



Province of
British Columbia
Ministry of
Forests

Prince George
REGION
Standard Operating Procedure
Number: 2-2

SUBJECT:

**Northern Rocky Mountain Crown
Range Grazing Policy**

CHAPTER

2

MANUAL

Range
(Grazing)

SECTION

2.521

PURPOSE:

To outline and reaffirm the procedures to be followed in administering the use of Crown range by horses in areas within the Prince George Forest Region which are:

- a) remote from areas of current and historic use by commercial ranching operations; and
- b) of especially high value for wild herbivores, and have historically been intensively grazed by this class of animal.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION:

This Standard Operating Procedure will primarily apply to range areas at the headwaters of the Peace and Liard Rivers, including the Northern Rocky Mountain foothills. It will specifically apply in the following Range Units:

Toad River (#154)
Tetsa (#152)
Tuchodi (#66)
Gathto (#155)
Prophet (#149)
Muskwa (#67)
Besa (#60)
Bison (#72)
Graham (#11)
Ingenika (#53)
Weston (#7)
Germansen (#58)

and its application may be extended in future to cover other Range Units where similar circumstances prevail.

DISCUSSION:

Within the area to be covered by this Standard Operating Procedure the forest service, in consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Branch and other natural resource management agencies, has determined wild herbivores to be the primary users of the Crown range resource. The Range Units here listed tend to be remote from established ranching

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operations and markets. Road access is limited or non existent in many cases. Development of agriculture has been discouraged to this point in time by policies of the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing. Further, most if not all of the area is either proposed or already established as Provincial Forest under Section 5 of the *Forest Act*. Consequently, few grazing tenure holders or applicants possess commensurate land bases and are dependent upon the uncertain capability of the Crown range to sustain winter grazing, together with supplementary feed which must be imported by the horse owner from areas of agricultural production.

PROCEDURE:

Under Section 9 of the *Range Act*, grazing tenure applications may be made in the prescribed form by any individual or company meeting the basic qualification of livestock ownership. However, within the geographic area covered by this procedure, preference will be given to owners of horses that are utilized in the recreational wildlife industry. Included would be licenced guiding operations and packing operations. Our prime intent continues to be to limit horse numbers to the minimum required to service the recreational wildlife industry, while recognizing the necessity to raise and maintain a reasonable number of replacement horses in the northern area. The forest service must neither condone nor facilitate the establishment of horse ranches in this area.

Expansion of presently established winter use of Crown range is to be discouraged, and expansion of supplemental feeding should be encouraged, as should Crown range improvement intended to decrease grazing pressures on critical wildlife ranges. Wildlife forage requirements and commensurability will continue to provide grounds for disallowing most new applications for grazing tenure within the area covered by this Standard Operating Procedure.

At such time as access is improved, this Standard Operating Procedure will be re-evaluated on an individual Range Unit basis and in full consultation with other Crown agencies and interested parties.

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Regional Manager

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