



11th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
February 16th - 18th, 2016
“Prairie – It’s a Happening Place”

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

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Conference Overview

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP), the Conference Steering Committee is pleased to present to you the Final Summary Report for the 11th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference which was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on February 16th – 18th, 2016.

The theme of the conference was “Prairie – It’s a Happening Place”, in recognition of all the things that are taking place on Prairie. This theme was picked up brilliantly by the plenary and concurrent speakers, pre-conference workshop instructor, and poster presenters that came together for this conference. The conference was well attended and covered a broad array of topics. A total of 304 people from western Canada and the northern United States participated at the conference and heard 10 plenary presentations, 58 concurrent presentations, and viewed 45 posters. In addition, 66 people participated in a pre-conference landscape restoration workshop, and we enjoyed the company of 15 trade exhibitors. As you can see - prairie is a *very* happening place!

The Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference provided a forum for conservation practitioners and fostered awareness, understanding and action on issues related to native prairie conservation since 1986. The conference, occurring every three years, and alternating between the three Prairie Provinces, engages people from many backgrounds in discussion of the issues, perspectives, challenges and opportunities relating to prairie conservation. We are pleased about this opportunity to recognize and celebrate our conservation history and provide a forum to discuss our continued work and issues for prairie and endangered species! For the 11th PCESC, the Steering Committee fervently took on the challenge of continuing the traditions and high standards that were established in previous conferences.

The 2016 Steering Committee continued the use of the logo that was developed for the 2013 PCESC because of its strong prairie theme in hopes that it will continue to be a symbol of PCESC. The logo is made of three circles representing the three Prairie Provinces, which overlap to symbolize collaboration. Inside are a plant (Rough Fescue, *Festuca hallii*), a bird (Western Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta*) and a mammal (Pronghorn, *Antilocapra americana*) that are iconic of our native prairies.

We were honoured to continue the tradition of the Prairie Conservation Award, honoring deserving individuals from each of the Prairie Provinces that have made a significant contribution to prairie and/or endangered species conservation. In addition, this was the second conference in which the Young Professional Stewardship Grant was awarded to support projects being carried out by individuals aged 18-30 that advance the engagement of people in conservation in grassland and parkland ecosystems of the Prairie Provinces. A total of \$7500 was raised for this grant through a silent auction held during the conference banquet!

This conference would not have been the success it was without the generosity of our many sponsors. Over \$59,000 was raised through sponsorship. Using the sponsorship categories of Platinum (1 sponsor), Gold (1 sponsor), Silver (1 sponsor), Banquet (2 sponsors), Bronze (11 sponsors), Targeted (1 sponsor), Poster Session (1 sponsor), and Friends (7 sponsors) allowed for

a range of options for different organizations. In addition to direct sponsorship, the hundreds of hours donated by the volunteers may have potentially doubled the 'sponsorship' amount.

Listed below is a summary of income and expenses. It is important to note that changes to these numbers may occur after the finalization of this Summary Report.

Estimated breakdown (includes GST, full budget available with file transfer):

Income:

Registration:	88,260.98
Sponsorship:	59,350.00
Tradeshow:	2,135.00
Seed Money:	8,750.00
<u>Silent Auction:</u>	<u>7,972.00</u>
	\$166,467.98

Expenses:

Hotel (Food, banquet rooms, A/V):	74,427.28
Registration and Planning Logistics:	38,972.32
Program:	13,847.57
Awards:	7,857.12
Communications:	2,635.39
<u>Seed money to PCEESC 2019</u>	<u>8,700.00</u>
	\$146,439.68

Using the figures above, revenue of **\$20,028.30** was achieved, to go towards SK PCAP 2014-2018 Framework implementation.

We trust that this Summary Report and associated CD will assist in the organization of future Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conferences.

Conference History

The first Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference (PCEESC) was held in 1986 in Edmonton, Alberta. Following its success, the decision was made to repeat the conference every three years, and that it should be held in each of the three Prairie Provinces in turn. The locations and themes of the conferences have been:

- 1986 – Edmonton: Endangered Species
- 1989 – Regina: Implementing the Prairie Conservation Action Plan
- 1992 – Brandon: Partnerships between Agriculture and Wildlife
- 1995 – Lethbridge: Ecosystem Management for Conservation
- 1998 – Saskatoon: Connection between Prairie Ecosystem Conservation and Economic, Social and Ethical Forces of Society
- 2001 – Winnipeg: Sharing Common Ground
- 2004 – Calgary: Keeping the Wild in the West
- 2007 – Regina: Homes on the Range – Conservation in Working Prairie Landscapes
- 2010 – Winnipeg: Patterns of Change: Learning From Our Past to Manage Our Present and Conserve Our Future
- 2013 – Red Deer: Engaging People in Conservation

Past Proceedings:

10th PCEESC – Holroyd, G.L., A.J. Trefry and B. Crockett (eds.). 2014. Engaging People in Conservation, Proceedings of the 10th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference, Red Deer Alberta. Published by the Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum, Lethbridge, AB.

9th PCEESC - Danyluk, Donna, Editor, 2011. Patterns of Change, Learning from our past to manage our present and conserve our future. Proceedings of the 9th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference, February 25 to 27, 2010 - Winnipeg, Manitoba. Published by Critical Wildlife Habitat Program, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

8th PCEESC - Proceedings of the 8th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference and Workshop March 1-3, 2007 Regina, Saskatchewan. Homes on the Range: Conservation in Working Prairie Landscapes. Editors: Robert Warnock, David Gauthier, Josef Schmutz, Allen Patkau, Patrick Fargey and Michael Schellenberg, Copyright 2008 Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan. Published by [Canadian Plains Research Center](#), Regina Saskatchewan.

7th PCEESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 26. Proceedings of the Seventh Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop. Calgary, Alberta, February 2004. Edited by Garry C. Trottier, Elizabeth Anderson, and Mark Steinhilber. Available on CD. Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

6th PCEESC - Proceedings of the Sixth Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop. Winnipeg, Manitoba, February 2001 Edited by Dana Blouin. Available on CD. Published by Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation. CD's available through the [Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation](#) 200-1555 St. James Street, Winnipeg Manitoba R3H 1B5.

5th PCEESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 24. Proceedings of the Fifth Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, February 1998

Edited by Jeffery Thorpe, Taylor Steeves and Mike Gollop. 398 pp. Available on CD. Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

4th PCESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 23. Proceedings of the Fourth Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop. Lethbridge, Alberta, 1995. Edited by Walter D. Willms and John F. Dormaar. 337 pp. 1996. (\$14.95 Can.) Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

3rd PCESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 19. Proceedings of the Third Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop. Brandon, Manitoba, February, 1992. Edited by Geoffrey L. Holroyd, H. Loney Dickson, Mona Regnier, and Hugh C. Smith. 384 pp. 1993. (Out of Print) Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, R5N 0M6.

2nd PCESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 15. Proceedings of the Second Endangered Species and Prairie Conservation Workshop. Regina Saskatchewan January, 1989, Edited by Geoffrey L. Holroyd, Gordon Burns, and Hugh C. Smith. 284 pp. 1991. (Out of Print) Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

1st PCESC - Natural History Occasional Paper No. 9. Proceedings of the Workshop on Endangered Species in the Prairie Provinces. Edmonton, Alberta, January 1986. Edited by Geoffrey L. Holroyd, W. B. McGillivray, Philip H. R. Stepney, David M. Ealey, Garry C. Trottier, and Kevin E. Eberhart. 367 pp. 1987. (Out of Print), Published by the [Provincial Museum of Alberta](#) 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 0M6.

