


MACKENZIE COUNTY

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

**AUGUST 27, 2019
10:00 AM**

FORT VERMILION COUNCIL
CHAMBERS

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Mackenzie County

**MACKENZIE COUNTY
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

**Tuesday, August 27, 2019
10:00 a.m.**

**Fort Vermilion Council Chambers
Fort Vermilion, Alberta**

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | Caribou Mountains Wildland Management Plan
Delegation – 10:00 a.m.
Calvin McLeod, Director Northwest Region, Alberta Environment and
Parks | 5 |
| 2. | Emergency Events – Gaps, Improvements, and Solutions | 49 |
| 3. | Red Tape Projects | 53 |
| 4. | Agricultural Land Expansion | 81 |
| 5. | Removal of Trees – 94 Avenue between 106 Street and 108 Street
(Hamlet of La Crete) | 125 |
| 6. | Next Meeting – November 26, 2019 | |



Mackenzie County

REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

Meeting:	Committee of the Whole Meeting
Meeting Date:	August 27, 2019
Presented By:	Len Racher, Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	DELEGATION Calvin McLeod, Director Northwest Region, Alberta Environment and Parks – Caribou Mountains Wildland Management Plan

BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:

Calvin McLeod will be present at the meeting to discuss any issues and concerns that the County has regarding the Caribou Mountains Wildland Park.

The Assistant Deputy Minister was unable to attend however is willing to meet with a delegation of Council during the RMA Convention in November.

Attached for reference are the briefing notes from the North Northwest Citizen's Advocacy Committee presented to Council on February 26, 2019.

OPTIONS & BENEFITS:

COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:

COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Author: C. Gabriel Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

POLICY REFERENCES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Simple Majority

Requires 2/3

Requires Unanimous

For discussion.

Author: _____ Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

**Mackenzie County Committee of the Whole Council Meeting: February 26th 2019,
Fort Vermilion, AB**

Briefing notes from the North Northwest Citizens' Advocacy Committee (NNWCAC)
Chair Person

The following is some background with the "recent events" that Calvin Macleod alluded to when responding to the re-activation of the Caribou Mountains Wildland Park Advisory Committee.

The events included:

1. The destruction of the White Sands Forestry lookout tower;
2. The recent emphasis on enforcing a "no killing of Bison" in the Caribou Mountains Wildland Park;
3. The move by the Government of Alberta (AEP) to have the herd of diseased American Plains Bison hybrids roaming outside of Wood Buffalo National Park declared "Wildlife" under the Wildlife Act, and the ramifications of that decision on local cattle producers, as well as the recovery of pure disease-free Canadian Wood Bison into their former range;
4. The appearance of misinformation by Conservation Officers of the Provincial Parks Branch in regards to these bison; and
5. The apparent on-going collaboration with Parks Canada on a program that will permanently protect this diseased herd in our area.

Overlapping all of these issues is, most of all, a lack of public disclosure and consultation with the local community, as well as an apparent abandonment of the principles that were communicated to the local public with regard to the continued uses of the area as was historically practised and the cultural importance of this area, provided by Alberta Parks when the Wildland Park was created (contained in documented minutes of those public meetings).

1st event:

The destruction of the Forestry gondola/fire tower and look out cabin, formally called the White Sands Forestry Lookout.

The reason for this concern is that it is apparent that Provincial Parks does not feel it's important to consult with the committee, which was designed to provide local perspective and significance of cultural and historic value placed on objects, such as this historic tower, when making permanent changes in the park.

The reason provided by Conservation Officers as well as Forestry is that there was liability associated with structure.

This is not a valid reason for destruction. Local historical societies and Canadian historical societies have a record of funding the rejuvenation of these sites, however they were never consulted. As well, surplus money usually available at fiscal year's end could have funded infrastructure/maintenance material, and rejuvenation would eliminate liability. Surplus money which is currently being expended on the joint forces operation in the caribou mountains as we speak, and for what amounts to misdemeanor offences similar in severity to no registration and insurance on ATV's.

Question:

Why did Provincial Parks fail to consult with Mackenzie County, the Committee, or engage the local people prior to demolition?

2nd event:

Currently Alberta Parks is involved in a Surveillance Program in the Caribou Mountains Wildland Park. This is a joint forces program involving Fish and Wildlife Officers. The intent, as articulated by Conservation Officers on site at Foggy tower as well as by phone-in information, identifies the purpose of this surveillance project. That being the enforcement of a relatively recent interpretation of Provincial Parks regulation.

For cattle and bison producers in the Fort Vermilion, La Crete, High Level area it means that when a diseased bison comes into contact with one of their animals, and it tests positive for Tuberculosis or brucellosis, CFIA will insure that your herd is slaughtered, and the taxpayer reimburses you for your loss, but the Crown's "wildlife " herd will be protected and CFIA has no responsibility for cleaning up that herd. New interpretation of the Parks regulation that according to that interpretation does not allow the killing of any of the American Plains Bison Hybrid and diseased bison in the park. It is also to enforce this application of the Parks Regulations on Guides and Outfitters.

First, we are not trying to interfere with on going enforcement programs. Our intent is have you explain why Alberta Provincial Parks wishes to protect these bison. They are not classified as wildlife, but more like domestic livestock. They carry Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis, two federally reportable diseases that have the potential of exposing local cattle herds and any other cattle herd that come in contact with these herds to diseases that require slaughter of herds to contain the disease. In addition, the culling of these herds has been a goal of both federal and provincial agencies for more than 80 years.

The diseased American Plains Bison hybrids and the diseases stand in the way of Canadian Wood Bison recovery. The effort expended by the Canadian Taxpayer to sequester small herds of pure Canadian Wood Bison in 5 different herds through out western and northern Canada for the expressed purpose of re-introducing them into the full extent of their former range has been in the many of millions of dollars. Continued protection of the diseased herd prevents that from happening. The facts are that the province does not regulate the slaughter of these animals by anyone, at anytime, for very good reason. The only physical population control on this herd is the few that are harvested by aboriginal and non-aboriginal people, as well as a few Americans who

actually pay good money for a trophy of an animal we want eradicated from this area. A win-win situation if ever there was one.

Several conversations with a senior conservation officer over the issue of Bison slaughter in the Wildland Park and the significant enforcement effort currently underway has led to the following reasons being provided by the conservation officer:

1. "The regulations are there and we have a responsibility to enforce them; and
2. "We have no other choice but to enforce this regulation" we cannot ignore the regulations.

These responses don't seem to have any merit, for the following reasons:

- During the same conversation, they advised that the users have to have registration and insurance on their ATV's but that "we don't want to enforce that regulation on you right now";
- The severity or penalty for no registration and insurance is the same as "removing an object from the park" \$287.00 specified penalty (traffic ticket type). All the charges that would result if a person killed a Buffalo in the Wildland Park are minor in nature and are specified penalty, (\$287.00);
- It seems we, the taxpayers, are supporting a joint Forces Surveillance operation , involving Aircraft, Fish and Wildlife Staff and Parks staff, including overtime and fuel, for the enforcement of non resource management related issues; and
- Conservation Officers have also stated that they are not "out to protect " these bison, but merely, out of a sense of duty, just enforcing regulations.

Questions:

1. Why the effort to protect them?
2. Why was this effort only in recent years? (Wildland Park a 15 year entity). No mention of activity or enforcement effort was made for the first ten years.
3. To what end is this protectionist policy? (Which leads to the 4th event Question)
4. Why spend the enormous amount of money on an enforcement effort, to protect a diseased organism from harming the park and other areas, and not spend a dime to preserve a historic site (tower) in the park?
5. Is this more misinformation, and is there another more serious agenda that is not being made transparent to the public?

Without doubt, recent charges now before the court will sort out the legality and credibility of the interpretation and application of the parks regulation. The point is:

Questions:

1. Why was that the process?
2. Why didn't Alberta Parks engage the community?
3. Isn't it much easier to interpret your current legislation according to the meaning and intent of the legislation and the writers of it, rather than stretch the meanings and definitions in way to purposefully protect this animal that everyone else needs gone?

4th event:

Information from your Conservation Officers indicate that "it's pretty well a done deal" to have these diseased bison declared "wildlife" in the province.

The ramifications of that move are as follows:

1. The reportable nature of these diseases is handled through CFIA. They are the agricultural reportable disease monitoring and control agency housed under Health Canada. Once these animals are "wildlife" and not an agricultural/ domestic animal, CFIA no longer monitors, controls or really has any involvement.
2. The designation will provide an opportunity to further restrict the slaughter of these animals by limiting the seasons they can be hunted, and the specific area to be hunted. It will also mean a need for increased "enforcement" presence, which will mean more government employees.
3. It will mean the end to the 90-year old plan to re-introduce Canadian Wood Bison into their former range and recover them to a healthy population status. We will have to "cull" pure bred, disease-free Canadian Wood Bison in these small areas, in order to preserve American Plains Bison Hybrid, and protect and insure that the diseases of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis will have a permanent repository in our province.

Questions:

1. If this is a plan as mentioned by the Conservation Officer for this area, why has there been no consultation, no public disclosure and public meetings?
2. Has AEP not learned from the heavy public criticism for the protection of the Big Horn Country proposals that they need public input and consultation to get things right? That means at the beginning of the planning stage, not at the "pretty well done deal" stage.

3. Will AEP engage the local public, its citizens groups and the public at large before considering that type of change?

3rd event:

Conservation Officers plainly stated that Bovine Tuberculosis stays active in the soil for up to two hundred years. The comment further went on to indicate that as a result it would be fruitless to try and eradicate this herd and then replace it with disease-free bison . They would just become infected from the soil.

This false information is concerning. It is, if regularly communicated to the public, what appears to be an on-going misinformation campaign, seemingly to justify a position taken by an agency with an agenda opposite to public well-being.

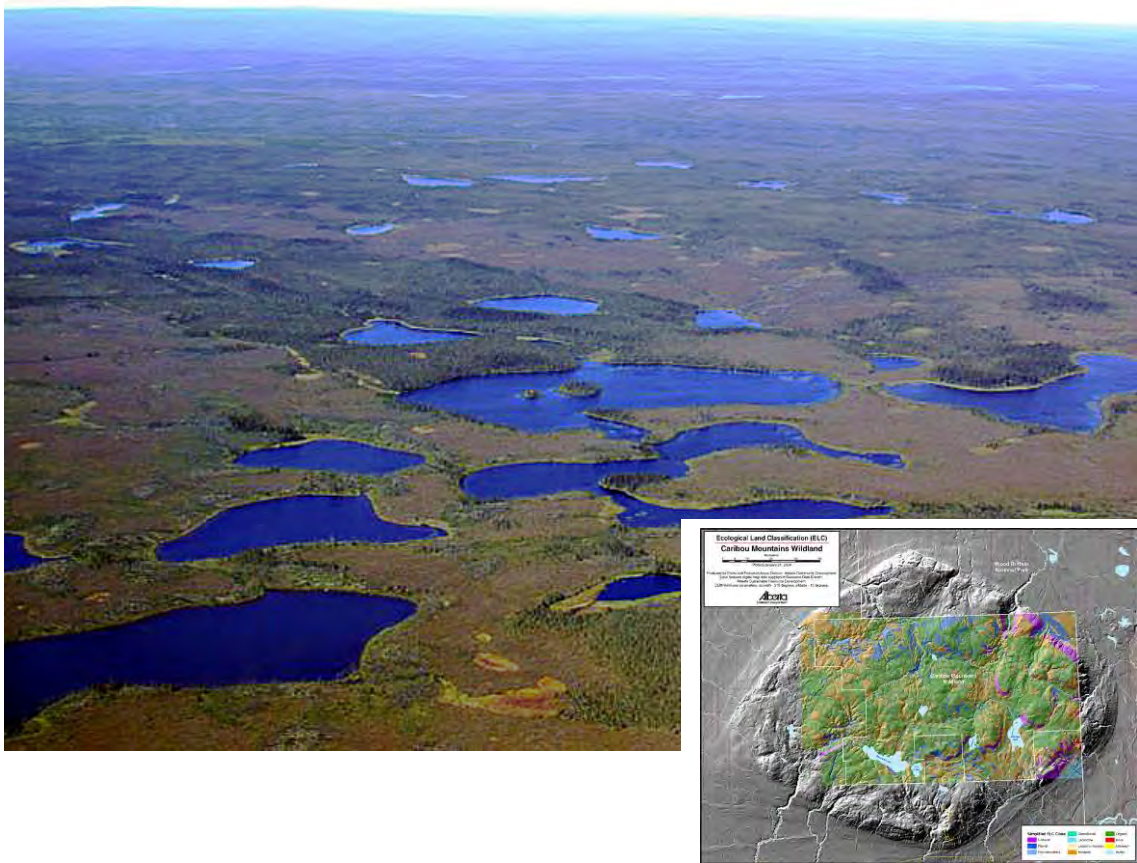
A good example of a relatively successful, or successful to-date, misinformation campaign is the Parks Canada's posters, website, and articles which describe the bison herd in the parks as "the largest, free-ranging, self-regulating Wood Bison herd in the world."

When the governments transferred 6,673 Plains Bison (Bison Bison Bison) from Buffalo National Park (Canadian Forces Base Wainwright) to Wood Buffalo National Park the Wood Bison (Bison Bison Athabascae) created a hybrid. The bison in the Park are 75% American Plains Bison with a small contribution of Wood Bison.

Make no mistake, there are no "Wood Bison" in Wood Buffalo National Park, but there should be. The misinformation is solely for the purpose of keeping the herd as is, so that Parks Canada can maintain their status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and all the prestige and money that flows from that designation.

The lack of desire to re-engage the Caribou Mountain Wildland Park Advisory Committee, and the lack of any attempt to engage local cattle and bison producers, the local Citizens and have public meetings to receive their input, on such important issues is similar and will have similar repercussions as the Big Horn Country proposals and public outcry over non-transparency from government.

Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park Draft Management Plan



Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture
Parks and Protected Areas Division

February 2007

International Standard Book Number:

For copies of this report, contact:

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Preface

The Caribou Mountain Wildland Provincial Park management plan provides a long-term vision and day-to-day guidance for stewardship of the park. The plan was prepared by department staff, within the context of existing legislation and regulations. It outlines the type and extent of outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities, facilities and services. The plan provides direction regarding the delivery of heritage appreciation programs that assist Albertans and visitors to understand and appreciate our natural heritage while ensuring its ongoing preservation.

The management plan was developed with an advisory committee and other public input and is intended to provide for periodic review and revision to reflect the current thinking of Albertans on how our natural heritage will be preserved for present and future generations.

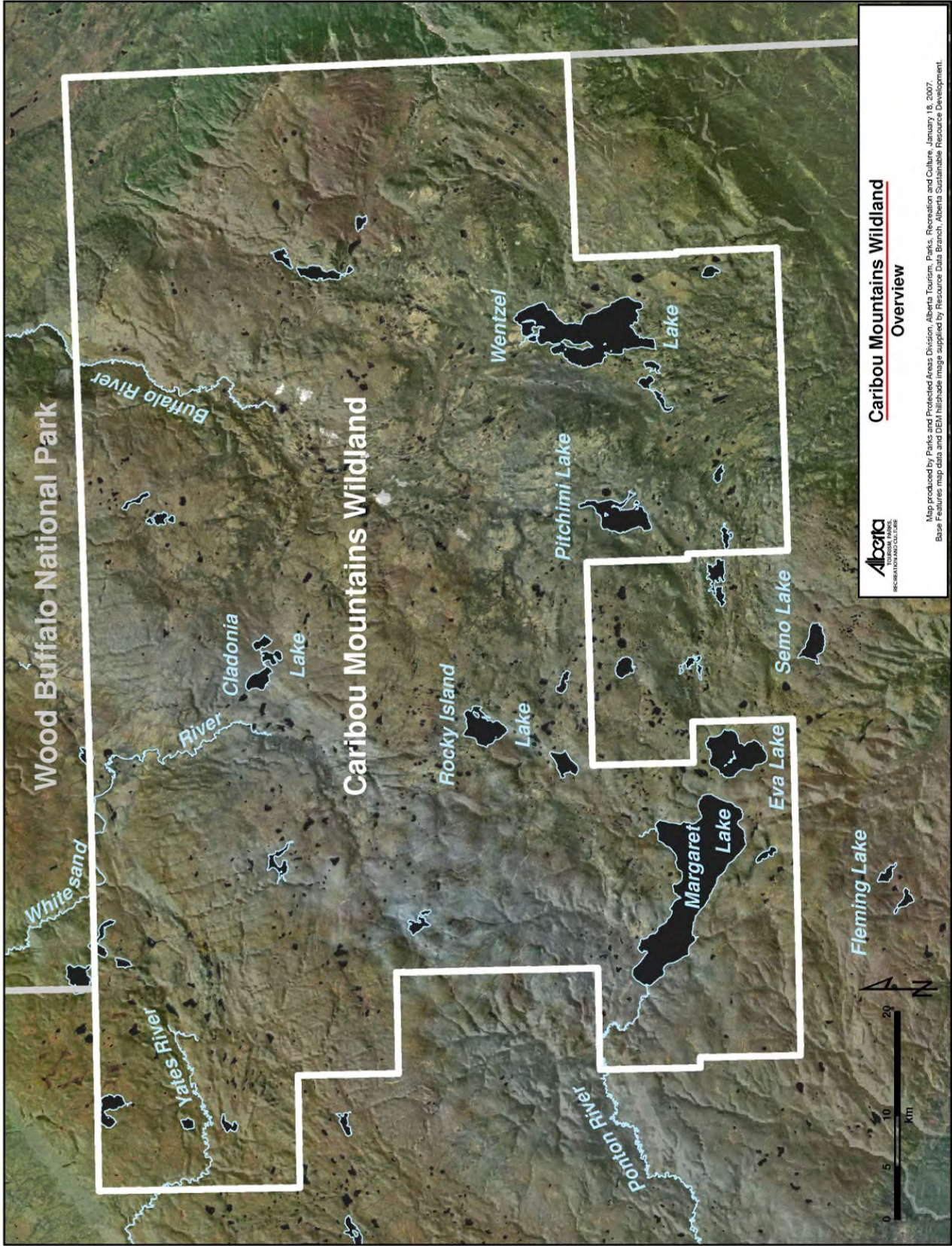
The Minister responsible for Parks and Protected Areas Division has authorized the implementation of the management plan and retains the authority to amend or interpret its provisions.

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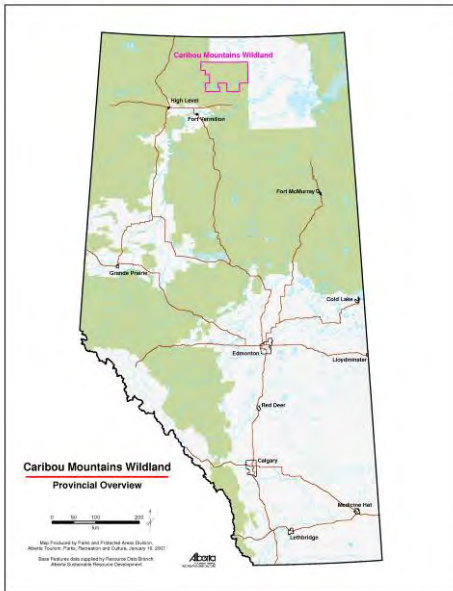


Alberta
REGISTRATION AND CULTURE

Caribou Mountains Wildland
Overview

Map produced by Parks and Protected Areas Division, Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, January 18, 2007.
Base Features: map data and DEM hillshade image supplied by Resource Data Branch, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development.

1.0. Introduction



1.1 Location and Designation

Caribou Mountains Wildland provincial park (5,910 sq. km.) is located in northern Alberta on a large plateau that rises up to 700 meters above the surrounding lowlands. It covers about 41% of the Caribou Mountains proper, and is a diverse area with many biological and landscape elements unique to Alberta.

The park is surrounded by Wood Buffalo National Park abuts the north and east side and by crown land on the other sides. The site is isolated and mostly undisturbed. The closest communities are the Little Red River Cree Nation at John D’Or Prairie and Fox Lake, both south of the park. Fort Vermilion is about 60 kilometers southwest of the park along the Peace River.

The Caribou Mountains have long been recognized as a unique landform in Alberta (Lee et al 1982). During the Alberta Government Special Places Program initiated in 1995, Caribou Mountains was nominated for

consideration as a protected area. Subsequently, Caribou Mountains Wildland provincial park was designated in July 2001.

1.2 Significance of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park

The Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park protects a large portion of the Boreal Subarctic Natural Subregion of the Boreal Forest Natural Region. This natural subregion exists in Albert only in the Caribou Mountains and Cameron Hills around Bistcho Lake.

Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs)

ESAs are natural landscapes that include the following criteria: unique, unusual or remnant ecosystems; unique landforms; habitat for rare and endangered species; and areas that perform a vital ecological function (Alberta Environmental Protection 1998). ESAs of provincial significance include relatively undisturbed and sizable remnants of upland and valley habitats, waterfowl and shorebird staging areas, and critical wildlife ranges.

Four ESAs of provincial significance were identified in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park (Sweetgrass Consultants 1997).

Margaret Lake	Excellent sport fishery, including whitefish, trout, pike, burbot Sites of breeding red-throated loons Other bird species at edge of range include grey-cheeked thrush, mew gull, American sparrow. Veneer bog Surrounding upland is caribou habitat
Caribou Mountains Peat Plateau Bog	Sphagnum dominated peat bog with collapse scars and channel fens

Caribou Mountains Northern Ribbed Fens	Limited and unique peat development and patterning Contains rare plants such as lousewort and bladderwort
Caribou Mountains Escarpment	A unique landform Supports a high flora and fauna diversity due to the extreme variation in elevation. Includes significant woodland caribou habitat

Rare Flora and Fauna Species

Nineteen rare species have been recorded for the park. These species are ranked provincially and globally by the Alberta Natural Heritage Information Center (ANHIC). ([Info on rare bryophytes coming](#))

Rare Species	Provincial Ranking	Global Ranking
Red-throated loon	SNA	G5
Red-necked phalarope	SNA	G4G5
Mew gull	S2	G5
Grey-cheeked thrush	S1	G5
American tree sparrow	SNA	G5
Woodland caribou (boreal ecotype)	S2	G5TNR
Wood Bison	S1	G4T2Q
Bird colony (herring gulls, mew gulls)	SNR	
Meadow bitter cress (<i>cardamine pratensis</i>)	S1S2	G5
Bodin's milk vetch (<i>Astragalus bodinii</i>)	S1	G4
Small butterwort (<i>Pinguicula villosa</i>)	S1	G4
Purple rattle (<i>Pedicularis sudetica</i>)	S1	G5
Western red cedar (<i>Thuja plicata</i>)	S1S2	G5
Narrow sedge (<i>Carex arcta</i>)	S1	G5
Hudson Bay sedge (<i>Carex heleonastes</i>)	S2	G4
Marsh rush (<i>Juncus stygins var americanus</i>)	S2	G5T5
Polar grass (<i>Arctagrostis arundinacea</i>)	S1	G5T5
Lapland reed grass (<i>Calamagrostis lapponica</i>)	S1	G5
Blunt-leaved pondweed (<i>Potamogeton obtusifolius</i>)	S2	G5

Key to provincial/global rankings: (S is provincial ranking; G is global ranking)

S1/G1: 5 or fewer occurrences or only a few remaining individuals; May be especially vulnerable to extirpation because of some factor of its biology.

