

NON-MANAGEMENT JOB DESCRIPTION POINT RATING EVALUATION PLAN

Working Title Rangeland Agrologist		Name	
Position Number	Reports to Position No., Class & Level Rangeland Team Lead	Division, Branch/Unit Operations Division, Approvals	Ministry Forestry and Parks
Present Class		Requested Class	
Dept ID	Program Code	Project Code (if applicable)	

PURPOSE: Give a brief summary of the job, covering the main responsibilities, the framework within which the job has to operate and the main contribution to the organization (see Non-Management Job Description Writing Guide [Pages 7-8](#)).

Under the Public Lands Act and Forest Reserve Act, lands that are managed for agricultural use are administered by the Department of Environment and Parks, Operations Division, Rangeland Approvals Program. These lands provide significant value and resources to Alberta's agricultural community, including cultivation, haying opportunities, and forage for grazing.

Reporting to the Rangeland Approvals Team Lead, the Rangeland Agrologist is responsible for delivering the Rangeland, Forest Reserve and Provincial Grazing Reserve Approvals programs. They provide professional expertise, extensive knowledge and decision-making on agricultural crown land. This is a regulatory, land management role that makes integrated, multi-faceted decisions to manage the ecological integrity of agricultural crown lands while facilitating responsible economic development, multiple-use opportunities and land allocation. This is accomplished through inter-agency referrals, intra-departmental coordination, stakeholder engagement, and First Nations and Metis Settlement consultation.

The Rangeland Agrologist represents local area interests on regional and provincial working groups and contributes subject matter expertise toward the development of regulations, policies, procedures, local plans and regional plans.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES: The purpose of the job can be broken down in different responsibilities and end results. Each end result shows what the job is accountable for, within what framework and what the added value is. Normally a job has 4-8 core end results. For each end result, approximately 3-6 activities should be described (see Writing Guide [Pages 9-10](#)).

1) Assess and audit crown land agricultural dispositions within the current regulatory structure

- a) Regulate crown agricultural dispositions to maintain ecological function and agricultural use by directing agricultural disposition holders on administrative requirements and collaborating with them on the implementation of best management practices.
- b) Assess crown land agricultural dispositions for ecological integrity, stewardship, and sustainability:
 - i) Audit disposition regulatory compliance through administrative review and field inspections
 - ii) Complete risk-based field audits with the Renewal Audit Process, the Rangeland Health Assessment Protocol, and Range Plant Community Guides along with ArcGIS field mapping tools
 - iii) Conduct stewardship reviews to discuss current range management practices being utilized and their effectiveness in enhancing the stewardship of the disposition
- c) Determine appropriate carrying capacity and grazing capacity allocations on crown land agricultural

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dispositions based on Ecologically Sustainable Stocking Rates

- d) Provide recommendations or make integrated decisions to issue, renew, suspend, or cancel agricultural dispositions based on regulatory requirements and audits
- e) Initiate and support the Integrated Compliance Process when non-compliance occurs on agricultural dispositions. This involves site inspections, conversations and meetings, abatement of non-compliant activities, review of reclamation plans, and thorough documentation of offences.
- f) Collect and evaluate comparable private land rental rates to support recommendations for Farm Development Lease rental rates
- g) Provide subject matter expertise to disposition holders on ecological integrity, stewardship, range management principles and practices, and may include development of long-term management plans (e.g. Range Management or Bison Management Plans)
- h) Foster relationships with agricultural disposition holders through effective communication skills. Assist disposition holders with on-line submissions of Stock Return Forms
- i) Make integrated decisions to amend, cancel, or add reservations to address management and development concerns on agricultural dispositions

2) Issue Approvals/Authorizations within the current regulatory structure

- a) Evaluate applications for agriculture use on crown land to ensure the requested activity coincides with GoA values and objectives
 - i) Review range improvement applications
 - ii) Evaluate lands and make integrated decisions to issue Hay Authorizations/Approvals or Head Tax Grazing Authorizations for short-term forage needs of the agricultural community.
- b) Perform integrated interagency referrals to ensure all resource concerns are considered in agricultural crown land decision making
- c) Lead and complete First Nations and Metis Settlement Consultation on behalf of proponents on applications where there is a duty to consult. Consultation addresses concerns relating to First Nations treaty rights and traditional uses
- d) Issue and manage time-sensitive emergency requests for grazing as directed by the Minister

3) Manage and administer Alberta's vacant public lands and participate in integrated land management decisions to promote responsible development and protect ecological integrity.

