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**The definitive voice for
public lands ranchers.**

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About Us

Since 1968, the Public Lands Council has been the only national organization solely dedicated to representing cattle and sheep producers who hold approximately 22,000 federal grazing permits across the West. Public lands ranchers face unique political, environmental, and economic challenges, and we work with government policymakers and private-sector partners to reach creative policy solutions.

“ Public lands ranchers form the backbone of many rural communities and local economies while leading the way in responsible and innovative stewardship of some our nation’s most iconic landscapes. ”

Our Vision

The definitive voice for public lands ranchers.

Our Mission

PLC works to support and maintain livestock grazing on public lands by advocating for and educating decision makers of the many values livestock grazing contributes to our natural resources and to the public.

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OREGON

Letter from the President

Friends,

As I reflect on this past year, I do not doubt that we have had many challenges. From extreme wildfires across the West to federal government decisions that impact each of our operations, ranching is not for the fainthearted. As we combat these challenges each day, we must remember that adaptation is key, and the Public Lands Council must adhere to that concept.

With the help and collaboration of partners and state affiliates, PLC has been able to adapt to any circumstance that comes our way – legislative, regulatory, and judicial. I say with great pride that PLC has swiftly and thoroughly handled every issue that has come our way, and I know the hard work will continue in future challenges to come. Maintaining partnerships, relationships, and coalition efforts pays off in the long run, and it certainly has paid off this past year.

“ Just like dealing with Mother Nature’s fury, politics seems to become more volatile every single day. As we have seen many times in the past, we may not see direct wins and obvious outcomes, but we remain headstrong and make sure that PLC is at the forefront of every issue. ”

The Endangered Species Act, BLM’s Public Lands Rule, Farm Bill, wild horses and burros, animal and eco-activists, and many more – these are not going away, but PLC will not wither for the cause. We must continue to push forward to minimize the damage, shape change, fight for impactful outcomes, and remain present.

I certainly cannot say that all this work is possible without the work of you, our members. Thank you for allowing myself and our team to serve you. It has been my honor to serve as your President these past two years, and I hope that I can continue to do my part to help ensure that PLC continues to be a force in the efforts to keep your voice present – no matter where you ranch.


MARK ROEBER
President









Letter from the Executive Director

Friends,

In the late 1960s, it became clear that ranchers grazing on federal land needed a specific advocate for their livestock, families, and way of life. The Public Lands Council was created to be that advocate – a single, consolidated voice to speak the truths of ranchers in the halls of Congress and executive agencies. Over the last 56 years, PLC has defended the industry against attacks from extremist movements who have sought to eliminate grazing. We have been the first to step forward with strategies to defend grazing as a legitimate use of the landscape when regulations threaten the industry’s viability. We have been the first – and sometimes last – line of defense when weather, politics, economics, and emotions make it seem like reduced grazing is an inevitability.

This last year has clearly demonstrated the need for PLC to continue to be that leader for public lands ranching – and for public lands. Over the last year, changes to federal interpretation of the multiple-use mandate have destabilized the understanding of what it means to manage public lands. PLC remains committed to ensuring federal lands are managed according to the law and science, both of which offer resounding confirmations that livestock grazing is crucial to the management of the West. As we enter this new chapter, PLC’s engagement in Washington, D.C. remains a steadfast reminder that it takes a combination of legislation, regulation, and litigation, to protect responsible land management.

In this report, you will find a list of recurring PLC priorities that demand the attention of organizational leadership and individual permittees alike. While protracted legislative negotiations will stretch into next year, PLC secured key legislative wins that echo “Grazing is Good” through key legislation like the draft Farm Bill and large wildfire mitigation packages. This year, we continued our campaign for Eastern delegations and urban constituencies to improve their collective understanding about the value of grazing, the regulatory burdens facing permittees, and all of the opportunities for improved management through flexibility. The last 12 months have been some of the most challenging days for public lands ranchers, but this legislative progress, coupled with key regulatory wins, confirms that our message about grazing continues to gain traction.

The next few months will bring significant change to the political outlook in this country, but after the last 56 years, I’m proud that PLC and our membership are prepared for whatever comes next.



