

# Rangeland Sustainability Program

Alberta's rangelands are vegetated ecosystems that provide ecological goods and services that benefit all Albertans.

Rangelands may be grasslands, grazeable forestland, shrubland, pastureland and riparian areas. Clean air, fresh water, food, timber, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, soil stabilization, pollination, buffering from extreme weather events like floods and fires, and carbon sequestration and storage are all direct benefits from Alberta's rangeland. Alberta's Rangelands are working landscapes that provide a sustainable and renewable source of livestock forage, contributing to the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers and supporting the foundations of vibrant rural communities in Alberta. Rangelands support environmental health and provide social benefits and opportunities for economic growth when managed sustainably.

## The Rangeland Sustainability Program

The Rangeland Sustainability Program (RSP) promotes the conservation and long-term sustainability of Alberta's rangelands and the ecosystem services they provide. The program works with partners and stakeholders to:

- support sustainable rangeland stewardship initiatives implemented by industry and stakeholders
- increase knowledge and understanding of rangeland management outcomes for long-term sustainability through research, education and tool development
- support rangeland initiatives that help producers overcome barriers to sustainability of rangelands

The Rangeland Sustainability Program is funded by a portion of annual grazing rental revenue.

Rangeland sustainability involves managing rangelands so that their status, condition and use is maintained over time.

## Partnerships

The Government of Alberta has funding to support eligible organizations that work alongside industry partners to improve the sustainable management of Alberta's rangelands.

This program is not open to individuals; however, Albertans are encouraged to partner with the following eligible applicants to develop projects in Alberta:

- academia and educational institutions
- Indigenous communities and organizations
- municipalities
- non-government organizations registered under the *Alberta Societies Act* (ASA)
- non-profit organizations (those that may not be registered under the ASA but are still considered not-for-profit)

Find detailed information on eligible projects and project costs and learn more about the program application process online at: <https://www.alberta.ca/rangeland-sustainability-program.aspx>.

## Program Achievements

Since the Rangeland Sustainability Program was established in 2020, \$152,205 has been allocated through two grant cycles. This funding has supported eight partner projects:

- research on the long-term impacts of invasive species on rangelands in the dry mixed grass,
- a field camp educating youth about rangelands and their management,
- updating documentation on industrial disturbance recovery strategies within the mixed grass ecoregion,
- demonstration of shrub encroachment control in the fescue grasslands,
- improving extension communication materials and providing opportunities to host hybrid rangeland management workshops,
- development of a sheep and goat vegetation management accreditation program,
- research on soil ecology dynamics of disturbance and reclamation in foothills fescue grasslands, and
- develop communication strategies and education products highlighting stewardship roles of rangeland managers across Alberta.