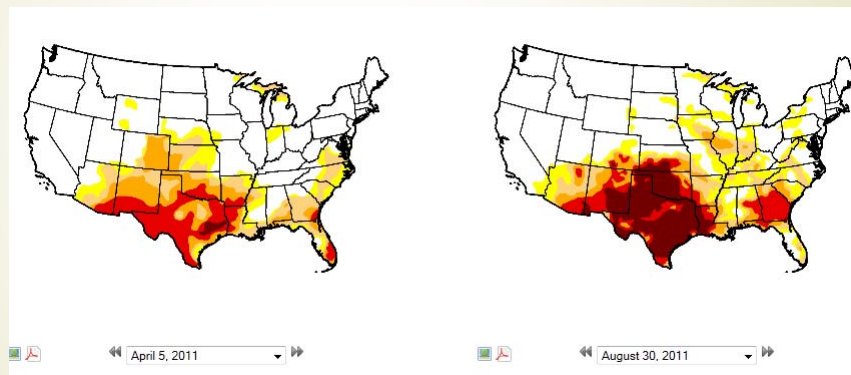
Ranch Map with Paddocks

- 10 – 15 Traditional large pastures
- 140 Paddocks ranging in size from 45 – 125 acres
- Designated riparian areas
- Three cells and three herds until 2010

Cattle Inventory



The Drought Years October 2010 – May 2015



Challenge of the Big Herd

- ▶ "Never run that many head in one herd"
- ▶ "Getting water to them"
- ▶ "Moving the Big Herd in efficient manner"



Placing 25 miles of PVC then 2" & 3" HDPE





Mobile Water Trough out of an old Propane Tank





Starting herd going under PVC pipe

- Position near a gate
- Place gates "inline" with the fence; not in a corner
- In early years cut lots of fence; required too much time and labor to repair
- After "training" can use anywhere cattle are; anywhere needed

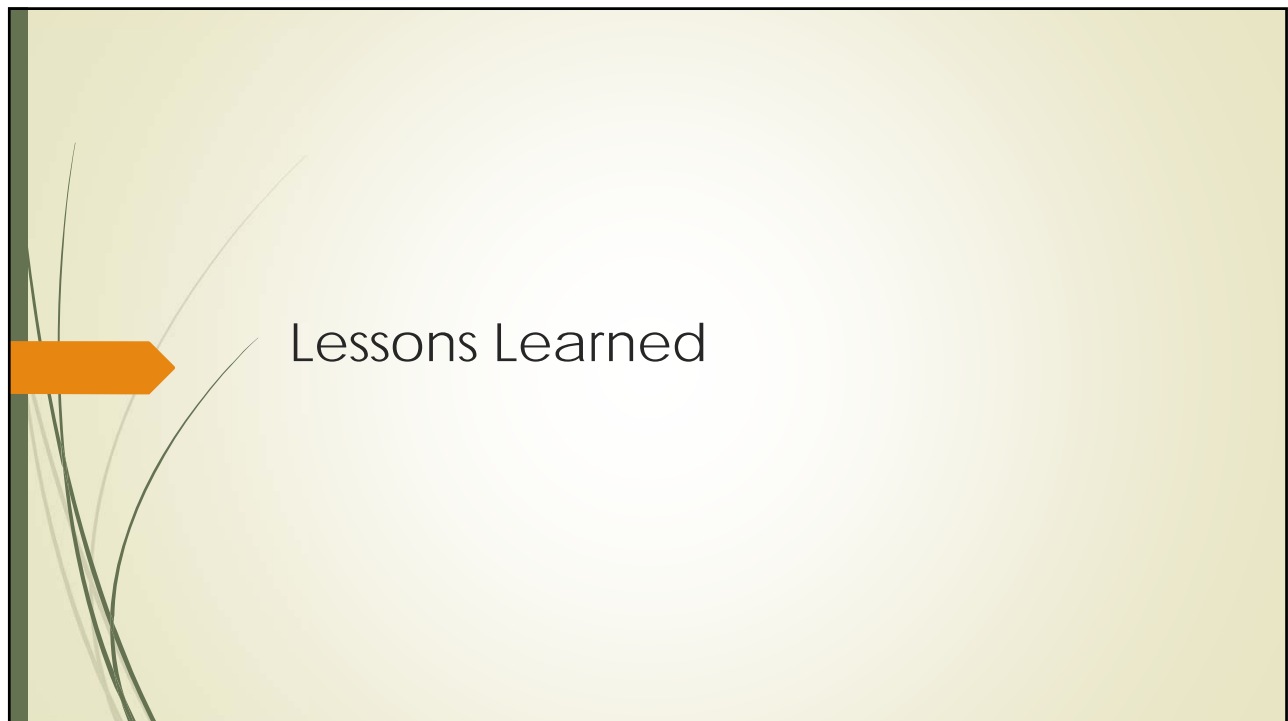




The PVC Pipe Solution
Borrowed from a YouTube Video – Source Unknown







Two "Tools" Stood Out

Animal Impact



Adequate Recovery

60 - 125 days preferred - 45 days in this shot due to consequences of flooding – forgiving year

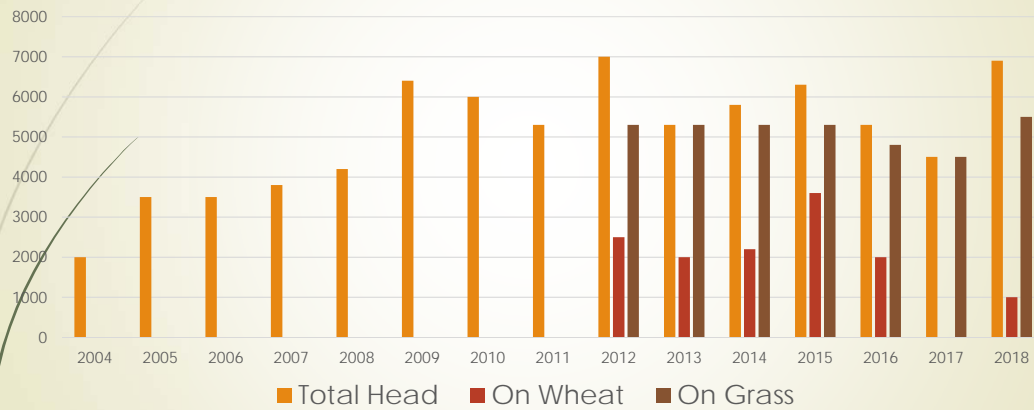
Regrowth evident – little bluestem



Benefits

- Decreased bare ground
- Retention of rainfall and moisture in soil
- Increasing diversity and quantity of grasses and forbs
- Increased carrying capacity
- Purposeful labor

Cattle Inventory



There Will Be Tough Years



There Will Be Forgiving Years



Holistic Goal

It All Starts Here!

- We have accomplished our goals and continue to be active and hardworking. The ranch is a place where our family, friends, and community come to joyfully participate in ranch activities and explore the benefits of holistic management. Healthy ecosystems thrive resulting in productive soils, forage, water, livestock, and wildlife. Our community and our world see the ranch as a model of sustainable, achievable, profitable management that is available to future generations.