KAITLYNN GLOVER
Executive Director

Financial Report

BRENDA RICHARDS
Treasurer

The Public Lands Council is an affiliate-based organization, funded and driven by the contributions of groups made up of public lands grazing permittees across 14 Western affiliate states. Each state affiliate contributes annual dues based on a billing calculation of 1.3 cents per animal unit month (AUM) permitted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the United States Forest Service for federal lands grazing in their state. One key use of the funds collected through this process is the facilitation of our policy work in Washington, D.C., educating policymakers about our industry, and influencing the decisions of legislators and regulators. Our advocacy efforts include holding briefings for staff on Capitol Hill, testifying before House and Senate committees, and educating federal agency staff on the important role public lands grazing plays in the economic, environmental, and social fabric of the West. PLC is pivotal in ensuring that decision makers, who are hundreds of miles away from the range, still understand the conservation value of the work all our permittees are doing.

Our affiliate dollars also play a role in helping PLC leverage contributions from partners and sponsors to make an even bigger impact across our industry and across the nation. I am proud to report that PLC has built and maintained outstanding organizational partnerships and sponsors like AgRisk Advisors, WSR Insurance, Envu, Vence, American AgCredit, and many more this year. We are deeply appreciative of their trust and support in our work! Strategic partnerships allow PLC to increase our visibility, and leverage industry-wide funds around common goals that impact cattle producers, sheep producers, and those who value our rangelands. Partnering with like minded organizations can increase the number of Western voices represented at the table when we discuss national-level policy challenges.

This year gave us a particularly clear example of how important these partnerships are, when PLC rallied numerous grazing, conservation, and agriculture groups to respond to the BLM's Public Lands Rule, and the agency's continued work to revise their grazing regulations. PLC's ability to mobilize multiple organizations to respond to the problematic ruling increased our visibility and significantly contributed to defending public lands grazing. An economically productive, viable grazing industry contributes to sustainable rangelands, healthy rural communities, wildlife habitat, clean water and air, and open green spaces for all Americans. PLC remains committed to responsibility and effectively utilizing contributions to advocate for the industry.

In addition to our work to grow our partnerships and sponsorships, PLC's grant program continues to bring meaningful and much-needed research work to light in the industry. After working last year to streamline our process, we are proud that our request for proposals established clear and consistent guidelines for submitting and evaluating proposed projects. During this fiscal year, PLC leadership made the decision to restructure our grant program to shift into an as-needed model. This allows for grant applicants to submit project proposals throughout the year, in time where it might be more demanding for the applicant and/or for PLC. This model will go into effect in Fiscal Year 2025, beginning October 1, 2024. PLC is proud of the work, advocacy, education, and support we supply to federal grazing permittees through these contributions from affiliates, sponsors, and partners. As we look back at the explosive growth and change our group has gone through during the last 56 years, we remain fully committed to making the best use of all our funds to ensure public lands grazing in the West remains viable, sustainable, and a strong contributor to the health of the landscapes we dearly love.





Policy Highlights

Wild Horses and Burros (WHB)

Coordinated work with like-minded partners continued to keep the most dangerous WHB policy at bay this year. PLC continued to defend a multi-faceted, humane strategy for WHB management that supports removal of horses from the range and a meaningful application of fertility control. Activists' continued efforts to enact bills like the Save America's Forgotten Equines Act and the Wild Horse and Burro Protection Act make it vital for us to continue educating members of Congress on the crisis unfolding on our public rangelands. PLC continues to request and secure increased funding for the program in preliminary appropriations bills, and has successfully kept efforts to limit that funding at bay.

Congressional Spotlight on Grazing

PLC's work to share the message that "Grazing is Good" caught another gear this year with bipartisan, bicameral efforts to expand flexibility for grazing permittees through the *Operational Grazing Flexibility Management Act* and the *Ranching Without Red Tape Act*, among others. PLC's emphasis on bipartisan introduction brought together coalitions like Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), and Representative John Curtis (R-UT) and Representative Gabe Vasquez (D-NM), to support common sense changes that will allow grazing permittees to be more responsive to on-the-ground conditions without interference from federal agencies.

Defending BLM's Grazing Program

PLC sought to intervene in federal court to defend the BLM's grazing program from radical environmental activists. Western Watersheds Project and the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility renewed their annual – false – talking points that BLM is failing to manage grazing to meet ecological goals and land health standards, this time filing a challenge in federal court. PLC has worked with the BLM for decades to improve data collection, storage, and analysis so the agency does not face frivolous challenges that waste valuable range resources and challenge BLM's ability to employ sound management.

