



PRAIRIE CONSERVATION FORUM

2006 & 2007 Annual Report

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Chairman's Report 2006

The year 2006 has been a year of preparation for change. I am very proud of the accomplishments of the Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF) and its members and pleased to have the opportunity to report on the highlights as I recall them as Chair.

First, we put into place the 2006 to 2010 edition of the Prairie Conservation Action Plan (PCAP). Thanks to the work of Cliff Wallis and his committee for drafting and redrafting the PCAP and reaching agreement amongst our nearly 50 member organizations to support the plan.

Some very important direction from the plan is being acted on. First, we have developed a Terms of Reference for a project on Ecological Goods and Services. The committee has worked hard to understand a complex and evolving subject and to develop a means to look at a landscape-based approach and study the values associated. Special thanks to Mark Wonneck for his work in developing our terms of reference and redrafting them until we achieved support around the table and at the annual meeting held January 12th 2007 in Okotoks.

Another initiative that warrants mention was the concept of a coordinator position to help achieve the objectives of the PCF and implement the PCAP. Thanks go to Olaf Jensen and Richard Quinlan for their leadership and dedication to this project. To date we have received the support of government and environmental group members. I think we are on the right path when support comes to us from so many different member organizations.

Finally, the idea of becoming a registered society under the Societies Act has been discussed at various times in the history of the PCF. In 2006, Dug Major took the idea to heart and, on behalf of the PCF drafted bylaws that will allow us to become registered.

All of the examples I have listed so far are examples of outstanding volunteerism. I think this is what makes the PCF a special organization. Prairie Conservation Forum is made up of organizations and individuals who are truly dedicated to prairie conservation and who are unselfish in their dedication to the forum and its projects. You have made my 2 year term as chair both rewarding and memorable.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the contribution of our Secretary Cheryl Dash and that of Louella Cronkhite who assisted in so many ways. As well, during 2006 we recognized Ian Dyson for his years as secretary of PCF 1989-2006. Thanks for the dedication and years of nurturing the PCF Ian!

Brian Laing

Chairman's Report 2007

I would like to thank the members of PCF for allowing me to be chair and lead the PCF through 2007. It was good year and a year where preparation and hard work from the membership allowed some necessary changes to occur.

There were two major changes that took place this year, the first change occurred when we gained our official registered Society Status on June 18. Special thanks to Dug Major for getting the bylaws together enabling the PCF to make the step forward to becoming a registered society.

Becoming a registered Society led to the second change for the PCF, the hiring of the first coordinator, Katheryn Taylor. Through the hiring of a coordinator the PCF now has a single source contact for members as well as the public, ensuring that there will always be a friendly voice when trying to contact the PCF by phone and that there will be a guaranteed response when emails are sent. The primary role of the coordinator is communication and outreach related to increasing the profile of the PCF and PCAP. Having a person dedicated to PCF business will ensure that the PCF moves forward.

Again, we had three good meetings this year, starting with the AGM in Okotoks, then out at Cypress Hills Provincial Park for the summer meeting and an excellent tour leading us through the history and forest and rangeland projects happening within Cypress Hills. The fall meeting took us to Red Deer and there we toured NCC property, Rumsey and the Dry Island Buffalo Jump.

I would like to thank all PCF members for their support and the committee members who made 2007 a year of change that will move the PCF and its members into the future as a leader in prairie conservation.

Vern McNeely

2006 – 2007 Annual Report Prairie Conservation Forum

Summary of Meetings

The Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF) typically meets three times each year, holding meetings in the winter, spring, and fall at different venues throughout prairie and parkland Alberta. Each meeting provides an opportunity for members to share information and discuss a wide range of prairie conservation issues. Topical updates are provided on environmental initiatives, planning projects, environmental legislation, member organization activities, emerging issues, and other themes. A field trip is usually held in conjunction with the spring and fall meetings. The PCF's executive committee (formerly known as the steering committee, but now called the Board of Directors) meets in advance of each scheduled Forum meeting to develop a meeting agenda, conduct PCF business, ensure necessary follow-ups from the previous PCF meeting have been completed, and prepare recommendations for consideration by the PCF.

The PCF held six meetings in the two-year period from January 2006 to December 2007. Highlights from these meetings are as follows.

Okotoks, January 2006

The Grasslands Vegetation Inventory (GVI), a reconnaissance level inventory that is classifying and mapping native vegetation in the Grassland Natural Region of Alberta, worked on awareness and support of the inventory. An Engagement Strategy was started to document all contacts and results of those contacts, including types of presentations, results, responsibilities, and identifying areas of need. Over the past year, work involved continued connection with stakeholders, successfully raising the profile of GVI within SRD, and a completed technical specification document. Work planned for the upcoming year included preparing for a training workshop for consultants involved with GVI, working with a consultant to develop a project plan and process map for the GVI program, and integrating Alberta Environment's Wetland Inventory into the GVI model to capture the wetlands in greater detail. Livio Fent and Barry Adams presented a summary of the program and provided examples of practical use. The presentation can be found on the 'members only' page of the PCF website.

