



The Corner Post

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources & Policy Division
Newsletter



WY. Dept. of Agriculture
Natural Resources & Policy Division
2219 Carey Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0100

Oil & Gas *Reclamation and Grazing*

Joe Budd, JIO

Reclamation and livestock have been around for some time and more often than not, occupy the same areas. Minerals are often extracted from public lands, which is also where a large amount of grazing takes place on a permitted basis. While oil and gas development has a good sized footprint, it usually isn't large enough to keep an area from being utilized by grazing permittees. It can make things much more complicated for both sides when grazing and development attempt to occupy the same area.

that it affects a cattle operation. Oil and gas companies pray for rain so their planting germinates. Ranchers want it to rain for crops and feed for cattle. So when we have a drier year than we consider "normal" it is no surprise cattle end up grazing on reclaimed lands. Understandably, this may be a source of frustration to reclamation companies; on the other hand, those same companies can find themselves where they need grazing at times and may find grazing to be beneficial.

As development progresses, successful reclamation of disturbed areas can become an issue. There is a wide array of factors that contribute to the success of reclamation and one of those can be management of grazing. Weather is a variable we have no control over and it affects reclamation work in many of the same ways

It often comes down to an issue of whether or not to fence off their reclamation and whether or not grazing is an asset or a detriment to the success of that reclamation. As with any tool, fencing comes with some positive

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Quotable Quotes

"After all, the wool of a black sheep is just as warm."

-Ernest Lehman

* Banner Photo: An example of successful reclamation where grazing was never removed.



AGRICULTURE

Producer Research GRANT

Get Involved!

Chris Wichmann, Manager

In 2012 the Legislature provided the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) with a new grant program for Wyoming's producers to use and benefit from. The Agriculture Producer Research Grant Program (APRGP) is defined as practical agricultural science or methodologies designed to address issues affecting agricultural producers. The general intent of this program is to identify issues affecting agriculture in the state and providing applied research or solutions to mitigate these issues, by providing knowledge or agriculture practices that will enhance the natural resource base, economic viability of agriculture operations, and/or the quality of life for production agriculture in Wyoming.

The WDA was provided \$200,000 and we have already completed the first Request for Proposals (RFP). We will most likely be providing an additional two RFPs before the end of the year (approximately in October and late December).

The first RFP produced an excellent pool of potential projects; such as, Bulbous Bluegrass-Control Options through Mechanical Treatments, Effect of Time and Fertilizer Management on Quinoa Production in Wyoming, Perennial Cool Season Grasses for Hay Production, and

many more. The WDA strongly encourages agriculture producers and researchers continue to utilize these funds.

To qualify for this grant;

- The projects should either be performed by agriculture producers or include agriculture producers as partners.
- The projects should truly be applied agriculture research projects and the research has not been performed before.
- The projects must include a researcher or educational entity.
- The projects must include a thorough outreach and educational component.

The WDA is excited about this opportunity for Wyoming agriculture producers to identify issues and create solutions at the ground level. We believe this program can greatly benefit agriculture production in the state and help sustain our agricultural communities. † *If you have any questions or an interest in this program please view our website at <http://agriculture.wy.gov/divisions/nrpl/aprg-program> or contact the Natural Resource and Policy Division at 307-777-7323.*

To receive an electronic or printed copy of The Cornerpost Newsletter, please contact Michelle MacDonald at:
307-777-7323 or
michelle.macdonald@wyo.gov.