- a) Evaluate requests referred by other agencies for industrial, commercial, and recreational activities proposed on vacant public land reserved for agriculture use under the Public Lands Act and Forest Reserves Act; identifying conflicts with the current agricultural use or rangeland resources.
- b) Manage budgets, develop contracts, and maintain relationships with municipalities and other stakeholders to ensure weed control targets are met.
- c) Identify, evaluate, recommend, and implement appropriate action for weed control, reclamation, and restoration
- d) Engage in, and support, the Integrated Compliance Process when necessary
- e) Make integrated decisions to amend, cancel, or add reservations to address management and

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development concerns on vacant crown land

4) Evaluate the highest and best agricultural sustainable use of public lands to meet the needs of development, conservation, and stewardship

- a) Complete land evaluation for suitability for Land Review Requests, Farm Holdings Consolidation Program, Public Land Sales, Land Exchanges, and any other requests involving agriculture use on public land :
 - i) Evaluate the physical qualities of land requested for disposition by completing soil and vegetation analysis, and assess landscape suitability to determine the parcel's agricultural capability
 - ii) Lead the integrated decision-making process to make a merit recommendation on the highest and best land use
 - iii) Facilitate auctions, tender openings, or allocation draws for lands made available for agricultural disposition or sale
- b) Provide local knowledge and subject matter expertise on the review of applications to the Land Trust Grant Program and candidate properties for potential purchase under the Land Purchase Program

5) Provide input into land management and operational policy, as well as program development, within AEP to represent district and regional interest

- a) Identify emerging issues that require policy formulation and forward these issues for further discussion
- b) Participate as a subject matter expert and program representative on committees to assist in developing regional or local plans (e.g. South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, Public Land Use Zones, Emergency Response Plans, Heritage Rangelands)
- c) Review and provide input into draft rangeland program policies and legislation
- d) Provide input and feedback on updated methods of program delivery

6) Provide subject matter expertise regarding legislation and regulations to ensure transparency of processes and programs on agricultural crown land

- a) Educate recreational users and disposition holders on their rights and responsibilities under the Recreational Access Regulation to ensure compliance
- b) Mediate conflicts through creative problem-solving techniques to resolve disputes between disposition holders and recreational users
- c) Act as the point of contact for Recreational Access Regulation on agricultural dispositions subject to Local Settlement Officer's conditions or Director's Orders (e.g. Provincial Grazing Reserves)
- d) Mediate disputes between disposition holders and other stakeholders to ensure that conservation values and the disposition integrity are considered (e.g. Grazing Timber Agreements)
- e) Provide general information to the public about the rangeland program, rangeland ecology and stewardship, and requirements of disposition holders
- f) Represent the Department as a subject matter expert to the Public Lands Appeals Board for regulatory appeals

7) Support the Ministry by providing professional services to the people of Alberta while upholding the

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APS values of respect, accountability, integrity, and excellence

- a) Maintain professional agrologist (P Ag) designation with the Alberta Institute of Agrologists
- b) Sustain leading-edge knowledge of the latest stewardship practices through conferences, courses, seminars, literature and publication reviews to maintain their status as subject matter expert
- c) Employ new and innovative electronic and communication technology
- d) Work closely with Rangeland Specialists to maintain and up-date field assessment skills and techniques
- e) Adapt to changing legislation and communicate these changes to disposition holders and members of the public
- f) Participate on committees that support the program or the workplace (e.g. conference planning, occupational health and safety)
- g) Provide timely responses to Action Requests, Information Requests, Staff Response Requests, and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) requests

SCOPE: List specific information that illustrates the challenges, problem solving and creativity requirements and decision making capacity of the position. Also identify the internal or external areas the job impacts (see Writing Guide [Pages 11-12](#)).

Rangeland Agrologists are responsible for the management of rangeland and agricultural resources on over 8 million acres of crown land in Alberta. These lands provide a variety of ecological values and functions, as well as 1.7 million Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of forage to the agricultural community.