The Education Committee planned to review their strategy once the 2006-2010 PCAP was completed to compliment and support the new PCAP.

Olaf Jensen became the new chair of the Prairie Ecological Research Committee (PERC), and planned to move PERC forward with the help of several members of the previous working team. The purpose of PERC is to support research on prairie ecology, set priorities and topics, and identify areas of overlap and partnerships.

The first of the 2006-2010 PCAPs were forecast to be distributed at the end of March, 2006. It can also be accessed through the website at this time.

Kent Lien presented an introduction to the National Energy Board and its Environmental Mandate. This presentation (called NEB 101) can be accessed on the 'members only' page of the PCF website.

Elections for the PCF Chair position for 2006 were held. Brian Laing (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development) was elected as the new chair for the 2006 PCF.

Milk River, June 2006

Copies of the 2006-2010 PCAP were distributed and it was posted on the PCF website for download. The Steering Committee was set to develop a distribution strategy that included all libraries, all MLAs, MPs and other politicians in the region, rural municipalities, the PCF membership, Saskatchewan and Manitoba PCAPs, and watershed councils.

At the last PCF meeting, it was agreed to draft a letter addressing concerns about coal bed methane development in the Rumsey Natural Area. The content was neutrally written to respect the PCF terms of reference statement that 'correspondence of the PCF will be factual and non-advocacy in nature'. The letter was tabled until such time that the action would have the desired effect.

The Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) moved forward with a request for proposals sent out to do the first 25 townships in the SE corner of the province and the Milk River Ridge. Another 75 townships were slated to be started in October. These 100 townships represent the start of the program. The GVI is working closely with the Alberta Vegetation Inventory (AVI – which just maps vegetation) to ensure seamlessness. Colour infrared was chosen for the aerial photography because it defines areas of wetlands and is the best way to measure the amount of moisture inherent in the landscape.

The education committee circulated their work plan for 2006-2010, based on the current PCAP. A PCF 2006 PowerPoint presentation was finalized and shown to the members. It is available on the PCF website for people to use when doing presentations.

Olaf Jensen and Richard Quinlan did a PowerPoint presentation for the Forum on hiring a Coordinator (the presentation can be found on the PCF website). There was support to hire a coordinator and a committee was formed to secure long-term funding for the position.

Brian Laing talked about an Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) project that focuses on Goals 1.1.3 and 1.3.4 of the 2006-2010 PCAP. The SRD project description is to implement those goals and to quantify the value of EG&S using the Milk River Ridge as a study area. This would be linked to a regional level through a joint workshop (Southern Alberta Sustainability Strategy), and at the level of the grasslands as a whole, a pilot project would be conducted on landscape and land-use types.

Mark Wonneck gave a presentation on the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), which can be found on the 'members only' page of the PCF website.

Tom Gilchrist gave a presentation about the Milk River Watershed Council Canada and spoke about work he has done to develop some guidelines for oil and gas on public leased lands. Tom's list of terms and conditions on surface lease arrangements for seismic, drilling and pipelines can be found on the 'members only' page of the PCF website.

Richard Quinlan gave a PowerPoint presentation on the MULTISAR program – helping landowners benefit from Species at Risk. It can be found on the 'members only' page of the PCF website.

The tour went the second day of the meeting and included a raft trip with Ken Brown, Milk River Rafting Company, on the Milk River. The final destination was Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park, with a tour of the new interpretive centre provided by Bonnie Moffet (Alberta Parks).

Drumheller, September 2006

The Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) surveyed 18 townships and air photography was flown for most of southern Alberta, south of Calgary. In October, an RFP will be put out for 90 more townships, centered over the Milk River Ridge, County of Vulcan, and possibly 7 or 8 in and around the Porcupine Hills.

The Education Committee expressed interest in updating the PCF website. Louella Cronkhite will be presenting at the teachers conference in Lethbridge in February 2007 on the grasslands education kit for grades 7-9.

Olaf Jensen and Richard Quinlan distributed two sets of letters asking for funding for the PCF Coordinator Position. The first set would go to six provincial and federal departments requesting long-term funding, and the second set would go out to PCF members requesting any amount they would be willing to contribute. The business case was also circulated, with a proposed budget and suggestions for funding sources (this can be viewed on the 'members only' page of the PCF website).

The motion was moved to apply for society status and have material (bylaws) ready for the January meeting.

The Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) committee had a couple of meetings and would like to draft a terms of reference by November. They would like the pilot project to act as a template that could be carried out elsewhere in Alberta, but the site has not been confirmed yet.

