



BRITISH COLUMBIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Beef Cattle Industry of British Columbia

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RESOLUTIONS

**for the 2025 Annual General Meeting
to be debated on June 6, 2025**

Resolution 25-01 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS international trade and tariff issues highlight the importance of Interprovincial trade; and

WHEREAS livestock trade is moving to use of electronic manifests and records; and

WHEREAS Alberta is developing an electronic manifest for livestock; and

WHEREAS B.C. producers would benefit from use of the Alberta electronic manifest;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA urge the B.C. Government to ensure that differing privacy and other laws do not prevent B.C. cattle producers from using the Alberta electronic livestock manifest; and

FURTHERMORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA urge Ownership Identification Inc. to work with Alberta Livestock Inspection Services to make the electronic manifest available to B.C. cattle producers.

Submitted by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association

CARRIED

DEFEATED

WITHDRAWN

AMENDED

Resolution 25-02 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS COVID and high housing costs have resulted in urban residents relocating to rural livestock producing areas with no intention of raising livestock; and

WHEREAS these residents and others see no need to build or maintain proper livestock fences around their properties; and

WHEREAS the Provincial government will not fund fence construction or maintenance on private land boundaries; and

WHEREAS a lack of proper, maintained livestock fence may allow livestock access to roads and highways thereby creating a public safety issue; and

WHEREAS the *Livestock Act* does not clearly set out responsibilities for building or maintaining a fence, and does not provide for enforcement or penalties where compliance becomes an issue; leading to neighborhood disputes and litigation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA ask the Province to clarify fencing responsibilities within the *Livestock Act*, and include provisions for enforcement and penalties; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Province require subdivision approvals to include construction and maintenance of livestock fences around subdivisions in areas designated as Livestock Districts.

Submitted by Fort Fraser Livestock Association

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Resolution 25-03 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS recent international trade and tariff disputes underscore the importance of food sovereignty and wholesome, locally sourced food; and

WHEREAS CFIA requirements for removal and disposal of Specified Risk Material (SRM) from slaughtered cattle, intended to reduce the risk of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and maintain access to international markets for Canadian beef, continue to have a devastating impact on local abattoirs; and

WHEREAS it is not clear that CFIA SRM requirements remain relevant or necessary;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA ask the BC Minister of Agriculture to raise the matter of CFIA SRM requirements in the context of interprovincial trade; and

FURTHERMORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA ask the Canadian Cattle Association to seek a thorough review of the need for SRM requirements.

Submitted by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-04 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Beef (CRSB) certification promotes high standards and best practices for environmental stewardship, livestock production and animal welfare; and

WHEREAS B.C. beef producers can achieve this certification through the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program; and

WHEREAS VBP+ requires extra time and expense from producers, and rewards are slow to materialize; and

WHEREAS other Provinces provide incentives for VBP+ certified producers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA and the Ministry of Agriculture work with partners such as Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) and Beef Cattle Industry Development Fund (BCIDF) to provide incentives comparable to other provinces for B.C. (VBP+) producers.

Submitted by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-05 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS livestock accidents involving cattle on roadways and trails within range tenures are a significant concern for both the agricultural community and motorists in British Columbia; and

WHEREAS the economic impact on farmers and ranchers due to cattle lost in such accidents can be substantial, affecting their livelihood and the broader agricultural economy; and

WHEREAS existing compensation mechanisms for cattle killed on roadways are limited, with some incidents resulting in little to no reimbursement for affected producers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BCCA lobby the Government of British Columbia and relevant authorities, to create an efficient reporting and claims process for cattle killed on roadways and trails that establishes an accessible, straightforward system for livestock owners to report such incidents and receive reimbursement in a timely manner; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that this resolution be communicated to the Minister of Transportation, the Minister of Agriculture, local government officials, and relevant stakeholders to ensure the successful development and implementation of the recommended actions.

Submitted by the Clinton Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-06 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS hydro transmission lines cross farmland all over the province of BC and this land is often in tame pasture, cropland or hayfield thus negating the requirement of the utility to perform brushing on the hydro right of way; and

WHEREAS reduced maintenance to the transmission line(s) results in substantial savings over time to the utility company; and

WHEREAS the landowner gets limited benefit from the transmission lines crossing their property;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA lobby the provincial government to mandate the utility companies to compensate landowners, who are actively farming the right of way, at a fair amount that reflects the reduced maintenance costs, normally born by the utility company.