Our newsletter is also found on the Wyoming Department of Agriculture website: <http://agriculture.wy.gov/divisions/nrp>



LARGE SCALE: LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

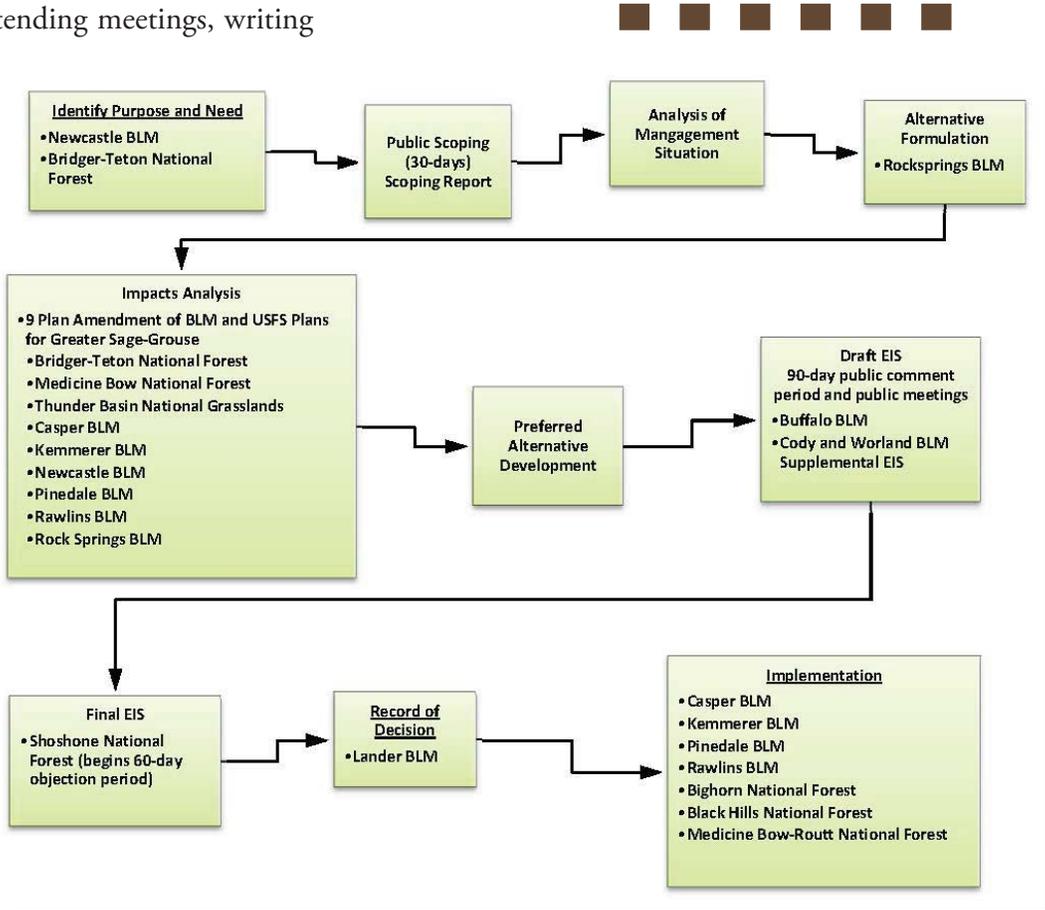
Jessica Crowder, Senior Policy Analyst

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) uses Resource Management Plans (RMPs) as a framework for management of lands under their jurisdiction. These plans are revised every 15 to 20 years. The United States Forest Service (USFS) uses Forest Plans in a similar manner. During revisions, representatives of elected officials are invited to serve as cooperating agencies, and the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) is included in the list of state cooperators.

As a cooperator, it is an honor to represent the agricultural community in Wyoming by attending meetings, writing comments on documents, and working to identify effects of BLM and USFS actions on agriculture. We have worked very closely with the BLM, USFS and other cooperators throughout each RMP and Forest Plan and look forward to seeing the final products, which we are edging closer to with each passing day. Currently, the WDA is joining the public comment period on both the Buffalo Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft RMP and the Supplement to the Bighorn Basin Draft RMP and Draft EIS.

