



10/29/2019

Connecting Corridors Workshop

Summary Report



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UNIT

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A Confidential Report to the Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum

The session began with opening from Nolan Ball, Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF) Board Chair. The facilitator shared the workshop objectives with the group. The participants agreed to use the following principles to guide their discussions:

- Everyone has wisdom and we need everyone's wisdom for the best result.
- Share "Air Time" – If you notices you are speaking lots, take a step back and invite others to share ideas. If you are quiet, step in and share your wisdom with others.
- These are generative conversations:
 - o Be curious, ask questions to deepen your understanding
 - o Its ok to change your mind
 - o There may be no right or wrong answer
- Unhinge (where possible) from devices
- Serious, fun, serious, fun – Let's enjoy our time together, do some important work

Context Setting

Ian Dyson provided additional context setting that integrated and linked ideas from O2 Report: Structural & Functional Connectivity Theory as well as other information shared during the October 24, 2019 webinar. Participants, having heard the info shared by Ian, provided the following additional information to help frame the day.

- Matrix – how do we start the discussion?
- Focus on policy as well as base areas
- ABMI looked at species – need to look at populations as well
- Implementation resistance – how do you communicate at an appropriate scale? How do we make the products usable i.e. follow-up?
- We have a lot of info – implementation needs details to fill in the blanks
- What is the timeframe we're working in?
- What are the major threats?
- Need large corridors as well as local scale
- Conflicting priorities – development versus impact
- To what extend can corridors be used?
- We don't have the tools to protect Environmentally Significant Areas
- We are constrained to do anything with the identified areas
- Broaden concept of corridor – continuous habitat over an area
- Use models to predict areas but we need to do follow-up research to verify
- Lack of focus on implementation
- Light pollution
- Transboundary work is positive and inspired
- Task of putting it all together
- How can we reframe conversations of connectivity into things municipalities are trying to accomplish?
- What is the social capacity to support / understand the work?
- Identifying opportunities to identify lower cost initiatives social and real capital

- Who is missing? We need to bring those doing conservation work into the conversation early i.e. Ducks Unlimited, AB Fish and Game, etc.
- Infrastructure related to irrigation and the impact on our work? Mitigation – buried lines.
- Irrigation Districts and Municipal Districts – what role do they have?

Location and Significance - Sense Making on a Landscape Scale

Participants were organized into the following four groups for the next few discussions.

Group 1

Cleve Wershler
Chris Manderson
Grace Wark
Graham Gaither
Ron McNeil
Rylee Hewitt

Group 2

Brendan Hemans
Heather Rudd
Ian Dyson
Sandi Robertson
Tim Romanow
Tracy Lee

Group 3

Alvin First Rider
Cliff Wallis
Craig Harding
Lynette Hiebert
Nolan Ball
Scott Stevens

Group 4

Christyann Olson
Joel Nicholson
Leif Olson
Matt Williamson
Shantel Koenig
Sue Michalsky

Part 1

Working in their groups, participants explored the following question: Where are the key places and/or what are the species we should focus corridor conservation and restoration efforts and why? Each group was tasked with capturing a list of conservation and restoration areas where most benefit could result and the rationale for why these areas are significant.

Where / What	Why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private conservation complex – spectrum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting different types of land holdings (i.e. private, municipal parks, public)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transboundary areas (Blackfoot Lands) MT, SK, AB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection categories - reconciliation • Implementation tool • Stewardship credit – between private landowners to encourage BMP’s for access/benefits • Central data storage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPAC’s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality and quantity • Importance of river corridors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of Low HV Landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at areas to improve species intactness in low HV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purple Springs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinch Point Across Hwy 3 (N-S) to areas of high value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Grassland / Parkland Natural Regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas on the Fringe of Grasslands / parklands that link multi-use habitats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Matrix – Pilots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships and influence on Private Land
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bow River – east of Calgary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important system for AB drinking water pinched at Calgary.

