

## Check List for Completing a Grazing Timber Agreement (GTA)

A Grazing Timber Agreement (GTA) is a written agreement between a grazing and timber disposition holder. A GTA outlines how the two parties will operate on a common land base. Once a GTA is completed, it is forwarded to Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) for endorsement.

Effective June 2006, ESRD **requires** GTAs be completed for all new grazing dispositions that overlap with timber dispositions. A GTA is also required for existing overlapping operations in the following situations:

- a new activity such as range improvements and timber harvest plans;
- ESRD **recommends** a GTA be developed for existing overlapping dispositions where there are unresolved grazing/timber issues; and
- either party holder may **request** ESRD consider the requirement of a GTA.

To assist both parties in the development of a GTA, the following check list has been developed. For more detailed information, review the June 2006 ESRD policy and manual, in particular Appendix 3 and 4 of the manual which provide requirements in more detail, and a GTA template. The policy and manual documents are located on the following ESRD website:

[Grazing & Timber Integration](#)

or you can contact your local Rangeland Agrologist and Forest Officer (Dial 310-0000 for toll free access)

### What should a GTA contain?

A GTA should address, at a minimum, the following requirements.

- ❑ **Objective** - For example, “we commit and agree to minimize the impact on both the timber and range resources and operations while protecting other resources and values.”
- ❑ **Contact Information** - Include grazing and timber disposition holder names, disposition numbers, contact information, mailing addresses and a map showing the grazing and timber location and relevant information.

### Grazing and Timber Strategies and Mitigation Measures:

- ❑ **Describe the present and future grazing and timber operations.** Describe grazing operations such as the carrying capacity, grazing season, rotation grazing plan, and future range improvement plans. Describe timber operations such as existing cutblocks, their age and regeneration status, future timber harvest and silviculture plans, including the removal of natural livestock fence barriers<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Natural livestock fence barriers include access barriers such as thick conifer stands and may be used in combination with steep topography and water bodies. When these barriers are logged this causes potential loss and injury to livestock, and increased costs. When these barriers are removed, a replacement fence is required, eg. 4 barbed wire fence with 7 foot, treated line posts.

- ❑ **List the present and potential impacts related to overlapping grazing and timber operations.** For each potential impact, develop an agreed upon mitigation strategy. In your GTA consider any impacts to access, timber harvest and reforestation, grazing management and forage, weed control and fence lines.
- ❑ **Describe agreed upon mitigation strategies to address potential impacts.** Identify who is responsible for which costs, and include a map that shows where the mitigation strategies will be implemented. For example, to mitigate the impact from the loss of a natural livestock fence, a replacement barbed wire fence will be constructed as follows: “It is agreed that a [describe type of fence] fence will be built to replace the logged natural fence line barrier located [describe location]. The estimated total fence costs (materials, labor and maintenance) is [insert estimated cost] and will be cost-shared in the following manner [insert description of who is responsible for which costs]. It is agreed that the fence must be constructed and in good working order prior to [insert date, activity, etc.]. See attached map.
- ❑ **Communication** - Describe how the disposition holders will maintain communication with each other, frequency of communication, and situations that will require special discussion. Describe how disputes will be managed.
- ❑ **Monitoring** - Describe monitoring procedures for each disposition; including how often and situations that require a joint inspection.
  - Monitoring check list includes:  fences and gates,  natural livestock fence barriers,  weeds and invasive plants,  grazing management,  access,  grazing forage utilization in cutblocks,  forest regeneration in cutblocks.
  - ESRD recommends describing two levels of monitoring. Level 1 is routine monitoring (normally checking the cattle, fences, and operations). Level 2 monitoring is implemented when a concern has been identified in Level 1 monitoring. Level 2 monitoring may require joint discussion and resolution on mitigation strategies. See Appendix 3 in the manual for more detail about monitoring and cutblocks. Timber disposition holder is responsible to carry out a number of inspections to ensure cutblocks are meeting forest regeneration standards as determined by ESRD.

**Endorsement** – Both the grazing and timber disposition holders must sign and date the GTA, and submit it to the Area Manager, ESRD for endorsement. The GTA becomes effective when all 3 parties have signed the GTA. Proposed new activities e.g. range improvement and timber harvest plans in the GTA can lead to a quicker turn around time for ESRD to issuance the appropriate authorization letter or disposition.

**See attached example GTA**