

Evidence-based Food Policy Project

ALR and Assessed Farmland Overlap in the RDCK



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Photo: Abra Brynne

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The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) contains **163,634.92 acres** (662.21 km²) of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land and **30,651.37 acres** (124.04 km²) of land categorized as farmlandⁱ by BC Assessment. Using GIS software (ArcMap 10.7), an analysis was performed to determine:

- a) What percentage of the ALR in the RDCK is used for farming
- b) What proportion of RDCK's farmland is found within ALR boundaries, and
- c) What proportion of RDCK's farmland is found outside of ALR boundaries.

This analysis was conducted to support the Evidence-based Food Policy Project in partnership with the Central Kootenay Food Policy Council.

Farmed ALR Land

Of the total ALR land in the RDCK, 16% is utilized for farming (as recognized by BC Assessment). See table below for more detail.

ALR Land	Percent	Area (acres)	Area (km ²)
ALR land utilized for farming	16%	25,373.02	102.68

Farmland within vs. outside the ALR

Of the total area categorized as farmland by BC Assessment within the RDCK, 83% lies within the ALR boundaries, and 17% lies outside the ALR boundaries. See table below for more detail.

RDCK Farmland	Percent	Area (acres)	Area (km ²)
Within the ALR	83%	25,373.02	102.68
Outside the ALR	17%	5,278.36	21.36

ⁱ As of 2018.

Data Notes

The ALR data used to complete this analysis were current as of 2019 and are available online through the BC Data Catalogue; the BC Assessment data used were current as of 2018 and were obtained by the Department of Applied Research and Innovation at Selkirk College through a custom data request.

BC Assessment Farm Classification

Farm classification through BC Assessment is a voluntary process that must be instigated by the owner of the land. There must be a “reasonable level of ongoing farming activity” in order to qualify, and producing farm operations must generate a minimum amount of incomeⁱⁱ from farm activity. Operations that no longer meet the requirements are reclassified on an annual basis.

Land that may be eligible for farm regulation classification includes:

- a) Land used for qualifying agricultural use (e.g. fruit and vegetable production, floriculture, horticulture, livestock raising, grain production, herb production, etc.).
- b) Land used for purposes that contribute to qualifying agricultural use (e.g. irrigation, riparian areas, farm outbuildings)
- c) Land in the ALR that is used for a retired farmer’s dwelling
- d) Land used for horse training/boarding, if in conjunction with horse rearing
- e) Vacant land associated with a farm

More detail on what does and does not qualify for the farm classification from BC Assessment can be found [here](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

Sources

Agricultural Land Commission. (2020). ALC ALR Polygons (Spatial Dataset). Retrieved from <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/alc-alr-polygons>

BC Assessment. (2018). Custom Data Request (Spatial Dataset).

BC Assessment. (n.d.). Farm Classification in British Columbia. Retrieved from https://info.bcassessment.ca/services-and-products/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/services-and-products/Shared%20Documents/BCAL15102%20BCA_farm_brochure_digital.pdf&action=default

ⁱⁱ The minimum income threshold varies with the size and assessed value of the farm operation (BC Assessment).

ⁱⁱⁱ https://info.bcassessment.ca/services-and-products/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/services-and-products/Shared%20Documents/BCAL15102%20BCA_farm_brochure_digital.pdf&action=default