



**SECTION:** MSL, ROE, LOC, EASEMENTS  
**SUBJECT:** Invasive Introduced Forages on Reclamation Sites

06-06

**Policy Statement:** Through the provisions of this policy, the Board has adopted zero tolerance for introduced invasive plant species on reclamation sites.

Background and Rationale:

The objective is to minimize the loss of native grassland and to reduce the threat of invasive introduced forage species. Native range is a diminishing resource critical to wildlife habitat that cannot be replaced. We recognize the economic contributions of the oil and gas industry to the region, and the province. We believe development can occur in a manner that offers minimal impact to the native range.

The goals of reclamation have been to return the disturbed land back an “equivalent land capability” that allows re-establishment of the original vegetation mix through recruitment of desirable species from off-site. Introduced invasive forages (eg. crested wheat grass, smooth brome grass, creeping red fescue, Kentucky blue grass, etc.) on the disturbed area prevent the re-establishment of the native species and have the potential to move off-site. These species reduce the integrity of the native range by reducing bio-diversity, depleting soil quality, and limiting useful productivity.

In the Special Areas “the use of native compatible species is required on native prairie or parkland sites constructed or reclaimed after September, 1992”.

The Special Areas Board uses a “cut-off” date of September, 1992. This coincides with the release of EUB IL 92-12 Guidelines for Minimum Disturbance on Native Prairie Areas. Industry was part of the consultation and development process for the IL and was made well aware of the need to utilize seed mixes that would allow the re-establishment of native plant species.

The Special Areas Board has granted authority for surface access subject to the provisions of the Minimum Disturbance Guidelines and prevailing Board policy covering Minimum Disturbance on Native Range since the release of IL 92-12 and its successive revisions.

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The expectation is that industrial disturbances will be reclaimed with native compatible plant species that reflect the adjacent areas surrounding the well site and access road.

There is an allowance for non-native species to be present on a site if that presence is “less than or equal to the amount of non-native plant species found in the surrounding control areas.”

In areas where there are no introduced invasive plant species, the Board has adopted a zero tolerance policy.

Control areas defined:

### **Well Sites**

The surrounding control areas for well sites shall be the immediately adjacent areas of equal size. A well site is usually 100m x100m (one hectare); therefore the eight hectares surrounding the site will be considered the control area.

### **Access Roads and Pipelines**

The control area for an access road or pipeline shall be 100m perpendicular to the construction on both sides at any point along the way.

Jay J. Slemp, Chairman  
Special Areas Board