Farm Bill

PLC occupies a unique role in Farm Bill discussions, bringing together forestry, grazing, fire, and livestock policy for the benefit of western communities. PLC continued efforts from 2023 to emphasize the need to elevate grazing as a tool to reduce catastrophic wildfire, both through pre-fire targeted grazing to reduce fuels, and post-fire as part of a comprehensive mitigation strategy. The House Agriculture Committee's bipartisan bill includes language to this effect, recognizing the need to ramp up grazing's visibility on the landscape. The House bill, and the Republican Senate framework, also recognize grazing as an important conservation practice when discussing amendments to tools like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other producer tools. Passage of a Farm Bill remains among the top legislative priorities for PLC and our partners who know that the Farm Bill is one of the crucial legislative vehicles to provide stability and predictability in how ranchers can utilize management program partnerships.

Public Lands Movement Guidance in the Event of a Foreign Animal Disease Outbreak



BLM Conservation and Land Health Rule

In June 2024, the BLM finalized a major rule that fundamentally changes how the agency will manage hundreds of millions of acres under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. After more than 15 months of consistent engagement from PLC and our partners, the BLM moved forward with a final Conservation and Landscape Health rule that failed to protect grazing and other multiple uses. Their efforts to begin leasing public lands for conservation purposes put millions of acres in jeopardy of conversion to non-use through their new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern process. From the beginning, PLC has led the natural resource and agricultural communities' engagement with the BLM.

“ **PLC mobilized dozens of House and Senate leaders, securing introduction of legislation that would require the BLM to withdraw the rule and draft appropriations language that would block implementation. With growing need to protect grazing access and guard against mass conversion of federal lands, PLC led a resource coalition in challenging the rule in federal court.**

Together with states, national partners, Congressional allies, and multiple use groups, PLC will continue to defend the crucial role grazing plays in land management across the West.

► **The coalition's case joins legal challenges from states, including Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, and North Dakota.**



For the last two years, PLC has supported the work of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) in developing guidance to use in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak. Foreign animal diseases, like Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), pose immense risk to the national cattle and sheep herds, and successful biosecurity measures must include public lands grazing management. In the event of an FMD outbreak, the industries would face a minimum of a 72-hour stop movement order, regardless of production scenario. PLC emphasized the need to have a nuanced, thoughtful, and predictable matrix for decision-makers to follow that would provide the necessary flexibility for permittees to stay on an allotments if needed, including the ability to supplement feed and water, contain fomites posed by recreation and other multiple uses, and protect their operations and land health.

The guidance supplements the existing Secure Beef Supply and the Secure Sheep and Wool Supply plans, providing guidance regarding the role of agencies, helpful just-in-time biosecurity forms for permittees, and a host of other tools that address the unique complexities of mitigating risk in a public lands grazing scenario.

PLC, ASI, and NCBA shared the guidance in a series of workshops, academic presentations, and tabletop exercises to help prepare state partners.

Sage Grouse

Year-to-year, PLC provides consistent leadership in sage grouse policy. We continue to oppose heavy-handed attempts to manage sage grouse and, by default, sagebrush habitat, through restrictive ESA listings. This year, PLC led industry-wide comments on BLM’s proposed changes to 77 resource management plans, leading the charge against components of the plans that could lead to 11 million acres of new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and ecological measures that were inappropriate for the ecosystem. For the last decade, PLC has secured annual passage of language that blocks an ESA listing for the greater sage grouse and continues to oppose other listing and critical habitat designations for other populations.



Endangered Species Act (ESA)

PLC continued to oppose the Biden Administration's harmful rewrites to the rules governing critical habitat designations, interagency consultation on ESA actions, and the consideration of economic impacts in ESA decisions. Following finalization of each of these rules this year, PLC leveraged Congressional opposition and secured introduction of bicameral Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolutions that, if enacted, would nullify the rules. These CRAs send a strong signal to the courts and to the agency that there is opposition to rules, and PLC will continue to lead regulatory reform efforts. PLC continues to champion permittees' ability to have regulatory certainty for their voluntary conservation efforts. Through our advocacy, provisions in Rep. Westerman's (R-AR) bill to improve the ESA would help to provide certainty to permittees and landowners alike who face increasing regulatory burdens and expanded depredation.

