

# FORAGE FIRST

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Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia"

by the

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## Forage Teams Up with Range



*Dennis Gellings moves a large flock of sheep in minutes with his three well trained working sheep dogs during our summer tour.*

Our forage association is great at collaborating! Especially for our events and R & D projects. This summer we teamed up with the Society for Range Management to organize our summer tour and their 3 day summer meeting with tours. *(see center fold for more details)* We also partnered with UNBC to organize a 5 part soils and forages course. You can read about our first kick off session this fall. And wait until you read about the Goat School ! We also welcome new contributing authors to this issue. The association has now undertaken four major projects and updates are provided in the newsletter, forage facts or at the upcoming annual general meeting *(see back page for AGM details)*.

Please do join us at any of our events or call any of the phone numbers below to find out how you can get more involved as a valued member of our dynamic association.

### Directors:

Darwin Linford, President, Taylor	789 9111
Bill Wilson, Treasurer, Dawson Creek	782 2866
Heather Hansen, Vice Pres., Montney	827 6826
Fred Schneider, Director, Pouce Coupe	786 5051
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Walter Fritsche, Director, Dawson Creek	782 5187

### Advisors:

Julie Robinson, BC Ministry of Agriculture 787 3241

### Committees:

Wildlife Policy, Ag. Env. Initiative: Rick Kantz  
Soil Conservation Council Canada: Bill Wilson  
R & D, Kiskatinaw Ecological Society: Glenn Hogberg  
Equipment Rental, PRAD Advisory: Walter Fritsche  
Pump Rentals: Sam Smithard, Art Seidl

### Projects & Contractors:

3D Wildlife Fence, Healthy Pastures Project : Talon Johnson  
Communications & Soils Project: Sandra Burton  
Events & Membership: Chris Thomson  
Website & Newsletter: Kim Strasky

Visit our website at [www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca)

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# South Peace Water Pumping Team

*by Talon Johnson*



Portrait of Stan Smithard



Art Seidl spring processing a calf

**Stanley Smithard** and his wife, Shirley, farm in Sunset Prairie, BC.

**Art Seidl** and his wife, Judy, farm in Tomslake, BC.

Can you tell us a little of your history and how you got started farming?

Stan: I was born and raised in Sunset Prairie and started to farm with my Dad in 1980. Mom and Dad moved into Dawson Creek in 1999 so that was when we officially took the farm over from them. Shirley and I have two daughters, Theresa and Laura, who are grown up and moved from home. I worked for Finning Cat Rental for 36yrs in the Parts Department so the farm has always been operated on the side.

What is your operation?

Stan: Currently we have 40 commercial polled Herford cow/calf pairs and 700 acres of land. We put up all of our own hay and occasionally put up some green feed when we are rejuvenating a pasture or hayfield.

How did you get involved in the forage association and with the water pumping rentals?

Stan: We have rented the water pumps three times - twice while PFRA owned them and once last year when the Forage Association took them over. When we rented it last year we were asked if we wanted to look after it for the association as we were the first ones to use it.

Can you share your life and farming history?

Art: We are farming on the same land my granddad started with in 1939. I took over farming from my Dad in 1985 when he retired. Judy and I have three children: Vicki, Cindy and Andrew, who are grown up and living off the farm. Over the years the farm, like many others, has been supplemented by off-farm income.

Have you been farming this whole time and what kind of operation do you have?

Art: It has always been a mixed farm but mainly cattle and forage. We have 100 commercial Simmental cow/calf pairs and are managing just over 1000 acres. We also put up a small amount of grain when rejuvenating fields and use that for feed.

How and why are you involved with water pumping rentals and the forage association?

Art: I wanted to make sure that the water pumping equipment previously owned by PFRA stayed in our area so I was happy to help out the Forage Association by looking after one of the units. A water pumping unit is too big of an investment for an individual to make and I believe in working co-operatively.

# Healthy and Vigorous Weeds??

by Talon Johnson

The **Healthy and Vigorous Forage Stands Project** is well underway! The current focus is mitigating the impacts of weeds in pasture and hayfields. Weed management can take a variety of forms from hand rouging, herbicide application, fertilization, placing/broadcasting seed of a competitive desirable forage, grazing with livestock or releasing bio control agents.



Top: Nicole Terrane & Ted Kabzems hand rouging Scentless Chamomile in the pouring rain.

Bottom: Talon Johnson counting SC plants (orange stakes).



## Scentless Chamomile Facts

### Weed Life Cycle:

Seeds per plant: 300,000 to 1,000,000  
Soils preferred: Black, dark grey & grey  
Life cycle: annual, biennial or perennial  
Germination conditions: light (need to be on soil surface)  
Seed viability: 10+ years

### Management:

Hand rouging: Effective - must get as much of root as possible

Herbicide: Difficult - fine leafed broad leaf, residuals provide better control

Mowing: No - will send up new flowers below cutting height

Grazing: No - palatable & nontoxic but low nutritive value & same problem as mowing

Tillage: Effective in tillage systems

Competition: Best control method in established forage or zero till systems

Biocontrol:

- ♦ Seed weevil (*Omphalapion hookeri*)
- ♦ Gall midge (*Rhopalomyia tripleurospermi*)

For more information about biocontrol contact Kerry Clarke at the Min of Ag.

**Resource:** AB Fish & Game Assn. Controlling Scentless Chamomile in Native Grassland. *The Landowner Toolkit Series*. Chapter 5.