Conference Sub-Committee Reports

Administration/Treasury

The PCEC account was mostly handled within the main PCAP bank account. Everything for PCEC was coded separately. A separate bank account had to be created for the Environment Canada G&C, as the Saskatchewan Stock Grower Association (SSGA) name is on the main bank account, and PCAP had to have an account with only the PCAP name on it for the G&C. As such, SSGA had signing authority on cheques coming into and out of the main PCAP account, and the PCAP manager had signing authority on cheques coming into and out of the separate bank account for the G&C.

There was only ever one person covering off the conference administration and treasurer duties, the SK PCAP Manager. This worked great because one person was in charge of the organization and storage of the financial information. The 2013 PCEC planning committee indicated that multiple people ended up working on administration and financials, which became confusing with multiple spreadsheets being developed. As such, it is recommended that the number of people involved in the financial side of things be minimized.

A paper trail-filing system, including photocopying all cheques that were paid out of and came into the PCAP account and coded to PCEC and attached to the invoices, was created. This became very helpful as a quick reference when questions arose.

PCAP invested in a permanent registration plug-in for the PCAP website. Although the initial cost of this was \$1750, it was seen as a good investment as the registration page can be changed quickly and used for any future events. Submission through paper and cheques were still received but these options were described on the registration page. As people registered online, an email was sent to the PCAP email with a copy of the registration information and a copy of the payment receipt if they paid by credit card. Registration forms and payment receipts were printed to have backup copies.

PCAP used SSGA's Moneris account to process credit card transactions. Even though a "PCEC" tag was embedded on registrations, SSGA's administrative assistant had difficulties matching Moneris transactions for PCEC to the monthly bank account statements during monthly bank reconciliation. Having the separate administrative assistant and access to a Moneris account made the financial process run very smoothly.

Recommendations:

- Continue to keep all paper and electronic items- invoices, receipts, etc. together.
- Use one financial accounting spreadsheet for the entire conference.
- Have one person who knows accounting (at least basic accounting) be in this role.
- Ensure that GST is accounted for throughout the conference with respect to registration, personal expenses and purchased items/activities and submit details to Revenue Canada as soon as possible.
- Follow-up with outstanding financial items early after the conference is over.

Secretarial Duties

The PCAP Manager was also in charge of secretarial duties, in conjunction with Sub-Committee Leads. It is important to get a secretary in place early in the development of the conference. This person is responsible for working directly with the conference chairs to establish steering committee meetings (chairs of each committee), meeting agendas, ensuring all minutes are completed in a timely fashion to keep the process moving forward. Included within the minutes was a separate section that highlighted the action items necessary for each committee to complete between meetings and was very helpful. The secretary also held all essential documents for the overall conference.

An email address (pcesc2016@gmail.com) was created to address questions regarding the conference. It was also a center point for receiving abstracts for oral presentations and posters, as on-line systems like “Dropbox” are not always accessible to certain organizations or government agencies. Creating a Gmail account is highly recommended as they are easy to create and manage. The PCAP Manger was in charge of the emails and inquired with other steering committee members as necessary. The Program Chair also had access to the emails for the purposes of receiving and managing abstract submissions.

Registration and Logistics

Meetings:

Committee meetings were held monthly or more frequently closer to the conference date if many topics needed to be discussed. Given the amount of tasks for the committee, the committee was broken down into sub-committees. The following sections briefly summarize the sub-committee activities, what worked, what did not work, and what should be done in the future.

Registration Table:

The PCESC 2013 committee recommend having a professional company or individual handle the registrations, name tags, table duty, etc. We did not have the funds for this, so registrations and nametags were handled by the PCAP Manager, and a separate person was designate to solicit, organize and communicate with volunteers.

- Have proper signage do direct people to the registration table.
- Although it is ideal to have at least one person at the registration desk at all times, this may not be possible if you are having trouble soliciting volunteers. Especially because this means that the volunteers miss out on concurrent sessions. Aim to have at least one person there during all of the breaks.
- Have multiple lineups to pick up registration package (i.e., A-E, F-L, M-T, U-Z).
- Organize volunteers to help stuff registration packages at least two days prior to the conference (minimum 3).
- Be ready for walk in registrations (i.e., have a computer with internet and a printer). Train everyone at the table how to process transactions ahead of time.
- Have plenty of extra name tags and registration packages.
- When making the name tags, strongly consider printing two name tag inserts and insert them into the plastic covers back-to-back so that names are displayed as the lanyards flip over. This would not be much of an extra expense or much extra work.

Food:

Food/menu for the conference can be a very tricky and time consuming task. Recommend that the chair of the committee be the lead on this and work directly with the caterer or hotel staff. It is ideal to have someone on the committee who is familiar with how much food to order for a certain number of people. PCECSC 2013 indicated that they did not have any morning coffee or treats and that was not well received, so we did have morning coffee and pastries/fresh fruit. Attempt to figure out your food budget/person prior to setting your registration fees.

- Budget high for food.
- Coffee/pastries and fresh fruit for the morning.
- Variety for breaks (and all meals) but do not order too much food for snacks in the afternoon – a lot of people are still full after lunch and will not eat during the break, so the food is wasted.
- Prepare for food allergies, gluten free, lactose, etc. Discuss options with caterer/hotel.
- On the online registration form, make sure that there is an option for people to state their food allergies, and if they are planning on coming to the banquet or not. People that live in the host city may not stay for the banquet, so you can save some money. Be careful with how you word questions – be straightforward. For example “Will you attend the Banquet” and have checkboxes for yes or no.
- Have alcohol available at socials and banquet.

Hotel/Location/Conference Rooms:

PCECSC was held at the Saskatoon Inn in Saskatoon. The hotel had plenty of meeting space and many rooms, and was very close to the airport. The PCECSC 2013 committee indicated that since the host city was Red Deer, which does not have an international airport, it was difficult for people to travel to who were flying. So, it is recommended to host the conference in a city with an international airport, and have the hotel close to the airport. Conference rooms were booked in winter 2015 but with flexibility to remove some rooms if not needed. This was useful for the Program Subcommittee to design the format of their program, and to allocate speakers to concurrent sessions. Conference rooms were confirmed in fall 2015, after the speaker allocations were settled. Conference rooms were originally booked for the whole day prior to the first full day of the conference, for the purpose of preparation. This was very useful because it gave the opportunity for pre-conference meetings of external organizations and workshops.

Recommendations:

- Ensure many rooms are blocked off. At least 50% of expected attendance.
- Make sure a good rate at conference hotel is granted and encourage folks to stay there.
- Have one point of contact between Committee Chair and Hotel.
- Follow budget closely.
- Ensure/confirm with programs the number of rooms available.
- There is always wiggle room on hotel pricing. Negotiate! We negotiated a lower room rate closer to the conference than what was stated in the original contract because registrants were complaining.
- Book conference rooms early. Arrange it so that there is flexibility to remove one or two rooms if they are not needed (it is harder to add rooms later if you don't have enough).
- Book a room to store and organize silent auction items and registration bag items.

Decorations:

The 2016 committee did not worry about centerpieces or decorations because of logistical constrain and worry about the budget. The hotel had stock centerpieces that were put out for the banquet. If you would like to have centerpieces, have one person in charge of making them and organizing setting them up before the banquet.

- Homemade centerpieces with items from local businesses were a huge hit in 2013.
- Auction off or have extra centerpieces available for purchase.
- Have volunteers (5+) available to help setup decorations.

