

Township Grid System of Alberta

Description

This map represents the province with the Alberta Township System (ATS) overlaid for referencing legal land descriptions in the province. The ATS is a grid network dividing the province into equal-sized square parcels of land, for purposes of administering legal land title. All maps in this Atlas have the ATS overlaid on them.

Data sources

The ATS is a variant of the Dominion Land Survey (DLS) system as implemented in Canada. The digital files containing the provincial coverage of legal subdivision and quarter section linework depicting road allowances, quarter section descriptors and combined scale factors were obtained from AltaLIS Ltd. These two linework products were derived from survey co-ordinates. Further work using these files was done to allow for spatial analysis to be carried out.

Potential uses

Any section of land in Alberta can be located by its legal land description. Producers and all landowners rely on this system for legal land descriptions.

The ATS designates land as being west of the 4th Meridian (110 degrees west longitude), 5th Meridian (114 degrees west longitude) or 6th Meridian (118 degrees west longitude). Between *meridians* are a series of columns, each six miles wide, called *ranges*. They are numbered consecutively from east to west, beginning west of the meridian. *Townships* are also six miles wide and are numbered from south to north. The southern Alberta border with Montana is township 1, up to the northern border with the Northwest Territories at township 126.

"Township" also describes the six mile by six mile square formed when the range and township lines intersect. These townships are further divided into 36 sections, each measuring one mile by one mile (one square mile). One section contains 640 acres. A section can be further divided into quarters (NE, NW, SE, SW) of 160 acres each or into 16 legal subdivisions (LSDs).

Legal land descriptions are written as in the following example:

SW 24-38-20-W5 – southwest quarter of section 24, township 38, range 20, west of the 5th Meridian.

Further information

The Alberta Geological Survey website gives further explanation about the ATS. From the homepage, click on *GIS Maps*, then *ATS Conversion Tools* in the bar at the right, then *Information on the ATS system*. www.agi.gov.ab.ca

AltaLIS Ltd. is the joint venture company that maintains and distributes Alberta's base mapping data sets. www.altalis.com

Range and township road maps for southern and central Alberta are available for sale from Map Town. From the homepage, click on *Maps of Canada* along the left side, then on *Alberta* on the map. www.maptown.com

Scroll down to view map

