



Sage-grouse Partnership Committee Meeting

Date: June 25, 2013

Time: 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Location: Manyberries Curling Rink

Introductions

Everyone was welcomed by Cliff Wallis. Environment Canada colleagues were also welcomed and it was noted that they were having a consultation session on Sage-grouse at 7pm.

Clarification of membership of the committee; those folks who would like to be part of the Sage-grouse Partnership process on an ongoing basis and are able to make a commitment to a number of meetings that will have short term and long term goals achieved through a work plan.

Sage-grouse Partnership Committee Members:

Bayot Britschgi
James Hargraves
Byron Haugan
David Heydlauff
Ralph Heydlauff
Tanya Jangula

Mack Murray
Wayne Murray
Ray Pearson
Ronda Reesor
Travis Reesor
Robert Weeks

Darcy Wills
Sue Michalsky
Christyann Olson
Cliff Wallis

All those in attendance at this meeting, who would like to be included on the committee were invited to let C. Olson know of their interest.

All those in attendance at this meeting:

Bayot Britschgi
Aaron Brower
Medea Curteanu, CWS
Ian Davidson, NC
Marty Drut, GN
Laura Good
James Hargraves
Graham Heidinger
Nevin Heidinger
Roger Heidinger
David Heydlauff

Ralph Heydlauff
VaLinda Ivanies
Tanya Jangula
Kerrie Kusler
Sue Michalsky, AWA
Bill Newton
Joel Nicholson, ESRD
Christyann Olson, AWA
Ronda Reesor
Travis Reesor
Darren Ross

Phil Rowland, WSGA
Larry Sears WSGA
Cliff Wallis, AWA
Suzanne Vuch, EC
Norm Ward, WSGA
Mark Waylund, EC
Paul Weeks
Tracy Wellicome, EC
Darcy Wills

Regrets: Ray and Bonnie Pearson, Byron Haugan, Mack Murray and Wayne Murray,

Agenda – items were added to Other: Communication frequency, MRWC, Multisar
Agenda approved with additions





Message from Bev Yee, ADM, ESRD, Integrated Resource Management Planning Division;

Joel Nicholson, ESRD Medicine Hat delivered the following message on Bev's behalf.

I apologize that I am unable to join you today, but I've asked Joel to share a few messages on my behalf. This past week has been a devastating and emotionally overwhelming experience for Albertans. People from across all sectors of Alberta – government, non-profit, industry and private citizens – have worked tirelessly to help friends and neighbours. There is much work left to do as we shift to recovery – and this government has committed to help every step of the way. More information will be available in the coming days; stay tuned to the Government of Alberta website for details.

Our original intent was to release the draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan in early summer and follow with consultation in the fall. Given the recent events, it is likely that the previous timelines envisioned for the draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan release and consultation may be impacted. As we move forward with recovery planning for these impacted areas, the discussions and conversations regarding the regional plan outcomes and implementation actions for achieving them will be ever more important for this region.

We know that there is already a strong ethic of land stewardship in the South Saskatchewan region, and recognize that landowners already put a great deal effort into caring for the land. The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan will seek to recognize those efforts, while continuing to promote, expand and develop new and innovative conservation and stewardship tools. Promoting the efficient use of land with landowners and municipalities alike will contribute to maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem functions of this landscape.

I want to specifically acknowledge the stewardship accomplishments of the ranchers and farmers of this area. In fact, we know that much of the remaining intact native grassland exists as a result of the sound management practices of local leaseholders. From voluntary actions in the previous drought period, to input into the development of strategies for reclaiming industrial disturbances, to your continued commitment for the Multiple Species at Risk (MULTISAR) conservation work, the health of these range lands are a reflection of our collaborative efforts. Maintaining the intact native grassland and species at risk habitat will continue to be a high priority, and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan will help to reinforce that priority.

Thank you for the excellent work that you do on behalf of all Albertans. I look forward to joining you at a future meeting.



Terms of Reference Review

The Draft Terms of Reference that was circulated prior to the meeting was reviewed and revised by the committee. The revised Terms of Reference will be circulated to the committee for final review and approval.

Co-chairs for the SGP committee

David Heydlauff agreed to be a co-chair on behalf of the ranchers Cliff Wallis from AWA will be the other co-chair.

It was requested that a map of the SSRBP Region be included in the minutes – see below:

**South Saskatchewan Land-Use Framework
Planning Region**





Map of traditional Sage-grouse Habitat was requested and is provided here from the 2001 Government of Canada Recovery Strategy.