S2/G2: 6-20 or fewer occurrences or with many individuals in fewer locations;

May be especially vulnerable to extirpation because of some factor of its biology

S3/G3: 21-100 occurrences, may be rare and local throughout its range, or in a restricted range (may be abundant in some locations); May be susceptible to extirpation because of large scale disturbances; some elements are tracked.

S4/G4: Typically >100 occurrences; apparently secure; elements not tracked.

S5/G5: Typically 100 occurrences; demonstrably secure; elements not tracked.

A- Accidental or casual in the province, includes species (usually birds or butterflies) recorded very infrequently, commonly far outside their usual range.

B - A rank modifier indicating breeding status for a migratory species.

C - Element is presently existing in the province only in captivity or cultivation.

E - Exotic species established in province, may be native to nearby regions.

H - Historically known, may be relocated in future.

N - A rank modifier indicating non-breeding status for a migratory species.

P - Potentially exists in province but no occurrences reported.

R - reported but lacking sufficient documentation

SNA - Alberta ranking, non-breeding - usually outside of range

T - rank for a subspecific taxon

Rare Plant Communities

Three plant community types documented during the 2003 Caribou Mountains Biophysical Study are recommended for addition to ANHIC Preliminary Plant Community Tracking List and should be considered as significant features within the park (Allen et al 2006). These are:

- Black spruce / star-tipped reindeer lichen woodland (*Picea mariana* / *Cladina stellaris*) on the east shore of Wentzel Lake. This community is different from other black spruce communities by the lack of sphagnum species and the total understory dominance by lichens.
- An area near Horseshoe Lake in the northwest corner of the park has a combination of permafrost peatlands in close proximity to an extremely rich patterned fen which may be unique in Alberta. The area contains several rare species and two ecological communities of significance. The ecological communities include:
 - *Sphagnum riparium* - *S. jensenii* – *S. angustifolium* permafrost thaw pocket shore-growing peat moss - pendant branch peat moss - poor fen peat moss permafrost thaw pocket
 - *Sphagnum angustifolium* - string poor fen peat moss string. These are near Horseshoe Lake in the northwest corner of the park, and are patterned fens made up of pools (flarks) and peat ridges (strings).
- A few-flowered spike-rush minerotrophic fen documented by Lee et al (1982) is also considered rare and should be added to the tracking list (Allen et al 2006).

1.3 Purpose of Management Plan

The management plan will provide direction for the future protection and use of the Caribou Mountains Wildland provincial park for a period of at least ten years. The plan is built on provincial policy and legislation, natural and cultural information, and public input.

Specifically, the management plan will:

- describe the park;
- place it in the context of Alberta's network of protected areas;
- define specific objectives of management within the broad goals of protected areas: preservation, heritage appreciation, outdoor recreation and heritage tourism;
- define areas requiring special protection or management (zoning);
- outline surrounding land use and cooperation with surrounding land managers;
- define actions required to implement the plan, including roles and responsibilities of agencies involved.

A review of the plan may occur after ten years from date of approval to ensure that management objectives remain relevant. A review could occur earlier if significant issues arose not covered in the plan.

1.4 Public Involvement

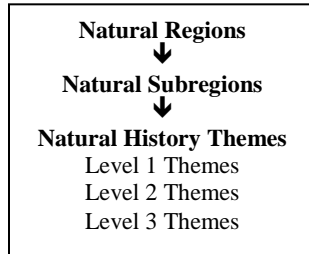
A Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed in 2002 to provide advice in preparation of the management plan for Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park. This advice will be framed within existing provincial legislation and policy for protected areas.

The public were invited to attend all meetings of the PAC. Open houses will also be held to obtain public input on a draft management plan, and the final plan will indicate how public input was incorporated. (This section to be finalized at end of planning process).

2.0 Role in Alberta's Network of Protected Areas

2.1 Natural Regions Framework

The government of Alberta is committed to protecting the province's natural diversity. To help select which areas of Alberta should be protected, a scientific framework based on natural features has been adopted. This



framework is a hierarchy of natural regions, subregions, and natural history themes. Natural Regions provide the "big picture" of Alberta's landscapes, such as grasslands, mountains, and boreal forest. The subregions and natural history themes are subdivisions of the natural regions, and provide a more specific picture of smaller areas.

There are six Natural Regions in Alberta, each of them readily apparent by their distinct landform features and vegetation. Each Natural Region has been divided into subregions based on criteria that vary depending on the natural region. For instance, the Boreal Natural Region is divided into 8 natural subregions based on vegetation, geology, and landforms.

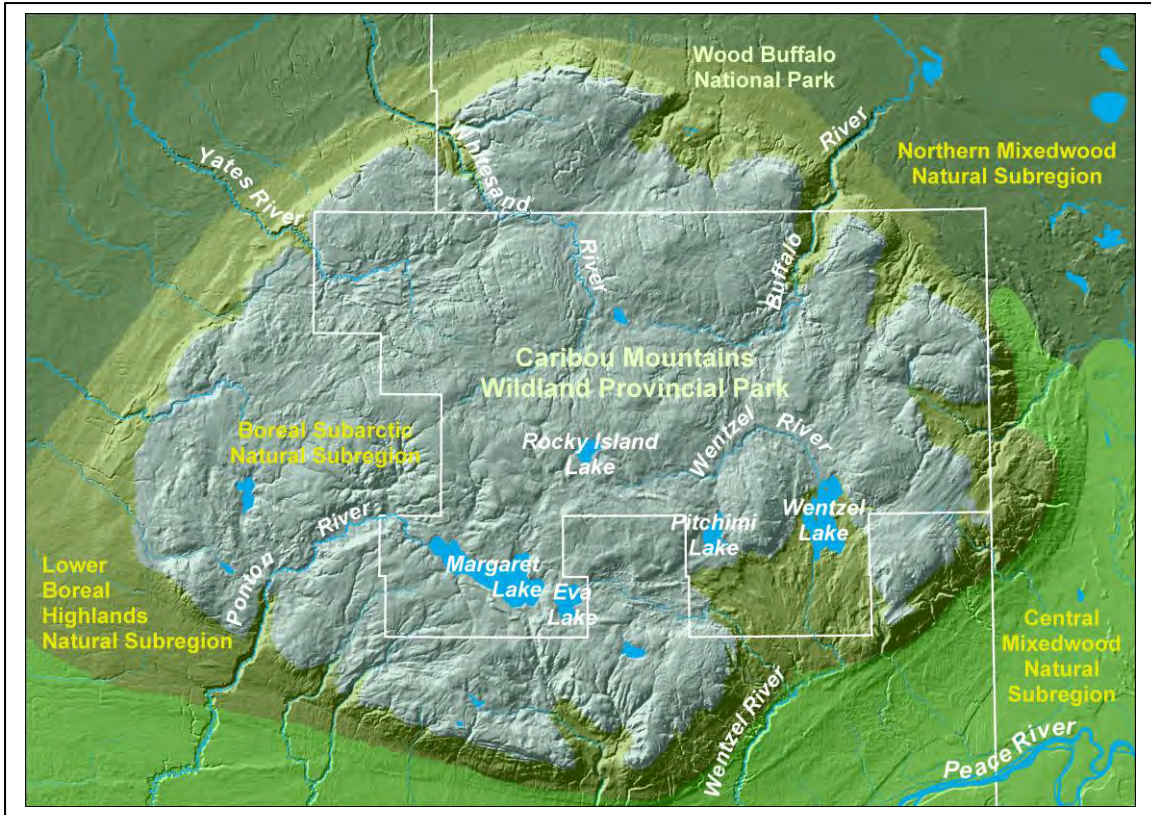
Caribou Mountains Wildland provincial park
Natural History Themes
Boreal Forest Natural Region
<i>Lower Boreal Highlands Natural Subregion</i>
Level I Themes (km ²)
Nonsandy Upland – ground moraine (25)
Valley/Ridge – rotated slope (225)
Valley/Ridge – floor/stream (105)
Wetland – mineral (100)
Wetland – organic (298.54)
Wetland – lake (70)
<i>Boreal Subarctic Natural Subregion</i>
Level I Themes (km ²)
Valley/Ridge – protected slope (377)
Non-sandy Upland – ground moraine (710)
Wetland – mineral (490)
Wetland – organic (3075)
Wetland – lake (334.39)
<i>Northern Mixedwood Natural Subregion</i>
Level I Themes (km ²)
Non-sandy Upland – hummocky moraine (15)

Subregions are further divided into Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 Natural History Themes. Level 1 Themes are based on easily observed landforms of subregions, such as wetlands and valley/ridges. They are the key working level of the framework. The Parks and Protected Areas Division network is analyzed and reported against targets for 168 Level 1 Themes.

Level 2 Themes are more specific breakdowns of Level 1 Themes. They are highly visible geological features or broad habitat/vegetation types, for example the black spruce/Labrador tea/lichen plant association of the subarctic plateau. Level 3 Themes are finer breakdowns of Level 2 Themes. They include specific features such as rare plants and animals, and specific bedrock and landform types, for example woodland caribou, karst rock formations and waterfalls.

The rationale and complete description of this Natural Regions framework is found in *Achuff 1994* and in *Downing and Pettapiece 2006*, and on the web at <http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/preserving/parks/managing/spectrumsites.asp>.

Over 90% of the park is in the Boreal Subarctic Natural Subregion. Portions of the surrounding escarpment (Boreal Highlands) and lowlands (Boreal Wetland Mixedwood) are also represented in the park (See Natural Regions map below).



2.2 Parks and Protected Areas Division Classification

Protected area legislation makes provision for eight classes of protected areas. This recognizes that protected area sites vary in size, in the sensitivity and significance of their natural heritage features, and in the recreational opportunities they may offer: This classification system has created a spectrum of Parks and Protected Areas Division ranging from pristine wilderness areas to intensive outdoor recreation sites. The classifications are

- Ecological Reserves
- Wilderness Areas
- Wildland Provincial Parks
- Provincial Parks
- Willmore Wilderness Park
- Heritage Rangelands
- Provincial Recreation Areas
- Natural Areas

Wildland provincial parks are large, undeveloped natural landscapes that retain their wild character. They preserve and protect natural heritage and provide opportunities for backcountry recreation. This is of particular interest to Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park.

2.3 Management of Parks and Protected Areas Division

Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture manages the provincial Parks and Protected Areas Division system as a legacy for future generations through leadership, stewardship and research to protect biodiversity and provide environmental, social and economic benefits.

Four goals reflect the Government of Alberta's commitment to maintaining a network of Parks and Protected Areas Division for present and future generations. The primary goal of preservation is balanced with three other goals: heritage appreciation, outdoor recreation and heritage tourism.

Preservations: To preserve, in perpetuity, a network of Parks and Protected Areas Division that represent the diversity of the province's natural heritage and related cultural heritage.

Heritage Appreciation: To provide opportunities to understand and appreciate Alberta's natural heritage, and to enhance public awareness of our relationship to and dependence upon the natural world.

Outdoor Recreation: To provide a variety of natural landscape-dependent outdoor recreation opportunities and related facilities and services.

Tourism : To encourage Alberta residents and visitors to discover and enjoy the province's natural heritage through a variety of outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism opportunities, facilities and accommodation services.

These four goals are implemented through a management approach focused on achieving long-term ecological health while accommodating compatible nature-based visitor opportunities. This approach calls for establishing and maintaining common goals and positive long term working relationships among land managers, stakeholders, neighbouring jurisdictions and visitors within the context of legislation and policy which govern the management of all sites within the provincial park system. In order to do this, management of the site will be based on the best available information and will seek to integrate biological, physical and social information. By doing this, the site will be able to continue to protect the special attributes for which it was designated, while continuing to provide compatible and appropriate opportunities for visitors. The following principles will be used to provide direction for the management of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park:

- Ecosystems extend beyond protected area boundaries. While management on neighbouring lands may affect wildlife, air, water, and vegetation within a protected area, likewise management within a protected area may affect adjacent lands. Ensuring good communication and co-ordination among land managers, stakeholders including neighbouring jurisdictions is essential. The management of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park must be coordinated with plans of the local municipality, other government departments, First Nations, and Wood Buffalo National Park.
- People are a fundamental part of the ecosystem. Inside protected areas, appropriate high quality recreation and tourism opportunities will be provided while protecting ecological and cultural heritage values. Understanding the relationship between people and the environment is the foundation of good management decisions.
- The traditional relationship of Alberta's aboriginal peoples to the land is a source of inspiration and understanding.
- Decisions are based on the best available ecological, cultural, economic and social information.
- Consulting and working with visitors, residents, businesses and other government agencies is a key component in maintaining ecological integrity, protecting our cultural heritage and offering opportunities to enjoy quality experiences.
- Providing high quality volunteer opportunities as well as visitor information, interpretation and environmental educational programs is essential.
- Natural processes, and, where appropriate, technology will be used to maintain or restore healthy ecosystems.
- Efforts will be made to establish more precise monitoring targets or indicator species by supporting ongoing research activities.

3.0 A Place for Nature

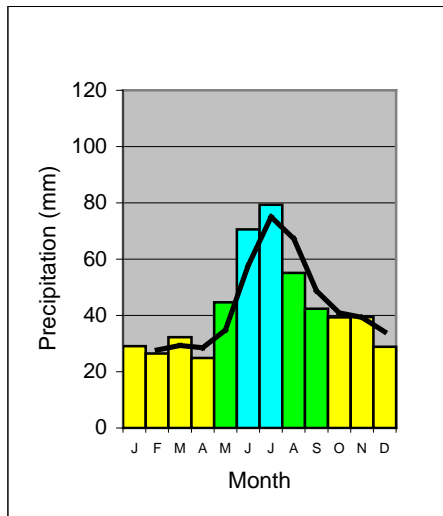
3.1. Geology, Climate, Landforms

Geology

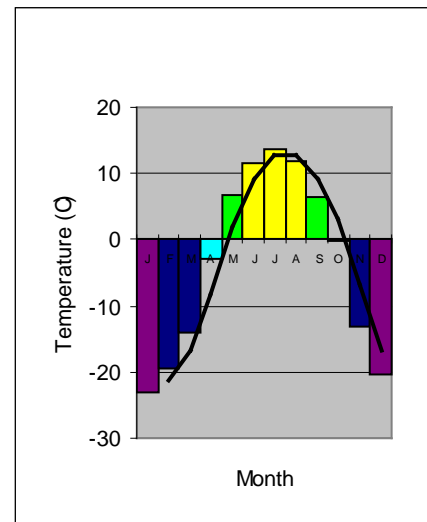
Bedrock geology in the Caribou Mountains consists of Cretaceous shales and sandstones, with some Tertiary gravels capping the higher hills. These gravels protect the upland from erosion (Lee et al. 1981). The escarpment lies at the transition from Cretaceous Shaftesbury Formation at lower elevations to Cretaceous Dunvegan formation and Smoky Group at higher elevations. Here the bedrock is a complex of shales, sandstones, and calcareous beds known for seepage and colluviation, which may be habitat for rare or unusual vegetation communities (Timoney 2005).

Climate

The climate is continental, cold-temperate with moist, short, cool summers and long, cold winters. While summer temperatures are cooler here than in adjacent low elevation areas, winter temperatures are likely more moderate, especially when cold Arctic air masses affect lower areas and temperatures increase with altitude. The frost-free period is less than 45 days.



Boreal Subarctic Natural Subregion
Mean Monthly Precipitation (MAP 512 mm)
(Natural Regions Committee 2006)



Boreal Subarctic Natural Subregion
Mean Monthly Temperature (MAT -3.6°C)
(Natural Regions Committee 2006)

Topography

The park contains two provincially significant landforms. The large, saucer shaped plateau that is a defining characteristic of the Caribou Mountains is an erosional remnant that rises 600 to 700 metres above the surrounding lowlands, with higher elevations mainly in the western part of the plateau. The plateau topography is gently rolling to rolling with large depressional areas. Most of the park is of this landform.

The slopes of the escarpment are mostly gently sloping, with the steepest slopes in the northwest (Allen et al 2006). Most slopes are dissected by streams and are very unstable. Slumping is common. Only the northeast and southeast corners of the park protect escarpment landscape.

Surficial Deposits and Soils

The area was glaciated by ice advancing from the northeast, but became ice-free around 9500 years ago. The Caribou Mountains formed an obstacle to the ice flow, and the resulting upward deflection of the ice sheet scoured ridges or flutings on the northeast slopes.

Surficial deposits of the plateau are primarily moraine till; the slopes of the escarpment are covered by glacial till in the form of both ground moraine and hummocky moraine.

In areas along river and lake shorelines, massive slumping of peat with pressure crevasses extending well back from the slump face occur. These slumps expose profiles of peat that are several metres thick.

Where mineral soils occur, they are mainly Gray Luvisols, Brunisols and Regosols developed on glacial till. There is no evidence of permafrost in any of the mineral soils. The escarpment is mainly mineral soils (Lee et al 1982). Soil temperatures are the coldest in Alberta.

Objective

Maintain natural habitats of the plateau and escarpment to support diversity of native species.

Management Guidelines

In general, disturbance to the plateau and escarpment should be kept to a minimum.

Since the escarpment and peatlands cannot be avoided by park users, some disturbance will occur. This will be minimized by allowing access only on frozen ground on a designated trail (see Section 4.4)

3.2. Hydrology

Wetlands

Wetlands are characteristic of the plateau, as much of it is covered with bog and fen peatlands. The area around Horseshoe Lake has already been discussed as a significant fen complex. Palsas, frozen soil cores that push upward forming hummocks, also occur in this fen complex.

The peatlands contain discontinuous permafrost, generally occurring above the 1500 foot level. Discontinuous can mean in location (patchy) or over time. The permafrost is maintained by the thick layer of peat and the snow blanket in winter. Disturbance to the peat layer may cause severe damage to the permafrost, with resulting changes in drainage, severe erosion, and disturbance to vegetation and wildlife.

Rivers

The major rivers in the park are the Wentzel and Ponton Rivers, which flow south into the Peace River system, and the Yates, Whitesand and Buffalo Rivers which flow north and west into the Hay River system. All ultimately flow into the Arctic. The rivers are generally fast flowing and usually steep-banked with rubble bottoms. The banks are unstable and prone to slumping.

Lakes

Caribou Mountain contains a relatively high density of large lake bodies compared to the surrounding area (Stelfox 1999). The largest include Margaret, Wentzel, Eva, Pitchimi and Rocky Island Lakes. The lakes are deep and cold, with Margaret Lake, the largest, being 61 m maximum depth and of 18.5m average depth

Objective

Maintain natural habitats of wetlands, lakes and rivers to support diversity of native species.

Management Guidelines

Removing or disturbing the wetlands peat layer should be avoided.

Activity on the lakes should avoid disturbance to habitat that may support fish spawning, breeding birds, and other wildlife activities that depend on these habitats (see Section 3.4.2).

3.3 Vegetation

Black spruce forests cover much of the plateau, primarily open stand and often stunted. Deciduous woodlands dominated by aspen and Alaskan birch are common only in the Wentzel Lake area, but occur sporadically elsewhere. Lodgepole pine stands are abundant on dry ridges, often associated with black spruce (Allan et al 2006). Bog bilberry and northern Labrador tea and lichen are characteristic ground cover.

The escarpment supports a high diversity of flora. Tree cover is typically mixedwood of aspen, balsam poplar and white spruce with a diverse understory, with balsam poplar and white spruce occurring more frequently on wetter sites. Lodgepole pine occurs on the well-drained sites. Black spruce may occur more frequently in upland areas near the plateau edges.

Wildfire is a natural phenomenon that has always played a role in the natural environment of the Caribou Mountains (see Fire History Map). Old burns have a thick regrowth of black spruce, pine and deciduous tree species, although growth is slow.

Vegetation communities in the park have been documented by Allen et al 2006. Sixty – six vegetation communities were identified. Of these, 4 are considered rare and recommended for addition to the Alberta Natural Heritage Information Center tracking list (see Section 1.2).

Lichen/moss info to be inserted.

Objectives

- **Manage the risk of wildfire to protect sensitive terrain, rare species, caribou habitat, ground vegetation and forest cover, and to maintain public safety.**
- **Monitor for forest insect and disease pest species, and control as required.**
- **Maintain rare vegetation communities and species**

Fire History map to be inserted..

Management Guidelines

Parks and Protected Areas Division in consultation with SRD, Forest Protection will prepare a wildfire plan. This plan will include a biophysical description of the park, fire history, a landscape assessment, fire management strategies, and a communication strategy. Considerations specific to Caribou Mountains include:

- Protection of caribou habitat
- Permafrost areas
- Protection of rare flora and fauna species and vegetation communities

- Consultation with Wood Buffalo National Park who has a border zone fire agreement with Alberta
- Consultation with other neighbouring jurisdictions.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development is the lead in Alberta with respect to control of invasive forest insect and disease pest species. Parks and Protected Areas Division will work with them to manage invasive insect and disease pests that happen to occur in the park. From a Parks perspective, forest insects and diseases in a wildland provincial park are considered part of the natural ecosystem. However, control actions will be taken if:

- required by legislation or by mutual agreement with Sustainable Resource Development;
- if vegetation loss is expected to be detrimental to the ecosystem;
- if species of concern or special communities are affected; or
- if the social value of affected features within the affected area is exceptionally high.

The vegetation communities identified by Allen et al (2006) should not be disturbed. Parks and Protected Area will work with park users to ensure these areas can be protected.

The occurrences of rare and unusual species identified by ANHIC will continue to be tracked as resources allow. Species lists from the 2003 biophysical survey will be maintained and updated.