The Rangeland Agrologist is a regulated professional under the Agrology Profession Act. The Rangeland Agrologist works independently, prioritizing workload based on need and level of risk. The Agrologist incorporates the roles of land manager, range ecologist, planner, and mediator, requiring a working knowledge of a broad range of Acts and Regulations.

The Rangeland Agrologist makes complex decisions and recommendations within their scope of practice and delegated authority. The Agrologist must balance often conflicting and/or politically sensitive land use demands from a broad base of stakeholders while maintaining the integrity of sensitive ecological systems. Stakeholders may be internal or external and may include the general public, municipalities, internal government agencies, industry, and First Nations or Metis Settlements.

While broad guidance is found in policies, directives, and legislation, the Agrologist must employ creative problem-solving, critical thinking, mediation skills, and extensive professional knowledge to address diverse and complex management issues. This requires collaboration and effective communication to integrate the concerns of all resource managers and stakeholders.

Continued management of Alberta's rangeland resources ensure sustained long-term use and prolonged social, economic, and environmental opportunities for Albertans.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES: Include information on required diplomas and degrees along with identifying the most important knowledge factors, including knowledge about practical procedures, administrative, technical or professional techniques, technical, scientific or program related processes, etc. Detail specific training if there is an occupational certification/registration requirement for the position. Specify the type of experience required for the position (see Writing Guide [Pages 12-14](#)).

Knowledge

- Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, Environmental Sciences, or a related field, and a minimum of 3 years of related experience
- Agrologists are required to be eligible for the designation of Professional Agrologist (PAg) from the Alberta Institute of Agrologists (AIA)
- Valid certifications maintained in Class 5 Driver's License, WHMIS, Standard First Aid and Basic CPR, ATV Safety Course, and Defensive Driving
- Understanding of ecosystem health and function, range and riparian management, range and riparian health assessment, forage production, livestock production, plant identification, plant community classification, soil science and classification, weed science, reclamation techniques, water resources, and agricultural capability ratings is required to provide sound advice and make informed land management decisions/recommendations on public land
- Knowledge of the regulatory requirements within the: Public Lands Act, Weed Control Act, Forest and Prairie Protection Act, Forest Reserves Act, Parks Act, Line Fence Act, Stray Animals Act, Agrology Profession Act, Water Act, Species at Risk Act, Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act and applicable Regulations
- Awareness of all current policy, directives, guidelines and processes
- Knowledge of the management of other resources on public land and competing or conflicting land use values (e.g. timber production, fish and wildlife management, industrial activities, recreational activities, and water resource management)
- Comprehension of contract management, including project tendering, contract issuance, and contract supervision on PGRs and in partnerships with municipalities for weed control on vacant public land
- Ability to use program-specific software and geospatial processing programs such as the Geographic Land Information Mapping and Planning System (GLIMPS), Grazing Reserve Management System (GRMS), AltaBase, ArcMap, and ArcPad
- Understanding of agricultural industry business practices

Skills & Abilities

- Advanced skills in mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution to effectively manage the interests of a wide variety of disposition holders, stakeholders and the public
- De-escalation skills are often required to moderate emotionally-charged situations
- Consensus-building skills are often required in order to achieve sound land management decisions
- Ability to use existing knowledge, acquire new field data, and synthesize these into meaningful management of the range resource on public lands for the benefit of the environment and Albertans
- Strong assessment, interviewing, and analytical skills in order to appropriately identify and document non-compliant activities
- Ability to work independently and alone, often in remote work locations
- Decision-making based on accurate data and knowledge of other activities on the land-base
- Critical thinking, creative problem-solving and flexibility: finding creative and innovative solutions to complex problems
- Strong organizational, time management, and prioritization skills to maintain efficiency, as well as respond to rapid changes in the work environment
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to function on a team to build and maintain relationships with stakeholders, disposition holders, and peers

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- Computer literacy in a Windows platform including Microsoft Office, ArcMap, and departmental computer programs such as GLIMPS, EDS, MyAgent
- Remote sensing, orienteering (GPS and compass), and interpretation of aerial photography, spatial data, maps, the Alberta soil inventory database, and the Alberta vegetation inventory
- Safe operation of four-wheel drive and off-highway vehicles (OHVs)
- Wilderness survival skills, as well as predator awareness and situational awareness are desirable
- Use of PPE tools such as winches, SPOT units, satellite phones, and bear spray may also be required

CONTACTS: Identify the main contacts the position communicates with and the purpose of the communication (See Writing Guide [Pages 14-15](#)).

