

LAND



ON THE COVER

The Way Forward
LITTLE BELT CATTLE CO.

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CARY ESTES

Cary Estes is a freelance writer based in Birmingham, Alabama. He has written for a wide variety of publications, websites and organizations, including the Alabama Tourism Department, Associated Press, Business Alabama magazine, Children's Hospital Today, Delta Sky magazine, ESPN.com, Livability.com, NBCsports.com, PGATour.com, Southern Living and Sports Illustrated. He previously spent 15 years working as a sportswriter at the Birmingham Post-Herald. His writing philosophy is, "Everybody has a story to tell." Find out more at → EstesWriting.com



TRAVIS DRISCOLL

Travis Driscoll puts his marketing background to work for buyers and sellers of ranches and ag properties in New Mexico and Colorado. Despite his vast experience selling large hunting, cattle and recreational ranches, Travis continues to hone his knowledge and professional skills as an active member of the Realtor's Land Institute. This affiliation opens the door to a national network of more than 1,300 land brokers, which give his clients a distinct advantage. In his free time, Travis can be found horseback, casting a fly rod or stalking that next big bull. Find out more → BeaverheadOutdoors.com



Clark Company began as a stage and cattle company in Ventura County in the 1890s. Five generations later, they have specialized in ranch sales and land management in the western United States, focusing on ranch real estate since 1958. Their staff is very knowledgeable, fully involved with the agricultural industry, maintains and operates their family ranches, and they are well acquainted with ranches and farm properties of the western United States. Clark Company's extensive listings and associations will provide buyers and sellers with an impressive array of choices. Find out more → ClarkCompany.com



DAN MURPHY

Dan Murphy, ALC, Broker and Co-Owner of M4 Ranch Group, has called the mountain west home his entire adult life. Dan's extensive and diverse business experience reveals a track record of success. Dan shows enthusiasm and advocacy for life by experiencing the great outdoors' wonders and pursuing professional and recreational life experiences. Life passions, dogged work ethic, and professional experiences have led to the vision and development of his team's current ownership of a nationally recognized real estate firm, M4 Ranch Group. Find out more at → M4RanchGroup.com



JON KOHLER

Jon Kohler is a third-generation land broker and broker/founder of Jon Kohler & Associates. As a passionate advocate for land stewards across the Southeast, Jon is equally passionate about the sporting way of life. Jon also serves on the national board of Pheasants/Quail Forever, the nation's largest non-profit organization dedicated to upland habitat conservation. While much of his time is dedicated to the high-quality land niche - Jon also enjoys spending quality time with his kids and wife/business partner, Erica Kohler, at their family farm, Lick Skillet, while ensuring rich sporting traditions are passed on to their children. Find out more at → JonKohler.com



California Outdoor Properties, headquartered in Vacaville, California, is one of the largest farm, ranch, and recreational private real estate companies in the Golden State. Founded by Broker/Owner Todd Renfrew, the company's roots are planted deep in agriculture and the outdoors. To provide the same great customer service to its farm, ranch, recreational property, and luxury estate clients in Nevada, the firm, which is a proud member of the LandLeader network, expanded into the Silver State and operates as Outdoor Properties of Nevada. Find out more → CaliforniaOutdoorProperties.com

LAND

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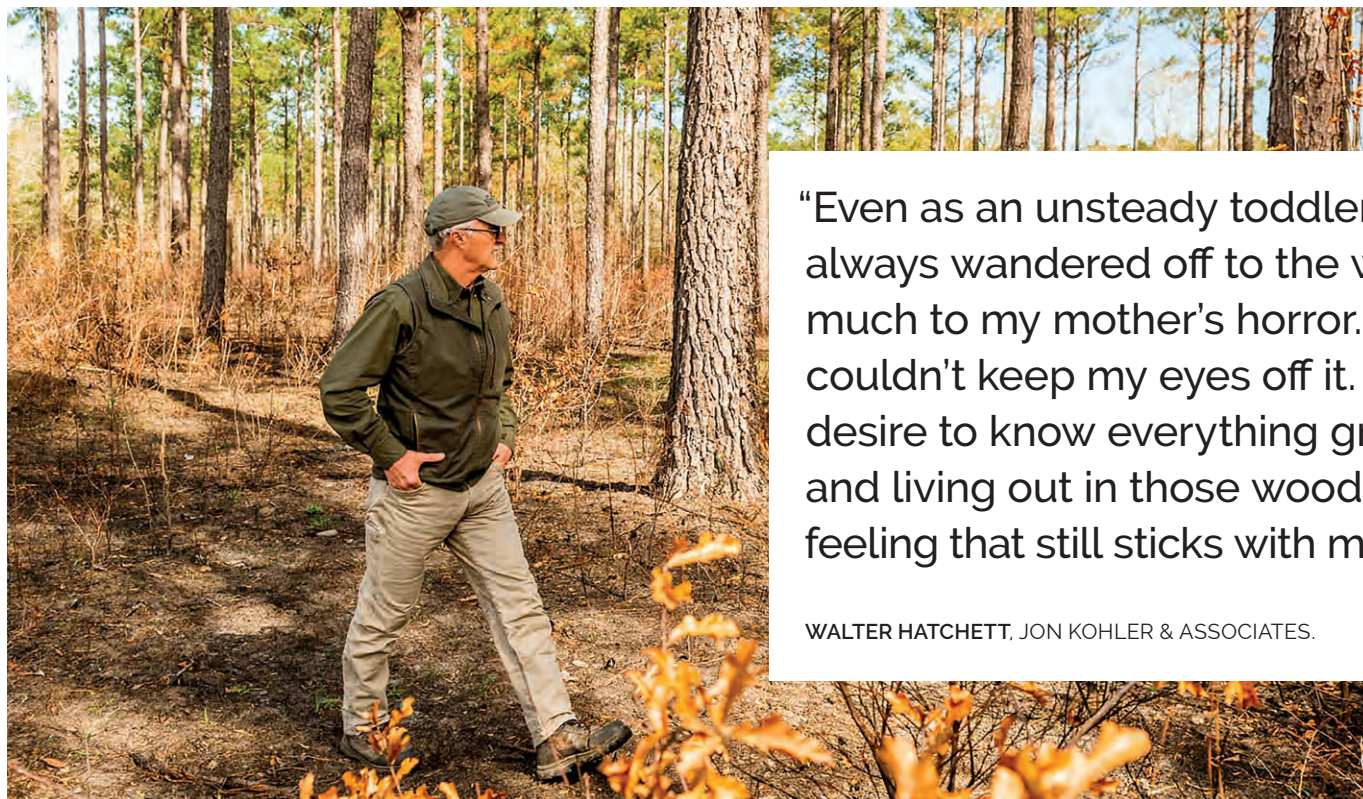
A man with a beard, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt, khaki pants, and a tan hat, is walking through a field of tall, golden-brown grass. He is surrounded by a dense forest of tall, slender pine trees. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a warm, dappled light effect on the ground and foliage. The man is walking towards the right side of the frame, looking slightly away from the camera.