**Scentless Chamomile (SC)** has become a common sight throughout the Peace Region, especially on newly disturbed land. John and Patt Kendrew have recently been faced with the overwhelming task of managing SC in 40 acres of their pastureland. In 2011, some SC seeds hitchhiked in with a few loads of topsoil that was spread to reduce and/or eliminate low spots. In 2012, the SC was discovered once it germinated and bloomed. John & Patt sprayed a little with GrazeOn and, with hired help, hand rouged tirelessly throughout the growing season to get on top of this noxious weed.

Unfortunately there was still Scentless Chamomile present this spring so we sat down with John and Patt to find a way to mitigate it's impacts on their land. Given their zero till management practice we decided the best strategy is to out compete the SC. There are still low, water saturated areas present in the pasture with little to no desirable forage present and other upland areas with older declining forage. Two seed mixtures were used to accommodate the different areas throughout the pasture:

- ⇒ Wet mix (water saturated areas): Reed Canarygrass, Timothy, Red Clover
- ⇒ Dry mix (bare or poorer forage stand areas): Meadow Bromegrass, Hybrid Bromegrass, Tall Fescue, Orchardgrass, Timothy, Creeping Red Fescue, Alfalfa, Red Clover

Desirable and undesirable forage (especially Scentless Chamomile) present prior to broadcast seeding was monitored. Hand rouging occurred to take care of SC that emerged this spring. Monitoring will continue to determine if newly established seedlings will prevent germination and growth of new SC plants.

## Funding Partners of the Healthy and Vigorous Forage Stands Project:

Peace River Agriculture Development Fund  
Murphy Oil Corporation

Peace River Regional District  
Enerplus



# Healthy & Vigorous Weeds *Contd*

**Canada Thistle (CT)** is a provincially noxious weed in BC and Alberta. Darryl Kroeker with Ducks Unlimited came to us with a fescue pasture heavily infested with CT in Doe River this spring. CT became abundant due to the excess moisture present plus continued overgrazing by previous managers.

We approached this infestation of CT with a herbicide and fertilizer management strategy used by Edward Bork in *Canada Thistle Management in Pasture*. This strategy proved to be very effective as the herbicide controlled or suppressed the CT while the fertilizer increased the vigor and competitiveness of the desired forage stand further impacting the CT.

Parts of the pasture (54 ac) was staked into nine treatments. Three treatments will receive herbicide and fertilizer, three will only get herbicide and three will receive neither as a control. Since the pasture is an established fescue stand with few legumes the herbicide treatments received will be 1600ml/ac (double rate) of Curtail M via an ATV sprayer in early July. Fertilizer will be broadcast this fall based on soil tests.

## Potential Organic Treatments for Canada Thistle

*By Michelle Leslie and Jennifer Critcher*

Canada thistle is a persistent weed, even for traditional farmers. Five different organic "herbicides" were sprayed or injected directly into the plant's vascular system to see if any organic means of control would be effective early in August.

Solutions misted onto plants with spray bottles:

- \* Bleach
- \* Boiled rhubarb leaf solution
- \* Vinegar (5% acetic acid/volume)
- \* Rhubarb leaf solution and vinegar
- \* 1L vinegar, 1 cup salt, 4 tbsp dish soap

**Results:** For some solutions, the spray bottle clogged up, so the nozzle was removed and solution was poured directly on to the plant. The spray tests for bleach, vinegar, and vinegar/salt/soap mix started to curl the leaves after one hour. A month later the only thistles with stunted growth were those treated with the vinegar/salt/soap mixture.

Solutions injected into plants at a variety of injection points :

- \* Lemon juice
- \* Rhubarb leaf solution
- \* Vinegar
- \* Bleach

**Results:** The injection tests yielded no immediate results. About a month after the initial application, none of the injection tests seemed to be effective, having only slight browning around each of the injection points and no browning throughout the rest of the plant.

## Canada Thistle Facts

### Weed Life Cycle:

Seeds per plant: 1,500 to 5,000

Life cycle: **perennial**

Germination conditions: **moisture, warmth (20-30°C) & light**

Root fragment that will grow new plant: **1/8-1/4" thick & 3/8" long**

Seed viability: **3 - 21 years**

### Management:

Hand rousing: **No** - plant difficult to pull

Herbicide: **Yes** - use in conjunction with fertilization to increase competition of desired crop.

Mowing: **Yes** - multiple times during growing season to deplete root reserves

Grazing: **Yes** - See Kathy Vos - Cows Eat Weeds

[www.livestockforlandscapes.com/cowmanagers.htm](http://www.livestockforlandscapes.com/cowmanagers.htm)

Tillage: **No** - can increase number of root fragments in areas with thistle

Competition: **Yes** - effective in areas where no thistle is established

Biocontrol:

- ◇ Stem gall fly (*Urophora cardui*)
- ◇ Stem weevil (*Eutorhynchus litura*)
- ◇ Defoliating beetle (*Lema cyanella*)

**Resource:** Sask Min of Ag, Canada Thistle and It's Control. Nov 2008.

### Project plans this fall/next spring:

- \* Mitigating impacts from **Foxtail Barley** using fall seeding, mowing or cattle grazing and herbicides.
- \* Digging into **Alfalfa Longevity** issues in pastures and hayfields.
- \* Mortality ratings for **Canada Thistle** from herbicide application, photo monitoring and fertilizer broadcast.
- \* Percent cover and photo monitoring in **Scentless Chamomile** pasture since broadcast seed has emerged.
- \* Develop a **Forage Species Selection Web Tool** for farmers, ranchers and professionals in the oil & gas industry.
- \* **Forage Facts** developed based on knowledge learned thus far in the project.

