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# Wildlife Friendly FENCING



*A Guide  
to Meeting  
Landowner  
and  
Wildlife  
Needs*

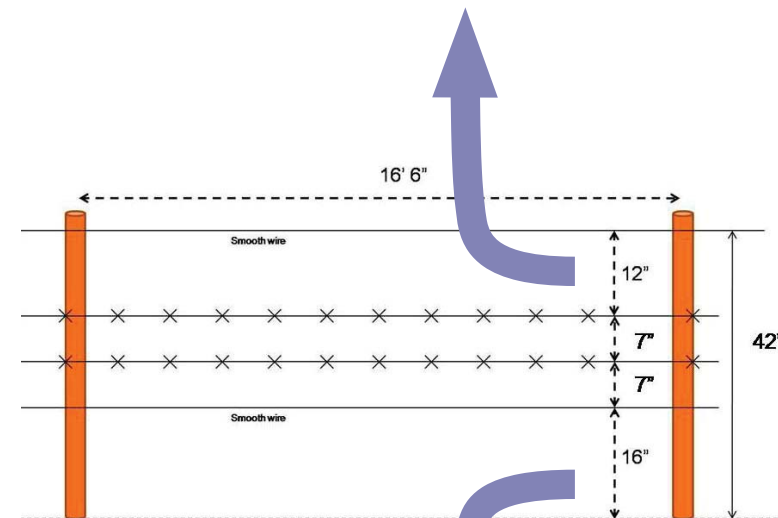
## Wildlife Friendly

# FENCE DESIGN

*Wildlife friendly fence design allows for:*

- ❖ *Barrier-free wildlife movement, while containing domestic livestock.*
- ❖ *Reduces damage to the fence, thus reducing the need for maintenance or repair of the fence.*
- ❖ *Is designed to eliminate or substantially reduce the number of injuries and deaths to wildlife.*
- ❖ *Can reduce the number of animal/vehicle collisions by -*
  - *Reducing the time the animal spends in the Right of Way.*
  - *Restrains domestic livestock from entering the ROW.*
  - *Reduces the chance of animals being trapped in the ROW.*
- ❖ *Maintains habitat connectivity for wildlife.*

*The 12" spacing between the top 2 wires reduces the chance of wildlife getting their feet entangled between the wires when jumping over the fence.*



*The 16" bottom opening allows for wildlife passage underneath the fence.*

MCA 61-4-101 Legal fence defined

*In contrast, traditional Right of Way fence design (5-wire, 6-wire, woven wire, etc.):*

- ❖ *Impedes wildlife movement to winter/summer ranges, water, and essential forage.*
- ❖ *Can cause injuries or fatalities during attempts by wildlife to cross over or under the fence.*
- ❖ *Increases the likelihood of wildlife damage to the fence which increases maintenance requirements.*

