

BHI Partners:

Local Governments:

Beaver County
Camrose County
Lamont County
Leduc County
Strathcona County

Government of Alberta:

Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture
Environment
Sustainable Resource Development
Agriculture and Food
Municipal Affairs and Housing

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,
Councillor Glen Lawrence, Ward 7, 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. And secondly, b) a review and analysis of existing environmental legislation at the federal and provincial government levels was completed and documented.

Phase 2 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.

Phase 2 is almost complete. A February workshop for the Planners WG and the Communications and Education WG will be held to evaluate possible development examples in each of the partnering municipalities using the decision support tool. This will build the foundation for acceptable steps to integrate the BHI Land Management Framework into municipal processes.

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 Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, 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 options on public lands and discover new 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 Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture

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 and Alberta Environment. 4) Upland vegetation classification for BHI target area being completed by Parks Canada. 5) Invasive Alien Species Management Plan and inventory, in partnership with Alberta Agriculture and Food and local Ag Fieldmen. 6) Ag-Capture, an agricultural land use inventory and analysis in partnership with AAFC-PFRA. 7) Valuing Natural Capital, in partnership with Alberta Research Council, Ducks Unlimited Canada and Max Bell Foundation.

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.

The Geographic Information Systems [GIS] Management plan has been completed. The next steps will be to 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.

Implementation of the GIS Management Plan will involve future coordination with partners, data standardization and the development of a web based data portal.

GIS WG Co-Chairs,
Randy Williamson, Strathcona County
Brenda Wispinski, Executive Director

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 upcoming activities will involve reviewing the website, holding a workshop to integrate the BHI's Communication and Education Plan with the Protected Areas Heritage Appreciation Plan, and hosting of a special event in March to update Municipal Councillors, Provincial and Federal Ministers, Deputy Ministers and senior staff on the accomplishments of the BHI and its member municipalities.

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

January

- 17 - BHI Board of Directors meeting
- 22-24 - ILM Workshop

February

- 1 - Planners WG and C&E WG Workshop
- 5 - C&E WG Workshop
- 14 - BHI Board of Directors meeting
- 27-28 - 2007 AESA Workshop at Leduc

March

- 7 - BHI Information Session
- 15-17 - 2007 Parks Forum

Working Together



For a sustainable region, through shared initiatives and coordinated action

Spring 2007 Newsletter

BHI Activities in 2006

Spring '06

-BHI presentation at CPAA at Red Deer

-Living by Water Seminar at South Cooking Lake

-BHI Poster presentation at 2006 Environment Conference at Edmonton

-Land Management Framework Phase 1 completion

Summer '06

-Elk Island National Park celebrates 100 years

-ILM and Land Use Framework focus group sessions

Fall '06

-Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve announced

-Camrose County Open House at Kingman

Happy New Year, and what a year it is going to be! This is the second edition of "Working Together", the newsletter of the Beaver Hills Initiative [BHI].

As BHI's partners remain committed to the vision to support cooperative efforts to sustain this unique landscape and the quality of life it provides, the BHI activities will be aligned with the 2007-2010 Business Plan. The main goals of data sharing, strategic coordination and partnership building will be the focus.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say "Thank You" to the partners, Board of Directors, Working Groups and our communities. Through your on going support, commitment and hard work, you have been instrumental to the success and achievements of the BHI. I look forward to continuing to work with you, creating new research projects, building on existing partnerships and establishing a stronger community connection.

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 Chairman, Executive Director and Chairs of all Working Groups, it will prioritize, coordinate and implement the work plans and activities of the working groups outlined in the 2007-2010 Business Plan.



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