Alberta: A Snapshot of 2019

Jurisdictional Update

Voluntary survey answers of Transboundary Grassland Partnership members in Alberta.

- 32% non-profit
- 26% private/individual
- 23% provincial
- 4% federal
- 1% local government
- 1% registered charity

Alberta Environment and Parks

Grasslands strategies including landscape footprint planning and conservation/protection and watershed management.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Southern Alberta Chapter

- Interactive educational programming “Why Grasslands”

Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association (WBRA)

- Sustainable ranching, conservation, habitat stewardship for species at risk and youth education.

CoolPro Solutions

- Invasive species prevention, early detection and rapid response, integrated control measures and reclamation.

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA)

- Promote action and awareness for Canada Target 1 (17% protection by 2020) through education and outreach on the benefits of native grassland.

Canadian Wildlife Service - Priority Places and Stewardship Unit

- Species at risk programming in priority places

Grassland Restoration Forum (GRF)

- Has developed “Recovery Strategies for Industrial Development in Native Grasslands” guidance manuals.

Milk River Management Society

- Co-managing grassland, riparian habitats and badlands along the Alberta/Montana border in legislated protected areas.

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)

- Cattle and Conservation Initiative Alberta

Gramineae Services Ltd.

- Conservation assessment and restoration of industrial disturbances in native grasslands.

Helen Schuler Nature Centre - City of Lethbridge

- Public education and outreach

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation

- Educational programming for elementary and junior high kids.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

- Administration of the Alberta Weed Control Act.

Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum

- Identifying and establishing grasslands connectivity in Alberta.

LandWise Inc

- Soil and land resource information to assist with reclamation and restoration

Milk River Watershed Council Canada

- Involved in Multiple Species at Risk Program, Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program, State of the Watershed Reports

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada Research Centre, Lethbridge Alberta

- Balancing environmental stewardship and productivity
- Mapping native grasslands and forages

Individual Responses

- Promote the value of riparian conservation, using beaver and beaver dam analogues. Documented that beaver were once common across the dry mixed grass prairie.
- The Prairie Provinces need to look at detailed impacts of how climate change will affect the ecosystems of the Prairies.

Nature Conservancy of Canada, NCC

- Land securement of important grassland habitat, stewardship of these lands, and easements with landowners interested in conserving their own properties.

University of Lethbridge, Natural Product Laboratory

- Investigation of chemicals (secondary metabolites/natural products) in prairie plants. Prairie plant education.

Calgary Zoological Society

Reintroduction of threatened and endangered wildlife species to sustainable habitats

Southern Alberta Land Trust Society

- Conservation easements of lands of high ecological significance. Sustainable agriculture and research.

Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area

- Habitat management, improvement and research

Recommendations

- Research on: insect decline; bird decline; soil ecology health; climate. Too many studies and programs are forgotten or ignored, and communication needs to be enhanced.
- Collaboration on grazing best practices and alternatives to grazing.
- The large carnivore conflict mitigation projects. It would be valuable to share population data, wildlife management strategies, solutions for human-wildlife conflict, and strategies for seeking community-based solutions across borders.
- Saskatchewan northern leopard frog populations may be used as sources for future population reestablishment in southwestern Alberta
- There is also potential for involvement with invasive species (terrestrial and aquatic) and ecosystem services projects.

Recommendations

- Collaboration on a literature review and interactive database of targeted grazing published and unpublished literature.
- Documentation and assessment of current projects in Alberta and Saskatchewan collaboration on the publication of a best management practices manual on targeted grazing applicable to the Canadian grassland ecosystems.
- Regional weed management plans, early detection networks, remote sensing, risk assessments, and species distribution models (data to support such models).
- Transboundary efforts are needed in Wildlife conservation and the building of a dam on the Milk River
- Grassland restoration projects. Strategies, seed suppliers, equipment rentals, soil prep, contractors, timing, seed mix,

Recommendations

- Making use of citizen-science focused EDDMapS (Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System - https://www.eddmaps.org/ to map invasive species in grassland conservation areas.
- Under Canada Target 1, TGP can participate by nominating specific areas within these regions for protection and receive funding from the Government of Canada for grasslands conservation. Projects may include: 1) cooperative multi-species, ecosystem/area-based action planning, 2) implementation of planned actions and monitoring, and 3) analysis and evaluation.

Thank you!

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