

From: Minister - Ministre [mailto:minister_ministre@agr.gc.ca]

Sent: August-15-13 8:53 AM

To: 'colson@abwild.ca'

Subject: Your correspondence to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food - Quote: 191940

Quote: 191940

Mr. Cliff Wallis
Vice-President
Alberta Wilderness Association
colson@abwild.ca

Dear Mr. Wallis:

I am writing in response to your letter to the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, forwarded by email by Ms. Christyann Olson, regarding the Onefour Ranch. As you may know, the office of the Prime Minister has forwarded your letter to me for consideration. I am pleased to convey to you the following information.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is realigning its efforts in some areas of research and technology. The decision to close some sites is a difficult one, but it is about making the best use of our resources, creating a critical mass of expertise and focusing on investments.

With respect to the Onefour Ranch, research on climate change in grasslands has been transferred to our Swift Current facility. The provincial Crown lease at the Onefour Ranch is a perpetual lease exclusively for the purposes of range research and development by the federal government. Once research and development ceases, the conditions of the lease are no longer being met, and the lands would therefore revert to the Province of Alberta. I therefore suggest you contact the Alberta government on the future designation of these Crown lands.

With regard to the portion of the Ranch owned by AAFC, it will be dealt with in accordance with the Government of Canada's policy framework concerning the disposal of surplus real property. These policies ensure that all transactions:

- are efficient, equitable and transparent;
- are made at market value to ensure the best value to the Canadian taxpayer;
- fulfill legal obligations to Aboriginal groups; and
- give due consideration to the interests of communities and other levels of government.

I trust this information is helpful. Thank you for writing on this matter.

Sincerely,

Gerry Ritz, PC, MP