

Alberta Conservation Association 2015/16 Project Summary Report

Project Name: Management Plan Development

Land Management Program Manager: Darren Dorge

Project Leader: Roy Schmelzeisen

Primary ACA staff on project:

Mandy Couve, Marco Fontana, John Hallett, Tyler Johns, Ed Kolodychuk, Randy Lee, Garret Mcken, Roy Schmelzeisen, Lenore Stone, Dan Sturgess, Brad Taylor, Juanna Thompson, Erin VanderMarel, Jon Van Dijk and Ken Wright

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks
Alberta Fish & Game Association
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters
Shell Canada Energy

Key Findings

- Reviewed and updated 19 management plans.
- Developed 8 new management plans for Conservation Sites acquired since 2014.

Introduction

Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) conducts various activities through the Land Management Program (LMP) aimed at conserving, protecting and enhancing wildlife and fish habitat and increasing sustainable recreational opportunities, particularly hunting and angling. We manage and maintain 346 Conservation Sites, which we have secured with the help of a variety of partners. Some of these sites are managed on behalf of the Crown, in which the original investment was made via the Buck for Wildlife Program and administered by the provincial government. On other sites, we hold sole or partial title. These sites were secured via our Habitat Securement Fund or our Corporate Partners Program, or were donated to ACA by individuals.

Management plans are essential to effectively managing our conservation assets because they define the vision, goals and features of the site and the responsibilities of project partners. Conservation Sites are managed both to provide quality habitat for wildlife species and recreational opportunities (foot access) for outdoor enthusiasts.

Once a new acquisition is secured, ACA works with partners to develop a management plan for the Conservation Site. Once finalized, ACA and our partners review and update the plan as required or on a term basis (e.g., after five years) to ensure that we are delivering on the goals and objectives identified in the plan.

Methods

The Management Plan Development project is provincially coordinated to ensure provincial standards are adhered to by LMP staff. The LMP manager and LMP regional leads are responsible for the provincial coordination of this program. Prioritizing and developing the management plans is coordinated regionally, and project staff are responsible for meeting with partners and ensuring that activities identified in the management plans are conducted. Implementation of these activities is administered through the Conservation Site Management program.

First, we prioritize Conservation Sites for management plan development as follows:

1. New acquisitions requiring a management plan
2. Sites that require extensive or immediate revisions
3. All other sites requiring updates (i.e., have not been revised within the term period)

Second, we develop management plans using the following steps:

1. ACA identifies all partners required to develop or review the management plan and meets with partners to discuss the goals, restrictions and responsibilities that will be identified in the management plan.
2. ACA writes a draft of the management plan using an ACA provincially standardized management plan template and process.
3. ACA reviews draft management plans for provincial consistency and submits draft management plans to partners for review until all partners are satisfied with the plan.
4. ACA finalizes the management plan and forwards it to partners for approval and signing.
5. ACA ensures that copies of the signed management plan are kept regionally and copies are forwarded to the appropriate government officials, partners, and to the ACA executive assistant (corporate office).

Results

We developed 8 new management plans for sites secured since 2014 (Table 1) and reviewed and updated 19 management plans (Table 2).

Table 1. Management plans developed in 2015/16 for Alberta Conservation Association Conservation Sites secured since 2014.

Site	Crown/Titled	Region
Letourneau	Titled	Northeast
North Pine Creek	Titled	Northeast
South Pine Creek	Titled	Northeast
Albright 2	Titled	Northwest
Salt Creek	Titled	Northwest
Whispering Timber	Titled	Northwest
Reinwood	Titled	Northwest
Drake	Titled	Central

Table 2. Management plans for Alberta Conservation Association Conservation Sites reviewed and updated in 2015/16.

Site	Crown/Titled	Region
Allen	Titled	Central
Larches	Titled	Central
Flatbush 7	Titled	Northeast
Sylvan Glen	Titled	Northeast
Cameron Development Corporation	Titled	Northeast
South Plain Lake	Titled	Northeast
North Fawcett 2	Titled	Northeast
Dollar Lakes	Crown	Northwest
Lac Cardinal West	Titled	Northwest
North Kamisak Lake	Titled	Northwest
East South Heart	Titled	Northwest
Rudakevich II	Titled	Northwest
Leddy	Titled	Northwest
Bull Trail	Titled	Southern
Crowsnest Lake	Titled	Southern
Frayn	Titled	Southern
Legacy	Titled	Southern
East Hays	Titled	Southern
Sentinel	Titled	Southern

Conclusions

Developing management plans is an important component of effectively managing our conservation assets. These plans enable ACA and our partners to more effectively manage the sites using a clearly defined process and with mutual intent. Management plan development is an ongoing activity. In 2016/17, we will continue to develop and update plans for Conservation Sites that we manage or own to ensure that effective and mutually agreed upon goals and objectives are administered on these lands.

Communications

- Organized and attended management plan meetings with our partners.

Photos



Tree planting plans are a component of site management plans. Photo: Garret Mcken



Management plans may identify potential site enhancements, such as planting willow stakes at Bull Trail. Photo: Julie Landry-DeBoer



Remote trail cameras can provide important wildlife information for management. Photo: Alberta Conservation Association



Often management plans identify enhancement needs for particular species, such as these saw-whet owl nest boxes. Photo: Garret Mcken



Alberta Conservation Association staff conducting a riparian health assessment to identify management needs for a site. Photo: Garret Mcken



Management of sites sometimes requires the removal of structures, such as this culvert at Reinwood. Photo: Garret Mcken



Successful tree plantings and wetland restoration on North Fawcett 2. Photo: Roy Schmelzeisen