

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 5, 2010

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**Statement by the Western Organization of Resource Councils on
decision to drop the animal identification program**

Billings, Mont. – Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack today announced the end of the controversial National Animal Identification System to track all livestock in the United States. Gilles Stockton, a rancher from Grass Range, Mont., represented the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) in a conference call with the secretary announcing the decision. Stockton issued the following statement on behalf of WORC.

Based in Billings, Mont., WORC is a network of conservation and family agriculture organizations in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

“I and my fellow members of WORC are pleased with Secretary Vilsack’s decision to scrap the proposed National Animal Identification System. Livestock producers from across this nation recognized that this proposal was intrusive, expensive, and unworkable, and we told this to Secretary Vilsack in as clear as terms as possible.

“It is my understanding that the Secretary has directed his agency to come up with a revised animal ID program. We urge the agency to remember, as it develops new proposals, that its first responsibility is to prevent the importation of livestock disease. Its second responsibility is to prevent the spread of diseases already introduced. I believe that livestock producers will support measures to mitigate the transmission of diseases as long as those measures are designed to meet these responsibilities, are practical and build on current state and federal disease control measures.”