# Projects of the Kiskatinaw Ecological Society

by Michael Nimitz

## Ranch Maxi-Eco-Sites

**Projected Completion Date:** Ongoing

**Projected Funding:** None of the society's money has been spent on the Nimitz Ranch RME's but some is available for people in the society that would like to establish their own.

**Concept of Ranch Maxi-Eco-Sites or RMEs:** A keystone to achieving and maintaining ecological balance on our ranch is the identification and establishment of Ranch Maxi- ecosites (RMEs). While these RMEs have been with us for a long time; it was only in 2005 - 06 when we were working on our Environmental Farm Plan that we decided to attach an official name to them; and, at the same time concentrate more on managing them individually.

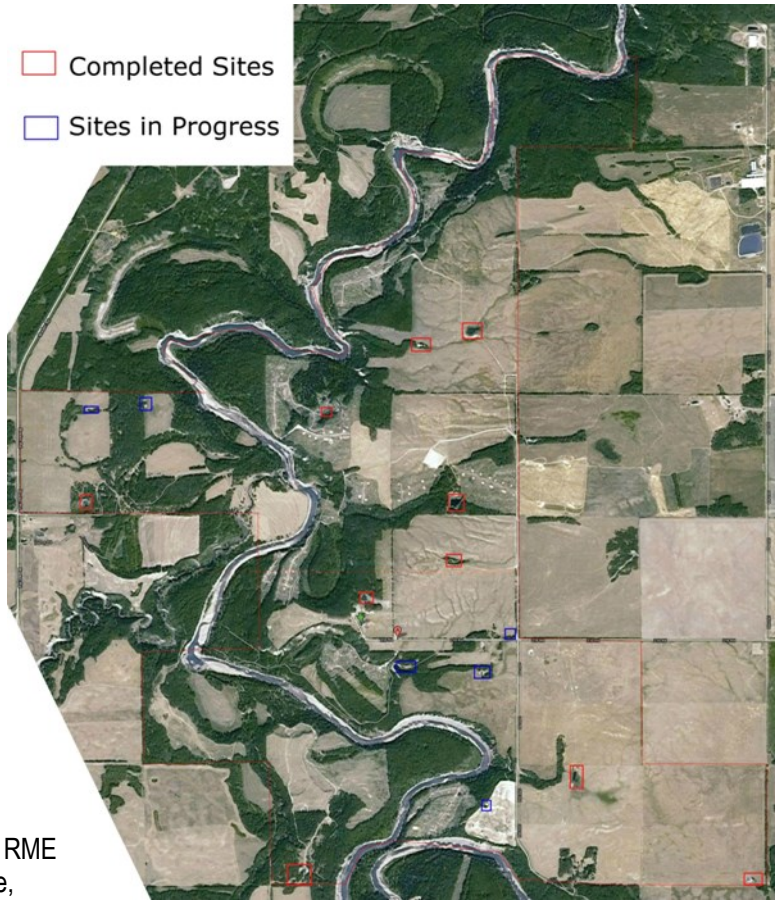


Photos of RME site before, after 6 years & after 8 years



Completed Sites

Sites in Progress



## Progress to Date:

Currently we have over 30 of these RME sites and are encouraging others in the society to establish some on their own properties with guidance and some funding from us. The RME terminology was chosen because it identifies an area that requires maximum management be applied to it. Usually these are small in size. A majority of our RMEs have to do with offsite water supply for domestic livestock and are fenced with high tensile electric fence. Many are asymmetrically fenced thus adding a little more surface land area for wildlife habitat. Small mammals, amphibians, song birds as well as water fowl and the occasional large mammal, appreciate these natural, relatively undisturbed areas adjacent to our domestic livestock water source. Usually these are fenced with electric polytwine initially and then converted to high tensile electric in a few years.



# Projects of KES *cont'd*

by Michael Nimitz

## Restoration Project

**Estimated completion date:** Fall 2014

**Estimated cost:** in the Thousands of Dollars

**Partners:** Encana and Ministry of Transport

### Background:

Through improper road construction and maintenance the drainage from the natural flow as well as the drainage from the road has caused mass erosion to the point where much of the bank is sliding downward trees and all. We are currently in discussion with Encana who has a proposed well site next to the area as well as through Encana with the Ministry of Transport to come up with a solution.

### Proposed project:

The current brainstorming solution has to do with re-sloping the ditches on the road as well as rock baskets above (west) and below (east) of the culvert on the road. Using coconut matting to hold grass seed on the landscaped slopes as well as halved drainage culverts placed in the ditch to prevent further erosion cuts.



□ Proposed Encana Well Site

▨ Areas affected by severe erosion

— Water Drainage to River

## More Projects

These are just 2 types of projects that the Kiskatinaw Ecological Society is committed to. They are also proposing a groundwater monitoring project (see next issue of Forage First).

The Kiskatinaw Ecological Society (KES) was formed to honor the memory of Mark Nimitz. These projects are made possible through the efforts and commitment of members. The KES would like to encourage other like minded people in this watershed to consider similar projects.