Volunteers:

Given the size of the conference, we had about 30 volunteers helping out with all aspects of the conference. Designate one person to organize and keep track of all volunteers (not the chair of the committee). Plan to provide some sort of perk to volunteers at the beginning of the budgeting stage and plan how you will give them special recognition. There was debate on exactly how to provide incentives to volunteers. Some people wanted discounted registration for volunteers, or even free registration for student volunteers. Due to a tight budget, we were unable to provide these kinds of incentives, but it is something to keep in mind for the future.

- Have plenty of volunteers but remember – too many cooks in the kitchen can also be a bad thing.
- Have a checkbox on the registration page for people that are interested in volunteering. Many volunteers were gathered this way.
- Maintain a volunteer task list (pre and during conference).
- Volunteer gift.
- Get students involved.
- Provide written instructions and program schedules at each podium for moderators. Specifically state to wait until the designated start times to start presentations (i.e. if a presentation ends early, wait until the next start time). Provide timers and time cards for the moderators.

A/V:

A/V was handled through the in-house specialist. It may be cheaper to use an outside company, but the hotel may not allow it or charge a fee for doing so. Explore options for keeping costs down. If you have large room, personal or work projectors will not work, they need to be high quality, high lumen to provide a good image. Large rooms also had 2 screens. Make sure to have extra microphones in each room for questions and insist that people use these microphones when asking questions. Each room should have at a minimum: laptop, projector, screen (2 in larger rooms, which mean 2 projectors), podium (with mic), wireless mic for Q & A or corded mic that stays in the same spot that attendees walk up to. We tried to avoid streaming videos from the web, and to have the video file on hand. Streaming can be unpredictable in hotel conference facilities.

- Ensure A/V requirements are properly communicated between Program, Registration and Logistics, and hotel A/V representative.
- Budget high, but do not tell the hotel what your budget is. Get them as low as possible and see if it works with your budget.
- Do not cheap out, get high quality gear, make sure an A/V person is available at all times (typically included).

- Make sure they test their slide advancers ahead of time – there were difficulties with the clickers in the main room which resulted in awkward situations and complaints in the evaluations.
- Do not use personal A/V equipment, rent all.
- Ask presenters in the presentation guidelines and in a separate reminder email, to submit presentation files before coming to the conference (deadline the Friday prior to the conference). We had very good uptake on this (90%). It was made very clear that the presenter is then responsible for uploading their presentation with the assistance of A/V at the conference. We used WeTransfer to send presentations to the conference Gmail account and this worked very well – it is very easy to use and allows for large file sizes.
- In the oral presentation guidelines, explicitly state that if presenters want to have videos in their presentations, to submit the video file separately. Videos embedded or hyperlinked beforehand into PowerPoint presentations did not work for some presenters.
- Exercise caution in planning to use on-line streaming for videos – not all hotels will have good streaming capabilities; preference is to have videos stored as a file on a flash disk, laptop computer, or other local device.

Sponsorship and Tradeshow

Meetings:

Stand-alone sponsorship meetings were never required – rather the sponsorship lead (Caitlin Mroz) gave updates at every Steering Committee meeting. Caitlin has been in charge of sponsorship for other PCAP events, so she communicated with the PCAP Manager regularly and was incredibly independent.

Prospect List:

A 2016 Sponsorship Package was created and reviewed by the Steering Committee who gave ideas for additional sponsors on an ongoing basis. Caitlin contacted the majority of companies, with the exception of Steering Committee members who had personal connections to particular companies and sent sponsorship letters themselves. We recommend having one main contact person for sponsorship who keeps a very organized spreadsheet of the status of sponsorship inquiries in order to avoid repeated requests to companies.

Activities and Timelines:

A preliminary spreadsheet “Sponsorship Strategy” and “Tradeshow Strategy” was drafted to include all activities associated with sponsors from the beginning of the process right up to and including the Conference. After making initial telephone or email contacts, a Sponsorship Package was developed and sent to sponsor prospects. Follow up calls or emails ensued. When a pledge was made the Sponsorship Chair asked the PCAP Manager to send the company an Invoice. Tracking of sponsor pledges and receipts was coordinated with the PCAP Manager. The Sponsor Chair coordinated the needs of the committed Sponsors, particularly display needs, with the PCAP Manager and the hotel liaison.

Suggestions:

- Drafting a list of all activities and timelines is useful and will provide the Steering Committee with a way to keep things moving along.

- Regular Sponsorship Committee involvement in Steering Committee meetings, especially as the Conference approaches, is a valuable tool to provide updates and garner new ideas if necessary.
- The Sponsorship Strategy will be continually revised and new prospects are likely to be added. A current list along with the name of the key contact person is good practice.
- Develop your Sponsorship Strategy and Sponsorship Package as early as possible. This will allow the Sponsor Chair to start early. A professional looking package is critical.
- The Steering Committee needs to understand that early development of conference website and program details will assist the sponsorship campaign.
- Some grants need to be applied for very early in the game, especially money associated with the federal government (e.g., Habitat Stewardship Program, Grants & Contributions).
- A “centralized” tracking system (spreadsheet that could be updated by all with details on when was the package sent to the sponsor prospects, when and how was the follow up made [by phone/by e-mail], outcome, etc.) is an efficient way to proceed.
- If there is a Treasurer role, they should (if possible) have some basic understandings of accounting procedures (this is higher level than this subcommittee but has an impact here).
- Be flexible with sponsorship categories – some grants may have to be targeted to something specific like food, poster session, etc.
- It worked very well to have the tradeshow booths set up on the Mezzanine – an area where coffee and snacks were set up during the breaks. This increased networking and socializing opportunities.

Sponsorship Opportunities/Display Space:

Platinum Sponsorship \$10,000+

Benefits:

- Officially open the conference by bringing greetings from your organization at opening remarks.
- Logo and name recognition as platinum sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Logo recognition as platinum sponsor on the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference website.
- Logo recognition on the AV displays shown during breaks and lunches.
- Verbal recognition at least once per day at the conference. Note: Recognition will be in order of donation size.
- Complimentary corporate display space.
- Up to 4 complimentary registrations (including banquet tickets).

Gold Sponsorship \$5,000+

Benefits:

- Logo recognition as gold sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Logo recognition as gold sponsor on the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference website.
- Logo recognition on the AV displays shown during breaks and lunches.
- Verbal recognition at least once per day at the conference. Note: Recognition will be in order of donation size.
- Complimentary corporate display space.
- Up to 3 complimentary registrations (including banquet tickets).

Silver Sponsorship \$2,500+

Benefits:

- Name recognition as silver sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Name recognition as silver sponsor on the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference website.
- Logo recognition on the AV displays shown during breaks and lunches.
- Verbal recognition at least once per day at the conference. Note: Recognition will be in order of donation size.
- Complimentary corporate display space.
- Up to 2 complimentary registrations (including banquet tickets).

Bronze Sponsorship \$1,000+

Benefits:

- Name recognition as bronze sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Name recognition as bronze sponsor on the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference website.
- Logo recognition on the AV displays shown during breaks and lunches.
- Verbal recognition at least once per day at the conference. Note: Recognition will be in order of donation size.
- Complimentary banner space in the display area.
- Up to 1 complimentary registration (including banquet ticket).

Friend Sponsorship \$500+

Benefits:

- Name recognition as friend sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Name recognition as friend sponsor on the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference website.
- Logo recognition on the AV displays shown during breaks and lunches.
- Verbal recognition at least once per day at the conference. Note: Recognition will be in order of donation size.

Targeted Event Sponsorship

Banquet Reception – 4 sponsors at \$2,000 each

- Verbal recognition at plenary session(s) prior to banquet and at beginning of banquet
- Special logo placement at banquet.
- Name recognition as Banquet Reception Sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.
- Up to 1 complimentary registration (including banquet ticket).