Submitted by the Cluculz Lake / Nechako Valley Regional Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-07 (V) Beef Production & Innovation Committee

WHEREAS individual livestock identification and traceability are recognized by cattle producers as important aspects in both the access to international markets for Canadian beef and cattle plus as an aid in management in the case of serious disease outbreaks; and

WHEREAS cow/calf producers are already responsible for the cost and application of RFID tags, which are the current method of identification recognized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency; and animal movement tracking by means of these tags may well be the next step in ever- increasing reporting and documentation regulations; and

WHEREAS reporting movement when cattle are managed in the course of regular annual rotations during the grazing and feeding seasons will be impractical without extensive extra labour costs and stress on the animals;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the British Columbia Cattlemen's Association urge the Canadian Cattle Association to communicate to the CFIA the following:

That the actions of moving cattle made during the regular annual movement of cattle, for grazing and feeding purposes, between premises that are recorded as "linked premises", with no change in ownership, be considered non-reportable for animal movement tracking purposes.

Submitted by the Fort Fraser Livestock Association

CARRIED

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AMENDED

Resolution 25-08 (V) Land Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS BC Beef cattle operations produce healthy, nutritious local food; and

WHEREAS many BC beef cattle operations rely on access to Crown land forage authorized by BC Ministry of Forests issued grazing tenures; and

WHEREAS hiring freezes imposed by the BC Provincial government and a lack of qualified applicants have resulted in range staff shortages within the Ministry of Forests and a subsequent lack of capacity to advertise and fill range vacancies and to renew or replace existing range tenures; and

WHEREAS this lack of capacity has resulted in beef cattle producers losing access to Crown range, thus compromising the viability of their operations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA urge Ministry of Forests District Managers to waive range tenure advertising and consultation requirements and/or utilize Direct Award provisions within the *Range Act* to maintain continuity of range tenures in situations where range staff capacity issues exist.

Submitted by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-09 (V) Land Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS the multitude of wildfire incidents in the province have created lack of ground cover, unstable soils, an increase in landslides, the influx of noxious weeds, and loss of forage for wildlife and livestock on Crown land tenures; and

WHEREAS in 1995 The Higher Level Cariboo Chilcotin Land Use Plan established “For the purposes of this Land Use Plan, grazing is considered to be generally compatible with many of the other resource uses. Therefore, these targets are expressed in terms of maintaining or enhancing the current authorized levels of ‘animal unit months’ (AUMs) in their approximate regional distribution”; and

WHEREAS resource management priorities have in general neglected to maintain or enhance AUM’s and focused primarily on enhancements to only the timber fiber resource at the detriment of grasses and forage on the landscape;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BC Cattlemen’s Association lobby the Province of BC to incorporate active restorative forage seeding by land and or air applications to restore carbon sequestration, re-establish soil stability, suppress noxious weeds, enhance moisture retention and improve AUM baseline over designated burned rangelands.

Submitted by the Chilcotin Stockmen’s Association

- CARRIED DEFEATED
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REFERENCE MATERIAL for Resolution 25-17

The Cariboo-Chilcotin Land Use Plan (CCLUP)

5.2.4 Cattle Grazing and Agriculture

Grazing/Agriculture (Feb. 15, 1995)

In this region the agriculture sector uses Crown land for grazing, hay production and opportunities for expansion of operations.

The grazing targets are not as closely tied to land area as the other resource targets. For the purposes of this Land Use Plan, grazing is considered to be generally compatible with many of the other resource uses. Therefore, these targets are expressed in terms of maintaining or enhancing the current authorized levels of "animal unit months" (AUMs) in their approximate regional distribution.

Grazing strategies focus on:

- * development of land-based targets through the production of Range Use Plans
- * promotion of sound, sustainable practices and land stewardship within the industry

*utilization of the Grazing Enhancement Fund to enhance the resource and address environmental issues.

In addition to grazing, agriculture strategies focus on:

- maintaining the existing level of hay production from Crown land
- ensuring that the industry has the continued opportunity for expansion of their land base onto suitable agricultural lands
- promoting sound, sustainable practices and land stewardship within the industry.

Resolution 25-10 (V) Land Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS proper maintenance of range fencing is essential for effective cattle management operations; and

WHEREAS adequate access for fire protection measures is necessary to ensure safety and protection of property; and

WHEREAS maintenance crews require sufficient space to perform fence repairs and conduct routine maintenance; and

WHEREAS clear access zones contribute to improved fire prevention and management capabilities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BCCA lobby the Government of British Columbia and relevant authorities:

1. To establish and maintain a right-of-way extending 10 meters on either side of the fence line; and
2. That no tree planting shall be permitted within the designated right-of-way area.