Where / What	Why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small Rivers – Rosebud River, Ghostpine ● St. Mary’s Reservoir and Belly River (East-West) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Irrigation canals crossing ● Ecological traps and sinks ● Native seed enhancement – production and availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Impassable to some species
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Structural connectivity (corridors) opportunistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build resilience ● Climate change rational ● Maintain continental scale movement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transboundary Milk River corridor ● Great Sand Hills ● Alberta/Saskatchewan Highway 41 ● High value landscapes ● Sub-regional scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intactness level ● Time is of the essence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wetland Complexes ● Special habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current policies can change unknown threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Functional connectivity ● Pronghorn – road, private land, fences ● ESA [Environmental Significant Areas] reports (old) ● Guilds – Sandy parkland, lightly grazed – don’t lose past research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Species at Risk ● Known occurrences and distribution (empirical)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Species at Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leopard frogs ○ Great plains toads ○ Rattlesnakes (hibernaculum) ○ Short-horned lizards ○ Plant assemblages (movement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landownership ○ Level of protection ○ Convergence between multiple species ○ Empirical research ○ Collective expertise ○ Plant movement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land ownership – private lands – First Nation lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of policy to support conservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High value landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is mapped for what is remaining / aligns with other data sets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SE Alberta / SW Saskatchewan/ Montana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use these areas for the building blocks / The Matrix
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parkland – all native prairie Landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State of the Prairie identified very little remaining ● Quality of habitat?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provost / Bodo Sand Plain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scarcity, rare habitats, risk of public land sales
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Battle River Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Important main movement corridors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Red Deer River Corridor 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High priority movement corridors and human movement conflict zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alleviate pinch point areas to facilitated movement

Where / What	Why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections through cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development pressures from both sides / funnelling wildlife into sinks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All river corridors in SW Alberta 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the conversation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on remaining / improving barriers to connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low hanging fruit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetland complexes and adjacent surrounding landscapes – i.e. Sullivan lake, Dowling lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop over habitat at least. • At risk in marginal agricultural land from industrial activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What defines priority? Is this misleading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and work in high priority areas but also capture low hanging fruit in some areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally Significant Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ESA's [environmental significant areas] because of species at risk values • Leverage based on species types
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly ways – temporal activity (connectivity is not permanent) seasonal connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of renewable energy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S.E. Grasslands S.W. Fescue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resiliency • Resistance to invasive • Sage-grouse • Pronghorn • Transboundary Conservation • Adaptive capacity • High risk and profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronghorn corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longest travelling ungulate • “umbrella species” • Existing data and info • Level of awareness good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffield block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of implementation management plan • National Wildlife area • Rare and endangered species
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East West Connections • Bow River Corridor • Riparian Corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East - west connection • Urban development • Water connections • Minimizing invasives • Riparian corridors • Ecotype boundaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Irrigation District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest private landowner in AB • Infrastructure barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remnant Parkland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wainwrights ○ Bodo ○ Rumsey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social licence good • Potential buy in with stakeholders • Connectedness between sub-regions • Organisms can move • Less than 4% intact

Part 2

Following the initial discussions, a designated host remained at their group's station and the remainder of the group participated in a gallery walk where each group travelled to the remaining stations for a brief overview of the ideas that the other groups discussed and captured any new comments, additions or questions of clarity.

Group 2 Notes

Similar

- Functional connectivity – roads
- Transboundary piece
- Looked at similar species at risk list – consider small as well as large critters
- Structural connectivity / scale
- Scaling- capture riparian areas North of Calgary at a finer scale
- Large scale structural connectivity and climate change and movement
- Functional – pronghorns and known information (smooth 18 inch bottom wire) or occurrence (documented migration routes)
- Importance of the south eastern block and Transboundary connections
- Structural maps stuff (High Value Landscapes)
- All same