At Jon Kohler & Associates, we have 30 years of experience working beside some of the Southeast's most steadfast land stewards. Men and women who own land not necessarily for financial gain, but for spiritual reward. These landowners have a goal beyond present-day enjoyment and more toward historical reverence and conservation for the future. Keeping land natural and healthy is a lot of work! Unsurprisingly, it takes a team to do all this. In steps the Land Manager—the individual with the energy and know-how to implement the landowner's goals and turn these worthy pursuits into reality.

A man wearing a plaid shirt, dark pants, a cap, and sunglasses is walking through a field of tall, golden-brown grass. He is pointing his right hand towards a dense forest of tall, thin trees in the background. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The title "Gunpowder & Grit" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font.

Gunpowder & Grit

STORY BY JON KOHLER



"Even as an unsteady toddler, I always wandered off to the woods—much to my mother's horror. I just couldn't keep my eyes off it. I had a desire to know everything growing and living out in those woods. A feeling that still sticks with me today."

WALTER HATCHETT, JON KOHLER & ASSOCIATES.

From day one of Jon Kohler & Associates, we've revered the land manager. To us, he likens with advisors from the Old Testament such as Daniel or Joseph in their role to the Pharaoh. The land manager may not be the king but on these properties he's the closest thing to it. His power lies in the fact that the landowner knows he will not prosper without his solid work ethic or heeding their good advice. It takes a rare skill set of knowledge, ambition and resources to manage the constraints they are under. Put it all together—and they do it all even in the high heat of July through September.

"I have to admit, I have a bit of envy for how land managers spend their day – until the dog days of summer." —Jon Kohler

While historically a physically laborious profession, today's land managers must bring a certain savvy to the job. They must understand today's science of land management. There are national and local resources, such as Quail Forever and Tall Timbers, that share knowledge and support to help with just that. However, with upheaval and supply chain issues the norm these days, land managers are running major operations, with high monetary value, on limited resources given that prices on necessities such as fertilizer and fuel continue to rise. Shortages of things as simple as feed are commonplace.

"Wild quail and good aesthetics are number one, products of fire and number two, products of diesel." —Jon Kohler

Even with these challenges, if there is anyone on this Earth more passionate about a tract of land than the landowner himself, it is the land manager. Most likely, this individual has had his hand in land management since, well, someone they respected in their youth first introduced them to it. For most, it started with a childhood reverence. Seldom does one just decide, to go into this complex field without being grounded in the land.

"I believe God called me to land stewardship," —Walter Hatchett, Jon Kohler & Associates. *"Even as an unsteady toddler, I always wandered off to the woods—much to my mother's horror. I just couldn't keep my eyes off it. I had a desire to know everything growing and living out in those woods. A feeling that still sticks with me today."*

It takes that sort of passion along with a healthy dose of grit and a huge portion of work ethic to manage a tract of land along with the owner's goals and their guests' expectations—all with Mother Nature's input. The land, the weather, and the wild game are not completely in our control. We can plant a tract of pine today, only to have a pop-up windstorm knock half of it down tomorrow. Maybe it's that challenge—a bit of

taming the wild—that gets the property manager out of bed before sunrise each day.

"The greatest reward from all those years managing property is going back, 30 plus years later, and seeing the results: Superior deer because of the management program I put in place years and years before. Or, a stand of trees I planted as seedlings that are now imposing sentinels of the property." —Walter Hatchett

There is something Biblical about caring for the land, and something equally redeeming about taking land that has been damaged and restoring it. It is in Genesis, the first book of the Bible, where God outlines man's dominion over Earth:

"God said, let us make man in our image. . .and let them have dominion. . .over all of Earth. . ." Genesis 1:26

The work done by land managers is directed by God. God created Earth. He gave man dominion over it. The land managers today are following his directive while also creating beauty and sustenance that will last well into the future.

So, here's to the land managers—those unsung heroes of land stewardship that are daily working the land, with a little bit of grit, and help and direction from God above. 🌱