Submitted by the Clinton Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-11 (V) Land Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS many range tenures in British Columbia are underused or inactive and failure by Government to allow current and potential tenure holders to utilize these tenures to capacity has resulted in aging and damaged infrastructure, reduction in livestock stocking rates, increased forest ingrowth and the proliferation of invasive weeds; and

WHEREAS the above failures have resulted in the significant growth of forage aftermath which has already led to significant wildfire tragedy to rural communities and the surrounding landscapes (such as Lytton and Jasper);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minister of Forests be encouraged to take common sense and necessary measures to enable ranchers to use livestock grazing as a method to reduce the wildfire threat to rural communities throughout British Columbia.

Submitted by Waldo Stockbreeders Association

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Resolution 25-12 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS relocation seldom works with bears. Individuals often return to their original home territory or become “problem” animals in other communities;

WHEREAS problem or predatory bears conflict with livestock in livestock producing areas and Range Tenure areas;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Cattlemen’s Association advocate for:

- 1) Problem bears not be translocated and released within Range Tenure areas or released near or adjacent to active occupied private grazing pastures.
- 2) Problem bears only be released in areas containing available alternate and natural food / protein sources; for example, near salmon bearing streams and rivers.
- 3) Provincial Wildlife Managers to develop and institute a bear hunting/harvest program opportunity via special permits to private citizens and/or to guide outfitters specifically designed to manage/terminate habituated, problem bears.

Submitted by the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association

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Resolution 25-13 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS the scotch thistle is an invasive species identified in the Invasive Species Council of BC; and

WHEREAS the scotch thistle causes considerable challenges to ranchers as it can spread through wind, in hay and water and by attaching to clothing or animal fur, and ranchers seek solutions to addressing this invasive species;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BCCA coordinate or attempt to facilitate research to develop a biological control for the scotch thistle.

Submitted by North Okanagan Livestock Association

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Resolution 25-14 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS invasive weeds continue to play a large role in pasture manage. Invasive weeds continue to take over from native grasses and tame grass lands. The cost and time to replant and or mitigate land lost to the invasive weeds is extremely expensive; and

WHEREAS nurseries and “wild flower” seed packs containing invasive weeds continue to be sold to the public with no warning. These flowers and or plants are escaping intended areas and encroaching on neighbouring properties and or crown lands. In many cases negatively affecting pasture lands and fields intended for beef forage;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Cattlemen’s approach the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and ask them to prove oversight over plants sold in nurseries and in seed mixes by eliminating or placing warning labels on plants or seed mixes that contain invasive plants that are negatively impacting agriculture.

Submitted by Quesnel Cattlemen’s Association

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Resolution 25-15 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS British Columbia and Quebec are the only Provinces that are not part of the Canadian Driver’s License Compact which enables inter-provincial enforcement and reciprocal recovery of fines for infractions of users of Crown land; and

WHEREAS many of those infractions in our province are committed by out of Province users who can ignore any fines issued by B.C. enforcement officers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BCCA lobby the Government of B.C. take the necessary action to become part of the Canadian Driver’s License Compact.

Submitted by Waldo Stockbreeders Association

CARRIED

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Resolution 25-16 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS British Columbia’s cattlemen require adequate and timely access to irrigation water, however unlicensed users are diverting water without consideration of the “First In Time, First In Rights” enshrined in water licences held by British Columbia’s ranchers; and

WHEREAS the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and Ministry of Forests (FOR) have been slow to, or refuse to, investigate complaints lodged with the ministries regarding unauthorized water use;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the British Columbia Cattlemen’s Association lobby government to ensure that complaints and issues lodged with the ministries are responded to in a timely fashion and that the *Water Sustainability Act* be enforced where unlicensed water users are impacting the ability of ranchers to access the volume and flow of irrigation water they are licensed for.

Submitted by the Windermere District Farmers’ Institute

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- WITHDRAWN
- AMENDED

Resolution 25-17 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS 5% of British Columbia’s land is suitable for agriculture and 2.7% is class 1 through 4, every effort must be made to keep said land in agricultural production; and

WHEREAS purchases of land by land conservancy groups has excluded, limited or restricted the type of agricultural practice on said land;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the British Columbia Cattlemen’s Association lobby federal, provincial and civic government to ensure that any land purchase which includes a government participation with public funds and is within the Agricultural Land Reserve that agriculture is allowed and encouraged to continue in whichever fashion is congruent with the land type, whether that be row cropping, field crops, forage production or grazing.