Lunches – 3 sponsors at \$800 each

- Verbal recognition at plenary session(s) prior to and at start of lunch.
- Special logo placement at lunch.
- Name recognition as Lunch Sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.

Refreshment Breaks – 4 sponsors at \$400 each

- Special logo placement on refreshment tables.
- Name recognition as Refreshment Break Sponsor on all marketing material and media opportunities including press releases, the PCAP newsletter and participant packages.

Sample Sponsorship Letter:

Dear “Person’s Name Here”;

Initiated in 1998, the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP) consists of 30 partners representing producers, industry, provincial & federal governments, non-government organizations and research & educational institutions, all working towards a common goal of native prairie conservation within Saskatchewan (www.pcap-sk.org). The Partnership represents the collaborative efforts and shared objectives of multiple interests and is guided by a five-year Framework and annual work plans that benefit the social, cultural, economic and ecological fabric of Saskatchewan.

SK PCAP will be hosting the 11th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference on February 16th-18th, 2016 in Saskatoon, SK. The theme for this year’s workshop is “Prairie - It’s a

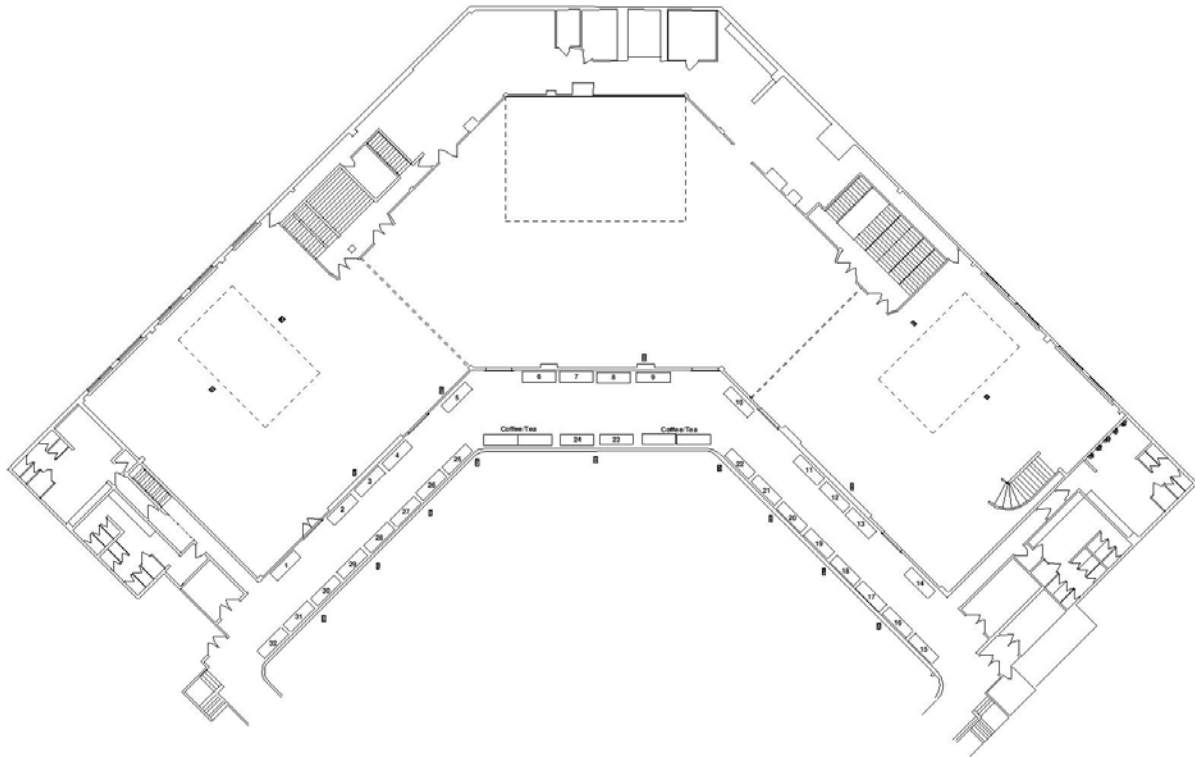
Happening Place!" This international workshop will feature a expert speakers, an evening banquet and breakout sessions. A poster session featuring relevant and innovative research progress will be a highlight of the event. For more details about this event, please visit the website at: <http://www.pcesc.ca/>.

Attendance at previous workshops surpassed 300 participants. For the 2016 event, over 350 participants are expected. The target audience includes representatives from environmental non-governmental organizations, environmental consultants, landowners, government, and research institutes.

In order to maintain a high quality workshop and meet the needs of our speakers and participants, SK PCAP is seeking **Silver Level Sponsorship** from "Organization name here". Sponsorship levels and forms of recognition are outlined in this package. Your generous contribution will help to provide a unique forum for those concerned with prairie conservation and endangered species and an opportunity for sharing experiences and knowledge. Sponsoring the 2016 Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference will contribute to conserving native prairie for generations to come. *If the sponsorship recognition benefits do not meet your needs, please contact us for information about targeted sponsorship.*

If "Organization name here" is interested in sponsoring the 2016 Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference, please contact "Contact name here" at "Contact information here". Thank you for your consideration.

Display Set-Up and Trade Show Form



#	Company	Table	4 ft or 8 ft?	Display	Electrical
1	ABMI	Y	4	Y	N
2	Nature Conserv.	Y	4	Y	N
3	Env. Canada	Y	8	Y	Y

Program Subcommittee

Conference Theme:

The PCESC Steering Committee established the conference theme as one of its first activities, in its first meeting (October, 2014). Steering Committee members submitted their own ideas to the discussion, and one was chosen by them. The one chosen was ***Prairie – It’s a Happening Place.*** This theme recognizes all of the interest groups and activities that are happening on the prairies, and, of course, the species that inhabit Prairies and go about their business there. It strives to discover how the prairies are being used and enjoyed, and how people are trying to achieve success with prairie conservation and endangered species protection and management. What is also happening is people from all walks of life are discovering and learning about Prairie. So much is going on!

The Subcommittee:

The subcommittee held its’ first meeting December, 2014. This subcommittee was formulated by volunteers from the Steering Committee. Most were from Saskatchewan, one was from Manitoba. In order to augment the subcommittee’s geographic representation, agricultural

representation, and PCESC experience, we chose to add 3 members: a member from Alberta, to make sure that province was represented, one to increase representation from agriculture, and one with a lot of PCESC experience. Total membership at one time was about 10 people. Two dropped off early on due to their own situations. The subcommittee met once per month, with part of the summer off, and then twice pre month at the busiest time in October/November. Some discussions and work were done by email. This amount of members was probably just right for our committee. Not all members could make all meetings, but at each meeting there was good representation. Those that could not meet provided good contributions by email. All members were actively involved all the way through, except the two who had to drop off early. The subcommittee chair had access to a government toll-free number for conversations. Webex or videoconference were not needed, but could have helped in displaying files to all members during the allocation of concurrent presentations.

Subthemes/Streams:

Knowing that the PCESC audience is very diverse, and we wanted to appeal to as many as possible, the Program Subcommittee worked over several meetings to establish and define some streams or sub-themes. Four were chosen and were to guide the development of the conference format, a plenary speaker roster, and the call for presenters' abstracts. The 4 sub themes were 1) Status, Trends, Threats, and Issues, 2) Protection and Conservation, 3) Restoration and Recovery, and 4) Connecting and motivating people to wonder, care, and act. We also hoped that the subthemes as presented would open the door for some non-traditional PCESC presentations. I think this yielded good result in a robust second afternoon around engagement and education, which may otherwise have been overlooked by possible presenters.