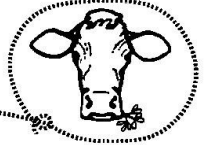
For more information or to get involved: contact [Michael Nimitz](mailto:michael.nimitz@gmail.com) at [michael.nimitz@gmail.com](mailto:michael.nimitz@gmail.com)



# Forage & SRM Tour

by Sandra Burton & Talon Johnson

Peace River Forage Association  
of British Columbia



Grazing, managing watersheds, re-vegetating, controlling weeds, assessing range health, cows and ducks, cows and forests were just a few of the topics discussed during the summer tour June 19 to 21, 2013. The Peace River Forage Association partnered with the Society for Range Management with over 100 for supper on Thursday evening. There were people from all over BC, Alberta and the Western States joining forage folks from our area. The diversity of ages, backgrounds, personalities and experiences was delightful! Here are a few appetizers of what we learned... next time join us for the full steak banquet!

## Thursday, June 20:

### Bear Mountain Community Pasture

Speakers at the first stop described the variety of users in the pasture from ranchers, recreation and oil & gas to wind energy and watershed preservation. We learned from:

- ◇ **Tyler Mohart**, Range Officer with FLNRO: "The Peace region has the second largest number of AUM grazing days in the province and 231 active tenures."
- ◇ **Richard Kabzems**, Research Silviculturist with FLNRO: "Aspen harvest started in the pasture in the 1960's when the price for aspen was set at \$0.50/m<sup>3</sup>, which is still the price today."



*The tour group learns about the multi users and issues with the Bear Mountain Community Pasture.*

- ◇ **Dillon Stuart**, Major Projects with FLNRO: "The 34 wind towers in the pasture generate 102 MW of energy a year and were the first ever wind towers built in BC."
- ◇ **Stephanie Haight**, Water Stewardship Officer for FLNRO: "There is a push for the upcoming Water Act to include regulations for the use of ground water which is currently not regulated."
- ◇ **Lary Fossum**, rancher with BCCA: "We convert areas to tame pasture as we can afford it, using forage loss revenue from oil and gas activities. We use a disc to get rid of aspen regrowth."



*Converting aspen lands to pastures was discussed from the grass / grazing viewpoint by **Glenn Hogberg** & from the health of the aspen sapling / roots by **Richard Kabzems**.*

### Hogbergs Aspen to Grazing

Next, the tour proceeded to Hogbergs, where Julie Robinson and Keith Carroll hosted one bus at the pasture that was converted from aspen lands in 1988, while Glenn Hogberg and Richard Kabzems hosted the 2nd bus at the more recently converted aspen lands. After a quick switch, both groups had great discussions at both sites and learned:

- ◇ Density of animals is critical for success.
- ◇ This works better with yearlings than cow calf pairs.
- ◇ Aspen roots being more exposed to frost damage.
- ◇ Aspen saplings injured by feeding equipment & cattle.
- ◇ Fertility additions through hay and manure favoring the grass growth.

*"When I first heard about using cattle to control aspen re-generation, I was sure it wouldn't work. I would like to publicly say in front of my wife, that I was wrong."*

*Richard Kabzems*





*Carmen Schneider, Julie Robinson & Bill Wilson share their re-vegetating experiences with us.*

## Re-vegetating Oil & Gas Sites

After lunch, we visited a revegetation site with Encana, where we learned:

- ◇ **Carmen Schneider**, summer technician: "Data from the first year shows the star forage species for establishment and growth are meadow brome grass, Anik alfalfa and slender wheatgrass."
- ◇ **Jennifer Critcher**, Encana: "The project has led to many positive discussions within Encana and we will be choosing a seed mix when it is completed".



*Jenn Critcher of Encana is enthused with the project.*



*Lary Fossum, local rancher, member of Forage Assoc/ BCCA*

## Holy Cow Project

**Carl Jahn, Rod March and Lary Fossum** introduced us to the Holy Cow project and the Timber and Range Impact Mitigation Initiative. They provided us with an alternative view on aspen stands where there is a legal obligation for these areas to regenerate back to aspen and not be converted for agriculture uses such as pasture.

- ◇ The Mitigation Initiative was created between ranchers and forest companies to come to an agreement regarding overlapping grazing and forestry tenures in rangelands.

- ◇ By law the most a regenerating aspen cut block can be opened up via roads is 7% however most forest companies only use 1-2%. One of the agreements between forest companies and ranchers was for forestry to maximize the 7% by building/widening roads and seeding them to tame pasture to provide forage to cattle.

## Quotes Along the Way:

"The tour demonstrated that educating users about the impacts their activities have on the resources they enjoy, goes a long way to significantly reduce future negative impacts." **Bob Gillaspay**

"I love the stories of why grasses are growing where you don't expect them, like blue grama grass in the Peace."

**Allen Dobb**



*Barry Sones & Mahesh KC listening ...*

## Cows & Ducks

The final stop of the day for the coach bus was the Ducks Unlimited project at the south end of Swan Lake. Trevor Hann of Environmental Dynamics Inc gave an overview of a study his company is completing on the Swan Lake watershed. A history of agricultural and industrial land practices in the watershed, together with the nature of the soils, is contributing to the eutrophication of Swan Lake. However, the residents of the watershed have a wide variety of expectations from Swan Lake which makes management solutions challenging.

Darryl Kroeker of Ducks Unlimited described the features of the 450 acre project spanning the south end of Swan Lake. In addition to supplying forage for local agricultural producers, the grazing management, riparian buffers and wetlands help to filter sediments and nutrients from local runoff into Swan Lake, especially those in Albright Creek. Interestingly, someone from the audience had to remind him about the value to the ducks as well!