Surprises

- Micro stuff
- Not using existing info

Misses

- Municipalities and land trusts – cumulative value of smaller scale conservation projects
- Watershed scale –existing partnerships with broad societal engagement, potentially key partners in advancing corridor connectivity.
- Strategic: consider the social landscape. Where geographically, considering the social context lies the best opportunity to engage?
- Threats – Southern East Slopes
- Transportation threats
- Flag the top significance of the international transboundary corridors
- Matrix discussion – connectivity wins in the anthropogenic landscape
- Parkland biodiversity score more important than Species at Risk

Group 3 Notes

- Investment into urban areas on education of importance of connectivity Urban & Rural connectedness
- Predicting areas of movement by human populations
- What species might fall through the cracks
- Why? – importance of climate change
- Identify sinks

Group 4 Notes

- Narratives – getting them and engaging from the start
- Natural processes (how) fire, drought, flood, wind
- Wetland complexes – how regulatory regime
- Save what we have – municipalities, First Nations, large intake blocks
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge – trapping / hunting corridors, identify conflicts, ranchers as stewards
- Eastern Irrigation District Matrix opportunity
- Corridor conflict
- Matrix – adjacent to large areas, create greater security, for important areas.
- Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure (OECM) – Private Land Conservation (How) small parcels equal big wins
- Iinnii initiative – bison reintroduction (how)

Following the gallery walk participants reconvened as a large group and shared the following reflections:

What's missing?

- Where is the best on the ground opportunity?
- May need to recalibrate lenses based on geography
- Risk/drivers of future development
- Private land – what is their appetite for conservation?

Surprises:

- Focus on low hanging fruit
- Traditional ecological knowledge
- Tools for municipalities – hard protection now versus 30-year targets.

Common Themes

- Mechanism to compensate municipalities and landowners.

Determining Criteria to Establish Priorities

Participants, working in the same small groups, used the rationale for how they selected priority areas (why) to develop a ranked list of criteria they believe Prairie Conservation Forum should consider when determining priority areas.

<p>Group 1 (members rated their top two choices)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Assessments (2,1,1,1,2,2,) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize costs Range sites of uncommon / rare EGS evaluation as bundling – flood mitigation Species of concern and level related to functional and structural connectivity (1,1,1) Keystone species Microbial communities (lacking information) Social success (probability) (2,2,2,2,1,1) Traditional ecological knowledge i.e. hunting, trapping corridors (2,2) Industrial, noise and light pollution (2) <p>Ecological traps, sinks – species or special groups Land ownership disposition categories</p>	<p>Group 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological (known point of intervention) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological high value Existing condition Remaining SAR [species at risk] International connectivity Condition high Threats (opportunity to address) Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity main frame Tools Land ownership
<p>Group 3</p> <p>Treat/Risk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Policy change Ability for conversion <p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Policy change Have previously mapped areas Can focus national/international low hanging fruit 	<p>Group 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider opportunity cost, identify if trade offs 1a. Resiliency in face of climate change 1b. High risk, bottleneck areas 2. Low hanging fruit, easy wins 2. Take existing, quit excessive planning and implement something on the ground

Each group reported on their ranked criteria. Participants noted that there were many commonalities and identified the following common criteria but did not rank them. It was also noted that there needed to be two categories of criteria - risk and opportunity.

Risk Criteria

- Risk – identify critical areas and high risk areas
- High ecological values
- Species – what might fall through the cracks

Opportunity Criteria

- Existing knowledge
- Low hanging fruit
- Policy
- Opportunity to address (social license)
- Opportunity cost

Ranked Priority Areas

Participants, using their group’s criteria, ranked all of the ideas the four groups identified as priority areas. Each participant received eight dots and could place dots beside any/all of the ideas listed on the what/where side of any of the group’s charts. Participants could put all their dots in one place or spread them out. In a couple of instances, participants placed their dots on the “why” side of the chart.

