



ZIPPY DUVALL

American Farm Bureau President speaks on Snake River dams, climate and other issues crucial to agriculture

ZIPPY DUVALL

Age: 65

Occupation: President, American Farm Bureau Federation; farmer

First elected: 2016

Farms in: Greensboro, Ga.

Family: Wife Bonnie passed away in 2020; four children, five grandchildren

Website: <https://www.fb.org/>

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

LEWISTON, Idaho — Zippy Duvall recently got an up-close look at the Lower Granite Dam, one of four dams Pacific Northwest farmers say are critical to their livelihoods.

Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, toured the area to learn more about the lower Snake River dams and offer his support to the region's farmers.

The dams are at the epicenter of a roiling debate over their impact on the region's economy. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, has called for tearing out the dams, while most of the region's farmers adamantly oppose it. They say the dams provide irri-

gation water, electricity and make the river navigable for the huge barges transporting wheat downriver to export terminals on the Columbia River.

The dams are just one of many issues impacting agriculture that draw Duvall's attention. As leader of the Farm Bureau, Duvall represents the interests of nearly 6 million farm families. The grassroots federation includes 2,800 county and state Farm Bureaus in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Duvall, 65, is a third-generation farmer in Greensboro, Ga., about 75 miles east of Atlanta. He raises beef cattle, broiler chickens and hay.



Capital Press File

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall meets with producers, FFA members and other Farm Bureau members during a 2017 dinner at Big D Ranch in Meridian, Idaho. Duvall spent the week visiting with hundreds of Idaho farmers and ranchers.

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Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, at the Lower Granite Dam near Lewiston, Idaho, on June 16.

Drought, markets and demand impact Northwest farmland rental rates

By **SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN**
Capital Press

Farmland rental prices in the Northwest changed significantly from 2020 to 2021.

In Oregon, Washington and Idaho, according to a USDA report released Monday, irrigated cropland is more expensive to rent in 2021 compared to last year, which experts attribute to high specialty crop prices and demand for land with water rights.

However, rental prices



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

Farmland with flowers in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

for non-irrigated cropland have stagnated or decreased due to drought and poor dryland crop yields. Pastureland rental costs have changed little.

Most farmers say they prefer flat or falling rental rates.

"Just personally, from what I'm hearing, with the margin of profit as narrow as it is, any time any expense goes up, that's going to impact (farmers) negatively," said Randy Welk, USDA's state statistician for Idaho.

Cropland

According to USDA's 2021 cash rent report, Oregon

producers on average paid \$181 per acre to rent cropland this year, \$21 more per acre than in 2020 — a 13% increase.

Irrigated Oregon cropland is \$245 per acre, up \$25 from 2020. The rental price of non-irrigated cropland, in contrast, went down \$5, from \$80 to \$75 per acre.

Dave Losh, USDA state statistician for Oregon, said demand for irrigated cropland on the west side of the state appears to be pushing this year's irrigated cropland prices up.

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Oregon ranchers lose appeal over 'grazing preferences'

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

An Oregon ranch family has failed to convince a federal appeals court to preserve their property's "priority" to graze livestock on public allotments.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that ranchers automatically lose the "grazing preference" for their property upon the expiration of their permit to release livestock onto federal allotments.

The ruling has broad implications for Western ranchers, since it rejects legal arguments that a private "base" property must retain its grazing preference even if a grazing permit isn't renewed.

The 9th Circuit's decision indicates the concept of "grazing priority" doesn't mean much anymore, said Mike Hanley, a rancher involved in the litigation.

"It could be the death knell of the Taylor Grazing Act," he said, referring to the federal statute that regulates public land livestock allotments.

In practical terms, the decision will make it tougher for ranchers to transfer private property, including to family members, without encountering heavy regulatory burdens, he said.

The case demonstrates the difficulty of litigating against the federal government, particularly in the 9th Circuit, Han-



Mateusz Perkowski/Capital Press File

From left to right, Mike Hanley and his wife, Linda, stand with daughter Martha Corrigan and her husband, John, at the family's ranch near Jordan Valley, Ore. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled against the family in its dispute with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

ley said. "In the long term, you're going to lose."

Grazing preferences provide private ranch properties with the top priority to obtain grazing permits on neighboring federal allotments.

Within the livestock industry, such preferences are crucial to the financial value of private ranches. They're also considered to stabilize the long-term connection between ranchers and surrounding federal lands.

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