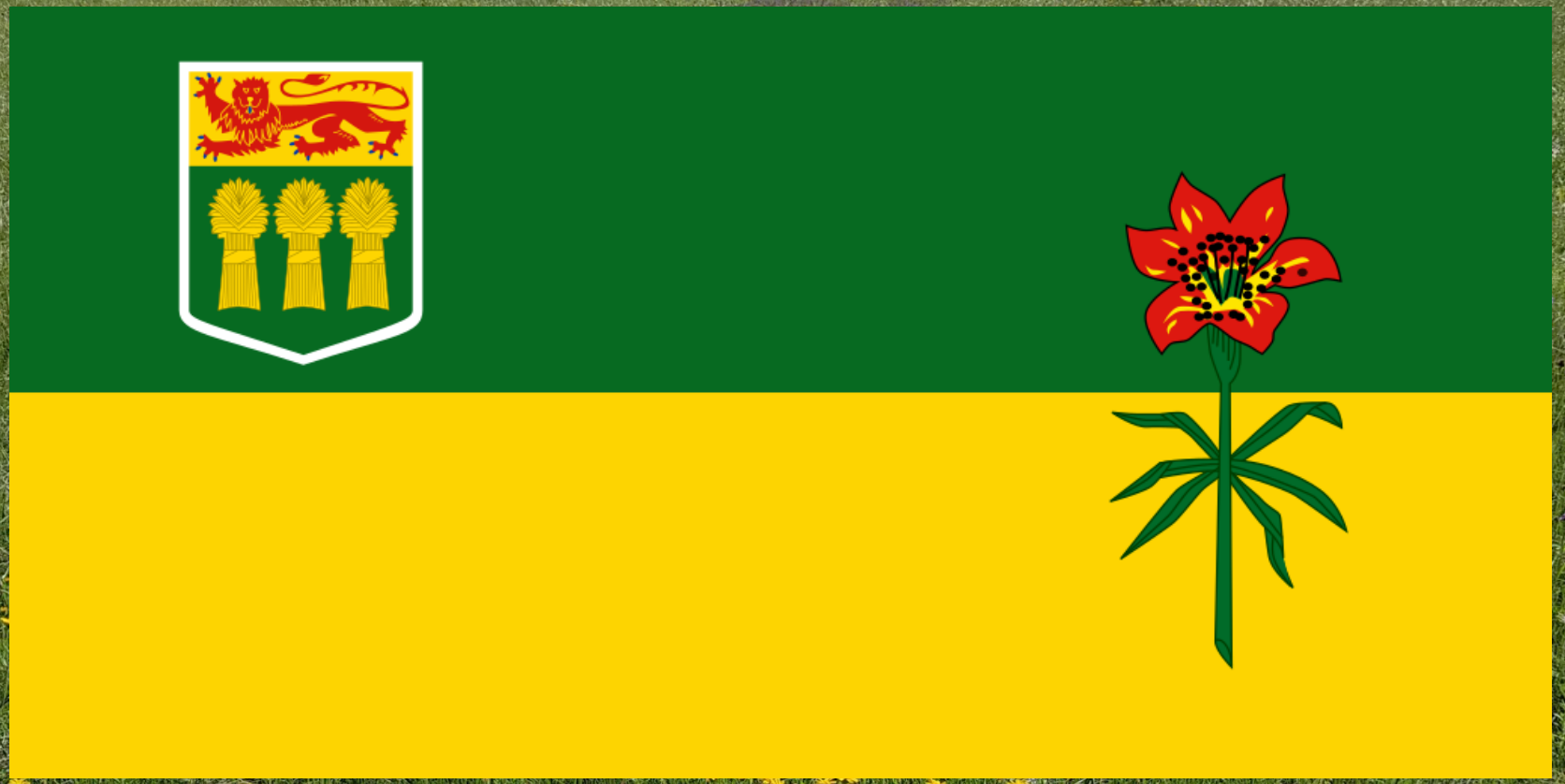
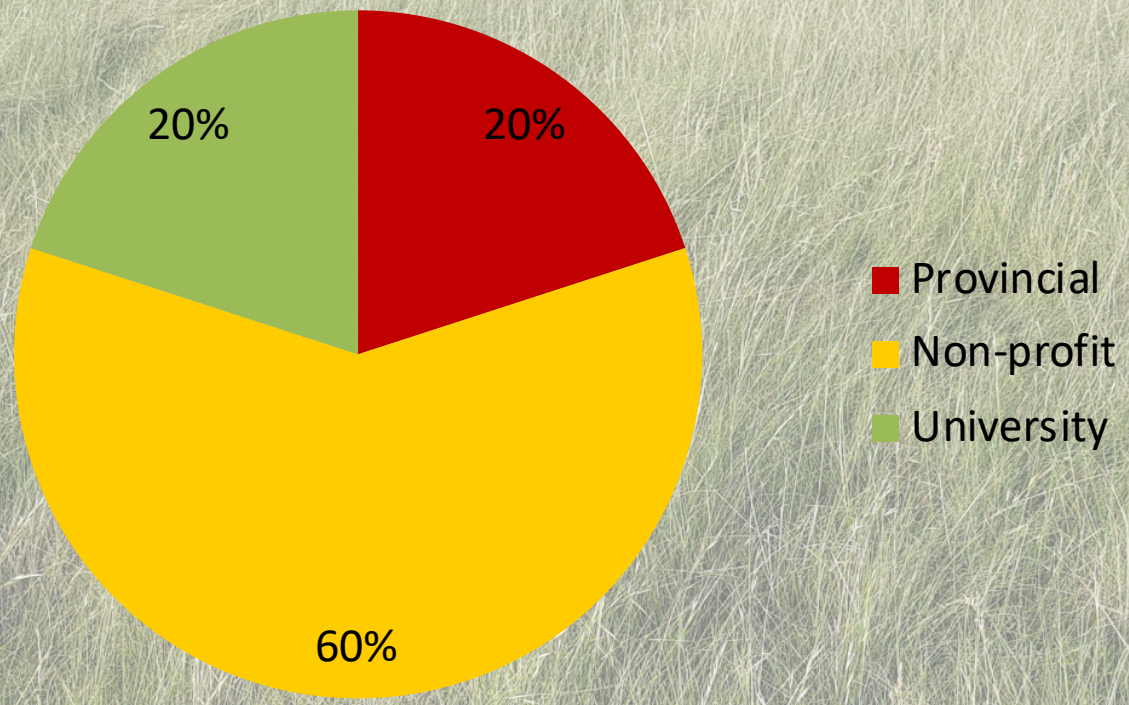
Saskatchewan