RMP and Forest Plan revisions go through a long process, generally taking four years to complete. The process is devised to encourage public input and ensure the BLM and USFS are making

sound land management decisions. The BLM and USFS undergo slightly different processes to develop their management plans, yet the end result for each is a broad, overarching plan intended to guide management for several years into the future. The timeline below identifies steps in the process, where each BLM Field Office and USFS Office is in the process, and at what point the public has the ability to comment. ✦ *For questions or more information, please contact Jessica Crowder or Justin Williams at 307-777-7321.*





Justin Williams, Senior Policy Analyst

We all know how frustrating it is when we have a heated conversation or a controversial meeting with someone and our point of view is not seen or heard. Agricultural producers who work with regulatory government agencies and staff probably experience this frustration more than necessary. Regulators may quickly deny a producer from implementing a range improvement project or from managing a cow herd as it's historically always been. The conversations with agency staff are often difficult and tempers can flare. When someone continues to tell us "no," instead of passively accepting this as the final answer or completing exploding out of anger, there are ways for us to negotiate, but this may mean changing your communication style.

In the end, communication really is about negotiating. The book "Getting Past No, Negotiating Difficult Situations" by William Ury is one resource to help us improve communication skills. The book guides us through:

- Staying in control under pressure
- Defusing anger and hostility
- Finding out what the other side really wants
- Reaching agreements that satisfy both sides' needs

We often explode out of frustration, but it really doesn't get us anywhere. "Getting Past No" includes these five steps to break down the barriers of communication and negotiation:

- Keep your reaction and mental balance in check. *Example: Ury refers to this as "going to the balcony" which is a metaphor to describe taking a step back mentally and gaining your composure.*
- Listen to what the other side has to say: acknowledge their points, concerns, feelings. *Example: "You're right, the grazing rotation isn't working and the cattle are spending too much time on the creek."*

- Learn to reframe the staff's position as a way to let them know you heard them followed by additional questions regarding their position. *Example: "I understand you have to enforce the rules of the permit and your hands seem tied. What other fencing options are available to create a better pasture rotation?"*
- Bridge the gap between positions. Find ways to make them feel and understand they have a win/win. *Example: "Have you ever thought about developing some offsite water in a stock pond? We could even make sure there is access to benefit sage-grouse."*
- Don't fall trap to threaten or coerce the agency, instead convey it's better to work together than against each other. *Example: "We both have the mutual goal to improve the allotment. Let's talk to an engineer and see what type of water development options have. I think we can really make this work."*

Developing the skills to communicate and negotiate better is difficult, if not awkward at first. It's genuinely a good investment in the people we live and work with each day. Taking the high road isn't always a bad thing. For more information on improving communication, you can attend one of the upcoming Drought Contingency Workshops (see page 5) and/or check out the following resources:

- "Perfect Phrases for Dealing with Difficult People" by Susan F. Benjamin
- "Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most" by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen
- "Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In" by Roger Fisher and William Ury ✦



DROUGHT *Contingency Plan* WORKSHOPS

Lucy Pauley, Mediation Program Coordinator

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture will soon be hosting a series of workshops across the state to help U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) permittees develop drought contingency plans for their grazing permits. The workshops will be held in eight communities across Wyoming in September and October, 2013. Partners for this project include the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, the Wyoming Association of Conservation District, the BLM, the USFS and the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service,

The goals of the workshops are to help participants understand the role drought contingency plans play with respect to their grazing permit and the importance of developing a plan. Participants will also learn about improving dialogue with the federal agencies and better understanding of the financial impacts of proactive planning for drought by comparing cost-savings of contingency plan to costs for emergency feed, transportation, etc. Presentations and panel discussions will provide an opportunity to hear from other permittees about best management practices and resources in their own region to help address these issues.