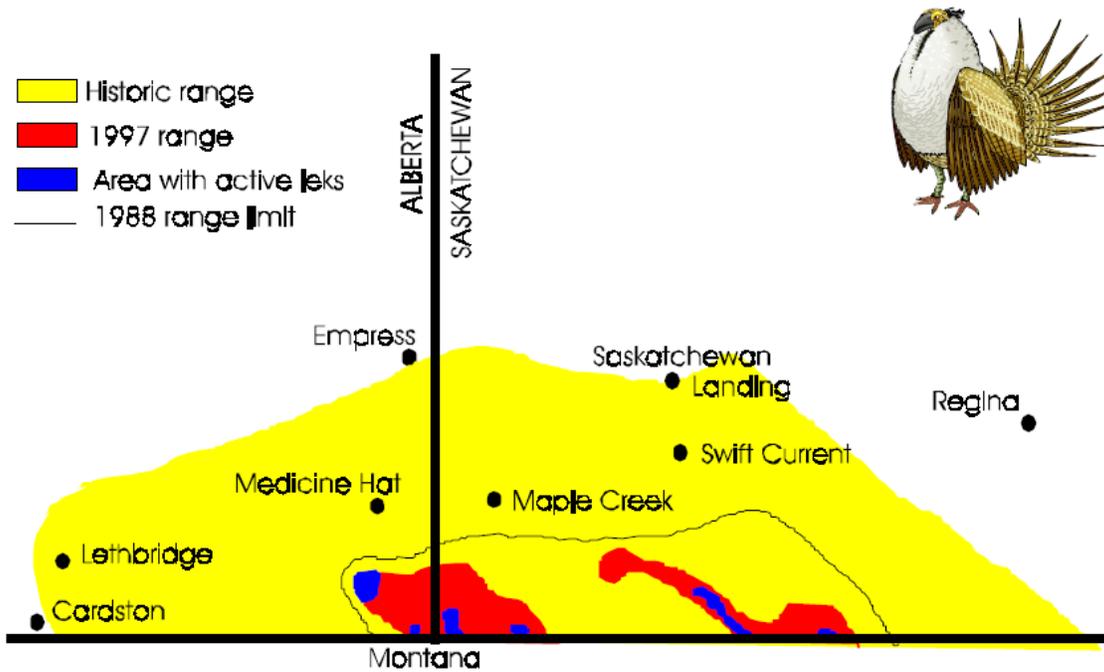


Figure 1. Distribution of Sage Grouse in Prairie Canada

Workplan

Items brought forward in the discussion today will be added to the list we have from phone calls and the last meeting. Cliff Wallis thanked the participants for some very helpful additions. A list will be provided to the committee for review prior to the next meeting. This list will be used to prioritize items for our workplan, the focus of our next meeting.

Copies of "What are Native Grasslands Worth" produced by the Ranchers' Stewardship Alliance were circulated to participants in the meeting. AWA will also make this available on their website in case there were insufficient copies.

Other

Communication frequency - group agreed they would like to be brought up to speed as things happen, communications will be regular and timely--as things occur related to Sage-grouse the news will be circulated. Committee will decide on any external communications by consensus.

Onefour – AWA Briefing Note circulated.





HiLine BLM RMP - AWA submitted comments primarily related to Sage-grouse to the US Bureau of Land Management on its draft HiLine Resource Management Plan.

Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development Presentation by AWA (Cliff Wallis)
– a few of the comments made by AWA were queried and Ronda Reesor requested some further background information on the subsidies reference which will be provided electronically by email.

PFRA pastures (Govenlock) - AWA has had discussions in Ottawa regarding Govenlock PFRA pasture and is promoting its establishment as a National Wildlife Area under Environment Canada jurisdiction with continued grazing by patrons.

Milk River Watershed Council - State of watershed report will be released soon after some additional editing. It will be an excellent resource for understanding the watershed in general covers what is working what is not working here to the confluence of the Missouri in Montana.

MULTISAR – Joel Nicolson reported they are running on temporary funding .

ALSA – Norm Ward indicated that there may be some opportunities associated with section three of ALSA and committed to sending a summary of the information.

Next Meeting of Sage-grouse Partnership Committee:

Wednesday, July 24, 2013, at 6 p.m. Manyberries Curling Rink
Please note change in date – we are unable to meet on the 17th of July.

Meeting adjourned for dinner and was followed by Environment Canada Sage-grouse Recovery Plan consultation session at 7:00 p.m.