



STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN 2006-2009

ALBERTA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



Conservation Through Collaboration

2006 – 2009

Strategic Business Plan



Established in 1997, ACA is a non-profit, non-government association working collaboratively to conserve and enhance Alberta's wildlife, fisheries and habitat.

ACA MEMBER GROUPS:

- Alberta Fish and Game Association
- Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association
- Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
- Alberta Trappers Association
- Federation of Alberta Naturalists
- Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
- Trout Unlimited Canada

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Don Pike

At ACA...

Conservation means sustainable use.

When we refer to natural biological resources we mean fish, habitat and wildlife.

At ACA...

Stewardship is our commitment to taking care of, and taking responsibility for, our natural biological resources.

MESSAGE FROM THE

Chairman

Following the objectives and strategies outlined in our 2006 – 2009 Strategic Business Plan will position ACA as an integral catalyst in the conservation community. Our aim is to focus the energies and resources of a wide variety of partners and stakeholders, allowing Alberta to emerge as a leader in biological resource conservation. Through collaborative partnerships, ACA will be more effective and will be able to enhance conservation efforts in a number of ways. Through these actions, important habitats throughout the province will be preserved, species and population levels will persist and a diverse array of recreational opportunities will be maintained.

OUR MISSION

ACA will work to conserve, protect and enhance our natural biological resources.

OUR VISION

An Alberta where there is good stewardship of our natural biological resources, where habitats are maintained and improved, where people work together so that future generations can value, enjoy and use those resources.

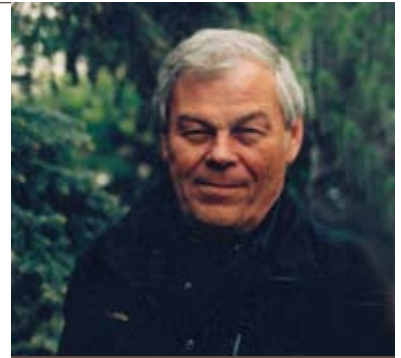
MESSAGE FROM THE

Managing Director

Alberta's prosperous resource extraction industry, increasing population and growing infrastructure place enormous pressures on the province's natural biological resources. This presents a number of conservation challenges. At ACA we recognize these challenges and are committed to working with other organizations to solve these challenges.

Our unique status as a delegated administrative organization allows us to work collaboratively with the Ministry of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, supporting their management of Alberta's wildlife and fish resources. We also work closely with conservation organizations, industry, corporate and other government stakeholders; we believe the success of conservation in Alberta depends on the cooperation of these groups. By acting as a catalyst, ACA plays a role in focusing the efforts of these groups toward specific challenges and by facilitating these efforts, has a greater impact on conservation.

At ACA we embrace the pursuit of excellence and continuous improvement. Our 2006 – 2009 Strategic Business Plan emphasizes our focus on The Resource. A longer-term program focus and strategies with specific targets guide us towards the achievement of our goals.



Steven Hull



Why A Strategic Business Plan?

The strategic business planning process is part of a continuous cycle that involves planning, implementing, assessing results and realigning the Strategic Business Plan. While intended to be a three-year outlook, ACA's plan is refined and updated annually. Strategic business planning is a dynamic business process that sets the guidelines for ACA's Annual Operating Plan. The Annual Operating Plan identifies how we will achieve the objectives outlined in the Strategic Business Plan.

ACA's Strategic Business Plan was developed with input from ACA's Board of Directors, conservation partners and ACA employees. The strategies and effectiveness measures contained in this plan are designed to move us towards achieving our mission and vision. ACA is committed to performance and results in all areas of our business (The Resource, Financial, Learning and Growth, Internal Business Processes and Stakeholder). We will achieve our vision by pursuing critical success factors in each of these areas.

Core Values

AT ACA WE MODEL AND PROMOTE:

Collaboration

We work closely with each other as well as with our partners to positively impact Alberta's natural biological resources.

Integrity

We maintain high ethical standards in everything we do. We are truthful, keep our promises and deliver on our commitments.

Excellence

We work to achieve the highest standards in everything we do.

Innovation

We strive to overcome new challenges and continually find new ways to improve.

Accountability

We are all responsible for our results and effectiveness toward conservation in Alberta and will accept responsibility for our actions.

Respect

We value the differences and similarities of our employees, partners and stakeholders. We strive to treat both our people and The Resource with the dignity they deserve.





CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges and Opportunities

As part of the strategic planning process, we annually review the challenges facing ACA and our progress to date, while looking for opportunities these challenges create for ACA that result in refined strategies.

For this 2006 – 2009 planning period, we will focus on these opportunities and challenges:

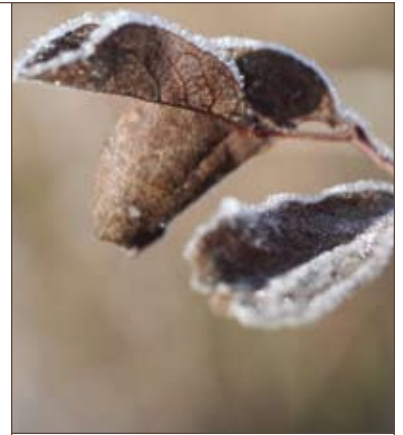
- Alberta's globally-unique landscapes and abundance of natural resources are a challenge in that so many stakeholders have interest on the same land base. The economic power created by this abundance provides an opportunity to coordinate the significant financial and political resources involved in conservation efforts in Alberta.
- A significant number of conservation entities and initiatives are already established in the conservation movement in Alberta. This poses a challenge and an opportunity for ACA to play an active role in ensuring their efforts are coordinated, by fostering a collaborative approach to conservation.
- Enhance the level of awareness and understanding of conservation issues within Alberta to promote the use, protection and enhancement of natural habitats and biological populations.
- Enhance, sustain and promote the conservation paradigm of hunters and anglers as the backbone of successful natural biological resource stewardship.
- Rigorously monitor and manage ACA's performance by identifying specific effectiveness measures and targets in each of our Perspectives, thereby enhancing our accountability and improving our impact on conservation.
- Continue to enhance our working relationship with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development through renegotiation of our program agreements, fostering collaboration and mutual support.
- Enhance the financial resources available to ACA, increasing our ability to work towards our vision.
- Embrace and maintain a high-performance organizational culture where learning, continuous improvement and employee engagement are paramount.

Our Operating Environment

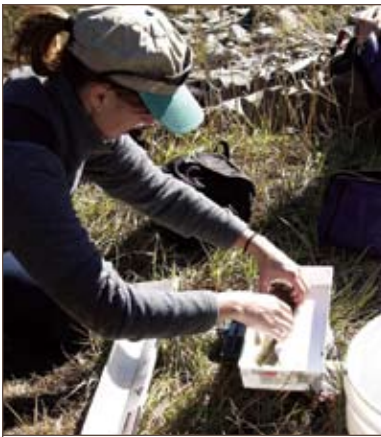
ACA is committed to managing its business by selecting a combination of the most efficient and effective practices, utilizing appropriate technologies, self-directed work teams and employee involvement. Our employees are empowered to make decisions and are accountable for their areas of responsibility rather than relying on central control. Financially, ACA will diligently manage costs and pursue innovative revenue generating strategies while maintaining scientific credibility and excellence as cornerstones in the services we deliver. ACA also encourages open and effective communications about our business and future strategies among the Board, management, employees and stakeholders.

OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

ACA is committed to meeting the needs of its stakeholders. We strive to provide benefits to Albertans by developing and delivering programs aimed at positively impacting conservation in Alberta. ACA's conservation initiatives benefit a wide variety of interest groups that includes: hunters and anglers, Alberta government, the federal government, local governments, academia, industry, landowners, conservation organizations and the citizens of Alberta. ACA believes in collaboration, where mutually agreed priorities are developed within the framework of our Strategic Business Plan, and help us improve our ability to positively affect conservation in Alberta.



OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT



CONSERVATION PROGRAMMING

Conservation Programming

Conservation programs delivered by ACA are categorized into three major areas: Fisheries, Habitat and Wildlife. Providing conservation services in these areas is the core of our business, which includes responsibilities delegated to ACA by the Government of Alberta. Within these three focal areas, we report on the results and achievements towards the “bottom line” – impacting conservation of Alberta’s fisheries, habitat and wildlife resources.

ACA’s operations are committed to achieving scientific excellence. This goal will be achieved by applying the highest standards of scientific rigor, transparency and accountability to all our programs. As a result, ACA will continue to: (i) develop and apply rigorous processes to review and prioritize focal program areas and project reports; (ii) promote the use of stringent study designs and methods; and (iii) communicate study findings to a broad suite of stakeholders, including the scientific community. Our continued commitment to scientific excellence, collaboration, accountability, credibility and innovation will foster an improved understanding of, and respect for, ACA as a dedicated group of highly-competent conservation professionals.

Several key strategies are applicable to all of our Conservation Programming.

Strategies:

- Analyze data to provide a defensible scientific base for conservation actions.
- Use collected data to focus discussions on conservation issues.
- Adopt or create decision support resources to identify trends in the abundance and distribution of Alberta’s wildlife and fish resources.
- Review focal wildlife and fish inventory methods and study designs.
- Develop innovative archiving and retrieval systems for ACA reports.
- Improve the flow of scientific information to policy makers, resource managers and other stakeholders.
- Maintain an internal Project Review Team to critically review select ACA projects.
- Enhance employee training and development to strengthen our scientific knowledge base and capabilities.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Continue to implement project planning and review processes to ensure ACA projects are scientifically rigorous and that they deliver key results.
- Complete reviews of select study designs and inventory methods used within ACA's three program areas.
- Develop and apply ecological criteria and indicators to guide ACA's habitat securement initiatives.
- Complete and distribute 120 individual ACA conservation reports to policy makers, resource managers and other stakeholders.
- Publish the results of 10 ACA conservation projects in peer reviewed scientific journals.
- Implement ACA's conservation report review and archiving processes.

COOPERATION WITH ALBERTA SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Responsibilities delegated to ACA by the Government of Alberta are delivered through the fisheries, habitat and wildlife program areas. ACA has special status as a delegated administrative organization (DAO), which means that ACA has accepted responsibilities to support the enhancement and management of Alberta's wildlife and fish resources as outlined in legislation and defined in a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD). ACA works with the Ministry, particularly the Fish and Wildlife Division, in developing ACA program priorities that best serve Alberta's natural biological resources. ACA is committed to providing resource managers with the most relevant, credible and timely information possible, thereby contributing to the success of the Ministry.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

The MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities for the Alberta Conservation Association and ASRD in relation to a number of common activities and includes a process for the development of specific Program Agreements. These Program Agreements will be renegotiated over the next fiscal year with a focus on further defining the role of ACA and the Minister's expectations. The current Program Agreements specify each organization's roles and responsibilities with respect to program planning, implementation and reporting.





CONSERVATION PROGRAMMING

- **Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Development Program Agreement**
Secures, enhances, creates and manages wildlife and fish habitat for the purpose of maintaining its diversity and quality throughout Alberta. The Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Development Programs are reliant on the Fisheries and Wildlife Management Enhancement Programs, respectively, to provide guidance to the planning and successful implementation of Habitat Programming.
- **Wildlife Management Enhancement Program Agreement**
The Wildlife Management Enhancement Program supports and enhances wildlife management programs that retain the diversity and abundance of wildlife populations throughout Alberta.
- **Fisheries Management Enhancement Program Agreement**
Supports and enhances fisheries management programs that retain the diversity and abundance of fish populations throughout Alberta. For the purposes of this document “fisheries” includes all fish and their habitat.
- **Waterfowl Crop Damage Prevention Program Agreement**
This program provides assistance to agricultural producers throughout the province in preventing waterfowl depredation losses to unharvested crops. This program is cost-shared equally with Environment Canada. The Waterfowl Crop Damage Prevention Program is complementary to the Waterfowl Damage Compensation Program that is cost-shared between the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and delivered in Alberta by the AFSC. The Waterfowl Damage Prevention Program and the compensation program, in combination, are directly related to agricultural producer willingness to participate in waterfowl habitat initiatives undertaken by ACA, ASRD, or other entities such as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.
- **Wildlife Predator Compensation Program Agreement**
The purpose of the Wildlife Predator Compensation Program is to provide Alberta livestock producers partial reimbursement for losses or injury to specified livestock (domestic cow, domestic sheep, domestic swine, domestic goat and domestic bison) as a result of predation by wolves, cougar, grizzly bear, black bear or eagles.
- **Shot Livestock Program Agreement**
The purpose of the Shot Livestock Compensation Program is to provide Alberta livestock producers partial reimbursement for losses or injury to specified livestock (domestic cow, domestic sheep, domestic swine,

domestic goat, domestic bison and domestic horse) as a result of being shot by another person during an open big game or bird game hunting season.

- **Enhanced Fish Stocking Program Agreement**

The Enhanced Fish Stocking Program will provide Alberta anglers with increased opportunity to catch and, wherever possible, creel more fish while maintaining the integrity of Alberta's natural waters and fish populations.

- **Report A Poacher Program Agreement**

The purpose of the Report A Poacher (RAP) Program is to provide Albertans with an opportunity to participate in the detection and apprehension of resource law violations. In addition, the RAP Program will promote the value and importance of conserving Alberta's native flora and fauna, and of ensuring compliance with wildlife and fish legislation. The RAP program will respond to opportunities to promote the positive image of resource users.

- **Information and Communication Program Agreement**

Both ASRD and ACA will maintain their own independent Information & Communication programs. ACA and ASRD will independently plan, fund and implement their annual communications plans in accordance with their individual annual operating plans. A regular communication process will be established between ACA and ASRD to identify if any mutually beneficial communication opportunities can be worked on cooperatively on a project by project basis.

- **Shared Services Program Agreement**

This agreement outlines the processes to ensure the cooperative sharing of resources as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) referenced above in which the Minister has agreed to make all reasonable efforts to assist the ACA with facilities, services, information technology and data as specified under the Program Agreements. The Minister has also agreed to assist ACA by sharing the resources and services of the Department where possible, and to assist in securing the necessary assistance from other agencies, organizations and other government departments.





FISHERIES

Fisheries

ACA's Fisheries Program is designed to implement fish conservation efforts in an effective, credible and collaborative manner that will sustain or improve Alberta's fish populations. We view conservation as the sustainable and responsible participation in the social and consumptive use of fish and aquatic resources, while realizing the importance of protecting healthy ecosystems.

Recognizing the importance of different spatial scales and processes that sustain healthy ecosystems, we have identified seven priority landscapes or aquatic resource types representing rivers and streams in the northeast and southern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, the prairie-parkland, boreal regions, the entire Milk River drainage, and lakes within the boreal and prairie-parkland regions. Additionally, critical threats and stressors for each of these priorities have been identified.