- Widespread depredation is one of the most visible effects of an inefficient ESA policy. PLC secured additional funding for depredation compensation for producers affected by Mexican gray wolf populations in the southwest.
- Ill-advised efforts to reintroduce species in unsuitable habitats was the hallmark of 2024. PLC elevated our affiliates' voices to oppose reintroduction of grizzly bears in the Northern Cascades through regulatory comments and in Colorado where USFWS failed to provide tools for producers facing effects of a politically-motivated referendum.
- Petitions continue to drive agency action. In the coming year, PLC expects more than 150 ESA listing or critical habitat determinations. ESA reform is crucial to stem the tide of burdensome ESA regulations so we can advance core priorities, like delisting the gray wolf across the continental United States, protect landowners from onerous restrictions that would accompany a Monarch Butterfly listing, and ensure the ESA does not prevent important herbicide application that supports biodiversity.





Gray Wolf Delisting

After USFWS missed the deadline to issue a new rule to delist gray wolves in the lower-48, PLC pushed the court to resume proceedings in our efforts to defend the Trump Administration's nationwide delisting rule. In all places, PLC continues to emphasize science-based, state management of this recovered species.

Agency Deference, Deferred

During the spring session, the Supreme Court's decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* removed the presumption that courts will defer to agency expertise when agency interpretation of vague statutory direction faces legal challenge. This decision overturned 40 years of Chevron deference, which has long been used to justify arbitrary agency decisions, and some that exceed statutory authority. PLC has both benefitted and fallen victim to court deference to federal agencies and we are now focused on education of lawmakers to provide the greatest protection and predictability through legislation, regulation, and litigation.

Western Solar Plan

As concerns mounted across the country about conversion of prime agricultural land to solar fields, PLC targeted these concerns in BLM's proposed expansion of the 2012 Western Solar Plan. After requesting variances in the proposed expansion of utility-scale solar in the 2023 scoping period, PLC recommitted to this request during the draft plan comment period. Over the last 50 years, AUMs have decreased as the agencies have grappled with diminished land health and increased demands on multiple-use management. The BLM's arbitrary goals to convert hundreds of thousands of federal acres will convert these lands to single-use.

“ PLC opposes any solar development that displaces grazing on public lands. Loss of grazed acres would be detrimental to the industry, to ecological objectives, and to long-term maintenance of public assets.

PLC will continue to urge BLM to utilize lands unable to be used for other purposes to protect the multiple use mandate and grazing's place on the land.

Regulatory Redux

As the Biden Administration finalized their rewrite of rules, PLC continued to prioritize consistency, flexibility, and regulatory certainty. Of the rules finalized in 2024, PLC opposed the final changes to the **National Environmental Policy Act**, draft changes to the USFWS' Biological Integrity, Diversity, and Environmental Health (**BIDEH**) policy, final changes to **ESA sections 4, 4(d), 7, and 10**, and more. At long last, USFS finalized changes to their range and grazing handbook and directives, allowing grasslands permittees and grazing associations a final look into the comprehensive changes from the last 5 years. For regulatory changes, PLC has adopted an approach to public comment periods that prioritizes both robust technical comments and widespread comment campaigns to offset those that seek to harm the grazing industry.

J. Mark Roeber
PRESIDENTIAL
HIGHLIGHT



Mark Roeber is a lifelong learner and although “generally” quiet, his words are spot on and to the point.

Mark embodies the motto that Colorado Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) often uses, “Cattle producers join CCA voluntarily and manage it cooperatively, working together to accomplish goals that no single cattle producer can reach alone.” Mark began his service to the industry by serving as President of the local Delta County Livestock Association in 1992. During this same time, he was very active with the Public Lands Council, working diligently through all the Babbitt years and “Cattle Free By 93” state and national meetings. He also spent countless hours in Washington D.C. and on the road. This attention to association above self continued when he was appointed to the Colorado Cattlemen’s Association Board in 1996 and rose to the ranks of President in 2006.

Mark would often say that each CCA President will have their defining issue during their term as president, and this came true for him as he worked through litigation, testimony, and meetings regarding the Endangered Species Act and a changing demographic in the Colorado State House and Governor’s office. Following Mark’s tenure on the CCA Board, he ran for and was elected twice as the Delta County Commissioner, serving one year as the Colorado Counties Inc. President, and then stepped up to lead the Public Lands Council. Mark often reminds us of various quotes, and one that comes to mind that describes his continued excellence of service is by Theodore Roosevelt, “... No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere.”

