

Chairman's Message:

With the closing of 2017 we look back on what we have been working on with the hope we have made progress.

The rental rate and assignment fee proposal is finally in the hands of government so hopefully we can turn our attention to other issues. It seems like we dealt with that issue most of my nearly 20 –year term on AGLA.

This past year our focus has moved on to issues like recreational access, something that seems to be important to leaseholders as well as recreation users. From our view the sheer number of hunters asking for access can be overwhelming. In my area we get 20 – 30 phone calls a day and even more in the foothills. Cut fences, open gates, shot cattle can be infuriating. A particularly sensitive issue for us the past year is the risk of fire. Fire bans were able to give us some small measure of protection. But it only takes one or two bad apples to spoil it for everyone else. Too bad former Minister Don Sparrow's motto of "Use Respect" doesn't always have traction.

We were saddened by the tragic loss of our Chairman, James Hargrave this past year. We definitely owe James a debt of gratitude for his efforts on our behalf. The AGM will include a discussion on how AGLA can pay tribute to James. The WSGA is in the process of establishing a scholarship fund in James' name. It would be appropriate for AGLA to make a contribution to that fund.

Another person I would personally like to thank is AGLA Manager Lindsye Dunbar. With the loss of James, Lindsye has been a big asset in getting me transitioned to the role of Chairman, as I certainly didn't expect to be stepping into that role when I agreed to become Vice Chairman.

I hope to see many of you at the AGM in early March.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Rutledge



AGLA Chairman Pat Rutledge

Your AGLA Board

Darcy Wills • Coutts
403.344.4312

Pat Rutledge* • Monitor
403.577.2382

Larry Sears • Stavely
403.549.2481

Terril Pierson* • Wardlow
403.566.2348

Kevin Meneice* • High Prairie
780.523.1252

Kyle Forbes* • Redcliff
403.504.6295

Dan Gray* • Big Stone
403.633.1925

Nate Horner • Pollockville
403.633.-1925

Cory Hines • Marwayne
780-205-3086

*Indicates term expires 2018

Annual General Meeting Notice

The 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 pm on March 7, 2018 at the Heritage Inn and Conference Centre in Brooks, AB

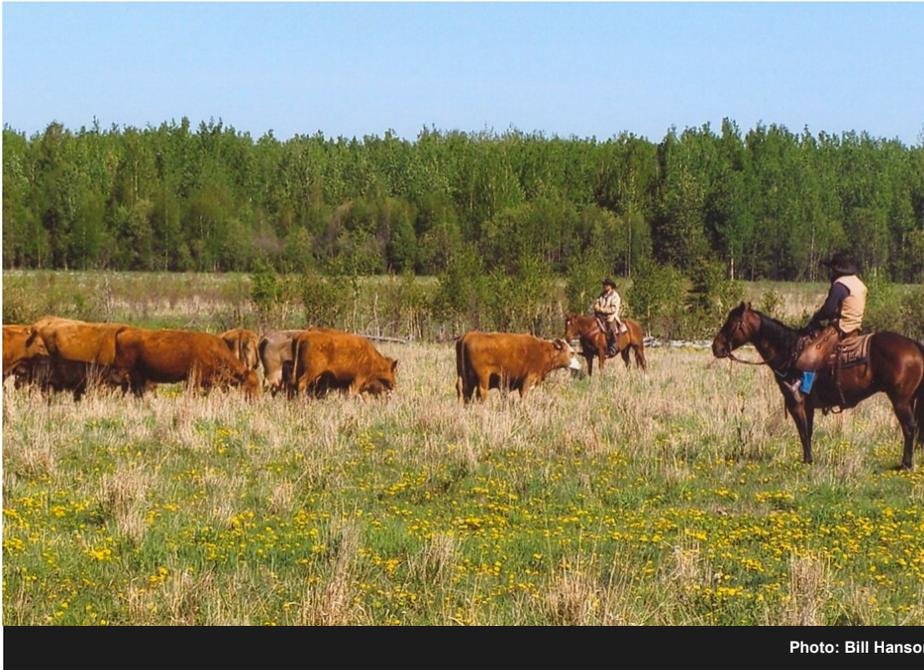


Photo: Bill Hanson

AGLA Year in Review

New Director

At last year's AGM, Lanni Bristow stepped down from his position as Zone C director on the board. Lanni has served on the board since the creation of the AGLA and his service is greatly appreciated. Cory Hines of Marwayne was elected to replace Lanni on the board as representative from Zone C.

The board is comprised of a very capable group of individuals who as a group are tremendous advocates and representatives for the grazing leaseholders in Alberta. They are committed to the continual effort it takes to maintain and improve the grazing lease system.

We still have a vacancy in Zone B and are hoping to fill it at the next AGM.

A complete listing of the board of directors along with their contact information can be found on our website www.albertagrazinglease.ca.

Operational Grazing Disposition Holders Advisory Committee

This past year marks the first full year of existence of the Operational Grazing Disposition Holders Committee with regular quarterly meetings. The goal of the committee is to create an open and informed dialogue between the leaseholder community and the Department.

The membership includes Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association, Alberta Beef Producers, Western Stock Growers' Association, Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve Association, Northern Alberta Grazing Association, Central Alberta Grazing Association, Sustainable Canada, Special Areas and a number of government representatives.

This year the committee finalized the proposal to modernize the grazing lease rental rate and assignment fees. After over 20 years of the minister freezing the rates on a yearly basis, the industry has collaborated on a new proposal to update the calculation. The proposal is based on the profitability of the industry with leaseholders paying less in time of less profit and more in times of more profit.