Most of the known occurrences for rare plant species are in the area of Wentzel Lake, Rocky Island Lake or Horseshoe Lake. Specific guidelines for their protection will be developed when use patterns in the park become better known.

Bryophytes, lichens, mosses, liverworts, etc. information to be added.

3.4 Wildlife

3.4.1 Mammals

There are at least 32 species of mammals in the Caribou Mountains, including woodland caribou, wood bison and wolverine (ANHIC 2006). See Appendix B for list.

Woodland Caribou

The range of the Caribou Mountains herd includes the park and areas to the west, with considerable overlap between summer and winter ranges. The prevalent black spruce/lichen communities in the park provide caribou habitat, and the park was designated in part to protect some of the range of the Caribou Mountains woodland caribou herd. Wildfires since the early 1980s have impacted much of this habitat with the loss of slow-growing ground and arboreal lichens, which can take up to 50 years to recover.

Information from past surveys suggest that caribou use of habitat is influenced by a variety of factors, the most important being snow depth and condition, predator movements, and quality and quantity of food. These factors vary from year to year, and caribou use of habitat varies correspondingly. The cows calve in seclusion at sites scattered throughout the landscape; telemetry data suggest that they return to the same calving areas (Dave Moyles, personal communication).

Woodland caribou are considered “Threatened” both provincially (Alberta Wildlife Act) and nationally (Species at Risk Act). For the Caribou Mountains herd, the highest population count

recorded during surveys between 1995 and 2000 was 263 individuals. This herd is now considered in decline (Hervieux et al. 2005).

Objectives

- **Support efforts to achieve self-sustaining woodland caribou herds in the Bistcho/Caribou Mountain range.**
- **Ensure the long-term habitat requirements for woodland caribou are met within Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park.**

A recovery plan for woodland caribou in Alberta has been prepared by the Alberta Woodland Caribou Recovery Team¹. As recommended by the recovery plan, range plans will be prepared by area teams to provide management direction and actions for specific caribou ranges. The range for the Bistcho/Caribou herd includes the wildland provincial park. Parks and Protected Areas Division will participate in the team that prepares the range plan for this herd.

Herd trends and distribution must be monitored sufficiently to permit an evaluation of recovery actions (Hervieux et al 2006). Parks and Protected Areas Division will continue to support Sustainable Resource Development (SRD), Fish and Wildlife with annual monitoring of collared caribou.

Human activities which create habitat constraints for woodland caribou are to be assessed and addressed in the range plan. If the range plan recommends changes in human use in the park, the recommendations will be taken into consideration along with park policy, management objectives of the park, current use, and implications for the users.

The wildfire plan that will be developed will take caribou habitat needs into consideration.

Wood Bison

Wood bison that range within the park are part of what is referred to as the Wentzel Lake herd (Mitchell and Gates 2002). Little information is available about this herd, including whether it is disease-free. According to a Traditional Use Study (Schramm et al 2005), the south-facing slopes of the escarpment is core bison habitat. The herd tends to stay on higher ground in summer feeding in meadows, and in winter moved to small lakes, dry creeks and old beaver dam areas where grasses are more available. Bison range within the park is generally Twp. 114 and 115 of Ranges 3, 4 and 5.

These wood bison are not considered wildlife under the *Alberta Wildlife Act* and so are unprotected and subject to unregulated hunting. However, because they are not considered wildlife they are not allowed to be hunted within Caribou Mountains Wildland provincial park. Hunting in parks, as per the *Alberta Parks Act*, is only allowed for species that are licensed for hunting under the *Alberta Wildlife Act*.

The wood bison is considered “Endangered” under the *Alberta Wildlife Act* and “Threatened” under the *Species At Risk Act*. Its restoration as a viable species in Alberta depends on resolution of disease concerns in northwestern Canada (www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fw/wildspecies).

Objective

- **To maintain bison population in the park**

¹ AB Woodland Caribou Recovery Plan 2006 <http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fw/speciesatrisk/index.html>

Management Guidelines

A strategy for management of the bison on a landscape level is being developed at an intergovernmental level. When this strategy is developed, more detailed guidelines will be developed for bison management within the park.

Other Mammals

Objective

- **Sustain mammal populations.**

Management Guidelines

SRD, Fish and Wildlife, is the lead agency for management of wildlife in Alberta. Parks and Protected Areas Division will work with SRD, Fish and Wildlife to ensure sustainable native populations are maintained in the park.

3.4.2 Birds

A total of 128 species of birds have been identified in the park (ANHIC 2006), including 27 species of waterfowl, 7 birds of prey, 3 of the grouse family, 22 shorebirds and gulls, 4 owls, and 64 species of songbirds. Twelve species found in the park are classified as sensitive in Alberta, and one may be at risk. Species list is in Appendix C.

Some species of interest are red-throated loons, mew gulls and American tree sparrow which are breeding at the southern edge of their range. Colonial nesting sites have been observed for mew and herring gulls. American white pelicans may stop in the Caribou Mountains on their way to nest at the Slave River rapids.

Objective

- **To maintain bird species in the park**

Management Guidelines

Colonial nesting sites will be mapped, boat and float plane users required to keep away from these sites in order to minimize disturbance.

3.4.3 Fish

Fish populations in Caribou Mountains are limited by the deep, cold lakes and the short growing season. Lake trout, lake whitefish, pike, Arctic grayling and walleye occur in the lakes. Arctic grayling is the main river species, but also dwells in the lakes. In fact, Caribou Mountains is one of the few locations in Alberta where lake dwelling populations of Arctic grayling exist. Arctic grayling are very sensitive to siltation of their habitat and has sensitive status in Alberta.

Fish in the Caribou Mountains area have had a long period of isolation due to the escarpment acting as a barrier to dispersion. It is believed that lake trout found there may be a unique subspecies as a result of this isolation (Dave Walty personal communication 2006). SRD, Fish and Wildlife have collected fish population data on some water bodies in the park.

Objective

- **Conserve native fish populations to maintain a broad range of age and size classes for each species.**

Management Guidelines

The strategy for management of the fishing resources will follow the current Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy². The objectives under the strategy are habitat maintenance, fish conservation and fish use allocation.

Habitat maintenance will be managed by:

- ensuring no net loss of fish habitat due to human disturbances;
- discouraging disturbance to spawning areas, shoreline vegetation, and other critical fish habitats. Critical spawning sites for lake trout and walleye occur at Pitchimi, Margaret, and Wentzel Lakes.

Fish conservation will be managed by:

- managing the harvest through catch limits, size restrictions, and catch and release so that the fishery is sustained and the natural size composition of the fishery is maintained.
- determining the presence of viruses, parasites and cysts in the fish population and taking steps to prevent it.
- developing a monitoring program to monitor changes in fishery harvest over time.
- managing the Arctic grayling fishery at the outflow of the Ponton River at Margaret Lake so that this unique population of large fish will be maintained;
- monitoring lodge fishery operations.
- obtaining further baseline fisheries data and other information as resources allow.

Allocation of fish use follows these priorities (Fish and Wildlife Policy for Alberta 1982):

- Conservation
- Subsistence fishing for Alberta's aboriginal people
- Resident recreational use; and
- Commercial fishing and tourist angling.

Fishing in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park will follow allocations as per Alberta Fishing Regulations.

3.4.4 Reptiles Amphibians/Insects

There is no information available about reptiles or amphibians in the park.

As a result of the biophysical inventory in 2003, 2145 specimens of beetles (Coleoptera) were collected, which are representative of 44 families and 310 species in Alberta (Hilchie 2004). The beetle species examined demonstrate a very strong boreal composition, but there are also elements of more northern regions and cordilleran regions. One find of note is the first Alberta record of the ground beetle, *Trichocellus mannerheimi*, a northern arctic/boreal species. A click beetle, *Eanus estriatus*, is represented by few Alberta records, mostly northern. Another ground beetle, *Elaphrus lapponicus*, is clearly cordilleran, typically found along streams in the cooler subalpine zone. A few agriculture pests and introduced species showed up in the survey.

A total of 155 species of spiders were collected during the 2003 field surveys, including several species recorded for the first time in Alberta (Nordstrom and Buckle 2006).

² See <http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fw/fishing/pdf/FishConservStrat.pdf>

3.4.5 Lepidoptera and Odonates

The survey of Lepidoptera during 2003, the first attempt to inventory the butterfly and moth fauna of Alberta's subarctic, yielded a total of 214 species representing 24 families (Schmidt et al 2004). Twenty-nine species are of special interest due to their limited occurrence in the province or because of significant new range information, including two species recorded from Alberta for the first time.

A total of 165 odonate (dragonflies and damselflies) specimens, belonging to five families and twenty-one species, were collected in July 2003. Though most species collected are common across Canada, four are uncommon and three are rare in Alberta (Macaulay et al 2003).

4.0 A Place for People

4.1 Cultural Heritage

4.1.1 Archaeology

An archaeological survey of lakes in the Caribou Mountains was conducted in 1975 (Donahue 1976). The survey identified 19 archaeological sites, including 10 campsites, one possible workshop and one possible burial structure, all associated with Margaret, Eva, Pitchimi or Wentzel Lakes. Only the shores of Pitchimi Lake contained a dense concentration of archaeological sites. One site on Wentzel Lake was stratified, dating back to 5220 years before present. A survey of the Birch Mountains conducted at the same time showed a greater density of sites, probably indicating that the Caribou Mountains were not as hospitable to human use as surrounding areas even then.

4.1.2 History

The Beaver Indians are historic occupants of the Caribou Mountain area, but little ethnographic information is available about them (Donahue 1976).

Aboriginal people in the Fort Vermilion area signed Treaty 8 in 1899. At the time of treaty negotiations, aboriginal people were deeply engaged in hunting and trapping. Historical sites include (LRRCN website <http://lrrcn.ab.ca>):

- Little Red River, a traditional meeting place which became a Hudson Bay outpost site and is now a pilgrimage site.
- Fifth Meridian was also a trading outpost and traditional meeting and camping place

A recent study has documented local traditional ecological knowledge on critical wildlife habitat, seasonal patterns of habitat use, and local distribution and movement of moose, woodland caribou and wood bison (Schramm and Krogman 2001).

The earliest fur trading post in the area was in 1786, on the Peace River downstream from the present town of Fort Vermilion. In 1788 Charles Boyer of the North West Company built his post at the mouth of the Boyer River.

Little Red River Cree Nation Traditional Use Surveys indicate that the names of some of the lakes in Caribou Mountains, for instance Margaret and Eva Lakes, were taken from the given names of the daughters of a Little Red River Cree trapper (Jim Webb personal communication).

It is also acknowledged that Metis people were early residents of the area, and continue to use it for hunting and trapping.

Objective

- **Protect the cultural resources in the park**
- **Learn more about the cultural history of the park area**

Management Guidelines

The prehistoric and historic sites identified by archaeological surveys will be protected. Most of the sites are along lakeshores, and when use patterns are better known Parks and Protected Areas Division will discourage use in these areas. When feasible, the sites will be monitored by Parks staff and their status reported to the Archaeology and History Section of Heritage Resource Management.

As resources allow, folk history of the area will be gathered. This will be an opportunity to work with the communities around the park and the museum in Fort Vermilion.

4.2 First Nations

The First Nations of the area include Little Red River Cree Nation, Tall Cree Nation, and the Beaver First Nations.

Objectives

- **Consult with First Nations people as per government policy**
- **Allow First Nations to continue to use the area for traditional activities**

Management Guidelines

First Nations will be consulted as per Alberta Government First Nations Consultation Guidelines 2006. Situations requiring consultation are identified in the guidelines.

Caribou Mountains is a traditional use area for First Nations (Schramm and Krogman 2001), and traditional use will continue.

As more is learned about traditional use in the area, PPAD may work with First Nations to present it in park information.

This management plan does not override any treaty rights and agreements.

4.3 Heritage Appreciation

Heritage appreciation includes interpretation, environmental education, and public information services that help people value and understand a protected area.

4.3.1 Interpretation and Environmental Education

Objective

- **Identify interpretive and environmental education opportunities.**

Management Guidelines

Because of the intent, the limited access, and low visitor use of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park, personal interpretation programs will not be offered in the park by Parks and Protected Areas Division. PPAD welcomes efforts by other agencies and groups to tell the story of Caribou Mountains off-site and will offer information and advice to groups providing this service.

Environmental education is generally tied to school curriculum and presented to school groups. PPAD may provide this service to schools in Fort Vermilion or High Level, or work with local education societies, if staffing resources allow.

PPA is willing to work with the local museum, First Nations, Metis and other agencies to increase awareness of the natural and cultural history of Caribou Mountains.

4.3.2 Public Information

Objective

- **Identify public information opportunities**

Management Guidelines

Public information includes written materials, maps, signs, and websites. PPA will develop a fact sheet including a map of Caribou Mountains, and may consider other information material as needed. Some information services may be tailored for those who may never be able to visit the park but can still appreciate it.

Signage in the park will be limited to boundary signs and information signs at access points. The information signs can include maps, natural features information, acceptable use, etc, and will be placed at land access points and aircraft landing sites.

A virtual tour of the park will be prepared when resources allow that will be accessible on the web. The tour could include natural feature highlights from the 2003 biophysical study, traditional use, and current use.

4.4 Outdoor Recreation

Recreational use of the park is mainly sport hunting and fishing by residents of the Fort Vermilion and High Level areas. Lakes are accessed in winter by snowmobiles and off-highway vehicles for ice fishing.

4.4.1 Access/Recreational Trails

Access to the park is difficult because of remoteness and the terrain. There are no all-weather roads to or within Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park. Off-highway vehicle access is from the Foggy Mountain Lookout Tower north of Highway 58. The trails use seismic lines that lead to Margaret Lake, Wentzel Lake and other lakes.

Objective

- **Provide appropriate recreational OHV/snowmobile access and trails**

Management Guidelines

OHV and snowmobile use by recreational users will be permitted on an approved access route in the winter under frozen ground conditions. The trail destination will be designated lakes.

Aircraft landing is allowed on designated lakes and on the airstrip at Margaret Lake Lodge (see Aircraft Landing 4.4.5).

4.4.2 Recreational Backcountry Camping

Objective

- **Provide recreational backcountry camping opportunities**

Management Guidelines

Random camping and associated open campfires are permitted in the park.

Formalized campsites will not be established in the park unless repeated use at a site requires basic facilities in order to lessen impact.

Campers in the park are expected to leave as small a footprint as possible on the landscape.

4.4.3 Recreational Fishing and Hunting

Objective

- **Provide recreational fishing and hunting opportunities**

Management Guidelines

Fishing is permitted in the park as per Alberta Fishing Regulations.

Recreational fishermen will be asked on a voluntary basis to report their catches to Parks and Protected Areas Division for monitoring purposes. The report should include number/species of catch at each lake, size/maturity of catch, angling date and times, and number of people fishing.

Hunting is allowed during open season in accordance with Alberta Hunting Regulations.

At this point in time, bison hunting is not allowed in the park.

Wildlife baiting by recreational hunters is not permitted in the park.

4.4.4 Recreational Boating

Objective

- **Allow motorized boat access on designated lakes**

Management Guidelines

Motor boats for recreational use are permitted on Margaret, Wentzel, Pitchimi and Eva Lakes. Boats can be left unattended at the lakes with Conservation Officer approval.

Non-powered watercraft, such as canoes and kayaks, are allowed on any waterbody in the park.

4.4.5 Recreational Aircraft Landing

Objective

- **Permit recreational aircraft to land on designated lakes within the park**

Management Guidelines

Fixed-wing aircraft will be allowed to land on Margaret, Wentzel, Pitchimi and Eva Lakes in summer and winter for recreational hunting and fishing, guide-outfitting operations, and other approved recreational, commercial or research-related activities.

An annual permit to land a fixed-wing aircraft in the park is required from Parks and Protected Areas Division. The permit requires authorization from the Executive Director of Parks and Protected Areas Division. The permit resides with the operator of the aircraft. Conditions of the permit include reporting number of passengers, number of landings, landing sites, dates and times to Parks and Protected Areas Division. Aircraft operators may also be asked to report any bird colonies or any other sightings of note.

If the aircraft landing is used for recreational fishing, the permit holder is to report back to Parks and Protected Areas Division with fishing information such as number/species of catch at each lake, size/maturity of catch, angling times. This will be part of the fishery monitoring program.

A landing strip is adjacent to Margaret Lake Lodge. Use of the airstrip for other than lodge operations will be addressed during the lease negotiations.

4.4.6 Other recreation activities

Objective

- **Permit other appropriate recreational activities in the park**

Management Guidelines

Low-impact recreational activities such as hiking are appropriate to wildland provincial parks, but may not be suitable for the terrain in Caribou Mountains.

Other proposed recreational activities will be assessed for their appropriateness. Criteria for assessment would include:

- Appropriateness to a wildland provincial park
- Appropriateness to the setting of Caribou Mountains.
- Impact on the environment and other visitor activities

4.5 Tourism

Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park is an appropriate landscape for limited nature based tourism and guiding /outfitting activities that can contribute to the local and provincial economy. Current guide/outfitting operators provide hunting opportunities, but the park is also appropriate for ecotourism/nature viewing types of tours.

4.5.1 Guide-Outfitting

Objective

- **Continue to permit commercial guide-outfitting in the park**

Management Guidelines

Guiding and outfitting is an important economic activity in the Caribou Mountains generating tourism-related benefits associated with hunting, fishing and ecotourism.

The commercial guide-outfitters who held allocations in the park area before it was established on July 24, 2001 will be able to continue their operations associated with hunting big game such as moose, bear, wolf and deer for which there is an open season under the Wildlife Act. They will be permitted to use off-highway vehicles to facilitate their hunting operations.

Subsequent guide-outfitters, if the guide-outfitters who held allocations before July 24, 2001 choose to assign their allocations to a new operator, will be required to comply with the legislation and policy in use at the time of reallocation.

To operate their business in the park, commercial guide-outfitters will require a Permit for Commercial Guiding which can be obtained from Parks and Protected Areas Division offices. Conditions of operation are specified on the permit.

A concession is being granted to current guide-outfitters to allow them to bait for bear and wolves in the park until the issue is resolved province-wide. Subsequent guide-outfitters may have to hunt without bear baiting in order to comply with current legislation and policy.

Guide-outfitters must obtain permits to land fixed-wing aircraft for their operations. The permit will be issued to the operator of the aircraft, as is the case for recreational aircraft use.

Fixed-roof accommodation for commercial guide-outfitting operations is not permitted in the park. Tent frames can be left standing, if in useable condition, with the permission of a Conservation Officer.

4.5.2 Margaret Lake Lodge

Margaret Lake Lodge currently operates on Margaret Lake. Its lease pre-dates the establishment of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park. It has one fly-camp with permanent structures on Pitchimi Lake, and one fly-camp with frame tents on Wentzel Lake.

Objective

- **Continue to support the operation of the existing remote lodge within the park**

Management Guidelines

Under the *Alberta Parks Act* no new dispositions can be issued in a wildland provincial park. Those dispositions active at the time of park establishment will be honoured. This includes the disposition for Margaret Lake Lodge and the associated airstrip. The associated lease for the fly-camp on Pitchimi Lake and the application for a fly-camp lease on Wentzel will be negotiated in a new lease.

Parks and Protected Areas Division is committed to working closely with the operators of Margaret Lake Lodge and encourages them to work towards continually improving their operations. In return, Parks and Protected Areas Division expects that the lodge will deliver high quality visitor experiences and maintain environmentally sensitive operations.

As Margaret Lake Lodge is within one of Alberta's most pristine protected areas, the lodge operators are encouraged to use environmentally sensitive practices for all aspects of their operations and are encouraged to be models of sustainable infrastructure. Parks and Protected

Areas Division can be consulted for operational or design options that are suitable for wildland provincial parks.

Parks and Protected Areas Division encourages Margaret Lake Lodge to consider offering a variety of activities that are compatible with the wildland provincial park classification. Margaret Lake Lodge currently provides fishing experiences, but other activities that would be appropriate include bird watching, photography, and canoeing.

Winter restocking of the lodge will be included in future lease conditions. Aircraft landing and use of motor boats in the park is permitted in association with lodge operations.

Each year lodge operators are required to provide Parks and Protected Areas Division information on annual activities and visitor statistics. Details as to what and when information is required will be outlined in the lease.

4.5.3 Other appropriate nature-based tourism opportunities

Parks and Protected Areas Division will work cooperatively with municipalities, aboriginal people and stakeholders to assess the nature based tourism potential of Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park as the need arises.

Any other commercial recreational activity in the park, for instance nature tours, will require a commercial guide permit from Parks and Protected Areas Division.

5.0 Zoning

Zoning is a management tool applied during the management planning process which helps to strike the appropriate balance between resource protection and use. Application of zoning acknowledges the differences in resource values as well as visitor use and landscape capability in different parts of a protected area. Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park has three management zones, a preservation zone, a wildland zone and a facility zone.

Preservation Zone

The preservation zone is applied to landscapes where protection of natural heritage values takes precedence over all other uses. Lands and waters in this zone are managed so that natural heritage values and ecological processes remain largely unaltered. Their protection is the main consideration in this zone. This zone includes the fen complex near Horseshoe Lake, other sites which contain rare communities and plant species, and archaeological sites.

Wildland Zone

These zones are intended to maintain features in their natural condition and provide opportunities for backcountry recreation. The majority of the park is a wildland zone.

Facility Zone

This zone provides for facility development in a park. Facility zones are not usual in a wildland provincial park, but in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park the lease area for Margaret Lake Lodge and airstrip will be a facility zone.

6.0 Disposition Management

6.1 Trapping Dispositions

There are 13 dispositions for Registered Fur Management Areas (RFMAs) in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park. So far one trapper's cabin has been registered (MLP 990036).

Parks and Protected Areas Division will honour all existing RFMAs. Trappers are permitted to carry out their traditional trapping activities according to Parks and Protected Areas Division trapping policy.

Trappers are to ensure they have the necessary approvals and permits required by existing legislation and policy.

When traplines become vacant, Parks and Protected Areas Division will work with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Fish and Wildlife Division, to align RFMA and park boundaries where possible.

6.2 Recreation/Government Agency Dispositions

Dispositions within the park include the following:

Recreation Dispositions

MLL 3036 (Miscellaneous Lease) for Margaret Lake Lodge operated by Caribou Mountain Wilderness. Lease is under Little Red River Forestry. Expiry Nov. 10, 2011.

LOC 971994 (License of Occupation) Margaret Lake Airstrip. Lease is under Little Red River Cree Forestry Ltd. Expiry Nov. 10, 2011.

