



“Diversity: Key to Resilience”

Draft Program*

*may be subject to change

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

8:00 am-12:00 pm	Various Tours (see prairiecesc.ca)
1:00 – 5:00 pm	Workshops in various locations Set up posters and tradeshow booths at TCU Place (Centennial Hall)
7:00 - 9:00 pm	Opening reception (Centennial Hall)

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

8:00- 8:50 am	BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION (Centennial Hall)		
9:00 - 9:30 am	Welcome, Conference Opening		
9:30 - 10:20 am	Plenary 1: Resilience Through Unity: How the Association of Manitoba Community Pastures Strengthened a Diverse Network. Barry Ross, Association of Manitoba Community Pastures		
10:20-10:40 am	HEALTH BREAK		
Rooms	<i>Gallery B</i>	<i>Gallery C</i>	<i>Gallery D</i>
	SESSION 1: Engaging Communities in Conservation	SESSION 2: From Lab to Landscape	SESSION 3: Species at risk Research and Monitoring
10:40-11:00 am	1.1 No one says “biodiversity” to me: Enhancing Conservation on the Working Landscape of the Saskatchewan Aspen Parkland Andrea Olive	2.1 Using molecular tools to identify mussels and support their conservation in the Lower Qu’Appelle River, SK. Gregory Frie et al.	3.1 Across the border: multi-jurisdictional survey of the Canada-northern Montana Swift Fox population Stefano Liccioli, Nicole Hussey and Beatriz Prieto-Diaz
11:00-11:20 am	1.2 Shared Legacy: Community Connections to Conservation Outcomes in Manitoba's Tall Grass Prairie Christine Chilton et al.	2.2 Patterns of population subdivision of Ord’s kangaroo rat throughout its Canadian range Jessie Bainbridge et al.	3.2 Paws on the Prairie: Collaborative project on Swift Fox distribution in Saskatchewan Beatriz Prieto-Diaz, Andrea Benville and Rebecca Magnus

11:20-11:40 am	1.3 Investigating Broader Social Impacts of Conservation on Grassland Species Heather Peat Hamm, Mia Grey and John Pattison-Williams	2.3 Living off the Fat of the Land: Linking Grassland Vegetation, Insects, and Birds John Wilmshurst et al.	3.3 Under the soil, monitoring the cryptic herpetofauna of Grasslands National Park Samuel Davison, Laura Gardiner
11:40 am-12:00 pm	1.4 Centering Community in Conservation: Engagement to Advance Species at Risk Recovery in Southwest Manitoba Steven Anderson et. al.	2.4 Using Species Distribution Models to Inform Conservation of Rare Vascular Plants in Northern Saskatchewan Dustin Snider, Eric Lamb, and Katherine Standen	3.4 Incorporating Diverse Perspectives into the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Herd's Stewardship Mia Nemeth and Clinton Westman
12:00 - 1:00 pm	LUNCH		
1:00 - 1:50 pm	Plenary 2: Overwintering in Canadian reptiles; knowns, unknowns and presumptions. Nicholas Cairns, Royal Alberta Museum		
1:50 – 2:40 pm	Plenary 3: Rematriation of Buffalo to the grasslands. Jesska Surjik, Buffalo Culture Collective		
2:40 - 3:00 pm	HEALTH BREAK		
Rooms	<i>Gallery B</i>	<i>Gallery C</i>	<i>Gallery D</i>
	SESSION 4: Grassland Birds I	SESSION 5: Education and Knowledge Sharing	SESSION 6: Conserving Through Disturbance
3:00 - 3:20 pm	4.1 The Prairie Canada Piping Plover census & collaborative monitoring Rebecca Magnus and John Conkin	5.1 Transforming agricultural landscapes for resilient food systems and biodiversity conservation Branimir Gjetvaj	6.1 Grazing, mowing and burning small white lady's-slipper (<i>Cypripedium candidum</i>) habitat in remnant tall grass prairie in southeastern Manitoba. Christy Borkowsky and Karin Newman
3:20 - 3:40 pm	4.2 Conservation of Burrowing Owls in Canada Geoff Holroyd	5.2 Conservation through childhood education Shirley Bartz	6.2 How do disturbance-based management practices influence soil properties and the presence of preferred plant species for Poweshiek Skipperling in Manitoba? Jessica Mariana et al.
3:40 - 4:00 pm	4.3 Eight years of burrowing owl head-starting in Suffield, Alberta Graham Dixon-MacCallum, Lacey Hébert and Troy Wellicome	5.3 "It's our gem": Leveraging community values to conserve prairie grasslands Mary Agnes Welch and Christine Chilton	6.3 Management practices benefit endangered Poweshiek Skipperling (<i>Oarisma poweshiek</i>) Melissa Grantham et al.
4:00 - 4:20 pm	4.4 Last Mountain Bird Observatory: 35 years of songbird monitoring on the prairies Jordan Rustad and Alan Smith	5.4 Conservation through Indigenous land access on the prairies Amy Seesequasis and Valerie Zink	6.4 Conserving grassland songbirds through climate-informed management of disturbance regimes Alice Boyle
4:20 - 6:00 pm	DEDICATED POSTER SESSION AND CASH BAR (<i>Centennial Hall</i>)		