Jurisdictional Update

Online Survey

- Sent to 34 partner organizations
  - 10 responded



Geography

- Saskatchewan
  - All over southern Saskatchewan/ all grassland areas in SK
  - Southwestern Saskatchewan (Cypress Hills)
  - Parklands of SK, Central SK
  - Agricultural extent of SK, south of forest fringe
  - Saskatoon area
- Across Prairie Provinces

What's New and Exciting in 2022?

- **Ministry of Agriculture**: Improving processes to protect native prairie. Streamline approvals on protected land to provide consistent conditions on lessee developments. Increasing invasive weed awareness and control programs: One-Government Invasive Weed Initiative has been approved and a task force has been formed.
- **Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation**: Just held the first Advancing Women in Conservation Summit in Saskatoon Sask. Completed our largest land acquisition of 935 acres NW of Crystal Lake, Sk. Working on a project called Fox Point on the east side of Last Mountain Lake, saving about 11 acres of native grasslands by turning it into a wildlife habitat project.
- **Nature Saskatchewan**: Rare Plant Rescue - Habitat Conservation Through Stewardship program is celebrating 20 years of native prairie conservation for plant species at risk, and the Stewards of Saskatchewan programs now have over 1,000 program participants conserving just over 925,000 acres of grassland habitat.

What's New and Exciting in 2022?

- **Meewasin Valley Authority** : Meewasin is the lead agency for the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange. The CPPFE is working with producer groups (e.g. community pastures), landowners and conservation agencies on developing awareness, training standards, and implementing safe prescribed fires on the landscape for management purposes. This initiative covers Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Developed a 15 hr online training course.
- **Native Plant Society of SK**: 1) Large scale conservation projects are being funded. 2) Rare Plants and Ranchers program: 136,000 acres under beneficial management plans for plant species at risk. 3) South of the Divide Invasive Alien Species Strategy project includes field work, consultations and an invasive species awareness survey. 4) Return of in-person tours
- **Canadian Wildlife Federation**: Working with ranchers to protect native grasslands and verify biodiversity benefits

What's New and Exciting in 2022?

