



New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association

P.O. Box 7517 * Albuquerque, NM 87194

TELEPHONE (505) 247-0584 * FAX (505) 842-1766

E-MAIL: nmcga20@gmail.com

WEB SITE: www.nmagriculture.org

February 9, 2022

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Attn: Chairman Sharon Salazar Hickey
PO Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Sharon.Hickey@state.nm.us

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Attn: Roberta Salazar-Henry
PO Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
R.Salazar-Henry@state.nm.us

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Attn: Jimmy Bates
PO Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Jimmy.Bates@state.nm.us

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Attn: Tirzio Lopez
PO Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Tirzio.Lopez@state.nm.us

Dear Commissioners:

The New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association ("NMCGA") periodically hears that the New Mexico Game Commission believes it is rarely apprised of problems with elk management in New Mexico. With this letter, we intend to address that.

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the New Mexico Game Commission are in the process of preparing and approving a new Four-Year Rule for elk in New Mexico. NMCGA respectfully requests that the Game Commission decline to approve any rule until the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish undertakes the serious but critical work in active cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, the BLM and the State Land Office to evaluate the forage and water resources available for elk, at least in areas where cattle are authorized to graze. That information should be vital to establishing the Four-Year Rule for elk. To date, however, the Department of Game and Fish has not done this work. That failure is a failure to be a wise stewards of our natural resources in New Mexico that cannot be allowed to persist.

The Game and Fish Department's inadvertence to analyze the available natural resources and the demands on these resources where elk are located in New Mexico has negative direct and indirect effects on New Mexico Livestock industries. Attached is a set of NMCGA approved speaking points and suggested solutions for addressing the management issues cattle growers face with elk.

LOREN PATTERSON, President, Corona; **BRONSON CORN**, President-Elect, Roswell **JOE CULBERTSON**, Vice-President At Large Amistad, **ROY FARR**, SW Vice-President Datil; **DAVE KENNEKE**, NW Vice-President, Cimarron; **JEFF DECKER**, SE Vice-President, Lovington; **CLIFF COPELAND**, NE Vice-President, Nara Visa; **SHACEY SULLIVAN**, Secretary-Treasurer, Bosque Farms; **RANDELL MAJOR**, Past President, Magdalena **TOM SIDWELL**, Past President, Quay

Also attached are letters underscoring the indirect impact that the Department's incomplete evaluation has caused. These include the effect that elk have on safety on New Mexico highways and the effect of elk on the alleged necessity to list species as endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

The New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association stands ready to respond to any questions you have concerning the elk issues that are now squarely before the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Loren Patterson", is written over a light gray grid background.

Loren Patterson, President

Cc:

Mike Sloan, Director New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Steward Liley, Chief of the Wildlife Management Division, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish