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.

FEDE RAL 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 - Commented on and supported ESA regulatory reforms including critical habitat designation, analysis of economic impacts and greater local input. Engaged extensively with the Senate EPW staff on amendments to the ESA that are slated for introduction in 2020. Worked to secure Senate passage of the ACE Act that provides federal compensation for livestock losses to listed species.

WSGA SPECIES SPECIFIC RESPONSES

Prairie Dog - Supported the Proposed Action to amend the Forest Plan to address management in the Thunder Basin National Grassland.

Colorado Butterfly Plant - WSGA was recognized for our role in fostering recovery and delisting of this plant in southeastern Wyoming.

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 - Supported currently proposed changes to the WOTUS rule that reduce the impact on agricultural operations.

LIVESTOCK HAULING

Issue - Federal regulations regarding the use of Electronic Logging Devices and hours of service would have major impacts on livestock hauling necessitating dangerous 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 exemptions or modifications.

FEDERAL LANDS - BLM

Issues - Permit renewal, permit flexibility, wild horse management

WSGA Response - Hosts quarterly meeting with BLM leadership on these issues; submits formal comments as appropriate.

Issue - Sage Grouse Amendments to Land Use Plans

WSGA Response - Actively supported Sage Grouse Plan Revisions; filed motion to intervene in appeal to the 10th Circuit of decision to stay implementation of the plan revisions.

FEDERAL LANDS - FOREST SERVICE

Issues - 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. Organized 2019 Summer Range Tour and hosted winter meeting to address these issues with FS leadership.

USDA

Issues - 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.

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.

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 DEVELOPMENT
Issue - Water Supplies
WSGA Response - Engaged in discussions regarding the potential for a demand management system on the Colorado River.

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

LEGISLATION
Issues - 2019 Session: Bills related to brand renewals & brand law enforcement, career/technical education, landowner liability, fake meat,
WSGA Response - WSGA successfully advocated for the interests of Wyoming agriculture on each of these issues while working to defeat many unfavorable bills.
WSGA Response - WSGA will be actively involved in these and other issues that may come before the legislature.

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’ interests. Current and recently-concluded cases include:

SAGE GROUSE
Issue - Impacts to grazing from BLM/USFS Plan Amendments for sage grouse.
WSGA Response - Filed litigation in Federal District Court, currently stayed pending outcome of proposed Plan Amendments; Appealed to the 9th Circuit on District Court injunction stopping implementation of BLM Plan Amendments.

GRIZZLY BEAR
Issue - Federal District Court decision overturning the delisting.
WSGA Response - Intervened in this case and in the appeal to the 9th Circuit.

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 25th year, the Environmental Stewardship Program recognizes Wyoming ranchers for their outstanding stewardship. The annual winner is recognized with a cash award. The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is a partner in hosting a tour of the winner’s ranch to highlight their stewardship practices.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
WSGA works closely with the UW, in particular the College of Agriculture, College of Law and the Ruckelshaus Institute. WSGA’s Executive Vice President serves on the Executive Committee of the College of Ag Dean’s Advisory Committee and served on the Search committee for the new Dean of the College.

COLLEGIATE CATTLE GROUPS
In 2013 WSGA created the Youth-Joint Membership program with the UW Collegiate Cattle Association. WSGA currently has over 30 student members under this program.

YOUNG PRODUCERS ASSEMBLY
In December of 2015, a group of young Stock Growers members created the Young Producers Assembly. In June 2017, YPA Bylaws became incorporated into WSGA Bylaws giving this youth group a seat with older WSGA generations. The Assembly is dedicated to education, networking, succession of their family and managed operations and gain more leadership roles in WSGA.

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, as the parent organization, partners with the Land Trust on many federal and state legislative and policy issues. www.wsglt.org

ENCORE GREEN ENVIRONMENTAL
WSGA has recently entered into an agreement with EGE to develop and foster a program for applying repurposed oil field waste water to land to enhance forage and crop production as well as to aid 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 and Technical Education

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 e-news
• 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
• Producer Member (4 Levels)
• Subsidiary
• Retired Rancher
• Guardian of the Grasslands
• Lifetime
• Cattlemen’s Club
• Youth & Youth-Joint Member
• Associate Member (4 Levels)
• Supporting Member

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