

Please renew your membership and keep in touch

AGLA's mission is *"To protect Alberta's grazing leaseholders from erosion of rights and property and to preserve the assets and income of grazing lease owners."*

We strive to be the voice of reason in matters of land use, property rights and surface rights. AGLA has represented the interests of leaseholders provincially, nationally and locally since 1998.

Grazing leaseholders undertake a significant role on Crown lands under grazing disposition. The extensive experience and knowledge of grazing disposition holders is an important resource in ensuring the health and responsible use of the rangelands. Crown lands under grazing disposition have benefitted from the intergenerational knowledge of its stewards, and the succession of those stewards depends on security and profitability. In fact, more extended tenure for stewardship renewals have been awarded in the past year than anytime since it has been put in place. So we know that leaseholders are doing a great job. Continued stewardship of Crown land in Alberta is reliant on the recognition of property rights in grazing leases and legislation supporting it. This is where AGLA comes in.

The advocacy work that AGLA does is critical because the value of the leaseholder is far too often diminished and dismissed. This needs to be a continual conversation with policy and decision makers or our value will be lost in

the shuffle. Most of the work done for leaseholders is done by the volunteers that sit on the board of directors. To keep costs down, AGLA directors do not take an honorarium nor do they claim expenses. The administration and other management duties is filled with a part-time contract position. AGLA is run solely on memberships and donations so the support of the membership is everything. It keeps the organization accountable and closely tied to the producers we represent.

We have a couple of things we ask of our membership:

- 1) If you are already a member, please renew your membership for 2024. If you have not purchased a membership, please consider doing so to sustain the important work AGLA does for leaseholders. At \$100 per year, it is the best deal out there for representation and advocacy. AGLA also accepts donations to help with operational costs.
- 2) Keep in touch. We are a voluntary membership organization which means we are accountable only to our membership. This model relies on feedback and input from the membership. There are a few ways to give your input. Contact your AGLA director, contact Lindsye at the office, join us at one of our regional meetings. We want to see you at our AGM. Please feel free to get in touch if you have an issue.



AGLA UPCOMING MEETINGS

JANUARY 31, 2024 2:00 PM
St Paul Ag Service Building
St Paul, AB

FEBRUARY 15, 2024 2:00 PM
CanAlta Hotel
Rocky Mountain House, AB

AGLA AGM
MARCH 6, 2024 1:00 PM
Coast Lethbridge Hotel and Conference Centre
Lethbridge, AB





AGLA
Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association

JOIN US!

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year started out promising with some fresh faces in government, a grazing framework nearing completion and snow on the ground in much of the province. However it quickly became an incredibly challenging year for many producers. Whether you were affected by fire, drought or predators it doesn't seem like there was an end to the struggles. With no snow and +11 temperatures as I write this at the end of December it feels as though there is little to be hopeful about. If you have had to make the hard call this fall or are waiting it out, I feel your pain. As does the majority of our industry. High calf prices this fall were little consolation for the complete lack of moisture, being burnt out or losing 40 head or more to bears or wolves. But, this ain't our first rodeo. Hang in there.

Near the end of April, Ministers Loewen and Savage signed off on the Rangeland Grazing Framework. This framework came out of months of conversations and input from industry representatives and department officials. The intent of this framework is to recognize the importance of sustainable livestock grazing on crown lands and to support the partnership that exists between the ranchers who hold these leases and the province. It will provide guidance for future policy and will help to ensure that leases remain successful and viable for future generations.

Through the summer we were in contact with leaseholders across the province that were dealing with significant issues on their leases when dealing with roads and motorized access. These issues can be incredibly frustrating and are not made easier when people who want to be bullies are involved. These issues are far more common than a lot of us realize and sometimes the last thing we want is more attention. However, like in most cases if a bully is allowed to force his way with one leaseholder it rarely stops there. Communication and making others aware that these issues are happening is a good first step. Additionally, bringing these issues to an organization such as ours not only provides support but can also help to remedy these situations before they get out of hand. If you are experiencing issues please don't feel alone, we are here to help and support you as much as possible. It's what your membership is for!

In the fall we hosted Premier Danielle Smith out to my family's ranch at Suffield for a tour and discussion around the importance of grazing leases to ranches as well as water security issues. We had some good discussions about the impact that consecutive years of drought are having on local ranches and look forward to more chances to visit with her in the future. We also took time to sit down with the new Agriculture Minister RJ Sigurdson. We discussed the importance of grazing leases to our province's beef industry with more than 20% of the Alberta beef herd relying on access to grazing leases. Our concerns were very well received and we felt as though he had a strong understanding of the importance of leases in Alberta.

In the new year we are looking toward department officials for a timeline as to when they plan to begin the scheduled review of the recreational access regulations. These regulations provide the rules and enforcement for recreationalists wishing to access grazing leases. It's important that we are involved to protect the rights and investments leaseholders have in the leases they steward. If you have issues or ideas you would like to bring forward for these consultations please feel free to reach out to any of our board of directors.