- **Nature Conservancy of Canada**: NCC's SK team capacity continues to grow– now at ~25 staff for the region.
- NCC-SK is now helping to conserve over 198,000 hectares of SK's most ecologically significant land and water. We continue to steward the lands we manage to conserve biodiversity.
- Newly developed "Working Landscapes" portfolio focuses on supporting agricultural producers and large-scale grassland managers, including pasture patron groups, to accelerate conservation in SK while maintaining grasslands as productive landscapes that support livestock grazing and ranching industry.
- As a delivery partner in the WFF's Prairie Grasslands Initiative, NCC continues to work with local ranchers & land managers to improve SAR habitat, enable wildlife movement and increase the amount of conserved land in the Prairies.
- 19 Plains Bison from the Old Man on His Back bison herd, were provided to The Key First Nation (near Norquay, SK), as part of the establishment of a Plains Bison herd.
- Outreach and engagement events, both online and on the land throughout the province.
- Field of Dreams campaign, SK residents donated their SK Government Insurance (SGI) rebate cheques to NCC, resulted in the securement of the 629-ha Lonetree Lake property in southern Saskatchewan.
- Developed a landscape-scale conservation plan for the Southwest Sandhills of Saskatchewan. Implementation of activities is underway, including working towards securement projects
- Staff continue to participate in the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange, and to build capacity for using prescribed fire as a grassland management tool throughout the prairie provinces.

What's New and Exciting in 2022?

SK Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP): 1) Indigenous engagement with our education programs, 2) Native Prairie Awareness Survey for the general public, 3) In-person workshops with partners, 4) Multi-species guide assessment is being tested by SODCAP and Meewasin Valley Authority, 5) Native Prairie Restoration/Reclamation Grant

SK PCAP Partnership:

- Update the Rangeland Health Assessment Workbook (lead by ECCC/MOA and 14 individuals on the project team)
- MOE: Prairie Landscape Inventory (MOE/UofS/ECCC) continuing into Prairie Parkland, established provincial bat working group, continuing work Habitat Management Plan for the Prairie, Boreal Plain and Boreal-Taiga shield, next step is stakeholder engagement before Minister's approval
- Living Labs –Central Prairies (South Of Divide Conservation Action Program is lead agency, with AAFC)
- GNP: 2016-2021 Report for Multi-Species at Risk Action Plan in Grasslands National Park is available and developing a new action plan
- Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds launched the Prairie Watersheds Climate Program (PWCP). It's led by the MB Association of Watersheds and SAW is delivering the program in SK. In MB and SK, there is up to $40 million in funding available to producers.
- Many are looking forward to being able to do in-person activities (tours, workshops, face-to-face chats)

Who do you connect with most?

In descending order:

- SK Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP)
- Provincial Ministries
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Nature Saskatchewan
- South of the Divide Conservation Action Program
- Researchers/Subject Matter Experts
- Federal Agencies (Canadian Wildlife Service/Parks Canada)
- Water Security Agency
- SK Stock Growers Foundation
- Birds Canada
- SK Invasive Species Council
- Local Watershed Groups
- First Nations/Buffalo Treaty
- Meewasin Valley Authority
- Central Grasslands Roadmap

Any new policy changes or funding sources?

- We have updated our Improvement Authorization Guidelines that set out activity restrictions and conditions to minimize or deny disturbance. We have also put forward a native prairie definition for approval. – **Ministry of Agriculture**
- Various grants from Environment and Climate Change Canada continue to be important for supporting the work that NCC does throughout Saskatchewan. – **Nature Conservancy of Canada**
- For the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange, the Weston Family Foundation is our main donor. – **Meewasin Valley Authority**
- Other answers included : “Not that we are aware of” x 3 and “No, but I wish there were.”

Anything else?

- Saskatchewan continues to seek ways to achieve our goal of protecting and conserving natural landscapes. – **Ministry of Agriculture**
- We are looking forward to hearing and learning about everyone's work since covid restrictions have lifted and we are looking forward to making new connections for future work. – **Nature Saskatchewan**