

GRASSLAND CONSERVATION

Alberta Prairie Conservation Action Plan

■ *Karen Raven, Chair*

The Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum has grown over the last 28 years, and today is comprised of some fifty member organizations. These organizations represent three levels of government, non-government organizations, industry, academia, and agricultural and environmental interest groups

The 2016-2020 is the sixth generation of the original PCAP



Photo: Dave Prescott

Transboundary Grasslands Workshop, Elkwater, AB January 19-20, 2016



WHAT ARE WE DOING – AN OVERVIEW

The Alberta Prairie Conservation Action Plan 2016-2020

1) Maintain Large Native Prairie and Parkland Landscapes

- Promote Large Landscape Conservation
- Understanding of Change Analysis and Intactness
- Minimal Disturbance and Restoration of Industrial Footprint on Native Prairie
- Encourage Stewardship among Land Managers

2) Conserve Connecting Corridors for Biodiversity

- Analysis of Location and Significance
- Build Awareness and Networking
- Promote Stewardship
- Establish Trans-boundary Connections**

Action:

- ✓ *Explore opportunities for enhanced landscape-level collaboration, confirm known landscape/species connectivity, and identify gaps and priorities. Commence by holding a workshop with Montana and Saskatchewan agencies and stakeholders to build relationships.*

3) Protect Isolated Native Habitats

- Define 'Isolated' Habitats/ Fragments
- Identify the Value or Values of these Isolated Parcels
- Define what we have



*Transboundary Grasslands Workshop,
Elkwater, AB January 19-20, 2016*



WHAT HAS WORKED WELL AND WHY”?

- Sustaining and renewing a broad network of diverse people and organizations committed to prairie conservation. There are always people who are passionate about prairie.
- A very collaborative and respectful organizational culture where everyone ensures all voices and other points of view are heard.
- It is seen as members’ roles to take on certain aspects, usually in partnership, to meet their own goals as well as the PCF goals. Engaging membership in the actual planning and input workshops on the PCAP – they have helped chart the direction.



*Transboundary Grasslands Workshop,
Elkwater, AB January 19-20, 2016*



WHAT HAS WORKED WELL AND WHY?- CONT'D

- Broad base of financial support has contributed to resiliency and sustainability.
- Five year PCAPs – a continuing, adaptive and evolving conservation blueprint for prairie and parkland conservation. Builds on past experience, allows new participants to ‘own’ the evolving conservation agenda.



WHAT HASN'T WORKED SO WELL AND WHY”?

- Several of the more complex initiatives have not ‘taken’ – where we may not have enough influence, expertise, time or sufficient focus. May also relate to individual or organizational focus that has changed or lapsed.
- Consistent engagement by the energy and ranching sectors has been challenging.
- Not being specific in our goals and linking them to measurable outcomes
- Getting our message out beyond the “choir” and being viewed as actually accomplishing measurable action on prairie conservation.



*Transboundary Grasslands Workshop,
Elkwater, AB January 19-20, 2016*



LESSONS: “MUST HAVES” & “MUST AVOID”

- Must have balanced representation, judicious and broadly-supported agenda (vast, settled landscape covered with dispositions).
- Must have committed people and enabling organizations. ‘Real’ work entails the investment of time and effort.
- Must have clear goals and involve membership in the development and implementation so everyone has ownership
- Must avoid taking eye off the ball – the conservation of native prairie and parkland ecosystems.



*Transboundary Grasslands Workshop,
Elkwater, AB January 19-20, 2016*