January 31 we will be hosting a meeting in St Paul for those who are in the northeast area of the province. That meeting will be followed up by another in Rocky Mountain House on February 15 and our AGM in Lethbridge on March 6. Please plan to attend the regional meetings if you are unable to attend our AGM in person. These meetings act as a venue for you to receive updates, relay concerns and bring forward resolutions that will guide our future efforts.

We wouldn't be as successful in our efforts if it wasn't for our dedicated members, donors and directors. Thank you all who have supported our association in the past, present and to all the new members, welcome. We hope to meet all of you at one of our meetings in the new year.

Thank You Again
Kyle Forbes, AGLA Chairman



AGLA Chairman Kyle Forbes



From L to R: AGLA Treasurer Darcy Kleinknecht, AGLA Manager Lindsye Murfin, Premier Danielle Smith, AGLA Chairman Kyle Forbes

2024 Rental Rates — This one will hurt a bit

This one will hurt a bit. The government has not released the rental rates for 2024 at the time of writing this but indications point to a significant increase. Like plan for double the rate of last year kind of significant increase.

The rental rate formula is a Weighted Average Capital Cost calculation (meaning that it is based on profitability) and it has been phasing in over the past 5 years. This year is full implementation and it was expected that there could be a small increase in rates. What will really kick us in the pants is the fall calf prices making the cost margins in the calculation really strong. So if you are making an extra \$600 per head for steers in the fall, you can expect to pay a bit more for your grazing lease rental rate.

This is the design of the rental rate formula. It is based on the cost of production and the potential of the leaseholder to be profitable. In years where cost margins are poor, leaseholders will pay much less in rent.

There are three dynamic inputs that are updated each year for the calculation of rental rate: the April steer price for 650 lb animals, the September steer price for 850lb animals and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the first 8 months of the year to adjust for inflation. We recognize most people are not grazing steers on their lease, however, when developing the calculation, industry and government agreed that this price index would be an appropriate trend indicator to use.

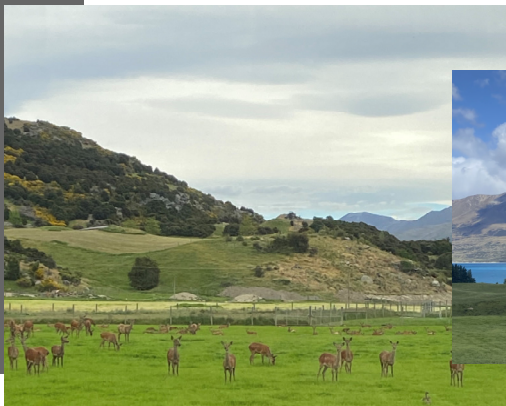
The calculation does account for the costs associated with running a Crown land lease and we get those costs through the Lease Cost Survey. The last survey was done in 2022 so we are working on fairly recent cost analysis. The results of that survey showed that the cost increases to run a lease are quite similar to the consumer price index. We rely on leaseholders to fill out the survey to get accurate cost data. The next lease cost survey is scheduled for 2032.

For comparison, the rental rate in Saskatchewan is \$8.18 per AUM and Manitoba is \$7.26 per AUM.

NEW ZEALAND 2023

A group of 28 made up the agri-tour to New Zealand co-hosted by AGLA . From November 18 to December 6 they toured agricultural and tourist destinations from the south of the south island to the north of the north island. It was a great trip to a great agricultural-based country.

Can't wait to see where we go next!



RALP Funding for Projects on Crown Land

'The Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) is a government initiative designed to promote the adoption of beneficial management practices (BMPs) to maximize ecological goods and services (EGS) and increase the environmental resiliency of agricultural landscapes.' That is the government overview statement for this program. What it means is that there is funding available for producers to apply certain approved practices that will increase the production of EGS and most likely benefit producers.

Producers can apply for funding to RALP under four categories: pasture management, cropland conversion, tree establishment and wetland. The good news is that projects on Crown land are eligible for funding. The bad news is that it re-

quires a bit of extra legwork on the part of the disposition holder but it should be worth it.

Activities and projects must be pre-approved by your local Rangeland Agrologist. Early discussions about your project with Rangeland Agrologists are essential to ensure proposals meet the necessary conditions for approval under the legislation that pertains to Crown land dispositions.

For more detailed information on eligible projects and to learn more about the program application process go to alberta.ca/resilient-agricultural-landscape-program. To find the contact information for your Rangeland Agrologist go to alberta.ca/land-management-contacts

**SECURING SUCCESS: FUNDING & GRAZING STRATEGIES
FOR YOUR OPERATION**

Join FFGA at one of the workshops on local funding opportunities. At these workshops, producers will have a chance to network with experts from the programs and other local organizations. In the afternoon choose to work hands on with experts and technicians in 1 of 3 breakout sessions; Environmental Farm Plans, RALP Funding Support, or How to Build your Grazing Plan.