What/Where	# of Votes	Breakdown by Group
S.E. Grasslands S.W. Fescue	16	11 blue, 3 green, 2 red
High value landscapes	15	8 yellow, 1 red, 3 blue, 3 green
Structural connectivity (corridors) opportunistic	12	10 red, 1 green, 1 yellow
Pronghorn corridor	12	9 blue, 1 green, 1 red, 1 yellow
Remnant Parkland (Wainwrights, Bodo, Rumsey)	10	5 blue, 3 green 2 yellow
High priority movement corridors and human movement conflict zones	9	4 yellow, 2 red, 1 blue, 2 green
Watershed Planning Advisory Council's (WPAC)	8	6 green 2 red
East West Connections, Bow River Corridor, Riparian Corridors	8	3 blue, 2 red, 1 yellow, 2 green
Wetland complexes and adjacent surrounding landscapes – i.e. Sullivan lake, Dowling lake	7	4 yellow, 2 red, 1 green
Private conservation complex – spectrum	6	5 green, 1 blue
Work on remaining / improving barriers to connectivity	6	3 yellow, 2 blue, 1 red
All river corridors in SW Alberta	6	4 yellow, 2 red
Alternative Land Use Service Matrix – Pilots	6	2 green, 1 red, 3 blue
SE Alberta / SW Saskatchewan/ Montana	6	2 yellow, 1 red, 3 green
Transboundary areas (Blackfoot Lands) MT, SK, AB	6	3 blue, 1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green
Suffield block	6	4 blue 2 green
Fly ways – temporal activity (connectivity is not permanent) seasonal connectivity	6	4 yellow, 1 green, 1 red
Transboundary Milk River corridor, Great Sand Hills, AB/SK Hwy 41, high value landscapes	6	6 red
Functional connectivity	6	6 red
Land ownership – private lands – First Nation lands	5	3 yellow, 1 red, 1 green
Environmentally significant areas	5	2 yellow, 1 red, 2 green
Eastern Irrigation District	4	1 blue, 3 green
Parkland – all native parkland landscapes	3	3 yellow
Sub-regional scale	3	3 red
Environment significant area reports (old)	3	3 red
Special habitat	2	1 red 1 Yellow
The Matrix	2	1 yellow, 1 blue
St. Mary's Reservoir and Belly River (E-W)	1	1 blue
Ecological traps and sinks	1	1 blue
Purple Springs	1	1 green
Species at risk plant assemblages (movement)	1	1 green
Bow River – east of Calgary	1	1 red
Wetland Complex	1	1 red
Why	# of Votes	Breakdown by Group
Important main movement corridors	3	3 yellow
Implementation tool	1	1 green
Stewardship credit – between private landowners to encourage best management practice's (BMP's)for access/benefits	1	1 green

Crafting Recommendations – By Priority Area

Participants, working individually and then in small groups, brainstormed ideas about what they felt would support corridor conservation and restoration efforts on a practical scale. Specifically participants identified:

- Projects to undertake in the top 3-4 priority areas
- Outcomes (success indicators) one would hope result from such projects
- Policy advice (key messages) that explain rationale as to why the focus is in these areas
- Information and educational resources that are critical / helpful to communicate with/to Albertans.

