

Alberta Conservation Association 2017-18 Project Summary Report

Project name: Management Plan Development

Land Management Program Manager: Darren Dorge

Project Leader: Roy Schmelzeisen

Primary ACA staff on this project: Mandy Couve, Stefanie Fenson, Marco Fontana, Jeff Forsyth, John Hallett, Tyler Johns, Hillary Keyes, Ed Kolodychuk, Garret McKen, Sue Peters, Roy Schmelzeisen, Dan Sturgess, Stephen Nadworny, Jon Van Dijk, Erin VanderMarel, Wanda Watts, and Ken Wright

Partnerships

- Alberta Environment and Parks
- Alberta Fish & Game Association
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Shell Canada Energy
- Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters
- Wild Elk Federation
- Nature Conservancy of Canada

Key findings

- Completed 38 conservation site management plans in 2017/18.

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. In the LMP, ACA manages and maintains over 210,000 acres of habitat in collaboration with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and other conservation 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. On other sites, we hold sole or partial title with other conservation organizations. Conservation Sites are secured by collaborating with various partners, our Habitat Securement Fund, Corporate Partners, or were donated to ACA by conservation-minded landowners.

Management plans are essential to effectively managing 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 ensure quality habitat for wildlife species and foot-access recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts.

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

Methods

The Management Plan Development (MPD) Project is provincially coordinated to ensure provincial standards are adhered to by LMP staff. The LMP manager, LMP project lead, and coordinators are responsible for provincial coordination of this program. Prioritizing and developing management plans is coordinated regionally with project staff being responsible for meeting with partners and to ensure activities identified in management plans are completed (completion of these activities is administered through the Conservation Site Management Project).

First, we prioritize conservation sites for management plan development 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 draft management plans for provincial consistency and submits draft management plans to partners for review.
4. ACA finalizes management plan and forwards 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 completed 38 management plans in 2017/18.

Table 1. ACA Conservation Sites Management Plans completed in 2017/18.

Site	Crown/Titled	Region
Allen	Titled	Central
Beaton Wetland	Titled	Northwest
Beltz Lake	Titled	Central
Bull Trail	Titled	South
Cameron Development Corporation	Titled	Northeast
Camp Creek	Titled	Northeast
Coulson	Titled	Central
Crowsnest Lake	Titled	South
Drake	Titled	Central
East Hays	Titled	South
Escape Coulee	Titled	South
Faust	Titled	Northwest
Flatbush 7	Titled	Northeast
Frayn	Titled	South
Golden Ranches	Titled	Northeast
Gouin	Titled	Northeast
Karvonen	Titled	Northeast
Karvonen 2	Titled	Northeast
Larches	Titled	Central
Legacy	Titled	South
Letourneau	Titled	Northeast
Link	Titled	Central
North Long Lake	Titled	Northwest
North Pine Creek	Titled	Northeast
Ross Creek	Titled	South
Sheerschmidt	Titled	Central
Sentinel	Titled	South
Silver Sage	Titled	South
South Plain Lake	Titled	Northeast
Sylvan Glen	Titled	Northeast
Timber Ridge	Titled	South
Walters	Titled	Central
Warrensville	Titled	Northwest
West Neerlandia	Titled	Northeast

Wild Rose	Titled	South
Winagami Northeast	Titled	Northwest
Winagami Southwest 2	Titled	Northwest
Wolters	Titled	Northwest

Conclusion

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 2018/19, we will continue to develop and update plans for sites that we own or manage to ensure that effective and mutually agreed upon goals and objectives are administered on these lands.

Communications

- Collaborated with project partners to determine roles and responsibilities, and development of management and habitat objectives for management plans on various conservation sites.
- Continued negotiations with Alberta Environment and Parks to determine requirements for management plans and prioritization of Crown conservation sites. .

Photos



Crop field on Camp Creek Conservation Site. Photo: Hillary Keyes.



Waterbody on Gouin Conservation Site. Photo: Roy Schmelzeisen.



Great blue heron with young at Faust Conservation Site. Photo: Garret McKen



Wetland at Little Burnt River Conservation Site. Photo: Garret McKen



Mule deer at Wild Rose Conservation Site. Photo: Tyler Johns



Riparian area along Ketchum Creek – Silver Sage Conservation Site.
Photo: Brad Taylor



Raven River flowing through Drake Conservation Site. Photo: Erin VanderMarel