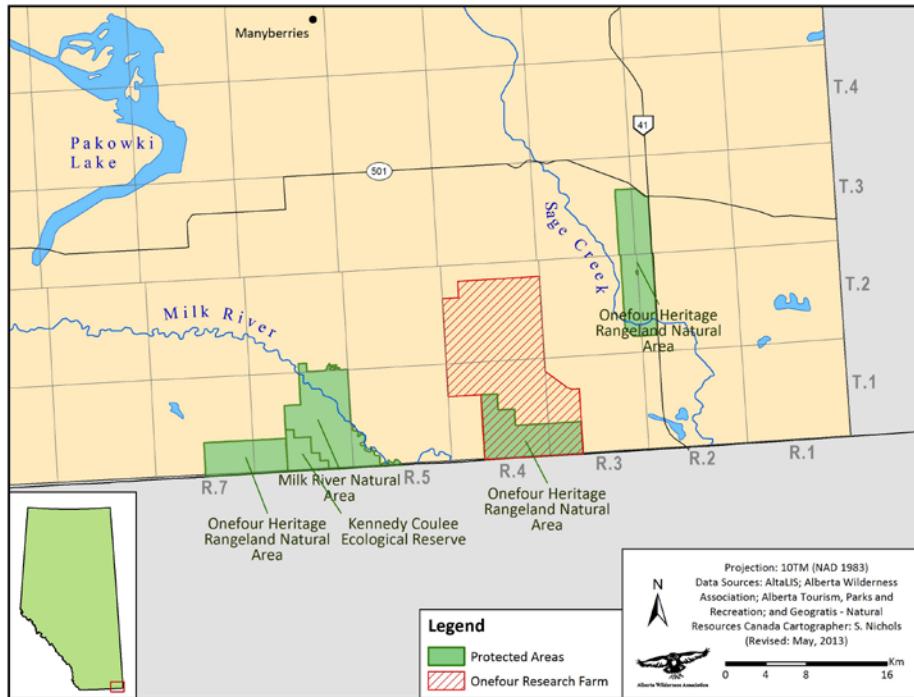




ONEFOUR RESEARCH FARM

"Home to at least 23 federally listed species at risk"

First established in 1927 as the Dominion Range Experiment Station, Manyberries, the Onefour Research Farm is primarily provincial land under long term lease for research purposes to the federal government. Onefour encompasses about 17,000 ha within the Dry Mixedgrass Natural Subregion of the Grassland Natural Region.



Conservation Attributes

- Approximately 70% (12,000 ha) of Onefour is native grassland
- Located within the Wild Horse Plain ecodistrict which supports the highest remaining proportion of natural cover in the Prairie Ecoregion in Canada
- Supports one of the highest densities of rare species occurrences in the Prairie Ecoregion
- High value to endemic grassland songbirds as breeding habitat
- High value for at least 23 federally listed species at risk
 - Supports valuable Swift Fox habitat and an expanding population of Swift Fox
 - The only known site in Alberta supporting Eastern Yellow-bellied Racers
 - The largest of only two Soapweed populations in Canada
 - The first confirmed nesting area for endangered Mountain Plovers in Canada, once considered to be fairly common in the area in the 1870s
- A legacy of research dating back nearly a century directed at maintaining healthy native rangelands grazed by livestock
- A portion of Onefour has protected area status as a Heritage Rangeland Natural Area

The Situation

Closing the Onefour Research Farm, shown on the map above, is part of plans the federal government has announced. The current federal lease for the research farm operations do not expire for some time, however the federal government may choose to surrender the lease back to the province of Alberta at any time. AWA believes the announcement, the time we have before the lease expires and the pending





South Saskatchewan Regional Plan provide both threats and opportunities for conservation of this vastly important native prairie grassland.

The Opportunity

The opportunity exists to ensure Onefour receives protected area status whether it ends up under federal or provincial management.

Under the existing lease arrangement with the Federal Government, designating this area as a National Wildlife Area makes sense. Vitally needed prairie research could continue. In addition, grazing could continue providing an opportunity for local ranchers. The existing research and livestock facilities would continue to be used.

The already designated heritage rangelands adjacent to the research farm would facilitate the transition of the research farm lands to protection under the Alberta Government. If Alberta will designate and protect the area, co-management much like the Milk River Management Committee, by ranchers, government, grazing academics, and conservationists would succeed based on experiences in other rangelands in this part of Alberta.

Well known for its importance to species at risk, the Onefour Research Farm provides safe and secure habitat to at least 23 federally listed species and many more that rely on this area, including the Yellow-bellied Racer, Mountain Plover and Yucca plant pictured below.

