



Thirty agricultural producers from the region gathered in Sundance this week to participate in the first session of the Wyoming Integrated Ranch Education (W.I.R.E.) course. W.I.R.E. is a comprehensive six-day class in ranch management which has been developed and taught by a team of Extension specialists and agents from the University of Wyoming. The W.I.R.E. course was co-sponsored locally by the Devils Tower Conservation District.

The W.I.R.E. course emphasized the "process of management", rather than particular production technologies. There is much emphasis on goal setting, comprehensive planning, analysis techniques, decision making, record-keeping and monitoring of resources. All of the major resources....from soil, water and range forage....to livestock, crops, wildlife, human resources and finances are considered, as well as the relationships and trade-offs among them. Theoretical concepts are mixed with practical examples, problem sets and field trips.

The team of UW Extension people which has created W.I.R.E. has been working on the project for a year and a half. Much of that time has been

required to produce two sets of teaching materials which are used in the course, a large reference manual about the various resources and their management and a detailed "case-study" ranch, which is based loosely on an actual Crook County operation. The case-study ranch is used throughout the course as an example of how some of the principles of management and production techniques can be applied in real-life situations. The W.I.R.E. course will be taught in many locations around Wyoming, but the Sundance session has been the course debut.

Participants in the Sundance W.I.R.E. course have come from four Wyoming counties, Montana and South Dakota. Among the participants from Crook County are Dawn and Shannon Brengle, Shella Brooks, Bruce Cundy, Greg Davis, Dorothy Greenwood, Drew Hutchinson, Will, J.W., and Thea Nuckolls, Ernie Reinhold and Ron Vore. Extension agents Gene Gade (Crook County) and Kent Drake (Campbell County) have been members of the W.I.R.E. development and teaching team since it was first conceived several years ago.