



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, Montana 59404-6133

November 15, 2019

Mr. Marc Demanigold
P.O. Box 253
Babb, Montana 59411

Dear Mr. Demanigold:

This letter is to follow-up the meeting we had on November 4. These annual meetings are vital to the success of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's conservation easement program because they encourage communication and prevent possible misunderstandings about the easement. I have enclosed a copy of the easement monitoring form that we completed during the visit. Please keep this letter and the monitoring form for your records and future reference.

We started the meeting discussing the new fence construction on the North Fork Bison Ranch and the interest it has generated in the neighborhood. I recapped the meeting we had with Chad Bullinger and yourself on June 11 prior to purchasing the Ranch. Fence construction and design was outlined at that time as 48" high woven wire fence with an approximate 6-8-inch space on the bottom. I agreed at the time, and still believe, those fence specifications "do not create a barrier that inhibit the movements" to area wildlife (elk, deer, moose, and both species of bears).

The Service has acquired conservation easements on tens of thousands of acres throughout Montana. Fence designs differ widely from ranch to ranch but typically are a combination of woven / barbed wire or 4-6-strand barbed wire generally less than 54" in height. Certainly, there are many "wildlife friendly" fencing alternatives available. The Service prioritizes community conservation by maintaining intact landscapes, first through our easement programs, and then working with landowners on improving other management practices when feasible in the future.

We also went over the easement documents for Glacier County 56G and 56X, which North Fork Bison Ranch purchased from A&N Cattle Co., LCC. The provisions of the grassland and wetland easement contracts vary slightly (July 15 haying date) from the conservation easement on the main Ranch.

No other large projects were identified in the near future for the Ranch, other than finishing fence construction in preparation for bison grazing. Thanks again for taking the time to meet with me. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call (406) 727-7400 x228 or my cell (406) 750-2505.

Sincerely,

for Jim Lange
Wetland District Manager

Enclosure