

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD



Report to the Ratepayer—Fall 2017

Message from the Chair

What a summer this has been for all of us in the Special Areas.

We have continued to focus on the activities you told us are priorities: getting safe roads built and surfaced, creating opportunities for growth in the Special Areas, and working with the provincial government to advocate for our communities.

This spring, the Special Areas Board and Advisory Council recognized an opportunity existed with competitive construction prices and committed to paving 44 kilometers of Highway 876. The Province saw the value of this project and is supporting it through a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement. Although the hot and dry conditions were challenging for area producers, they allowed our road work to proceed with minimal interruptions. The progress we made this season has put us in a favorable position to continue to execute our road plan in future seasons.

This summer has seen significant progress in mitigating the impact of the Province's *Climate Leadership Plan*. Announced in August, the Province is providing \$450,000 in grant funding for the Community Action to Create Diversification project, managed by the Hanna Climate Change Strategy Taskforce. These grant funds will support the creation of ten Community Action Teams which will focus on local initiatives and opportunities for growth. I encourage you to support these teams with your time, your ideas and your feedback over the coming months.

We welcomed Minister Shaye Anderson (Municipal Affairs) to the Special Areas this month as he visited our region. Minister Anderson met with Town of Hanna, Town of Oyen and the Village of Consort representatives, as well as the Special Areas Advisory Council. Elected officials had an opportunity to share some of the issues facing their constituents, highlight success stories, and discuss partnerships with the Province. As a part of this tour, Minister Anderson viewed the area impacted by the September 11th wildfire, giving him a chance to see the enormous scale of the devastating fire.

That wildfire, which triggered a Local State of Emergency in the Special Areas, burnt over 90,000 acres and resulted in devastating losses near Bindloss and Buffalo. We continue to support those affected, working with them to find the best path forward.

Municipal elections will be taking place in three subdivisions in the Special Areas on October 16th. I encourage all residents of the Special Areas to connect with your Advisory Councillor to share your thoughts and talk about your concerns.

Warm Regards,

IN THIS EDITION

TO THOSE WHO ANSWER THE CALL

- Thank you to Volunteer Firefighters and First Responders

RANGE MANAGEMENT

- Managing Forage Supplies in Drought Conditions

ELECTION 2017

- Candidate List
- Voting Stations
- What Do I Need To Bring To Vote?

Special Area 2 District Office	(403) 854-5600	212-2nd Ave. W, Box 820, Hanna, AB T0J 1P0
Special Area 3 District Office	(403) 664-3618	319, Main St., Box 30, Oyen, AB T0J 2J0
Special Area 4 District Office	(403) 577-3523	4916-50th St. Box 220, Consort, AB T0C 1B0

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- Taxes—Nov. 15, 2017
- Lease Rentals—Dec. 31, 2017
- Community Pasture Application—Dec. 31, 2017



THANK YOU TO ALL FIRST RESPONDERS

To Those Who Answer the Call, Thank You

Volunteering is a way of life here in the Special Areas. For our fire services and first responders, volunteers are the difference between an emergency and a disaster.

To volunteers who give of their time and energy as firefighters and first responders, we thank you. To families who have their daily routines interrupted at all hours of the day, we thank you. To business owners whose operations are disrupted when volunteers respond to emergencies, we thank you.

Without all of you, our communities would not be whole, our ranches and farms would not be protected, and our travels would not be as safe. Your selfless dedication and courage inspire our communities, employers, neighbors, friends and families.

Thank you for your service and for your support.



RANGE MANAGEMENT

How to Manage Forage Supplies in Drought Conditions

Previously, we discussed how to use the sustainable stocking rate to balance livestock forage demand with available forage supply. This year, drought conditions have been affecting producers here in the Special Areas and throughout southern Alberta. A critical part of successfully adapting to drought conditions is to actively monitor pasture and grass conditions, adjusting the sustainable stocking rate due to the negative impact of sustained hot and dry conditions.

One of the biggest decisions facing producers this fall is how to make sure pastures are given enough time to rest before being grazed again.

A key principle of effective range management is to provide rest to your pasture after grazing. When moisture and growing conditions do not allow normal root and leaf regrowth, rest periods must be changed to compensate. Growing season rest allows plants to replenish root reserves, to maintain vigor and to produce seed. Heavily grazed plants recover more slowly than plants which have been moderately or lightly grazed. Grazing the leaf area of the plant that collects solar energy causes it to draw on the energy reserves in roots for regrowth—rather than the plant storing energy reserves. Over time, heavy grazing causes the plant to lose productivity and eventually die off.

Most stored carbohydrates in the roots are used up to produce spring growth. A single grazing period followed by rest is normally recommended for prairie rangelands, given the relatively short growing season. Annual heavy, season-long grazing will force livestock to repeatedly graze forage plants too frequently. This is very detrimental to long-term forage production of a pasture. Drier regions or growing seasons will require longer rest periods after grazing than regions or growing seasons with more moisture.

By using flexible rotational grazing practices, adequate periods of rest and recovery are given to land. Planned grazing programs also build in enough rest for land as a part of their planning process.

For help or information on how you can plan grazing while providing effective rest for your pastures—especially in drought conditions—contact our Special Areas Agrologists at (403) 854-5600 or visit your local District Office.

If you would like more information on carrying capacity calculations and effective range management, please contact our local Special Areas Agrologist Nolan Ball at Nolan.ball@specialareas.ab.ca or at (403)854-5647.

Effective rest leaves areas ungrazed for a period of time. Plants need to replenish root reserves and photosynthetic capacity.

Hunters & You—Tips on Managing Access This Season

Hunting season is here, and that means you may be getting more requests for people to access land for recreational uses. Here are some frequently asked questions and information for your reference.