Agenda topics will include:

- The financial impacts of proactive drought planning
- Basic components of drought contingency plans including sample plans, agency policies and other factors to consider
- Communication strategies between permittees and federal agencies
- What's in your agency file?
- Panel presentations featuring local agency staff and permittees discussing effective drought contingency strategies

- Learn more about the resources in your area to address range management and monitoring assistance, technical expertise, the roles of your local Cooperative Extension Service and Conservation Districts, and more

More information about the workshops is available on the WDA website at <http://wyagric.state.wy.us/divisions/nrp/mediation-program/drought-workshops>. If you'd like more information, contact Lucy Pauley at (307) 777-8788 or email lucy.pauley@wyo.gov. The workshops are made possible in part by a grant from the Western Center for Risk Management, through work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2010-49200-06203. ✦

Workshop Dates

September 24: Rawlins — Carbon County Library

September 26: Douglas — Wyoming State Fairgrounds

October 1: Buffalo — Johnson County Library

October 2: Sundance — Crook County Library

October 15: Worland — Community Center Complex

October 16: Lander — Fremont County Library

October 22: Pinedale — Sublette County Library

October 23: Kemmerer — Lincoln County Library

(all programs run from 2:00 — 5:30 p.m.)

Americans with Disabilities Act

To obtain this publication in an alternative format, contact the Wyoming Department of Agriculture at (307) 777-7323.



Justin Caudill, Ag Program Coordinator

The WLCI works to maintain, improve and or restore ecological health within a nineteen million plus acre area in southern and western Wyoming on both private and federally managed lands. This is accomplished by focusing science activities and funding for projects on five habitat communities; sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, riparian and aquatic communities. Within these focus communities the WLCI works to address key landscape issues such as habitat fragmentation, non-native invasive species, and water quality and quantity. There are two major project categories for WLCI; Science and Habitat.

Science Projects

One of the most unique features of the WLCI is the application of science to decision-making processes. To develop and pursue the science required for success of the WLCI, the U.S. Geological Service has assembled a WLCI Science Team composed of hydrologists, geologists, biologists, geographers, social scientists, and information-management specialists. The team has developed an overall science strategy and specific work plans to address management needs identified by WLCI partners. Major strategies include assessing known information about southwest Wyoming’s ecosystems and its

people, conducting monitoring and research to detect changes and improve knowledge, and developing a means of archiving discovered information for sharing with collaborators and the public. The Science Team has developed a comprehensive assessment, or a compilation of the current conditions from all available data for the WLCI area. The assessment includes developing methods for using spatial images to assess changing conditions, and mapping key habitat types, crucial wildlife-use areas, potential development areas, and on-the-ground habitat treatments.

Habitat Projects

WLCI habitat projects are on-the-ground activities intended to improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats and terrain, and are conducted by various WLCI partners, including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and others. Data compiled by the USGS Science Team are being used to evaluate habitat-improvement projects. Project assessment work includes acquiring and standardizing data of project activities to guide ongoing and future monitoring and research. Assessment information will identify species most likely affected by development. An important outcome of this effort will be transferability of landscape conservation models and procedures to other areas targeted for energy development.

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- Justin Caudill, Ag Program Coordinator/WLCI.....352-0378
- Larry Bentley, Eastern WY Consultant.....867-2555
- Joe Budd, JIO Office Program Coordinator.....367-5378

The following lists Habitat project types:

- Aspen Treatment Projects
- Riparian Enhancement Projects
- Sage-Grouse Projects
- Aquatic Enhancement Projects
- Sagebrush Enhancement Projects
- Wildlife Projects
- Avian Species Projects
- Invasive Species Treatment Projects

For more information on these activities or reports on specific projects please visit wlc.gov, or contact Justin Caudill at 307-352-0378 or justin.caudill@wyo.gov. †

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Oil & Gas (continued from page 1)

and some negative impacts to the resource. In the case of reclamation, fencing serves as a way for companies to protect their investment. Duration of fencing and fence type become key parts of the puzzle. In many cases, there is no need for a fence and the reclamation is strong enough to persist and thrive without the elimination of grazing.

Permanent fences provide the most protection, but can be detrimental to the reclamation effort. A permanent fence in place for more than three or four years may allow the grass community to become so predominant, it will choke out the forb and shrub components of a site, which are vital to success. In these cases, oil and gas operators often want the area grazed to knock down some of the grass and allow the forbs and shrubs room to thrive.