The tour went the second day of the meeting and included a stop at Hand Hills Ecological Reserve, with discussions on the GVI, aspen encroachment, grazing management, biodiversity, and the Hand Hills Management Plan. Livio Fent, Barry Adams, Lorne Cole, Dug Major, and Cam Lockerbie led the discussions. The second stop of the tour was Little Fish Lake, with a presentation by Cam Lockerbie on Little Fish Lake Management and Research.

Okotoks, January 2007

The Grassland Vegetation Inventory has four contractors working on 107 townships, with four major areas currently being studied: the southeast corner around the Wild Horse where the Milk River enters the U.S.A.; 36 townships in the Milk River Ridge; 40 townships in the county of Lethbridge; and the Porcupine Hills. The aerial photography is using digital photography to provide stereo colour infrared (this has delayed the project by about 4 months). The hydro layer is currently a priority to be redone, as superimposing the new information over the old hydro layer (25 years old) doesn't work. This is being redone for the south-eastern area (134 townships) because that is where the inventory will be conducted next year. Most of the funding for the inventory is coming from the Land Use Framework Initiative, and there is secure funding for two more years.

The Education Committee has reviewed the PCF website and is looking for good grassland landscape photos for the site. They also reviewed the education work plan and are considering a workshop to develop a targeted, strategic education plan based on the broader work plan. The proposal to present the grasslands education kit (Alberta Grasslands: A World at your Feet) at the Southwest Alberta Teachers' Convention Association in Lethbridge was accepted. Louella Cronkhite and Waneeta Fisher will be presenting a PowerPoint presentation that is being developed for this purpose. The committee encourages the membership to use the general PCF PowerPoint presentation when possible. It is on the members only page of the PCF website.

Olaf Jensen proposed to close down PERC (Prairie Ecology Research Committee) because the material posted on the website hasn't been used very much. The bibliographic references would be moved to another site more accessible to the public. The Steering Committee will deal with this issue at their next meeting.

Letters were sent out to all members of the PCF and to larger government departments requesting funding to hire a coordinator. Alberta Environment, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and Parks Canada are all going to contribute funds. The Steering Committee will develop a job description and general guidelines for the coordinator. A term position is suggested, and a recruitment and hiring process needs to be established.

Mark Wonneck went through a PowerPoint presentation on the purpose, project objectives, deliverables, etc. of ecological goods and services (EG&S). The presentation can be found on the members page of the PCF website. It outlines the relationships of the project to PCF goals, with the purpose being to increase understanding of ecosystem goods and services and their value among local landowners and resource/land-use decision-makers. The presentation also outlines the deliverables and estimated project costs.

An interim board of directors was elected because the by-laws were not passed at an AGM, and the PCF is not yet an official society. Interim board members for 2007 are: Vern McNeely (chair), Cliff Wallis (vice-chair), Olaf Jensen, Tom Livingston, Rob Hugill, Richard Ehlert, Harvey Gardner, Ian Dyson, Linda Cerney, Tara Worobetz, Mark Wonneck, and Brian Laing.

Dug Major led members through a discussion of the draft bylaws. The bylaws can be found on the members page of the PCF website under PCF Society Status. Application to the Societies Act will occur unless there is significant change to the by-laws.

Cypress Hills Inter-Provincial Park – June 2007

The Steering Committee reports that the final approval of bylaws has been made for PCF society status and that they anticipate acceptance of the by-laws in July. A coordinator (Katheryn Taylor) has now been hired and has been given an outline of priorities for work. The current contract runs until December 31st, 2007.

The Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) completed 107 townships this past year and 320 townships were completed for the hydro project. There are plans to spread the inventory further north this year and to complete 200 townships. They are also working on a process to maintain the GVI. For more details, see the members only page of the website.

Katheryn Taylor (coordinator) will be the chair of the education committee. This past year, the education committee presented the grassland education kit at the Southwest Alberta Teachers Convention in Lethbridge, made up a new display board that is tied in with the most recent PCAP, and made up a couple of posters that summarize the most recent research projects of the PCF. The presentation used at the Teachers Convention can be found on the members only page of the PCF website. The display board is currently housed at the Provincial Building in Lethbridge (Alberta Environment) and is available for members if they want to take it to meetings/conferences etc.

The Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) committee is working on a one-page outreach document to bring members up to speed on EG&S. The Phase 2 SAL (Southern Alberta Landscapes) EG&S report for Southern Alberta was completed and is called 'Conceptual Linkages and Initial Assessment'.

Linda Cerney gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Lethbridge Naturalists and work that they have been involved with. Aaron Domes, a visitor services specialist from Cypress Hills, gave a presentation about Cypress Hills, including some of their preservation and conservation projects, as well as the 'dark-sky' project that they are involved with (Cypress Hills is considered a dark-sky preserve because there is very little light pollution in the area).