Projects

- Remnant Parkland: pre-emptive acquisition of parkland habitat at City fringe (Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer)
- Remnant Parkland: use conservation tools to connect intact remnants (heritage rangeland designations)
- Remnant Parkland: management tools to restore native grasses and use of traditional knowledge to increase biodiversity
- Remnant Parkland: projects identifying remnant parkland patches and identify which larger natural areas they are closest to. Identifying key hazards/sinks that lie along corridor connecting the two.
- S.E. Grasslands: encourage conservation measures already in place and seek government compliance for significant protection or no go / no development areas.
- S.E. Grasslands: 'Hat' to 'Havre' Pronghorn project
 - High profile Hwy 1 or 3 crossing project – influence land use development plan for corridor in Cypress County
 - High ecological value – funding to support stewardship projects on crossings and producer stewardship credits for voluntary measures.
- S.E. Grasslands
- S.E. Grasslands project – multijurisdictional efforts. Best management practices on private lands need to be explicitly valued and promoted.
- S.E. Grasslands projected deeded land (native) strategies re disposition and protection. Work with agencies Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC), South of the Divide Action Program, Sustainable Canada
- S.W. Fescue
- S.W. Foothills Fescue project to improve native connectivity NW-SE between St. Mary's reservoir and Cowley. Agencies: Alternative Land Use Services, Kainai, Piikani, municipalities, NCC, Southern Alberta Land Trust Society(SALTS)
- Establish a market for ecosystem services – pay farmers to conserve connectivity
- Identify important habitat at the boundaries of sub-regions/ecotypes and conserving/protecting
- A data pool for connectivity planners to identify priority areas
- Provide data in an accessible format for Municipal governments to use/access
- High priority movement: pronghorn project building crossing, remove and make wildlife friendly fence requirements

- Highway overpass construction for pronghorn on Trans Canada Highway
- Highway crossing for pronghorn along highway 1
- Pronghorn crossing
- Pronghorn
- Pronghorn – promote wildlife friendly fencing in pronghorn corridor, pronghorn overpass
- Large scale fence modification program for pronghorn across the Northern Sagebrush Steppe Initiative
- Pronghorn: support to fill in pinch points, use as a demonstration project, support movement corridor conservation and transboundary conservation
- Pronghorn projects 18” wire on all known migration routes. Highway and Railway crossings at Dunmore and Highway 2
- Pronghorn – focus conservation and education on key pronghorn movement corridors, especially Dunmore area.
- Pronghorn crossing – highway corridor crossing near Dunmore road, highway, railway work with agencies South Eastern Alberta Watershed Alliance (SEAWA), NCC, municipalities, AB Transportation
- Wildlife crossing along Highway 1 to facilitate pronghorn movement
- Transboundary support cooperative initiatives to identify ways corridors will be recognized and protected.
- Transboundary AB, SK, MT east of Sweet Grass Hills project improved connectivity of SE AB to MT and SK, foci species: Greater Sage Grouse and Pronghorn continued efforts/awareness by Transboundary Workshop e.g. Regina 2020
- Transboundary project AB and MT west of Sweet Grass Hills for connectivity improvements – outcomes N-S enhancements. Agencies: Blackfoot/Blackfoot, Milk River Watershed Council Canada (MRWCC), Federal, Provincial, and municipalities.
- Participate in transboundary planning and advocacy
 - Transboundary Grasslands Partnership, Great Plains Conservation Network, Tri-national Grasslands Initiatives)
 - Applies to S.E. Grasslands, S.W. Fescue, High Value landscapes and Transboundary areas.
 - Transboundary bison habitat range monitored by US, Canada, and Native governments
- Transboundary Blackfoot Bison Conservation National Park
- S.W. Grasslands Kainai bison re-introduction project
- High value river corridors Blackfoot traditional sites
- High value landscapes – support high biodiversity, analyze to see what [species] and habitats may not be represented.
- Develop a ‘model’ to assign value based on agreed criteria that systematically and transparency clarifies values, risks, and desired outcomes.
- Stepping back from corridor guidelines (municipal)
- Understanding the broader conservation mechanisms that exist for municipalities to protect private/public land
- Officially protect public grazing land in long-term conservation (of some sort)
- High value landscapes: encourage “foothold” properties in high value landscapes regardless of non-government organization (NGO) presence.
- Structural connectivity: focus efforts not only on mainstream but also coulee systems and tributaries including intermittent.

- Structural connectivity: complete mapping project to use common formula to identify key corridors. Baseline map for all users to work with the same data.
- Structural connectivity: assess pinch points and effectiveness of existing corridors. Expand corridor concept to include broader areas for species like plants and insects (i.e. not just [movement] corridor)
- Structural connectivity – private municipal conservation
 - Coordinate planning an acquisition of priorities to acquire in key areas with small [auditing?] e.g. Calgary source water project plan
- Structural Connectivity: High value landscapes preserve connection from Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA) in SE end of Calgary to Bow River Corridor and protect Bow River Corridor
- Influence regional plans (policy [private] weak)
- Easement [against?] agricultural to site specific measures to overcome inhibitions.