Submitted by Windermere District Farmers’ Institute

- CARRIED
- DEFEATED
- WITHDRAWN
- AMENDED

Resolution 25-18 (V) Environmental Stewardship Committee

WHEREAS the BC Cattlemen’s Association (BCCA) notes the significant rise in elk population, their non-migratory behavior, and the impact on agriculture; and

WHEREAS the repeated grazing by ungulates, particularly in the spring, is affecting plant health and stand longevity, with no available assistance; and

WHEREAS there is an imperative to enhance the present compensation and management programs in order to better support ranchers in addressing these impacts; and

WHEREAS this multifaceted resolution aims to enhance support for cattlemen affected by wildlife interactions to ensure sustainable agricultural practices, in turn, food security in British Columbia;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BCCA request actionable results on wildlife damages, winter feed loss, spring crop damage, structural damage and wildlife mitigation as guided by the supplemental information provided.

Submitted by Kootenay Livestock Association

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1) Supplemental Information for Resolution 25-18

Agriculture Wildlife Program:

- Expedite payout times for wildlife damages and losses.
- Review the crop loss compensation model to more accurately represent sustained year-round losses.

Winter Feed Loss and Winter/Spring Crop Damage Program:

- Address feed losses resulting from elk consumption of hay in winter.
- Address hay production losses resulting from spring/early summer elk foraging.
- Create separate funding model for damages incurred by farmers due to wildlife damage to crops during the spring/winter.

Structural Damage:

- Address structural damage (particularly fencing) damaged by wildlife.

Wildlife Damage Mitigation Program:

- Review hunting regulations in consideration of increasing tag numbers while permitting harvest of cow and yearling elk or changing hunting season timing to better reflect maximal agricultural crop damage.
- Consider implementing Private Landowner Tags to more effectively manage wildlife populations while also safeguarding agricultural interests.
- Review mitigation models in other jurisdictions having similar issues.

2) White Paper (Elk) by the Kootenay Livestock Association

Introduction

Agricultural conflict with wildlife, particularly with elk, has become a growing issue for ranchers. As elk populations increase, they pose significant challenges to agricultural operations, affecting both the productivity and profitability of ranching. This paper explores the impacts of elk on ranchers, the benefits to elk populations, and the current challenges and solutions related to managing this conflict.

The agricultural-wildlife conflict is not new, but its current scale has become unsustainable. The increasing elk numbers and the resulting damage are leading to significant frustration and financial losses for ranchers. Factors contributing to the proliferation of elk include potential mismanagement of hunting regulations, lack of suitable habitat in migratory regions, diminished migration routes, and the elk's habituation to agricultural crops.

Impacts on Ranchers

1. Reduction in Crop Yields

Elk significantly impact crop yields through foraging, leading to substantial annual losses for ranchers. As elk populations grow, their impact on crops worsen over time. This continuous pressure results in reduced yields and increased costs, jeopardizing the long-term viability of farming operations.

2. Fencing Costs and Challenges

Ranchers invest heavily in fencing to manage their private lands appropriately. However, fencing presents its own set of challenges. It requires regular maintenance and upgrades to be effective. Wildlife has little regard for livestock fencing. The added time and cost of repairing fences damaged by wildlife can be overwhelming.

3. Loss of Hay Feeding

Elk also affects the supply of hay meant for feeding livestock. When elk eat hay intended for livestock ranchers must incur additional costs to replace it. This not only impacts the immediate availability of feed but also strains financial resources, particularly during adverse weather conditions when hay is essential. The compensation program is intended to supplement the cost of ranchers having to buy hay; however, the program has its limitations. First of all, the compensation only accounts for 80% of the measured value lost. Secondly, that value is based on market values that are averaged. The market value seldom represents the actual value and ranchers having to replace hay often end up paying much higher costs.

Benefits to Elk

1. Reliable Year-Round Feed Source

Non-fenced agricultural lands provide a reliable year-round feed source for elk. This consistent food supply supports healthy elk populations and contributes to their overall well-being.

2. Proximity to Calving Grounds

Agricultural lands are often located near calving grounds, offering elk a convenient and safe place to feed while remaining close to their birthing areas. This proximity is beneficial for the survival and growth of elk calves.

3. Security and Lack of Predators

Agricultural areas offer a degree of security from predators, providing elk with a safe feeding environment. This reduces the risk of predation and supports population growth and encourage the habits that elk have established.

4. Enhanced Elk Populations and Habitats

The benefits of agricultural lands contribute to burgeoning elk populations, and which in turn benefit the hunting community and wildlife enthusiasts. Increased elk numbers and habitat enhance hunting opportunities and wildlife observation, supporting local economies and conservation efforts.

Landowners provide a service to wildlife which is coming at the expense of the ranchers' bottom line.