*Trevor Hann and Darryl Kroeker at the DU stop.*





*Dennis Gellings demonstrated his 3 working dogs gathering a large flock of sheep.*

## Working Sheep Dogs Demo

This was a favorite stop for many of us on the second bus. What we learned with Dennis Gellings at the working sheep dogs demo was that:

- ◇ The hardest part is pushing the dogs away from the handler.
- ◇ A good trainer/ handler can direct 3 dogs simultaneously, even with a wind.
- ◇ A large flock of sheep spread over 100 acres were rounded up and brought calmly by the watching crowd to the handling facilities in about 10 to 15 minutes.

## Kendrews Healthy Pastures

This site is one of several demo sites that are part of a larger project led by **Talon Johnson**. We are learning more each time we visit these sites and we hope to share this with you in upcoming newsletters and factsheets. Until then here are some memorable quotes:

“Our goal is to have forage in our pastures as vigorous as what grows in the ditches along the road.” **John Kendrew**

“We were so disheartened last year when we discovered the topsoil was contaminated with hitchhikers. Everywhere the grader spread the topsoil, we now have scentless chamomile. But working with the Forage Association to tackle this problem has us excited about how we can improve our pasture.”

**Patt Kendrew**

“I was so excited to see my baby forage plants growing after all that work with Ted to broadcast a wet and dry seed mix early this spring. We have learned that you can manage your forage plants to out compete weeds such as scentless chamomile, Canada thistle and foxtail barley.” **Talon Johnson**



*Talon Johnson & Patt Kendrew describing the goals & monitoring of the Healthy Vigorous Pastures project at the Kendrews' site.*



*Allen Dobb singing for us.*

## Banquet & Entertainment

Both busloads reunited back at the Sudeten Hall for a wonderful steak supper, thank yous, awards and live entertainment. **Darwin Linford** accepted an award to the Peace River Forage Association from **Sonja Leverkus** of the Society for Range Management.

The evening was capped off with **Allen Dobb** and **Elaine Armagost** entertaining us with some live music and tunes, each with their own unique style.



*Sonja Leverkus, President SRM PNW presents Darwin Linford, President PRFA of BC with an award recognizing our active role in promoting innovation and conservation.*





*Richard Kabzems entertaining us with stories of the historic use of this site.*

## Friday, June 21:

### Peace Valley Native Grasslands

This area contains Dalmatian Toadflax, a provincially noxious weed. Our group learned from Elaine Armagost that:

- ◇ There was approximately 17 acres infested with the toadflax, half Crown land and the other half private land.
- ◇ This plant can be controlled by goat grazing (rosette and bolting stages).
- ◇ There are biocontrol agents for toadflax from warmer climates with some overwintering/ survival issues.

### Range Burning & Aspen Grazing

Venturing into Upper Cache country we met up with rancher Howard Goertz to talk about the prescribed burning plan he uses on his land. He told us "We have been lighting prescribed burns for the past couple of years and find it is a successful method for rejuvenating cattle grazing ranges".

Note also: CBC documentary "Wood bison population benefits from northern B.C. forest fires: benefits of prescribed burning" with Sonja Leverkus.



*Keith Carroll tells us about the range burning planning & process.*

### Range Health Monitoring

Rae Haddow & Matthew Braun led us through this hands on activity, we split into four smaller groups and went through the Rangeland Health Field Guide uplands function checklist.

Matthew Braun, Range Practices Agrologist with FLNRO "Having a reference community is crucial when completing these assessments so you know what your plant community should model".



*Ross Green & Matt Braun monitoring range health.*



A special thank you to our border collie Julie Robinson who kept us on time so that no speakers, topics or stops had to be hurried through.

### In Summary

"It was really great and I got a chance to be familiar with a lot of range topics (from species identification to prescribed burns). The tour was well organized, I am sure all of your contributions have played a great role to make the tour a great success. Thank God I did not miss this great opportunity. Thank you all." Mahesh KC

### Thank you to the organizing committee:

Julie Robinson, BC Min of Agriculture  
Keith Carroll, BC Min of Forests & Range  
Richard Kabzems, BC Min of Forests & Range  
Darryl Kroecker, Ducks Unlimited  
Brian Haddow, AAFC

### Thank you to our other partners:

Society for Range Management Pacific North West  
Douglas Lake Equipment  
Peace River Agriculture Development Fund  
AAFC / Canadian Agriculture Adaptation Program

**Photo credits:** Allen Dobb,  
Sonja Leverkus, Talon Johnson & Sandra Burton



# A Summer For Rain ?

by Diane Kitt

Wow! This has been a summer for rain, hasn't it? You know, we have lived here in this Peace River country for about 45 years now and the weather is always a good topic for discussion, speculation and opinion, if nothing else. It governs most of a farmer's days and often disturbs his nights, all year long.

I remember coming to the Peace on our honeymoon in early 1968. What a beautiful, lush and generally wonderful place it appeared to us as camping newly weds, looking for that special place to call ours, build a home and begin our life together.

Lots of government crown land was available for those of us with really strong backs and a determination fuelled by doubts of our families we had left in the South. Oh, don't get me wrong, they all wished us well, but you could see and hear scepticism in their comments as we departed, loaded to the gills with everything we thought we would need to get a foot hold in this new place, this new Country.

