

WYOMING STOCK GROWERS ASSOCIATION

ISSUES UPDATE

2022

GUARDIANS OF WYOMING'S
COW COUNTRY FOR 150 YEARS

OUR PRIORITIES

- Protect Private Property Rights
- Create Value-Added Market Opportunities for Wyoming Beef
- Enhance the Role of Young Ranchers in Industry Leadership
- Tell the Ranchers' Story



HOW WSGA
IS WORKING
FOR YOU

ABOUT WSGA

The mission of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association is to serve the livestock businesses and families of Wyoming by protecting their economic, legislative, regulatory, judicial, environmental, custom and cultural interests.

Organized in 1872, WSGA is a member-driven organization, which lobbies and tracks issues at the state and national levels and works closely with the agencies affecting our industry. We participate in litigation on critical issues and work to enhance the public image of the cattle industry.

NOTE: WSGA has had long-term engagement in many issues and proactive programs. This Issues Update highlights our most recent activity.



WYOMING STOCK GROWERS
ASSOCIATION

Guardian of Wyoming's Cow Country since 1872

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FEDERAL ISSUES

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Issue - Largely as a result of incessant litigation by environmental groups, the ESA is focused primarily on listing of species with inadequate attention to socio-economic impacts. Listing decisions lack definitive reliable criteria for delisting.

WSGA Response - Strongly opposing the current administration's efforts to withdraw key regulatory changes of the previous administration regarding definitions of "habitat", and the process for designating "critical habitat".

WSGA SPECIES SPECIFIC RESPONSES -

Remain directly involved, including through litigation, on species including the sage grouse, grizzly bear and wolf.

CLEAN WATER ACT

Issue - The 2017 withdrawal of the onerous WOTUS rule left uncertainty regarding the scope of EPA jurisdiction on water quality issues.

WSGA Response - Joined with a broad coalition in opposing the withdrawal of the Trump Administration WOTUS rule. Working to assure that new rules being developed do not broaden the scope of the Act in a manner harmful to agriculture.

LIVESTOCK HAULING

Issue - Federal regulations regarding the use of Electronic Logging Devices and hours of service would have major impacts on livestock hauling necessitating rest periods or the use of relief drivers.

WSGA Response - Participated in a national coalition to seek exemptions for livestock haulers. Succeeded in securing delays in implementation and continue to work on permanent exceptions or modifications.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

Issue - NEPA is often an obstacle to timely meaningful on-the-ground resource management actions.

WSGA Response - Striving to retain changes made by the previous administration that simplify and shorten the NEPA process while giving greater weight to local input.

FEDERAL LANDS - BLM

Issue - Permit renewal, permit flexibility, wild horse management.

WSGA Response - Interacts regularly with BLM on these issues. Encouraging final action on revised grazing regulations. Actively supporting wild horse gathers.

Issue - Sage Grouse Amendments to Land Use Plans

WSGA Response - Actively supported Sage Grouse Plan

Revisions; filed motion to intervene in appeal to the 9th Circuit of decision to stay implementation of the plan revisions.

FEDERAL LANDS - FOREST SERVICE

Issue - USFS Grazing Policy; Vacant Allotments; NEPA Regulations

WSGA Response - Participated in development of amendments to the Grazing handbook; Served on independent group to advise FS on NEPA revisions. Organized a Wyoming working group on vacant allotments.

USDA

Issue - Farm Bill Programs; Trade; Animal Identification; Animal Health; Fake "Meat"

WSGA Response - Provide comments on a range of USDA programs; work with the Wyoming Congressional Delegation on legislation appropriate to these issues. Led efforts to secure passage of legislation allowing for interstate shipment of state inspected meat. Supported efforts to remove brucellosis from the Select Agent List. Opposed a mandatory program requiring RFID tags. Worked to facilitate producer participation in the CFAP program.

MARKETING

Issue - Country of Origin Labeling

WSGA Response - Advocate for all segments of the industry to proactively support voluntary COOL initiatives. Supports USDA withdrawal of current misleading "Product of USA label.

Issue - Market opportunities for Wyoming Beef.

WSGA Response - Leading initiative to enhance opportunities to enter interstate and export markets; support expansion of local processing; support Wyoming beef in K-12 school system; support local food initiatives. Led efforts to secure passage of legislation allowing for interstate shipment of state inspected meat.

Issue - "Fake Meat"

WSGA Response - Engaged in development of federal legislation to assure proper labeling of plant based and lab produced substitute meat products.

Issue - Beef Promotion

WSGA Response - Actively support the Beef Checkoff and resist all attempts to undermine the program.

STATE ISSUES

BRAND PROGRAM

Issue - Challenge to the constitutionality of the ability of law enforcement to stop vehicles for brand inspections

WSGA Response - Cooperating with the County Attorney and WLB in defense of the current system.

WATER

Issue - Water Supplies

WSGA Response - Engaged in discussions and economic analysis regarding the potential for a demand management system on the Colorado River. Assure protection of surface and ground water users from excessive groundwater withdrawal.