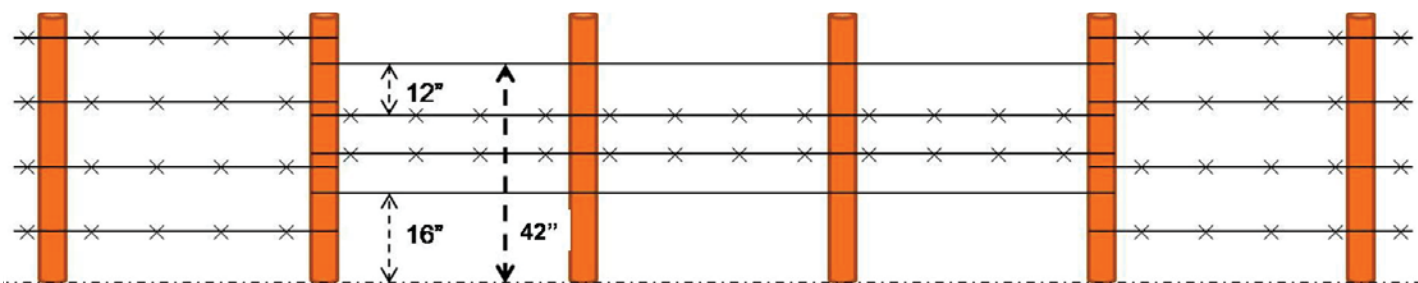
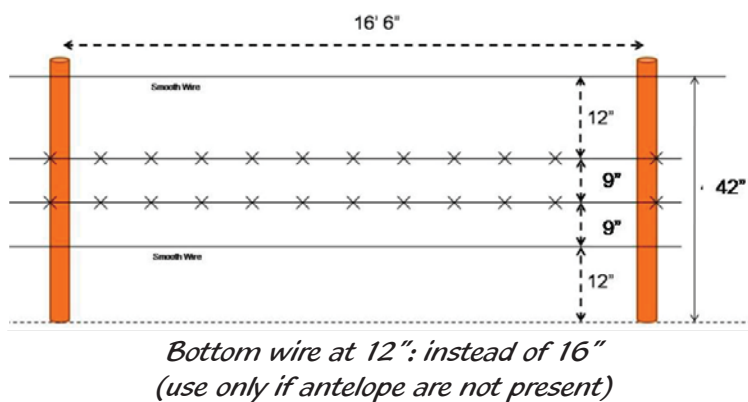
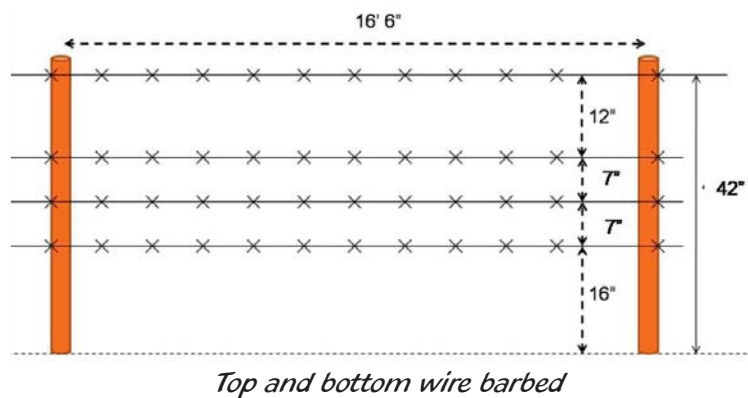
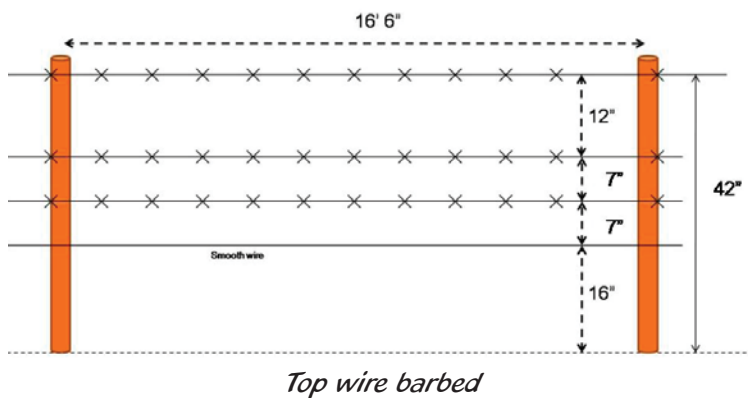


**M**ontana is nationally known for its scenery and wildlife; including its big game populations of deer, antelope, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, and bears. Human/Wildlife related recreation brings in millions of dollars annually into Montana's economy. However, a sight no one enjoys seeing is wildlife entangled in a fence; distraught animals trapped between fences; young animals separated from their mothers; or wildlife herds blocked from following migration routes. The culprit -- fences designed without consideration for wildlife needs.

Wildlife can become entangled in wire fences that are too high for them to jump, have narrow spacing between wires, or that have bottom wires too low for wildlife to crawl under. Woven wire fence acts as a barrier to antelope which prefer to crawl under fences, and also creates barriers for young animals attempting to follow their mothers.

