

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM27 – Wildlife-friendly fencing



Enhancement Description

This enhancement involves the use of wildlife-friendly fencing techniques that allow free passage of daily wildlife movement and seasonal migration; and/or increase visibility to prevent entanglement and mortality.

Land Use Applicability:

Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland and Forestland

Benefits

Fencing used to define property boundaries and contain livestock creates barriers and traps to wildlife movement, fragments habitats and separate herds. Improper fence design results in injury and death through entanglement and collision. Wildlife-friendly fencing techniques allow for safe passage and increase fence visibility improving wildlife habitat, granting access to food, shelter and water.

Criteria

One or more of the following wildlife-friendly fencing techniques will be implemented to accommodate targeted wildlife species. The minimum amount of fence treated must be equal to or greater than the length of 20% of the total existing permanent fence.

- 1) Improve Passage through New Fence: New fence planned for installation will meet NRCS state standards for wildlife-friendly fence for height, wire spacing and type, etc.;
- 2) Improve Passage through Existing Fence: Existing fence will be retrofitted, adjusted, or replaced to meet NRCS state standards for wildlife-friendly fence for height, wire spacing and type, etc., and/or openings and crossings will be created to facilitate wildlife movement. If fence is no longer needed, removal is also acceptable. Methods used to create openings or crossing include, but are not limited to:
 1. Lay-down fence
 2. Seasonal electric fence
 3. Adjustable wire fence
 4. Underpass fence with raised wire
 5. Pole top fence;



- 3) Improve visibility of new or existing fences in wildlife travel corridors or other high-risk areas for fence collisions using durable flagging, vinyl markers, PVC pipe or other similar materials that will meet NRCS state standards for spacing, interval and size. Fences that often present a high risk for collision or entanglement are those fences located in frequently travelled areas, such as, fences near water, near breeding grounds (e.g., grouse leks), or in corridors between seasonal habitats. A good example of improving visibility for prairie grouse (e.g. prairie chickens, sage grouse, etc.) in rangeland can be found at:
www.suttoncenter.org/pages/fence_marking_instructions

NOTE: If no state criteria exist follow criteria in Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks publication “A Landowner’s Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences”.

Documentation Requirements

1. Identify type(s) of wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used
2. Location on a map showing where wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used
3. Photograph each wildlife-friendly fencing techniques used



Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM27 – *Wildlife Friendly Fencing*

References:

- **NRCS Practice 382 – Fence**
- **"Creating the Wildlife Friendly Fence"**
<http://fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors/HTML/articles/2009/fencing.htm>
- **"How to Build Fence with Wildlife in Mind"**
<http://fwpiis.mt.gov/content/getItem.aspx?id=34461>

Primary recommendations for wildlife-friendly fencing are:

- The top wire or rail should be smooth and 42 in. or less from the ground.
- At least 12 in. should be left between the two top wires.
- The bottom post or wire should be smooth and at least 16 in. off the ground.
- Fence design should be varied, with some lower sections included to allow for easy crossings at some areas.
- A high-visibility wire or flagging should be used to provide visual markers for animals.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.