MLP 880095 (Miscellaneous Permit) Pitchimi Lake fly-in tent camp associated with Margaret Lake Lodge. Lease is under Little Red River Cree Forestry Ltd. Expiry Dec. 31, 2005.

MLP 990032 Wentzel Lake Application for outlier camp from Little Red River Forestry. The application was made during the deliberations for protected area status for Caribou Mountains.

Negotiations for these dispositions will be conducted with the disposition holder on expiry. The Pitchimi and Wentzel Lakes fly-camps will be negotiated under a new lease.

Government Dispositions

Disposition Reservation (DRS) 1124 – airstrip on Pitchimi Lake – SRD, Forestry

DRS 1125 – dock on Pitchimi Lake – SRD, Forestry

DRS 850129 – Fire Tower near north boundary – SRD, Forestry

DRS 940091 – Fire Tower north of Rocky Island Lake – SRD, Forestry

DRS 780066 Margaret Lake Airstrip (no longer an airstrip, instead used as a staging area).

The DRS dispositions are for government management purposes, authorizing government use of public land. These will be maintained if necessary. DRS 780066 may be updated to reflect actual use.

6.3 Oil/gas/mining dispositions

There are 25 abandoned exploratory wells located in the park, 19 of which were drilled between 1961 and 1984. Many of the wellsites have not had reclamation certificates issued for them. Parks and Protected Areas Division will inspect the sites for reclamation and take the appropriate action.

Two oil and gas companies have dispositions within the park:

LOC 980185	Paramount Resources Ltd.	Expiry Feb 05, 2023
LOC 980188	Paramount Resources Ltd.	Expiry Feb 05, 2023
LOC 980264	Paramount Resources Ltd.	Expiry Feb 05, 2023
MSL 980377	Paramount Resources Ltd.	Expiry Jan 28, 2023
PLA 032076	Apache Canada Ltd.	Expiry 9999-999-99

These are on the west side of the park and are part of larger dispositions outside the park. PPAD will work with these companies with the goal of removing park land from their dispositions.

Any oil and gas leases sold after park designation will have a no-surface access addenda as a condition of sale.

There are no mining dispositions in the park.

7.0 Regional Coordination

7.1 Surrounding Land Use

Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park is surrounded on the north and east by Wood Buffalo National Park, and on the south and west by the Municipal District of Mackenzie #23.

Little Red River Cree First Nation holds a Forest Management Agreement for FMU 23 through their holding company, Little Red River Forestry Ltd. FMU 23 abuts the south boundary of the park between the east boundary and approximately Eva Lake.

The nearest communities to the park include:

- Little Red River Cree Nation communities at Fox Lake (where the majority of the population resides, but has no year round road access), John D'or Prairie (the administrative center), and Garden River, which is within Wood Buffalo National Park.
- Tall Cree First Nations Reserves 163, 163A-B, 173, 173A-B
- Fort Vermilion, Alberta's oldest European settlement, located on the Peace River

7.2 Agency Cooperation

Effective working relationships will be established and/or maintained with adjacent land managers and stakeholders in the vicinity of the park.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture have prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which spells out the lead department in overlapping responsibilities, such as forest protection and fish and wildlife management. The two agencies will be guided by this MOU in the management of Caribou Mountain Wildland Provincial Park.

Wood Buffalo National Park

Wood Buffalo National Park will be consulted in matters of common interest, including fire management, bison and caribou management, visitor management, and other matters that require cooperation.

Being federal lands, Wood Buffalo National Park has an agreement with the Alberta government regarding fire management which will be included in the Wildfire Management Plan.

Little Red River Forestry

Parks and Protected Areas Division will work with Little Red River Forestry on common issues that arise as managers of adjacent lands.

Municipal District of Mackenzie #23

Parks and Protected Areas Division will consult with the MD as required.

8.0 Recommendations for Additions to Park

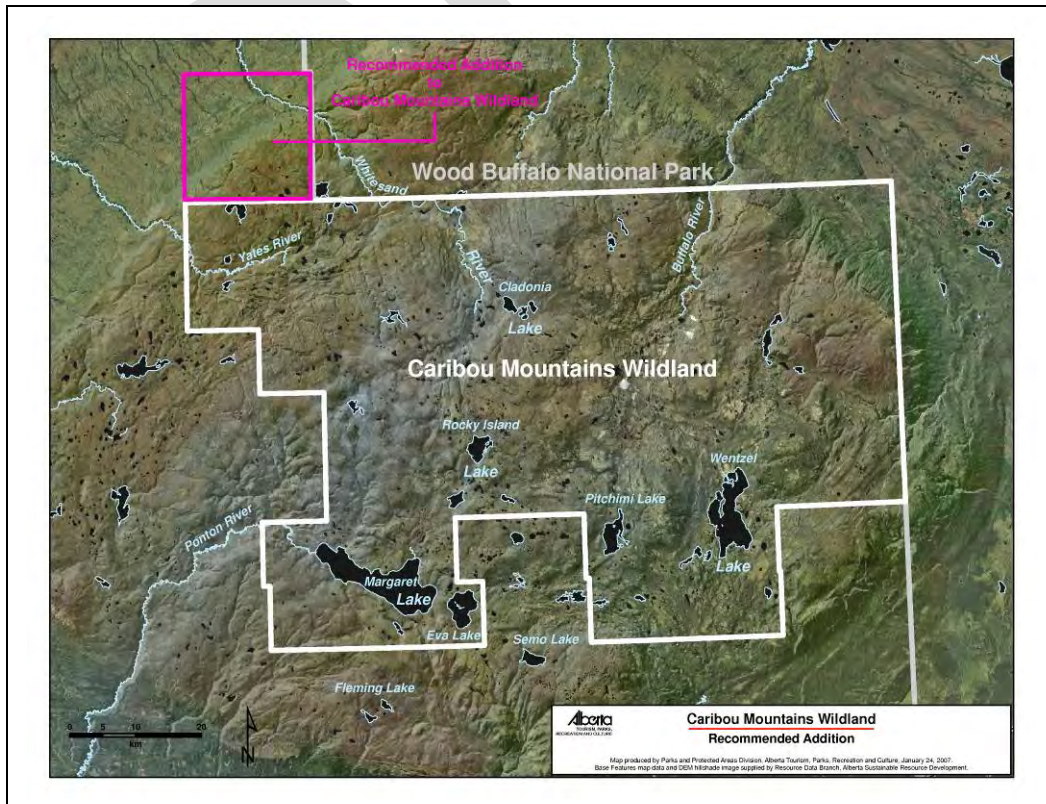
Addition of land to an established protected area is based on criteria such as contributions to the objectives of Parks and Protected Areas Division system planning, consolidation of park lands, and support from other land management agencies and the public.

This plan recommends that the following lands be added to the park (see map):

W5 Rg 10-11 Twp 122

W5 Rg 10-11 Twp 121.

These lands are in the northwest corner of the park, and would protect more of the escarpment landform, and also ensure that the full extent of the Horseshoe Lake wetland complex is protected.



9.0 Plan Implementation and Review

9.1 General Plan Implementation

The coordination of plan implementation and day-to-day management of Caribou Mountain Wildland provincial park is the responsibility of Parks and Protected Areas Division of Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture. This includes administration, planning, information/education/marketing, maintenance and enforcement. Cooperative and effective working relationships with neighbouring jurisdictions, visitors, and stakeholders will continue to be developed.

Parks and Protected Areas Division seeks to nurture partnerships with other agencies to the mutual benefit of both parties and the community. Corporate sponsorships and donations for park projects will be welcomed and encouraged.

The volunteer program of Parks and Protected Areas Division encourages people to become involved in parks in different capacities. Information is found at <http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/involved/parks/volunteer/index.asp>. Management of volunteers will conform to the standards set out by the department's Volunteer Program. Work with groups and individuals interested in the park will continue and active partnerships to care for protected areas or educate and inform visitors will be encouraged.

9.2 Review of Management Plan

This management plan will be reviewed within 10 years from the date of its approval. The review will generally focus on the objectives and management actions outlined in this plan. Parks and Protected Areas Division will initiate the review and a public consultation process as needed.

Earlier reviews may be required if there are significant events or changes which may require management deviation from the intent of the plan.

9.3 Advisory Committee

The advisory committee which provided advice for this management plan will have completed its commitment on approval of the plan. However, it is hoped that the communication and cooperation fostered with agencies and stakeholders during the planning process will continue.

9.4 Projects Proposed in this Plan

- Complete Wildfire Management Plan with SRD.
- Inspect abandoned wellsites and take appropriate action (ie issue reclamation certificates, request reclamation, etc.).
- Work with oil and gas disposition holders to remove park lands from their dispositions.
- Participate on caribou range planning team
- Develop park signage, information material and virtual tour
- Map sensitive areas, such as colonial nesting areas, rare vegetation communities, archaeological sites for protection purposes

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Personal Communication

Dave Moyles, Area Wildlife Biologist, Fish and Wildlife, Sustainable Resource Development. Peace River.

Jim Webb,

Dave Walty, Regional Head, Fisheries Management NW, Fish and Wildlife, Sustainable Resource Development

Jim Rosin, Fisheries Technician, Fish and Wildlife, Sustainable Resource Development

Appendix A

Activities, Uses and Facilities Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park

To be inserted

Draft

Appendix B

Mammals in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park

Masked shrew	Gray wolf
Water shrew	Red fox
Dusky shrew	Black bear
Arctic shrew	Marten
Pygmy shrew	Fisher
Snowshoe Hare	Ermine
Least chipmunk	Least weasel
Red squirrel	Mink
Beaver	Wolverine – may be at risk*
Deer mouse	River otter
Southern red-backed vole	Canada lynx
Heather vole	Mule deer
Meadow vole	Unknown deer species
Muskrat	Moose
Northern bog lemming	Caribou – endangered*
Porcupine	Wood bison – threatened*

* Alberta Fish and Wildlife Status (ANHIC 2006)

Appendix C

Birds found in Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park

This list of 128 birds was compiled from observations during a Biophysical Survey in 2003 (ANHC 2006).

Loons	
Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>
Grebes	
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegana</i>
Pelicans and Cormorants	
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>
Swans, Geese and Ducks	
Tundra swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Northern pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
Green-winged teal	<i>Anas crecca carolinensis</i>
Blue-winged teal	<i>Anas discors</i>
American wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>
Northern shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>
Ring-necked duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>
Greater scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>
Lesser scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>
Common goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangulus</i>
Barrow's goldeneye	<i>Bucephala islandicus</i>
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>
White-winged scoter	<i>Melanitta deglandi</i>
Surf scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>
Long-tailed duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>
Common merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Red-breasted merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
Birds of Prey	
Northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
Red-tailed hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Sharp-shinned hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaeetus</i>
Northern harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
American kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Grouse-like Birds	
Spruce grouse	<i>Canachites canadensis</i>
Ruffed grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>
Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>
Crane-like Birds	
Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>
American coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>
Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns	
Semi-palmated plover	<i>Charagrius semipalmatus</i>
Spotted sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>
Solitary sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>
Greater yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleucus</i>
Lesser yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>
Sanderling	<i>Claidris alba</i>
Baird's sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>
Least sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>
Wilson's snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>
Semi-palmated sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusillus</i>
Red-necked phalarope	<i>Lobipes lobatus</i>
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
California gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>
Mew gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Ring-billed gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>
Franklin's gull	<i>Larus pipixcan</i>
Bonaparte's gull	<i>Larus philadelphia</i>
Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Arctic tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>
Black tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
Owls	
Great horned owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>
Northern hawk owl	<i>Sumia ulula</i>
Long-eared owl	<i>Asio otua</i>
Short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
Nightjars	
Common nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>
Kingfishers	
Belted kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>
Woodpeckers	
Northern flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus auratus</i>
Black-backed woodpecker	<i>Picoides arcticus</i>
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>
Hairy woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus villosus</i>
Three-toed woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>

Perching Birds	
Yellow-bellied flycatcher	<i>Empidonax flaviventris</i>
Alder flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>
Least flycatcher	<i>Empidonax minimus</i>
Western wood pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>
Olive-sided flycatcher	<i>Nuttallornis borealis</i>
Eastern phoebe	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>
Eastern kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>
Tree swallow	<i>Iridoprocne bicolor</i>
Bank swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Gray jay	<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>
Common raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
American crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>
Black-capped chickadee	<i>Parus atricapillus</i>
Boreal chickadee	<i>Parus hudsonicus</i>
Red-breasted nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>
American robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Hermit thrush	<i>Catharus guttata</i>
Swainson's thrush	<i>Catharus ustulata</i>
Gray-cheeked thrush	<i>Catharus minimus</i>
Ruby-crowned kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Bohemian waxwing	<i>Bombycilla farrula</i>
Cedar waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>
Northern mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Northern shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>
Red-eyed vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>
Philadelphia vireo	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>
Warbling vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>
Tennessee warbler	<i>Vermivora peregrina</i>
Orange-crowned warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>
Yellow warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>
Magnolia warbler	<i>Dendroica magnolia</i>
Yellow-rumped warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>

	<i>coronata</i>
Black-throated green warbler	<i>Dendroica virens</i>
Blackpoll warbler	<i>Dendroica striata</i>
Palm warbler	<i>Dendroica palmarum</i>
Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>
Northern waterthrush	<i>Seiurus novaboracensis</i>
Common yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas)</i>
Wilson's warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>
American redstart	<i>Setaphaga ruticilla</i>
Red-winged blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>
Rusty blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>
Western tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>
Pine grosbeak	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i>
Rose-breasted grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>
Evening grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertina</i>
Pine siskin	<i>Spinus pinus</i>
White-winged crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>
Common redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>
Dark-eyed junco	<i>Junco hyemalis hyemalis</i>
Chipping sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>
Clay-colored sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>
White-throated sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>
Fox sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>
Lincoln's sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolni</i>
Swamp sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>
Savannah sparrow	<i>Passerculus snadwichensis</i>
Song sparrow (B)	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
White-crowned sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>

Appendix D
Draft Aircraft Permit

Draft



Mackenzie County

REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

Meeting:	Committee of the Whole Meeting
Meeting Date:	August 27, 2019
Presented By:	Fred Wiebe, Director of Utilities
Title:	Emergency Events – Gaps, Improvements & Solutions

BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:

The recent Chuckegg Creek Wildfire has brought attention to areas where the region is well prepared but also areas where there have been gaps identified. Mackenzie County should use this as an opportunity to identify those gaps and come up with improvements and solutions.

Administration has begun and will continue to work on identifying gaps but also recognize this will be a work in progress for some time due to the large workload attributed to it. Alberta Emergency Management Agency also does a disaster review to come up with lessons learned and this will also be used as a valuable tool to our region.

Enclosed is a document with noted gaps that administration recommends could use council’s efforts to help improve outcomes of future events.

OPTIONS & BENEFITS:

COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:

Author: F. Wiebe Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

POLICY REFERENCES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Simple Majority Requires 2/3 Requires Unanimous

For discussion.

Author: F. Wiebe Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

Emergency Events - Gaps, Improvements & Solutions

Gaps where lobbying is required:

1. An external review should be completed on why the wildfire was not contained earlier. Investigate claims where crews were pulled off the fire at early stages due to budgetary reasons.
2. Wildland/Urban Interface challenges including how to incorporate farm equipment for farmland firebreaks.
3. Not having a full time Fire Chief. This was mentioned by a few different agencies including Alberta Emergency Management Agency as well as Alberta Wildfires and from Wildland/Urban Interface firefighters from other regions that came to help.
4. Cellular & internet communications are fragile. Lobby for better protection of key infrastructure in the region that supply the region but also to the entire northern Canada.

Gaps to be addressed by administration:

1. Alberta Emergency Alert requires further review and revamping both the delivery model as well as aligning the public understanding versus the administrators understanding of its purpose.
2. Communications – this was a challenge throughout the event. The challenges extended from the Wildfire Information Officer controlling information, the event being multi jurisdictional, demographic challenges including languages, internet and cellular access, and platforms used to get information to public. There was no communication plan in place and a support plan for communications.
3. Current Emergency Management Plan out of date, could be better organized, and is missing important information within the plan.
 - a. Livestock management plan not in place.
 - b. Essential Services & Business Continuity
 - c. Reception centers that have been identified in the plan were thought to have back up power but were informed during the event that only to some portions of the buildings.
 - d. Communications plan.
4. Alberta Task Force teams (ie: Northwest Incident Management Team) need to be trained to understand that they are helping with the disaster at the discretion of the municipality(s). These teams should be made up of more than just volunteer firefighters and they should also incorporate the use of local staff and their local knowledge.

5. Lack of Northwest Alberta Regional Emergency meetings with involving all affected agencies. Boreal Housing was missed as an agency representative.
6. Staff training and an understanding of responsibilities.
7. Navigating and learning/understanding Unified Command.
8. AEMA training should be better tailored for role specific training.



Mackenzie County

REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

Meeting:	Committee of the Whole Meeting
Meeting Date:	August 27, 2019
Presented By:	Len Racher Chief Administrative Officer
Title:	Red Tape Projects

BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:

The Provincial Government passed Bill 4 – the Red Tape Reduction Act and is seeking input from businesses, organizations and the public to point out unnecessary regulations and share ideas on which regulations should be improved, kept or scrapped.

A copy of the progress report highlighting the government’s first one hundred days is attached for information.

OPTIONS & BENEFITS:

Attached is a draft copy of the County’s summary of projects that have been delayed due to slow and/or difficult regulatory and approval processes.

COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:

COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Author: B. Peters Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

POLICY REFERENCES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Simple Majority

Requires 2/3

Requires Unanimous

For discussion.

Author: B. Peters Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____

Red Tape Projects

Mackenzie County has many projects that are delayed due to slow and/or difficult regulatory and approval processes. An administrative review of the current County projects that are delayed identified a common theme. Twelve municipal projects were identified as being significantly delayed due to 'red tape' – of these projects, all twelve are delayed because of the same provincial ministry; Environment & Parks (AEP).

From a municipal perspective, the reason for this challenging regulatory environment include the following items:

- Re-interpretation of existing legislation
- Inconsistent interpretation of existing legislation
- Difficult application processes and poor support networks
 - Electronic Disposition System (EDS), OneStop are constantly evolving and technically challenging to use
 - Processes are not well defined so users don't know how to navigate the process
- Lack of overarching policy direction by the province
- Managers that have created an attitude of compliance rather than support
 - Non-compliance is often viewed as crime-like, resulting in investigations and enforcement, rather than support on how to become compliant, even when self reported

We feel that some of these problems have occurred as a result of no defined overarching policy for the province. For example, by requiring a paleontologist to be on site during gravel excavation operations, the province is prioritizing the potential discovery of dinosaur bones over the cost effective supply of gravel. The northwest corner of Alberta remains without a regional plan to help set land use priorities, and it is recommended that the layers of assessment and review be specific to each region.

Additionally, many provincial approval processes are really 'in the weeds'. For example, why do lane closures within towns/hamlets require approval by the Minister of Transportation? These lanes do not serve a provincial road network or have salvageable timber – what is the ministries interest in these lands?

'Red tape' makes approvals take longer and delays projects, slowing the economy in many ways. These challenges also seem to compound. As municipalities, we are dependent on grants for many of our projects. Many grants are used for projects that are otherwise unaffordable for a municipality, and project costs incurred prior to grant approval are frequently ineligible for reimbursement. Grants also typically come with a stringent reporting and project completion timelines. Project approvals routinely take between 18 months and several years, often with tens of thousands of dollars (if not well into the hundreds of thousands) of assessments and engineering needing to be completed in order to obtain approval. This effectively eliminates the ability of a

municipality to utilize grants for many projects, resulting in many needed projects never being completed.

In Mackenzie County these problems are likely exaggerated, as roughly 95% of our municipality is crown land. The ability to avoid crown land and work with private landowners as an alternative is rarely an option.

DRAFT



Cutting red tape

The first one hundred days



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Minister's Message

This past spring we committed to getting Albertans back to work and to grow our economy.

To deliver on that promise, our government established the office of Red Tape Reduction and I was given the honour by our Premier, Jason Kenney, to represent this file as associate minister.

Since then we have been working closely with all areas of government to establish red tape reduction action plans that work for Albertans.

Unnecessary red tape prevents job creators from creating jobs, businesses from growing and generally makes life difficult for all of us. These regulatory burdens are costing Albertans money, time that could be better spent with family and a better way of life.

Our goal is simple: identify and cut the red tape that is preventing Albertans from obtaining the services they need and eliminate that unnecessary red tape by one-third.

We immediately established an action plan that included:

- Cut red tape within government to allow the public sector to focus on serving Albertans better;
- Create a red tape reduction website to crowdsource input from businesses, organizations and the public;
- Form industry panels to help us identify unnecessary red tape in priority sectors of Alberta's economy;
- Move from a process to outcome-based regulatory approach; and
- Fight for an end to interprovincial barriers to free trade.

Since then, we have successfully eliminated various items of red tape, received over 2,400 submissions to our website (CutRedTape.Alberta.ca) and met with the first two of our industry panels.

We are optimistic that we will reach our goal of reducing unnecessary red tape and once we do, we will implement a "one-in/one-out" rule requiring ministries to identify at least one offsetting regulatory requirement for every new requirement created.

Together, we have made tremendous progress. This report tells the story of the first 100 days of our work, our achievements and our next steps as we continue down the path and pave the way for a better Alberta.

The Red Tape Reduction initiative will be a key factor in making Alberta one of the freest and fastest-moving economies in the world.

Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction

Background

For years Alberta businesses and everyday Albertans have been bogged down with excessive red tape. At last count, our province had more than 470 acts and more than 1,000 regulations as well as countless more policies, forms and processes – many of which could be streamlined, modernized or cut.

This amount of red tape creates considerable headaches for people who must navigate an often unfriendly system and fill out form after form in order to access a government program or basic necessity.

In January 2019, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) released its annual Red Tape Report Card (<https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en/advocacy/red-tape-report-card>), which grades provincial governments on their progress tackling excessive regulation. For the second year running, Alberta scored an “F.” According to the report, Alberta earned a failing grade because it had not made reducing red tape a priority. In fact, new rules on health and safety had increased red tape, worsening the burden on businesses. The CFIB estimates that in 2017, businesses paid about \$4.4 billion to comply with regulations.

.....
“The Alberta government needs to comprehensively measure all regulatory requirements business owners face. This information must be publicly reported on a regular basis so legislators can understand the size of the problem and set reduction targets.”

- Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses in the 2019 Red Tape Report Card

.....

Governments create regulations and policies for a number of good and well-intentioned reasons. They help protect the environment, keep people safe and healthy, and ensure industries are fair and competitive. Over time however, many regulations outlive their usefulness and some no longer reflect current realities.

Our government launched our plan to eliminate excessive red tape and is undertaking a number of strategies to keep our promise to cut red tape by one-third.

We have already made significant progress. In our first 21 days in office, cabinet passed 17 red tape reduction proposals, including:

- Making it easier for charities and non-profits to operate by modernizing banking requirements and offering multi-year rather than just annual funding agreements;
- Improving access to financial supports for agribusiness by cutting unnecessary forms; and
- Simplifying permits for trucks traveling over provincial and municipal roads.

Here are some highlights of what we accomplished.

Highlights of Red Tape Reductions in the First 100 Days

Agriculture and Forestry

- Streamlined the *Weed Control Act* appeal process, significantly shortening process wait times from over 300+ days to 30-40 days.
- The Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) established an AgriBusiness Lending Centre. Lenders in Lethbridge, Calgary and Leduc will serve the food and value-added processing sectors and build relationships with small- to medium-sized businesses.
- The AFSC introduced a quick-loan option for up to \$100,000 for new clients and \$150,000 for existing clients, providing access to capital in about 20 minutes.

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation lending mandate

Entrepreneurs in the food and value-added processing sector will have better access to financing to get their products to market and create jobs for Albertans, thanks to changes made by the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). Its changes have simplified the process for those seeking financing.

First, the AFSC established an AgriBusiness Lending Centre. Lenders in Lethbridge, Calgary and Leduc will serve the food and value-added processing sectors and build relationships with small- to medium-sized businesses.

Second, the AFSC streamlined the application process, reducing turnaround times. Related to this, the AFSC introduced a quick-loan option for up to \$100,000 for new clients and \$150,000 for existing clients, providing access to capital in about 20 minutes.

With a \$15-million lending limit for agricultural producers, streamlined processes and lenders across the province, the AFSC is well positioned to fuel economic growth and job creation. Since the end of May, the AFSC approved more than \$11.5 million in new lending support for the food and value-added processing sector.

Community and Social Services

- Reduced the burden on AISH applicants with disabilities and mental health challenges by no longer requiring them to fill out financial eligibility forms when seeking Legal Aid.
- Reduced wait times when applying for grants, providing certainty to stakeholders and freeing up non-profit organizations so they can focus on delivering programs and services.

MyAlberta Evacuation Payment

The MyAlberta Evacuation Payment was used for the first time during the 2019 Alberta wildfires. Evacuees could apply online and receive one-time emergency funding via Interac e-Transfer to help them with the costs of being evacuated. Sixty per cent of evacuees (approximately 12,000 of 20,000) used the online process and were able to receive the payment within one day of applying. Compared to receiving the payment by debit card or cheque, e-Transfers removed the need for people to travel to specific locations and wait in line to receive financial assistance, saving them time and reducing administration for government.

Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women

- Set up e-transfers for Community Grant Programs. This will allow organizations to receive their funding within three to five business days, rather than an average wait of 100 days.

Economic Development, Trade and Tourism (EDTT)

- In partnership with Environment and Parks, EDTT's Tourism division achieved a major deliverable when government officially announced the extension of public land lease tenure from 25 to 60 years for qualifying tourism development projects.

Energy

- Restored certainty in our electrical system by returning to an energy-only market; reducing the administrative burden on the industry.
- Simplified the code of conduct regulation under the *Electric Utilities Act*.
- Repealed the Independent Power and Small Power as well as Innovative Energy Technologies Regulations as they are no longer required.
- Simplified the advertisement requirements for electricity retailers and natural gas services.

Environment and Parks

- Tourism operators can now get longer leases on public lands, gaining greater certainty for their futures and making the tourism industry more competitive. This is a partnership between Environment and Parks and Economic Development, Trade and Tourism.
- Alberta ranchers who go above and beyond the government's environmental standards are being rewarded with extended 20-year leases. This gives ranchers long-term economic stability and clears the backlog of leases waiting approval.
- Lifted prohibition-era liquor constraints on provincial park campsites and select day use areas across the province, allowing responsible Albertans the pleasure of enjoying a beer and a burger in these areas, and freeing up parks staff to ensure public safety and visitor enjoyment rather than enforcing onerous liquor bans.

Infrastructure

- Updated and simplified the current appraisal policy on rural property sales. This change will reduce government costs and speed up the rural property sales process by as much as four weeks.

Justice and Solicitor General

- Required civil enforcement agencies to discharge inactive civil enforcement registrations that were greater than 10 years old so Albertans no longer have to apply for a court order to discharge them.
- Paved the way to introduce barcodes in standard handwritten multi-part violation tickets used by enforcement agencies allowing greater accuracy and efficiency, and supports the future Traffic Ticket Digital Service that is currently under development.

Barcoding for standard handwritten violation tickets

Starting this fall, Alberta will introduce barcodes in standard handwritten multi-part violation tickets used by enforcement agencies. Barcodes will bring more accuracy and efficiency, and will support the future Traffic Ticket Digital Service under development. The new service will let people use their smartphones and the barcode on the traffic ticket to pay traffic fines, request time to pay and/or make partial payments.

Labour and Immigration

- Eliminated barriers to newcomers to Alberta with the *Fair Registration Practices Act*.
- Unified the College of Alberta Professional Technologists and the College of Alberta Professional Foresters into one professional regulatory organization – the Association of Alberta Forest Management Professionals.

The Fair Registration Practices Act

For many professionals who come to Alberta, excessive red tape prevents them from working in their field even if they have been practicing for years outside Alberta. The *Fair Registration Practices Act* will eliminate many of the barriers newcomers have to deal with. For example, Jacqueline worked as a medical doctor overseas for 25 years. But after facing the endless barriers and hoops of the system in Alberta, she ultimately had to go through a diploma program just to find work in an administrative job in a medical clinic. Every day Jacqueline is surrounded by doctors who have comparable training, but she is not able to care for patients the way she was trained to.

Municipal Affairs

- Upgraded the Municipal Disaster Recovery Program application form. This includes collecting more information up-front so eligible municipalities can receive funding more quickly.
- Safety codes officers and master electricians will no longer pay administrative fees for certain services, such as training equivalency requests, preparation of records/photocopying and replacing certificates or identification cards.

Service Alberta

- Introduced digital ID that can validate identity online. This innovation enabled people who were evacuated from their homes during the 2019 wildfires to apply for financial support online instead of in person. Evacuees were able to deposit funds directly – and promptly – into their accounts.
- Paused the regulations coming into force on condominiums until government can review them, meet with stakeholders and determine if adjustments need to be made to strike the right balance without increasing red tape and administrative burden.
- Eased the burden on private-sector business by directing the Real Estate Council of Alberta about proposed changes to business signage requirements.

Pausing new condominium governance-related regulations

Government recently heard from Albertans that the new condominium governance-related regulations that were to come into effect on July 1, 2019 were going to bring extra red tape.

We place a great deal of value on input from condominium stakeholders. Condominiums are homes, but they're also managed like businesses. They have budgets, capital plans and bylaws to help them run efficiently. We don't want our regulations to get in the way of them operating effectively.

That's why we are pausing those regulations coming into force until we can review them, meet with stakeholders and determine if adjustments need to be made to strike the right balance without increasing red tape and administrative burden.

Those regulations, along with those requiring condominium boards to purchase new forms of insurance, are now scheduled to come into force on January 1, 2020.

Transportation

- Reduced administrative burden for industry due to harmonized rig classification standards across the province.
- Reclassification of Oilwell Service rigs reduced more administrative burden for industry by exempting oil well service rigs from some regulatory requirements on commercial vehicles. This initiative works to align with other provinces.

Treasury Board and Finance

- Established the outcome-based regulatory approach to minimize regulatory impacts on citizens and businesses and enforcing each ministry to enact a Red Tape Reduction Plan of their own.
- Introduced digital proof of automobile insurance enabling drivers quick, safe and easier access when asked to provide it.

Modernized application process for special event licences

Albertans and businesses are enjoying looser restrictions around special event liquor licensing. After hearing from its stakeholders, Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis modernized, simplified and clarified the application process for special event licences. As a result, some organizations have added to their events or expanded their options for events.

For example, with fencing no longer required, the St. Albert Legion is able to run a beer garden each weekend at the St. Albert Farmers' Market. Other events, such as K-Days and Taste of Edmonton, expanded their events to site-wide licensing so attendees could enjoy an alcoholic beverage without being relegated to a fenced in beer garden.

How Alberta is Taking Action to Reduce Red Tape

On April 30, 2019, Premier Jason Kenney appointed Grant Hunter to lead government's efforts to cut red tape. As associate minister of red tape reduction, and with the support of the red tape reduction office (also announced on April 30), the associate minister will oversee all of government's red tape reduction efforts. This includes working internally and externally to target unnecessary over-regulation weighing down job creators, while empowering entrepreneurs and business owners to invest and create jobs in Alberta.

Red Tape Reduction Act

One of the associate minister's first orders of business was to introduce the *Red Tape Reduction Act*. Passed on June 10, this legislation is the cornerstone of our plan to reduce red tape and, in fact, makes eliminating unnecessary red tape the law in Alberta.

.....
"We're going to take Alberta from being the most over-regulated to the freest economy in Canada. We aren't just saying we're reducing red tape; we are making it the law. We are committed to cutting red tape by one-third – and once we cut it, we will prevent new red tape from creeping back."

- Jason Kenney, Premier

.....

The act lays the foundation for government to make life easier for all Albertans. It empowers us to take the steps necessary to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses, speed up approvals and help them grow.

.....
"We have not wasted any time since being elected. Already, we have taken bold action to eliminate scores of needless red tape and we are just getting started. This legislative vehicle provides a clear mandate to reduce red tape by a third, which will free up our job creators to do what they do best – create jobs."

- Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction

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Taking Inventory

Our government has launched a review of the province's regulatory decisions and the policies and processes that bog down Albertans and Alberta businesses. This includes developing a number of tools to measure, report and reduce efficiencies across government.

Every ministry is undertaking an inventory of its respective statutes and regulations, and associated policies, forms and guides. Each item is under review with an eye to removing any inefficiencies and unnecessary regulatory and administrative requirements. Ministries are working quickly and deliberately so Albertans can benefit from improved efficiency as soon as possible.

It's not enough that we just eliminate existing red tape; we need to ensure we don't create more.

Our government is adopting a regulatory approach that focuses on outcomes instead of processes. It's a common sense approach that makes sure every regulation, policy or administrative requirement exists because it makes life better in some way for Albertans.

Each ministry must consider five principles early in the process of developing, amending or eliminating red tape. These principles are the foundation of the red tape reduction initiative, ensuring that every regulation in place is:

- Necessary;
- Effective;
- Efficient;
- Proportional to the outcomes they are trying to achieve; and
- Regularly reviewed in a meaningful way.

The associate minister of red tape reduction is overseeing this process, ensuring ministries keep pace with targets and report back on their progress at regular intervals.

Asking Albertans for Input

On June 24, government launched a website (cutredtape.alberta.ca) that updates the public on our progress in reviewing and eliminating red tape. The website includes a dedicated email inbox (cutredtape@gov.ab.ca) and invites everyone to submit what they feel are unnecessary regulations and share their ideas on what should be kept, improved or scrapped.

In the first 100 days, more than 2,400 people, organizations and businesses submitted suggestions, ranging from eliminating faxes to overhauling program areas. This input is vital to our work and we will continue to consider all suggestions as we undertake a comprehensive and ongoing review of all red tape within government.

The website (cutredtape.alberta.ca) is updated regularly with new accomplishments and Albertans are encouraged to visit the website regularly to track our progress.

Talking to Industry

Alberta's businesses bear the brunt of burdensome red tape. About half of our province's existing acts and regulations directly or indirectly apply to private sector business, so we are turning to members of industry to share their experiences, ideas and expertise on making our province a more welcoming place in which to do business.

We are establishing industry-specific advisory panels representing key economic sectors in the province. The panels will advise on regulatory and administrative policy and burden, and provide input to the associate minister of red tape reduction and relevant government departments.

In August 2019, government announced the Oil and Gas panel and the Tourism and Hospitality panel. We will announce the remaining panels over the coming months for these sectors:

- Small business (fall 2019)
- Manufacturing (fall 2019)
- Forestry (fall 2019)
- Agriculture, agri-food, and bio-industrial (winter 2019)
- Non-profit (winter 2019)
- Construction (winter 2019)

.....

“The regulatory burden in our province is simply unnecessary. Albertans know this, job creators know this and our government knows this. I look forward to hearing from Albertans on how we can reduce the burden and to meeting with industry leaders to discuss how we can make it easier to do business and create jobs in the province. I encourage every Albertan to follow our progress online as we work together to cut red tape.”

- Grant Hunter, Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction

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Tracking Our Progress

Tracking our progress is critical to our success. As we work towards our goal, we will continually measure and monitor our progress, first by developing an inventory of all regulatory requirements to form a baseline count, then regularly measuring our work against that.

At the same time, it's also important not to increase Alberta's regulatory burden. Our government has imposed a regulatory cap with a commitment to no overall increase in the number of regulatory requirements after achieving our goal of one-third reduction.

When a new regulatory requirement is introduced, an existing requirement needs to be eliminated (one-in/one-out) unless the requirement is related to a government commitment. Each ministry's regulatory requirements are individually counted, tracked and reported.

Albertans can track our progress on our website (cutredtape.alberta.ca) where we will regularly post all approved initiatives. In addition, ministries will develop 3-, 6-, and 12-month red tape reduction plans. In 2020, the associate minister of red tape reduction will table a progress report in the Legislature.

Conclusion

Our government's commitment is to make life easier for those who continue to contribute so much to our province – the entrepreneurs and job creators – and enable them to build their businesses, move forward and get Albertans back to work. The red tape reduction initiative will eliminate the inefficiencies that prevent businesses from succeeding and hinder all Albertans in accessing the government programs and services they require.

We made a tremendous amount of headway in this first 100 days. We still have a long road ahead as we examine every regulation, every regulatory requirement, and all policies, processes and forms and modernize, improve and eliminate as necessary.

As we steadily work towards reducing regulatory requirements by one-third, we will continue to post our progress, ask for public input and remain focused on this effort that will benefit all of us.

Simply put, the red tape reduction initiative is a common sense approach and an important part of our government's work to get Albertans back to work.

Appendix

Completed Initiatives As of July 31, 2019

Initiative	Description
Weed appeal process	Streamline appeal process from 300+ days to 30 - 40 days.
Implement Agriculture Financial Services Corporation's lending mandate	Work with Alberta's Agriculture Financial Services Corporation to improve access to capital for agricultural processors, including food processors. This includes establishing an agribusiness lending group with experienced and knowledgeable staff who can work with agricultural processors to help bring deals to fruition.
Electronic funds transfers	Set up electronic funds transfers for community grant programs, reducing wait times from 100 days to about a week.
Multi-year grant agreements	Move current grant funding agreements, where feasible, to multi-year grant agreements to provide certainty to stakeholders and reduce the bureaucratic process of annual renewals.
Code of Conduct Regulation under the <i>Electric Utilities Act</i>	Simplify code of conduct requirements for disclosure statements for electricity retailers, and remove the requirement for the statement on select Internet advertising on electricity and natural gas services.
Independent Power and Small Power Regulation	Repeal the regulation. It is no longer required.
Innovative Energy Technologies Regulation	Repeal the regulation. It is no longer required.
Liquor in provincial parks	Relax liquor constraints in provincial parks.
Tourism and commercial recreation growth	Give tourism operators longer leases on public lands.
Disposition term length	Increase disposition term length from 25 years to 60 years to support tourism and commercial recreation on public lands.
Longer public land tenure to boost tourism growth	The new term length and lease will come into force Nov. 1 and will align with other jurisdictions.
Digital projects request for proposals format	Reduce the time to respond to an information technology request for proposal by about two-thirds, saving vendors and government time and making it easier for smaller vendors to bid on government projects.

Initiative	Description
Remove interprovincial red tape	Eliminate Alberta's procurement and regional economic development exceptions and fast-track a review of all Alberta exceptions under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) to eliminate as many as possible, as Premier Kenney announced at the July 10-11 Council of the Federation meeting. All premiers agreed to an immediate CFTA amendment to narrow or eliminate exceptions, and called on the federal government to adopt this amendment.
Public Health Act forms	Repeal the Public Health Act Forms Regulation.
Surplus Crown rural property appraisals	Simplify the appraisal policy on rural property sales by removing the requirement to undertake an external property appraisal if the internal appraisal is within 15 per cent of the last external appraisal.
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) recipients automatically meet Legal Aid eligibility requirements	Automatically accept AISH clients applying for Legal Aid, provided their legal matter falls within Legal Aid's scope of services.
Discharge all inactive personal property registrations placed by the civil enforcement more than 10 years prior	Require civil enforcement agencies to discharge inactive civil enforcement registrations more than 10 years old so Albertans don't have to apply for a court order to discharge them. The Personal Property Registry maintains inactive registrations for infinity unless civil enforcement agencies voluntarily discharge them or people apply for a court order. Undischarged registrations can potentially affect an Albertan's future credit standing even for actions that were settled.
Regulated Forestry Profession Amendment Act Regulation	Consolidate the regulation to unify the College of Alberta Professional Technologists and the College of Alberta Professional Foresters into one professional regulatory organization known as the Association of Alberta Forest Management Professionals.
Job creation student wage	Implement a job creation student wage of \$13 for students age 17 or younger to encourage employers to hire young Albertans for their first job.
General holidays	Restore prior rules for general holidays.
Banked overtime hours	Restore prior rules for employers that allow overtime hours to be banked at straight time.
<i>Fair Registration Practices Act</i>	Bring measures to ensure that regulated professions and individuals applying for registration are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

Initiative	Description
Municipal Disaster Recovery Program application process	Upgrade the form so eligible municipalities can receive advance funding for initial disaster response costs to support recovery efforts at the beginning of the process.
Disaster Recovery Program applications	Develop a SharePoint site that municipalities can directly upload information to support Disaster Recovery Program applications, speeding up the process and increasing security around the transmission of information.
Rental recovery application process	Streamline and reduce the number of forms landowners who rent land access to companies must complete when applying to recover rent that is past due under a surface lease agreement. The change means only one application is needed and is processed faster.
Surface Rights Board decisions	Implement a new process for faster Surface Rights Board decisions that have reduced delays between hearings and decisions being released.
Permitting and inspection services	Streamline online safety codes permitting and inspections services to reduce paperwork for accredited organizations and increase efficiency of site inspections.
Audit process for accredited organizations	Clarify and reduce the number of documents to be submitted and increase time allowed to respond to audit reports to reduce the administrative burden for organizations accredited under the <i>Safety Codes Act</i> to deliver permitting and inspection services in their jurisdictions.
Private sewage disposal system permitting	Reduce submission requirements for permit applications to simplify the application process.
Certificate and student record access for National Fire Protection Association students	Provided students with better access to their records by consolidating two seals into one certificate and providing students access to records and certificates through an online system.
Condominium regulations	Put in place a six-month pause on condominium regulations.
MyAlberta Evacuation Payment	Enable evacuees to apply online and receive one-time emergency funding via Interac e-Transfer. This alleviates the need for travel to specific locations and wait in line to receive financial assistance, saving them time and reducing administration of the program for government.
Automatic enrollment from Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) to the Alberta Seniors Benefit	Enable automatic enrolment of AISH program recipients into Seniors Financial Assistance programs at age 65.

Initiative	Description
Special licensed events	Clarify that enclosed events such as festivals can choose where its patrons can consume alcohol.
Charity non-cheque payments	Expand the use of electronic funds transfers for charities when making payments from their casino bank accounts.
Alternative financial security for gaming retailers	Direct Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis to approve cash deposits from retailers as an alternative financial security for gaming retailers.
Artisan markets	Expand the definition of artisan market in Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis policy.
e-Transfer for charities	Expand the use of electronic funds transfer (e-Transfer) for charities when making payments from their casino bank accounts.
Reclassify oil well service rigs	Exempt oil well service rigs from some regulatory requirements on commercial vehicles and align with other provinces.
Service rigs – harmonization	Harmonize rig classification standards across provinces.

Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction

Associate minister has a mandate to:

- Make recommendations to Treasury Board and cabinet on ways to highlight regulatory reform and red tape reduction;
- Table new bills or legislative amendments in support of red tape reduction;
- Work with all ministries to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate outdated regulations and reduce red tape; and
- Table an annual report, starting in 2020.

Red Tape Reduction Office

On May 13, 2019, government established the red tape reduction division within the ministry of Treasury Board and Finance. This division anchors an effort that spans across all government ministries and coordinates red tape reduction efforts across government. The division is led by a senior assistant deputy minister.

The deputy minister of Treasury Board and Finance and deputy ministers across government have red tape reduction accountability embedded in their performance agreements or mandates.

The deputy minister of Treasury Board and Finance is responsible for:

- Reporting to the associate minister of red tape reduction and ensuring collective buy-in from ministries and agencies; and
- Assigning an internal red tape reduction team to work with the red tape reduction division.

The senior assistant deputy minister (ADM) leads the red tape reduction division and chairs the ADM Red Tape Reduction Steering Committee. The senior ADM is responsible for:

- Overseeing the work of the red tape reduction division by setting the direction, removing barriers and obtaining buy-in from ADMs across government; and
- Rolling out and monitoring the red tape reduction initiative.

The red tape reduction division is the main anchor in the cross-ministry initiative and is responsible for coordinating efforts across government. The division is responsible for:

- Chairing the red tape reduction community of practice across government and diffusing expertise and best practices across government;
- Developing and increasing the capacity of the members of ministry red tape teams to deliver training to their colleagues and stakeholders;
- Providing policy support;
- Creating a clear and consistent framework for counting, monitoring, tracking and prioritizing the reduction of regulatory requirements and regulatory burden across government;
- Measuring performance and impact of the red tape reduction initiative;
- Facilitating public input (including through a red tape reduction challenge website) and overseeing input from various stakeholders; and
- Creating communications tools, including the annual report, to ensure the public is aware of the government's commitment and progress.

Principles of Red Tape Reduction Initiative

Principle 1: Necessity

- Requires strong evidence of need before regulating;
- Relates to public interest – specifically public health, safety, environmental protection and fiscal accountability; and
- Matches resource capability and availability with the desired regulatory outcome.