Q: Do I have to allow people access to my land?

A: If you have deeded (private) land, you are not required to provide access.

If you have a lease on public land (Crown land), recreational access is subject to reasonable conditions.

Q: Can I put conditions on access?

A: Yes—but they have to be reasonable. Conditions like foot access only, limited/restricted access due to cattle/animals present, or during a fire ban are common.

Q: How do people know how to get a hold of me?

A: Special Areas publishes a map book annually that has landowner/lease holder information. Map books are available at District Offices (located in Hanna, Oyen & Consort).

An example of the media content SAB is posting this year.

THIS HUNTING SEASON BE FIRE SMART & PREVENT GRASSFIRES

The Special Areas is experiencing *extremely dry conditions*.

**AT THIS TIME, WHENEVER POSSIBLE USE FOOT ACCESS WITH
NO DRIVING IN ANY GRASSED AREAS.**

During your hunting season:

- get access permission from the landowner/leaseholder
- use extreme caution at all times
- avoid driving off roads
- smoking is not advised
- have a charged water extinguisher in your vehicle at ALL times.

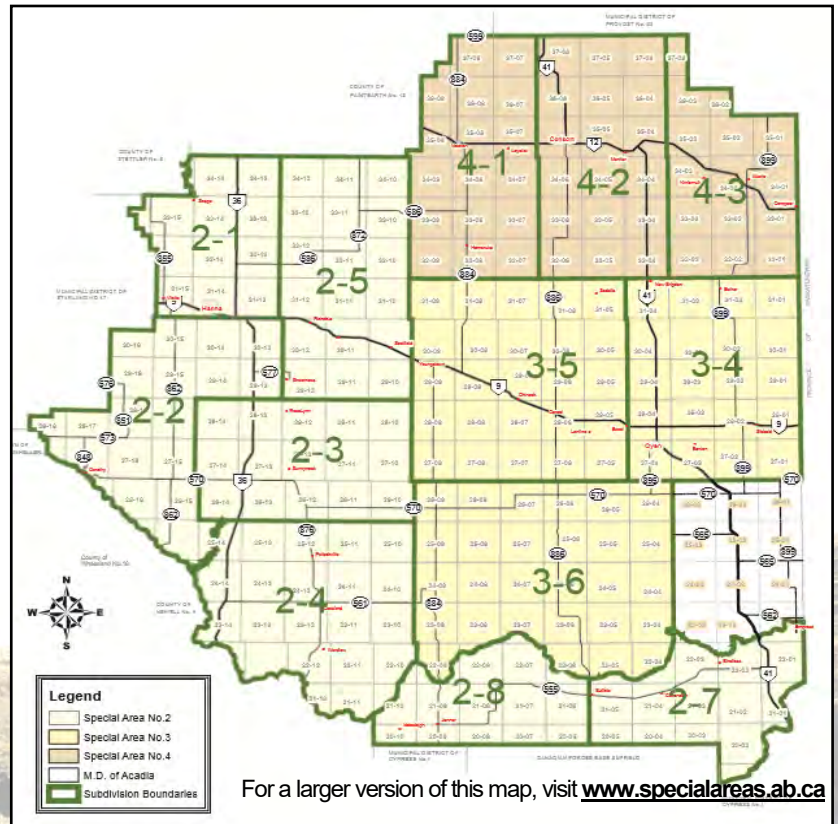
For more information, contact the Special Areas Board at (403) 854-5600.

2017 MUNICIPAL ELECTION—ADVISORY COUNCIL

On Monday October 16th, 2017 people all across Alberta will go to the polls to elect representatives to their local municipal government.

WHO ARE THE CANDIDATES?

Sub-division	Acclaimed/ Election	Candidate Information (Incumbent noted as I)
2-1	Election	Kevin Bossert
		Bob Gainer (I)
2-2	Acclaimed	Neal Roes (I)
2-3	Acclaimed	Brad Slorstad (I)
2-4	Acclaimed	Brent Horner (I)
2-5	Acclaimed	James Madge (I)
2-7	Acclaimed	Daryl Swenson (I)
2-8	Acclaimed	Brad Osadczuk (I)
3-4	Acclaimed	Travis Foot (I)
3-5	Acclaimed	Samuel Shadlock
3-6	Acclaimed	Kevin Wilson (I)
4-1	Acclaimed	Graham Schetzslé
4-2	Election	Robert Kropinske
		Barry Redel
4-3	Election	Corey Doneff
		Douglas Noble



DO I GET TO VOTE?

As governed by the *Local Authorities Election Act*, elections will be held in subdivisions where there are more than one candidate to choose from. To see which subdivision you are in, check out the map above. If the candidate has been acclaimed for your subdivision, there will not be an election on October 16th for your area as only one candidate was nominated.

In 2017, there will be three subdivisions holding elections in the Special Areas: Subdivisions 2-1, 4-2 and 4-3.

WHERE DO I VOTE ON OCTOBER 16TH?

Voting stations will be open from 10 am to 8 pm on Monday, October 16th.

- Subdivision 2-1 – Hanna Community Centre, 503-5 Ave. W, Hanna
- Subdivision 4-2 – Consort Sportex, 4602-50 Ave., Consort
- Subdivision 4-3 – Altario Community Hall, 201 Center St., Altario

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO VOTE?

You must prove you're eligible to vote. That means you have to be a resident of the subdivision you are voting in and you have the right ID with you on election day. This includes government ID (Drivers license, Passport, etc.), an AB issued document (tax notice/property assessment), correspondence from a school, college or university, or documents with your address on them (utility bill, credit card statement, etc.).