WILDLIFE

Issue - Impacts of Migration Corridor protections on private property and federal permits.

WSGA Response - Engaged in development of the Governor's Executive Order on Migration Corridors to protect property rights. Advocating for greater flexibility in the use of landowner licenses. Participating on a Task Force charged with developing recommendations regarding Elk Feedgrounds.

LEGISLATION

Issue - 2021 Session: Bills related to trespass, split estate, sage grouse mitigation, ag land valuation, land exchanges, bonding, College of agriculture, and the biennial budget.

WSGA Response - WSGA succeeded in securing passage of bill addressing meat processing, COVID 19 relief for agriculture and invasive species. WSGA worked to assure the defeat of legislation that would have imposed additional tax burdens on agricultural producers.

Issue - 2022 Session: Bills related to property taxation, wild horse management and vacant state lands may be considered.

WSGA Response - WSGA will be actively involved in these and other issues that come before the 2022 Session.

CURRENT LITIGATION

The WSGA Litigation Fund began in 1999. We have been involved in a wide array of cases, most often as an intervenor in support of our members' interest. Current and recently concluded cases include:

GRIZZLY BEAR

Issue - Challenge to Recovery Plan
WSGA Response - Filed an amicus brief with the Wyoming Supreme Court in support of the landowner. Received a favorable Court ruling.

Issue - Challenge to USFWS Biological Opinion regarding the renewal of the FS Upper Green River Grazing Permit.
WSGA Response - Intervened; DC District Court denied a preliminary injunction and transferred the cases to Wyoming District Court as requested by WSGA.

EMINENT DOMAIN

Issue - Use of eminent domain to access private lands to collect data for an Application to Drill.
WSGA Response - Filed an amicus brief with Wyoming Supreme Court in support of the landowner; Decision pending.

COLLABORATION

CENTENNIAL RANCH PROGRAM

WSGA is a partner with the State Historic Preservation Office in this program that annually honors Wyoming centennial farms and ranches. More information visit: www.wyoshpo.state.wy.us/CFR/

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Now in its 27th year, the Environmental Stewardship Program recognizes Wyoming ranchers for their outstanding stewardship. The winner receives a cash award and a day is set aside in the summer to honor and celebrate the winner's ranch while highlighting their stewardship practices.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

WSGA works closely with the UW, in particular the College of Agriculture and the College of Law. WSGA was successful in stopping UW reorganization that would have moved the Ag Econ Program to the College of Business. Currently engaged in efforts to establish a Natural Resource Clinic in the Law School.

COLLEGIATE CATTLE GROUPS

In 2013, WSGA created the Youth-Joint Membership program with the UW Collegiate Cattle Association. WSGA has had many student members under this program.

YOUNG PRODUCERS ASSEMBLY

Now in its 7th year, YPA provides a critical pathway for younger livestock producers to become engaged in WSGA and provide a critical perspective on programs and issues while developing their leadership skills.

AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION COALITION

WSGA is a founding board member of this western coalition that brings together agricultural and conservation organizations to work on national issues of common interest.

WYOMING STOCK GROWERS LAND TRUST

WSGA established the Land Trust in 2000 to provide a vehicle for conserving lands in agricultural production. The Trust currently holds easements on approximately 300,000 acres of land.

ENCORE GREEN ENVIRONMENTAL

WSGA has recently entered into an agreement with Encore Green Environmental to develop and foster a program for applying repurposed oil field wastewater to land to enhance forage and crop production as well as to enable landowners to market carbon credits.

OTHER COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

NATIONAL

National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Public Lands Council
Wild Horse & Burro Coalition

STATE

Wyoming CattleWomen
Wyoming Business Alliance
Wyoming Taxpayers Association
Wyoming Association for Career & Technical Education
Wyoming Beef Council

COMMUNICATION

WSGA provides members with timely information regarding the cattle industry and the Association.

We also promote the role of the Wyoming cattle industry in resource stewardship, animal care and the production of high-quality safe and nutritious beef. We do so with the following:

- *CowCountry* quarterly magazine
- *No Bull Sheet* monthly newsletter
- *eBULLETin* weekly email update
- Annual Issues Updates
- Social media initiatives on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, & YouTube
- Regular media news releases
- Meeting presentations and trade shows

EVENTS

WSGA annual events include the following:

- Wyoming Cattle Industry Convention & Trade Show - June
- WSGA/WDA Environmental Stewardship Tour - June/July
- Winter Roundup Convention & Trade Show - December
- Legislative Reception - Jan./Feb.
- National Western Stock Show's Wyoming Day - January

MEMBERSHIP

By joining the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, you have the opportunity to work with other producers and industry leaders from around the state to build a community that is dedicated to supporting and advocating for Wyoming's agriculture industry.

There are membership options for everyone:

- Producer Members
- Associate Member - *businesses & organizations*
- Supporting Member - *non-producer*

Learn more about WSGA memberships and join online at www.wysga.org or contact our office at 307-638-3942.