

## **Plenary 3: Central Grasslands Roadmap Plenary**

### **Canadian & Indigenous perspectives on the Central Grassland Roadmap**

- Panelists:** Miles Anderson (rancher), Christian Artuso (CWS), Carolyn Callaghan (Canadian Wildlife Federation), Alvin First Rider (Blood Tribe Land Management), Kate Hewitt (Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources), Cheyenne Ironman (Sioux Valley Dakota Nation), Ruiping Lou & Cliff Wallis (Alberta Wilderness Association)
- Time:** Thursday, February 23: 8:30 - 10:00 am
- Abstract:** Following a virtual summit in 2020, an in-person summit in 2022 & the formation of various working groups, the Central Grasslands Roadmap (<https://grasslandsroadmap.org>) has developed a plan for grassland conservation throughout the Great Plains (available [here](#)). The roadmap tries to unite the many networks and interests in the grasslands and the working groups continue to connect and engage as broad and diverse a community as possible. This panel offers diverse perspectives on the experience of being part of the roadmap and our hopes and plans for the future.

#### **Bios:**

##### **Miles Anderson**

Miles Anderson is a cattle rancher near Fir Mountain, Saskatchewan. Miles has a diploma from Olds College and rich life experiences on the prairie, paying keen attention to species' symbiotic relationships and interactions. Miles has promoted good stewardship in the backdrop of Grasslands National Park & been immersed in Endangered species and the politics that surround them, earning the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General. He has been involved with Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association since 1983 in many roles, including first chairperson of PCAP. He is a strong proponent of people being part of this ecosystem at least since the last ice age.

##### **Christian Artuso, PhD**

**Christian Artuso** is a conservationist with the Canadian Wildlife Service (Migratory Birds). He chairs the Canadian working group of the Central Grasslands Roadmap and is an invited expert for the Commission for Environmental Cooperation grasslands initiative. He chaired the program committee of the 12th PCEC in Winnipeg, 2019. He sits on the Bird Specialist Subcommittee of COSEWIC and is involved in many initiatives here and internationally. He coordinated the Manitoba Breeding Bird Atlas. He has received the Cliff Shaw Award for contributions to the *Blue Jay*, Nature Manitoba's Ernest Thompson Seton Award and Manitoba's Service Excellence Award (partnership category). (Instagram: @ch\_artuso, Facebook: chris.artuso.3, Twitter: @Birds\_Manitoba)

##### **Carolyn Callaghan**

Carolyn Callaghan is Canadian Wildlife Federation's Senior Conservation Biologist for Terrestrial Wildlife. She holds a Ph.D. in wildlife ecology from the University of Guelph. Her primary area of focus is the conservation of biodiversity on working landscapes in Canada, including rights-of-way and agricultural land. She and her collaborators look for compatibility with farming practices and business practices on rights-of-way and the recovery of species at risk and threatened ecosystems. Carolyn's work spans ecological research, government policy, and sustainable food indices.

**Alvin First Rider**

Alvin First Rider is an Environmental Technician for Blood Tribe Land Management. He is a Blood Tribe member and a descendant of the Blackfeet Nation. A graduate of Salish Kootenai College with a BS in Environmental Science. He sits on various boards such as Prairie Conservation Forum. A main focus is promoting truly Indigenous led conservation projects and Blackfoot Ecological Knowledge with a focus on Bison and fire rematriation.

**Kate Hewitt** Kate has been a Project Manager at The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) since 2021 and responsible for delivering and facilitating projects related to CIER's thematic areas of Climate Change and Energy, Traditional Knowledge, and Biodiversity as they relate to collaborative initiatives and partnerships with Indigenous communities and various stakeholders. Originally from Toronto, Ontario, Kate now resides in Williams Lake, B.C. on the unceded territories of the Northern Secwepemc and T̓silhqot'in Nations. Kate has 18 years of experience and designations in the Natural Resources Management field with specific focus and interest in Wildlife Management and Conservation Planning.

**Cheyenne Ironman** *Han mitakuyapi!* I am a mother and proud member of Wipazoka Wakpa (Sioux Valley Dakota Nation). I've led many new initiatives in the community in the last 6 years from food sovereignty projects, climate change adaptation, energy efficiency, grasslands and SAR awareness, land-based activities, a kayaking program, and much more. The success of the initiatives is owed to the community – everything was made possible with the support of our leaders, the staff, our elders, and knowledge keepers, the youth, and the people participating and offering support. I'm currently managing the Sustainable Bison Management Planning Project and grasslands initiatives.

**Ruiping Luo** is a Conservation Specialist with the Alberta Wilderness Association. Her current work focuses on grasslands and Species At Risk, although she has a particular interest in how species interact. She holds a BSc from the University of Calgary and an MSc from the University of Toronto, where she studied drought and plant-herbivore interactions.

**Cliff Wallis** Born in England, Cliff moved to Alberta as a boy. He worked for Alberta Parks in the 1970s, then began his own environmental consulting firm. Cliff is a Professional Biologist with a diverse background in protected area systems planning, wetlands, ecological studies, Species At Risk, environmentally significant areas, environmental assessment, restoration, and regulatory processes. Cliff has served on NGO boards since the 1970s and worked with governments, non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities, local landowners, and industry. He has been involved with legal cases including the Friends of the Oldman River Society v. Canada (Minister of Transport) which was successful in the Supreme Court of Canada.