

## **Mountain Pine Beetle Natural Range Barrier Mitigation Funding Program (December, 2006)**

### **Criteria for Funding**

The purpose of the fund is to mitigate the negative effect of Mountain Pine Beetle and Mountain Pine Beetle salvage harvesting on livestock production by controlling livestock distribution and protecting environmental values in affected communities. Mitigation projects will replace natural range barriers and range developments lost or damaged during timber salvage harvesting and associated road construction (not associated with forest licensee responsibilities under FRPA). Remaining funds will investigate and develop new opportunities for forage allocation. In addition:

- the project must be on Crown range;
- the project must be supported by the Range Branch, the District Range Officer and the Range Act Agreement holder;
- the majority of the project must benefit the Crown range resource;
- the projects must address public and animal safety, provide a forage supply for existing clients, protect natural resources and/or prevent trespass of livestock.

### **Program Purpose and Direction**

- The funding for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 is \$1.2M each year.
- District staff is responsible for completing and submitting the project application.
- Unless a district requests to administer the fencing contracts, all fencing contracts will be administered by the BCCA. The BCCA is responsible for fence layout, purchasing materials, contractual agreements and quality assurance.
- Last year numerous options were identified to mitigate the removal of natural range barriers by district staff and the BCCA. Use the project proposal form to identify projects other than fencing to mitigate the removal of natural range barriers. Identify specific projects the MPB Range funds can help implement. Call me if you would like to discuss barrier mitigation options other than fencing.
- Many FSRs are being upgraded to deal with the MPB AAC uplift and the associated increased speed limits and logging traffic. Timber licensees cannot access the appraisal system for fencing to address road upgrades.
- Riparian areas and sensitive ecosystems may have more cattle pressure after natural range barriers are removed. In addition, creating common range to mitigate barrier removal may increase the pressure on riparian areas. Consider riparian and sensitive ecosystem values when submitting project proposals.
- Consider projects to create short and long term grazing opportunities for community pasture associations and clients interested in common range agreements.

- The needs for mapping natural range barriers vary among districts. Therefore, continue to provide input into the process for mapping natural range barriers in your district.
- The majority of the natural range barrier breaches are covered through the appraisal system.
- The MPB fund will not address the removal of natural range barriers on grazing leases.
- The MPB funds will not be used to maintain fences. Range tenure holders need to be diligent maintaining range developments in MPB affected areas. District staff and range tenure holders should encourage timber licensees, woodlots and small scale salvage to focus harvesting along fence lines.
- Range Branch is working with other agencies and industry to identify funding sources to contribute to projects. The Ministry of Environment, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and timber licensees are willing to assist with projects to protect riparian areas and mitigate the removal of natural range barriers. District staff and range tenure holders should seek cost sharing options with timber licensees, road users and other Ministries.
- Affected communities are interpreted as those with beetle action coalition groups. The majority, but not all, of the funds will be directed to the communities included in coalition groups.

### **Process to Apply for Funding**

The MPB Natural Range Barrier Mitigation Fund will address the critical needs of livestock producers in MPB affected communities. If you have a client who meets the criteria, use the attached form to provide Range Branch with the following information:

- how the criteria are met;
- project description;
- number of AUMs protected;
- project location.

Qualifying projects will be reviewed and prioritized by a committee (District Range Officers, BCCA and Range Branch) at two meetings. The first meeting will be at the end of November and the second meeting will be in March. Projects identified as emergency situations may be expedited by Range Branch.

### **Projects to Mitigate the Removal of Natural Range Barriers**

- Range Branch is mapping natural range barriers and meeting with forest licensees and land planners to increase the profile of range issues during the forest harvest planning stage.
- Fencing projects will mitigate the removal of natural range barriers, increase the animal and public safety along public and Forest Service roads, protect sensitive ecosystems, provide long term certainty of available forage and prevent Range Act agreement holders from being in non-compliance of their range use plans. Most breaches of natural range barriers should be covered through the appraisal system.
- Removal of natural range barriers can negatively affect riparian areas and sensitive ecosystems. Range Branch will initiate discussions with other Crown land interest groups to identify riparian areas or sensitive ecosystems that will be affected by livestock following MPB salvage harvesting. The intent is to establish a committee to identify strategies and projects to protect riparian areas and sensitive ecosystems.

**Please forward all project proposals, questions and concerns to Andrew Pantel ([Andrew.Pantel@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Andrew.Pantel@gov.bc.ca), 250-565-4409).**