This position must maintain a high degree of professionalism during all communications, and has daily contact with the public, agricultural producers, proponents, and other professionals in government and industry.

Professional advice is provided on soils, rangeland stewardship, range and riparian health, tame and native ecosystems through workshops, publications, one-on-one contact, and other means to achieve ecological stewardship and sustainability. The Rangeland Agrologist also mediates (using conflict resolution and de-escalation skills) proponent and public disputes regarding issues on public land. Local stakeholders and clients include resource agencies, individual disposition holders, special interest groups, local governments, agricultural stakeholder groups (Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association, Alberta Beef Producers, Rocky Mountain Forest Range Association, Provincial Grazing Reserves, etc.) and members of the general public.

The Rangeland Agrologist handles politically sensitive issues which require effective communication with Area Managers, Program Directors and affected stakeholders. This position is required to assist in preparation of advice or responses to inquiries (e.g. Briefing Notes, Action Requests) for politically sensitive or controversial land and resource management issues.

Unique within the Operations Division, Rangeland Agrologists conduct First Nations and Metis Settlement consultation on behalf of agricultural proponents.

Committee involvement includes, but is not limited to: OH&S, Regional and Sub-regional Planning, Watershed groups, Foothills Restoration Forum, Public Lands Administration Regulation, Recreational Access Plans, Species at Risk Recovery Plans, Heritage Rangelands, and GoA initiatives

SUPERVISION EXERCISED: List position numbers, class titles, and working titles of positions directly supervised (see Writing Guide [Page 15](#))

There are no regular positions reporting directly to this position. As necessary, this position mentors wage or project staff who are generally classed as Agrologist 1 and new Agrologists with minimal experience while they work towards a full working level.

CHANGES SINCE LAST CLASSIFICATION REVIEW: Identify significant changes that have impacted the responsibilities assigned to your position since the last review (see Writing Guide [Pages 15-16](#)).

- Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR; 2011): added complexity to the Rangeland Agrologist's workload through legislated timelines and additional requirements for review resulting in more staff time dedicated to processing of applications (refer to Responsibilities & Activities (R&A), bullet 2)

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- Public Lands Appeal Board (refer to R&A 6(f))
- Integrated Compliance Process (refer to R&A: 1(e), 3(d))
- First Nations and Metis Settlement Consultation (refer to R&A , bullet 2(c))
- Alberta Energy Regulator (AER): changed how Rangeland Agrologists interact with the oil and gas sector; Rangeland Agrologists now interact directly with industry instead of providing information via the land use officer. (refer to R&A 3(a))
- The addition of several new processes and tools such as the Renewal Audit process, Stewardship Review, computer programs (ArcGIS), and the Online stock return form (refer to R&A, 1(b ii) and 1(h)
- Alberta Wetland Policy (Sept 2013): added complexity to the integrated decision-making process, as well as increasing the knowledge that is required to do the Rangeland Agrologist job. (refer to R&A 2(a) and 2(b))

ORGANIZATION CHART: An organization chart that includes supervisor, peers and staff **MUST** be attached (see Writing Guide [Page 17](#)).

This information is being collected under the authority of Section 10 of the Public Service Act and will be used to allocate positions within a classification plan and to manage the Alberta government human resources program. If you have any questions about the collection of this information, contact the Job Evaluation Unit, 6th Floor, Peace Hills Trust Tower, 10011 - 109 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3S8, phone 780/408-8400 or contact your Ministry Human Resource Office.

Signatures

The signatures below indicate that the incumbent, manager and division director/ADM have read, discussed and agreed that the information accurately reflects the work assigned (see Writing Guide [Page 16](#))

Incumbent

Name

Signature

Date

Manager

Name

Signature

Date

Division Director/ADM

Name

Signature

Date