So, this was the beginning. When we reached the place we were to make our home, we were pretty excited, just to have arrived. After many flat tires and bad wheel bearings, and other minor breakdowns, when we reached that seismic line that would take us to our 'promised' land, so we pushed onward, only to find the first of the obstacles that would challenge us as the months and years passed by. Overgrown with grass, the lines held a lot of water in the low spots, and we pushed hard as far as we could go; right to the edge of a small clearing we would call home for a couple of years. Stuck! The truck could pull the little trailer no further. Hey, this will do!

We scrounged slabs and short pieces of lumber from an old abandoned sawmill sight just to build an out-house. We picked roots and rocks to prepare a small field for seed bed. We got a milk cow! There was no clock to tell us when to eat, sleep, or work. And of course, the sun shone half of the night, so it seemed.



We were homesteading, and we were happy.

Then came that first August. The first garden was a bust. The ground was hard, needed manure and more 'love' than we could give it. It was a lot colder in those early years too. It was hard to keep the frost at bay. I remember a trip to Dawson Creek for parts, stopping at a market garden in Taylor on the way home. We got a great big zucchini for 18 cents. That was a feast!

Then came the big rains. There had been rain showers over the summer, but none like those that started that 3rd week of August, continuing straight through September. There were 38 days we did not see the sun. Without shops or other out buildings to work in, we were 'trailer' bound. Those same seismic lines we had used for a road to our home all summer, became impassable. We read a lot to pass the time, as we had no TV and only occasional radio. We truly questioned our new lives, wondering if we were doing the right thing, or were we being so determined to our detriment?

On October 3, the rain stopped and the sky cleared, and as it always does, the roads and fields began to dry. Life went on. We are still in the Peace, and still on the same homesteaded ground, still talking about the weather!



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**facebook**

The PFRA is now on  
Facebook!

Find us by typing in:

**Peace River Forage Association of BC**

"Like" our page and we will keep you up-to-date on upcoming events, project statuses, news from other forage associations/groups and any other relevant news impacting forage and livestock producers.

## Wildlife Damaging Stored Feed?

Consider becoming a cooperator in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the **3-D Fencing Project** and take advantage of this innovative fencing system.

We are looking for individuals who are willing to experiment with different 3-D designs, fence line lures, minimizing snow insulating effects and middle of winter set-ups.

# Trial Rides Past & Present

by Richard Kabzems

According to the feedback we received, one of the highlights of the Forage -SRM Tour was the entertaining way that Richard Kabzems wove historic stories into our tour days. Here is an example: an excerpt he had dug up from Dorthea Calverley's "*The Mounted Police Road, The First Alaska Highway*" ...

"... Somebody else made a decision that a wagon road eight feet wide with rest houses every thirty miles would be a good thing." ... (i.e. a road from the Peace to the Yukon!) ... "So in March 1905, a force of thirty-two men and sixty horses and mules set out from Fort Saskatchewan near Edmonton to do that little job." ...

"Corporal Profit's crew built 12 by 16 foot shelters every thirty miles, laid corduroy and built bridges where necessary. This involved much muscle work with axe and saw. Packhorses reluctantly turned into harness teams snaked logs out of the bush. Raising them may have been done by team up inclined slopes to build walls and roofs, but unless they had whipsaws to make planks for the skids, that was unlikely. Comfort for the men was the least consideration. Officers and noncommissioned officers had saddles, but constables either rode bareback or walked. To make riding more interesting they had neither bits nor bridles - just a halter and halter shank to "steer" the horse. It is unlikely that the police bought neck reined mounts for the constables! As the halter shanks wore out the riders used the hobbles."

"No "frivolous" complaints were entertained. One morning a constable had no riding horse. The grass and peavine was waist high and dripping wet. He asked Inspector Richards for a packhorse to ride but was refused. Three times he had to wade across Cache Creek which was in flood. He was wet to the waist when he caught up with the mounted party. It was his job to cut trees. They too were dripping wet. At the first chop the rest of him was drenched. His partner suggested that he ask Corporal Profit whether he might return to camp and put on dry clothes. Presumably he could have borrowed a horse to ford the river. Corporal Profit reported him the Inspector who had him "arrested!" and "admonished" - which would mean having his magnificent pay cut on the charge of making a "frivolous complaint".

There was a comic opera air about the whole performance. One wonders what urge to perfectionism Inspector Richards was plagued with. At the end of a day's work the party would mount and place their axes as they would their rifles at the "advance into combat" order. The blunt end of the head was pressed against the thigh, the haft angled just so at the proper slant. The whole troop would ride back at full gallop. Every night the performance was carried out.



How the unfortunate constables on foot got back in proper form was not recorded."...

Another historic event took place on August 3, 2013, the **Mark Nimitz Memorial Trail Ride**. Friends and neighbors met at the Nimitz's ranch. The Annual General Meeting of the Kiskatinaw Ecological Society was followed by a cowboy lunch of chili, ribs and campfire coffee.

Over 30 riders took part in the trail ride. Green pastures and full dugouts along the ride demonstrated what kind of a summer we have experienced this year. Unlike the unfortunate constables of 1905, no one required us to return to the ranch in the proper military form. "Frivolous complaints" as well as stories and songs were encouraged.



Ernie Nimitz serving up cowboy coffee and Michael Nimitz getting horses and riders ready for the trail.

**Thank you to  
The Nimitz Family for a great cowboy lunch &  
Wayne Ezeard & Fred Burres for cowboy tunes**



# Goat School® British Columbia

*by Darwin Linford*



Kore Inkster's goats happily contained in their electric fence.