Conference Formats:

We reviewed old conference programs to see what they had for schedules, numbers of plenaries and concurrent sessions, session length, etc. We also considered the 2013 evaluations. One member formulated 3 diverse options for a possible schedule format, covering 2 days instead of 2.5 (which we felt was too long). One option was for each subtheme to run in a different room for the whole conference, but have a combined gathering at start and end of the conference. A second was similar, but with a combined gathering each morning, and concurrent sessions the rest of the day. Our committee, interested in encouraging the audience to branch outside of their disciplines, chose one that was divided into 4 half-day periods based on one of the 4 subthemes, each starting with plenary speaker, followed by break-out/concurrent presentation sessions. We added a pre-conference "wine and cheese" networking period the evening before the main program, and made sure it avoided any technical content. This format was chosen in April, prior to the call for presentations and the start of Plenary discussions. We had good feedback that our format - the coming together and separating and coming together and separating, short speakers but with long breaks and long transition periods, made the conference go by quick, but at the same time it was not tiresome.

Plenary Sessions:

Plenary sessions were the primary order of business throughout 2015. We started with everyone on the committee giving suggestions for plenary and concurrent topics and speakers, and the Chair compiled them. That didn't work very well, and was quite aimless, despite our settlement on 4 subthemes. Next, we tried with developing a list of messages or subject areas related to the 4 subthemes that we wanted to be addressed to the whole audience. It took several meetings to

determine what these topics should be and who should speak and address them. This was a subcommittee-wide effort, with the Chair compiling members' ideas and trying to form them into a structure. Once speakers were decided upon, a subcommittee member was assigned to contact them and be the continuing point of contact. Plenary speaker confirmation letters were formulated (a form letter that was customized for each) and sent to the speakers via these contacts, in November 2015. At that time, we lost one speaker who forgot he had another commitment, and we were able to fill and confirm it before early January.

While there was a lot of good feedback about the Plenary Sessions, there was some criticism in the evaluations about wanting more diversity in the plenary sessions (and concurrent sessions). In particular, there was an obvious desire for stronger First Nations representation. It is highly recommend that the 2019 planning committee makes a stronger effort to include First Nations representatives in the plenary sessions as well as concurrent sessions.

Plenary sessions after lunch could be a little bit shorter, considering a heavy meal often makes people drowsy. Our afternoon ones were an hour and fifteen minutes or more, before a break. Even though they had multiple presenters – the session seemed long to some attendees.

For the plenary speaker gifts, the 2016 Planning Committee chose to make a \$100 donation on the speakers' behalf to one of three memorial scholarships or bursaries at post-secondary institutions in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. This was well received by the plenary speakers. In their thank you-cards that were given to them after their presentation, there was a paper insert with a Survey Monkey link to which they were directed to in order to make their selection. Distribution of funds among the 3 scholarships was \$700 - \$500 - \$300.

One key point of discussion around Plenary Invitations was the level of re-imbursement for expenses or professional fees. We decided it is fair and an incentive to provide these things, but only for the Plenary speakers. All registration and expenses would be provided, if needed. In the form letter, they were asked to contact the Steering Committee Chair if they wished to arrange for any of their registration or expenses. No speakers asked for professional fees. Some speakers considered it an in-kind contribution, or donation. Some speakers were local, and did not need expense reimbursement. Some were able to claim as part of their work travel.

Pre-Conference Workshops and Meetings:

Our subcommittee wanted to avoid breakout workshops, because we felt it was tough to engage people and manage them for such large audiences. Thus, we went to more of a lecture-style format for our sessions.

One committee member had an idea to hold pre-conference workshops as a professional development way to attract registrants. We decided that since the conference rooms were booked a day in advance, that people could be given the opportunity to use them for workshops and meetings, and we could advertise them on the website and in communications, BUT planning them and overseeing their registration would not fall under the responsibility of PCESC. Despite that plan, it just did not work out that way for the Pre-conference workshop. Overall the involvement worked well, until there was a disagreement on the coverage of some costs. It is highly recommended that if you choose to have a pre-conference workshop, establish a contract with the workshop lead specifically stating who is responsible for what logistics and what costs.

This erases the possibility of either party trying to impose costs on the other or having to rely on email records of communication. Two additional meetings were scheduled in the late afternoon of the pre-conference day.

Concurrent Sessions:

Some attendees and presenters did not like how short the concurrent sessions were. We recognize that people have different preferences and that it is difficult to please everyone. We based our presentation slots on evaluations following the PCESC 2013 concurrent session layout (multiple 12 minute presentations with short transition periods). We chose to have 25 minute slots, consisting of 15 minutes for speaking, 5 minutes for questions, and the remainder for transition between speakers and rooms, and introducing the speakers. There was positive feedback about allowing 5 minutes for transition time.

Presentation Topics

Some attendees desired more presentations (plenary or concurrent) on certain topics. While the Program Subcommittee was responsible for choosing Plenary speakers and subject matter, the Concurrent sessions were limited by the breadth of the abstracts submitted by interested presenters. All who wanted to do an oral presentation were allowed to do one. All who preferred posters could do one. Any ambiguous ones were allocated according to what space was left. One topic that was prominent in this year's evaluations was the desire for more aquatic species or wetland topics, and for First Nations content. We recommend that the 2019 committee look into the 2016 evaluation summary for other desired topic areas.

Our committee did recognize during abstract sorting that some key topic areas were not represented and took a targeted approach to filling those areas. The audience of PCESC is very diverse, and it is unlikely that all desired subject matter can be addressed in abundance, if at all. A Program Subcommittee can improve the diversity in the breadth of incoming abstracts by making sure the call for presentations goes out to people from a diversity of disciplines and backgrounds.

Another frequent criticism about the organization of the concurrent sessions was that people were interested in presentations that happened at the same time, so they couldn't see all they wanted to see. Again, there is a diversity of interest in the audience, and people's learning preferences are different. Our committee wanted people to learn new things and associate with people they normally would not, so that is why we grouped our presentations around subtheme/periods, rather than around subtheme/rooms for the entire conference (see Conference Format). Within the different subthemes, we tried our best to group associated presentations into study areas (e.g. mammal-bird-plant-insect; or habitat, landscape, species-based; or urban, rural, youth), in an effort to prevent this sort of criticism.

Networking and Informal Discussions

Despite keeping long coffee breaks and lunches, having the pre-conference "wine and cheese", and the poster/cocktail period before the banquet, there was still additional desire in the evaluations for more networking and discussion opportunities. The 2016 Planning Committee discussed this further afterwards, with the idea that the 2019 committee should consider having breakout rooms designated to have "hot-topics" discussed. At the very least, more time should be designated for open-mic discussions during the plenary sessions. These discussions could be very

informal, with no outcomes, or they could be purposeful and/or have some pre-arranged speakers on hot topics, with discussion afterward. Some of our members suggested that they should not be concurrent with oral presentation sessions, as speakers would not like their audiences being diverted to the “Discussion Room”. Additionally, there was felt to be a need to have a very good facilitator for these discussion sessions, to control the flow and who would “stir the pot” with targeted questions, or who may organize some experts to start the discussion.

