

# Interseeding to Improve Forage Quality & Quantity Project

by Julie Robinson & Dr. Nitya Khanal

**Project Question:** Can the gaps (*photos below*) be fixed with interseeding into an existing forage stand?



Photo caption: Julie Robinson (*far left*), emergence gaps (*center*) & Dr. Nitya Khanal (*far right*).

## Timeline:

Project Start date: April 1, 2019

Project End Date: March 31, 2022

**Project Partners:** Dr. Nitya Khanal Research Scientist, AAFC Beaverlodge Research Farm, Peace Region Forage Seed Association, South Peace Grain Cleaning Co-op, Aaron Mackay & Lori Vickers BC Ministry of Agriculture.

## Project Goals:

- ⇒ To demonstrate if forage quality can be improved by seeding into an existing stand by exploring which species of legumes and grasses have the greatest potential for success in interseeding.
- ⇒ To demonstrate if forage yield and carrying capacity can be improved by seeding into an existing stand by exploring species and timing of seeding.
- ⇒ To determine if new forage drill Vredo can be utilized to seed into existing forage stands and if management practices that can be utilized to improve the success of interseeding such as intensive grazing, or herbicide use.
- ⇒ To develop extension material, knowledge and knowledgeable resource people to provide strategic support to delivering on farm climate adaptation practices and improve and enhance forage networks to enable a more resilient forage industry into the future.

The goal is to have two sites developed per year for interseeding. In the project's second year (this year) we will see the addition of at least two more sites.

Monitoring will expand yearly to accommodate the addition of sites. Year two monitoring will include year one plots there were established in Montney and in the Sunset Community Pasture area. and year two plots that are planned for in the south peace. Year three monitoring will be over all 5 sites. Producers who are interested and have appropriate sites will be selected as partners. The steering committee will help direct priorities to align with gaps in research and industry priorities to ensure that individual site questions and plots still address a greater question.

Specifically, sites with low variability and poor stand vigour or low plant density will be targeted. Species composition will be critical to success and producer's ability to prep the site will also be considered. Intensive grazing prior to seeding or herbicide use must be options.

This summer Forage Friendly Enterprises, the lead contractor of this project, welcomes Rachel Juell to their team, from a family farm in the Doe River area. Rachel is currently attending school in the Okanagan and is looking forward to a summer job in the outdoors!!! Stay tuned for updates from her as she helps deliver on this project.

This summer we hope to establish 3 new plots 2 in old tired hay fields and one in a tired pasture. One of the challenges in a hayfield is what legume could be successful if it is an old alfalfa field as past experience indicates trying to introduce alfalfa seedlings into an old stand will not be successful. This is another opportunity where birdsfoot trefoil may shine. STAY TUNED for our results