



2013 Outstanding Rangeland Management Award Recipient Diaz Murray and 2013 TSSRM President Jeff Goodwin

Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management
Outstanding Rangeland Management Award
Diaz Murray (F Bar Springs Ranch)

Mr. Diaz Murray owns and operates two adjoining ranches in North Central, Texas. The ranches are approximately 12,664 acres. The Bryant Edwards Ranch encompasses 7642 acres and the Earl Springs Ranch is 5022 acres. Both of the ranches are located approximately 10 miles east of Henrietta, Texas. The average rainfall for this part of Texas is 32 inches. Both ranches are all native rangeland. The major ecological sites on the ranch are Loamy prairie, Claypan prairie, tight sandy loam, sandstone hill, and loamy bottomland.

Mr. Murray was raised in Georgetown, Texas in Williamson County. In 1974, Mr. Murray bought his first ranch in Montana and ranched there until 1998. The Montana operation was a cow/calf operation in Custer County near Miles City. In 1999, Mr. Murray bought the Earl Springs Ranch and bought Bryant Edwards ranch in 2004, and has been ranching in Clay County ever since.

Mr. Murray is a very good grazing manager. His experiences with drought in Texas and Montana drives many of his management decisions. It has additionally, been his driver in consistently focusing on moderate to light stocking rates. The ranches are conservatively stocked at 1AU/22ac. Mr. Murray focuses on being flexible with his stocking rates by balancing animal demand with forage supply; this forward planning has allowed him to manage his grazing through the winter for many years without feeding hay. Yearling cattle are rotated through a four pasture rotational system. The rest of the ranch pastures are in a rest rotation system with each pasture on a 1 year deferment schedule. The Bryant Edwards ranch is currently divided into 12 pastures and the Earl Springs into 13 pastures. Additional drought management strategies in the past have been early culling, early weaning, and eliminating all open cows.

With rather large pasture sizes, grazing distribution is very important to the productivity and grazing efficiency of the ranches. To address this issue Mr. Murray has installed over four miles of pipeline on the Earl Springs, and eight miles of pipeline on Bryant Edwards ranches. These pipelines and water troughs have allowed Mr. Murray to increase grazing distribution on parts of the ranch that had been historically underutilized. These water system improvements also increase the amount of clean fresh water to cattle and limit the use of surface pond water increasing gain and productivity.

Mr. Murray is additionally very interested in wildlife management, especially quail. He works to maintain forb populations and appropriate woody cover for numerous wildlife species. Mr. Murray implements an active brush management program on the ranch focusing on Individual Plant Treatment methods in order to selectively support the wildlife habitat goals for the ranch while maintaining a productive forage base for the cattle operation.

As for the cattle operation Mr. Murray operates as a 100% all natural, grass fed beef operation. Mr. Murray markets wholesale directly for Burgundy Pasture Beef in Grandview, Texas. Both ranches raise pure bred Black Angus genetics. Mr. Murray focuses his calving season in February-March and consistently weans a 650-700 lb. calf in October every year on grass with no supplemental hay. Being a respected pure bred operation Mr. Murray keeps outstanding records not only on his cattle and their performance but also detailed grazing management records to assist him in making management decisions. Cattle handling is also very important to the success of the operation. Mr. Murray emphasizes low stress cattle handling techniques when rotating and working cattle and operates in a fully functional working facility designed by Dr. Temple Grandin.

Mr. Murray has been a member of the Texas Section Society for Range Management for 26 years, since 1988. Mr. Murray has also served in a leadership role within the section serving on the Board of Directors. Mr. Murray is also the Texas Section Society for Range Management's elected representative to sit on the Board of Directors of the Texas Grazing Land Conservation Initiative. Additionally Mr. Murray has been a leader serving as a Director and long standing member of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association.

Mr. Murray has proven to be an outstanding rangeland manager not only for his successes with his ranching operations, but his consistent support for the art and science of rangeland management through his involvement in professional societies.