

BHI Partners:

Local Governments:

Beaver County
Lamont County
Leduc County
Strathcona County

Government of Alberta:

Community Development
Environment
Sustainable Resource Development
Agriculture, Food & Rural
Development
Municipal Affairs

Government of Canada:

Elk Island National Park,
Parks Canada
P.F.R.A., Agriculture & Agri-Food
Canada

Academia:

University of Alberta

Industrial Partners:

Alberta Industrial Heartland Assoc.
Northeast Capital Industrial Assoc.
Fort Air Partnership
Strathcona Industrial Assoc.

Non-Government

Organizations:

Ducks Unlimited Canada
North Saskatchewan Watershed
Alliance
Alberta Fish and Game Assoc.
Alberta Conservation Assoc.
Nature Conservancy Canada

Councillors Working Group:

Composed of elected officials representing each of the member municipalities of the BHI, the Councillors' WG coordinates communications to and from each of the respective municipalities, their councils and their public.

Authority for decision making rests with each municipal council, and the Councillors' WG's key activity is facilitating open and interactive dialogue among the member municipalities of the BHI.

Councillors WG Chair,
Glen Lawrence, Strathcona County

Planners Working Group:

Comprised of professional planners and resource specialists, the Planners WG main purpose is to develop a better information base for a common planning approach, by developing instruments and tools to guide planning in the BHI's landscape.

Key activities of the Planners WG involved completion of Phase 1 of the Land Management Framework in June 2006. Phase 1 involved two components:

a) a comparative analysis of the five municipalities' MDP [Municipal Development Plan] and LUB [Land Use Bylaw] that include the Beaver Hills. Secondly, b) a review and analysis of existing environmental legislation at the federal and provincial government levels was completed and documented.

Phase 2 has recently commenced and involves development of an integrated decision support tool for municipal planners that identifies the ecological function zones. Geospatial analysis and modeling will focus on landscape management, surface and groundwater protection, landscape connectivity, airsheds and core biodiversity areas.

Strong linkages exist between the Planners WG, the GIS WG and the Research & Monitoring working groups, and their collaborative review and input has proven invaluable to Phase 2.

The Planners WG goal is to raise awareness of the uniqueness and vulnerability of the Beaver Hills ecosystem and explore tools and mechanisms which will provide a context by which the public will support policy and legislation to protect the landscape.

Planners WG Chair,
Dr. Guy Swinerton
Professor Emeritus, UofA

Protected Areas Working Group:

The main objective of the Protected Areas working group is to encourage a higher level of collaboration between all agencies dealing with conservation lands in the Beaver Hills. Comprised of representatives of Alberta Community Development, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Parks Canada, the Nature Conservancy Canada, Alberta Conservation Assoc., Ducks Unlimited Canada and University of Alberta; PAWG's goal is to explore habitat protection and reclamation opportunities on public lands and discover new and alternative mechanisms to preserve landscape integrity and connectivity.

Key activities include increased management collaboration between federal and provincial protected areas and the identification of private lands that NGO members can seek to protect through various means. The overarching objective is to maintain and enhance the Beaver Hills' landscape connectivity, biodiversity and ecosystem health that are fundamental to sustaining the area's character and its natural, social and economic capital.

A protected area "cooperation plan" is being developed to identify priority objectives and projects that will enable PAWG partners to support the BHI with the best possible "core area" environmental protection while also improving each agency's conservation efficacy. Cooperation with other working groups will be central to PAWG's mode of operation.

Protected Areas WG Chair,
Terry Krause, Planner
AB Community Development

Research & Monitoring Working Group:

The primary objective of the Research & Monitoring WG is to coordinate & prioritize research efforts of all the BHI's working groups. Key activities include: 1) Fire history study will demonstrate importance of fire-proofing to private landowners and determine prescribed burn areas in protected areas. 2) Wetland assessment protocols developed in conjunction with the Alberta Research Council. 3) Wetland inventory of existing and historically drained wetlands will be completed in 2007 in partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada. 4) Upland vegetation classification for BHI target area being completed by Parks Canada. 5) Invasive Alien Species inventory planned for 2007, letters of support received from each municipality and currently in preliminary discussion with Ag Fieldmen and provincial representatives.