Call for and Allocation of Paper and Poster Presentations

The call for posters and papers was released in May 2015, for a deadline the first week of September, and submission to the PCESC2016 gmail account. Our intent at that point was to extend the call to mid-September, but we actually extended it to early October. We received a little over 100 abstracts, with good distribution among the subthemes, and oral vs poster. The Steering Committee and Program Subcommittee Chairs saved the abstracts from the PCESC2016 gmail account and assembled them into a single file for the subcommittee to review and classify according to subtheme and subgroup (i.e. a cluster that would have its own room in a concurrent session). A spreadsheet was assembled by the Steering Committee and Program Chairs to help with the classification and organization, and contained the presenters, organizations, oral vs poster, presentation titles, and spaces to assign subthemes and subgroups.

The allocation of oral presentations was a team effort, but it took a few iterations before an arrangement was agreed upon. Members submitted different arrangements to be discussed and agreed upon. The goals were to allow all people who requested oral to do oral, to fit the presentations in groups according to the subthemes (there were some associated with multiple subthemes), and have the fewest number presentations at any time, but not making the schedule so packed that transition and timing were problematic. The presentation periods with 4 rooms could not be avoided, given the limited timeline of our chosen Conference Format, and if we wanted all oral requests to be accommodated. A program subcommittee, and especially a person assigned to coordinate the effort, can expect to spend the most time and frequent discussions on this component. The Steering Committee Chair informed the oral and poster presenters by email of their acceptance, and kept up contact with regards to questions and reminders. This role could have been assigned to a Program Subcommittee member as well, to relieve the Chair of this work.

Poster Session:

All poster presentation requests were accommodated, even some that came after the deadline, because there seemed to be ample space in the room that we had set aside for them, for a total of around 44 posters. Not only did we have a room set aside, but we also had a dedicated poster session for presenters to be available to discuss their poster. This session was merged with the cocktail hour prior to the banquet.

It turned out after initial complaints that the room we chose for posters was in a hard-to-find, low traffic area, so we moved them to a common area in the open. They got better reception there, although the space was very tight. We had to move the poster boards out into an open area last minute due to complaints, and wasted money on the rental of that room.

Presentation Guidelines

These were provided in part with the call for posters and oral presentations, and in whole as posted on the website, and in the letter of acceptance provided to the presenters. They were also included in the printed program. Guidelines include the basics about format and time period for presentations, equipment provided, poster space, and instructions to send presentation files to the Conference Chair before the conference (the Friday prior to the conference). We recommend an addition to the oral presentation guidelines: to send video files or other “embedded” files as separate files. A number of attempted videos did not work at PCESC 2013.

Printed Program

A printed program was provided to attendees, and assembled by the Steering Committee Chair, with help from other committees. It was 7 pages, and based on the format from the 2013 PCESC. It contained the sponsors, Organizing Committees, general information, presentation guidelines, information about the Young Professional Stewardship Grant, schedule at-a-glance, floor plans, plenary abstracts and biographies; and oral paper and poster abstracts. Two criticisms were common: the landscape oriented schedule-at-a-glance pages flipped the wrong way (they should have flipped on the long side of the page), and first initials and last names only were provided for speakers (people wanted full names of speakers – for identification and introductions). The challenge of providing full names of speakers in the schedule-at-a-glance will be finding enough space and formatting it effectively, but there should be no problem in providing full names of speakers in the abstract sections.

Summary of Program Subcommittee Recommendations:

- Make sure there is adequate geographic and disciplinary representation on the subcommittee, but try not to exceed 10 members. More members could be more viewpoints to accommodate.
- For 2019 PCESC, try to get some First Nations representation, as the 2016 PCESC was extremely underrepresented in attendance and subject matter.
- A first meeting of December, 14 months before the event, was a decent time to start, with monthly updates afterward, until the busy time in October/November, where it changed to biweekly.
- Choosing some subthemes or streams or hot issues will help focus the conference program planning, but keep an open mind as they may have the potential to limit the conference; include descriptions of these subthemes in the call for presentations so people can recognize that this conference is relevant to them.
- By the end of May, choose a format for the program schedule – consider how many plenaries and concurrents and how long, whether or not to have a dedicated poster session, how long breaks should be. Should it be 2 days or 2.5 days? Should there be a pre-conference social, or any pre-conference workshops or meetings?
- Start discussing Plenary speakers in the spring. Expect to request them as soon as possible. I think we got lucky in extending our discussions and final decisions to late summer. We tried 2 different approaches and still wound up with a lot of discussion. The subthemes helped a lot in brainstorming and focussing our list of choices.
- Use program subcommittee contacts for initial invitations of Plenary speakers, but then develop a form letter for confirming them. That way all contact can make sure to cite presentation place/date/time and length, topic to be addressed, formats, invitation to

request expense re-imburement, and a point of contact for more information. Contacts can further personalize the form letter and send it to the presenter.

- Expect to re-imburse for travel, accommodations, registration for Plenary speakers only. You can minimize your budget for this by limiting the number of speakers from far away. Budget for speaker gifts/honorariums but only for Plenary speakers.
- Try to keep presentations after lunch short.
- Consider adding a “discussion room” or some kind of discussion breakout sessions. Be strategic about the outcomes and format of this. You may require some good facilitators for effective discussions and outcomes.
- Provide lots of opportunity for networking – long breaks and lunches, cocktail hour, dedicated poster session, pre-conference evening social, etc.
- Booking the conference rooms for the day before the conference offers others an opportunity for meetings or workshops, but PCESC needs to commit to their level of involvement. If external workshops are to be offered, and PCESC committees are to be involved, then a contract is recommended that cites who makes what arrangements, and what items are paid for by whom.
- Allow sufficient transition time between presenters. This includes introductions, finding the right presentations, switching speakers, and people moving amongst rooms. Five minutes covered this well for 2016, leaving 5 for questions and 15 for the presentation. Make sure presentation start times are the same for all concurrent presentations.
- Improve the diversity in the breadth of incoming abstracts by making sure the call for presentations goes out to people from a diversity of disciplines and backgrounds. Keep an eye/ear open for hot topics and new developments in Prairie and Endangered Species and try to target your call for abstracts to possible presenters on them. Look into the 2016 evaluation summary for other desired topic areas.
- Use a strategy for timing the call for papers and posters. Have an initial deadline (September 4) and extend it once for 30 days or so. September may have been too early, but we caught a lot of abstracts later that month and in early October. Expect to have late requests even into January, and know what you want to do with them (we accepted as poster because we had the space).
- If a team approach is to be used for organizing and allocating oral speakers to the schedule, then plan to spend a lot of time in October and November. Assign a person to coordinate these discussions and do the paperwork.
- Assign someone to be the contact for confirming concurrent oral and poster presenters.
- There were multiple complaints about the layout of the schedule in the conference program – the program booklet had to be flipped in order for the schedule to be read properly. A physical proof before full printing was assessed, but it had no problems. Insist that the printing company avoid printing like this.
- Use full names of presenters in the Program Guide, not first initial of first name and full last name.
- Ensure that the poster session is in a high traffic, highly visible area.
- Scout out the rooms before confirming them and designing the program around them if possible. Pay attention to ease of transition between concurrent presentations, ease of finding them when in a rush, and size for what they need to be used for.
- Ensure with the company that you are renting poster boards from that the boards are sturdy and in good condition, not wobbly, unsafe boards, very difficult to hang posters on.

Communications Subcommittee

Building on previous PCESC conferences, communications needs of the conference focused first on the renewal of existing communications tools, and the development and delivery of new tools to ensure the widest audience possible is reached.

Committee Details:

A communications committee was created to help guide the development and implementation of a communications strategy for the 10th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference. The committee membership included representatives from a variety of different ‘sectors’ within the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species community. The idea being to have a better grasp of how best to reach potential audiences in a manner appropriate to their culture.