Karin Smith-Fargey, from the Prairie Learning Centre (PLC) in Saskatchewan, gave a PowerPoint presentation about the PLC. The presentation can be found on the members page of the PCF website. The PLC is interested in educating students about the grasslands at the high school level and want to give them hands-on learning in the outdoors. The course they have developed for the curriculum blends phys-ed, arts, social science, and the range of applied and pure sciences.

The tour went the second day of the meeting, where PCF members got to partake in some of the activities held in the park in regards to their 'History in the Hills' event. The afternoon tour

was conducted by Les Weekes, who took us to some sites involved in research projects on forest and range management.

Red Deer – September 2007

The Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) is in progress over CFB Suffield and the planning process has started for 2008/2009. Over the next three years, the project will be three-quarters completed, and the contractor has put a second aircraft on the job to make the work go faster.

The Education Committee will be holding workshops on the grassland education kit at the University of Lethbridge to education students, as well as at the Teachers Convention in Medicine Hat in February. The committee will be meeting on Oct. 4 to discuss the possibility of doing distant learning broadcasts and partnering with Inside Education to offer a course to teachers about the prairies. Katheryn and Neil are working on upgrading the PCF website.

The Ecological Goods and Services Committee want to take Alberta Environment's methods (SAL model that identifies what ecological goods and services there are on Alberta's landscape) and apply them to a local landscape level. The committee will be putting together an RFP to hire a consultant to design an on-the-ground study with proper public consultation. The project will likely look at a native range site to see what services it offers, but it would also be good to look at land that has been changed from its native state (eg. agricultural). The committee is also developing a fact sheet about ecological goods and services.

The Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN) gave the PCF an overview of their organization and some of the projects that they are working on. These include publishing books, with the new Atlas of Breeding Birds of Alberta just off the press. Information about their projects, such as 'Living by Water', 'Important Bird Areas', 'Prairie nest records scheme' and their natural history database can be found on their website at www.fanweb.ca.

We had two guest speakers at this meeting. Beverly Anderson gave the PCF a PowerPoint presentation (that can be found on the members page of the website) on the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance, and Todd Nivens from the Kerry Wood Nature Centre in Red Deer gave a talk about the causes and consequences of global warming and explained how the Nature Centre is doing its part to reduce its ecological footprint. His presentation can be found on the members page of the PCF website.

The tour was on the second day of the meeting, with stops at a Nature Conservancy of Canada site led by Juanna Thompson, a tour of Rumsey led by Felix Gebbink (Public Lands), and a tour of Dry Island Buffalo Jump, led by Terry Krause and Cam Lockerbie (Alberta Parks).

Strategic Priorities of the PCF

PCF Work Groups 2006 – 2007

Prairie Conservation Action Plan 2006 – 2010

The 2006-2010 PCAP was completed and distributed to members, all libraries, all MLAs, MPs and other politicians in the region, rural municipalities, the PCF membership, Saskatchewan and Manitoba PCAPs, and watershed councils. It was also posted on the PCF website for download.

PCF Education Committee

The Education Committee circulated their work plan based on the 2006-2010 PCAP. A general PCF PowerPoint presentation was finalized and shown to members. This presentation was developed to promote the PCF and members are encouraged to use it. A new display board was also developed and focuses on the 2006-2010 PCAP. It is available to members when attending conferences/meetings/tradeshows/etc. It is currently housed at the Provincial Building in Lethbridge.

Presentations of the Grasslands Education Kit were conducted at the Southwest Alberta Teacher's Convention Association in Lethbridge in February, and at the University of Lethbridge to education students in November, 2007.

A new focus was decided upon by the committee in the fall of 2007. Some future actions will be to develop distance-learning broadcasts, try to get prairie topics into the school curriculum, and partner with an environmental education group (possibly Inside Education) to teach prairie topics to teachers.

Grassland Vegetation Inventory

GVI continued to progress throughout 2006/07, with funding in place to start the project. 107 townships were completed for the GVI, 320 townships were completed for the hydro project, and 645 air photo townships were completed in 2006/07. Plans are in place to expand the GVI further north and to complete 200 more townships in 2008. Currently, a process to maintain the GVI is being sought.

The GVI team is working towards developing a version of the GVI for public use, which will be able to be accessed via the internet.

Prairie Ecology Research Committee (PERC)

PERC was officially disbanded because the material posted on the website was not being used very much. The bibliographic references were to be moved to another site more accessible to the public.

Ecological Goods and Services Committee (EG&S)

An EG&S committee was started up to focus on Goals 1.1.3 and 1.3.4 of the 2006-2010 PCAP. Terms of Reference were developed by the committee, and plans were made to conduct a pilot project. The committee plans to quantify the ecological goods and services found on a local landscape level using the Southern Alberta Landscapes (SAL) model (that details the ecological goods and services available in Alberta) and an Australian EG&S model. An RFP was developed and a contractor hired to conduct a pilot project that will establish the desired outcomes of a small-scale EG&S project, including such actions as finding an appropriate site to conduct the study and a proper public consultation process.