**Goat School® British Columbia** was hosted by the PRFA on Sept 13, 14 & 15, 2013. Ken and Janice Spaulding came all the way from Saint Albans, Maine to bring their Goat School®, a culmination of years of experience raising meat & dairy goats. They believed that they could offer our area a lot as their climate is very similar to what we experience in northern British Columbia.

The Forage Association was joined by attendees as far away as Vancouver Island, NE Alberta, Vanderhoof, and Calgary, not to mention those from the North & South Peace regions, including enthusiastic 4-H members!

Friday covered topics such as:

- ◇ Cultures - Focussed on cultures that typically consume goat meat.
- ◇ Marketing opportunities and economics in our area, BC and all of Canada.
- ◇ Improving pastures and multispecies grazing (such as in healthy pastures two goats can be added for every cow without damaging the integrity of the pasture or taking feed away from the cattle - quoted from Mark Kennedy, Missouri State Grazinglands Specialist)
- ◇ Weed management

Saturday was spent learning about animal husbandry as it refers to raising goats. Subjects included:

- ◇ Kidding
- ◇ Worming
- ◇ Vaccination
- ◇ Nutrition
- ◇ Hoof trimming

Goats were provided by Kore Inkster & her daughters from Baytree, Alberta. This gave an opportunity for participants to see hands on demonstration of the above activities. Ken & Janice readily answered a variety of questions and concerns brought forward by a very engaged crowd.

On Saturday night Goat School® was joined by a group of participants from the PRFA/UNBC Soils and Forage interactive field day for a "Dirty Goat Banquet"!

Sunday's session was held at Tower Lake Community Hall where Janice led the class in cheese and soap making using goats milk. Participants learned the processes to make Ricotta, Chevre, Feta and Mozzarella Cheese. Janice kept everything simple and fun which left everyone feeling confident they could create the same great products she does. Thank you to Ken and Janice for their willingness to share years of knowledge and experience!



Ken and Janice Spaulding sharing some of their memorable goat experiences with the group.

## **Thank you to all supporters of Goat School®**

Peace River Agriculture Development Fund  
South Peace Grain Cleaning COOP  
North Peace Veterinary Clinic  
South Peace 4-H District  
Kore Inkster & Family - supplying goats  
Jarnagin Family - supplying goat milk  
Harmony Boer Goats - goat meat  
South Peace Colony - goat butcher and cutting  
Nimitz Beef - beef  
Marty Gauthier - pork meat  
Phil & Cathy Tubb - setting up tents  
Jen Johnson - cooking a fantastic meal

# Digging into Soils & Forages

by Sandra Burton

This spring our association was approached with an exciting opportunity to partner with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) to develop a soils and plant course. The target audiences are crop advisors, ranchers, revegetation consultants, university professors, students, soils specialists and range agrologists. We are working with **Bill McGill**, a UNBC Dean & Professor, to deliver this course in our area. The concept of the course is to work with real people solving real issues using a case study approach. All activities are interactive, field based and as hands on as possible. We strongly believe that learning is all about having fun.

For those that need it, the course will be recognized in three ways:

- ◇ UNBC course credits for students towards graduation
- ◇ An approved Professional Development activity with BC and Alberta Agrologists (BCIA & AIA)
- ◇ Certified Crop Advisor credits

September 14th was the first day of a five day series offered in the Peace Region. It attracted a wonderful mix of forage producers, environmental and oil & gas professionals. This first day was hosted by the Hogberg Family and the question of the day was "Where has all my alfalfa gone?".



Deryle Griffith quizzing forage id station master Keith Carroll.

## Thank you to our partners:

Hogberg Family  
UNBC  
Shell Canada  
Peace River Agriculture Development Fund  
Investment Agriculture Foundation/AAFC



Bill & Alice McGill, Collin Batchelor, Glenn Hogberg, Katie Hill, Marilyn Carroll & Sandra Burton discuss what the soil tells us.

There were a number of pieces to the puzzle to understand the issue so participants were divided into four small groups that rotated through a series of stations. Activities offered clues from different view points: soils (bottom up), plants (top down) and landscape (side to side).

After everyone had a chance to learn what they could from each station we gathered at basecamp and engaged in a large group discussion. The goal here is to integrate the biological knowledge acquired throughout the day with the management context of the Hogberg operations. The focus of all the field days is not so much answering the question of the day as the discussion and the discovery of mentors in our midst. Soils folks joined goat school folks for a "dirty goat banquet" and enjoyed the wonderful meal prepared by Jen Johnson.

We received very positive feedback after our first field day. **Jim Mackenzie**: "We have been to other professional development sessions but the interactive format and take home knowledge from this field day is head and shoulders above anything else." and **John Kendrew**: "When you are bent down over a soil pit and there is so much information flying around, some of it goes over your head!"

If you are keen to join this dynamic learning dialog, see the next page for details on the next sessions.

