

## Agriculture and the Beaver Hills Ecosystem

### Did you Know?

The Beaver Hills is a unique ecosystem located immediately east of the City of Edmonton, Alberta which encompasses over 1,500 sq. km [585 sq. mi] of extensively treed uplands [Dry Mixedwood, Boreal]<sup>1</sup> rising 2600 feet above the surrounding plains [Central Parkland, Parkland]<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>[Alberta Natural Sub-region, Natural Region]

Land use within the area has been traditionally agricultural, interspersed with recreational uses throughout, and industrial uses bordering the northern extent of the area.

Faced with increasing demands from recreational, urban and country residential land uses, the Beaver Hills ecosystem is at risk. Efforts to find compatibilities between development pressures and ecological function are necessary ensure sustainable development for future generations to come.

With a steadily increasing population in the region, the Beaver Hills Initiative recognizes the importance of working together and creating regional, beneficial land use policies that can enhance the growth and development of all sectors, including agriculture, while ensuring economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Partner agencies involved in BHI are:

Counties of Beaver, Camrose, Lamont, Leduc and Strathcona County  
15 other agencies including provincial, federal, industrial associations, and environmental non-government organizations

## What is Ag-Capture?

Detailed parcel by parcel capture of agricultural data

Tool to assist in the inventory, analysis & mapping of agricultural land-use activities

Captures an information void in land use planning in agricultural landscapes

Analysis of collected data will help inform and support local land use planning initiatives.

## Beaver Hills Initiative Pilot Site

Agriculture is very dynamic in the region and is a major economic driver in the many of the partner municipalities.

One of three pilot sites in Canada.

Data will be useful for local and regional planning initiatives.

PFRA will use test sites to review the survey method, analysis of data, development of quality control measures & refinement of a user's manual.

## Benefits to the BHI

Bridge the data gap between land cover mapping and land use zoning maps

Use data and maps for land use planning activities & addressing development issues

Acquire a broader understanding of sub-sectors of agriculture and agri-food industry in the region

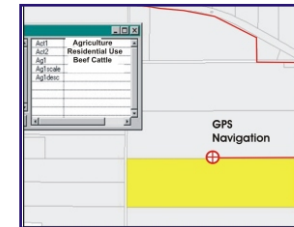
Analyze and understand the interaction of agriculture & other land uses

## Ag-Capture Process

**Data Collection Form**  
- Custom form developed for Beaver Hills Initiative



**“Windshield Survey”**  
- Surveyors will only capture data that is visible from public land



**Collecting Data**  
- GIS mapping  
- GPS for navigation

### Survey Data

- Data outputs such as maps and reports will be utilized by the Beaver Hills Initiative & local counties for land use planning activities and initiatives.



## Contacts:

**Brenda Wispinski**  
Executive Director  
Beaver Hills Initiative  
780-464-8280

**Ray Lopushinsky**  
Chair, Beaver Hills Initiative  
Lamont County  
780-895-2233

**Candace Vanin, P.Ag.**  
PFRA - Edmonton  
780-495-3308



**Canada**

