



Aug. 15, 2024

Board to audit range practices near Merritt

MERRITT – The Forest Practices Board will audit the range planning and practices of the Douglas Lake Cattle Company on range agreement RAN076915 in the Cascades and Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource Districts.

The five-day field audit will start on Monday, Aug. 19, 2024.

The Douglas Lake Cattle Company's operations are in the southern Interior of B.C., located in the highlands between Kelowna and Merritt to the north and south of Highway 97C (the Okanagan Connector). The range agreement covers an area of more than 200,000 hectares of Crown range, with more than 7,000 head of livestock authorized for grazing.

Auditors will examine range activities for compliance with the Forest and Range Practices Act. Requirements include adhering to the approved range-use plan, ensuring that range activities protect riparian areas, fish habitat and upland areas, and maintaining range developments, such as fencing.

The ranch was founded in 1884 during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and has the largest cow-calf operation in B.C. Grazing occurs mostly in the bunchgrass, Interior Douglas-fir, montane spruce and Engelmann spruce biogeoclimatic zones. The audit area is within the territory of the Lower and Upper Nicola First Nations.

Once the audit is complete, a report will be prepared. Any party that may be adversely affected by the audit findings will have a chance to respond. The board's final report and recommendations will be released to the public and provincial government.

The Forest Practices Board is B.C.'s independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices, reporting its findings and recommendations directly to the public and government. Auditees are selected using a modified random sampling method without considering past performance or public complaints.

The board audits forest and range practices on public lands and the appropriateness of government enforcement. It can also make recommendations for improvement to practices and legislation.

For more information:

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