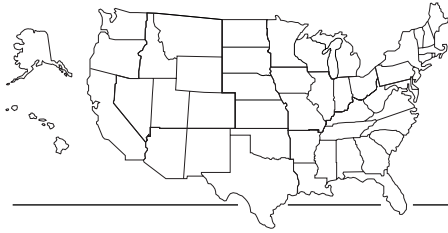


The LandReport

*A Monthly Report for the
American Landowner*



Newsletter

JUNE 2018 • LANDREPORT.COM



Supreme Court Rules 5-4 in Florida v. Georgia

A divided court gives Florida another opportunity to draw more water out of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint basin and away from Atlanta.

A decades-long legal battle that has thus far incurred more than \$100 million in legal fees took an unexpected turn on June 27 when the nation's highest court ruled that a court-appointed special master was "too strict" when ruling for Georgia. Previously, the Supreme Court appointed Special Master Ralph Lancaster to study the issue, which involves two rivers, the Chattahoochee and the Flint, that flow through Georgia and converge to become the Apalachicola at the Florida-Georgia state line. Georgia relies on the Chattahoochee and



the Flint to provide drinking water for Atlanta and to irrigate farms that produce cotton, corn, soybeans, and peanuts. Florida sued its northern neighbor to protect the state's fishing industry in and around Apalachicola Bay by imposing consumption caps. The special master agreed that Florida had been harmed by Georgia's overuse of water, but that it failed to meet its obligation to show that the consumption caps it seeks to impose would actually be of benefit. Read more [HERE](#).

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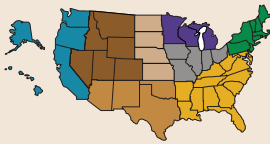
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EPA



NATIONWIDE

EPA DECLARES BIOMASS CARBON NEUTRAL. In a major policy shift that benefits timberland owners, EPA administrator Scott Pruitt announced that biomass will be considered carbon neutral for the purposes of regulating emissions from sources such as power plants that burn wood. Biomass proponents hailed the announcement as long overdue. "The EPA's declaration that forest biomass energy is carbon neutral confirms what we in forestry have long known," said Rep. Bruce Westerman, the only licensed forester on Capitol Hill. "Trees are a renewable resource, and properly managed forests can provide clean energy for decades to come. Simply put, this move by the EPA is a victory for Arkansas forests and the industries that rely on our number one renewable resource."



SOUTHWEST

EMINENT DOMAIN

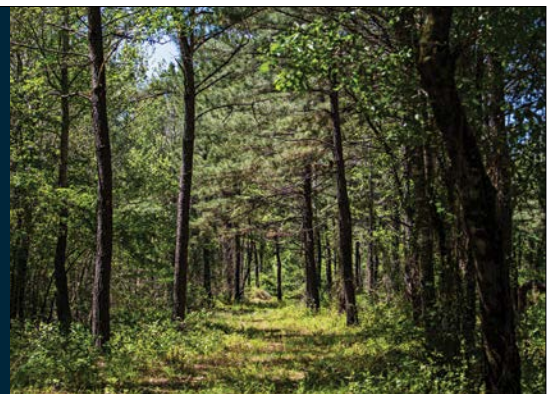
BORDER WALL

PRIVATE LAND SEIZURES UNDERWAY IN RIO GRANDE VALLEY. McAllen Mayor Jim Darling reports that 167 landowners in Hidalgo County have received condemnation notices from the federal government. The

notices arrived as Customs and Border Protection personnel informed South Texas officials from cities, counties, and foreign trade zones along the border that the federal government is moving forward with private land seizures in the Rio Grande Valley in order to build sections of the border wall. Darling insisted the federal government be held to the same standard it holds cities and counties to when they use federal funds to acquire land.

"Under federal law, when we take property, we always have to pay relocation damages for the remainder," he said. "It's really weird: When we use federal money, it can delay projects for about a year for environmental impact (studies). The federal government says, 'Oh, we don't have to do that.'" Read more [HERE](#).

Get Lost



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MIDWEST

FARMLAND

OWNERSHIP

INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF FAMILY-OWNED FARMS ARE NOT FAMILY-FARMED.