Mark’s laugh isn’t the easiest to earn, but it’s certainly one of the most contagious. Mark will tell you his greatest accomplishment and source of pride is his wife Jody Roeber, their four very talented children and their spouses, and his seven hard-working grandchildren.



Mark cares not just about the issues that PLC works on, but about the health, strength, and longevity of the organization. He has done a tremendous amount of work over the years to mentor new leaders on the PLC Board of Directors, policy committees, and staff, bring new perspectives and players into the discussion, and strengthen the relationships that allow PLC to exert great influence at the national level. Mark is very skilled at cutting through the noise and refocusing on our core mission. He redirects away from the rabbit holes that can eat away at valuable time while still expecting timely results on the things that matter. Mark has always championed PLC's staff and has been a supportive leader to all.

The visibility that comes from being president of a national association can be uncomfortable at times, particularly for leaders like Mark who are deliberative, intentional, and thoughtful about their contributions to the larger cause. So often, national leadership positions are occupied by those who are the most willing to speak from the front of the room or are eager to be the first to the microphone. Mark is rarely the first to speak about an issue; he gathers as much information as he can, develops an opinion, and strategizes about the best way to be successful before he makes any of his thoughts public. After working with Mark, you see how important and successful his approach is, as he's led PLC through a slalom of challenging issues that can change the face of our industry. He has an unwavering commitment to collaboration and always seeks input from diverse corners of the public lands grazing community. Put simply, Mark is the kind of team-builder that upholds the core principles of PLC: we do it together, for the benefit of all public lands ranchers. We are grateful for his years of dedication, mentorship, and commitment to public lands grazing. Congratulations to Mark on the completion of his term as PLC President!



CHEYENNE LEACH

Spotlight

Investing in the Next Generation

Each year, PLC makes the Nick Theos Scholarship available to students to support their participation in our annual legislative conference here in Washington, D.C. These funds make it possible for young people interested in Western issues, public lands ranching, and natural resources policy to attend briefings and issue updates from agency officials, congressional staff, and policy experts. This year's recipient was **Cheyenne Leach**, an applicant represented by Montana Stockgrowers Association.

Each spring, summer, and fall, PLC, in conjunction with NCBA, hosts two interns every semester here in our Washington, D.C. office to learn directly from our Government Affairs team. Over the course of several months, they work with our policy team to further their education in the policy realm of agriculture and strengthen their passion for the livestock industry. Our most recent interns were **Julie Diebel** and **Gunnar Griggs-Bell**. Check out what they had to say about their time with PLC this summer!

This summer, working with Public Lands Council has been an invaluable experience for my personal and professional growth. The team in Washington, D.C. encouraged the two of us to expand on our existing knowledge and challenge what we thought we knew about the impact of federal lands. With my background in beef cattle production, I gained a deeper understanding of how grazing practices vary on public lands and recognized the industry's need for external support. Engaging with producers across the West, participating in regular Hill meetings, and drafting materials on key issues have all inspired me to stay connected with the council going forward. I'm eager to apply the insights from this internship in my future career and am excited to complete my undergraduate studies at Texas A&M University this fall.

JULIE DIEBEL



During my time with Public Lands Council, I had the opportunity to hone in on my passion for environmental policy and public lands. Working and meeting with ranchers who manage livestock on public lands gave me valuable insights into the real-world implications of policy and how they are affecting and helping our friends and affiliates in the West. Attending hearings on Capitol Hill and writing letters of support deepened my understanding of the public lands and grazing arena, fueling my commitment to advocating for these critical issues. This internship experience has significantly strengthened my passion for public lands ranching, and I am excited to attend the Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University and shape my academic journey to study public and federal land use in the cattle and sheep industries.



