



RINKER ROCK CREEK RANCH

Wildlife Friendly Fence Information

What's going on with all the fences on the ranch?

You may have noticed in the last few years that Rinker Rock Creek Ranch (RRCR) has been building quite a few fences along the meadows in the Rock Creek corridor. Believe it or not, this is planned to benefit wildlife *and* livestock!

Why?

RRCR has been a working livestock ranch for many generations. Multiple families homesteaded the area and as they sold or moved, the ranch was slowly acquired by one landowner.

Each previous landowner had fenced their piece of property to keep their livestock in, but as the properties were combined, fences were not removed. This led to most properties being converted to pastures, with many pastures containing a mixture of *upland* and *riparian habitat*.

In late summer, both livestock and wildlife seek out the riparian areas for tender plants and water. This can lead to excessive use in riparian areas that causes erosion, introduces invasive species, and reduces available forage and habitat for livestock and wildlife.

Wildlife friendly lay-down fencing allows animals to move more easily through the ranch and reduces the number of animals that become entangled in barb wire fencing. This style of fencing is also cost effective in two ways – it is cheaper to build and it is less time consuming to maintain.



WOVEN & BARB WIRE FENCE



WILDLIFE FRIENDLY FENCE

How?

The RRCR Advisory Board seeks ways to manage the ranch holistically. They suggested the creation of meadow (riparian) and upland pastures to manage livestock grazing timing and location.

To create these pastures, the board reached out to partners (Idaho Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Office of Species Conservation) for technical and financial assistance.

Through support from the U.S. Department of Interior Secretarial Order 3362 (*Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors*), and the Governor's Office of Species Conservation, the ranch has constructed over 10 miles of 3 strand, high-tensile, electric, lay-down fence.

This fence can be electrified when livestock are present and laid down flat on the ground when livestock are not present, reducing barriers that migratory wildlife face.

As part of this undertaking, RRCR plans to remove over 20 miles of unnecessary, redundant or dilapidated barb wire and woven-wire fence to ease tripping and entanglement hazards to wildlife.

Contact:

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Fence Design:

- 5" wooden or metal pipe posts should be used for all braces. Brace all corners, gates, and direction changes greater than 15 degrees. At least 1 H-brace per gate side, per fence turn, and per elevational change.
- Distance between "anchor" posts = 75-100', as topography allows (then at least 1 stay post to keep the lines from getting tangled).
- 220,000psi high-tensile electric wire, tightened firm, but not so tight that there is no "give" if an animal does hit the fence.
- Bottom wire should be 20-22 inches from the ground, next wire should be 8 inches from the bottom wire, top 2 wires should be spaced 10 inches apart, top wire should be 40-42 inches off the ground.
- Solar powered fence energizers are used to make the fence hot.

Parts for a 3-strand high-tensile electric fence include:

- Anchor posts (wood or metal) and H-braces
- Stay posts (fiberglass usually) to stabilize wire and prevent tangling between anchor posts
- High tensile electric wire, smooth, 12.5 gauge, Class III, galvanized wire with a tensile strength of 170,000 PSI and breaking strength of 1308 lbs. is adequate
- Plastic insulator clips (regardless of whether anchor posts are wood or metal)
- Screws (to attach insulators)
- Tensioners (at least one per line per fence segment)
- Solar fence energizer (amount/power of energizers depends on desired power, and fence line distance)
- Grounding handles (to put on in-line gates to de-energize lines)

METAL H-BRACE AND GATE



METAL H-BRACE READY FOR WIRE

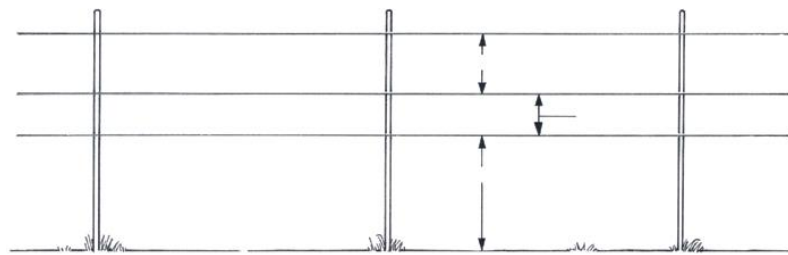


Diagram:

Wire height showing wires at 22-30-40" from the ground. Refer to *A Wyoming Landowner's Handbook to Fences and Wildlife* for more details, as well as options for other types of wildlife-friendly fencing.

Resources:

In the Wood River Valley and Camas Prairie, contact:
Charles Sandford, USFWS – charles_sandford@fws.gov
Josh White, USFWS – _joshua_white@fws.gov
Terry Gregory, IDFG – terry.gregory@idfg.idaho.gov