This may seem easily achieved by taking down the fence, but it is not that simple. Removing the fence could result in these areas becoming over utilized and may set the reclamation process backward, rather than helping it forward. The issue of duration arises again, and with it comes the issue of when to utilize that area. The next logical option may be electric fences, but they need checked more often and keeping the fence “hot” (electrified) isn’t always easy. Electric fences can be finicky and flimsy; they ground out on vegetation and

then get pushed over, leaving nothing but a tangled mess.

The easiest solution in this case may be simply adding a gate to the permanent fence around the reclamation. This provides a way to have reclamation utilized, increasing forb and shrub numbers, while still retaining the ability to protect the reclamation. Another solution may be partially fencing an area to limit utilization of the entire site. Additional tools include: salt, mineral and water to attract animals to areas, while discouraging use of another. A range rider staying with the cattle can also aid in distribution and utilization of areas and allow oil and gas operators and ranchers to co-mingle in a fashion that is conducive to success on both sides.

In reality, reclamation and grazing do occupy the same areas and the issue is not whether they can co-exist, it is how they can best co-exist. Reclamation stands separate from ranching, even though the two practices have many commonalities. Quite simply, they are in a position to benefit one another and through some clever management of each situation and a little planning, the two uses can serve as tools to one another. The proper management of these areas not only allows ranching practices to continue while development occurs but can improve the entire system for wild ungulates, insects, reptiles and the plants in the area. ✦

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Resource Management Plans Available for Public Review

Currently there are two Bureau of Land Management (BLM) major land management planning documents available for a 90-day public comment period.

The Buffalo BLM has been working on an updated Resource Management Plan (RMP) for about 4 years. This plan is intended to guide management of BLM administered lands throughout the Buffalo area (Campbell, Johnson and Sheridan counties) for the next 15-20 years. The Supplement to the Bighorn Basin Draft RMP and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is also available for a 90-day public comment period. This Supplement is intended to address greater sage-grouse habitat management in the Cody and Worland BLM areas.

The WDA has been an active cooperater throughout the development of each of these documents. As a cooperater we have been involved in face-to-face meetings and conference

calls and have submitted several hundred written comments. The WDA has focused on evaluating the effects of the proposed management on agriculture in each BLM area and has worked to make sure these effects are clearly stated in the RMPs and EISs.

If you have questions about the impacts on agriculture please contact Jessica Crowder at 307-777-7024 or jessica.crowder@wyo.gov ✦

To learn more about the Buffalo RMP/EIS and scheduled public meetings visit:

<http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/buffalo.html>

To learn more about the Bighorn Basin Supplement and scheduled public meetings visit:

<http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/rmps/bighorn.html>



Upcoming Events

September 17:	Conservation District Area I Meeting, Wright	October 17:	Conflict Resolution Day Workshop, Casper
September 18:	Conservation District Area IV Meeting, Casper	October 22:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Pinedale
September 19:	Conservation District Area II Meeting, Cheyenne	October 23:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Kemmerer
October 1-3:	Conservation District Southwest Pacific Region Meeting, Durango CO	November 7-10:	Wyoming Wool Growers Annual Meeting, Jackson
October 1:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Buffalo	November 14-16:	Wyoming Farm Bureau Annual Convention, Laramie
October 2:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Sundance	November 12-14:	Wyoming Section of the Society for Range Management, Sheridan
October 8-10:	AgriFuture, Laramie	November 18-21:	Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts Annual Convention, Jackson
October 15:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Worland	December 2-5:	Wyoming Stock Growers Winter Roundup, Casper
October 16:	Drought Contingency Workshop, Lander		

If you have questions or comments about the information in this newsletter, please contact Michelle MacDonald, WY Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources & Policy Division at 307.777.7323 or michelle.macdonald@wyo.gov.

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