



The Corner Post

Summer/Fall 2019

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources & Policy Division
Newsletter



WAY BEYOND WORDS

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Natural Resources & Policy Division
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Trying to explain to someone what a policy analyst does for the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) is difficult to say the least. One thing is certain; we read hundreds of pages of documents and make lots of edits in bright red ink. While it's important to understand the semantics of wording and sentences and how these may negatively impact federal lands grazing permittees, it's just as important for us to get out on the ground and see the allotment in person.

are all considerations when looking at areas where resource conditions need improving.

Seeing the resources is incredibly valuable, but the highlight of participating in monitoring and field visits, is the opportunity to meet agency staff and



grazing permittees face-to-face. It's difficult to build the relationship over the phone or through an e-mail. Riding on a horse or in an ATV provides great opportunity for valuable conversations. It's these conversations where our presence, actions, or questions provide a clearer picture

When we review the permit renewal documents, the handful of pictures included in the Environmental Assessment doesn't provide the context to understand the resource concerns, and possible contributing factors for the area not meeting desired conditions or standards. Previous disturbances such as wildfire or oil and gas development, geology, snow pack, wind, or even recreation use

of what a policy analyst with WDA does for our clients, the livestock grazing producers and permittees. We would offer for any of the agency staff and most importantly the federal lands grazing permittees we represent, to include us in future monitoring days and field visits. †

Quotable Quotes

"The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty. Plainly, the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of liberty.

-Abraham Lincoln

*Cover photo courtesy of Justin Williams

ONE STEP CLOSER GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY - SPA

Chris Wichmann, Manager

In the spring edition, I wrote about the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) receiving its first Master Agreement for Good Neighbor Authority. The next step in the process to getting important natural resource and agricultural work done on the ground is to finalize the Supplemental Project Agreement or SPA. The WDA has completed a SPA for the Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF). The BTNF agreed with the WDA to broaden the traditional SPA to identify more expansive types of projects (more programmatic), so the BTNF could adapt and prioritize funding to projects needing attention in real time. This would allow for more flexibility to address issues occurring on the ground in a timely manner.

We identified several broad projects to consider when funding comes available. These projects consist of; completing NEPA on an assortment of projects, rangeland monitoring, persistence and viability assessments for species, approving and implementing range improvement projects, and most importantly

to WDA the re-issuing of vacant and forage reserves allotments back into active permitted use.

The Bridger-Teton National Forest currently has approximately 17-vacant allotments and an additional 12-allotments currently listed as a forage reserve. It is important to the WDA and the agriculture industry that these allotments be placed back into active permitted use if called upon by eligible permittees/landowners.

The Good Neighbor Authority and the identified SPA is a tool we are really excited about. It is a way to address the needs of various agriculture producer's issues and needs across the forest.

The Final Step in this process will occur once the Forest Service finds funds to implement any of the projects we have identified in the SPA...Stay Tuned. †

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 posted on the WDA website at:
<http://agriculture.wy.gov/divisions/nrp>.

Meet the NR&P Extern

Rachel Romsa, NR&P Extern

Living back and forth between Wyoming and Florida my whole life gave me great cultural exposure. I would enjoy the sunshine in Florida with my mom during the school year and spend summers at my dad's family farm in Wyoming, three generations of growing wheat and raising cattle. It was humbling to see and experience how food is grown and how hard farmers work.

I was excited to have the opportunity to extern with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture because I knew I would be exposed to so many new things involving agriculture and the environment. Over the years, my interest in these areas has grown tremendously. I want to understand the challenges facing the agriculture industry and public lands, two things that I have a tremendous amount of appreciation for. This externship allowed me to learn about the issues and solutions of these topics.



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While working in the Natural Resource and Policy Division, I have been able to attend a basic mediation training. It was so enlightening to see another form of extremely valuable dispute resolution. The skill set to be a successful mediator is something I will continuously work on. I was also able to organize land management and resource management plans from Wyoming and all the Western Group States. It was very educational when I was also able to talk to a Forest Service Supervisor who help me navigate through some research on the topic of grazing allotments.

I wish my time here wasn't so short because I have enjoyed the externship very much and I hope to work with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture in the future. I learned so much being here and will take my expanded knowledge back to the University of Wyoming College of Law for my second year of law school. ✦

Resources for Neighbor vs. Neighbor Disputes

Lucy Pauley, Mediation Coordinator

Every summer, the Mediation Program receives several calls from individuals looking for resources to help with a neighbor vs neighbor dispute. Sometimes these conflicts are about a shared road or gates being left open. Perhaps they disagree about a fence needing repaired and cattle getting into someone else's pasture. Sometime the conflict will revolve around a shared irrigation ditch and maintenance needed to keep the water moving. Whether it's goats or sheep, horses or cows, neighbor/neighbor disputes are a part of rural living.