January 10, 2024 – Acme Community Centre
January 30, 2024 – Patricia Community Hall
9:00am – 4:00pm

Cost (lunch Included)
FFGA Member \$25 / Non-Member \$30

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Recreational Access Regulations — Upcoming review

It is expected the government of Alberta will run consultations on the Recreational Access Regulations this year—leaseholders need to be a strong voice throughout this.

The Recreational Access Regulation (RAR) is due for a review and it seems the department and Minister Loewen are gearing up for it to begin this spring. We have yet to hear how the Minister proposes to design the engagement for consultation on this update but with the level of investment and risk leaseholders carry in grazing leases, we should have a representative presence at the consultation table. Grazing leases are an integral part of the beef industry in Alberta and are not only instrumental in the livelihoods of the individual leaseholders but contribute to the strength and resiliency of rural communities.

There have been a few changes in recreation since RAR was originally crafted so there should be an update to the regulations. Some of the changes that should be addressed include the higher prevalence of diseases (specifically CWD), longer hunting seasons and more days per week to hunt in some areas of the province, the increased use of social media and smart phones and improvement of the technology of hunting gear.

Probably the biggest issue that needs to be addressed is the intensity of the recreation on the landscape. Never before have recreation pressures been this high and it is the hope that there will be an acknowledgement of the impact of use on Crown land under grazing disposition. Not only on the potential for damage, for which the leaseholder is required to mitigate, but also the potential for profit loss, loss of forage value and infrastructure as well as the risk to adjacent lands in the case of fire being started by recreationalists. Leaseholders carry an incredible amount of

risk as a result of granting reasonable access and the risk is not adequately offset by the liability provisions in RAR.

AGLA undertook a survey of our membership in 2022 regarding recreational access. The results showed us that the majority of leaseholders province-wide are concerned with being required to grant access for recreation. When considering the risk leaseholders are forced to accept when granting access, this is not a surprise. In the comments received back, there were many leaseholders who reported not having troubles with recreationalists respecting both the position of the leaseholder and the land they are accessing for recreation. We found this encouraging but as with almost everything, it's the bad examples that ruin it for everyone. The province needs to find a way to address the legitimate complaints in this system.

As we anticipate the review process, we are committed to doing everything we can to prevent further degradation of the rights of leaseholders. We will need the help of our membership to make sure our message is received and appropriately considered by government. Please remain aware of this consultation and plan to participate as stakeholders in this system. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to your AGLA directors or to Lindsye in the office.

AGLA CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

Do you have an issue AGLA should be working on? Submit it in the form of a resolution.

Send in your resolution to albertagrazinglease@gmail.com
or 587-435-4072 or contact the director for your area

AGLA AGM—Wednesday, March 6 at 1:00 pm Lethbridge

Resolutions submitted and tabled at the regional meetings will be voted on by the membership at the AGM.

YOUR 2023-2024 AGLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

	Position	Phone	Email	Town
Kyle Forbes	Chairman (Zone A1)	403-548-3183	kaforbes@cciwireless.ca	Redcliff
Ray Marcy	Vice Chairman (Zone D)	780-876-6510	marcylaneranch@gmail.com	Grande Prairie
Larry Sears	Past Chairman (Zone A)	403-625-0417	larrylsears@gmail.com	Stavelly
Darcy Kleinknecht	Treasurer (Zone A1)	403-952-9034	darcy87@outlook.com	Manyberries
Don Broomfield	Zone A Director	403-625-6368	broomfield.agla@gmail.com	Turner Valley
Darcy Wills	Zone A Director	403-344-4312	drwills@cciwireless.ca	Coutts
Kevin Stewart	Zone B Director	403-741-4719	kedelinc@hotmail.com	Big Valley
Brett Matthiessen	Zone C Director	780-242-1345	brett.matthiessen@gmail.com	Vilna
Darwayne Claypool	Zone C Director	780-621-0934	darwayneclaypool@hotmail.com	Lodgepole
Art Wheat	Zone C Director	780-847-2385	tbonecattleco@hotmail.com	Marwayne
Kevin Meneice	Zone D Director	780-523-1252	kevinmeneice@gmail.com	High Prairie
Bill Smith	Zone D Director	587-343-5463	blksmith2C@gmail.com	Grovedale
Regan Curry	Zone E Director	403-363-3563	rwattle@outlook.com	Finnegan
Lee Fryberger	Zone E Director	403-793-1742	lee.fryberger@xplornet.com	Wardlow
Dustin Aebly	Zone E Director	403-793-0958	aeblyranch@netago.ca	Jenner
Cody Cronkhite	At Large	403-733-2273	cjc82@hotmail.ca	Warner

* Board listing up-to-date until 2024 AGM in March

KEEP US ACCOUNTABLE: Please feel free to reach out to any of our directors or to the office at the information below.



Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association

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