According to the Department of Agriculture, 99 percent of all farms in the US are family-owned, not corporate farms. Yet because of demographic trends and costly barriers to entry, only 60 percent of farmland nationwide is actually farmed by those same families. The remaining 355 million acres are rented out, and that number is likely to increase. This is especially the case in the heart of the Corn Belt, Iowa. Currently in the Hawkeye State, more than half the agricultural lands are farmed by tenants, not the owners themselves. Among the many drivers propelling this growing trend are the prohibitive costs of both land and machinery. The average Iowa farm encompasses 330 acres, and the average price of an acre of Iowa farmland exceeds \$7,000 per acre. In other words, \$2.1 million is the typical cost of the land alone. Read more [HERE](#).



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NORTHEAST

AWARDED

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

VINEYARD WIND SELECTED TO CREATE 800-MEGAWATT OFFSHORE FARM. A Danish-backed offshore wind farm has been awarded a contract to power 500,000 homes in Massachusetts. Called

Vineyard Wind, the wind farm will be located off the southern coast of Martha's Vineyard. Vineyard Wind, which is backed by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners and Avangrid Renewables, bested two competitors for the contract authorized under a 2016 renewable energy law that requires the procurement of major hydroelectric and offshore wind resources to help reduce the state's carbon footprint. "Today's announcement brings the Commonwealth one step closer to achieving our administration's goals of creating a clean, reliable, and cost-effective energy future for Massachusetts residents, and significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change," Gov. Charlie Baker said in a statement. The current timetable calls for construction to begin in 2019 and for the wind farm to become operational by 2021. Read more [HERE](#).



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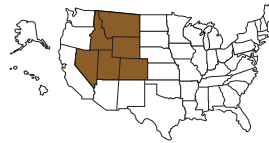
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WEST

RULING

WATER RIGHTS

MONTANA WATER COURT RULES

ON ABANDONMENT. In another major water rights decision, a Montana water court affirmed that Gene Klamert had not abandoned valuable water rights on

Flatwillow Creek in Petroleum County. Upstream landowners Daniel Iverson, Dan Wilks, and Farris Wilks had appealed a 2017 ruling by Water Master Ben Sudduth in Klamert's favor. They contended that Klamert's failure to irrigate for 17 years led to the abandonment. "The Court finds the Master's recommendations are based on substantial evidence," wrote associate Montana Water Court Judge Douglas Ritter. The decision was closely followed because cases involving abandonment are rarely heard. Under Montana water law, a water right with an early priority date is beneficial since water is allocated on a "first in time is first in right" basis. The earlier the priority right the better the water right. Read more [HERE](#).



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GLOBAL

DEFORESTATION

TREE COVER

2017 RANKS AS SECOND-WORST YEAR FOR TROPICAL TREE COVER LOSS.

Scientists from the World Resources Institute and the University of Maryland have determined that last year was the second-worst year for tropical tree cover loss, exceeded only by 2016. An area equivalent in size to Bangladesh — approximately 39 million acres of tree cover — was lost in 2017. The clearing of forests for agriculture continues to drive large-scale deforestation. Countries with particularly high losses included Brazil, which saw 7.4 million acres of deforestation last year, and Columbia, which saw a marked increase as a result of increased political instability. Last year's hurricane season also had catastrophic consequences in the Caribbean with the Dominican Republic losing 32 percent of its tree cover, and Puerto Rico losing 10 percent. Conversely, Indonesia saw a decline of more than 50 percent in deforestation thanks to a national ban to stop draining and burning peatlands. Read more [HERE](#).

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LandReport VOICES

BY DAVID ZAWALICH,
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER


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Recently I had the opportunity to chat with Chris and Melinda Jeffrey of Thistle Dew Land and Cattle in Joliet, Montana.

DZ: *Chris and Melinda, how was your 2017 and what is your outlook on the market for 2018 and beyond?*

C&M: Last year we enjoyed record sales in our cattle operation and increased YOY sales in our land and ranch brokerage. Both operations continue to grow. Through the first half of 2018 we have surpassed land sales for all previous years and are extremely excited about the future. As the economy continues to strengthen, we expect a robust 2018.

