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**EPA Honors Koch Ranch for Environmental Excellence**  
*Award is ranch's fourth major environmental honor in 1999*

*Wichita, Kan.* -- In a ceremony at its regional headquarters in Denver today, the Environmental Protection Agency presented the manager of Koch's Beaverhead Ranch with the 1999 Regional Administrator's Award.

This recognition is the fourth major environmental honor the Montana ranch has received in 1999 for its history of innovative environmental stewardship and community outreach initiatives.

EPA Regional Administrator William Yellowtail noted that the EPA was recognizing "stars" for their outstanding contributions, "the people who cherish and help communities protect the unique mountains, plains and canyons" that make up EPA's Region 8. Yellowtail congratulated Beaverhead ranch manager Ray Marxer and his wife, Sue, on the achievement and recognized that successful environmental protection depends upon the combined contributions of dedicated and committed individuals like the Marxers.

Ray and Sue Marxer have received three additional national-level environmental stewardship honors recently. In April the Marxers were honored at national Earth Day celebrations in Washington, D.C. The previous month, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies presented them with the National Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award. This award came on the heels of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Environmental Stewardship Award, which the ranch and the Marxers received in February.

Ray and Sue Marxer were among six Montanans and two Native Americans from the Chippewa, Cree and Blackfeet tribes honored by EPA Region 8 today and commended for their efforts to improve drinking water quality, promote sustainable land-use practices, and increase protection from contaminants on Indian reservations.

The EPA praised Marxer for his innovative grazing system, riparian restoration projects, and public outreach projects. The Agency credited these efforts with fostering an "unusually productive relationship" between the ranching and environmental communities.

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Founded in 1865, the Beaverhead Ranch is one of Montana's oldest. Koch Beef Company's Matador Cattle Company has owned and operated the ranch since 1951. Koch hired Ray Marxer as a cowboy in 1974 and appointed him manager in 1990.

Sprawling over 250,000 acres and supporting nearly 14,000 cattle, the Beaverhead ranch has been characterized by Montana's Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department as "a showcase of environmentally sound management practices." The Matador Cattle Company first implemented environmentally friendly ranching with the introduction of rest-rotating grazing. The new grazing system benefited both the ranch and the local ecosystem. While Beaverhead managed to increase the weight and number of cattle, the number of local wild elk swelled from 56 to 400. During the winter, more than 1,500 wild elk now call Beaverhead home. In addition to the elk, Beaverhead also boast populations of wild antelope, moose, beaver, fox, blue herons, sandhill cranes, and bald eagles.

The ranch is currently working in partnership with the U.S. Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the Federal Bureau of Land Management to reintroduce westslope cutthroat trout to Beaverhead's Bear Creek. Ray Marxer has directed the ranch's efforts in selective timber harvests, fish habitat improvements, additional grazing experiments in stream side-areas, water use efficiency, and protecting water quality through a feedlot runoff containment system.

"We've learned through the different things we've done that in order for a biological system to be healthy, it requires periodic rest and periodic harvest," said Ray Marxer. "We've worked hard to find a balance, and try to apply the most beneficial practices that benefit not only wildlife and resources, but our business and economy as well. By taking a proactive approach to life, business, and towards environmental issues, you are more likely to be able to direct change rather than react to it."

The Beaverhead ranch is located in southwestern Montana, near Dillon. It borders Idaho and includes some lands within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The ranch also borders the Blacktail Wildlife Management Area and the Red Rocks National Wildlife Refuge, and uses grazing allotments in Wilderness Study Areas.

*Koch Industries, Inc., parent of Koch Agriculture Company's affiliate, the Matador Cattle Company, is based in Wichita, Kansas. Through its subsidiaries, Koch Industries employs 16,000 people worldwide and is involved in virtually all phases of the oil and gas industry, as well as in chemicals, plastics, energy services, chemical and environmental technology products, asphalt products, metals and mineral services, agriculture, financial services, and ventures. For more information on Koch, refer to [www.kochind.com](http://www.kochind.com) or [www.kochenvironment.com](http://www.kochenvironment.com) on the Internet.*

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