

# “Heritage Rangeland” Natural Areas

## Background

In the late 1990s during the Special Places 2000 program, seven sites totaling 721 km<sup>2</sup> were identified as *Heritage Rangeland* Natural Areas.

These sites were legally established under the Natural Areas class as a ‘best fit’ for interim management until the legislation for the Heritage Rangeland class was pro- claimed.

In the interim, a variance on the prohibition of grazing in Natural Areas was provided in these sites, which are managed consistent with the management guidelines for Heritage Rangelands rather than Natural Areas.

Including the term Heritage Rangeland in the name of these Natural Areas signaled the GOA’s intent to re-designate these sites under the Heritage Rangelands class once the legislation was in place.

<b>PURPOSE OF CLASS:</b>
<p><b>NATURAL AREAS</b> Established for the conservation of nature in smaller sites of local significance and provide opportunities for low impact nature based outdoor recreation, nature appreciation and education, which are dependent on and compatible with the conservation of nature.</p>
<p><b>HERITAGE RANGELANDS</b> Established for the conservation of representative areas of Alberta’s prairies, using grazing (via long term leases) to maintain the native grassland ecology. This class ensures the protection of biological diversity and maintenance of ecological health of native grasslands in perpetuity while also sustaining the historic culture and economic function of ranching on Alberta’s native rangeland. Low levels of self-guided recreational use may be permitted at the discretion of the grazing leaseholder where it is compatible with the conservation objectives of the site, but the visitor experience is largely un-promoted.</p>

**Table 1: Permitted Uses and Activities for Heritage Rangelands and Natural Areas classification at the Twin River site.**

While activities may be “permitted” in a class in general, they may be further restricted via policy or a management plan on a site specific basis. Permitted or restricted uses in Heritage Rangelands are almost entirely dictated by legislation, whereas use in Natural Areas is largely determined via policy.

Activity	Natural Areas	Heritage Rangelands
<b>Recreational Uses &amp; Facilities</b>		
Foot Access		
Recreational Hunting		
Recreational Fishing		
Recreational Horse Use		
Cycling, Mountain Biking		M
Backcountry Camping		
Auto Access Camping		
Auto Access Camping (for OHV)		
Existing Off-Highway Vehicles		M
New Off-Highway Vehicles		M
Existing Snowmobiles		M
New Snowmobiles		M
On-Highway Vehicles off-road		M
Helicopter Landing		M
Existing Trapping		
<b>Non-Recreational Uses &amp; Facilities</b>		
Existing Domestic Livestock Grazing		
New Domestic Livestock Grazing		
Existing Telecommunication Towers		
New Telecommunication Towers		
Pre-Existing Oil & Gas with associated development		
New Oil & Gas with associated development		
Surface Minerals (e.g. gravel)		
Mining: Metallic & Industrial Minerals and Coal		
Existing Mainline Pipelines		
New Mainline Pipelines		
New Cultivation		
Wind Energy		
	<i>Use is NOT compatible with class</i>	
	<i>Use normally permitted if suitable site, subject to conditions</i>	
	<i>Use may be considered in some specific sites</i>	
	<i>Management purposes only (Agencies and Disposition Holders)</i>	M