Research & Monitoring WG Chair,
Murray Heap
Parks Canada

GIS Working Group:



The main objective of the GIS WG is to support all other BHI working groups with their needs for geo-spatial technologies.

The GIS WG is comprised of GIS specialists from Strathcona County, Parks Canada, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada and Alberta Parks & Protected Areas.

Key activities of this working group have been to complete the Geographic Information Systems [GIS] Management plan, establish a GIS library of all digital data, metadata & other information so that access by partners to accurate and current data is functionally efficient for analysis and display purposes.

Application to potential funding sources such as Geoconnections has also involved development and submission of a multi-year proposal in fall of 2006 on behalf of the BHI partnership.

GIS WG Chair,
Dave Dubauskas
Strathcona County

Beaver Hills Initiative

**Innovations in:
Data and information sharing
Strategic coordination of planning
Partnership building**

Communications & Education WG:

The objective of the Communication and Education WG is to meet the communication needs of BHI working groups by planning and organizing outreach activities, promoting education and awareness, and develop display materials, brochures and factsheets.

The C&E WG members are represented by communications and outreach specialists with various NGO's, and provincial and federal government specialists.

Key activities have involved development of:
a) a BHI Communication Plan integrated with the Heritage Appreciation Plan
b) BHI logo
c) printed materials such as factsheets, posters, brochures, and newsletter
d) web site [www.beaverhills.ab.ca]
e) numerous public presentations

With linkages to all the working groups of the BHI, promotion of project activities and results will be on-going and strategically targeted.

Interim C&E WG Chair,
Brenda Wispinski

Upcoming Events

- Sept 18-21 - North American Weed Management Conference at Calgary
- Oct 13 - BHI Board of Directors Meeting
- Oct 18 - Alberta Land Trust Workshop at Strathcona Wilderness Centre
- Oct 21 - Alberta Industrial Heartland Resident Issues Synergy Conference at Dow Centre, Fort Saskatchewan
- Nov 1 - BHI Board of Directors Meeting
- Nov 6 - Agriculture Update 2006 for Professionals at Edmonton
- Nov 29/30 - BHI Workshop at Strathcona County Hall - details TBA
- Dec 6-8 - Western Canadian Grazing Conference at Edmonton
- March 2007 - 2007 AESA Workshop

Working Together

For a sustainable region, through
shared initiatives and
coordinated action



Fall 2006 Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2006 Events

April

-BHI presentation at CPAA at Red Deer

-Living by Water Seminar at South Cooking Lake

May

-BHI Poster presentation at 2006 Environment Conference at Edmonton

June

-Land Management Framework Phase 1 completion

July

-Elk Island celebrates 100 years

August

-ILM and Land Use Framework focus group sessions

Sept

-Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve announced

Welcome!! to the first edition of "Working Together", the newsletter of the Beaver Hills Initiative [BHI]. We are proud to provide an update on the many activities underway with the BHI. Building upon the achievements of this award-winning initiative created in 2000, is the goal of our every activity.

Our efforts focus on coordination, and as such, working groups have been established to effectively manage the range of projects and information requests received by the BHI. The partners of the BHI remain committed to the vision to support cooperative efforts to sustain this unique landscape and the quality of life it provides. We hope you will find the updates informative and enjoy learning of all the activities of each of the working groups of the BHI.

Executive Director,
Brenda Wispinski

Benefits of the BHI Partnership:

Integration of expertise of the partners

Funding leverage - for every \$1 of municipal funding, over \$3 is received by BHI in grants and contributions

Development of a world-class model of a sustainable community

Data sharing and access for regional planning and economic development

Executive Working Group:

The Executive WG serves as a coordinating body to ensure consistency of purpose, sharing of resources, communications, and timely direction on specific projects.

Comprised of the Executive Director and Chairs of all working groups, it assists the Board of Directors in setting agendas and priorities for Board consideration.



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