The following are the strategies, actions and effectiveness measures that make up the essential core of ACA's Fisheries Program. We consider the strategies and actions below to be essential to the development and delivery of a fisheries program that both meets our responsibilities as a delegated administrative organization and meets our stakeholders' expectations.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Provide timely and accurate information describing the abundance, structure and use of aquatic habitats by select fish populations.

Strategies:

- Determine existing information that can be used to evaluate the health of focal species by 2007.
- Adopt or develop a suite of population metrics capable of describing the health of select fish species by 2007.
- Design sampling protocols in priority waterbodies to describe the health of select fish species by 2007.
- Collect data, analyze and report on population health of focal species in select waterbodies annually.

- Maintain and enhance population health of focal species within select waterbodies.
- Collaboratively develop reporting standards for stock assessment and monitoring assessments.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Identify and apply the suite of metrics to quantify the health of fish populations in 15 select waterbodies by 2009.
- Information is provided to appropriate resource managers or land-use planners on a timely basis.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Determine the level of watershed fragmentation and sedimentation caused by stream crossings in select drainages and collaboratively develop remediation plans to diminish these effects.

Strategies:

- Determine the percent of linear watershed fragmented by road-stream crossings and velocity barriers in select watersheds.
- Facilitate the collaborative development and implementation of remediation plans for the identified barriers with major stakeholders.
- Assess the potential for identified stream crossings to convey sediment to intersecting streams.
- Facilitate the collaborative development and implementation of remediation plans for identified sediment sources in collaboration with major stakeholders.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Crossing density, locations, percent-linear fragmentation and sedimentation risk are reported in 10 select watersheds by 2009.
- Participate in meetings between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, Alberta Environment, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and other regulatory organizations to restore connectivity of stream habitats.
- Watershed crossing information given to stakeholder groups annually.





FISHERIES

OBJECTIVE 3:

Describe and monitor levels of angler use, harvest and demographics on select waterbodies.

Strategies:

- On an annual basis, collect and provide information quantifying angler use and harvest at select fisheries.
- Provide information to support innovative strategies that minimize the impacts of angler use.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Levels of angler use and harvest are quantified at 15 select fisheries and are reported to resource managers and other stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Develop a suite of watershed assessment indicators and report on overall disturbance of watersheds.

Strategies:

- Report on a suite of indicators including fish-habitat fragmentation to describe watershed condition.
- Work collaboratively to develop strategies to diminish or eliminate specific threats to watersheds.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Specific factors affecting watershed conditions are identified and reported.
- Report the results of watershed assessments annually.
- Strategies to diminish impacts on watersheds are collaboratively developed and implemented and communicated to a suite of stakeholders annually.

Habitat

ACA's Habitat Program is committed to maintaining or increasing habitat for priority species or populations that are habitat limited and to provide sustainable recreational opportunities. Alberta's fish and wildlife rely on a diversity of habitats, and ACA's Habitat Program works collaboratively with many conservation agencies and individuals to promote habitat stewardship. Our Habitat Program is designed to be orientated towards providing on-the-ground enhancements that provide habitat for numerous wildlife and fish populations. Programs are delivered in an effective, credible and collaborative manner and are delivered to meet our vision.

The following are the strategies, actions and effectiveness measures that make up the essential core of ACA's Habitat Program. We consider the strategies and actions below to be essential to the development and delivery of a habitat program that both meets our responsibilities as a delegated administrative organization and meets our stakeholders' expectations.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Collaborate with private landowners, government, industry and other stakeholders to maintain, enhance and protect priority riparian habitats.

Strategies:

- Continue to develop, implement and deliver a provincially standardized riparian program that identifies priority areas, tools and monitoring protocol to be used.
- Collaborate with land managers and key stakeholders to develop key alliances.
- Implement riparian programs within priority areas in each Business Unit.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Collaborative partnerships to foster conservation of riparian areas are established with at least five other organizations.



HABITAT



HABITAT

- The area of riparian habitats protected and enhanced is increased by 20% by 2009.
- Provincial Riparian Conservation Program is developed.
- 15 riparian enhancement projects are delivered in priority areas throughout Alberta.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Implement and adaptively manage a habitat program that maintains and restores the health of ungulate winter range in priority watersheds.

Strategies:

- Develop ecosystem management plans for priority planning units in each Business Unit.
- Work with partner groups to achieve habitat maintenance or enhancement goals.
- Collect relevant baseline and post-treatment information to evaluate the effects of habitat manipulations on a suite of species, including ungulates.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Ecosystem plans are developed for one to three planning units in each Business Unit.
- GIS-produced baseline information is collected and analyzed for all treatments.
- Baseline information is collected for one-third of all proposed treatments.
- Apply an average of at least four management treatments each year.

OBJECTIVE 3:

To maintain, protect and enhance priority grassland habitats in Alberta through the development and implementation of habitat conservation initiatives.

Strategies:

- Continue to develop and implement a provincially standardized grassland program.
- Collaborate with land managers and other conservation organizations.
- Deliver standardized grassland programs within priority areas in target Business Units.

- Work with landowners and Public Lands to develop habitat strategies for multiple species for 25% of the high-priority areas within the Multi-species Landscape Level Stewardship Program (MULTISAR) program area.
- Develop a landowner stewardship guide to conserve habitat for species at risk.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Provincial grassland conservation program developed and implemented.
- Partnerships provide 33% of the costs to grassland conservation programs. Habitat conservation strategies developed for 25% of the high-priority areas.
- Stewardship guide developed and distributed to landowners.
- Enhancements completed through MULTISAR by ACA and other conservation organizations.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Secure, develop, protect and maintain high-priority wildlife and fisheries habitats and habitats that provide recreational opportunities.

Strategies:

- Continue to implement strategies to secure, develop, protect and maintain priority habitats.
- Collaborate with other habitat conservation organizations in target areas.
- Review a suite of land-access programs used elsewhere in North America.
- Ensure historical Buck for Wildlife programs and projects that fall within target areas are managed effectively and efficiently.
- Develop and implement a lake aeration program using standards protocols.
- Develop, maintain and monitor priority fish-access sites.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Partnerships provide 50% of funds to complete land acquisitions and five new partnerships are secured to support projects within the habitat program.
- Habitats in priority target areas are secured, protected and maintained.
- Land-access programs in other jurisdictions are examined and evaluated.



HABITAT



HABITAT

- Criteria are developed and implemented to increase the effectiveness and cost efficiency of the lake aeration program.

OBJECTIVE 5:

Manage, monitor and maintain ACA habitat conservation assets associated with former Buck for Wildlife crown properties and clarify expectations related to specific crown properties and water control structures that would be beneficial for ACA to continue to manage or maintain.

Strategies:

- Continue to collaboratively identify priority and non-priority properties and projects.
- Clarify expectations related to specific crown properties and water control structures that would be beneficial for ACA to continue to manage or maintain.
- Obtain management authority on priority Buck for Wildlife crown properties.
- Divest management responsibilities for non-priority crown properties.
- Outline responsibilities associated with properties and projects within ACA's purview, including the development of property management plans.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Properties and structures of little conservation value are divested from ACA.
- Management plans for each property and structure are developed.
- Priority habitats are monitored, managed and enhanced.
- Implement a land-use referral system.

OBJECTIVE 6:

Lead the formation and implementation of the Alberta Habitat Conservation Working Group to address habitat conservation issues in Alberta.

Strategies:

- Form the Alberta Habitat Conservation Working Group.
- Form sub-working groups within the Alberta Habitat Conservation Working Group to address focal habitat issues, including riparian habitat programs, habitat securement programs, habitat enhancement programs, and the development of habitat conservation policies.

