



ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"

June 13, 2013

Premier Alison Redford, QC
Legislature Office – 307 Legislature Building
10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Email: Premier@gov.ab.ca

RE: Onefour Research Farm

Dear Premier Redford:

As part of the cuts to Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, the federal government recently announced the closure of the Onefour Research Farm near Manyberries. Onefour has far more value to Albertans and all Canadians than just agricultural research. Onefour has 12,000 ha of natural grasslands which support at least 23 federally listed species at risk making it of very high ecological importance. Please see the Briefing Notes we have prepared and attached for your reference.

As you know AWA has a long-standing interest in the protection of this area. We urge you to recognize the ecological importance of the Onefour Research Farm and ensure it receives appropriate protected area status. Most of the Onefour Research Farm is provincial land leased to the federal government. The most cost-effective alternative for Albertans would be to continue to lease the land to the federal government and encourage Environment Canada to take over management of Onefour under a National Wildlife Area designation. Under this scenario livestock grazing would continue, the site could still be used for research, and most importantly, the land base would be managed for the benefit of Alberta's species at risk.

The Onefour Research Farm has been able to demonstrate for nearly a century that Alberta's Dry Mixedgrass Prairie can support both livestock production and species at risk dependant on grasslands. It is important that this land base continue to be able to support both. In the event that the federal government surrenders their lease on the land to the province, we urge you to designate the land base as a natural area under co-management between government, conservation organizations and local ranchers using the Milk River Management Committee as a model. It is far less expensive to maintain populations of threatened species than to bring them back from the brink of extinction once suitable habitat is no longer available.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely
ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Wallis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cliff Wallis
AWA Vice-President

cc: Honourable Diana McQueen diana.mcqueen@gov.ab.ca



ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

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June 14, 2013

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
Email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Re: Onefour Research Farm

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

Recently, the Canadian government announced substantial cuts to the research component of Agriculture and AgriFood Canada. Included in those cuts is the imminent closure of the Onefour Research Farm near Manyberries in Alberta. Onefour has value to Canadians much greater than its capacity as an agricultural research site. It contains some of the most important habitat in Canada for some of the most threatened grassland-dependent species. The land base has 12,000 ha of natural grasslands which support at least 23 federally listed species at risk. Onefour's legacy to Canadians is its nearly century-long track record demonstrating that livestock production and species at risk can co-exist under the right management. We have attached Briefing Notes on Onefour for your reference.

AWA urges you to recognize the ecological importance of the Onefour Research Farm and establish it as a National Wildlife Area under the management of Environment Canada. We know from experience that the effort and expense of recovering a species from the brink of extinction is much greater than maintaining healthy populations. In Onefour, the Government of Canada has a unique opportunity to continue to conserve vital habitat for numerous prairie species at risk, while simultaneously providing grazing opportunities for local ranchers.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely
ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

Cliff Wallis
AWA Vice-President

CC:

Honourable Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment minister@ec.gc.ca

Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada ritzg@agr.gc.ca