



2021 AGM Summary

On February 24 the Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association (AGLA) held their Annual General Meeting (AGM) virtually via Zoom. The AGM creates an important link between the membership and the board. It allows AGLA to inform our members about the activities of the AGLA and provides an open forum to hear the concerns from members.

2021 Grazing Disposition Rentals

2021 is the second year of the phased implementation of the new rental formula. The grazing disposition rentals for this year are \$2.95/AUM in the Zone 1 (south) and \$1.74/AUM in Zone 2 (north).

Tenure for stewardship was implemented in 2019. Since then, 43.1% of the grazing lease area inspected has been recommended for extended tenure. Provincially the average is just over 14% of all grazing leases.

AGLA Activities Update

AGLA Chairman Kyle Forbes updated on the group's activities over the past year. AGLA has been diligently working on promoting our industry and the role of the leaseholder in the responsible stewardship of grazing lease lands for public, ecological and economic benefits.

AGLA continues to support its leaseholder members by advocating on a number of issues; the suite of concerns regarding access, the recognition of the property rights that are associated with a lease contract, the recognition of the work of the leaseholder as the caretaker of the land as well as operational issues for the day-to-day management of grazing leases.

Leaseholder Valuation Report

AGLA contracted Serecon to complete a report detailing the economic value of the costs borne by disposition holders through their legislatively required management activities on Crown lands. Many of these costs would otherwise be borne by the province.

The study found that leaseholders provide upwards of \$70 million in value to the province of Alberta annually for their role overseeing Crown land under grazing disposition. It is difficult to see a scenario where the value the leaseholder provides could be provided in any other way that would be more cost effective to the province.

Crown land and private land pasture lease cost were also compared. Cost surveys show additional costs are undertaken by Crown land lessees to fulfill their legislated requirements. When adjustments are made for all things being equal, the costs of managing livestock on a per unit basis is as much or more on Crown lands than on private lands due to the additional requirements.

The full report and summary available on the AGLA website or by request from the office.

Updating Grazing Lease Contract

Government updated the grazing lease contract to increase the efficiency of processing renewals and to address inconsistencies with legislation. AGLA worked alongside other industry groups and with government for most of 2020 to ensure leaseholder rights were not diminished in this update. Leaseholders will see a change in the format of their lease contracts when their leases come up for renewal.

Department backlog reduction initiative

A backlog on processing grazing lease transfers and renewals in the department has been stretching for up to four years in some cases. This has caused significant barriers to commerce for leaseholders and is something leaseholders have lobbied the government to rectify for years.

Government is currently running a focused program to address the backlog and there has been great progress. Government estimates the backlog should be completely depleted by the end of April.

Recreational Access

Recreational access has continued to be a point of potential conflict between leaseholders and recreational users with the rules around the use of undeveloped road allowances being a particular issue this past year. As this issue is escalating, the Minister has asked the grazing groups to get together with the recreational groups to table some solutions.

When recreationalists are acting in contravention to the regulation, enforcement actions under the Recreational Access Regulations (RAR) can be taken. Leaseholders are encouraged to call the Report-A-Poacher line and even submit a picture of the user's license plate. Even if the officer doesn't end up catching the perpetrator, data can be collected that more accurately reflects the scope of the problems for the leaseholder. Leaseholders may need to press charges since some officers won't want to respond to a call when there are no charges laid. It does not automatically require the leaseholder to attend court if they press charges.

Last year, the top three RAR enforcement actions by offence type were:

- 1) Entering land re grazing lease / farm development lease without providing proper information / making contact with contact person (This makes up 2/3 of enforcement actions)
- 2) Fail to comply with terms / conditions imposed by agricultural disposition holder
- 3) Fail to comply with prohibitions/restrictions on land re: grazing permit/cultivation permit/grazing license/authorization to harvest

The province is looking at developing a new recreational access platform this year and will be relying on consultations with leaseholders and recreationalists through the development process.

Grazing Disposition Holders Operational Committee

AGLA has been an active participant in the Grazing Disposition Holders Operational Committee (GDHOC). The membership of the committee reflects regional representation across the province. It includes AGLA, Alberta Beef Producers, Western Stock Growers Association, Northern Alberta Grazing

Association, East Central Alberta Grazing Association, Sustainable Canada, Special Areas, Rocky Mountain Forest Grazing Reserve Association and a number of government representatives.

The new chair is Executive Director of Lands Delivery and Coordination South Rob Simieritsch, representing a direct link from the committee to department executive.

The workplan for the next year is robust and reflects provincial concerns. The list includes initiatives to reduce red tape, operational efficiencies, policy clarification/enhancements, and succession management challenges. Some of these action items will need significant work including with other stakeholders.

Elections

The AGM is also the forum where the member representatives are elected to the board of directors. This year's election resulted in welcoming new directors Bill Heidecker and Kevin Stewart from Zone B. Darcy Wills, Larry Sears, Brian Loewen and Art Wheat were all re-elected to the board.

We are elated our board has expanded over the past couple of years with effective province-wide representation. This truly makes our organization stronger and able to effectively advocate on behalf of our members. The board is comprised of very capable individuals who are committed to the continual effort it takes to maintain and improve the grazing lease system.

There are still some vacancies in the board – two directorships in Zone A1.

Resolutions

The AGM is the opportunity for any members to bring forward and/or discuss any resolutions they see fit for the association. This year we had four resolutions tabled for the membership to discuss.

RESOLUTION 2021-01

WHEREAS recreational access pressure, especially in the last year, continues to be a growing concern for leaseholders,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AGLA look for solutions in terms of access management and work with the department to bring about more meaningful enforcement and education of the current regulations. THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that AGLA apply for funding from the range sustainability fund to complete a literature review of the impact of recreation on Crown lands.

RESOLUTION 2021 – 02

WHEREAS the current government is actively encouraging increased access to and use of Crown land through messaging and implementation of a Trails Act and considering enforcement is severely lacking in many jurisdictions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AGLA advocate for the government of Alberta to increase conservation officer numbers in understaffed locations either through policy change dealing with officer transfers or recruitment.

RESOLUTION 2021 – 03

WHEREAS community grazing associations, once each member has more than 20 head per member, must accept new members as they apply;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AGLA research and pursue policy to have that number be raised to 40 head per member.

RESOLUTION 2021 – 04

WHEREAS part of the new structure for determining the yearly grazing lease fee is based around the investments leaseholders make in Crown lands and that the cost survey is due to be completed in 2021;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AGLA advocate for the department to continue with timely lease cost surveys to ensure fees accurately reflect current market situations faced by producers.

If you have any questions about this year's AGM or you would like more information on the issues that were discussed at the meeting, please feel free to contact any of the board members listed below:

Name	Title	Zone	Phone	Email
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Darcy Wills	Secretary/Treasurer	A	403-344-4312	drwills@cciwireless.ca
Larry Sears	Past Chairman	A	403-625-0417	larrylsears@gmail.com
Don Broomfield	Director	A	403-625-6368	broomfield.agla@gmail.com
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