All leaseholders in the province should have received a letter outlining the proposal with resources for more information. The proposal is available on our website along with an FAQ document that should be able to answer many questions leaseholders have. AGLA Chairman James Hargrave attended a few industry meetings to present the proposal and answer questions in person.

2018 AGM Agenda

12:30 pm Registration & Coffee

1:00 pm Approval of Agenda & Chairman's Report – Pat Rutledge

1:15 pm Treasurer's Report – Darcy Wills

1:30 pm Election

1:50 pm Coffee break

2:15 pm EAP Activity Update

2:45 pm Open discussion

3:30 pm Questions, Resolutions

4:00 pm Adjournment

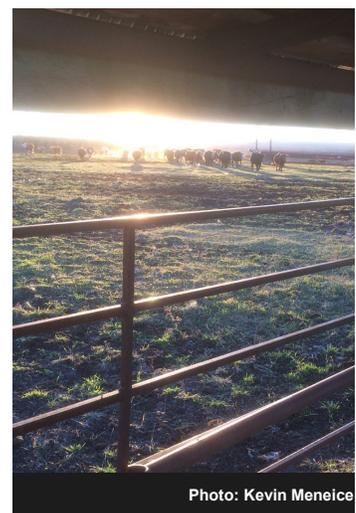


Photo: Kevin Meneice

Grazing Advisory Committee (continued)

Leaseholders with further questions on the proposal can feel free to call any of the AGLA executive, the AGLA office or the director for their area.

The Operational Grazing Disposition Holders Committee also started to work on updating the Grazing Lease Code of Practice this year. Only preliminary work has been done so this will be an agenda item into the upcoming year. Also on the list of topics to tackle in upcoming committee meetings include recreational access issues, extended tenure based on a risk approach (tenure for stewardship), succession planning and management challenges, administration and management of heritage rangelands.

Grazing Advisory Panel

In July 2015 the Auditor General released a review of the grazing lease system in Alberta with one resulting recommendation: that the Ministry of Environment and Parks define and communicate the environmental, social, and economic objectives it expects grazing leases should provide all Albertans, as well as relevant performance measures to monitor and ensure those objectives are met.

To address this recommendation, the Grazing Advisory Panel was established including a number of beef industry groups including AGLA, NGOs and government to define the objectives and performance measures. Over the course of the past year, the group met to build a document to reflect that which we already know in the industry. The heavy lifting is pretty much finished and the document should be completed in the next few months.

Loss of our Chairman

In October AGLA was shaken by the sudden passing of our Chairman James Hargrave.

James was a rare man. He was wise beyond his years but also approached everything with youthful energy and passion. James was humble and genuine. James instilled a deep respect for him in those he left in his wake. Such an incredible advocate for leaseholders, James used to say the grasslands were part of him. And he put his time and effort forward to reflect his passion for the industry we all love. In addition to being an exceptional Chairman for the AGLA, he also served as Vice President of the Western Stock Growers' Association, volunteer fire fighter and was also the first to step forward to lend a helping hand to anyone.

But for all the time and effort James spent attending meetings and events tirelessly advocating for beef producers, grazing leaseholders and rural life, that all came second to his love and devotion to his wife, Liz, and their four young children. While James was working on the ranch, he was very rarely without at least one of his kids keeping him company. And while he attended nearly all industry meetings, he was always the first one out the door after the meeting on the chance he could catch his kids before they went to bed.

In all your life you would be incredibly lucky to meet even half a dozen people the same caliber as James. The loss is indescribably huge. He will be forever missed.

The Western Stock Growers' Association is setting up a fund in memory of James. More information will be available in the next couple of months with the opportunity to donate to the legacy.

AGLA Vice Chairman Pat Rutledge will step up into the role of Chairman at least until the AGM. Pat has served on the AGLA board since it's inception and has working on grazing lease issues for much longer than that. With his experience and knowledge, we are confident he will do the role justice.



James Hargrave giving a tour of Hargrave Ranch to EAP Minister Phillips, AF Minister Carlier and Speaker Wanner, sharing his story and message about stewardship of Alberta's grasslands by grazing leaseholders.

Upcoming Burning Issues

We have seen recreational access slowly and increasingly becoming a bone of contention between leaseholders and recreational users. With the growing population, the demand for places to recreate is also growing, putting Crown lease land in the spotlight to be these places. Fueled by well-disseminated messaging that includes misinterpretation of the rights of the leaseholder and the all too familiar cry of "that land belongs to all Albertans and as an Albertan I can be on it whenever I want, you can't stop me!", relations between leaseholders and recreational users has been steadily declining.

Under the regulations, leaseholders must allow reasonable access. But what happens when the person or people you have granted access to does damage – to the infrastructure and improvements the leaseholder has invested in, the resources on the lease that the leaseholder stewards and depends upon, to the livestock harvesting the resource on the lease? The wildfire damage and danger this past summer and fall seems unprecedented yet one leaseholder found a cigarette butt left behind by a recreational user on his lease land. After the loss of life, homes, buildings, grass and livestock we have seen this fall due to fire, the respect for the use of the land on the part of this particular user is still so low it makes leaseholders' blood run cold. And they can't be alone in their lack of respect, although it is usually the few that wrecks it for the majority.

What is the solution to this brewing problem? What can AGLA do as an organization to neutralize the gathering storm? This will be a major topic of discussion at the AGM on March 7 in Brooks. Please join us!



STAY INFORMED ON THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT YOUR GRAZING LEASE

KEEP YOUR AGLA MEMBERSHIP UP TO DATE. JOIN THE AGLA EMAIL LIST.

Contact us at: albertagrazing-lease@gmail.com or 587-435-4072

**The AGLA respects and will protect your confidentiality. Your email address will only ever be used to send you updates and information on AGLA and your grazing lease. It will never be shared with anyone else.