During the scoping stage, the communications committee meet on a monthly basis to review updated versions of the communications strategy. Eventually the strategy was presented to the conference steering committee for final approval. Once approval was gained, we were able to initiate work on key elements of the strategy, including the development of the conference brand and website, conference announcements and other communication tools. At that point the committee met very infrequently.

Conference Brand:

In 2013, the Planning Committee developed a PCESC brand emblematic of the prairie landscape in hopes that future conference organizers can save time and money on developing logos, and so that a consistent brand can be associated with PCESC. It can be described thus: using Rough Fescue, Western Meadowlark and Pronghorn are emblematic species in the prairie landscape. Behind each species are a series of intersecting circles that are representative of the broader partnerships that exist among those working to conserve prairie ecosystems and endangered species throughout Canada and the United States of America.



The 2016 Planning Committee decided to continue with the logo and brand development, and we would encourage future Planning Committees to do so as well.

Website:

A website was developed for the 9th conference using the www.pcesc.ca web address. The platform allows for easy updates to website content, as well as support online conference registration, which was requested by the Registration Committee. The content management system uses an Umbraco, which proved very easy to work with. Hi Q Soft provided training on the system operation and provided technical support on an as needed basis, based on an hourly rate of \$100. One challenge with the website was the use of webpage templates. While PCAP ended up developing our own registration plug-in for future use, a registration system through Hi Q Soft will be available for future conferences if necessary.

Communications:

We developed an extensive contact list for the conference by compiling contact details from previous conferences and from PCAP partners, with an effort towards making sure there was adequate representation in 3 provinces and multiple backgrounds (e.g. academic, government, amateur, professional, industry, urban, etc.). We would strongly recommend having one person dedicated to advertising to help communicate to a wider array of interest groups. This would also allow for more advertising mediums including newspapers, magazines and getting the event information into more organization's newsletters. It is crucial to have some advertising costs in your budget – the 2016 conference budget did not have money allocated to advertising which limited us.

Communications Products:

- **Media Releases:** A media release was prepared and circulated one week prior to the early-bird registration deadline, two weeks prior to the conference, before the banquet and after the banquet to announce the award winners. A Media release during the conference is highly recommended as it is easier to attract media to an event that is taking place in real time.
- **Posters:** We developed a poster template and associated content for placement in agency offices, college and universities and other public spaces.
- **Email Announcements:** Email announcements were a major method for reaching our target audiences. All electronic announcements provided links to the website.
- **Social Media:** We had a PCESC 2016 Facebook page and Twitter account which garnered over 100 followers each. This was a great way to keep people up to date about the program and other conference activities.

Recommendations

- Have one person dedicated to advertising; otherwise this is something that easily gets pushed to the side. Advertising tactics that include newsletters, magazines, ensuring posters are hung up in certain locations, are time consuming so it becomes hard for people with other tasks to take something like this on.
- Ensure there is money in the budget for advertising.
- Ideally registration deadlines, announcement of the conference program and electronic announcements for the purpose of increasing registration should be well timed.
- Some thought might be given to using Chimp, or other email programs to better design and deliver announcements electronically. This might allow for better tracking of reach and overall effectiveness of each announcement. We used Constant Contact for our media releases, but our email announcement could have looked more professional.
- Target communications to non-Prairie-related audiences, like the various urban community groups, industry groups, education groups, etc.

Silent Auction, Awards and Entertainment

*One of our biggest recommendations for future planning committees is for the Silent Auction to be a separate committee with at least 5 people solely working on the silent auction. The 2016 committee had 5 people working on the silent auction, awards and entertainment, and this was a lot for these five people to take on.

Native Prairie Conservation Award:

It is ideal to have one provincial coordinator from each prairie province (see details below for their role) to coordinate the advertising of the awards and the organizing of applications. The committee must also agree on the award criteria, invitation letters for nominations, finding an award gift, and assisting at the awards ceremony. The chair oversees these roles and assists all aspects including staying on budget, contacting the award recipients and assisting them in getting to the conference to accept their award and ongoing communication between this committee and the steering committee.

Once the committee is established, assign duties for specific individuals to work on. Find an appropriate award item, purchasing the item and ensuring the item is ready well in advance of the conference (in 2016 we printed native prairie photos onto canvas). Framed certificates were also given to the award recipients. It should be made clear from the start that the provincial contact is in charge of both the PCA and YPSG nominees and recipients in terms of communications, logistics of the award recipients, and introduction of the recipient during the banquet.

Award Recipient and Province Tracking:

Ensure that the table containing all the award recipients over the years continues to be updated and provided to the next conference hosts.

Travel Assistance:

Make sure to include travel for the award recipients as part of the budget. The Planning Committee was in a position to be able to assist in the travel of the award recipients to the conference. However, keep in mind that nominating organizations for the PCA may be able to help pay for successful applicant's travel. The 2016 committee saved money this way.

Awards Ceremony:

If the nominator was available to attend, they were offered to present the award. If the nominator was not available then the provincial coordinator would introduce the recipient. We chose not to announce the award winners prior to the ceremony; however, we recognized the award winners after with pictures and project descriptions in PCAP newsletters. Ensure that if the nominators who are introducing the award recipients have a PowerPoint presentation, that they are uploaded to the computer in a timely fashion. Ensure that the award recipients are sitting close to the front to allow for smoother flow of the program. We had a photographer available to take pictures of the award recipients and their nominators through the ceremony and after together.

Recommendations for Future Awards Committees:

- Create a separate email address for PCA and YPSG applications. This will ensure that nomination emails do not get lost.
 - Obtain a chair and supporting committee members early in the conference process.
 - Use past award chairs, provincial coordinators and committee members for advice.
 - Find provincial coordinators early on to assist in the process and to have enough time for nominations and selection.

- Move nominations closures earlier (e.g. 2 months before the conference), for selection and contact of the recipient in appropriate time. This allows the committee to work with the recipient to get travel arrangements completed early.
- Develop a set of scoring criteria so nominations are reviewed objectively.
- Ensure you have booked 3 rooms for the recipients within the conference hotel.
- Advertise the award nominations early both throughout the province (using all available work and personal networks) and on the PCESC website. Post the award winners on the PCESC website after the conference for further acknowledgements.

Young Professional Stewardship Grant

Description:

The Young Professional Stewardship Grant was developed to promote future work to achieve success with prairie conservation and endangered species management. The Young Professional Stewardship Grant is for professional or aspiring conservationists between the ages of 18-30 who live and/or work in Alberta, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba. Applicants from various disciplines are encouraged to apply and do not need to be enrolled in, or a graduate of, an academic institution.

The Young Professional Stewardship Grant seeks innovative proposals which advance the “engagement” of people in conservation in Grassland and Parkland Natural Regions of the Prairie Provinces. Proposals may consider topics in the areas of land management, ecology, species at risk, or habitat enhancement, with a focus on education and community outreach, a desired outcome, or the use of an integrated management approach. Proposals should take into consideration and avoid unintended consequences, whereby the project may benefit one species at the detriment of another species. Projects should also demonstrate some kind of socio-economic benefit. The deliverables expected from the winning projects include: an interim report and a final report. Funds raised from the silent auction at the conference go directly to assisting these professionals or aspiring conservationists to achieve success with prairie conservation and endangered species management. It is also the intention that if they are able to, each YPSG grant recipient is encouraged to present a poster at the next PCESC.

Guidelines:

Young professionals between the ages of 18 – 30 years living and/or working in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba can apply. Proposals may be submitted by individuals, partners, or groups. Applicants are not required to be enrolled in, or be a graduate of, an academic institution. Up to three individual grants awarded totaling \$7500.00 (\$2500.00 each); 80% will be received upon proposal award and the remaining 20% will be delivered upon project completion after the final report has been submitted. Three judges representing the three Prairie Provinces will review all applications and select winners.

