

Improvements in upland and riparian vegetation allowed the rancher to increase his cow/calf numbers by 50% and improve the average weaning weights of calves by 150 lbs. Improved riparian conditions attracted more elk and beaver. According to this successful rancher, "The best environment for

■ Despite availability of abundant upland forage, cattle tended to concentrate in and overuse riparian areas.

■ Improved management of upland and riparian vegetation combined to reduce erosion and sedimentation of streams and irrigation and fishing reservoirs, and to enhance summer streamflows.

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Restoring vigorous riparian vegetation led to increased beaver activity. Beaver dams stored water and trapped sediments. Elevated water levels subirrigated adjacent land, which expanded riparian areas and provided more livestock forage and more wildlife habitat.

raising cattle is also the best environment for wildlife." He considers beaver a positive influence on watershed recovery. "I wish I had more of the irrigating [expletive deleted]."

He credits good diversity in upland and riparian vegetation with providing more stability to his livestock operation, especially during dramatic variations in weather patterns. His ranching philosophy is, "The closer that you can have it to like nature would have it the better off you are in the long run. Its more economically sound."

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■ Fencing riparian areas into separate pastures allowed the rancher to obtain optimum utilization of upland and riparian forage and improve watershed conditions.

■ Improved riparian vegetation encouraged beaver activity which raised stream water levels and expanded the riparian area. This increased livestock forage and wildlife habitat and decreased erosion and sedimentation.

■ Good riparian management was an integral part of increasing the ranch's long-term productivity and profitability.