

## SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS BOARD MEETING May 8, 2012

**Present:** Bill Knibbs, Eileen Cowtan, Marty Drut, Anne Bernhardt, Tina Regehr, Corlaine Gardner, Barry Anderson, John Slater (host)

**Minutes:** April 3, 2012, minutes reviewed. John **MOVED** the minutes be adopted; Eileen seconded. **CARRIED.**

### Action Items:

1. Map of designated critical habitat. Marty reported that this work is in progress.
2. Discussion and decision concerning the Ecojustice Sage Grouse Lawsuit. John emphasized that no actual lawsuit is in progress but rather the application for the lawsuit is currently under review. Ecojustice is still attempting to communicate with the federal government in this regard.
3. Signatures on bank account. Eileen, Barry, Anne and John to go to the downtown Servus Credit Union to confirm new signing authority for the Society of Grasslands Naturalists on May 14.

### Treasurer's Report – Eileen

1. Eileen presented a Balance Sheet and Income Statement as of April 30, 2012.
2. Eileen also provided a current GN Members list. A few members yet to renew their 2012 memberships.
3. Eileen was pleased to report that our new GN bylaws have been received and filed (approved) at the provincial level. We still await a similar response federally.
4. Eileen reported the GN 2012 Annual Return for the Alberta Society's Act has been filed (approved).

### Correspondence – Eileen

1. Eileen spoke about correspondence (magazines, newsletters, pamphlets) that has been received by GN recently. Anne **MOVED** that the GN membership to "Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin" not be renewed; a saving of \$50.00 per year: seconded by Marty. **CARRIED.**

### Other Reports and Discussion

1. Issues Committee – John, Marty
  - Approximately 8-10 people turned out on April 30 to complete the Land Use Framework workbook. Good discussion took place even though completing the workbook was lengthy.
  - The meeting with MP Lavar Payne postponed until the summer months. John will contact our new Wildrose MLA's Drew Barnes and Blake Pedersen to arrange a meeting and discussion of current environmental issues deemed important by GN. Bill & Marty will accompany John.
  - John and Marty will meet with SRD Fish and Wildlife Officer Dale Eslinger on May 9.
  - John has emailed Dave Young, City Parks Manager, regarding the removal and disposal of Baby's Breath, an invasive plant species found throughout Medicine Hat.
  - John discussed the need for immediate action in the Ranchlands area in order to preserve the Tiny Cryptanthe, a plant species at risk. In this regard, John & Tina will be contacting Ian Hakes, City Environmental Advisor, to discuss the long term plan for the Environmental Reserve area.
  - Anne suggested that a travelling display might help to make the public aware of the sage grouse current status. Perhaps different species at risk could be highlighted during the year to foster public awareness.
2. Communications Committee – Tina
  - Tina reported that a meeting will be held on May 9 at the Nature Centre to demo the GN website being developed by Paul Thibault. Board members invited to attend.
  - Tina has already established GN Facebook with pictures and announcements. New GN brochure and display board at the Nature Centre to be worked on during the year.
3. Interpretive Program – Corlaine
  - Park care is an on-going activity and not limited to garbage pick-up. Other activities could include pulling weeds, tree-wrapping, etc.
  - Marty reported that an individual contacted the Nature Centre wanting more specific details regarding tree-wrapping. Such potential volunteering and interest need to be followed up with concrete plans for action. John will contact Mike O'Shea to find out about tools, etc.
  - Marty has been busy planning the Medicine Hat Spring Bird and Flower Count on May 27. Contact Marty if you would like an assigned area to count.

4. Indoor Programs – Rob
  - Tuesday May 22 at 7:30 pm at the Nature Centre will feature a land use workshop from Alberta Treasury Board and Enterprise and led by Selena McLean-Moore.
5. Outdoor Programs
  - On Saturday June 2 the Cypress Hills annual spring bird count in Elkwater. More details to follow.
  - On Thursday June 21 (alternate date June 28) Dennis Baresco will lead a Heritage Trees Walk. More details to follow.
  - Possible summer field trips include: the King Ranch near Aiden, the Blackfoot Crossing near Cluny, Saskatchewan Grasslands Nation Park and West Butte Montana in the Sweet Grass Hills. Eileen will contact the SE Alberta Archaeological Club for additional ideas.
  - From September 15-23 the Canadian Shoreline Cleanup will take place. John has set an email to Mike to register Grasslands Naturalists in this event. Discussion focussed on whether Police Point or other visible areas near the library, city hall or arena should be chosen for the cleanup.
6. Nature Alberta – Marty
  - The Suffield Coalition group has expressed concern with regard to the federal government budget cuts to what impact will be had on the Suffield Base National Wildlife Refuge.
7. SEAWA – Rob and Martha (no report due to their absence).

#### **Other Business**

1. The GN potluck supper will be held on the evening of June 26 at Police Point Park. John has agreed to send official invitations to local dignitaries such as the mayor, alderman, MP's, MLA's, etc. Tina agreed to assist John with organizing this correspondence. Information in the May Chronicle (Members' Corner) would be beneficial in recruiting some assistance from members for planning and setting up this event.
2. It was decided that future Board meetings be held on the first Tuesday of each month. Due to summer holidays, no board meetings will be held in July and August unless pressing business arises.
3. After some discussion it was agreed that there was little interest in pursuing the Young Naturalists Club of the Nature Alberta Program. Ample opportunity for the youth to become involved already exists with organizations such as 4-H, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Junior Forest Wardens, etc. and it is suggested that GN and MHIP work with these groups, offering cooperative programs or speakers.

Adjournment at 9:10 pm. The next Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, June 5 at 7:00 pm hosted by Marty Drut, 3 Redwood Green SE, Medicine Hat, 403-527-9710.