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### **Absaroka Fence Initiative celebrates first year's successes**

**CODY, Wyoming** — After its first full year of on-the-ground projects, the Absaroka Fence Initiative is looking back at the successes of 2021 with gratitude for its many partners and volunteers from the community.

The Absaroka Fence Initiative is made up of landowners, community members, land managers, non-governmental organizations and local government agencies in Park County. The group aims to ensure fences are functional for livestock management and wildlife movement across the landscape, through projects, public workdays and outreach to the community.

In 2021, the group completed several projects that resulted in the removal of 8.2 miles of obsolete fence; the modification of 5.7 miles of fence to make it wildlife friendly; the recycling of more than 10,000 pounds of fence materials; and the donation of 788 volunteer hours.

“What started out as a small endeavor with a few partners working together on fences has grown to become a much larger and more successful initiative than we could have hoped,” said Alicia Hummel, Bureau of Land Management range specialist who serves on the Absaroka Fence Initiative Steering Committee. “We are grateful to our volunteers, partners, donors, even those who just follow our progress online. Your support helps us make our landscape better for livestock and wildlife.”



Collaborators targeted areas where fencing could be improved to have the greatest impact on wildlife migration, while still functioning to effectively manage livestock. This resulted in project locations on a mix of public and private lands.



A highlight of 2021 was the May 1 Four Bear Fence Tear. During the event, 80 volunteers, including Cody Cub Scouts Pack 3050, removed 3 miles of unneeded fencing, and nearly 4,000 pounds of old wire, clips and t-posts were recycled.

The largest Absaroka Fence Initiative fence project of 2021 took place in August, when more than 5 miles of fencing was removed, and 1.5 miles modified, on public and private land between Wapiti and the Buffalo Bill Reservoir.

The 2021 projects wrapped up on November 6 in the same area, along the North Fork Highway right-of-way fence, when 40 volunteers pulled 500 pounds of stays from 3.2 miles of fence in two hours. This fence modification will enable wildlife to more easily navigate the landscape in their crucial winter range.

The group is looking forward to several projects in 2022 and seeks opportunities to connect with willing landowners and community members. If you are interested in learning more about this work or getting involved, visit [absarokafenceinitiative.org](http://absarokafenceinitiative.org) to sign up for our newsletter, follow @absarokafenceinitiative on Facebook, or email [absarokafenceinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:absarokafenceinitiative@gmail.com).

