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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michelle Hammond Urain, Marketing Coordinator  
Winnemucca Convention and Visitors Authority  
(775) 623-5071 ext 101 or (800) 962-2638  
Email: michelle@winnemucca.com  
Website: www.winnemucca.com

**WINNEMUCCA'S RANCH HAND WEEKEND OFFERS FAMILY FUN, COMPETITION**

WINNEMUCCA, Nev.—February 26 through March 1, Winnemucca, Nevada will celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Ranch Hand Rodeo weekend and locals and visitors alike won't want to miss a single excitement-filled minute.

Five fast-paced and fun events will combine over the course of the long weekend, drawing participants and spectators from numerous Western states and Canada; in all, more than 2,000 people are expected to pack the Winnemucca Events Complex.

Plus, the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Winnemucca Ranch Hand Rodeo will take place Saturday, February 28, and Sunday, March 1. Thirty teams will go head to head in six events including saddle bronc riding, cow mugging, calf roping, team branding, ranch doctoring and women's breakaway.

Each four-man, one-woman team must participate in women's breakway and cow mugging. Additional events are optional as teams vie for \$20,000 in prizes plus enough bragging rights to last until the 2010 competition.

The Ranch Hand Rodeo weekend will kick off Thursday, February 26, with the Cow Dog Trials. The elimination round will begin at 8 a.m. and continue into the afternoon. Canine competitors will work on verbal commands or whistles to put several head of cattle through various obstacles and maneuvers that simulate actual working ranch conditions. The day's top dogs will advance to the final round scheduled for 7 p.m.

Friday, February 27, will be devoted to the equine athletes. Horse sellers and buyers will gather to Winnemucca from all over the Western United States for the Ranch, Rope and Performance

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Horse Sale. The sale is open to any ranch, rope and performance horse under saddle two years and older as well as grade horses. Entries are limited to the first 60 horses.

Sifting will be held in the covered arena adjacent to the indoor Winnemucca Event Center beginning at 7 a.m. Friday. Consignors will submit a recent short video of each sale horse with their entries to enable the committee to expedite their evaluations.

A riding preview of sale horses will follow at 5:30 p.m. Friday. Rope horses will preview out of the box and cutting and working cow horses will demonstrate dry work. Additionally, horses will work a single cow during the sale in the sale ring. The Ranch, Rope and Performance Horse Sale will follow at 6 p.m. Saturday, February 28.

At 11:30 a.m. Friday, the fast-moving Stock Horse Challenge will begin. The Challenge will pit finely tuned cowhorses against the clock as they attempt to perform their everyday livestock handling duties in the fastest, most efficient manner possible. Horses entered in the Challenge are judged on their reining, cow work and roping abilities. Entries are due February 15; the competition is limited to the first 50 horses.

Saturday, March 1, the Kids’ Dummy Steer Roping and Stick Horse Barrels competitions will begin at 3 p.m. Youth will be divided into three age divisions—0-5, 6-9 and 10-12—for Dummy Steer Roping; Stick Horse Barrels contestants must be 5 years old or younger. Contestants must be pre-entered by February 22 to participate; entry fee is \$5 per event.

Sunday, March 2, Cowboy Church will be held in the arena grandstands at 8 a.m. followed by the final performance of the Ranch Hand Rodeo.

The Western Trade Show will be open all four days, beginning at noon on Thursday and continuing at 9 a.m. Friday through Sunday. With more than 60 vendors scheduled to attend, shoppers

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won’t be disappointed in the selection of beautiful wares, from custom saddles and tack to silver, horsehair, rawhide, housewares, art, clothing and much, much more.

For more information on participating, vending or consigning during the 2009 Winnemucca Ranch Hand Rodeo weekend, please visit [www.RanchRodeoNV.com](http://www.RanchRodeoNV.com). Entry forms and official rules are available online. Information also is available by calling (775) 623-5071 or (800) 962-2638.

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