

## ANM27 - Wildlife Friendly Fencing

**Identify Wildlife Types.** This enhancement shall accommodate the safe movement of all species present that may be impacted by fence lines. Consider deer, elk, moose, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, javelina, bears, grouse, cranes, waterbirds, or other wildlife that occur within your landscape.

**Criteria 1: Improve Passage.** Retrofit existing fence to install crossings that allow safe wildlife movement.

**I. Location and number of crossing required to meet NM NRCS state standards:**

Location of Crossings. Crossings will be located in areas with game trails (travel corridors), where fence damage occurs from wildlife crossing, and at fence corners or intersections. Consider that travel corridors generally follow swales, gullies, ridges, and along waterways.

Number of Crossings. In addition to the areas identified above, a crossing should be placed every ½ mile on non wildlife-friendly fence; *where wildlife has been identified as using the area*. A fence line that meets this requirement may be considered “wildlife friendly”.

**II. Any of the following methods may be used:**

**1. Retrofit Wire Type/Spacing.**

*Deer/Elk/Moose:* Top wire  $\leq$  38 inches above ground level, bottom wire  $\geq$  16 inches above ground level, with the top two wires 10-12 inches apart and stretched tight. It is required to maintain tight wires. If stays/posts are less than 10 feet apart, the stays should not extend below the bottom wire. If replacing the top or bottom wire, consider using a barbless wire. If existing fence is mesh/net wire, lower the height  $\leq$  38 inches and install other crossing methods in high traffic areas; or use another method.

- High traffic areas: mark fence with visual markers (see Criteria 2, III)

*Pronghorn/Bears/Javelina/Bighorn Sheep:* Same as above, but with a smooth bottom wire; provided in sections at least 300 feet long. If existing fence is mesh/net wire, see “pronghorn underpass”.

- High traffic areas: raise the bottom wire to 18-20 inches above ground.

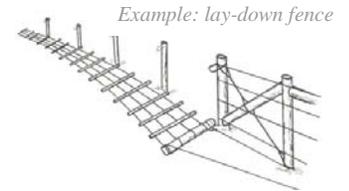
**2. Remove Unnecessary or Non-functional Fence.** Any fence which is down, loose or no longer necessary can be removed to meet this criterion. All wire must be removed from site (piles or downed fence can cause mortality by entanglement). In the case of double fences, both must be addressed to provide crossing. (i.e. where an old fence was not removed, and a new fence was installed next to it). This enhancement may not be used as site preparation; a new fence may not be installed where fence was removed for this purpose. Use method #3 instead.

**3. Install Section of New Wildlife Friendly Fence.**



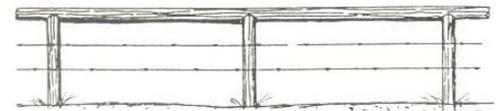
It may be more practical in some cases to replace existing fence with a wildlife friendly fence design. The wire type/spacing requirements are the same as for retrofitting fence.

4. Lay-down Fence. Create sections of fence that can be laid down when not in use (similar to opening-up a large wire gate); located in areas of wildlife use. This may also include a design that allows drop-down of the wires when not in use.



5. Seasonal Electric Fence. Replace permanent fencing with seasonal electric fence in areas with short duration grazing where permanent fence is not necessary. Seasonal electric fence generally has 1" heavy fiberglass posts or plastic-insulated steel posts, with wood post bracings. The top wire being conductive high-visibility tape, braided wire, or polymer coated wire no higher than 42 inches above ground. The fence should flex as game passes through it, else fence damage will occur. Use the manufacturers minimum wire tension. The wire should be wound-up and stored during seasons of non-use.

6. Rail Fence Crossing. Rail fences can either be a top rail with two wires below, or be constructed of two rails. The top rail  $\leq 38$ " above ground level, with smooth wires placed at 18" and 26" above ground OR a lower rail placed to allow at least 18" of clearance from ground level. Post spacing 10 to 14 feet apart. Each crossing will be a minimum of 50 feet long. Use round rails/poles, rather than square or split-rail in areas where snow may build-up on the rail. Do not use boards or planks.



7. Worm Fence Crossing. Where existing worm fences are taller than 38" above ground level; drop one or two of the top rails to create wildlife crossings with a top height  $\leq 38$  inches above ground level. Create crossings every 400 feet, and at swales or near streams.
8. Bunch Wires with PVC. Used on wire fence at wildlife crossings areas; where livestock is not present. The wires are released from the posts for about a 50 foot section, and then two to three wires are bunched together and "capped" by a 1.5" dia. PVC pipe (that has been cut horizontally to slip onto the wires); to form two PVC covered wires. The wires are re-attached to the posts. Each crossing will be a minimum of 50 feet long.
9. Pronghorn Underpass. Used on mesh/net wire only. Retrofit the braces and/or sections of fence (min. 10 feet wide); to include wires instead of mesh/net. The bottom wire must be at least 18" above ground level.



## Criteria 2: Improve Visibility

Increase visibility of fencing using vinyl markers, PVC pipe or other similar materials that will meet NRCS state standards for spacing, interval and size:

I. Within lesser prairie-chicken range (or other grouse): fences installed within a ½ mile radius of a lek shall be marked to reduce fence collisions. Additional markings may be used where bird use is frequent or where collisions have occurred. Marking will consist of installing 3-inch pieces of vinyl siding undersill on the top wire and third wire from the top on a four or five wire fence. Where fence post spacing is 30 feet then 4 markers will be installed on the top wire (and evenly spaced) and 3 on the third wire from the top. Where fence post spacing is 20 feet place 3 markers on the top wire (evenly spaced) and 2 markers on the third wire from the top. In addition all brace and line posts will be configured to discourage raptors from perching. Instructions can be found at: [http://www.suttoncenter.org/pages/fence\\_marking\\_instructions](http://www.suttoncenter.org/pages/fence_marking_instructions)

II. Within Waterways/Wetlands/Playas etc. Fences can cause mortality of large birds such as sandhill cranes, swans, owls, raptors, and great blue herons by blocking critical take-off and landing paths. Modify the fence by adding white 1/2" dia. PVC tubing or other durable bright/white materials to make the top wires visible (ie. grouse markers). The use of flagging is not approved.

III. Big Game Heavy Use Areas. The addition of visual markers will assist in reduced fence entanglement and fence damage. Any white/bright marker methods mentioned above may apply (no flagging). Markers must be combined with the crossing methods described in Criteria 1.

For additional information, see publication "[A Landowner's Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences](#)"

## Documentation Requirements

1. Identify type (s) or wildlife friendly fencing used,
2. Location on a map showing where wildlife friendly fence is located
3. Photograph of each wildlife friendly fencing method used
4. Map of existing applicable (functional and non functional) fence.

