

Hunting on Agricultural Crown Land

Recreational Access Regulation (RAR)

Hunting heritage runs deep in Alberta and is a tradition family and friends have taken part in for many years. Responsible hunters have always conducted themselves in a way that demonstrates respect for hunting traditions, other hunters, landowners and the general public, as well as wildlife resources and the environment. Whether you are hunting on private land (with permission), or on Crown land, hunters play an important role in wildlife management.

In recent years, there has been increased interest in hunting on agricultural Crown land. This fact sheet will help prepare you for your hunting trip on agricultural Crown land (land that is leased for agricultural purposes).

What is the Recreational Access Regulation?

The Recreational Access Regulation (RAR) was created in 2003 under the *Public Lands Act*. The intent of the regulation is to allow the agricultural leaseholder to protect and care for the land and livestock, while allowing some recreational access to the land. Please note that although all agricultural crown lands (permits, licences, and leases) fall under the regulation, contact is only required for leases.

What does the regulation say?

You, as a hunter, must contact the leaseholder prior to entering the grazing lease. In the event of a dispute you will be required to prove proper contact was made. Leaseholders are required to allow recreational access to the land, as outlined in the RAR. As the land manager, the leaseholder is held accountable for the land, including any damage caused by recreational activities. A leaseholder can deny access or specify conditions for use if:

- livestock are present in the field
- a crop has not yet been harvested
- you wish to discharge a firearm or use explosives near livestock

- you wish to hunt unreasonably close to livestock in a fenced pasture
- you are not on foot
- you wish to camp
- a fire ban is in effect
- the proposed use is not permitted under a recreation management plan or a condition set by the government

Every lease is different and leaseholders may apply conditions to help facilitate access, such as how to contact the leaseholder, where to park, and how to access the land. These conditions are reviewed by the Department.

In some cases, more specific Department conditions, such as limiting the number of hunters, can be set to help ensure public safety, animal health and proper land management.

Checking conditions and contacting the leaseholder

Contacting the leaseholder is required. To find contact information, detailed maps and access conditions, visit the [Recreational Access Internet Mapping Tool](#). If you have not used this tool in the past, use the [Recreational access internet mapping tool instruction guide](#).

Talking to the leaseholder will allow you to discuss important information. For example, there may be sensitive areas, hazards or livestock that you need to avoid. Unless otherwise specified, contact the leaseholder at least two weeks prior to your trip to confirm your plans. When contacting the leaseholder, be prepared with the following information:

- When you would like to access the lease
- Your contact information
- The activity you are proposing
- How many people are in your hunting party
- License plate of vehicle(s)

Please note, that you cannot access the lease without a response from the leaseholder. If you cannot get a hold of the leaseholder, please [contact a local rangeland agrologist](#).



Stewardship of the land

Alberta's Crown land is a shared resource and a shared responsibility. Regardless of intent or mode of travel, all recreational users are expected and encouraged to respect, take pride, and play a stewardship role in maintaining the quality and character of Alberta's natural resources. When accessing agricultural Crown land be courteous, and remember to:

- Abide by all hunting regulations
- Follow instructions provided by the leaseholder
- Pack out litter and do not damage land or property
- Park vehicles so they do not block access for the leaseholder or other users
- Leave gates as they were found
- Report anything unusual you see to the leaseholder

Denied Access

As a hunter, you have a few options if you are denied access to a grazing lease. This process is going to take a minimum of 7 days.

Step 1: Ask the leaseholder which conditions you were denied access under. If the reason provided by the grazing leaseholder does not meet the conditions set out in the RAR, or to the specific lease, have a respectful conversation with the leaseholder.

Step 2: If the leaseholder does deny access outside the regulation [contact a local rangeland agrologist](#) as soon as possible.

Step 3: An agrologist will facilitate a discussion between disputing parties on recreational access to the land in question.

Step 4: If the parties come to a facilitated conclusion, then the matter is considered settled. If access is still not agreed upon, the agrologist will suggest submitting an application for Local Settlement Officer (LSO) review. You can learn more about this process [here](#). Once you enter this formal process, it will take at least 7 days.

310-LAND(5263)

Report violations of the Recreational Access Regulation to [310-LAND \(5263\)](#) – call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report illegal activity, public safety incidents and enforcement concerns on provincial Crown land.

When reporting a violation to the Recreation Access Regulation or other illegal activities you may be asked to:

- describe what happened
- describe where it happened
- share photos of the activity or incident, if you have any
- describe the person(s) involved
- provide the vehicle make and licence plate number (if applicable)

Other hunting opportunities

Agricultural Crown land provides over 5 million acres of hunting opportunity, but it is not the only place available for hunting. In total, Alberta has 100 million acres of Crown land that provides unique opportunities for hunting. Remember, not all Crown land is managed in the same way, so make sure to check the restrictions wherever you are going – you are responsible for knowing what the regulations are and where you are. Learn more here:

- [Hunting in Alberta](#)
- [Hunting in Alberta Parks](#)

Hunting on private land is permitted if you have permission from the landowner; however, private landowners have the right to permit or deny access for any reason. Permission is also required before entering or crossing Indian reserves and Metis settlements.