Effectiveness Measures:

- The Alberta Habitat Conservation Working Group is formed and develops a strategic action plan.
- Sub-working groups are formed to address specific habitat program challenges.
- Formation of the Alberta Habitat Conservation Working Group results in detectable improvements in the delivery, efficiency and effectiveness of habitat programs in Alberta.

OBJECTIVE 7:

To maintain, enhance and restore habitats identified in Minister approved species at risk recovery plans.

Strategies:

- Identify additional lakes where piping plover nesting and fledging success are impacted by land-use practices.
- Undertake stewardship activities with landowners on 75% of priority lakes to assist with the recovery of piping plover.
- Assess environmental threats to leopard frog and identify management opportunities at priority sites.
- Contact landowners to seek opportunities to enhance survival of leopard frogs.
- Carry out MULTISAR to benefit a number of species at risk.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Identify and prioritize lakes where conservation activities for piping plovers are required.
- Work cooperatively with landowners to reduce the impact of livestock grazing on piping plovers on at least 75% of priority lakes by 2008.
- Stewardship activities have decreased the number of piping plover nests lost as a result of grazing activities.
- At least four key lakes have had all livestock grazing concerns addressed.
- Habitat enhancement activities are completed at two to four priority leopard frog sites.



HABITAT



WILDLIFE

Wildlife

ACA's Wildlife Program is designed to enhance the sustainability of wildlife species through science-based conservation. Our focus will be on four thematic areas, including ungulates, upland game birds, waterfowl and species at risk. Our objectives are prioritized at the provincial scale within the following five activities: (i) Identification of Wildlife Conservation Priorities; (ii) Population Inventory and Assessment; (iii) Applied Ecological Studies; (iv) Recreational Opportunities; and (v) Species at Risk Recovery Plan Support and Implementation. Pivotal steps in our program development are timely discussions with external experts and stakeholders to gain insight and build opportunities for collaboration.

The following are the strategies, actions and effectiveness measures that make up the essential core of ACA's Wildlife Program. We recognize these strategies and actions to be essential to the development and delivery of a wildlife program that both meets our responsibilities as a delegated administrative organization and meets our stakeholders' expectations.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Facilitate the identification and prioritization of wildlife knowledge gaps and conservation needs in Alberta through collaboration with experts and stakeholders.

Strategies:

- Facilitate external working groups for select program themes to identify key information needs, provide recommendations for conservation and provide avenues for collaboration.
- Foster knowledge transfer from jurisdictions and experts around the world through participation in transboundary working groups and symposiums focused on ACA's wildlife focal themes.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Cooperatively assist with the development of Alberta working groups for each focal theme (e.g. upland game birds, ungulates, waterfowl and species at risk) by March 2007.
- Participate in at least one transboundary working group for each focal theme.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Collect and interpret population data on select wildlife species using systematic monitoring methods.

Strategies:

- Support the completion of provincial wildlife inventories through the Aerial Ungulate Survey Program.
- Develop systematic habitat-based inventory tools for 1) sharp-tailed grouse, and 2) moose.
- Monitor waterfowl populations on Hay-Zama wetland complex.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Final reports summarizing the aerial ungulate inventory survey are delivered to ACA's Provincial Wildlife Team by March of each year.
- Interim reports summarizing sharp-tailed grouse and moose inventory results for pilot areas are produced by March 2007.
- Conditions for wildlife set by Alberta Energy and Utilities Board for oil and gas operations on Hay-Zama wetland complex are met.
- Summary of detailed survey results is delivered to the Hay-Zama Committee to support the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with select industries.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Develop monitoring and evaluation tools to quantify the benefits of habitat enhancement activities.

Strategies:

- Assess the effectiveness of using fecal hormone levels as an indicator of population condition.
- Evaluate whether fecal hormone levels can be used as a cost-effective method to monitor the benefits of winter habitat restoration for ungulates.

Effectiveness Measures:

- The results of the fecal hormone study are published in a peer reviewed journal by 2009.



WILDLIFE



WILDLIFE

OBJECTIVE 4:

Complete applied conservation studies on the status, movement patterns and ecology of priority species.

Strategies:

- Identify 1) the benefit of nest boxes for two cavity-nesting ducks, 2) implications for other duck species from heightened competition, and 3) population trends of select waterfowl in Buffalo Lake Moraine.
- Evaluate occupancy and nest success of mallard-nesting tunnels.
- Identify key life stage values for Yarrow-Castle bighorn sheep population. Explore opportunity to develop resource selection function models for Bighorn sheep in collaboration with Glacier National Park.
- Derive habitat selection models for pronghorn antelope within agricultural, native prairie and mixed habitats within the grassland natural region

Effectiveness Measures:

- Year-one occupancy and nest success from nest tunnels are quantified.
- Results are reported in ACA's magazine by March 2008.
- Results of applied studies presented at wildlife conferences and submitted to peer-reviewed journals.

OBJECTIVE 5:

Develop and support opportunities to enhance consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife related recreational experiences for all Albertans.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with Alberta Community Development to assess the impacts of off-highway vehicles on wildlife populations, with a focus on ungulates and upland game birds.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Results delivered to Alberta Community Development to aid in the development of off-highway vehicle use policies that benefit wildlife conservation.

OBJECTIVE 6:

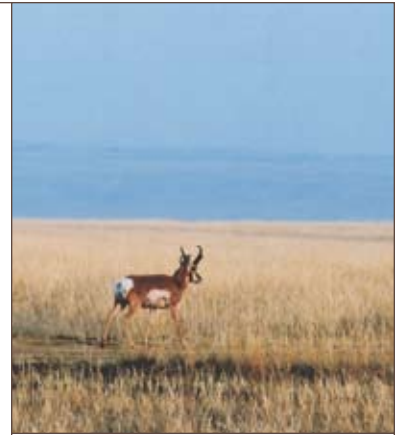
Support the development of Provincial and National recovery teams, and assist with the implementation of recovery actions for species with approved recovery plans.

Strategies:

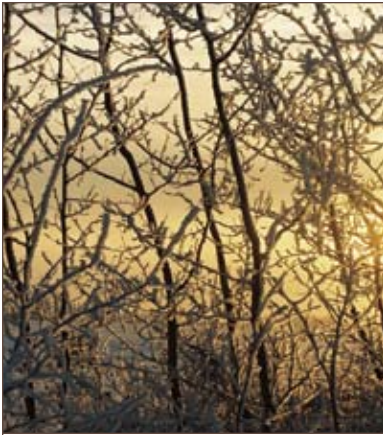
- Collect and interpret data to assist with the designation of legal status for species at risk, and subsequently assist in the development and implementation of species at risk recovery plans.
- Assist with prioritization of species to receive detailed status assessments.
- Facilitate development of status reports to support the Endangered Species Conservation Committee in legal status designation and recovery plan development.
- Support the provincial Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan by monitoring occupancy and breeding success of peregrines in rural nest sites in central Alberta.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Endangered Species Conservation Committee assigns legal designations to at least nine species by March 2009.
- Assist with the delivery of recovery actions for at least three species with approved provincial recovery plans by March 2009.
- Lead the delivery of several actions described in the 2005-2010 Alberta Piping Plover and the Alberta Northern Leopard Frog recovery plans.
- Complete a scientific paper summarizing the results of the last 10 years of conservation research on piping plover in Alberta.



WILDLIFE



Our Conservation Funds

Grant Eligible Conservation Fund

At ACA we believe it is our responsibility to support the collective effort to conserve, protect and enhance Alberta's natural biological resources. In addition to delivering conservation programs throughout the province, we administer a fund that has been awarding conservation grants since 1997.