Draft versions of an outreach document have been completed, the purpose of which is to educate members about EG&S.

Other Activities

Coordinator

A coordinator was hired and was able to work on specific projects of the PCF, such as the production of a Policies and Procedures Manual, upgrades to the PCF website, a PCAP assessment (to see how the PCAP goals are moving forward), actively recruiting new members, a new brochure, and a new display for use at tradeshow. The coordinator also took over many administrative duties, such as arranging and organizing meetings, attending all PCF committee and general meetings, chairing the education committee, providing news and updates to members, and being the contact person for members and the public alike.

Appendix 1: PCAP Assessment 2007 –

PRAIRIE CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN ASSESSMENT 2007				
Goal	Objective	Action	Organization Working on Action	
Goal 1: Research	Objective 1.1: Describe Alberta's native prairie and parkland landscapes by promoting, conducting, compiling and analyzing relevant research.	1.1.1	SRD, DUC, AENV	
		1.1.2		
		1.1.3	SRD, Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, CWS, PCF, AENV	
		1.1.4	MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, City of Calgary, Cows and Fish, DND	
	Objective 1.2: Build sustainable data systems to ensure the maintenance, availability and analysis of research data.	1.2.1	DUC, AENV, Alberta Parks, ACA, CWS, OGC, OWC, PCA	
		1.2.2	DUC, ACA, DND, AENV, PCA	
		1.2.3	SRD, Alberta Parks, ACA, CWS, OGC, PCA	
		1.2.4	CWS	
		1.2.5	Alberta Parks, NRCB, PCF, OGC, OWC, ANPC, AENV, PCA	
	Objective 1.3: Establish a research program on prairie ecology at a post-secondary institution in Alberta.	1.3.1	ACA, Universities of Alberta, Lethbridge, and Calgary	
		1.3.2	Alberta Parks, ACA, OGC, AENV, PCA	
		1.3.3	Alberta Parks, PCA	
		1.3.4	Alberta Parks, SRD, PCF, MULTISAR, AENV	
		1.3.5	Alberta Parks, CWS, AENV	
	Goal 2: Stewardship	Objective 2.1: Develop and implement policies and programs and advise on laws and regulations that encourages the conservation and restoration of Alberta's native prairies and parklands.	2.1.1	CWS, FAN, ANPC
			2.1.2	Alberta Parks, MULTISAR, NCC, DND, AENV
			2.1.3	Fish and Wildlife
2.1.4			EUB, Energy, SRD	
2.1.5			SRD, PCF	
2.1.6			SRD	
Objective 2.2: Support land use management practices and protective mechanisms that sustain diverse ecosystems and restore species at risk populations across the whole prairie and parkland landscape.		2.2.1	SRD, Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, Cows and Fish, OGC, DND, AENV	
		2.2.2	(Alberta Parks, MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, Cows and Fish, OGC, ANPC) PCF, OWC, PCA	
		2.2.3	SRD, Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, ACA, City of Calgary, Cows and Fish, OGC, DND, AENV, PCA	
		2.2.4	Alberta Parks, Fish and Wildlife, ACA, CWS, OGC, PCA	
		2.2.5	MULTISAR, ACA, NRCB, AENV	
		2.2.6	PCF	
		2.2.7	Alberta Parks, PCA	
Objective 2.3: Protect significant, representative, and sensitive prairie and parkland ecosystems.		2.3.1	Alberta Parks, SRD, DUC, NCC, City of Calgary, OGC, DND, City of Lethbridge, AENV, PCA	
		2.3.2	Alberta Parks, DND, PCA	
		2.3.3	CWS, Alberta Parks	

	Objective 2.4: Restore degraded prairie ecosystems.	2.4.1	Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, Cows and Fish, CCA, OGC, DND, AENV, PCA
		2.4.2	SRD, Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, City of Calgary, OGC, DND, PCA
		2.4.3	DUC
		2.4.4	CWS, EUB, DND, PCF, AENV
Goal 3: Education	Objective 3.1: Promote an understanding and appreciation of our native prairie and parkland ecosystems.	3.1.1	SRD, Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, ACA, City of Calgary, Cows and Fish, CCA, Royal Alberta Museum, OGC, DND, City of Lethbridge, OWC, FAN, ANPC, AENV, PCA
		3.1.2	ACA, PCF, AENV, PCA
		3.1.3	MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, OWC, ANPC, PCA
		3.1.4	
		3.1.5	Alberta Parks, DUC, MULTISAR, City of Calgary, Royal Alberta Museum, PCA
		3.1.6	Alberta Parks, OWC, ANPC, AENV, PCA
		3.1.7	SRD, OGC
	Objective 3.2: Share information and resources to assist land users and decision-makers in conserving native prairie and parkland habitats and species.	3.2.1	MULTISAR, ACA, Cows and Fish, PCA
		3.2.2	Alberta Parks, MULTISAR, ACA, NCC, NRCB, Cows and Fish, OGC, ANPC
		3.2.3	ACA, DND, OWC, AENV
		3.2.4	Fish and Wildlife, ACA, MULTISAR, OGC, PCA
		3.2.5	PCF
		3.2.6	PCF
	Objective 3.3: Encourage the incorporation of prairie and parkland ecosystem studies in formal educational curricula at all levels.	3.3.1	Alberta Parks, MULTISAR, ACA, OGC, OWC, AENV, PCA
		3.3.2	PCF, U of A, U of C

