

Land Reserve Commission

Mission

- To protect the agricultural land base necessary to provide a safe and secure food supply that meets the current and future needs of British Columbians.

Strategic Shifts

Forest Land Reserve (FLR):

- Cabinet found that the process for creation of the FLR was flawed and directed that the FLR be eliminated and incorporated into the Working Forest initiative led by MSRM.
- Forest practices will shift from regulation by the Land Reserve Commission (LRC) to a results-based forest practices code regulated by another government agency, industry or a public-private partnership.

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR):

- Cabinet concluded that there is a compelling public interest in protecting agricultural land for farm use. The ALR program was also determined to be affordable and efficient compared to other farmland protection tools.
- Cabinet determined that the Commission will implement a new delivery model for the ALR. Transition to the new delivery model involves the following strategic shifts:

Status Quo	New Era Vision
Central Commission with regional panels	Six regional Commission panels with regional appointees
Limited delegation & local government role	Collaborative governance of ALR including full delegation of subdivision/non-farm use
Inflexible legislation & regulations	Streamlined process & flexible regulations
Limited permitted uses	Expanded permitted uses & economic opportunities
Prescriptive regulatory process	Results-based process

Core Business Areas

- The Commission administers the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) a provincial land use zone that encompasses 4.7 million hectares of agricultural land. The ALR was established in 1973-74 based on a review of agricultural capability (soil and climate), existing land use and an extensive consultation process. The core business of the Commission is to administer the boundaries of the ALR and land use and subdivision within the Reserve.
- The core business of the Commission is carried out through three functions:
 - Strategic Planning & Corporate Policy.** This function encompasses the Commission's policy development role, participation in the planning and policy initiatives of other organizations including local government plans and by-laws, and communications;

- **Regional Operations.** This function is focused primarily on the review of applications under the *Agricultural Land Reserve Act* and the *Soil Conservation Act*, compliance and enforcement; and
- **Administration & Information Systems (GIS).** This function includes secretarial and administrative support as well as record management. The Commission maintains an application database used for record management, and is legally obligated to maintain mapping of the ALR.

Major Initiatives

Will no longer deliver:

- Once the FLR is eliminated the Commission will no longer regulate land use within the FLR. The Commission will develop an exit strategy for the FLR.
- Once the alternative delivery model is in place the Commission will no longer regulate forest practices on private land within the FLR and private managed forest land within the ALR.
- In areas where Commission authority for subdivision and non-farm use has been delegated to a local government or other agency, the Commission will no longer review and decide these applications.

Delivering differently:

- The ALR is to be maintained. The Commission has three goals with respect to the ALR:
 1. ***Ensure that the Commission is responsive, efficient and accountable.*** Regional responsiveness to community needs will be reinforced through the six regional panels and new collaborative governance arrangements with local governments, First Nations and other agencies (e.g. delegation of authority for subdivision and non-farm uses in the ALR). The *Agricultural Land Reserve Act* will be streamlined and the range of uses permitted in the ALR will be expanded. A new dispute resolution process will help balance interests and resolve conflicts.
 2. ***Protect the agricultural land base.*** The Commission panels will continue to review applications for exclusion using the best available information and consultation with applicants. Guidelines will be developed to assist local governments and other agencies to address the provincial interest in agricultural land preservation in their plans.
 3. ***Enhance the sustainable use of the agricultural land base.*** Rural economies will be reinforced by permitting non-farm uses and value-added activities in the ALR that will not impact negatively on agricultural businesses or the long-term suitability of lands for agriculture. The Commission panels will work with local governments, First Nations and other agencies to ensure that their plans, policies and activities permit and enhance the use of the ALR for agriculture.

Ministry Resources (million \$)

Resources for the Land Reserve Commission are identified in the summary of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management's Service Plan.

Attachment

Government Priorities relating to Land Reserve Commission

New Era Commitments Included in 02/03 – 04/05 Service Plan

- Make the Land Reserve Commission more regionally responsive to community needs;
- Adopt a scientifically based, principled approach to environmental management that ensures sustainability, accountability and responsibility; and
- Provide faster approvals and greater access to crown land and resources to protect and create jobs in tourism, mining, farming, ranging and oil and gas production.

Key Projects Included in 02/03 – 04/05 Service Plan

- Restructure the Commission as six regional panels;
- Delegate authority for subdivision and non-farm uses in the ALR to willing local governments and other agencies;
- Implement a dispute resolution process to help balance interests and resolve conflicts;
- Develop guidelines and work with local governments, First Nations and other agencies to assist them to address the provincial interest in agricultural land preservation in their plans.
- Streamline the *Agricultural Land Reserve Act* and widen the range of uses permitted in the ALR to diversify and stabilize local economies.