Funded by the province's anglers, hunters and other conservationists, ACA's Grant Eligible Conservation Fund (GECF) supports programs that benefit Alberta's wildlife and fish populations and the habitat they depend on. The grants are designed to enhance ACA activities. Any individual or group may apply for funding for projects that support the priorities outlined within ACA's major program areas.

Annually, this fund provides in excess of \$1 million in funding and supports a variety of conservation projects and programs throughout Alberta. Community groups, conservation organizations, leading-edge scientific researchers and Albertans in general champion these projects and programs.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Increase the level of partnership and funding in order to support delivery of the highest caliber of conservation projects.

Strategies:

- Investigate non-traditional alliances and sources of funding.
- Identify potential revenue partners from foundations, industry and corporate sectors and submit major multi-year funding proposals to those organizations.
- Increase the level of partnership contributions by developing strategic partnerships.
- Broaden the influence on conservation by increasing the resources available to this fund through partnerships and strategic alliances.

- Market the GECF as a potential recipient of annual fundraising activities that includes a balance of revenue from industry and corporate partners, foundation solicitations and planned gift giving combined with shorter-term fundraising projects.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Enhance awareness of the Conservation Fund to attract quality funding applications that will positively impact conservation efforts within ACA’s major program areas.

Strategies:

- Develop communications tools and targeted campaigns advertising ACA funds.
- Promote the communication of results and successes of projects the fund supports.
- Provide media with news releases to enhance awareness of the fund.

Effectiveness Measures For All Objectives:

- The Grant Eligible Conservation Fund has grown by 25% by 2008.
- Our stakeholders are aware of the successes obtained through the fund.
- The fund attracts high-quality applicants from all over Alberta.
- All grant recipients are accountable to ACA.



OUR CONSERVATION FUNDS



Habitat Securement Fund

The objective of the Habitat Securement Fund (HSF) is to enable, facilitate and provide financial support for the purchase and/or the securement of priority natural habitats in Alberta. The geographic scope of the HSF includes all lands within Alberta.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Habitat projects are aligned with ACA's Habitat Program's strategic direction.
- Key relationships, formal agreements and strategic alliances have been forged and maintained with key habitat conservation organizations in Alberta.
- A net gain in wildlife and fish recreational opportunities is realized from our Habitat Programs.

Grants in Biodiversity

The objective of ACA's Grants in Biodiversity Program is to increase our knowledge of Alberta's flora and fauna by providing research funds to outstanding graduate students and postdoctoral fellows doing research in Alberta. This collaborative program, funded primarily by ACA, is administered through the Alberta Cooperative Conservation Research Unit, a consortium of researchers working at, or affiliated with, the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Improved knowledge of the diversity and status of plant and animal communities in Alberta.
- Conservation stakeholders, including the public, resource managers and regulators, and the scientific community have an improved understanding of processes that maintain current levels of biological diversity in Alberta.
- Data collected with provision of the Grants in Biodiversity Fund support other efforts to conserve Alberta's natural biological resources.
- Improved numbers of conservation partnerships between ACA and the Alberta Cooperative Conservation Research Unit.

Financial Resources

At ACA we strive to maintain financial strength and continually improve organizational performance.

Alberta hunters and anglers are the backbone of a large majority of ACA's conservation initiatives, supplying over 70% of revenue through levy dollars. Levy revenue is expected to remain constant at approximately \$7 million per year over the next three years. Expenditures however are forecast to increase at a rate of approximately 5% per year because of inflation. This "flat lining" of revenue, offset by an increase in expenditures, could have a significant impact on the level of ACA's conservation programming in the future. Consideration has been given to reviewing and potentially adjusting the levy on all or specific licenses and a recommendation to adjust levies will be brought forward early in 2006.

To maintain and enhance the level of programming and to improve ACA's ability to have a positive impact on conservation in Alberta, specific attention must be paid to growing and diversifying our revenue base. A comprehensive revenue generation program will develop alternative methods for enhancing ACA's financial sources, while not directly competing with our founding member organizations or other conservation organizations.

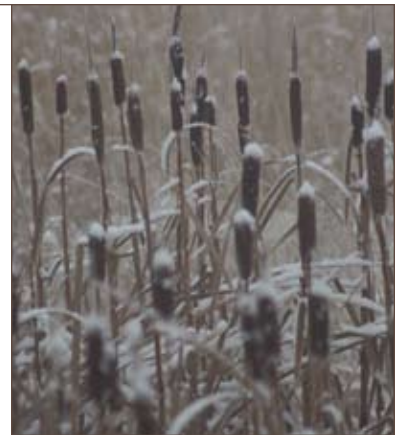
OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

To increase operating revenue from alternate sources and develop new revenue partners from corporate, industry and foundation partnerships.

Strategies:

- Investigate non-traditional sources of funding.
- Identify potential revenue partners from foundations, industry and corporate sectors and submit major multi-year funding proposals to those organizations.
- Leverage financial strength through partnerships and strategic alliances where possible.
- Increase the level of partner contributions by developing strategic



FINANCIAL RESOURCES



FINANCIAL RESOURCES

partnerships.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Enhance revenues from levy sources and other revenue generating initiatives by 15% (\$1.5 million) by 2008.
- Increase partnership revenue by 15% (\$450,000) per year by 2008.
- Develop and implement two different options for additional revenue generation.
- Secure two new partners or strategic alliances by 2006.

OBJECTIVE 2:

To maximize the use of available financial resources.

Strategies:

- Continue to refine the budgeting and funding allocation process and internal business processes to allow reallocation of financial resources throughout the year.
- Reallocate financial resources to off-set lease and other costs now payable to the Alberta Government.
- Enhance the accountability and financial reporting processes to ensure timely and accurate financial information is available for decision making.
- Practice effective cost containment strategies.
- Financial status of all business areas will be reviewed and evaluated quarterly.
- Develop a partner recognition process that will attract partners who have not previously been involved with conservation in Alberta.
- Explore revenue generating mechanisms used to fund conservation initiatives in other provinces and countries.
- Pursue strategic alliances with industrial and corporate communities.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Reduce operational costs by 10% of total revenue over the three years.
- Operate within a balanced budget.
- Maintain administrative costs at or below 15% of our operational budget.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Implement Partners In Conservation recognition program outlining benefits to potential partners.

Strategies:

- Develop a comprehensive recognition program that complements the diversity of ACA partners.
- Work in alignment with communications on developing the awareness and understanding of ACA's Partners In Conservation programs that include the development of this funding program.

Effectiveness Measures:

- ACA's Partners In Conservation funding program is implemented.
- Website promotes funding benefits and recognition for partners.
- Recognition program supports revenue generation strategies providing clear recognition categories for partners.
- Increase the recognition of ACA as a scientifically credible organization by publishing the results of conservation programs delivered by ACA in peer reviewed scientific journals.
- Increase scientific credibility through involvement in conferences, workshops and other events.
- Apply for high-profile awards annually.



FINANCIAL RESOURCES



Communications

ACA is committed to regular communication with our partners and stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding of ACA's role in the conservation community. The communication plan remains externally directed, focusing on regular communications with our partners and stakeholders.

In addition, internal communication remains a key component of our communications program and is crucial to the success of ACA. Internal communication has an impact on many different areas in the workplace, including the overall culture, job satisfaction, productivity and performance of individuals, teams and the organization.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Enhance partner relations and increase the understanding of ACA's role in the conservation community.