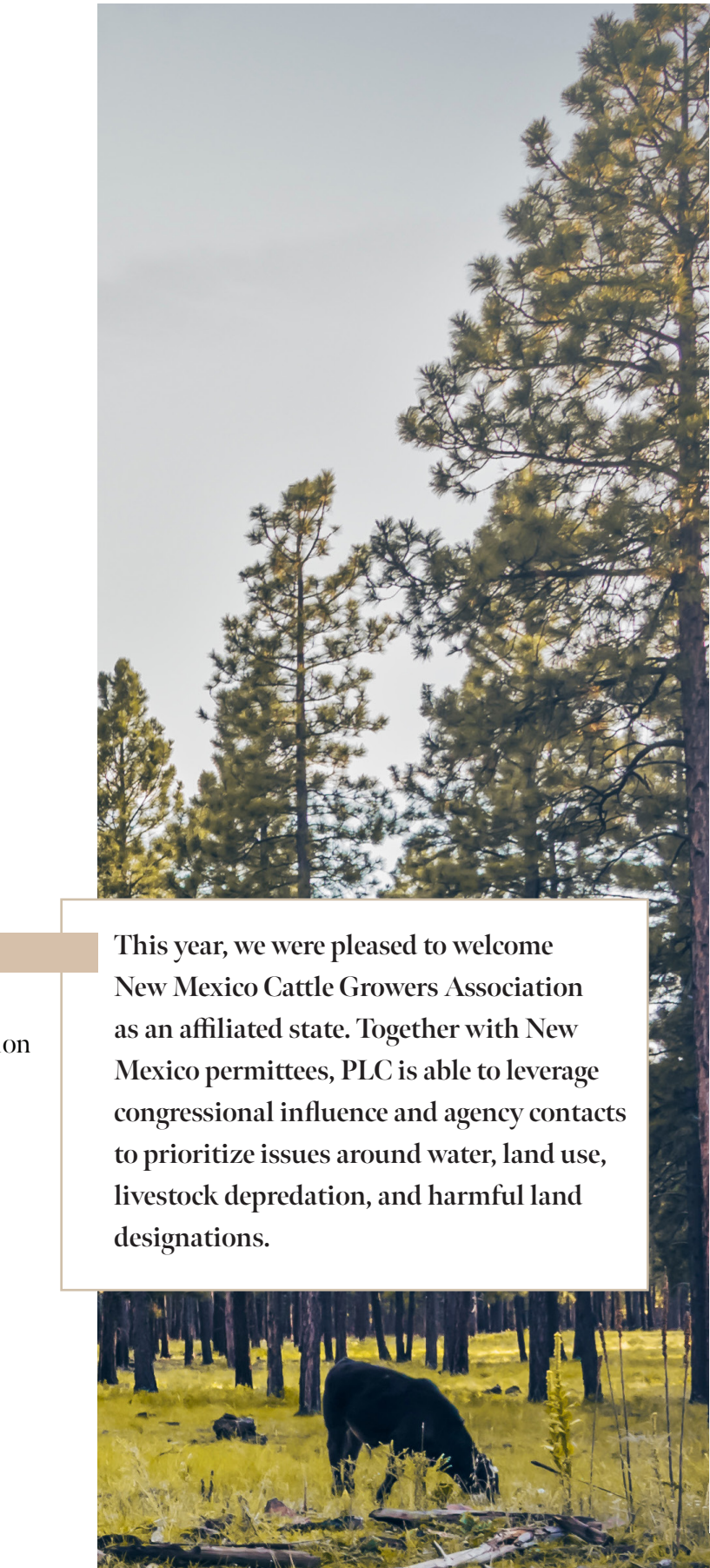
GUNNAR GRIGGS-BELL

Western Work, National Impact.

OUR PARTNERS

- Arizona Cattle Growers Association
- California Cattlemen's Association
- California Wool Grower's Association
- Colorado Cattlemen's Association
- Colorado Livestock Association
- Colorado Wool Growers Association
- Idaho Cattle Association
- Idaho Wool Growers Association
- Montana Stockgrowers Association
- Montana Wool Growers Association
- Nebraska Cattlemen
- Nebraska Sheep & Goat Producers Association
- Nevada Cattlemen's Association
- Nevada Wool Growers Association
- **New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association**
- North Dakota Stockmen's Association
- North Dakota Lamb & Wool Producers Association
- Oregon Cattlemen's Association
- Oregon Sheep Growers Association
- South Dakota Cattlemen's Association
- South Dakota Sheep Grower's Association
- Utah Cattlemen's Association
- Utah Woolgrowers Association
- Washington Cattle Feeders Association
- Washington Cattlemen's Association
- Washington State Sheep Producers
- Wyoming Stock Growers Association
- Wyoming Wool Growers Association





This year, we were pleased to welcome New Mexico Cattle Growers Association as an affiliated state. Together with New Mexico permittees, PLC is able to leverage congressional influence and agency contacts to prioritize issues around water, land use, livestock depredation, and harmful land designations.