Principle 2: Effectiveness

- Ensures an outcomes-based approach in the design;
- Strives for neutral or positive economic impact while maintaining consumer, environmental, health and safety protections, and fiscal accountability; reduces negative economic impacts wherever possible; and
- Ensures focus on small business needs.

Principle 3: Efficiency

- Ensures well-functioning processes and timely and user-centered administration; and
- Ensures consistent, transparent and efficient regulatory requirements necessary to protect the public interest, including health, safety, the environment and fiscal accountability.

Principle 4: Proportionality

- Ensures that both the regulatory burden of complying and the penalty for not complying are proportionate to the value generated by regulating; and
- Regulates as lightly as possible and uses alternatives when possible to enable competitiveness.

Principle 5: Meaningful Review

- Ensures that existing regulations remain relevant through ongoing review where appropriate;
- Ensures commitment to analyzing existing regulations by government and industry panels; and
- Engages meaningfully with industry and stakeholders to identify opportunities for review.

Industry Panels

Purpose

The panels will be advisory rather than technical in nature. Key objectives include:

- Creating situational awareness – enable two-way sharing of information and intelligence about regulatory and administrative burdens and realities in the applicable sector;
- Testing of options and actions – provide an informed and confidential sounding board to test potential options for regulatory and administrative streamlining and red tape reduction;
- Facilitating responsiveness to sector interests and concerns – enable government to better respond to regulatory and administrative challenges identified by key stakeholders; and
- Coordinating communications – promote alignment of activities and messaging.

Mandate

The mandate of the panels is as follows:

- Identify areas of greatest regulatory and administrative burden in the applicable sector;
- Provide ideas and advice for regulatory and administrative streamlining and red tape reduction;
- Provide feedback on proposed government policies, processes and actions as requested;
- Provide feedback on progress updates provided by government regarding implementation efforts; and
- Identify sector-government actions related to regulatory and administrative streamlining.

Meetings

The associate minister will preside over all meetings of the panels. Panels must meet at least semi-annually, with additional meetings scheduled if required. The associate minister (or designate) will confirm meeting times and agendas based on determined need and emerging priorities.

Officials from the Office of the Premier and relevant government departments may also be invited to attend and participate in meetings of the panel.

Counting/tracking progress

We will continually measure and monitor our progress. Ministries support public reporting by:

- Counting – maintaining a count of the number of regulatory requirements imposed by all statutes, regulations and associated policies, forms and guides for which they are responsible (their count); and
- Reporting – updating the Regulatory Requirements Count Database managed by the red tape reduction office to ensure it contains an accurate representation of its count at any given time.

The count will begin in September 2019 with each ministry conducting its own count based on a government policy and consistent guidelines.

COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Administration recommends that some form of public involvement be integrated into the agricultural land expansion process, should the project proceed. It is also recommended that the County meet with neighbouring jurisdictions to explain our priorities and objectives.

POLICY REFERENCES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- Simple Majority Requires 2/3 Requires Unanimous

For information.

Author: _____ Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____



Mackenzie County

MACKENZIE COUNTY

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

ministerial briefings

THE HONOURABLE DEVIN DREESHEN

Mackenzie County wishes to present the following briefing on a matter of concern to our region. Attached you will find information regarding our top priority issue.

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Background

Public land sales were initially scheduled into three separate phases: the first two phases were completed between 2011 and 2013, with a total of 118,936 acres sold. The province received an amount of \$13,733,492 over reserve bid from the initial two phases. These land sales have provided an increased potential for further economic and agricultural development within our region. However, the earnings acquired from these lands were retained in full by the Alberta Government, leaving zero funds available for Mackenzie County to construct roadways and other infrastructure required to access these new lands.

Phase three of the land sales was scheduled for February 26, 2016. However, it was cancelled with no further details. The land from phase three, a total of 17,264 acres is still waiting to be sold.

Community and Economic Impact

The initiative that led to phase one and two of Crown land sales has had a significant economic boost to our region. Mackenzie County is rich in fertile land, making agriculture a predominant industry in our region. With the Alberta Government acknowledging the commitment for further development of agriculture, our region will continue to benefit from these future land sales.

According to the 2018 Mackenzie County Municipal Census, 66% of our population resides in rural areas. These regions produce high quality and largely sought after crops that are sold in the global market. Our grains are used as the base ingredient in most global foods available (e.g. barley, oats, canola, wheat). With 52% of our population under the age of 25, the community and its agricultural industry will continue to grow.

Access to new agricultural lands also creates continued economic growth within our County for our residents. Many temporary and permanent jobs are created, in areas such as road construction, development of the land, equipment sales, crop input sales, and transportation of goods. Not only does the expansion of agricultural lands have a positive economic impact, but this open farm land also provides substantial protection to our communities from the threat of wildfire.

Municipal Objective

The United Conservative Party identified agricultural land expansion as part of their platform in the recent 2019 election. Mackenzie County would like to see the Alberta Government work together with us to ensure that the land sales of phase 3 are completed in full. In addition, the County would like to see further expansion of an additional 350,000 acres of agricultural land sales in our region. Priority areas for further expansion have been identified, with the first priority being areas that are along current or proposed key transportation routes.

We firmly believe that, while quality farmland is being sold in southern Alberta for residential and commercial use, it would be beneficial to continue development of our agriculture, food production, and value added processes. It is crucial that adequate roadways and infrastructure are built in order to access newly developed agricultural lands. Therefore, Mackenzie County requests to receive financial assistance for infrastructure initiatives within the region to support the agricultural land expansion.

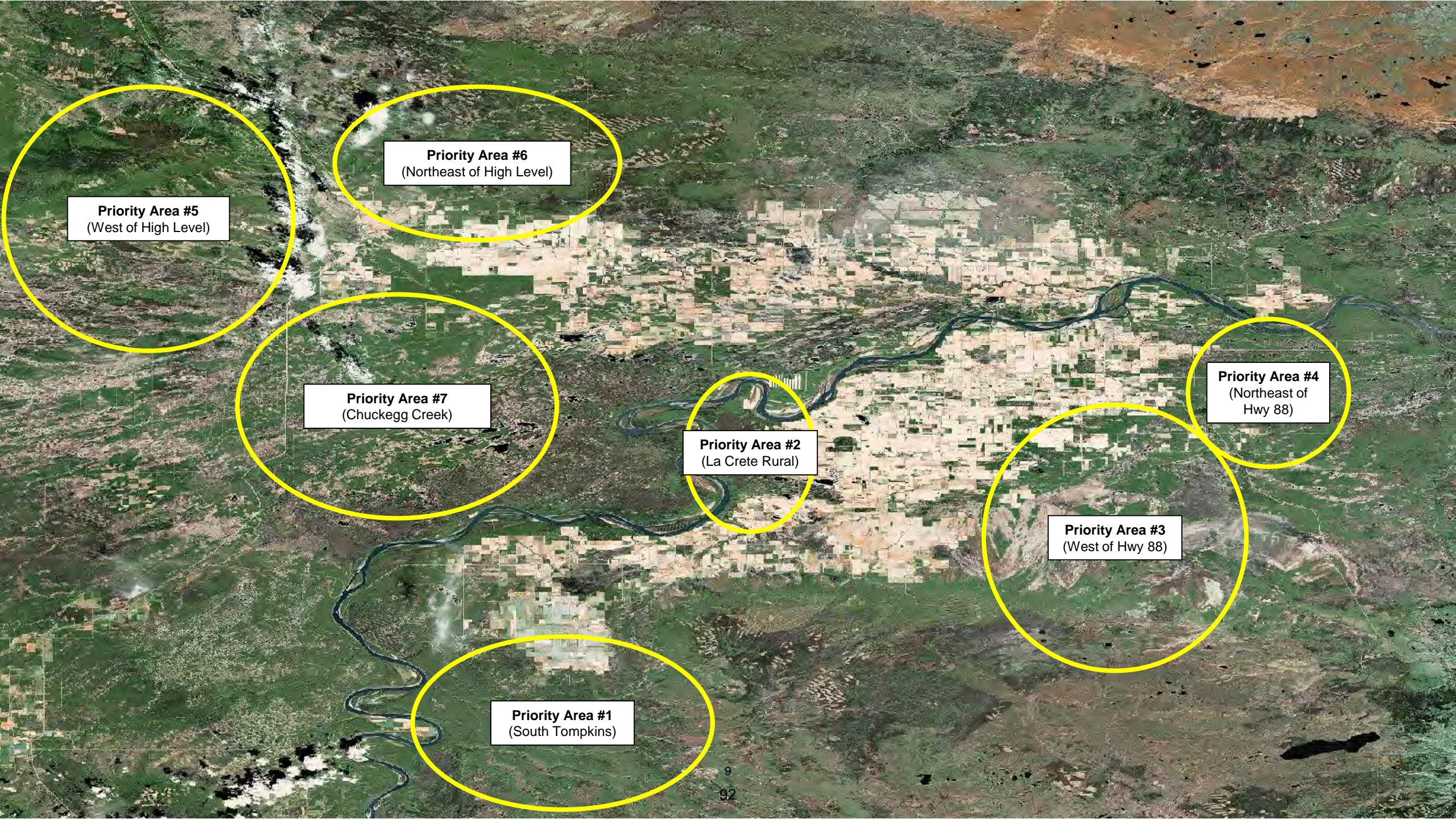
Appendix A: Technical Report

Mackenzie County is completely within the Boreal Forest and covers an area of 7,761,580 hectares (80,478 square kilometers). Within its large landmass, Mackenzie County hosts a variety of different ecological features such as hills, rivers, wetlands, upland forest areas and flat cultivated areas. Much of the flat areas have been developed as agricultural lands. A large portion of Mackenzie County's region remains untouched and with that, there is potential for expanding the agricultural lands. Although in a northerly climate, the agricultural industry thrives in Mackenzie County due to the rich soils and the extended hours of daylight each summer.

To determine what areas of land would be suitable for possible future agricultural land expansion, Mackenzie County had O2 Planning + Design Inc. put together a map that displays priority areas based on a number of different factors. The areas in the detailed map were determined by removing the following unsuitable land cover types: lotic riparian areas, areas within 200m of a waterbody, wetland complexes over 10 hectares, and any existing agricultural or anthropogenic land cover (e.g. roads, residential, industrial sites), and steep slopes over 15%. The overall area of potential agricultural land that was determined is approximately 425,000 acres. It is important to note that steep slopes was not one of the data layers used to develop the detailed priority area maps.

These priority area maps act as the first step in determining potential agricultural land and infrastructure expansion in Mackenzie County. These areas have been determined using digital data sets—environmental assessments would be required to confirm all of the details within each priority area. Mackenzie County encourages agricultural land expansion and the development of road networks while also supporting local biodiversity. If this project were to continue moving forward, Mackenzie County would like to ensure that wildlife buffer zones are put into place, as well as proper wetland mitigation efforts and that biodiversity protection is prioritized in all stages of development.

Appendix B: At-A-Glance Map of Priority Areas



Priority Area #5
(West of High Level)

Priority Area #6
(Northeast of High Level)

Priority Area #7
(Chuckegg Creek)

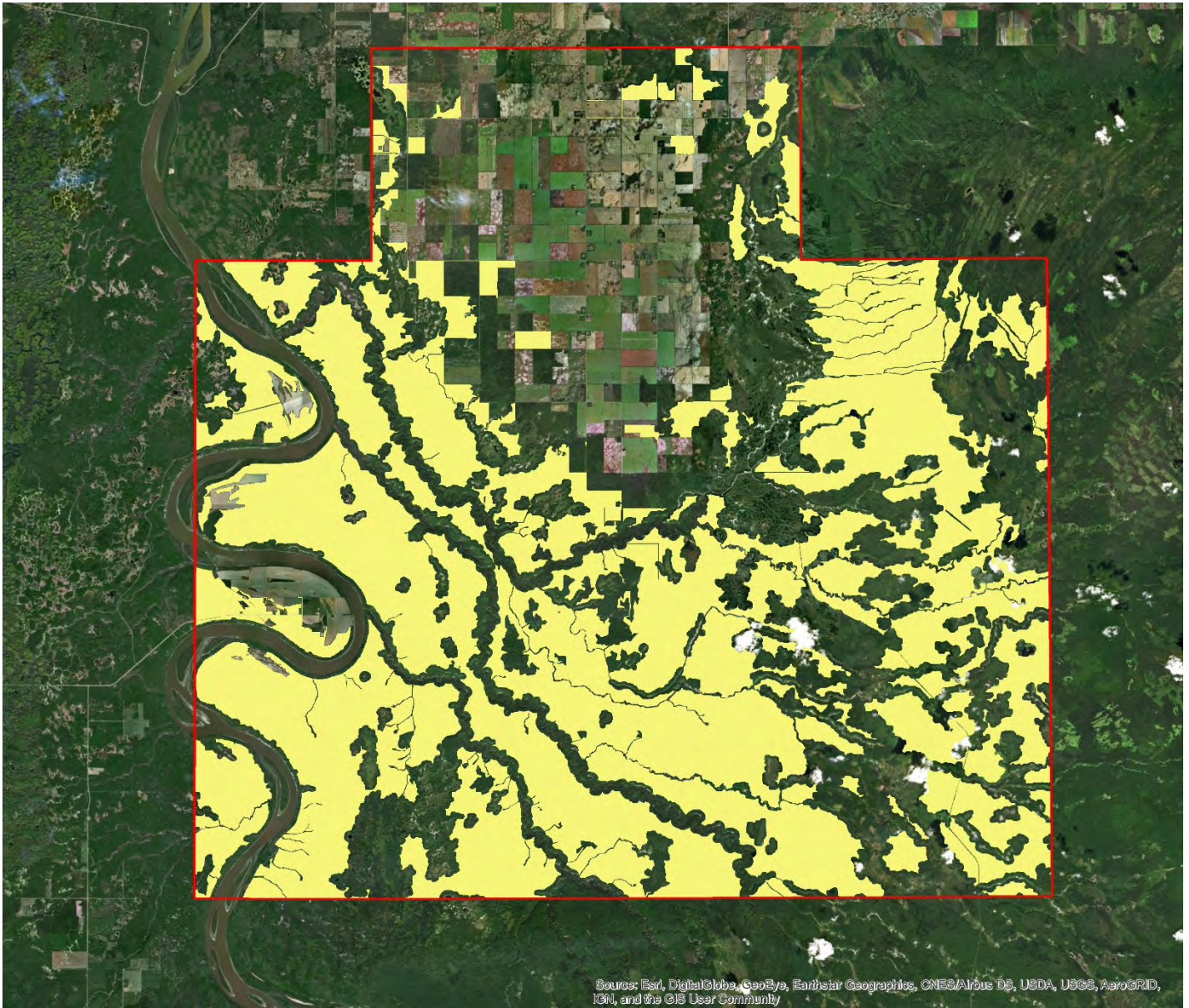
Priority Area #2
(La Crete Rural)

Priority Area #4
(Northeast of Hwy 88)

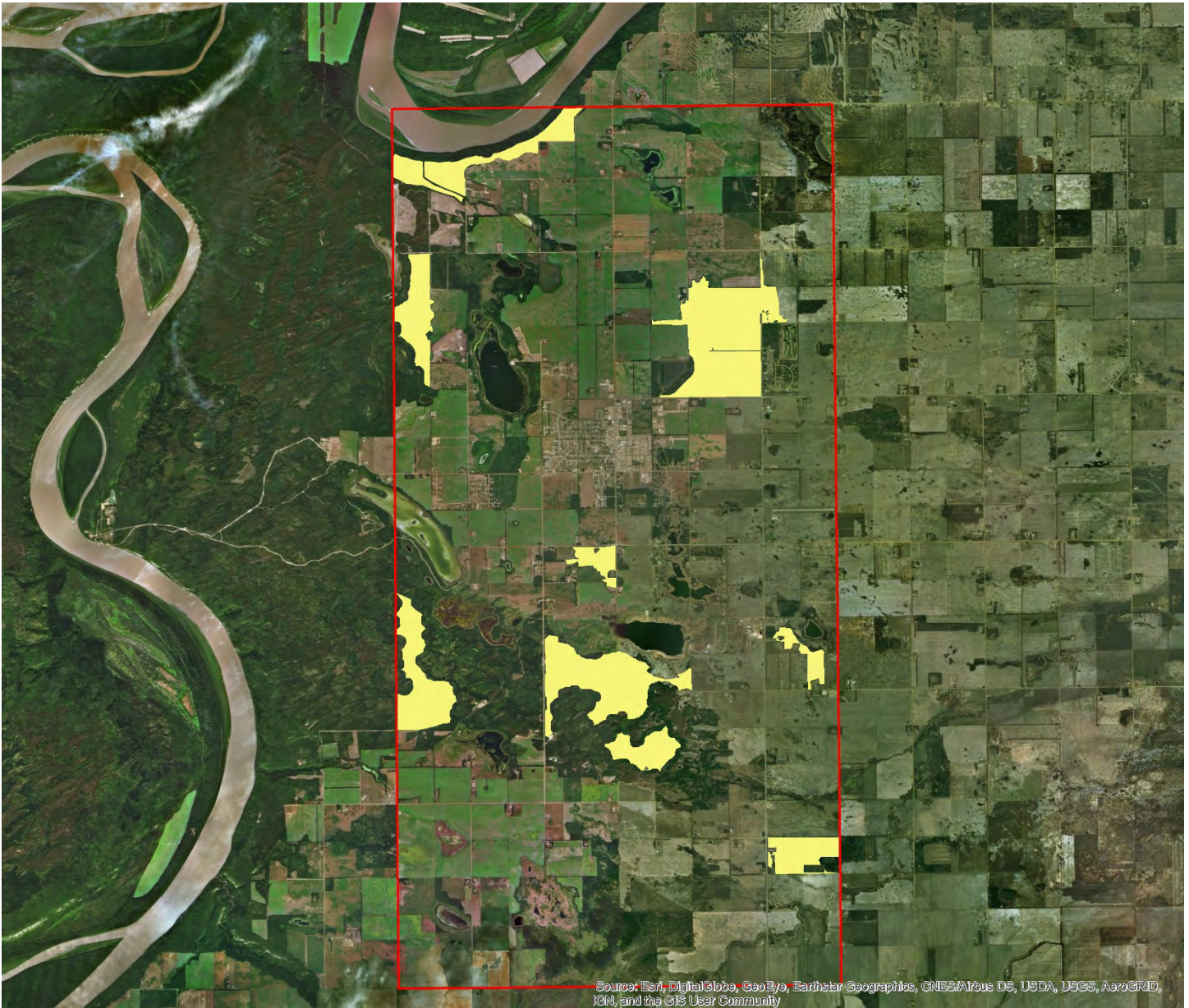
Priority Area #3
(West of Hwy 88)

Priority Area #1
(South Tompkins)

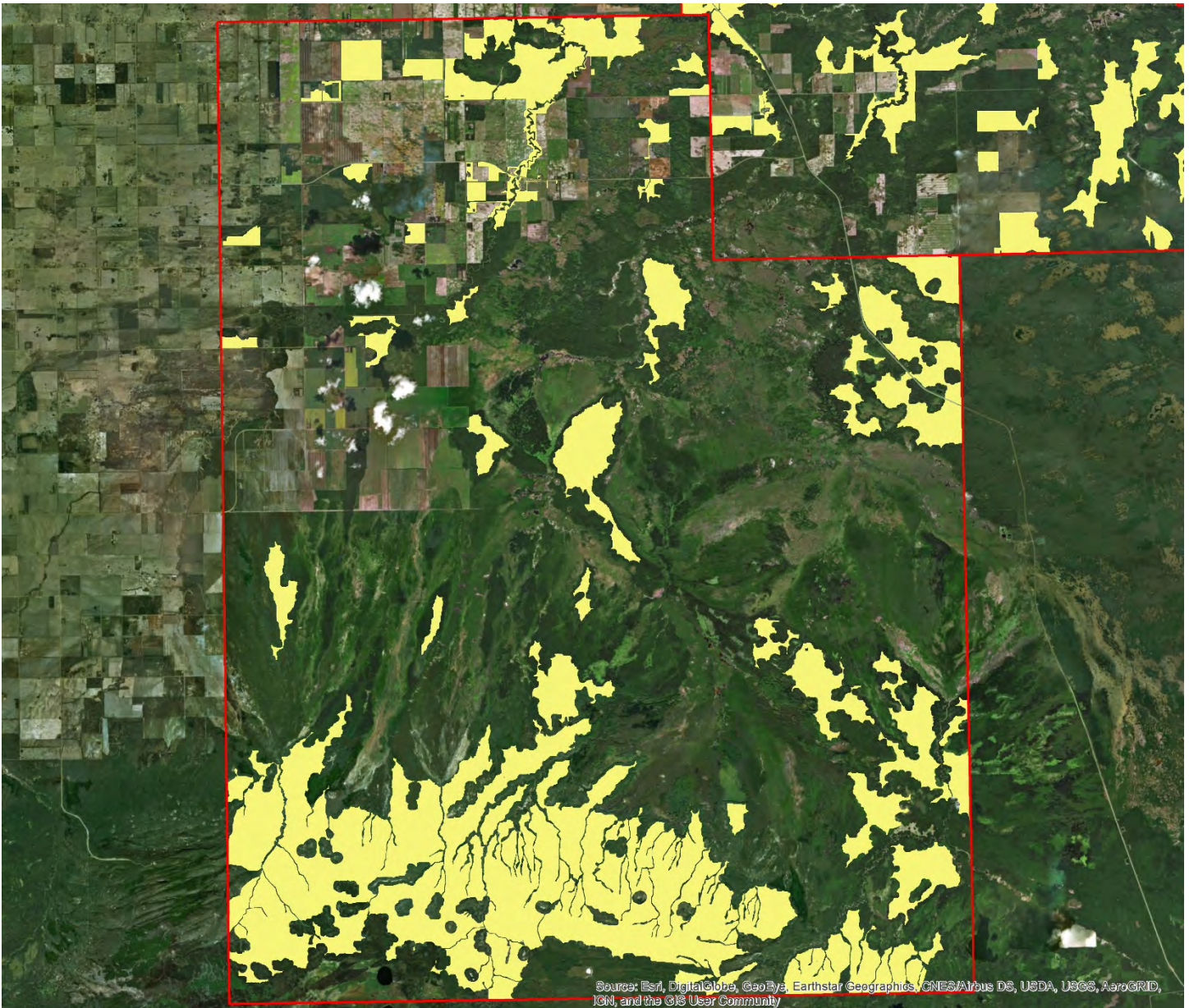
Appendix C: Detailed Maps of Priority Areas



