



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Yakama Agency
P.O. Box 632 / 401 Fort Road
Toppenish, WA 98948

October 3, 2023

Board of Yakima County Commissioners
LaDon Linde, District 3 Commissioner
Yakima County Courthouse
128 N 2nd Street, Room 232
Yakima, WA 98901

Re: Open Range within Yakama Reservation

Dear Mr. Linde,

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agrees with the Yakima County concerning that there be no “open range” within the Yakama Reservation Boundaries. The reasoning for this recommendation is to eliminate confusion throughout the valley floor and have consistent regulations.

The BIA operates the Range program, there are permittees that pay for the forage on the land that their cattle consume so this does not constitute any open range. Within the valley floor we use a provision in the leases that says that if you have cattle, they are to be fenced in to protect from trespass. This can help with other property owners who may have complaints concerning property damage.

Eliminating “open range” within the Yakama Reservation boundaries would also help alleviate any problems that people would encounter while driving and possibly colliding with livestock. This is a problem that still exists and seems to be a grey area concerning whom is at fault when livestock is hit by a vehicle.

Should you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (509) 865-2255 or email wyeth.wallace@bia.gov.

Respectfully,

Wyeth Wallace
BIA Superintendent