BY THE NUMBERS

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6.2K

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+ 48%
REACH

+ 57%
ENGAGEMENT

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1K

FOLLOWERS

+ 146.4%
REACH

+ 67.6%
ENGAGEMENT

X X

1.3K

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✉ Email

3.7K

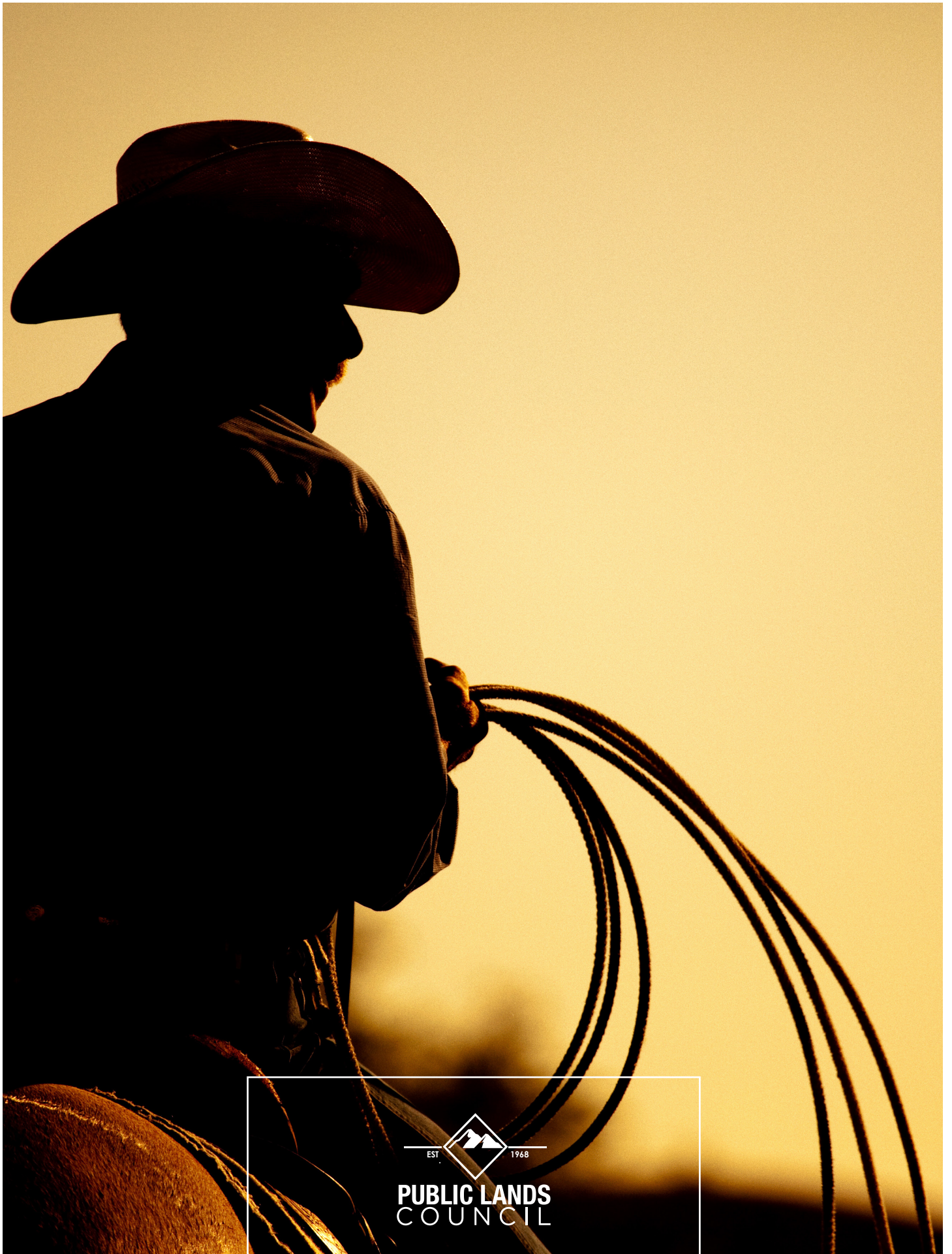
SUBSCRIBERS

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CONTACT
GROWTH

35%

AVG. OPEN RATE
(INDUSTRY RATE 11%)



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