Outcomes

- Implement North Saskatchewan Regional Plan projected areas (eastern Parkland)
- Implement South Saskatchewan Regional Plan
- Alleviate pinch points (especially pronghorn, snakes)
- Restoration, cultural connection, awareness, increased biodiversity
- Pronghorn: functional movement corridors i.e. barriers to movement removed, fences, Highway 1. Key habitat secured through policy or legal instrument. Social license to conserve pronghorn
- Highway mitigation for pronghorn across Highway 1
- Less impairment of pronghorn migration by fences across the Northern Sagebrush Steppe Initiative
- Increased movement of pronghorn across TransCanada Highway and reduction in road mortality
- Built infrastructure that improves connectivity and reduces collisions
- Wildlife connectivity included in conversations around development decisions.
- International policy/partnership. Restoration, resiliency. Increased biodiversity
- Buffer zone protection. Identifiable monitoring and movement corridors. Protection of Blackfoot sites.
- SW Fescue: high value lands are secured through policy or legal instrument. Lands are functionally connected and resilient. Structurally, functionally connected to high value lands in B.C. and MT (Highway 3 corridor)
- S.E. Grasslands: large areas with minimized impacts reduced landscape friction without need to purchase lands. Increased sense of stewardship.
- S.E. Grasslands: high value lands are secured through policy or legal instrument. Lands are functionally connected and resilient. Structurally and functionally connected to high value lands in SK and MT.
- S.E. Grasslands: improved connectivity on highest profile pronghorn mitigation. Improved public education/messaging. High ecological value lands improved connectivity voluntary easy wins to incorporate the ranching community.
- Municipalities understand the information that was been created already.
- Large area of public land will be protected long-term
- Larger uptake or more acceptance for conservation mechanisms that support environmental outcomes
- No new energy: oil and gas or renewal development on high value lands or vital corridors landscapes

- Conserved/protected areas that are climate change resilient or will be important in the future
- An identity for these areas that the willing can own (brand)
- A map defining prairie “Alberta’s biodiversity highways”
- Reconciliation – calls to action related to the landscape – incorporating Traditional ecological knowledge with local, municipal, planning.
- High value landscapes – Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI) to enhance this tool (e.g. Dyson, Dolan model) for risk assessment layer
- Connectivity – high value lands. City ecological network connects to regional landscapes
- Structural connectivity: private and municipal conservation – protection for connectivity that responds to municipal needs with multiple tools approaches to assemble corridor / stepping stone habitat
- Greater transboundary access for tribes and First Nations to culturally significant species
- Greater ecological health with reintroduction
- More adequate budgeting for shared regional conservation
- Greater social cohesion and land use appreciation.

Policy Advice

- Bolster tribal and First Nation (Canada, US) sovereignty, economic development and cultural access – bring them to the table always.
- Alter border checks for staff involved
- Develop mutual interests or plan
- Private and municipal conservation
- Advocacy with Government of Alberta (GOA) and Federal Government on tools incentives and funding
- Using locally significant names/ references to characterize opportunities
- Pronghorn - large landscapes / conservation migration, safety
- Building nature’s highways
- Valuing stepping stones
- Keeping Alberta whole
- Conserving our natural capital
- Without secure land protection our biodiversity is at risk as is our health and wealth
- Do not sell public lands
- Land stewardship and conserving for future generations
- Existing data on pronghorn movements and fence/ road issues should be communicated to policy makers
- Your 4x4 has a highway. Shouldn’t the deer?
- The Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF) connectivity project – helping wildlife ‘roll their coal’
- How does connectivity apply to a local landscape? How does it impact “me”?
- Importance of native grasslands corridor – secondary “value” of connecting habitat for multiple species at risk / biodiversity
- Voluntary with producers
- S.E. Grasslands highest unique value of the area show the need to ensure movement over time in perpetuity
- Social promotion of stewardship
- Protective notations on crown lands with suitable restrictions