Strategies:

- Host Partners In Conservation conference in 2007 and 2009 and maintain regular communication with conference attendees after the conference.
- Active relationship building with member groups through participation in their conferences and events, face-to-face meetings and Business Unit presentations.
- Implement government relations strategies that expand our relationships with various government departments.
- Partner consultation to measure current relationships and identify areas for improvement.
- Regional partner and stakeholder meetings, presentations and open houses.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Biennial Partners In Conservation conference attracts conservation organizations, government, stakeholders and industry conservationists.
- Relations with member groups are improved as demonstrated by positive partner consultations results.

- Increase in ACA's reputation and influence measured by awards, published reports, requests for endorsement, media inquiries, and involvement in conservation community events.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Implement public education and outreach activities that increase awareness and understanding of wildlife, fisheries and habitat issues in Alberta.

Strategies:

- Investigate the possible development of an education and outreach program.
- Work with regions to coordinate public education and outreach priorities.
- Business Units develop annual communications plan that aligns with corporate communications objectives.
- Work with provincial teams to develop priority wildlife, fish and habitat oriented activities, presentations and/or publications.
- Evaluate effectiveness of ACA's Conservation Magazine.
- External website expands to include more regional project focus.
- Explore collaborative opportunities with a variety of educational institutions.
- Enhance media relations through frequent contact with media; provincial media relations align with regional conservation issues and priorities.
- ACA awareness campaign that enhances our visibility and knowledge among stakeholders and external audiences.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Regional program and project specific communication align with corporate communication objectives (brochures, regional displays).
- A number of wildlife, fish and habitat oriented public education and outreach activities, presentations and/or publications are developed.
- Conservation Magazine distribution increases by 40%.
- Website traffic increases because of increased community focus.
- Media understands ACA's role in the conservation community.
- Increased awareness of ACA enhances our ability to leverage funds.





OBJECTIVE 3:

Enhance internal communication tools and understanding for all ACA staff.

Strategies:

- Evaluate current internal information sources through staff needs assessment and implement tools to assist teams.
- Implement orientation tools for new staff that incorporate human resources information and communications standards for the organization.
- Develop corporate style guide and reference binder that includes information such as vision and mission.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Employee survey reports satisfaction with internal communications tools.
- Corporate style guide becomes a key tool for all staff and enhances consistency of organization’s visual image and messaging.
- Employee survey reports clear understanding of ACA’s vision, mission and key messages.
- Any staff person can easily explain who ACA is, what ACA does and how their specific program area fits with ACA’s overall goals and objectives.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Improve the level of interaction, information exchange and collaboration with other conservation specialists.

Strategies:

- Implement ACA’s Report Series and all related reporting and distribution practices and procedures.
- Deliver presentations and attend focal partner group meetings to increase the awareness of ACA including its conservation programs.
- Use collected data to focus discussions on conservation issues and management options and decisions.
- Deliver seminars at Alberta’s three major universities on ACA, its mandate and vision.
- Publish manuscripts in peer reviewed scientific journals.
- Participate in scientific reviews, and project and program funding allocations for external conservation organizations.
- Initiate, develop and support collaborative conservation programs and projects with external research and conservation organizations.

- Improve the flow of scientific information to policy makers and resource managers by delivering presentations at conferences.
- Maintain an internal project review team to scrutinize ACA reports.
- Facilitate ongoing employee training and development to strengthen our scientific knowledge base and capabilities.
- Maintain and develop knowledge of current conservation issues and scientific standards.
- Develop and maintain an appreciation of conservation efforts by other organizations.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Increased awareness of ACA's programs and projects by delivering presentations at scientific conferences and public venues.
- Support open evaluations and discussions of current conservation issues by participating in working sessions and public events.
- Increased number of partnerships with universities, government, industry and other conservation organizations to develop innovative ways to conserve Alberta's fish and wildlife and the habitats that they occupy.
- Publish the results of ACA's conservation programs and projects in peer reviewed scientific journals.



COMMUNICATIONS

Employees

Our employees deliver a wide variety of conservation projects and programs in close collaboration with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and other partners throughout the province. ACA is committed to the creation of a high-performance workplace and to sustaining an engaged and inspired workforce.

OBJECTIVES & KEY STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE 1:

Provide a unique culture and flexible working environment that allows ACA the ability to increase capacity (knowledge management) by retaining and recruiting highly-skilled professionals.

Strategies:

- Create complementary base of highly-skilled professionals that offers a challenging and supportive environment for colleagues.
- Encourage a work culture with a high level of flexibility for employee work schedules and locations.
- Encourage strong professional and personal development of ACA employee long-term careers.
- Annually explore unique benefit and pension options that give ACA a unique program not readily available in other organizations.
- Annually review ACA salary scales to ensure they remain comparable to other organizations with similar focus.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Percentage of employees that 'strongly agree' they are satisfied with the benefit program increases to 60% by March 31, 2007 and to 75% by March 31, 2008.
- 60% of employees 'agree' that ACA pay scales are fair and are being kept current with market conditions.
- Percentage of employees that 'strongly agree' the benefit and pension program is fair consideration increases to 60% for March 31, 2007 and to 75% by March 31, 2008.
- Percentage of employees that 'agree' their salary is fair consideration



EMPLOYEES

for work performed increases to 50% for March 31, 2007 and to 60% by March 31, 2008.

- Percentage of employees that 'strongly agree' that ACA offers a high level of flexibility for work schedules and locations is greater than 60% by March 31, 2007 and to 75% by March 31, 2008.
- Greater than 90% of employees have a professional development strategy by March 31, 2007, and yearly thereafter.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Provide a work environment that supports the health, safety and well being of all employees and invests in their future development.

Strategies:

- Reduce the frequency and severity of injuries by maintaining a comprehensive safety program.
- Implement a succession planning framework as part of our performance management process.
- Ensure all employees have personal development plans linked to their personal performance objectives.
- Embrace learning events focused on leadership or technical skills that build strength, professionalism and flexibility into our workforce.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Zero lost-time accidents.
- 35% of employees are acquiring interpersonal skills through professional courses.
- 33% of employees are involved in a succession plan.
- 5% of employees are pursuing academic upgrading/continuing education.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Employees understand their working environment and how they contribute to ACA's vision and mission.

Strategies:

- Ensure ACA policies and practices are being applied fairly.
- Ensure employees are actively involved in their constant improvement.
- Ensure employees understand how their job contributes to the vision and mission of ACA.



EMPLOYEES



EMPLOYEES

Effectiveness Measures:

- Employees view management as an enabler and a positive contributor to our objectives.
- Biannual employee surveys indicate an overall rate of satisfaction and engagement of 85%.
- On line survey of leadership at ACA results in 80% indicating a favorable perception.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Employees are rewarded and recognized based on their performance as well as their behaviour exhibited.

Strategies:

- Implement individual and team reward and recognition programs.
- Identify and measure key core competencies associated with all positions at ACA.
- Compensation and advancements are based on performance and the exhibition of desired competencies and behaviours.

Effectiveness Measures:

- Training opportunities for employees engaged in program areas of fish, wildlife and habitat.

OBJECTIVE 5:

ACA employees have the necessary information, infrastructure and assets available in a reliable and timely fashion to achieve our objectives.

Strategies:

- Maintain internal communications program including internal web community.
- Clarify the relationship ACA has with the Alberta Government for shared services accommodations and warehousing.
- Internal business processes remain flexible to react to necessary changes in programming.
- Explore linkages with other organizations where the sharing of assets, accommodations or services may be beneficial to both parties.

