

Wildlife Program Agreement

Between:

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
(ASRD)

-and-

Alberta Conservation Association
(ACA)

This agreement is made pursuant to the Wildlife Regulation, AR 143/97 and the Memorandum of Understanding between ASRD and ACA dated December 8, 2006.

Program Description

The Wildlife Program supports and enhances conservation activities that retain the diversity and abundance of populations and communities of wildlife in Alberta. It includes consideration of all non-fish taxa, but has a strong focus on harvested species. The Wildlife Program includes components related to wildlife populations, their habitats, and the ecosystems that support them.

The Alberta Conservation Association's (ACA) function as a Delegated Administrative Organization (DAO) is bound by the conditions of this Program Agreement. This Agreement sets down the Wildlife Program scope, roles and responsibilities that guide the Association in its activities as a DAO of the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development. Both parties ensure that ACA is fulfilling its role in supporting and enhancing ASRD's strategic objectives through a process of strategic planning and ongoing communication. Through an annual integrated strategic planning process ACA and ASRD collaboratively identify a suite of provincial scale priorities, ASRD finalizes priorities, and ACA then selects priorities that guide ACA's rolling three-year Strategic Business Plan, and Annual Operating Plan. ACA and SRD may, through mutual consent, change agreed upon within-year priorities to respond to emergent issues. In addition to agreed upon priorities, ACA may elect to participate in activities around emergent within-year opportunities identified through consultation with its stakeholders, SRD, and the conservation community.

The ACA Wildlife Program informs and supports ASRD in ASRD's role of determination of species status; the development, communication, and implementation of species recovery or management plans; and management of consumptive and non-consumptive use and users. The Wildlife Program supports the inventory and monitoring of priority species and their habitats; the retention, enhancement of priority habitats; and the restoration and reintroduction of priority populations. Inventory and monitoring may provide a baseline for programs to

assess and monitor ecological goods and services. Through ongoing communication, ACA provides science-based information and advice to ASRD.

Program activities may include, but are not limited to, population enhancement, applied ecological studies, and understanding and facilitation of users' needs and wants. An essential element for all program components will be the monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of wildlife and habitat conservation activities.

Outcomes

The following outcomes have been identified for the Wildlife Program. These outcomes are the anticipated results of identified Wildlife Program activities and provide a basis for tracking the success of the Program. It is not the intention that all of the outcomes listed below will be achieved in one year.

- Pertinent inventory information is available for conservation of, allocation, recovery or planning for priority wildlife populations, wildlife communities and their habitats.
 - Identification of potential population and/or habitat risks and/or enhancement opportunities.
 - Identification of priority habitats for stewardship or securement.
 - Pertinent information gathered regarding attitudes as well as consumptive and non-consumptive uses of wildlife populations and habitats
 - Pertinent information regarding population status and trends for priority wildlife species
- Pertinent information is available regarding:
 - Wildlife response to specific habitat or species management activities
 - Broad land use trends and activities necessary to inform effective wildlife/landscape planning
- ACA is engaged with ASRD, stakeholders, and broader conservation community to identify important wildlife conservation issues.
- ACA has contributed to the development of priority species, landscape, and recovery plans.
- Wildlife conservation initiatives for identified priorities have been implemented (e.g., species management, habitat management, education and outreach, and research).
- Albertans, agencies and decision makers are provided with current and reliable information and biological advice on priority Wildlife Program elements.
- Applied ecological studies focused on answering questions that will evaluate and/or improve the delivery of the wildlife priorities (e.g., population limiting factors, species/habitat associations, wildlife movement patterns, and techniques to maintain or enhance landscapes and wildlife populations)
- Wildlife habitat for priority species is conserved and enhanced.

- Other ACA delegated Programs are provided with strategic direction and guidance to ensure effective linkages (e.g., Land Management, Shared Services, Communications and Outreach Programs).
- ACA and ASRD strategic and operational planning are effectively coordinated to achieve optimum long-term benefits from Wildlife Program initiatives.

Specific Program Activities

The following broad categories of activities have been identified as taking place within the framework of this Program Agreement. For each category of activities roles and responsibilities have been identified for ACA and ASRD. The roles for ASRD have been provided only to the extent that ASRD provides a critical input to an ACA activity.

Activity: Species / Population Inventory	
Description - Identify and/or monitor population size, trends and distribution for priority wildlife species (excluding annual aerial surveys).	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding * Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding	

Activity: Plan Development and Implementation	
Description - Support the development of priority wildlife species plans that will assist in species recovery and management. Implement select components of plans (e.g. Species at Risk Recovery plans, Management plans, Landscape plans)	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As determined through the strategic planning process, a member of ACA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates and leads the plan process • Coordinates the development of the plan • May elect to delegate the lead role in the plan development or implementation to ACA

<p>may sit on the planning team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide professional input to the planning process • Provides advice and data to support the development of the plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May, through the strategic planning process, accept a role in plan implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACA may support monitoring and identify opportunities for refining plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for building the plan • Minister approves the final plan • Responsible for distribution of the plan to Albertans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates implementation, monitoring and refinement of plans
---	--

Species Management and Enhancement	
<p>Description - Carry out activities to support priority population management and measure and monitor responses to those activities (e.g., productivity enhancement and reintroductions)</p>	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p>	

Activity: Aerial Ungulate Survey	
<p>Description – ACA and ASRD work in partnership to conduct aerial surveys in support of population management and allocation of ungulate/game species. This is a core, multi-year function, components of which occur every year. Given current capabilities of ACA and ASRD, it is essential to work closely together over the next five years to deliver this activity effectively. ACA and ASRD will each provide a provincial contact to coordinate annual delivery of the program</p>	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in</p>	

Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides predictable multi-year support based on core inventory needs. Secures and administers resources and staffing, including partners (i.e., ASRD) as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where agreed upon, provides technical support and advice, resources, staff participation on surveys, and may second staff to ACA to fulfill essential roles or provide expertise. • Adjusts priorities within-year as environmental, biological and social conditions dictate, while working within allocated resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within year adjustments of priorities are discussed and delivered where appropriate and feasible. • Provides a summary of results within timeframes agreed to with ASRD for resource allocation, followed by formal submission of data in an acceptable format • ACA will collaborate with ASRD to ensure current year winter aerial ungulate survey count data is available to public on external web page prior to autumn hunting season 	

Activity: Applied Research / Ecological Studies	
Description – The Wildlife Program facilitates applied research to address ecological knowledge gaps for priority species, their landscapes, and human use to aid in conservation. Research projects should focus on answering questions that support, evaluate, and/or improve the delivery of wildlife programs.	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates with ACA to identify information needs and data gaps

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates completion of applied conservation studies on priority species through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACA staff • Collaboration with university research • Contracted researchers • Develop methodology, analysis, interpretation, conclusions, and recommendations. 	
--	--

Activity: Status Assessment

Description – Inform and support the assessment and designation of the status of priority wildlife species.

ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects data and knowledge to inform status reports and 5-year general status assessment • Assist with development of detailed status reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates 5-year status assessment document • Approves and distributes status reports and manages the status assessment process • Minister assigns legal status designation to species

Activity: Habitat Inventory and Enhancement	
Description - Identify priority habitats for enhancement activities or land securement. Implement activities to support the enhancement of identified habitats	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements habitat components of species recovery, species management, and/or land management plans • Designs and delivers agreed to habitat enhancement activities necessary to achieve desired wildlife values. • Develops monitoring tools to assess effectiveness of habitat enhancements • Identifies and secures priority lands. • May complete priority habitat inventories, cumulative effects assessments or habitat risk assessments 	

Activity: Recreation Opportunities	
Description - To develop and support opportunities that enhance or maintain recreational use, habitat integrity, and user interest while encouraging current and future generations to value, enjoy, and use our biological natural resources.	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around strategic and operational planning occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement programs to meet identified ACA/ASRD priorities 	

Activity: Education Outreach	
<p>Description – Programs to inform Albertans of Wildlife Program values and activities, increase their understanding of wildlife needs and provide tools and materials necessary to achieve priority outcomes.</p>	
ACA Roles and Responsibilities	ASRD Roles and Responsibilities
<p>* Roles and Responsibilities around resourcing and protocols occur as defined in Schedule 7 of the Memorandum of Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACA and ASRD collaborate to identify key audiences, messages and timelines to support effective implementation of wildlife program elements. • Jointly encourage voluntary stewardship by Albertans by clearly communicating wildlife program needs and developing Beneficial Management Practices for priority species • Makes recommendations to other DAO Programs within ACA that may play roles in education and outreach. 	

Wildlife Performance measures

As a mechanism to track and report on activities delegated to ACA under this program agreement both parties have agreed to adopt the following performance measures. ACA assumes responsibility for tracking and reporting on these performance measures to ASRD at the conclusion of each operating year. Both parties may report on these measures to stakeholder groups as they deem appropriate.

- Participation on at least 3 plan development teams and/or working groups annually
- Over a three-year rolling term, at least 75% of agreed to aerial ungulate and game species surveys are completed; data and reports are provided. Unpredictable environmental conditions may preclude achieving this target.
- Publicly accessible reports are completed on 75% of wildlife projects undertaken within 12 months of project completion. Annual year-end up-dates are provided for ongoing projects
- All data captured and reports generated through Wildlife Program initiatives are provided to ASRD in the appropriate format annually.
- At least 75% of agreed upon projects are completed to agreed upon standards and time

Program Term

- This Agreement shall commence upon the date of signature and remain in effect until December 8, 2011.
- This Agreement is subject to annual review and may be amended from time to time as outlined in the MOU signed December 8, 2006 between ACA and ASRD.