Organizations listed in this assessment:

- Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF)
- Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) including Fish and Wildlife, MULTISAR, Public Lands, Resource Information Management Branch
- Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)
- Alberta Conservation Association (ACA)
- Alberta Parks
- Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS)
- City of Calgary
- Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)
- Cows and Fish
- Natural Resource Conservation Board (NRCB)
- Cross Conservation Area (CCA)
- CFB Suffield (DND)
- University of Lethbridge (U of L)
- University of Calgary (U of C)
- University of Alberta (U of A)
- Operation Grassland Community (OGC); Alberta Fish and Game Association
- Royal Alberta Museum
- Energy and Utilities Board (EUB)
- Alberta Energy
- City of Lethbridge (Helen Schuler Coulee Centre)
- Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN)
- Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC)
- Alberta Environment (AENV)
- Parks Canada (PCA)

Appendix 2: PCF Member Organizations

Alberta Conservation Association
Alberta Conservation Tillage Society
Alberta Fish and Game Association
Alberta Native Plant Council
Alberta Wilderness Association
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
City of Calgary
City of Lethbridge (Helen Schuler Coulee Centre)
Cows and Fish – Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society
Cross Conservation Area
Dryland Salinity Control Association
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Eastern Irrigation District
EnCana Corporation
Federation of Alberta Naturalist
Grasslands Naturalists
Lethbridge Naturalists Society
Nature Conservancy of Canada
Oldman Watershed Council
Operation Grassland Community
Pekisko Group
Petro-Canada
Red Deer River Watershed Alliance
Sandy Cross Conservation Foundation
Society of Range Management
Southern Alberta Applied Research Association
Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
Special Areas Advisory Council
Special Areas Board
University of Alberta
University of Calgary
University of Lethbridge
Western Sky Land Trust Society
Wildlife Society

Government of Alberta

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Alberta Community Development (Provincial Museum of Alberta)
Alberta Community Development (Tourism, Parks Recreation and Culture; Parks and Protected Areas)
Alberta Economic Development
Alberta Energy

PCF Member Organizations Continued:

Alberta Environment

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (Fish and Wildlife Division)

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (Lands Division)

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (Natural Resources Conservation Board)

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (Resource Information Management Branch)

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation

Government of Canada

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (PFRA)

Canadian Wildlife Service

Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces Base – Suffield

Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service

Parks Canada (Waterton Lakes National Park)

National Energy Board

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference (Prairie Conservation Forum)

AUTHORITY

Initiated in 1989 by the Government of Alberta as the Prairie Conservation Coordinating Committee. At the discretion of individual member organizations, the committee was reconfirmed and renamed in 1995 as the Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF). The Prairie Conservation Forum is consultative and advisory to member organizations. It does not have legislative, management or program authority or responsibilities. The acceptance of Prairie Conservation Forum recommendations will remain at the discretion of individual member organizations.

DURATION

The Prairie Conservation Forum is tied to the Alberta Prairie Conservation Action Plan (PCAP), 2006 - 2010. The committee will exist until 31 December 2010. This tenure may be extended at the discretion of the Prairie Conservation Forum.

PURPOSE

The purpose or role of the Prairie Conservation Forum is to encourage effective implementation of the Alberta PCAP and provide an ongoing profile for prairie and parkland conservation initiatives. This role has and will continue to focus on three key elements:

1. Networking and Information Exchange

- Serve as a forum for **information exchange and cooperation** between key organizations with interests in or jurisdiction over prairie conservation initiatives;
- Allow **key contacts** to get together periodically to review the plans, projects and programs of member organizations, to assess progress and to integrate program efforts; and
- Where appropriate, **coordinate actions** to manage potential conflicts, avoid duplication and ensure effectiveness amongst the projects of member organizations.