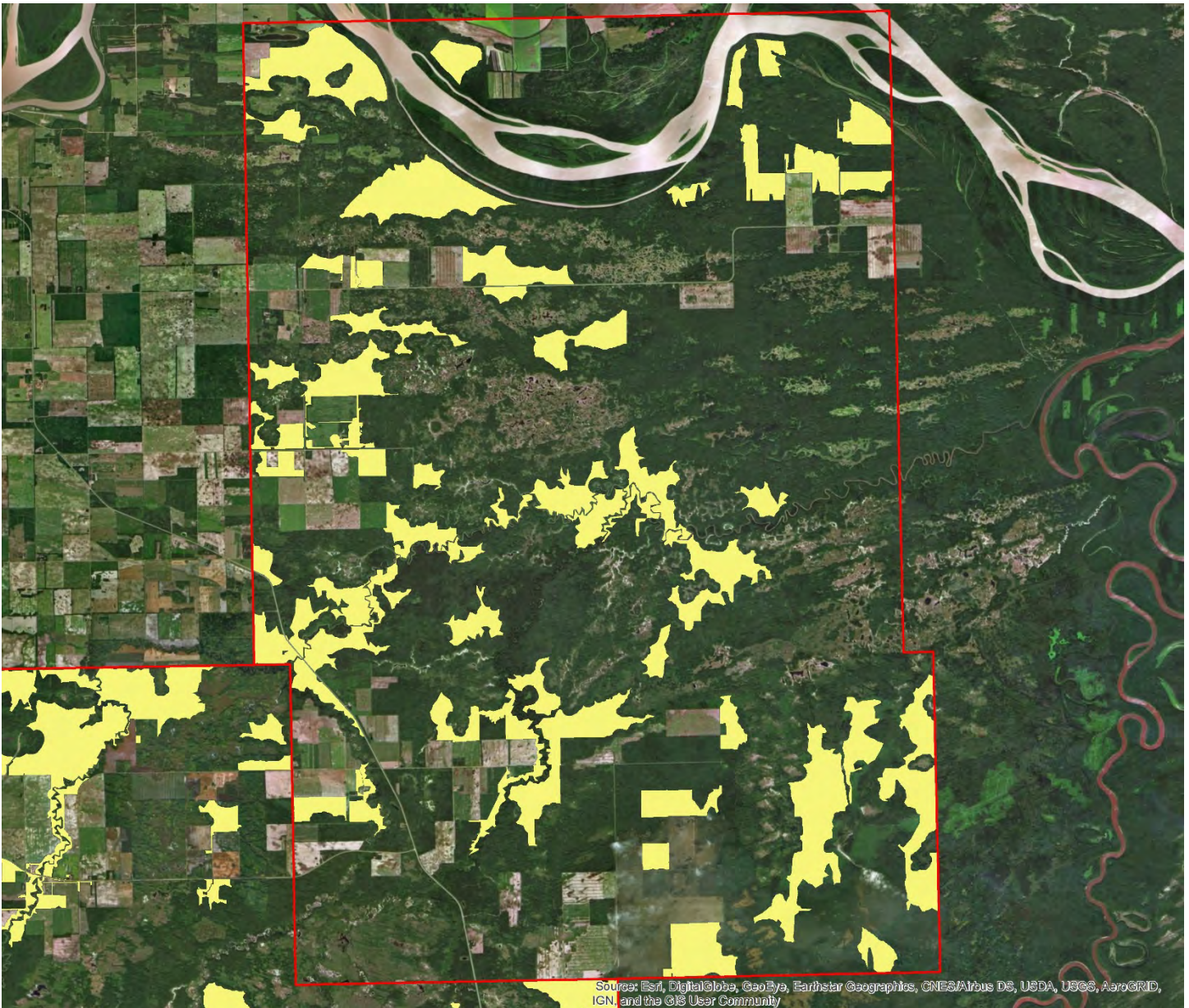
Map 1. The fourth priority area is northeast of Hwy 88 and just north of the North Tall Cree Reserve. Again, there is existing farmland to the east, so there is potential to expand agricultural lands in this area.



Map 2. The second priority area includes the remainder of undeveloped lands within the rural area just outside of the Hamlet of La Crete.

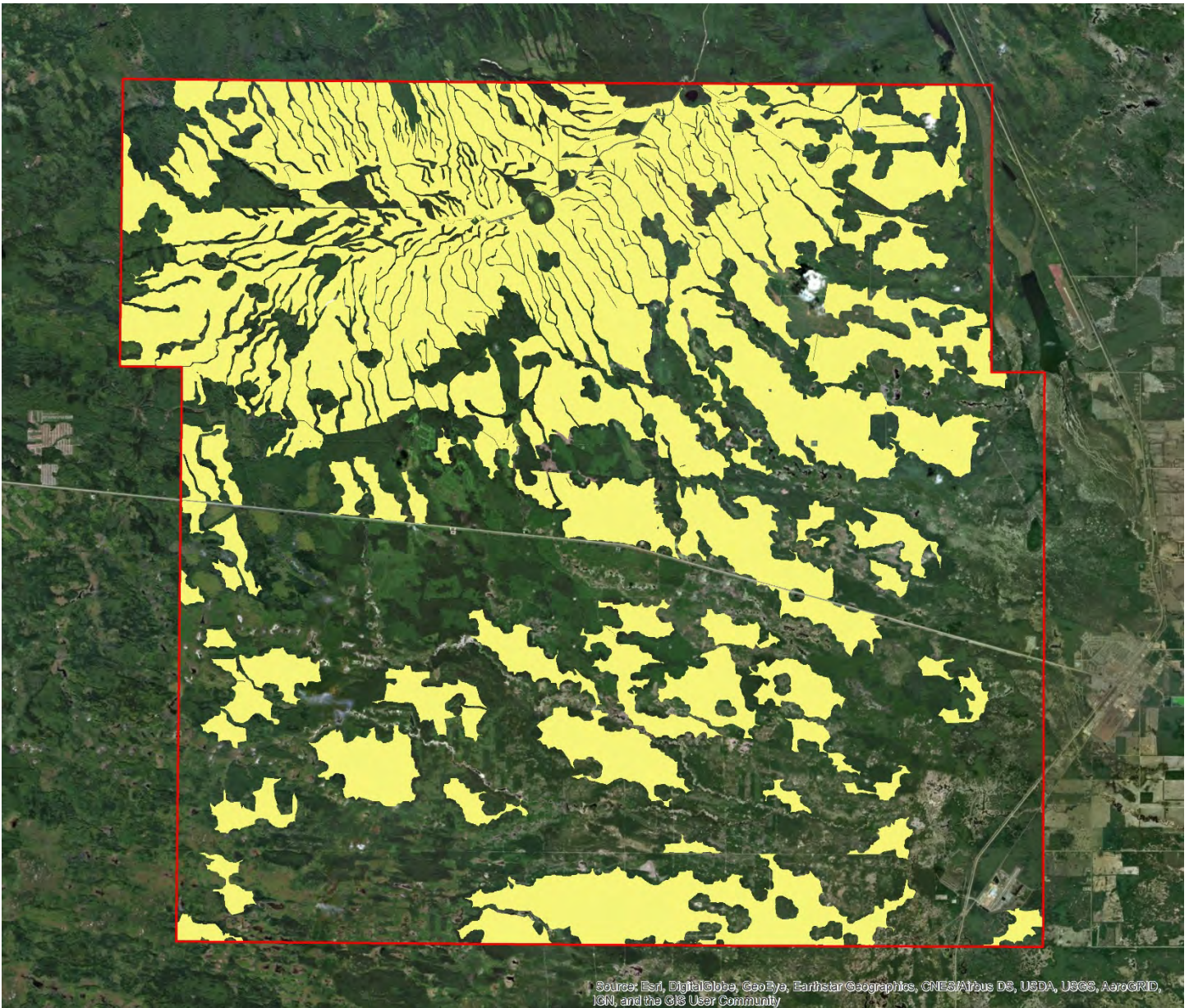


Map 3. The third priority area would be west of Highway 88. Farmlands currently exist to the north and east, therefore the main idea for priority area #3 would be to expand on current agricultural areas.

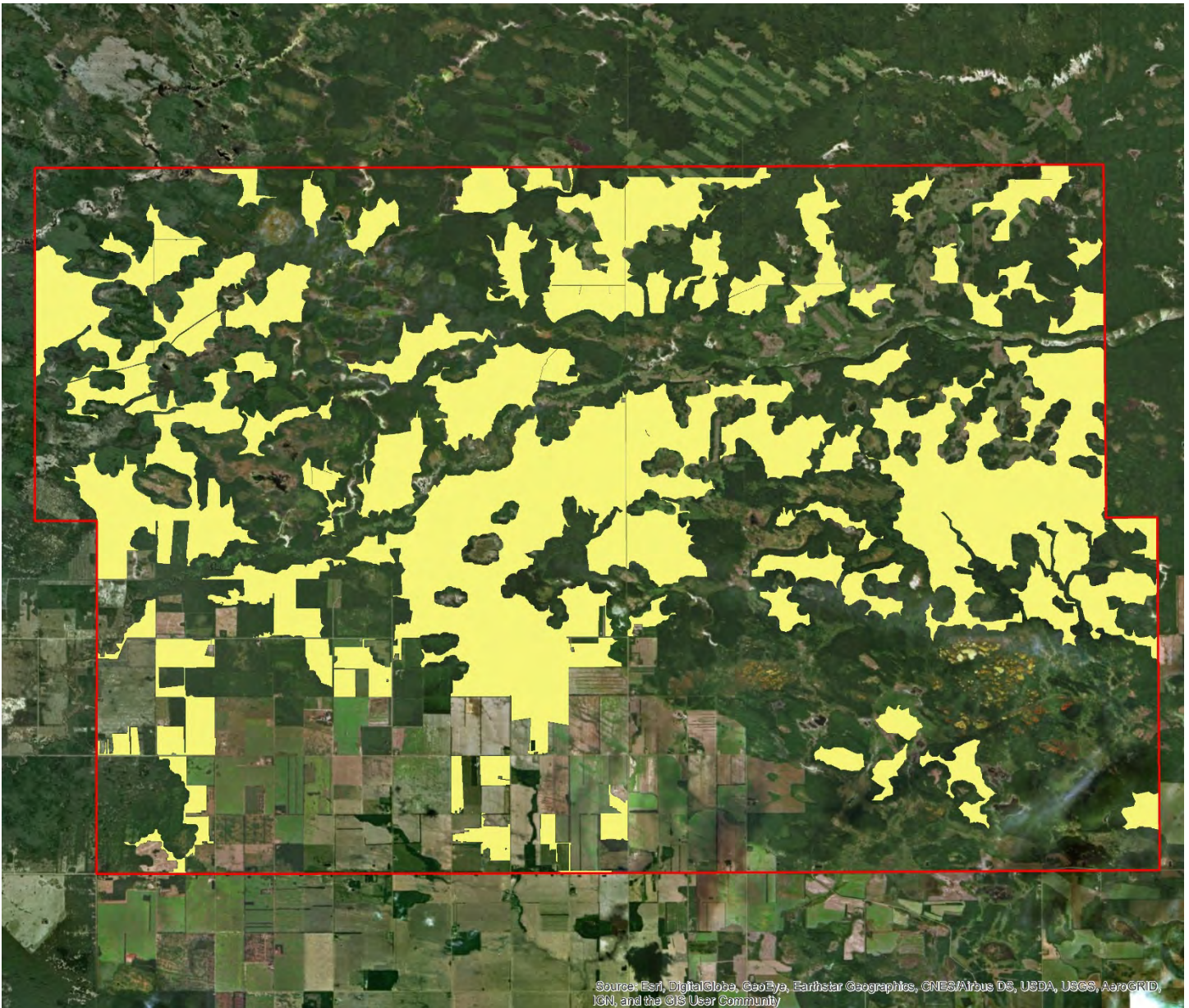


Sources: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Map 4. The fourth priority area is northeast of Hwy 88 and just north of the North Tall Cree Reserve. Again, there is existing farmland to the east, so there is potential to expand agricultural lands in this area.



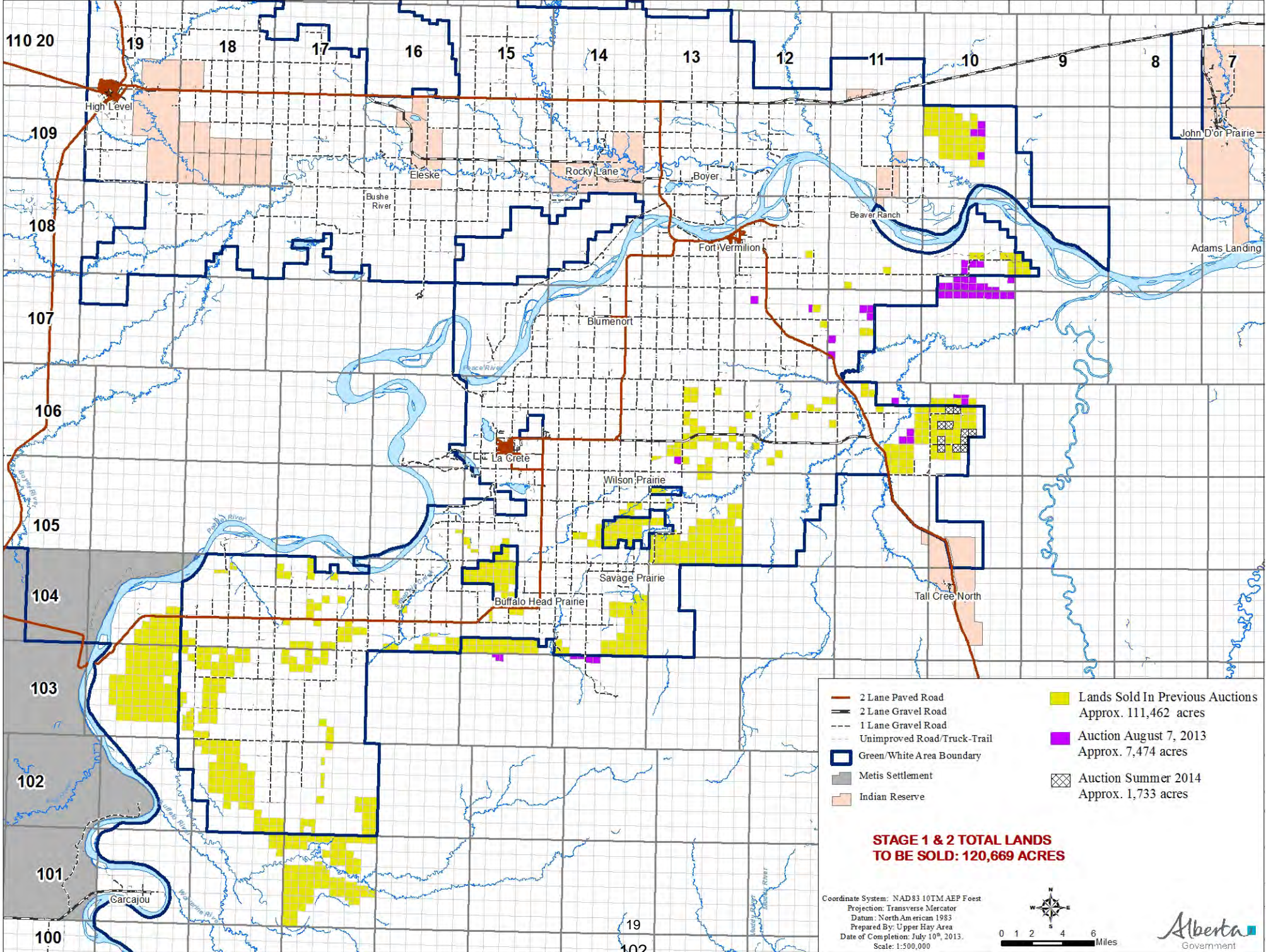
Map 5. Priority area five is west of the Town of High Level. Currently, there has not been a lot of agricultural development in this area. Rather, forestry and oil and gas have been the active industries. This area may contain rugged terrain and steep slopes, therefore further investigation is recommended on whether or not this area could be used for potential agriculture.



Map 6. The sixth priority area is northeast of the Town of High Level, where farming already exists. Wetlands could become an obstacle here as well, however there are existing farmlands and the potential for expansion

**Appendix D: Previous Land Sales Maps
and Correspondence**

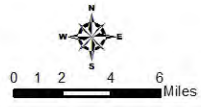
MACKENZIE COUNTY NEXT PROPOSED LAND AUCTIONS

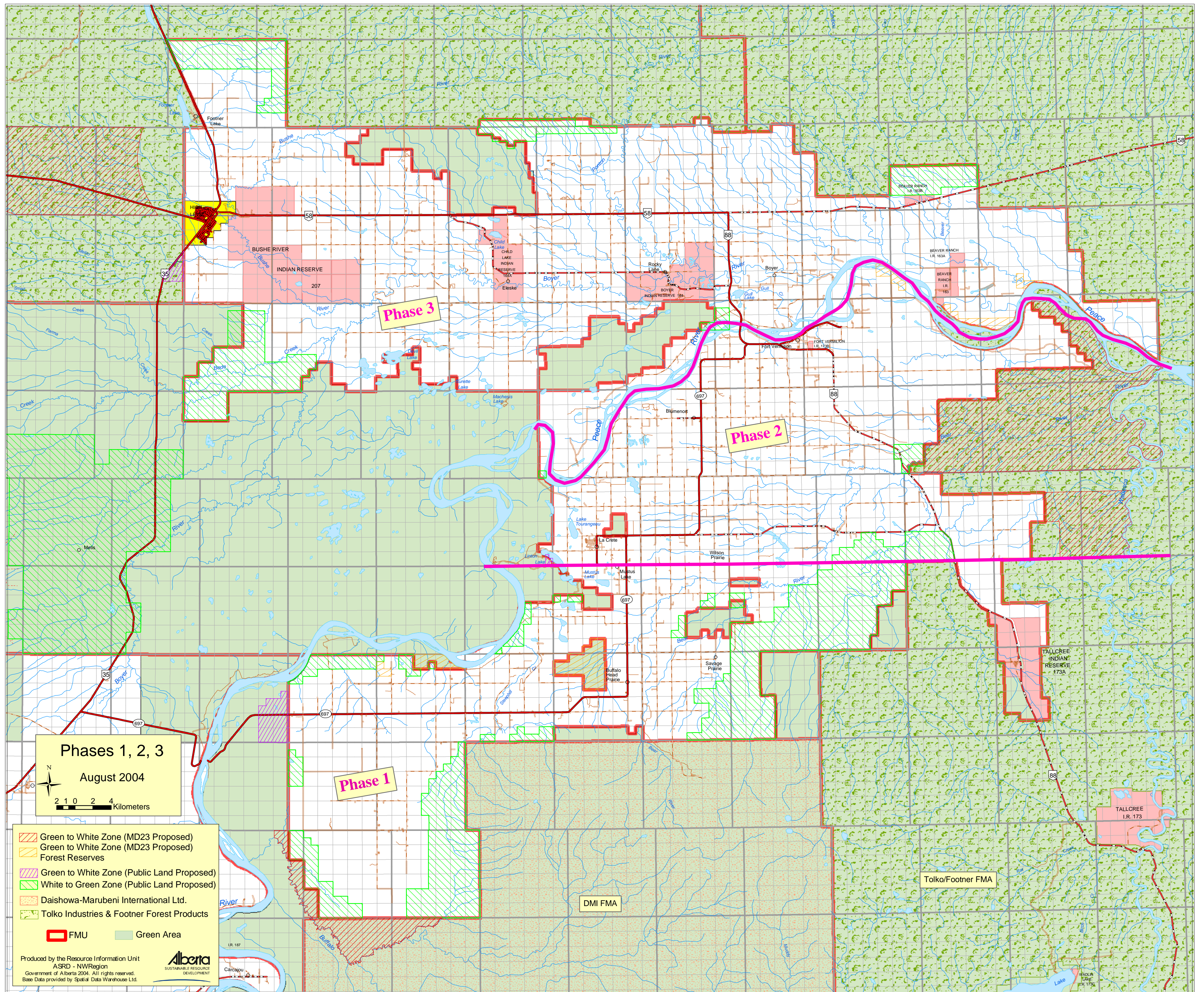


- 2 Lane Paved Road
- 2 Lane Gravel Road
- 1 Lane Gravel Road
- Unimproved Road/Truck-Trail
- Green/White Area Boundary
- Metis Settlement
- Indian Reserve
- Lands Sold In Previous Auctions
Approx. 111,462 acres
- Auction August 7, 2013
Approx. 7,474 acres
- Auction Summer 2014
Approx. 1,733 acres

**STAGE 1 & 2 TOTAL LANDS
TO BE SOLD: 120,669 ACRES**

Coordinate System: NAD83 10TM AEP Foest
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: North American 1983
 Prepared By: Upper Hay Area
 Date of Completion: July 10th, 2013.
 Scale: 1:500,000





Phases 1, 2, 3
 August 2004

2 1 0 2 4 Kilometers

- Green to White Zone (MD23 Proposed)
- Green to White Zone (MD23 Proposed)
- Forest Reserves
- Green to White Zone (Public Land Proposed)
- White to Green Zone (Public Land Proposed)
- Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd.
- Tolko Industries & Footner Forest Products
- FMA
- Green Area

Produced by the Resource Information Unit
 ASRD - NWRegion
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 Base Data provided by Spatial Data Warehouse Ltd.



Mackenzie County

Summary of Land Sales by AB SRD

SALE	Land Offered for Sale	Unsold Parcels	Acres Sold	Appraised Value	Reserve Bids (85% of appraised value of sold land)	Sale Proceeds	Profit over the Reserve Bids
	# of parcels	# of parcels		Sold			
2011							
January	55	8	6,946	\$1,962,500	\$1,668,125	\$2,438,050	\$769,925
February	131		16,182	\$4,599,500	\$3,909,575	\$4,329,375	\$419,800
March	73	28	7,076	\$1,824,000	\$1,550,400	\$1,810,800	\$260,400
April	78	11	10,363	\$2,840,000	\$2,414,000	\$3,415,925	\$1,001,925
August	117	33	13,022	\$3,657,600	\$3,108,960	\$3,988,660	\$879,700
September	123	16	16,953	\$3,001,265	\$2,551,075	\$4,358,820	\$1,807,745
December	117	1	17,219	\$4,732,300	\$4,022,455	\$7,377,165	\$3,354,710
2012							
January	60	4	8,883	\$2,092,500	\$1,778,625	\$2,214,850	\$436,225
June	97	0	14,818	\$2,713,574	\$2,306,538	\$5,178,500	\$2,871,962
2013							
August	51	0	7,474	\$2,393,000	\$2,034,050	\$3,965,150	\$1,931,100
Total	851		118,936	\$29,816,239	\$25,343,803	\$39,077,295	\$13,733,492

August 10, 2012

The Honourable Diana McQueen
Minister of Environment and Sustainable
Resource Development
204 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Minister:

RE: MEETING WITH MACKENZIE COUNTY – JULY 23, 2012

Thank you for taking time to meet with Mackenzie County and discuss our municipal and regional priorities. We are very pleased with the time and excellent dialogue we had with you and your colleagues.