- Keep riparian / river corridor systems intact
- Approach municipal planning with policy to avoid development adjacent to rivers
- Communicate value of high value lands to provincial and municipal governments (ESAs, Ecological goods and services mapping)
- Implementation workshop

Information & Education Resources

- Many agencies / partners for education / awareness
- Transboundary – MRWCC, Milk River Watershed Alliance (MRWA), Blackfoot, Blackfeet, municipalities provincial/state and federal, governments
- Native Elders, pamphlets, city halls
- Maintaining corridors for natural movements (of water, plants, animals, etc.) is not only good for ecological health but also human health
- Pursue developing narratives – their work, their value, their contribution to the solutions, for key stakeholder groups
- Excellent, transparent communication
- Community workshops: spread info on connectivity, discover opportunity / low hanging fruit, including public “buy in”
- Maps of land-use types/ ownerships: public / private, leases / dispositions, designations
- Maps that show important locations
- Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)
- Citizen science – outreach – pronghorn crossing, transboundary AB, SK, MT
- S.E. Grasslands
 - Transboundary in nature
 - Umbrella for other projects
 - Easy wins
 - Can be impacted by multiple organizations
- Story of pronghorn in AB. Focus on key stakeholders i.e. hunting groups Albert Fish and Game Association (AFGA), land holders, naturalists, municipalities, public
- Pronghorn – LN?? to Banff NP importance of linking habitat
- Pronghorn – take all the great work on pronghorn and build some communication products
- Pronghorn – promote education and awareness on movement barriers. Conservation and landowner groups can promote use of wildlife friendly fences.
- Pronghorn movement corridors
- S.E. Grasslands – The Nature Conservancy (TNC) resiliency and connectedness study
- Show landowners the context of their land. Build narrative that well-managed lands can be economic and sustainable, while still providing ecological functions.
- S.W. Fescue – info on how to construct effective highway crossing structures for predators. Info how to keep people safe with predators in their community
- Citizen science – field trip to sites to continue connection to land.
- Ecotourism – educational curriculum
- Awareness, create culture connections for youth, education curriculum
- Need to connect science piece with communication professionals. We have lots of science need next steps.
- Build culture of conservation
- Cows and Fish type demo projects

- Remnant Parkland – conserve remaining intact parcels of Native Parkland. Focus conservation programs to private lands.

Complementary Activities to Support our Work

To close out the afternoon participants shared final thoughts on complementary activities to support PCF's work.

Are there specific tools (i.e. data needs) we need to help us accomplish this work?

- ABMI – what species? Mine existing data and pull the info together. Where is the convergence and identify information gaps.
- Advocate for open data policies for all organizations.
- Government of Alberta conservation offsets. Offsets worth actual costs (has to be beyond footprint) need meaningful legislation.
- Understanding the social side of conservation – social license communicate successes and wins.
- Six (ish) applied research projects i.e. pronghorn. Humans need to be included as a species
- Cows and Fish examples of demonstration programs.

Based on the areas and projects we identified, what information and extension services (for Albertans) do you feel we need?

- We have success stories we can share with municipalities (where, why it worked)
- RMA's presentations in front of councils, tours of successes and on the ground initiatives.
- Youth – hearts and minds – educate this population (4-H, Junior Forest Wardens)
- AB Fish and Game Association – portion of the fees to go to conservation projects i.e. pronghorn crossing.

Final thoughts, questions for PCF to consider?

- Scaling up- replicate without duplication.
- Moderate resolution data on attitudes towards wildlife conservation.

Closing Remarks

Ian Dyson closed the day by providing a summary of the ideas heard throughout the day and shared how PCF will use the information going forward.