



## **Wildlife Friendly Fence Contractor and Business Certification 2026 Partnership Agreement**

The Wildlife Friendly Fence Contractor and Business Certification Program equips fencing contractors and businesses to meet the growing demand for wildlife friendly fencing while educating professionals on local regulations and best practices. The program promotes certified businesses and positions them as preferred providers for wildlife conscious landowners, while encouraging broader adoption of wildlife friendly fencing across the community. It provides practical guidance on designing, constructing, and modifying fences that reduce injury risk and improve wildlife movement while maintaining functionality for landowners and livestock operations.

Developed by the Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation in partnership with Teton County, this program builds on decades of on-the-ground experience improving habitat connectivity and reducing wildlife–fence conflicts across the region. Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation advances wildlife conservation driven by science, collaboration, and a community of volunteers.

### **Certification Guidelines**

#### **1. Follow Local Regulations**

Contractor shall comply with all applicable [Teton County](#) regulations and Town of Jackson code when working within those jurisdictions. Key provisions include

- Top rail: 38 inches or less above ground
- Bottom wire: smooth wire (non-barbed) 18 inches or more above ground (20 inches preferred where a bottom rail is present)
- Minimum 12 inches between the top two horizontal elements
- Maximum of three horizontal elements

#### **2. Follow Wildlife-Friendly Design Standards for Livestock Fencing**

All newly constructed or reconstructed cattle or horse fences (including those built under agricultural exemption) shall meet the following minimum standards:

- Top wire or rail: 38 inches or less above ground (40 inches maximum)
- Bottom wire: smooth wire (non-barbed) 18 inches or more above ground
- Minimum 12 inches between the top two horizontal elements
- Use of a wooden top rail is strongly encouraged to improve visibility
- Woven wire or other mesh fencing shall not be used
- For sheep, swine, bison or other livestock, refer to [A Wyoming Landowner's Handbook to Fences and Wildlife](#) for appropriate specifications

### **3. Limit Buck and Rail Fencing**

Buck-and-rail fencing shall not be used to fully enclose an area. Where allowed by local regulations, these fence types shall be constructed to wildlife friendly standards (as defined in [A Wyoming Landowner's Handbook to Fences and Wildlife](#)) and may only be used in limited sections for decorative or landscape purposes, or where necessary due to rocky or wet soil. Key provisions include

- Top Rail: 38 inches or less above the ground (40 inches maximum if containing livestock)
- Bottom Rail: 18 inches or more above the ground (20 inches preferred)
- Alternating sections without interior rub rails

### **4. Follow Repair Regulations**

Existing fences may be repaired up to a cumulative maximum of 25% of total fence length over the lifetime of the fence, consistent with Teton County Regulations. Beyond this threshold, the fence shall be brought into full compliance with current wildlife-friendly standards and local regulations.

### **5. Improve Safety of Residential Fence**

Privacy or chain-link fences limited in extent and, where used, must include gates or openings that can be opened to allow wildlife to escape enclosed areas. "Dead-end" fence configurations, including fences that are open on one side but enclosed on the other, shall not be constructed. Ornamental fences shall not include spikes, sharp finials, or other features that may impale or injure jumping wildlife. Spacing between pickets or bars (vertical elements) shall be less than 6 inches to prevent wildlife from becoming trapped while attempting to pass through gaps. Fence designs shall not include gaps at the top that could catch the hind legs of a jumping animal.

### **6. Enhance Wildlife Permeability**

Contractor is strongly encouraged to incorporate additional wildlife-friendly features wherever practical to improve permeability and seasonal movement, particularly in high wildlife-use areas. These may include:

- Drop-down Rails
- Drop or lay-down sections of fence
- Gates
- Visibility markers or other collision reduction measures

More visible and durable materials, including wood or other solid components are preferred over wire where practical. Contractor shall work with landowners to identify opportunities to implement these features where appropriate.

Contractor agrees to implement these standards in good faith across all applicable projects and understands that certification may be revoked for repeated or intentional non-compliance.