Mediation can be a tool to help neighbors come together and talk about the situation in a calm manner, with the help of a neutral mediator. The mediator helps everyone hear both sides of the story and brainstorm solutions that work for everyone. However, sometimes parties aren't ready to look for solutions or the situation has become so heated they don't feel comfortable being in the same room. As the mediation coordinator, I have a variety of resources I suggest to parties who are looking for more information on their problem.



“Avoiding a Border War: Begging a Conversation with a Neighbor about Border Fences” is published by UW Extension and it explains the legal definition of a lawful fence and landowner responsibilities for sharing the maintenance and construction costs of fencing. The article is available at <http://www.wyomingextension.org/agpubs/pubs/B1194.pdf>. “If you Fence it, They’ll State Out” was printed in UW Extension’s Barnyard and Backyards magazine. Available at http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/_files/documents/magazine/ifyoufenceit.pdf, this article gives you additional information on fence law in Wyoming and some

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NEW 2020 Calendars featuring scenes of Wyoming agriculture and information about mediation will be available in October.

Stay tuned for more information or visit our website at:

<http://wyagric.state.wy.us/divisions/nrp/mediation-program>.



Justin Caudill, Ag Program Coordinator

In April of this year the Wyoming Game & Fish Department solicited volunteers to convene a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Work Group. The work group will be involved in a suite of meetings to discuss the science, and concerns related to CWD, with the goal of generating recommendations towards updating Wyoming's Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan. Out of the call for volunteers thirty-two applicants were selected from across the state, each bringing unique knowledge and life experience to the group.

In late May and early June of 2019 five public meetings were held in differing location across the state, these meetings were held prior to the first work group meeting. The public meetings were intended to allow everyone having an interest in CWD and its affect upon Wyoming's cervid (deer, elk, and moose)herds to voice their thoughts or concerns, this information was collected and later

used as the beginning dialog for the work group during their meetings. More public meetings have been slated for December of this year; December 2 in Pinedale, December 3 in Worland, December 10 in Laramie, December 11 in Casper, and December 12 in Sheridan.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal disease of the central nervous system in mule deer, white-tail deer, elk, and moose. CD belongs to a group of rare diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). These disorders are caused when a protein in the animal becomes folded in an abnormal formation. These abnormally folded proteins are called prions. If you would like to learn more about the disease, the work group, or the current plan please visit the Wyoming Game & Fish web-site at <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Wildlife-in-Wyoming/More-Wildlife/Wildlife-Disease/CWD-in-Wyoming-Wildlife>. ✦



DISPUTES (continued from page 4)

strategies for resolving fencing disputes.

The Wyoming Livestock Board has extensive information about Wyoming fence law and livestock liens. While Wyoming is a "fence out" state for cattle, landowners who have a constructed a legal fence and still have neighboring livestock getting on to their property can apply for a livestock lien to recoup the costs of feeding and caring for trespassing livestock. More information can be found by

contacting your local brand inspector or visiting the WLB's website at <https://wlsb.state.wy.us/public/law-enforcement>.

If you would like to learn more about the mediation process or find out if your situation is appropriate for mediation, please contact Lucy Pauley at (307) 777-8788 or email lucy.pauley@wyo.gov. You can also visit the website at: <http://wyagric.state.wy.us/divisions/nrp/mediation-program>. ✦

Americans with Disabilities Act
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Upcoming Events

- September 10: Area V Meeting, Green River
- September 12: Area II Meeting, Cheyenne
- September 17: Area III Meeting, Lovell
- September 18: Area I Meeting: Gillette
- September 19: Area IV Meeting, Casper
- October 22-25: Basic Mediation Workshop, Jackson
- November 7-10: West Central States Wool Growers Convention, Evanston
- November 13-15: WY Farm Bureau Federation Centennial Annual Meeting, Laramie
- November 13-15: WY Association of Conservation Districts Convention, Buffalo
- December 9-11: WY Stock Growers Winter Roundup, Casper
- January 22-25: American Sheep Industry Annual Convention, Scottsdale
- February 8-12: National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting, Las Vegas
- February 10: Legislative Budget Session Convenes



Visit our website:

<http://agriculture.wy.gov/divisions/nrp>

If you have questions or comments about the information in this newsletter, or to obtain an email copy, please contact Michelle MacDonald, Natural Resources & Policy Division at: 307.777.7323 or michelle.macdonald@wyo.gov.

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