

OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland Decision to Designate

Questions & Answers

1. What is a heritage rangeland?

The grasslands of southern Alberta have evolved under a history of grazing by bison. In the absence of bison, sustainable livestock management by ranchers has replaced this process over time. Heritage rangelands celebrate and legislatively protect Alberta ranching culture and the connection of ranching to the land.

2. Why was this site designated as a heritage rangeland?

The establishment of the heritage rangeland allowed the Alberta Government to create a new park that will continue the OH Ranch's 125 year legacy of land stewardship. It will also support the objectives of the draft Land-use Framework.

The OH Ranch has had a long-term vision that such a dedication would benefit Albertans now and in the future by conserving and promoting a number of important values.

3. Where is OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland located?

OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland is located in southern Alberta within the Municipal District of Foothills. The area encompasses portions of Township 17, Range 3, West of the 5th Meridian and Townships 18 and 19, Ranges 3 and 4, West of the 5th Meridian.

A map indicating the location of the heritage rangeland is available at <http://www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/consult/OHRanch/default.aspx>

4. How big is the heritage rangeland?

The Crown land within the heritage rangeland is 10,200 acres. This is roughly the equivalent of ½ of a township or the combined area of Okotoks and High River.

5. How was the name for this heritage rangeland chosen?

At the beginning of the process the tentative name of the heritage rangeland was Longview-Pekisko Heritage Rangeland, as a reflection of the location of the ranches included in the designation. During the process, the name was changed to OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland. This official name recognizes the legacy of OH Ranch and the importance of the ranching culture in Alberta..

6. Will oil and gas development be permitted within OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland?

Although minimal industrial activity on the public and private land within OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland has occurred to date, existing mineral right commitments will be honoured.

Existing mineral commitments are as defined by any tenure, disposition, right, agreement or approval that existed prior to the Heritage Rangeland designation. Honoring these commitments includes all activities, both subsurface and surface, needed to win, work, and recover the mineral resource defined in the existing mineral commitment. Considering the primary purpose of the Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas, and Heritage Rangelands Act is to protect this Heritage Rangeland, special care must be taken when exploring, working and recovering the mineral resource in order to minimize impacts of activities on the natural landscape, wildlife, fish and vegetation.

The designation of the Heritage Rangeland does not prohibit new mineral right agreements. Any new mineral agreements will be issued with 'no surface access' restrictions to prevent surface disturbances within the Heritage Rangeland. Access for exploration related to any new mineral agreements issued after designation will not be permitted. 'No surface access' restrictions will be applied to all future mineral rights agreements on the public and private land within OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland.

7. What kind of recreation is permitted in OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland?

Limited opportunities for non-facility based recreation will be available provided that they are compatible with the preservation of the natural values and with grazing management.

Outdoor recreation is not a priority of this Heritage Rangeland and will not be promoted. Recreational activities that are compatible with the Heritage Rangeland designation are:

- *foot access*
- *horse use*
- *recreational hunting*
- *fishing*

These activities would be permitted subject to the [Public Lands Act Recreational Access Regulation](#) and prior contact with the lessee.

Foot access, horse use, recreational hunting, and fishing have occurred on the public land of OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland in the past.

Motorized recreation of any sort will not be permitted in OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland (as stated in the [Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas, and Heritage Rangelands Act](#)).

8. Who will manage this heritage rangeland?

The day-to-day responsibility for managing the land within OH Ranch Heritage Rangeland will remain with the OH Ranch. Fees from the grazing lease will still be paid to the Government of Alberta.