Effectiveness Measures:

- A clear agreement is in place between ACA and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development outlining a commitment to provide suitable infrastructure to ACA for a distinct period of time.

Monitoring Our Performance

At ACA we are committed to ensuring our strategies are properly executed. By aligning our strategies throughout ACA, we will excel towards our mission. Our teams have developed measures and targets within five **Perspectives**. Progress made toward these targets will provide decision makers with critical information on: (i) the efficiency with which resources are transformed into a positive impact on conservation; and (ii) the effectiveness of organizational activities and operations in terms of their specific contributions to strategic objectives and our mission.

Performance within each of these **Perspectives** is measured quarterly through a balanced scorecard process. Measurements and feedback are sought to understand the current ability to execute our strategies. This feedback cycle provides opportunities for corrections or improvements as needed. The objective is to demonstrate continuous improvement as we strive toward our mission.

ACA has established measures and targets across five **Perspectives**. These include:

- **The Resource**
- Financial
- Learning and Growth
- Internal Business Processes
- Stakeholder

It is important to achieve success in each of these Perspectives in order for ACA to be successful as an organization and have a positive impact on conservation.



MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE



MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE

ACA's Five Perspectives



THE RESOURCE

The Resource Perspective is unique to ACA. This objective ensures ACA is contributing to the "bottom line". If we are to be successful, our primary measure of success is the extent that our activities, and those that we support externally, positively influence conservation of Alberta's natural biological resources. Success in this Perspective can only be realized if success is obtained in each of the other Perspectives. Objectives relating to the Resource Perspective must directly contribute to the conservation of fisheries, wildlife or habitat.

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS – FISHERIES:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|------------------|--|---|
| Fisheries Obj. 1 | Identify and apply the suite of metrics to quantify the health of fish populations. | in 15 select waterbodies by 2009 |
| Fisheries Obj. 1 | Information is provided to appropriate resource managers or land-use planners on a timely basis. | all reports are provided by the end of the fiscal year |
| Fisheries Obj. 2 | Information on stream crossing density, locations, percent linear fragmentation and sedimentation risk are quantified. | in 10 select watersheds by 2009 |
| Fisheries Obj. 2 | Participate in meetings between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, Alberta Environment, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and other regulatory organizations to restore connectivity of stream habitats. | participate in 10 meetings and report on the substantial progress arising from them by 2009 |
| Fisheries Obj. 2 | Provide more information on the ecological effects of watershed crossing to stakeholder groups. | information is provided to stakeholders annually |
| Fisheries Obj. 3 | Levels of angler use and angler harvest are defined at select fisheries and are reported to resource managers and other stakeholders. | quantified at 15 select fisheries by 2009 |
| Fisheries Obj. 4 | Specific factors affecting watershed conditions are identified and reported. | all relevant factors are identified by 2009 and described for 10 individual watersheds by 2009. |
| Fisheries Obj. 4 | Strategies to diminish impacts on watersheds are collaboratively developed, implemented and communicated to a suite of stakeholders. | five key strategies are identified and communicated to stakeholders by 2009 |

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS – HABITAT:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|----------------|---|---|
| Habitat Obj. 1 | Establish collaborative partnerships to foster the conservation of riparian areas. | establish five collaborative partnerships by 2009 |
| Habitat Obj. 1 | A provincial Riparian Conservation Program is formalized and increases the number of riparian enhancement projects in Alberta. | develop and implement 15 new riparian enhancement projects by 2009 |
| Habitat Obj. 2 | Increase the number of ecosystem plans and management treatments in each Business Unit. | develop one to three planning units in each Business Unit and apply at least four management treatments each year by 2009 |
| Habitat Obj. 3 | Develop and implement a provincial grassland conservation program. | program developed by 2008 |
| Habitat Obj. 3 | Increase the level of external funding to support habitat conservation strategies. | a 33% increase in external funding by 2005 |
| Habitat Obj. 3 | Increase the number of habitat conservation strategies applied to the high-priority areas, including activities direct to MULTISAR. | a 25% increase by 2009 |
| Habitat Obj. 4 | Increase the number and level of partnership contributions to land acquisitions. | five new partnerships are secured and partnership contributions provide 50% of funds to complete land acquisitions |
| Habitat Obj. 4 | Land-access programs in other jurisdictions are examined and evaluated. | evaluations completed by 2008 |

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Habitat Obj. 5 | Properties and structures of little conservation value are divested from ACA and management plans are developed for those that the ACA retains. | completed by 2008 |
| Habitat Obj. 6 | The Alberta Habitat Working Group develops a strategic action plan and sub-working groups begin to address specific habitat program challenges. | completed by 2007 |
| Habitat Obj. 7 | Identify and prioritize lakes where conservation activities for piping plovers are required and work cooperatively with landowners to reduce the impact of livestock grazing on piping plovers. | reduce the impact of livestock grazing on piping plovers on at least 75% of priority lakes by 2008 |
| Habitat Obj. 7 | Increase the number of habitat enhancement activities to assist with the conservation of the leopard frog. | enhancement efforts are completed at two to four priority leopard frog sites by 2009 |

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS – WILDLIFE:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Wildlife Obj. 1 | Cooperatively assist with the development of Alberta working groups for each focal theme (e.g. upland-game birds, ungulates, waterfowl, species at risk) | develop one transboundary group for each of the four program themes by March 2007 |
| Wildlife Obj. 1 | Participate in at least one transboundary working group for each focal theme. | facilitate the effective operations of one transboundary group for each of the four program themes |
| Wildlife Obj. 2 | Final reports summarizing the results of aerial ungulate inventories are developed to ACA's Provincial Wildlife Team. | reports are produced annually |
| Wildlife Obj. 2 | Develop the interim reports summarizing sharp-tailed grouse and moose inventory results for pilot areas. | peer-reviewed reports are completed by March 2007 |
| Wildlife Obj. 2 | Conditions for wildlife set by Alberta Energy and Utilities Board for oil and gas operations on Hay-Zama wetland complex are met and communicated to a suite of stakeholders. | reports and related communications are completed annually |
| Wildlife Obj. 2 | Summarize the results of wildlife surveys to the Hay-Zama Committee and support the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with select industries. | a Memorandum of Understanding is developed with at least two industrial partners |
| Wildlife Obj. 3, 4 | Results of wildlife programs are presented at wildlife conferences and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. | 20 presentations are delivered and 10 peer-reviewed articles are published in scientific journals by 2009 |
| Wildlife Obj. 5 | Results delivered to Alberta Community Development to aid in the development of off-highway vehicle use policies that benefit wildlife conservation. | up to 10 presentations, if required, by 2009 |
| Wildlife Obj. 6 | Increase the number of assignments of legal designations by the Endangered Species Conservation Committee. | at least nine legal species designations by March 2009 |
| Wildlife Obj. 6 | Assist with the delivery of recovery actions for species with approved provincial recovery plans. | delivery of specific actions for at least three species with approved provincial recovery plans by March 2009 |

FINANCIAL

The objective of the Financial Perspective is to strive for optimum efficiency coupled with financial growth and diversity. To achieve that, processes need to be analyzed or developed that facilitate: (i) the determination of cost and performance trends over time; (ii) process changes that can be implemented to produce optimum efficiencies; (iii) increased partnership revenues; and (iv) the exploration and implementation of innovative revenue generating mechanisms.

This Perspective is important because expanding our revenue base and optimizing the cost efficiency of ACA's operations ensures the maximum amount of funds are available for accomplishing the primary mandate of ACA. Business Unit Leaders must ensure ACA operating costs are optimized to meet the challenges of creating programs that work better and cost less.