## Thank you to our enthused station masters:

Keith Carroll, Richard Kabzems,  
Julie Robinson, Sandra Burton

## Thank you to our knowledgeable mentors:

Bill McGill, Glenn Hogberg, John Kendrew,  
Bill Wilson, Talon Johnson

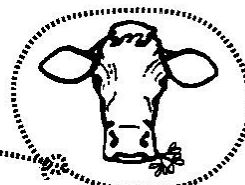


# Upcoming Soils & Forage Fun Days

**UNBC**

*In partnership with*

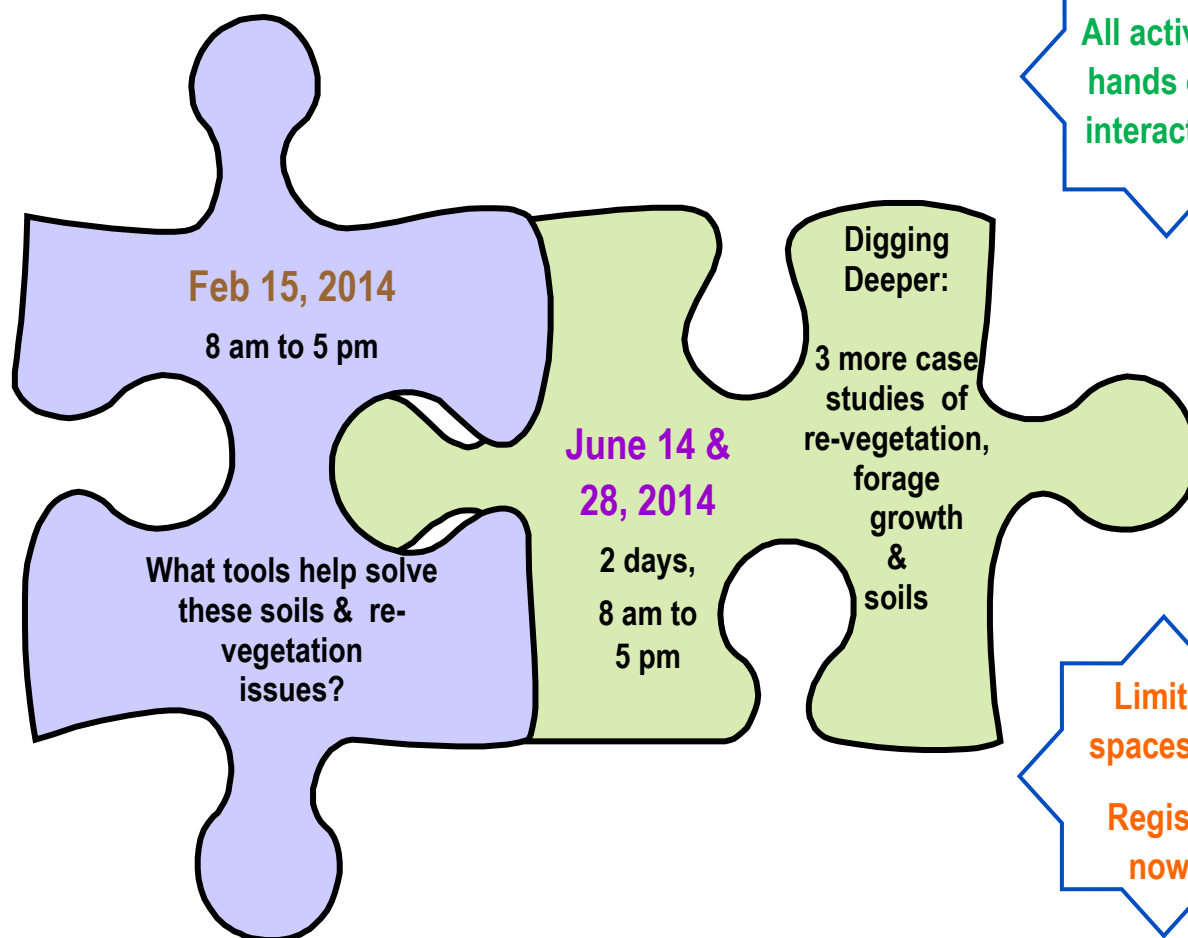
Peace River Forage Association  
of British Columbia



## Interactive Soils & Forages Course

Involving Real People with Real Issues

All activities  
hands on &  
interactive !



Limited  
spaces left  
Register  
now !

**For More Details  
or To Register  
in the Peace:**

Sandra Burton at  
250 789 6885  
[sburton@xplornet.com](mailto:sburton@xplornet.com)

*Thank you to  
Shell Canada ,  
Encana  
& PRAD  
for their contributions*

**Registration Costs:**  
\$50 / day non members

**20% discount for members  
10% discount for registering  
for all 3 days**

## Upcoming Events & Thank You's

### Mark Your Calendar!

*The Peace River Forage Association  
Invites you to join in on their*

### Annual General Meeting

**November 30 2013**

**3:00 to 9:00 pm**

*Taylor Community Church ,  
Taylor, BC*

*To pre-register call Chris at 250-789-6885  
or 250-793-8916*

### Canadian Forage & Grasslands Association Conference & AGM

**Theme:** Taking Forages Main-  
stream - "Challenge, Pitfalls, and  
Opportunity"

**When:** Dec 9th (Tour), 10th &  
11th (Conference), 2013

**Where:** POMEROY Inn & Suites  
at Olds College, Olds, Alberta

#### More Information:

[http://www.canadianfga.ca/events/  
current-events/](http://www.canadianfga.ca/events/current-events/)

**The Peace River Forage Association would like to thank**  
the following partners and sponsors for supporting their summer and fall events:

Society for Range Management Pacific North West  
PRAD - Peace River Agricultural Development Fund

Douglas Lake Equipment

South Peace Grain Cleaning Co-op

North Peace Veterinary Clinic

Harmony Boer Goats

South Peace Colony

Nimitz Beef

Marty Gauthier

The Hogberg Family

Encana

Shell Canada

Jen Johnson, Caterer

Agriculture Environment & Wildlife Fund through Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC & ARDCORP

University of Northern British Columbia