Compensation and Wildlife Exclusion Fencing Program

1. Current Measures

To address the conflict, compensation and fencing programs were developed to provide relief to both ranchers and wildlife. These programs aim to reimburse ranchers for damages caused by elk and assist with fencing costs to protect agricultural lands.

2. Inadequacies of Current Measures

Despite these programs, current measures are insufficient. *The fence cost sharing program no longer exists*, and the growing elk populations and extensive use of wildlife exclusion fencing have placed increased pressure on unfenced landowners. The density of fences has led to new problems, including disrupted migratory paths, increased highway mortality, and impediments to escaping wildfires.

Need for Modernization and Solutions

1. Problems with Existing Fencing

Existing wildlife exclusion fencing has proven problematic (hence the cancellation of the program).

- They obstruct traditional migratory paths and new corridors that may lead wildlife to the backcountry, this contributes to increased highway and railway mortality and limiting the elk's ability to escape wildfires.
- Wildlife exclusion fences also create significant barriers for both wildlife movement and ranching operations.
- Wildlife exclusion fencing also creates more pressure on landowners who choose not to fence.

One of the barriers for landowners is the cost, for the initial installation and upkeep and repair.

2. Required Solutions

The current compensation model needs to be reviewed to reflect actual losses, including damage to infrastructure and the impact of year-over-year grazing stress on irrigated fields. A modernization program should address these challenges by providing better compensation and developing strategies to move elk away from private agricultural lands. Effective solutions may include:

- Improved fencing designs
- Enhanced elk population management
- Implementation of Private Landowner Tags (with no stipulations)
- Hunting pressure on agricultural lands
- Increased adequate habitat creation

These strategies are sensitive and may take time to accomplish the desired effects. In the meantime, ranchers are absorbing much too high a cost to raise elk. Collaboration with unfenced ranchers needs to occur. If we want to see family ranches continue in the Kootenays and we don't want to see more wildlife exclusion fences being installed action needs to be taken.

- Increased financial support for ranchers affected by wildlife conflicts
- Timely payout on the Agricultural Wildlife Program is essential

Maintaining unfenced grasslands could be a key component of a new approach. Unfenced ranchers might also collaborate with government wildlife managers to address other wildlife measures, leveraging the environmental services provided by these lands. Additionally, ranchers could enhance encroached forests through thinning operations to improve grassland ecosystems outside of government Environmental Restoration (ER) programs.

We strongly suggest landowner tags be given to ranchers by formula based on the quantity (and level of elk pressure) of private land acreages to do with as they please. In other areas of the world this method has been used successfully and gives the elk monetary value, in turn this also strengthens the argument of having them on the landscape. These landowner tags could be sold or given by ranchers to local hunters or outfitters which could help ease some the financial burdens of buying feed/seed/fertilizer and would allow the landowner to 'vet' anyone hunting on their land (liability issues). A problem with the current limited entry private land tags is the liability factor. When strangers come onto a farm to hunt, it opens the door to many potential issues relating to liability such as shooting in the vicinity of livestock and residential homes. If it were a landowner tag, then the rancher could, in a sense, mitigate these prospective problems or guide the hunter themselves to alleviate any issues. If it was sold to an outfitter, they could have a trained guide accompany the hunter which would also mitigate any said potential issues. In turn, the ranchers would feel more at ease and in control of who they allow on their land and of negating any liability issues and can bring financial gain to the ranch itself. By and large this could have the potential to benefit all parties. Understandably, there are pros and cons to this management tactic as well.

In summary the pros of landowner tags:

- Bring monetary value to elk on the landscape
- Increased financial gain for ranchers to accost rising prices of feed/fencing
- Mitigate elk from 'hovering' on prime hay land and pressuring them off private land and onto public land
- Increased hunting opportunities to local hunters and residents alike in areas they previously wouldn't be able to hunt in
- Reduce the potential of liability stress of having hunters on their land for private landowners
- Offers a proven management technique to the area that could simplify the issue for government

Alternatively, if collaboration fails, compensation program funds could be redirected to unfenced ranchers for establishing wildlife exclusion fences.

Conclusion

The conflict between ranchers and elk requires a nuanced approach that balances the needs of both agricultural operations and wildlife conservation. The sustained establishment of wildlife exclusion fencing over the past decade has magnified the losses experienced by unfenced ranchers. While current compensation and fencing programs have offered some relief, they are no longer adequate in managing growing habituated elk populations and their impacts. A comprehensive modernization program along with potential landowner tags and more effective solutions are essential to address the challenges faced by ranchers and ensure sustainable coexistence with elk. It is not enough to talk about what must be done; it is time to actually do!