

Our land and natural resources are the foundation of this great nation. From the food on our tables and the water we drink to jobs and recreation, this natural heritage is essential to our economy, our independence and our way of life.

As the owners and managers of private and leased public lands throughout the West, we created the Western Landowners Alliance to advance excellence in the stewardship of these resources. We have a vested financial stake in the well-being of these landscapes, we have boots-on-the-ground experience of owning and managing land, and we care deeply about our neighbors, our communities and future generations.

Our work is founded on the following principles:

- Working lands are an essential component of the Western landscape.
- Healthy lands and strong economies go hand in hand.
- Wild places, working lands and human communities all have legitimate places in the landscape and must be considered together.
- The desire to achieve long-term prosperity while conserving our lands, water and wildlife for future generations is a common-ground, non-partisan goal.

We believe a need exists to make significant changes in policy, land use and management to secure a positive future. Informed by landowners and in close collaboration with public land management agencies and non-profit partners, we seek to identify constructive paths forward. We look forward to working with you to build a better West.

Sincerely,



Jeff Laszlo
Chair

As a rancher, I've learned that conservation and ranching are not mutually exclusive pursuits. In fact, to do either well you'd have to do them together.

–Jeff Laszlo, Granger Ranches,
Montana



WORKING LANDS

Are essential to Western rural and urban economies
Sustain up to 80% of wildlife species
Provide the natural resources that feed, water and fuel the nation
And they are disappearing

Recommendations to Conserve and Restore Working Lands and Rural Economies

Invest in the West

Smart investments to conserve and restore working lands can yield positive returns for taxpayers and stimulate rural economies:

To create jobs and revitalize rural economies, re-invest in working lands and the natural resources they supply

Leverage public dollars with private landowner investment and cooperation

Invest in next generation ranchers and farmers

Build on Success

These programs work and can be expanded for even better outcomes:

Safe Harbor and CCAA assurance agreements

NRCS Working Lands For Wildlife

USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife

“All Hands All Lands” collaborative partnerships

Farm Bill Conservation Title

Get out in Front

Proactive investment can deliver better results at lower cost than reactive management driven by crisis and conflict:

Support pro-active, voluntary conservation to avoid species becoming imperiled

Prioritize forest health: fix the USFS fire budget

Improve collaborative frameworks within agencies

Design economic and tax policies to keep family farms and ranches intact

Work Together

Managing land is complex and requires holistic thinking, flexibility and adaptation:

A comprehensive strategy for federal lands restoration

Habitat vs. single species conservation

Interagency coordination and improved outreach to landowners

Programmatic flexibility for adaptive management

Build relationships based on trust to achieve shared goals

Any good business reinvests in the people and resources that sustain it. As a nation, we ***must*** do the same

*What's being lost in the rhetoric
is the only thing that matters-
the eventual consequences for
the land*

-Bill McDonald, Sycamore Ranch,
Arizona



"Every 2.5 minutes, the American West loses a football field worth of natural area to human development." – Center for American Progress

"Over 40 acres of US farmland are lost every hour." – American Farmland Trust

"Working lands represent one of the best hopes for conservation." – National Audubon Society

"It is estimated that 73% of our Nation's land is privately owned and that the majority of our fish and wildlife resources occur on those lands." – USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife

"Federal taxpayers have an interest in the conservation of agricultural resources because of agriculture's potential to both impose significant downstream costs as well as provide significant public benefits. Simple conservation practices taken by farmers can provide taxpayers with a positive return on investment." – Taxpayers for Common Sense



Riders from Granger Ranches gather cattle on the Wall Creek Game Range. The rotational grazing management of this allotment is considered a model for sustaining both ranching and elk habitat.

Photo courtesy of Jeff Laszlo

Western Landowners Alliance (WLA) invites you to join us in advancing the ecological health and economic vitality of private and leased public lands in the West. Led by landowners, we work to advance policies and practices that sustain working lands, connected landscapes and native species. As landowners, we have a vital role to play in shaping the modern American West. Please see our website at WesternLandownersAlliance.org.