Remember to decide your “Important Dates to Remember”:

- Application and Proposal Submission Deadline: December 31
- Grant Winners Announced: February 22
- Grant Agreement Executed: March 31
- Project Implementation: prior to October 31
- Interim Report: December 31

- Final Report Submitted: December 31

Mandatory Criteria:

- Must focus on your conference theme.
- Community Involvement/Extension component.
- Must be innovative.
- Must include / identify socio-economic benefits.
- Must be conducted in the grasslands, rangeland, or parkland regions of Alberta, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba.

Stewardship Grant Recommendations:

- Need better advertising to get more applications.
- Develop a set of scoring criteria so nominations are reviewed objectively. Judges liked the two page scoring sheet provided.
- Make sure there are an odd number of judges to avoid ties.
- Make sure to communicate before the conference the next step of getting the agreements out, executed and the winner's names/photos/project synopsis posted on the website, etc. Make sure you know who is going to be responsible for the contracts since this happens post-conference.
- Would be nice to have an update as to where the three projects are at in the future.

Silent Auction

Ensure you have an adequate number of people working on gathering silent auction items. Remember that destination packages outside of the Prairie Provinces work just as well! We included a box on the online registration page for people who would like to donate an item to the silent auction – we gathered a lot of items this way! We found that following up with organizations 2-4 weeks after the donation request letters were given to them was very effective. The silent auction takes place the evening of the banquet and 100% of funds raised are used to support the Young Professional Stewardship Grant. Give recognition to the silent auction donors on the PCESC website and on a poster on a wall where the silent auction is taking place.

Silent Auction Recommendations:

- Include volunteers on the committee from all three provinces to facilitate contributions from different jurisdictions.
- Have designated people in major cities available to pick up silent auctions and bring them to the conference. This will alleviate any last minute running around pre-conference to gather items.
- Ensure plenty of space and tables available.
- Start setting up the silent auction EARLY – it took the 2016 committee at least five hours to set up the silent auction the night before the banquet. Do not fool yourself into thinking that you can put it together during the lunch break.
- Have minimum bid prices for more expensive items.
- Pair less popular or lower cost items with other items
- Have credit card payment as an option.
- Have a minimum of 5 volunteers available to help setup and monitor the auction.

- Have all items on display prior to the auction.
- The auction should be open for bidding for at least half a day including the afternoon and evening of the banquet. Close the auction and remove the bid sheets after the evening entertainment.
- Promote the silent auction numerous times throughout the day so people know that it is there to raise funds for the Young Professional Grant AND that it is the only source of funds for that grant.
- Collect the bid sheets when the auction closes and have them at the registration desk where credit card payments can be processed. This way, organizers know which items have been paid for and which have not. Ask people to pay for their items before removing them from the auction table. It is also a requirement of CRA to keep the bid sheets, as the host organization may be asked to produce them in the event of an audit. Thank the donors to the silent auction at least once during the conference. There is no need to thank them individually, but a public acknowledgement of the contributions make donors more likely to contribute in future years.
- Take the time to send out thank you letters to all silent auction donors. Tell them what impact their combined donations had. It could increase the chances of them donating to PCESC again!
- Take care in scheduling the silent auction at the same time as any evening entertainment – people will tend to gather near it in order to watch their bidding. Placing the silent auction closer to any provided entertainment will help people enjoy the silent auction and the live entertainment simultaneously.

Silent Auction Donation List
(partial):

Acorn Naturalists
Alberta Conservation Association
American Meadows
Argento Jewelry & Accessories
Art Abandonment
Bodhi Tree Yoga
Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company
Branimir Gjetvaj
Cabela's
Calgary Zoo
Cameco
Candace Savage
Circle Y Ranch
Cindy Hoppe
City of Regina
DAVIDsTEA
Dr. Coffee's Café
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Elaine Kennedy Photography
Elkhorn Resort Spa & Conference Centre
Elkhorn Ridge Resort
Ellis Bird Farm
Friends of Wascana Marsh
Geoff Holroyd
Grasslands National Park
Heather Peat-Hamm
Joanna Lemieux
John Carlson
Kakwa
Kevin Van Tighem
Kicking Horse Coffee
Larabella Jewelry Design
Lyric Theatre (Swift Current)
Manitou Springs Resort & Mineral Spa
Manitoba Conservation and Water
Stewardship
Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation
McDougall Gauley LLP.
Meewasin Valley Authority
Milk River Watershed Council Canada
Mooseworld Inc.
Mountain Equipment Coop
MULTISAR
Nature Saskatchewan

Nature Conservancy of Canada
Outdoor Photography Canada Magazine
Otter Limits (Saskatoon)
Paws and Paddles Wilderness Tours
PotashCorp
Prairie Wind & Silver Sage
Prairies North Magazine
Quarter Circle L Ranch
RCMP Heritage Centre
Rebecca Eberts
Rebellion Brewing
Regina Folk Festival
Regina Symphony Orchestra
Royal Saskatchewan Museum
Sage Grouse Initiative
Sageview Art Gallery
Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive
Centre
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Association
Saskatchewan Science Centre
Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation
Saskatoon Zoo Society
SaskCentral and Saskatchewan Credit Union
SaskTel
Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan
Sharon Butala
Smith and Best Float Studio and General
Store
Stephanie Bodas Photography
Stevie Lemieux
Soap Cutts
Society of Grasslands Naturalists
SODCAP
Sundance Balloons
The Harvest Moon Cafe
The Manitoba Museum
Tinhorn Creek Vineyard
Tourism Moose Jaw
Tourism Saskatchewan
Trevor Herriot
Wanuskewin Heritage Park
Western Development Museum Saskatoon
Wholesale Sports
Willow Park Liquor & Spirits
YMCA of Regina

Conference Evaluation Results

(Full evaluation results, with comments, are found on the CD)

	Questions	Strongly Agree	%	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%	N/A	%	No response	Total Responses
1	The conference was well advertised	35	23%	93	62%	10	7%	3	2%	9	0%	2	150
2	Registration was easy	94	62%	51	34%	1	1%	0	0%	6	0%	0	152
3	The conference was well organized	104	69%	47	31%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	151
4	The conference was held at a suitable venue/location	100	66%	48	32%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	151
5	The conference was an appropriate length of time	90	59%	61	40%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	152
6	The conference was a good networking opportunity	102	68%	49	32%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	151
7	The conference was informative	92	61%	59	39%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	152
8	The conference met my expectations	90	59%	61	40%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	152
9	The conference was of good value	86	57%	62	41%	2	1%	0	0%	1	0%	1	151
10	I was satisfied with electronic distribution only of pre-conference promotion and materials	74	49%	69	45%	1	1%	1	1%	7	0%	0	152
11	I was satisfied with the printed program booklet	84	56%	61	40%	5	3%	1	1%	0	0%	1	151
12	I was satisfied with the program format - the format of plenary and workshop sessions were effective	77	51%	66	43%	6	4%	1	1%	2	0%	0	152
13	I was satisfied with the diversity and relevance of conference topics	80	53%	64	42%	8	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	152

Folders on CD:

A/V

Awards

Budget

Committees

Communication

Conference Report

Entertainment

Evaluations

Logo

Poster Session

Proceedings

Program

Registrations

Saskatoon Inn

Silent Auction

Sponsorship & Funding

Steering Committee Meetings

Trade Show

Venue

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Workshops