## Optional Designs of Wildlife Friendly Fencing:

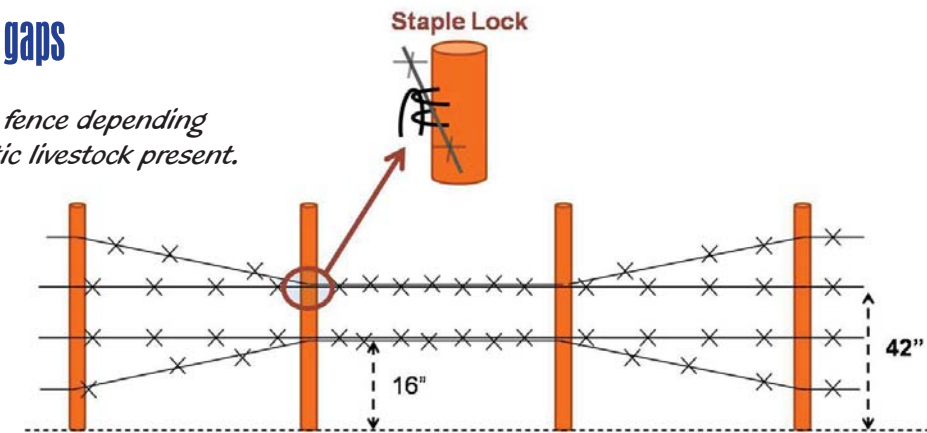
Modifications can be made to a wildlife friendly fence depending on the type of wildlife, land-use, and/or domestic livestock present. Below are a few options:



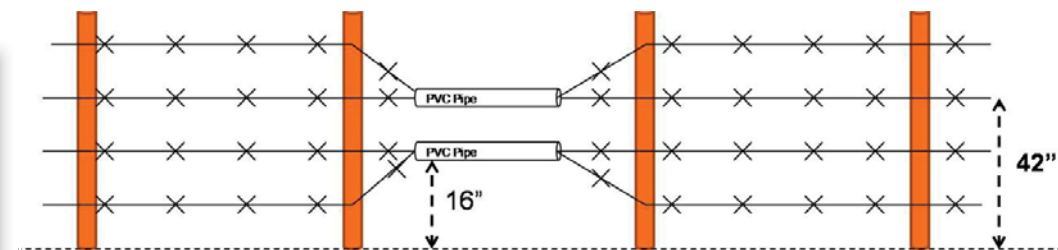
## Other Optional Designs of Wildlife Friendly Fencing:

- Temporary (seasonal when livestock are not present)
- Permanent wildlife passage fence gaps

Modifications can be made to a wildlife friendly fence depending on the type of wildlife, land-use, and/or domestic livestock present. Below are a few options:



Top, bottom or both wires secured to next upper or lower wire to allow for animals to crawl under or jump over



Top, bottom or both wires secured to center wires with PVC pipe to allow for animals to crawl under or jump over. Spacing of these under/over passages should be at least every 1/4 mile; placed in areas of known wildlife migration; or in areas of known concentrated wildlife movement



## Common questions about wildlife friendly fencing:

- ❖ Will wildlife friendly fencing serve my purpose?
- ❖ What design will work with cattle, sheep, horses, etc.?
- ❖ What design options are there for topography that varies from steep hillsides to level terrain?
- ❖ What wildlife species are present in this area?
- ❖ What are the daily, seasonal or regional wildlife movements in this area?

MDT'S RESOURCES SECTION'S SUPERVISOR AND DISTRICT BIOLOGISTS ARE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS AND WOULD BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU IN WILDLIFE FRIENDLY FENCE DESIGN. CONTACT INFORMATION IS LISTED ON THE BACK OF THIS BROCHURE.

## Other Resources:

There are many different designs and modifications to wildlife friendly fences. A good resource for landowners looking for additional information is Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' guide entitled; "A Landowner's Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences: How to Build Fence with Wildlife in Mind" (<http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/livingWithWildlife/tips.html>) . If you would like a copy of FWP's wildlife fencing guide sent to you; please email Joe Weigand, Private Lands Wildlife Specialist, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; at [joweigand@mt.gov](mailto:joweigand@mt.gov).