2. Steering Prairie Conservation Action Plan Implementation

- Constitute a **cooperative partnership** between different levels of government and non-government organizations in sharing major responsibility for implementing the Alberta PCAP, and also allowing both groups to **share their experiences** and **strengthen mutual goals and objectives**;
- Assess and make **recommendations on overall priorities** for implementation of the Alberta PCAP to those member organizations who are involved in implementation actions. Provide advice to those same members on program or project design and implementation;
- Encourage members to tailor their own programs, policies or initiatives to meet the goals of the Alberta PCAP;
- **Review progress** in implementing the Alberta PCAP;

- **Identify gaps and recommend measures** to rectify such areas as inventory deficiencies or new program requirements; and
- **Encourage coordination and compatibility** amongst major conservation-related initiatives such as the Prairie Conservation Action Plans, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, habitat conservation, wetland conservation, cover programs, protected areas programs, and biodiversity initiatives.

3. Public Awareness and Education

- Adopt media communication strategies as appropriate to ensure that significant initiatives and accomplishments are widely communicated publicly; and
- Develop educational resources to enhance awareness of the value and importance of biological diversity and Alberta's native prairie and parkland.

MEMBERSHIP

There is an "open door" policy on membership in the Prairie Conservation Forum. Organizations or agencies who wish to participate in the work of the committee may join the Prairie Conservation Forum on request. Meetings will be open to the public.

PRAIRIE CONSERVATION FORUM OPERATIONS

- Chair - elected annually from and by the Board of Directors. There is no limit to the number of times PCF members can be elected to serve as Chair, provided no more than two consecutive terms are served at one time.
- Vice-Chair – elected from and by the Board of Directors.
- Treasurer – elected from and by the Board of Directors.
- Secretary - provided by the Government of Alberta (Department of Environment).
- Coordinator – hired directly by the PCF through funds obtained from member organizations.
- Board of Directors - consists of representatives from a cross section of the membership (elected annually), Chair, Vice-Chair, Coordinator and Secretary.
- Working Groups - established to address specific tasks or issues by the Prairie Conservation Forum. Working groups will be disbanded once their task has been completed.

LOCAL COMMITTEES

The Prairie Conservation Forum will facilitate and encourage the development of local or regional committees. However, the Prairie Conservation Forum prefers a loose arrangement without an organizational hierarchy or sanctioning functions.

PRAIRIE CONSERVATION FORUM OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. Meetings

- The Prairie Conservation Forum will conduct three general meetings per year. Meetings will be held in the winter (January), spring (April/May/June) and fall (September). The chair will be responsible for chairing these meetings;
- Additional Prairie Conservation Forum meetings may be called at the discretion of the steering committee when circumstances warrant;
- Notification of the dates(s), location and anticipated agenda items will be mailed to all members at least 30 days in advance of the meeting; and
- The Board of Directors will meet three times per year to guide the Prairie Conservation Forum in implementing the Alberta PCAP and related initiatives and to prepare an agenda for Forum meetings. Board of Director meetings will be called by the chair with as much notice as possible between Forum meetings.

2. Decisions

- The preferred method of decision making is by consensus. However, if that approach is not feasible, decisions of the Prairie Conservation Forum will be recorded through a vote of the attending membership. All members will have an opportunity for input through discussion at a Prairie Conservation Forum meeting;
- In the event that a decision is required in between meetings, membership votes will be obtained through the appropriate referral mechanism (i.e., mail, fax, Email, phone);
- Minority opinions will be recorded if the member(s) holding those views so request; and
- All members will receive advance notification and background information concerning upcoming decisions, at least **30 days in advance**.

3. Documentation and Correspondence

- The Secretary and/or Coordinator will be responsible for developing the agendas for the general meetings in close consultation with the Chair and Board of Directors;
- All minutes of meetings and correspondence from the Prairie Conservation Forum will be prepared, distributed and retained by the Secretary and/or Coordinator;
- Correspondence of the Prairie Conservation Forum will be factual and non-advocacy in tone. Correspondence reflecting the Forum's views will be signed by the Chair. Forum correspondence neither binds nor necessarily reflects the views of any given member organization.
- Signature sheets will only be used to convey personal support.

4. Prairie Conservation Issues

- When issues are brought to the Forum for comment or deliberation or when the Forum is asked to provide support for initiatives (research, program proposals,

- causes, etc.) the Forum will be guided in its deliberations by its Policies and Procedures manual and the Alberta Prairie Conservation Action Plan.
- The Prairie Conservation Forum will register views as a committee on issues which, following discussion, the majority of members feel meet the following criteria:
 - The issue relates directly to the Alberta PCAP and is significant (i.e., is provincial in scope or is otherwise of a sufficient magnitude to be considered as a significant prairie conservation issue);
 - Prairie Conservation Forum representation would be useful or will likely make a difference to the final outcome (resolution) of the issue.

5. Prairie Conservation Forum Report

A report summarizing the activities, projects, decisions and financial transactions of the Forum will be prepared every two calendar years, by March 31 of the following year, up until the end of 2007. Starting in 2008, reports will be prepared annually.

