

## Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum

The PCF began in 1988 and is a large voluntary coalition of stakeholder groups. Members are interested in the conservation of native prairie and parkland environments in Alberta.

### Our Vision

Ensuring that the biological diversity of native prairie and parkland ecosystems is secure under thoughtful and committed stewardship of all Albertans.

### Get Involved

The PCF holds three general meetings a year where members have the opportunity to share details of the work they are doing in the prairies/parkland of Alberta. Guest speakers provide insight on the issues surrounding the state of Alberta's grasslands.

The spring and fall meetings are held in different communities throughout the prairie/parkland regions of Alberta and include a field tour with them.

The forum is open to new members. If you would like to learn more about the PCF, please visit our website:



[www.albertapcf.org](http://www.albertapcf.org)

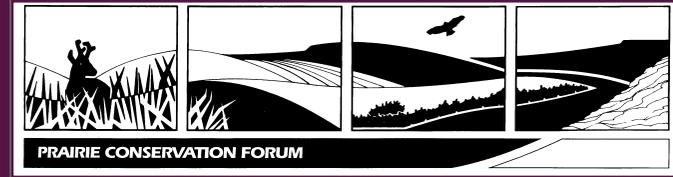
For more information please contact:

[info@albertapcf.org](mailto:info@albertapcf.org)

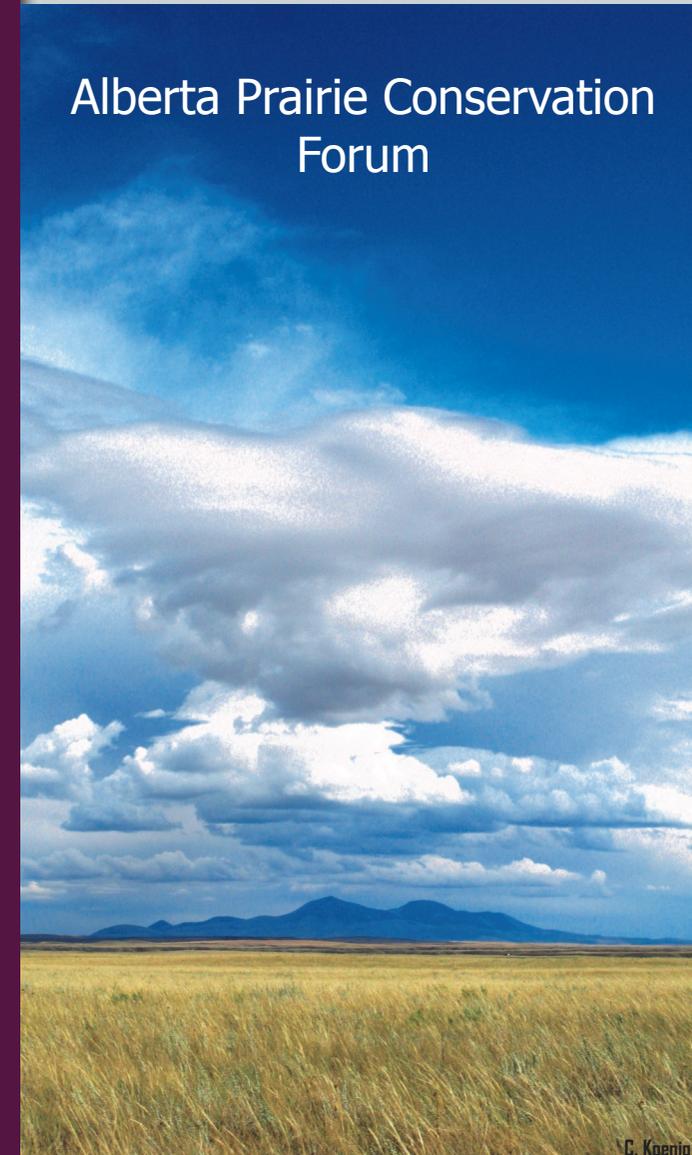
Prairie Conservation Forum  
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200—5th Ave. South  
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4L1

Or check out our home page:

[www.albertapcf.org](http://www.albertapcf.org)



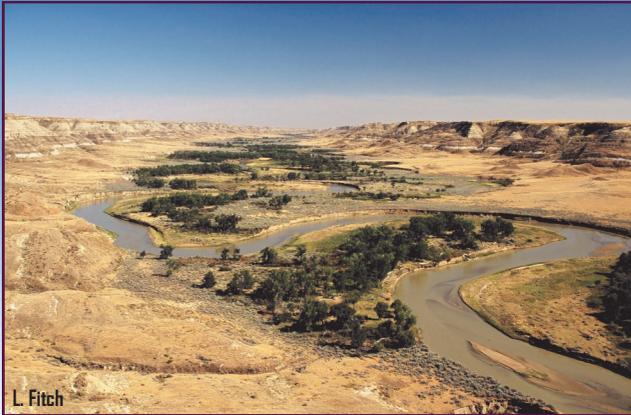
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*Is not our sense of who we are defined  
by what we experience in the places we  
live our lives?*

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# ≡ The Prairies — Our Home



**The North American prairie** is a vast landscape dominated by grasslands. In Canada, the prairie region extends from eastern Manitoba, through southern Saskatchewan, to the foothills of Alberta. The prairies are dominated by deep-rooted grasses, a variety of forbs and small shrubs, as well as taller shrubs and trees (such as cottonwoods) that can be found in moist draws and river valleys. Along its fringe, grasslands intermingle with aspen woodlands to produce the aspen parkland.

Many processes are at work on the prairies, including fire, flood, drought, grazing, decomposition, erosion, deposition, and soil disturbance. These processes, along with low annual precipitation, temperature extremes, and a drying wind continue to shape the prairies of today and add to the diversity of life that can be found here.

From a global perspective, the prairie is a relatively young ecosystem, with less variety than many others. Still, immense populations of grazing animals, including bison and pronghorn antelope, roamed it for millennia.



## A changing landscape...

When the first settlers came to the prairies, they thought of it as an inhospitable land where it would be difficult to survive. Since then, the prairie landscape has undergone many changes as people realized they could not only survive here, but thrive. Resource extraction, agricultural conversions and intensification, urban development, introduced species, climate change uncertainty, and the development of energy resources have all contributed to the uncertain future of the prairies. Ranching, an industry long important to prairie people and a system to which prairie plants have adapted over time, can also lead to habitat degradation unless it is sustainably managed. In fact, many of the largest tracts of native prairie in Alberta can be found on ranchlands, making ranching one of the most important industries in maintaining and conserving native prairie.



## Where do we go from here?

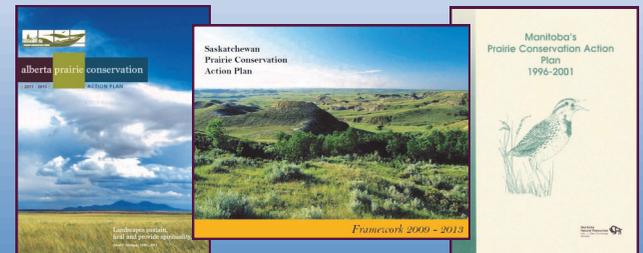
The Prairie Conservation Forum is made up of many member organizations that are committed to the conservation of Alberta's prairies and parkland. Part of this process involves working together and sharing knowledge of what work has been done, what work is currently being conducted, and what work needs to be done in the future.

**The Alberta Prairie Conservation Action Plans** (or PCAPs) are five-year blueprints aimed at prairie-wide efforts to conserve and manage native prairie species, communities, and habitats. The Forum exists to promote the Alberta PCAP and to provide an ongoing profile for prairie and parkland conservation initiatives.



Swift fox and burrowing owls, G. Court

Alberta's PCAP is linked to a larger prairie conservation strategy, with similar documents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Together, these plans promote prairie-wide conservation practices.



You can request a copy of Alberta's Action Plan by contacting the address provided on the back of this pamphlet. Alternatively, a copy of the plan can be downloaded from our website at [www.albertapcf.org](http://www.albertapcf.org).