DZ: *What are some thoughts on your market?*

C&M: We see opportunities across the board, particularly on the larger ranch units like our Big Sky Wheat and Grassland listing where an investor can install our Montana Grasslands Program to advance success and ROI.

DZ: *Can you give me an overview on your Montana Grasslands initiative and what the benefits are to a land investor?*

C&M: Our exclusive Montana Grasslands Program offers land and ranch buyers a compelling reason to own ground.

With our program, landowner investors can succeed without having deep experience in the ranching business. Our guidance and management systems make land ownership both enjoyable and profitable. We can install a cattle and grazing operation to drive cash returns while minimizing the investment in what depreciates. This positions the ranch on a rapid plane of appreciation. Our knowledge, experience and love of ranching provides very personal and passionate oversight.

DZ: *How about a rundown on a current listing?*

C&M: Our Big Sky Wheat and Grassland unit is 16,000 acres and includes all the pieces to enjoy success investing in a Montana ranch. These types of units do not come along very often. In our opinion Montana ground of this type, when properly managed, will steadily advance in value.

DZ: *How about another?*

C&M: The J7 Ranch in Melville, Montana, has it all: excellent grass production, good timber, water, location, privacy, wildlife. It features incredible views of the Crazy and Snowy mountains plus an historic log home tucked away by the Tony Creek. Offering 4,921 acres, this one won't last long. 🇺🇸

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LandReport VOICES

BY EDDIE LEE RIDER JR.



Texas Landmark Properties

Wendy Johnson, ALC. United Country Texas Landmark Properties

Wendy Johnson started selling agricultural land, ranches, recreational properties, and, probably her favorite, equestrian estates, in 2012 all over Texas. She owned and operated Oak Knolls Stables in St. Jacob, IL, until she relocated. She grew up in rural Illinois with horses, and they are still her passion to this day. She has earned her Accredited Land Consultant (ALC) designation from the REALTORS® Land Institute and has received awards recognizing her achievements, including Rookie of the Year, Top Producer and Leadership. She has enjoyed success in the competitive equestrian arena, bringing home World and Reserve Championships.

ELR: Wendy, as of January of this year, you became a United Country broker. Tell us about that.

WJ: Travis Wolford of United Country reached out to me and I purchased United Country Texas Landmark Properties in January of this year. The United Country franchise provides tools and expertise that has helped me to get listings. The Company has an amazing marketing team that has helped me with skills necessary to represent clients in today's market. My name recognition is expanding in the area, and having a successful company and team behind me allows me to better represent my clients.

ELR: Tell our readers about your background.

WJ: I grew up on my family's farm in St. Charles, IL. At age 7, I started to ride and have competed across the country. God blessed me with an amazing husband of 20 years and 3 children. I was a paralegal for 15 years until my family decided to move to Texas. At that time, I had decided to leverage my legal background combined with my experience farming and raising horses to obtain my real estate license focusing narrow and deep



in farm and ranch, agricultural land, rural acreage, equestrian and cattle facilities.

ELR: Tell us about a couple of your favorite listings and what makes them special.

WJ: Hidden Creek Ranch located in Terrell, Texas, is an exquisite ranch with unique features of nature and privacy consisting of a 4,100 sq. ft. home, saltwater pool, metal barn, multiple turnout pastures on 362 acres with wildlife habitat, and a creek combined with agricultural ground. This is the perfect combination of country charm, and convenience to dining, shopping, hospitals, and grocery stores.

<https://www.landsoftexas.com/property/9797-County-Road-312-Terrell-Texas-75161/5391536>

Exotic Edge Ranch located in Edgewood, Texas, is a stocked game ranch on 145 acres. The land has a stocked lake, multiple ponds, strategically placed for WMP. The ranch boasts a home with finish out, guest quarters, barn, workshop, arena, deep well, and city water at CR 3105, road frontage on CR 3117, CR 3108, and CR 3105. The topography varies from open pasture to treed hilltops. 🇺🇸

<https://www.landsoftexas.com/property/702a-Vz-CR-3117-Edgewood-Texas-75117/5498525>

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