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|------------------|---|---|
| Grants – all | ACA Grant Funds. | 30% increase from 2003 – 2004 levels after three years in each fund |
| Financial Obj. 1 | Funds received through levies and alternate revenue generating initiatives. | funds increase by \$1.5 million (15%) by 2008 |
| Financial Obj. 1 | Financial partnership revenue. | secure two new partnerships per year partnership revenue increases by \$450,000 (15%) per year |
| Financial Obj. 1 | Develop and implement options for additional revenue generation. | two new initiatives developed by 2008 |
| Financial Obj. 2 | Operational costs. | 10% reduction in operational costs in specific areas |
| Financial Obj. 2 | Operate within a balanced budget. | zero balance – income statement |
| Financial Obj. 2 | Maintain administrative expenses. | 15% of total budget |

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Objectives relating to the Learning and Growth Perspective promote organizational and individual growth. These investments support continued term growth in competency and infrastructure that are required to achieve excellence in the remaining four strategic areas (i.e. The Resource, Internal Business Processes, Financial, and Stakeholder). As such, achievements in Learning and Growth are crucial to the long-term future success.

Support for this Perspective recognizes the link between top-level strategic objectives and activities required to build skill levels, motivate employees, supply information, and align individuals, teams and Business Units with ACA's strategy and long-term objectives.

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|------------------|--|--|
| Employees Obj. 2 | Number of lost-time accidents occurring per year. | zero lost-time accidents |
| Employees Obj. 2 | Number of employees receiving leadership, management and personal development training. | 35% per year |
| Employees Obj. 2 | Number of staff pursuing academic upgrading or continuing education. | ten employees |
| Employees Obj. 2 | Training opportunities for a number of staff to become proficient in the use of GIS information and tools. | three employees |
| Employees Obj. 2 | Succession planning process. | a minimum of 33% of employees have a succession plan |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Biannual surveys indicate high employee satisfaction and engagement. | 85% of employees |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Employee retention. | 95% of employees retained |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Satisfaction with benefits program. | 85% of employees satisfied |
| Employees Obj. 4 | Focused training opportunities for employees engaged in program areas of fisheries, wildlife and habitat. | one event is hosted per year for each program area |

INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESSES

The objectives in the Internal Business Processes Perspective collectively assure that an effective array of conservation programming is established to: (i) support customer needs; (ii) provide efficient project management (accountability, scientific credibility and innovation); and (iii) monitor ACA's programs and responsibilities. Key processes in ACA's business and administrative plans must be monitored to ensure the outcomes satisfy our objectives.

This Perspective addresses the internal business processes that must be developed and maintained to meet customer and stakeholder requirements and expectations. It also leads to financial success and satisfied customers. Within any organization, there are a number of internal business processes that require focused attention and constant improvements to ensure requirements and expectations are met as effectively as possible, while accommodating cost efficiency issues addressed in the Financial Perspective.

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Financial Obj. 2 | Financial information is produced on time and is understood by all recipients. | reallocations are made quarterly when required |
| Financial Obj. 2 | Implement best practices for financial management. | operate the organization within a balanced budget |
| Communications Obj. 3 | Corporate style guide developed to enhance ACA's visual image and messaging. | style guide complete in 2006 |
| Communications Obj. 3 | Employees clearly understand ACA's vision and mission. | employee survey shows 80% understanding |
| Communications Obj. 3 | Employee satisfaction with internal communication tools. | employee survey reports 85% satisfaction |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Information collected can be archived and retrieved. | standardized reporting protocol developed |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Collaboration with scientifically credible institutions. | three collaborative ventures developed with academic institutions |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Scientific credibility of ACA programs. | two journal articles per year and six conference presentations per year |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Employees involved in improving administrative processes. | one non manager will be involved in all process reviews |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Alignment of programs with ACA's vision and direction – employee engagement. | online survey results report employee engagement in excess of 85% |
| Employees Obj. 3 | Employees are clear on criteria used in allocation process. | consensus is achieved |

STAKEHOLDER

The Stakeholder Perspective enables organizations to align the core measure (stakeholder satisfaction) to targeted stakeholders. For this Perspective, the primary objectives are to provide effective service to, and establish effective partnerships with, external and internal customers. Effective service and partnerships are key ingredients in assessing the health of any of ACA's conservation programs.

CRITICAL SUCCESS MEASURES AND TARGETS:

| OBJECTIVE | MEASURE | TARGET |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Financial Obj. 3 | Develop and implement partner recognition program. | recognition program implemented by 2006 |
| Communications Obj. 1 | Stakeholder survey (partners, member groups, media). | minimum of 75% partners satisfied |
| Communications Obj. 1 | Number of awards received or nominated for. | two per year |
| Communications Obj. 1 | Number of media inquiries, requests for endorsement and involvement in conservation community events. | 120 per year |
| Communications Obj. 2 | Regional focus on website. | web traffic increases by 30% in 2007 |
| Communications Obj. 2 | Conservation Magazine reaching a number of households. | distribution increased by 40% by 2008 |
| Communications Obj. 3 | Alberta Sustainable Resource Development supports ACA with clear communication to Alberta Sustainable Resource Development employees. | joint communications involving ACA and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development leadership on important issues |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Number of occasions where ACA acts as a catalyst within the conservation community. | a minimum of two events hosted per year |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Number of ACA programs and projects presentations to increase awareness. | 10 presentations per year |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Participation in open evaluation and discussion of conservation issues. | 10 working sessions or public events per year |
| Communications Obj. 4 | Explore partnership with other scientifically credible organizations. | one new partnership developed per year |
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that strongly agree they are satisfied with the benefit program. | 60% by March 31, 2007 |
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that agree ACA pay scales are fair and current with market conditions. | 60% |
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that strongly agree the benefit and pension program is fair consideration. | 60% by March 31, 2007 |
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that agree their salary is fair consideration for work performed. | 50% by March 31, 2007 |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that strongly agree ACA offers a high level of flexibility for work schedules and locations. | 60% by March 31, 2007 |
| Employees Obj. 1 | Percentage of employees that have a professional development strategy. | 90% by March 31, 2007 |
| Employees Obj. 5 | Clarify infrastructure issue with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. | agreement between ACA and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development is in place by 2006 |



Summary

This document represents ACA's fourth iteration of our Strategic Business Plan and strategies for the period 2006-2009. Building on past successes, we have updated our direction to continue ACA's evolution. This plan articulates ACA's objectives for the next three years and includes targets to measure our performance. This plan is a critical and invaluable document that provides the framework, the direction and the clarification that ACA's various stakeholders require and expect. As we look to implement this Strategic Business Plan, we believe we must realize success in four major Perspectives (Financial, Learning and Growth, Internal Business Processes, and Stakeholder) in order for us to realize success in our main Perspective – **The Resource**.

Additionally, by making a significant investment in our employees and our working environment, every employee will understand and be well prepared for their role, share a commitment to excellence and be encouraged to help us achieve our vision. Also, we must continue to tell our story – letting stakeholders know what we do, how we do it and where we have been successful.

Strategic planning is a dynamic business process that sets the guidelines for ACA's Annual Operating Plan. This document identifies WHAT we will be doing and WHY. The Annual Operating Plan identifies HOW we will achieve these objectives, complete with funding and resource allocations, work plans, operating details and evaluation systems.

Our Strategic Business Plan is not created in isolation. We acknowledge and thank ACA employees, managers, program partners, and Board of Directors for their valuable guidance and input into this important document.

CONSERVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION



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