



# Western Stock Growers' Association

## *Special AGM Edition Newsletter*

March 2015 Volume 4, Issue 2

### **PRESIDENT'S AGM ADDRESS**

The last two years as President of Western Stock Growers has been very gratifying for me. There have been some very contentious issues come before us; some have been dealt with and some are still ongoing. We still have the Province trying to implement convoluted Land Use Plans that they themselves have still not got figured out how to master. They have been trying to fix things on the go and I think that we all would be better off with a solid well thought out plan that will work before the plans are implemented. We have had some very good discussions and made some headway on these issues, but as always they change the Minister as well as the staff under them so we are perpetually starting from scratch.

We are also being bombarded with many issues on the wildlife. We have a constant roll out of endangered and threatened species coming from the Federal Environment Department, from some grasses to moths to sage grouse. There is also big issues with the provinces handling and management of their wildlife such as the elk, bears and cougars. The mindset has been to just put them out somewhere and they will efficiently manage themselves. It is glaringly obvious that is just not working.

We have a new Premier, again, and are waiting for a new budget, again, and looks like we are probably going to have a spring election. So here we all are waiting in limbo for the powers that be to get their so called "Mandate" and get their affairs in order. While in the meantime there are lots of real things to deal with on the ground that are being put on the waiting list. It looks to be a very busy time ahead as we wade through all of this.

I am honoured to be elected for another term as WSGA president. As always I am available for your questions and concerns. I encourage you to get involved as this is your organization and we take the direction from our membership. I am sure that this next year is going to be as industrious as the last few have been.

Respectfully,

Aaron Brower

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## **2015 AGM Resolutions**

### **RESOLUTION #1**

WHEREAS landowners provide the habitat and bear the cost of wildlife; and

WHEREAS the mismanagement of wildlife is becoming a problem for landowners that is reaching critical levels, and;

WHEREAS the current compensation programs for wildlife damage are limited, restrictive and largely ineffective; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WSGA lobby the Government of Alberta to provide better compensation for wildlife damage and develop a hunting season to better control wildlife numbers and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WSGA lobby the Government of Alberta to also develop a marketplace for wildlife presence and habitat.

### **RESOLUTION #2**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT WSGA develops an invoicing program to assist producers in documenting a claim for reimbursement of expenses of caring for the provinces wildlife.

### **RESOLUTION #3**

WHEREAS the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Resource Development and Parks has undergone many changes and additions over the last few years, and;

WHEREAS the primary use of public land in the White zone is for agriculture;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WSGA lobby the Government of Alberta to move the management of grazing lease land into the Agriculture and Rural Development

## **WSGA Awards of Recognition from AGM**



Eileen McElroy was recognized for almost 25 years of commitment to the WSGA.



George Ward, AKA Mr Stockgrower, received recognition for over 60 years of service to the WSGA.

## **2015 Resolutions continued**

### **RESOLUTION #4**

WHEREAS Property Rights are stated to be of paramount importance to the Premier of Alberta; and

WHEREAS the proposed Springbank dry dam is the first of its kind in Alberta and untested in any comparable circumstance with a rapid mountain river with its alpine silt; and

WHEREAS the Elbow River runs through 30 plus miles of Alberta Public Lands, upstream of Bragg Creek and Redwood Meadows, areas seriously affected by the 2013 flood, yet the diversion system and subsequent dry reservoir construction is planned to occur immediately after the river enters private property, downstream of Bragg Creek and Redwood Meadows; and

WHEREAS the McLean Creek dam-site upstream and other upstream locations on the Elbow River of these two communities are deemed less desirable mostly due to

- a) Time to get approvals and permits to build the dam from provincially owned ESRD lands take much longer to acquire than to process expropriation of lands from private owners (Bill 36)
- b) A policy now in Alberta to never dam another river in the Province
- c) Construction site is much more unstable (mountain rock) than an earthen dam in Springbank; and

WHEREAS the proposed project is budgeted to cost approximately \$215,000,000 and

WHEREAS the public opinion has been massaged in favor of the project with the excuse that time is urgent, and the desire to not disrupt public lands takes precedent over the displacement of rural property owners and the future of their community and families;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that WSGA takes a position to challenge the Alberta government on the need for more public awareness, more in-depth study of the possible negative outcomes, the violation of the fundamental principles of property rights within the province with such a project, and the true search for more alternatives such as have been suggested. These views must be promoted on behalf of all rural landowners in Alberta in order that abrupt onslaughts of the powers of Alberta's central government over the rights of rural property holders without due consultation and agreement be recognized and discouraged.

### **In appreciation**



Aaron Brower was thanked for his time spent as president this past term; a job well done in the eyes of the board. Rebecca Brower was presented with a gift of appreciation for holding down the fort at home while Aaron is away on WSGA business.

## **WSGA Elects Not-So-New Executive**

Elections for new executive was held at this year's AGM on February 18. Both our president and 1st vice president have been re-elected for another term. Aaron Brower will stay on as president and James Hargrave will stay on as 1st VP. Ryan Copithorne, our Zone 5 director, was elected as our new 2nd vice president. Phil Rowland will remain as past president. The treasurer position is vacant with the resignation of Eileen McElroy.



WSGA President Aaron Brower (L) and 1st Vice President James Hargrave (R)

There were also a few changes to the board of directors. Elected into a vacant director-at-large slot is Neil Ward of Fort St John.

Zone 9 director Gary Etherington did not stand for re-election. We currently have three vacancies to fill: Zone 8, Zone 9 and one director at large position. If you or anyone you know is interested to serve on the WSGA board, please contact the office.

A full listing of our Board of Directors with contact information is available on our website.

## **Canadian cow-calf smartphone app development survey**

The Canadian Hereford, Simmental and Angus Associations have jointly been awarded funding from the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA) to explore the development of a mobile smartphone application ("app") for Canadian cow-calf producers with integration into Canadian breed association performance data. Integrated Traceability Solutions Global ("ITS Global") of Okotoks, AB has been contracted to research and summarize the functionalities Canadian cattle breeders desire in a mobile app. This on-line survey is the first step of the process.

The questionnaire will take ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Survey results will be analyzed collectively by ITS Global, and all individual responses will remain confidential. Only those respondents who express an interest in follow-up will be contacted by ITS Global for further feedback, using only the contact information provided in this survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/52XYK3G>

If you choose not to respond to this survey but would still like to provide input on the development of a mobile cow-calf app, please e-mail [appinfo@itslivestock.com](mailto:appinfo@itslivestock.com).

Responses will be accepted until March 31, 2015.

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