Thank you for visiting our Region and providing excellent firefighting support.

As discussed at the meeting, 111,462 acres of land was sold by ESRD during 2011-2012 with gross sales proceeds of \$35M and nearly \$12M profit over the reserved bids. Mackenzie County Council and residents are appreciative of furthering the agricultural opportunities this mass land sale has brought to our communities and the Province.

During our past meetings with the Ministry, we were informed that any crown land sale proceeds are deposited into Alberta's Land Stewardship Fund. We understand that the land is Alberta's resource and as such all Albertans should benefit from it equally. Concurrently, we would like to bring to your attention that the sale has brought near insurmountable challenges for the County in regards to infrastructure provision to service these lands.

Based on a suggestion from the past Ministers of Sustainable Resource Development and Transportation, and as a good business sense, Mackenzie County developed a Rural Road Network plan that was shared with you at the meeting. The Rural Road Network plan's estimate is \$32M. This includes

building low volume farm access roads, two major bridge structures and other minor crossings.

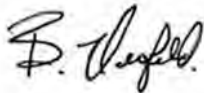
In addition, the County is taking a proactive approach with the professional assistance of multiple Ministries (Agriculture and Rural Development, ESRD, Transportation, Municipal Affairs) in developing a Master Drainage Plan for which an Expression of Interest for the perspective engineering firms is being developed. Mackenzie County has limited funds and is seeking any financial assistance that can be provided for this initiative (estimated at \$150,000). The cost of construction of the major drainage channels is yet to be determined and may range from \$10M to \$25M.

While we understand the complexities of provincial government policies, procedures and availability of programs to support a variety of urban and rural municipal needs, we feel that opening up new agricultural lands in our municipality is an extraordinary and unique initiative and qualifies for one-time support from provincial government.

In summary, we thank you for your interest in Mackenzie County's initiatives and really looking forward to working with our new government to advance our most northern region into a sustainable future.

We would be pleased to meet again at your convenience. I may be reached at (780) 841-1806 or through Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer, at (780) 927-3718 or (780) 841-8343.

Sincerely,



Bill Neufeld
Reeve

c: Premier Alison Redford
Hon. Ric Mclver, Minister of Transportation
Hon. Frank Oberle, MLA, Peace Region
Mackenzie County Council
Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer
William (Bill) Kostiw, Director of Infrastructure Development and
Government Relations

March 27, 2013

The Honourable Alison Redford
Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Premier:

RE: ALBERTA NORTH - RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for taking time to attend the AAMD&C Convention and events. We appreciate your continued support and interest in urban and rural development.

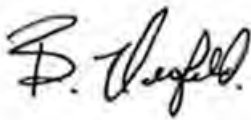
As the most northern, underdeveloped specialized municipality in Alberta (rural and urban mix), our challenges are unique and often not understood by our Alberta-south neighbours. We are continually looking for opportunities to improve socio-economic indicators in our region. This can be exceedingly challenging considering the region's underdeveloped state, lack of adequate information and understanding of our region's resources on the provincial level, numerous federal and/or provincial regulations that were non-existent during the similar stages of development in southern areas of Alberta. As an example, the Province sold 111,000 acres of new agricultural land in Mackenzie County with gross revenues from these sales \$30M, which is \$9M above the reserve bids. The County was not successful in obtaining any funding from these sales that would allow the County to construct basic farm access roads and/or to address major surface water issues to allow for orderly environmental compliance.

Some of our other challenges are associated with transportation (roads, rail, air) to markets, access to adequate and timely health care, and post-secondary educational opportunities. The upcoming Lower Peace Land Use Framework may add to the developmental challenges in our region. The County's latest challenge is associated with the closure of a Federal Agricultural Research Farm in the Hamlet of Fort Vermilion. We feel that greater support from higher levels of government is much needed in order to progress our region to sustainable existence.

Therefore, on behalf of Mackenzie County Council and residents, we thoroughly enjoy living, working and playing in our region and we invite you to visit our area to see, discuss, and experience our challenges and help us to develop solutions to assure prosperous and continuous development of Alberta's True North.

We would be pleased to accommodate your schedule for visiting our region. I can be contacted at (780) 841-1806, or contact Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer, at (780) 927-3718.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Neufeld". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bill Neufeld
Reeve

c: Honourable Frank Oberle, MLA Peace Region, Associate Minister of
Persons with Developmental Disabilities
Mackenzie County Council
Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer



Mackenzie County

P.O. Box 640, 4511-46 Avenue, Fort Vermilion, AB T0H 1N0
P: (780) 927-3718 Toll Free: 1-877-927-0677 F: (780) 927-4266
www.mackenziecounty.com
office@mackenziecounty.com

September 25, 2013

Mr. Darcy Beach
Area Manager, Peace / Upper Hay Area
Peace Area
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Bag 900-37, 3rd Floor Provincial Building
9621 - 96 Avenue
Peace River, AB T8S 1T4

Dear Mr. Beach:

RE: FARM LAND AVAILABILITY WEST OF THE TOWN OF HIGH LEVEL

Thank you for your and your department's work to date in assisting our municipality to identify and make new agricultural land available.

Agriculture is the back bone of our municipality. Our municipal sustainability is reliant on sustainable agriculture in our region. As identified in our Four-Step Community Sustainability Plan:

"The sustainability of agriculture in the area depends on three factors:

- The adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to cultivate new lands acquired from the province's Crown lands through a land exchange
- The continued support of a northern research station to assist farmers to adapt traditionally effective agricultural practices to the northern climate and to the emerging changes in this climate in the coming decades
- The expansion of agribusiness as a means to provide employment opportunities for young adults to find employment in the community rather than having to leave the area to find work"

Considering the local climate, flora and fauna, developing the most suitable land for agricultural purposes is the key for agricultural success. The lands west of High Level are some of the best qualities in the Region. These lands are also conveniently located near the existing infrastructure: highways, grain elevators in High Level and rail, which is essential in order to competitively export agriculture products.

Mr. Darcy Beach
Page 2
September 25, 2013

Based on the Inter-Municipal Development Plan, developed with the Town of High Level, large industry is preferred to the south of the Town of High Level, the residential expansion and the airport hinder the development of agricultural land north of High Level, and the majority of arable land to the east of High Level is already privately owned and currently in seed bed. Furthermore, due to oil & gas sector recently abandoning this area of its facilities and pipelines, temporary accesses and winter roads are already situated in the lands located west of High Level, which is not only a financial benefit, but also an environmental benefit.

Continuing agricultural development is crucial for Canada. Agriculture is one of the most important components of the Canadian economy.

If you require further information, please contact me at (780) 927-3718 or on my cell (780) 841-8343.

Sincerely,



Joulia Whittleton
Chief Administrative Officer
Mackenzie County

pc: Mackenzie County Council
Gail Tucker, Land Program Manager, Alberta Environment and
Sustainable Resources

Enc.: Inter-Municipal Development Plan – Future Land Use Zoning Plan



Mackenzie County

P.O. Box 640, 4511-46 Avenue, Fort Vermillion, AB T0H 1N0
P: (780) 927-3718 Toll Free: 1-877-927-0677 F: (780) 927-4266
www.mackenziecounty.com
office@mackenziecounty.com

April 2, 2014

The Honourable Ken Hughes
Minister of Municipal Affairs
404 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Minister:

RE: ROADS TO NEW AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Thank you for taking time to attend the NADC Summit in Athabasca on March 14, 2014. We appreciate your attendance at the Summit to hear our Northern Alberta concerns. Specifically, we appreciate our discussion with you regarding Mackenzie County roads to new agricultural lands challenges.

After nearly fifteen years of negotiations between Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Mackenzie County, First Nations, and other stakeholders, Mackenzie County was fortunate to see new agricultural lands being offered for public sale. The negotiations were initiated after exchange of green and white zone lands (136,000 acres) between the Province and the County in order to accommodate FMAs for Tolko and Footner Forest Products. As a result, 120,000 acres of new agricultural land was sold within the last three years. The Alberta Government has collected \$39M in revenues from the sales, which is \$13M above the reserved bids that were set at 85% of appraised value. Mackenzie County has prepared a Roads to New Lands plan. Thirty million dollars is the engineering estimate to build local roads sufficient to serve the new area, including two bridges. Mackenzie County would like to work with you on finding a funding solution for this unprecedented land sale.

Since the beginning of the sales, Mackenzie County Council met with two different Ministers of Transportation, Minister of SRD and ESRD, prior Minister of Municipal Affairs, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, and former Deputy Premier and AB Treasury Chair. These meetings yielded no results thus far. We understand that the land sales proceeds have been contributed to the Alberta Land Stewardship Fund that has specific purposes under legislature.

Hon. Ken Hughes
Page 2
April 2, 2014

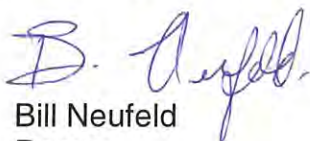
And, we understand that the Province's policy is that "all Albertans benefit from the Province's resources". We understand that funds from the Fund will be used to acquire lands for provincial projects and/or remediate environmental impacts in various parts of Alberta.

We have faced the same question multiple times "why did you not ask for road funds prior to the sale?". It is from fear that our "fortune" dissipate – fear of jeopardizing commencement of the sales. We were advised by some to collect property taxes to construct the new roads. Considering high transportation costs for our farmers due to our remoteness, compounded by having a single grain transporting facility, an option to solely transfer the costs of installing new infrastructure to the farmers will indefinitely jeopardize theirs and our prosperity. We were advised to use the MSI grant to construct new roads. As a specialized municipality with 12% land mass of Alberta, three hamlets and nearly 11,000 people, the MSI grant is quickly absorbed within our other priorities.

It is hard to "connect the dots" today how fairness can be reached as agricultural land sales of this magnitude does not take place every day, and considering that rural roads infrastructure was installed in other parts of Alberta years ago by the provincial government for the general benefit of all Albertans. Our municipality is the agricultural frontier and is still in developing stages. We really require assistance from the province in this situation.

We would like to arrange a meeting with you, Minister Robin Campbell and Minister Wayne Drysdale and are available to meet at your earliest convenience to discuss this further. Thank you for your consideration and I can be contacted at (780) 841-1806, or contact our Chief Administrative Officer, Joulia Whittleton, at (780) 841-8343.

Sincerely,



Bill Neufeld
Reeve

Attach

c: Hon. Frank Oberle, MLA for Peace River, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Ms. Pearl Calahasen, President, NADC, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake
Mr. Bob Barrs, President, AAMD&C
Mr. Tom Burton, President, AAMD&C Zone 4
Mackenzie County Council
Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer, Mackenzie County

March 3, 2016

The Honourable Rachel Notley
Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

The Honourable Shannon Phillips
Minister of Environment and Parks
208 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Premier and Minister:

RE: MACKENZIE COUNTY PUBLIC LAND SALE

As part of Green Zone – White Zone exchange twenty years ago, the Government of Alberta has committed to selling 136,200 acres of public land in Mackenzie County into private ownership for agricultural expansion. One hundred eighteen thousand and nine hundred thirty six acres (118,936) have been sold to-date (from January 2011 to August 2013), with most of these lands in agricultural production today.

The public land sale that was scheduled for February 26, 2016 and advertised throughout the County has now been cancelled. Thus, Mackenzie County is requesting that the provincial government follow through with their promise to sell 136,200 acres of public land in Mackenzie County and reschedule these sales as soon as possible.

Mackenzie County Council requests a response in a timely manner and an urgent meeting with you to discuss this matter.

Please feel free to contact myself at (780) 841-1806 or by email bill@mackenziecounty.com , or Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer, at (780) 841-8343 or by email jwhittleton@mackenziecounty.com .

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Neufeld". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bill Neufeld
Reeve
Mackenzie County

c: Mackenzie County Council
Joulia Whittleton, Chief Administrative Officer



ALBERTA
ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Lethbridge-West*

APR 18 2016

Mr. Bill Neufeld, Reeve
Mackenzie County
PO Box 640
Fort Vermilion AB T0H 1N0

Dear Reeve Neufeld:

Thank you for writing to express your concern about delays with regard to a public land sale in Mackenzie County. Honourable Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta, has reviewed your comments and asked me to respond on behalf of the Government of Alberta.

It was a pleasure to meet you at the annual conference of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties to discuss this important matter in person. As we discussed, Environment and Parks will honour the commitment to proceed with the sale of these 11 quarters of land in Mackenzie County. Administrative delays resulted in the cancellation of sale dates in December 2015 and February 2016. Department staff are working to resolve these delays and expect to reschedule the land sale to occur in the upcoming months.

I encourage you to remain in contact with Ms. Camille Ducharme, Approvals Manager in our Peace River office. You can contact Ms. Ducharme directly at 780-624-6321, or by email at camille.ducharme@gov.ab.ca.

Sincerely,

Shannon Phillips
Minister

cc: Honourable Rachel Notley
Premier of Alberta

Camille Ducharme
Environment and Parks

September 28, 2016

Mr. Darcy Beach
Regional Executive Director, Peace Region
Alberta Environment & Parks
Bag 900-37, 3rd Floor Provincial Building
9621-96 Avenue
Peace River, AB T8S 1T4

Dear Mr. Beach:

RE: PHASE III LAND SALE

This letter is to request your continued support to expedite the Phase III land sales in the High Level area of Mackenzie County. We understand that the County has provided all necessary information needed, and that the next steps are in the Provinces' hands to move forward.

Please advise us on the status of the land sales, as we have many potential future farmers very anxious to purchase and develop this prime farm land.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you require any further information, I can be reached at (780) 927-3718 or email lracher@mackenziecounty.com.

Yours sincerely,



Len Racher
Chief Administrative Officer

c: Mackenzie County Council
William (Bill) Kostiw, Intergovernmental Relations & Special Projects
Coordinator, Mackenzie County

October 12, 2016

Len Racher
Chief Administrative Officer
Mackenzie County
PO Box 640
Fort Vermillion AB T0H 1N0
lracher@mackenziecounty.com

Dear Mr. Racher:

Thank you for your letter dated September 28, 2016, concerning the next steps for Stage 3 land sales in the High Level area of Mackenzie County. Environment and Parks appreciates Mackenzie County's patience in this matter and the information provided to date for the Stage 3 land sales.

Environment and Parks has not concluded consultation with Indigenous Peoples, and other internal departmental work required in the land sale process. There are many complexities in the selling of Crown lands and we will provide Mackenzie County with further information on this file as soon as we are able.

Camille Ducharme, Approvals Manager in Peace River, is available for any further inquiries you may have and can be reached by phone at 780-624-6321 and by email at Camille.Ducharme@gov.ab.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Beach", is positioned above the typed name of the sender.

Darcy Beach
Regional Executive Director

cc: Camille Ducharme

April 10, 2018

The Honourable Oneil Carlier
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
229 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with representatives from Mackenzie County on March 21, 2018 during the RMA Spring Convention. We value the time you set aside from your busy schedule to allow us the opportunity to discuss some of the issues we are facing in our region, and offer us insights to our concerns.

The availability of farmland in Mackenzie County is becoming more and more of a concern. A recent tender opening for a land lease indicated a very high demand for farmland. 16 bids were received ranging from \$30.00 to \$75.00 per acre. As farmland in southern Alberta is being taken out of production due to urban expansion, there is the perfect opportunity to replace it in the north. Research conducted at the University of Alberta found that between 1984 and 2013 the amount of land used for urban or industrial purposes between Edmonton and Calgary grew by 52 per cent. The urban area of Calgary had tripled in that time. 625 square kilometers of land was converted from agricultural to urban or industrial uses between 2000 and 2012. In those 12 years, 35 per cent of this land was the highest quality farmland, while 34 per cent of the land was in the second-best category. We feel that a program similar to the Wet Land Replacement program would work well with farmland as well. Acres of land that is being taken out of agricultural production in Alberta would have to be replaced with the same acres elsewhere in the province.


The diseased Bison in Wood Buffalo National Park is still of great concern. It is our opinion that the diseased Bison should be eradicated, and the Park replenished with a healthy herd.

We are hopeful that the Provincial Government sees the great need for the second natural gas pipeline in our area and would partner with our gas Co-op to make this happen. This will allow our community and industry to further grow and invest in our area.

We would also like to thank you for seeing the need to pull back on the Caribou Range Plan, and asking the Federal government for a social economic impact study.

Should you have any further questions or discussion, please contact our Chief Administrative Officer Len Racher at (780) 927-3718, or by email to lracher@mackenziecounty.com.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter F. Braun". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter F. Braun
Reeve
Mackenzie County

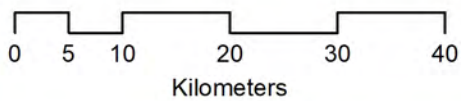
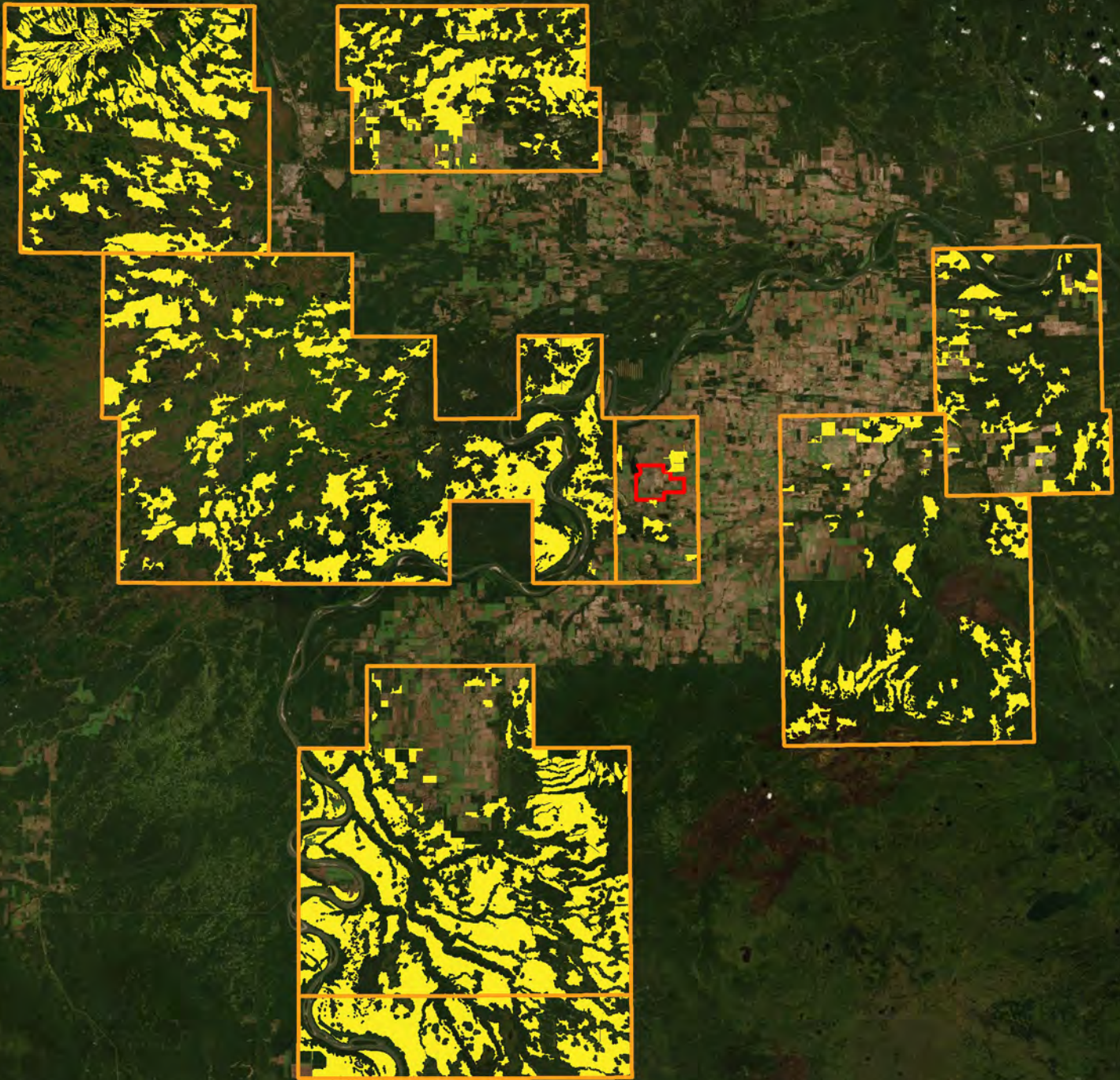
- c. Debbie Jabbour, MLA Peace River
Mackenzie County Council

Appendix E: Timeline

Public Land Sales Timeline

- 2011 Alberta Sustainable Resource Development sold 87,761 acres of Crown land, a profit of \$8,494,205 over reserve bids.
- 2012 Public land sale auction held on June 26th, where 13,403 acres of land were sold in Phase 1 region, and 1,427 acres of land were sold in Phase 2 region. A profit of \$3,308,187 over reserve bids.
- 2013 7,474 acres of land sold in Phase 2 region. A profit of \$13,733,492 over reserve bids.
- 2016 Phase III public land auction was scheduled for February 26th, however was cancelled with no postponed date.
- 2019 Alberta Government revisits Public Land Sales in the Peace Region. Mackenzie County provides information package to AB government showing interest and support.

Mackenzie County Agricultural Lands



OPTIONS & BENEFITS:

Administration is in the process of receiving a quote to complete this work.

Administration would like to inform Council of this project in case there is sensitivities around the removal of this many trees.

COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Once a quote is received it is expected that this project will be covered by the operating budget.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:

COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Administration is planning to train staff on proper pruning techniques.

POLICY REFERENCES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Simple Majority Requires 2/3 Requires Unanimous

For information.

Author: _____ Reviewed by: _____ CAO: _____