Appendix 4: Vision, Goals, and Objectives (Alberta PCAP: 2006–2010)

The Vision

The Vision of the Prairie Conservation Forum is that the biological diversity of native prairie ecosystems in Alberta is being conserved for the benefit of current and future generations.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the Prairie Conservation Forum include:

- (a) A conservation ethic that will guide all activities and management decisions on the prairies;
- (b) All stakeholders are given the opportunity to be involved in the process of achieving the prairie conservation vision. Stakeholders will work cooperatively and form partnerships to achieve prairie conservation objectives; and
- (c) Stakeholders are empowered at a local community level to work towards prairie conservation initiatives, drawing on local knowledge and expertise.

Goals

The current Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum Action Plan (2006-2010) is designed to sustain the focus on biodiversity, be relevant to contemporary challenges and align with current trends in environmental governance. The plan rests on three goals that build logically to the Prairie Conservation Forum's vision of conserving biological diversity:

Goal 1: Research

This goal encompasses the data collection, inventory and research activities necessary to adequately determine the state of biodiversity in prairie and parkland Alberta and to understand the likely implications of continuing intensification of human activities.

Objectives

- 1.1 Describe Alberta's native prairie and parkland landscapes by promoting, conducting, compiling and analyzing relevant research.
- 1.2 Build sustainable data systems to ensure the maintenance, availability and analysis of research data.
- 1.3 Conduct research into key priority areas.

Goal 2: Stewardship

There is human use on all levels of the landscape, as well as environmental use on all prairie landscapes. The relative contributions of both change dramatically from place to place, reflecting what we have to work with and what our society's objectives are. The challenge is to bring the desired outcomes into consistent alignment so that the PCF can pursue its mission of biodiversity conservation with other groups working to manage watersheds, airsheds, and/or land use.

Objectives

- 2.1 Develop and implement policies and programs and advise on laws and regulations that encourage the conservation and restoration of Alberta's native prairies and parklands.
- 2.2 Support land use management practices and protective mechanisms that sustain diverse ecosystems and restore species at risk populations across the whole prairie and parkland landscape.
- 2.3 Protect significant, representative, and sensitive prairie and parkland ecosystems.
- 2.4 Restore degraded prairie ecosystems.

Goal 3: Education

People appreciate what they understand. All the information in the world is of no value if only a few 'specialists' are aware of it. The story of the state of the prairie needs to be built, told and widely understood. The challenge is to broaden the base, to have a wide dialogue with Albertans that builds public awareness and engagement, that allows people to see what's happening and what the consequences are, that promotes a societal convergence on the evidence, and results in a societal commitment to take positive action.

Objectives

- 3.1 Promote an understanding and appreciation of our native prairie and parkland ecosystems.
- 3.2 Share information and resources to assist land users and decision-makers in conserving native prairie and parkland habitats and species.
- 3.3 Encourage the incorporation of prairie and parkland ecosystem studies in formal educational curricula at all levels.

Appendix 5: Financial Report

Financial Report as of December 31, 2006

Opening Balance, January 7, 2006		\$4,343.92
REVENUES		
Grant from Alberta Community Development		\$2,500.00
Grant from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development		\$3,000.00
Interest		\$2.39
Total Revenues		\$5,502.39
EXPENDITURES		
2006		
Town of Okotoks - PCF meeting hall rental	\$192.60	
Hansel and Gretel Catering- Lunch at Jan 2006 meeting	\$332.56	
Photo contest prizes	\$23.48	
Meals for June PCF Meeting	\$315.00	
Milk River Raft Tours- June Meeting	\$300.00	
Topline Printers – PCAP Printing (AWA In-kind for \$1235.60)	\$1916.00	
Member Raft Fees for June Meeting	\$105.00	
Ed Crowe Painting and Frame – gift	\$152.61	
Photo Development	\$6.35	
Best Western Jurassic Inn- rental for Sept PCF meeting	\$95.39	
Speaker Gifts	\$135.05	
Total Expenditures	\$3,574.04	
Net (revenue/expenses \$9,846.31 – \$3,574.04)	\$ 6,272.27	
Closing Balance, December 31, 2006		\$ 6,272.27

Prairie Conservation Forum
Statement of Operations and Net Assets (Deficiency)
Year Ended December 31 2007

Revenue		
Grants	\$33,100	
Donations	\$1,465	
Other Income	\$6	
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Total		\$34,571
Expenses		
Meeting Expenses	\$1,941	
Licenses and dues	\$75	
Advertising	\$1,218	
Speaker Gifts	\$179	
Coordinator Contract	\$26,500	
Coordinator Expenses	\$1,367	
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Total		\$31,280
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Excess of Revenue over expenses		\$3,291
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Appendix 6: Recognition of PCF Supporters

Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Parks Division
Alberta Conservation Association
Nature Conservancy Canada
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Alberta Wilderness Association
Alberta Native Plant Council
Alberta Environment
ACD – Alberta Community Development
Ed Nelson
Environment Canada
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada