

Alberta Conservation Association 2016/17 Project Summary Report

Project Name: Management Plan Development

Land Management Program Manager: Darren Dorge

Project Leader: Roy Schmelzeisen

Primary ACA staff on this project:

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Partnerships

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

Key Findings

- Developed 33 management plans for Conservation Sites in 2016/17.

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 355 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 Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). On other sites, we hold sole or partial title with other conservation organizations. These sites were secured via our Habitat Securement Fund or our Corporate Partners Program, or were donated to ACA by conservation-minded landowners.

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

Once a new acquisition is secured, we work with our partners to develop a management plan. Once finalized, we 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 project lead and coordinators are responsible for the provincial coordination of this program. Prioritizing and developing management plans is coordinated regionally, and project staff are responsible for meeting with partners and ensuring that activities identified in the management plans are completed (completion of these activities is administered through the Conservation Site Management project).

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

1. New acquisitions (management plan are required to be completed within one year of securement)
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 each management plan and meets with partners to discuss specific goals, restrictions and responsibilities that will be identified in the management plan.
2. ACA writes a draft management plan using an ACA provincially standardized management plan template and process.
3. ACA reviews the draft management plan for provincial consistency and submits the draft to partners for review.
4. ACA finalizes the management plan and forwards it to partners for final 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 33 management plans in 2016/17. Of these, nine were completed and signed (Table 1). The remaining plans are scheduled to be finalized in 2017/18.

Table 1 Alberta Conservation Association Conservation Sites management plans completed and signed in 2016/17.

Site	Crown/Titled	ACA Region
Albright	Titled	Northwest
Albright 2	Titled	Northwest
Cameron Development	Titled	Northeast
Kure	Crown	Central
Reinwood	Titled	Northwest
Salt Creek	Titled	Northwest
South Peavine	Titled	Northwest
Sundew	Titled	Northwest
Whispering Timber	Titled	Northwest

Table 2. Alberta Conservation Association Conservation Sites management plans drafted in 2016/17.

Site	Crown/Titled	ACA Region
Allen	Titled	Central
Beaton Wetland	Titled	Northwest
Beltz Lake	Titled	Central
Bull Trail	Titled	South
Camp Creek	Titled	Northeast
Crowsnest Lake	Titled	South
Drake	Titled	Central
East Hays	Titled	South
Faust	Titled	Northwest
Flatbush 7	Titled	Northeast
Frayn	Titled	South
Gouin	Titled	Northeast
Grantham Lake	Titled	South
Karvonen 2	Titled	Northeast
Larches	Titled	Central
Legacy	Titled	South
Letourneau	Titled	Northeast
North Long Lake	Titled	Northwest
North Star	Titled	Northwest
Ross Creek	Titled	South
Sentinel	Titled	South
South Plain Lake	Titled	Northeast
Sylvan Glen	Titled	Northeast
Walters	Titled	Central

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 Conservation Sites using a consistent and clearly defined process. Management plan development is an ongoing activity in our planning cycle. In 2017/18, we will continue to develop and update plans for Conservation Sites that we own or manage to ensure that we are effectively managing these sites to meet mutually agreed upon goals and objectives.

Communications

- Organized and attended management plan meetings with our partners.

Literature Cited

None

Photos



Plans identify site enhancements, such as this spruce planting in aspen understory at Reinwood Conservation Site. Photo: Garret Mcken



Plans capture details regarding management of important site features, such as this great blue heron rookery at Faust Conservation Site. Photo: Garret Mcken



In 2016/17, we prepared a management plan for Salt Creek, one of our new Conservation Sites. Photo: Garret Mcken



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Trail cameras provide valuable information on wildlife movements on our Conservation Sites, such as at Reinwood Conservation Site. Photo: Alberta Conservation Association trail camera



Some sites, such as South Plain Lake, are managed as pheasant release sites. Photo: Allie Olson