6:00 - 9:00 pm	BANQUET, SILENT AUCTION AND EVENING PROGRAM <i>Introduction by Adam Janzen from Trace Associates Inc., Banquet Sponsor</i> <i>Young Professional Stewardship Grant Winners, Announced by Chelsea Pomedli from Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve, Grant Sponsor</i>
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Thursday, May 7, 2026			
8:00 - 9:00 am	BREAKFAST		
9:00 - 9:10 am	Opening remarks		
9:10 - 10:10 am	Plenary 4: From Grassroots to Connections Across a Biome: Strengthening Indigenous-led Grassland Conservation Cheyenne Ironman, Indigenous Kinship Circle <i>Introduced by Branimir Gjetvaj, on behalf of PPPI, Keynote Speaker Sponsor</i>		
10:10-10:40 am	NETWORKING BREAK		
Rooms	<i>Gallery B</i>	<i>Gallery C</i>	<i>Gallery D</i>
	SESSION 7: Grassland Birds II	SESSION 8: Tools for Conservation	SESSION 9: Breaking down Barriers for Conservation
10:40-11:00 am	7.1 High spatial variability of depredated artificial Greater Sage-grouse nests in Grasslands National Park, Canada Julia Put et al.	8.1 Collaborative science for Tomorrow's Prairies: toward a shared understanding of grassland classification in Canada Alison Long et al.	9.1 Lizard, Lizard, Lizard - Mitigating for Sensitive Species on an Ecologically Significant Grassland Adam Janzen
11:00-11:20 am	7.2 The Last of Us: Preventing extirpation of Greater Sage-grouse in Grasslands National Park, Canada Laura Gardiner, Julia Put and Christopher Reed	8.2 Collaborative science for Tomorrow's Prairies: projecting grassland loss under conversion scenarios Bronwyn Rayfield et al.	9.2 Effects of climate change on future potential habitat of plains rough fescue (<i>Festuca hallii</i>) in the Central Plains of North America Johan Home and Eric Lamb
11:20-11:40 am	7.3 Beyond Vegetation Structure: How Plant Communities and Soils Shape Habitat for Grassland Species at Risk Philip Rose et al.	8.3 Collaborative science for Tomorrow's Prairies: Biodiversity impacts for scenarios for grassland conversion in Canada Ronnie Drever et al.	9.3 Pronghorn Xing: "Paving" the Way for Wildlife Corridors John Wilmshurst et al.
11:40 am-12:00 pm	7.4 Changes in landcover of a prairie city picks winners and losers in the bird community Ryan Fisher, Jordan Rustad and Mark Brigham	8.4 Working Together for Biodiversity: A Review of Collaborative Conservation in Canada Lilian Dart et al.	9.4 The risks, benefits, and challenges of cross-boundary conservation of species Lea Randall
12:00 - 1:00 pm	LUNCH		
Rooms	<i>Gallery B</i>	<i>Gallery C</i>	<i>Gallery D</i>
	SESSION 10: Conservation Planning	SESSION 11: Restoration	SESSION 12: Wetlands

1:00 - 1:20 pm	10.1 Learning as We Go: Bringing Heritage Resource Management into Conservation Planning Erica Maier	11.1 Restoring Grassland Habitat: 17 Years of Native Grass Reseeding in the Dry-Mixed Grasslands of SE Alberta. Brad Downey, Julie Landry-DeBoer and Phil Rose	12.1 Peer Learning and Wetland Conservation: Insights for Conservation Practitioners Andrew Batycki, Helen Baulch and Maureen Reed
1:20 – 1:40 pm	10.2 Prairies Under Pressure: Mapping Woody Plant Expansion and Assessing Its Impact on Ranching Irini Soubry, Lampros Nikolaos Maros et al.	11.2 Seeds of Diversity: native seed production and urban restoration Marika Olynyk et al.	12.2 Influence of agricultural intensity on waterfowl productivity in the Canadian Prairie Pothole Region Andrew Collard et al.
1:40 – 2:00 pm	10.3 Conservation prioritization at scale: using GIS-analysis to identify Where to Work in Canada’s agricultural heartland Lisa Greaves et al.	11.3 Economic Incentives with Ecological Benefits: Using a Reverse Auction for Native Grassland Restoration Mindy Hockley-Anderson	12.3 A watershed class–based evaluation of changes in Prairie wetland habitat and bird abundance with changing climate Colin Whitfield, Bob Clark, and Chris Spence
2:00 - 2:20 pm	10.4 Conservation of Vegetation Communities: Using the Canadian National Vegetation Classification to Crosswalk, Classify and Rank Grassland Types Sarah Vinge-Mazer et al.	11.4 Breaking Down Dams, Building Back Prairies: A Case Study in Southern Alberta Neena Jordan and Kim MacKenzie	12.4 Understanding the impacts of agricultural land use on aquatic insect populations in the Prairie Pothole Region. Roberto Sanchez
2:20 - 2:40 pm	10.5 Detecting Crested Wheatgrass Using Remote Sensing Xulin Guo, Mohammed, and Dale Gross	11.5 From Collection to Capacity: Building a Resilient Native Seed Network for Western Canada Renny W. Grilz	12.5 Little Streams, Big Habitat Value Tyler Eresman and Marnel Muller
2:40 - 3:00 pm	HEALTH BREAK		
3:00 - 4:00 pm	Plenary 5: Resilience Through Connection: What Biodiversity Teaches Us About Working Together. Terry Gagne, Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve		
4:00 - 4:30 pm	CLOSING THE CONFERENCE		

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