

## Society of Grasslands Naturalists Board Meeting September 4, 2012

**Present:** John Slater, Bill Knibbs, Eileen Cowtan, Marty Drut, Anne Bernhardt (host), Martha Gue, Barry Anderson

**Minutes:** June 5, 2012, minutes were reviewed. John **MOVED** the minutes be adopted; Bill seconded. **CARRIED.**

### Action Items:

1. Ecojustice Sage Grouse Lawsuit /Judicial Dispute Resolution. Marty reported that Ecojustice recently filed an appeal in relation to the Cabinet confidence motion. This issue needs to be resolved before the main application can proceed.
2. Meeting with MP Lavar Payne on June 27. John reported that GN requested maps of the designated critical habitat for the sage grouse be provided. In response, an email from Minister of Environment Peter Kent was received on August 13 stating that "actions" were being taken by the federal government in this regard. Kent also indicated that no further comments were being made at this point due to the current lawsuit.

### Treasurer's Report – Eileen

1. Eileen presented a Balance Sheet and Income Statement as of July 31, 2012.
2. Our current membership is now 92 with 2 new memberships being added.

### Correspondence – Eileen

1. Eileen provided a list and some copies of **recent correspondence** (Wild Steer Butte Wind Power Project, UERAB meeting notifications), **newsletters** (Nature News, Nature Outlook, Lethbridge Naturalists Society, The River Current, Across the Board, Alta Link) and **magazines** (Wilderness Advocate and Conservation.)

### Other Reports and Discussion

1. Issues Committee – John, Martha
  - Alberta Bill 202 regarding Public Lands Preservation passed first reading on May 31; second reading is scheduled for October 27. "In its current form, the bill – if passed – would require a wildlife assessment be conducted and public notice be given prior to disposition of public lands."
2. Communications Committee
  - Need development of new GN Brochure and Display Board at Nature Centre.
  - Efforts will continue to issue email notices of field trips to GN members.
  - Link of GN Website to other websites needed such as SEAWA and NA.
  - Need GN Member to download pictures to GN Website Galleries.
3. Interpretive Program – Marty
  - Cleanup, removing invasive plants and tree wrapping are on-going activities in Police Point Park. Removal of wormwood sage/absinthe has had recent success.
  - Marty also reported that the tree wrapping work party by Geocache on the west side of the park has gone well. Hopefully, this group will continue to provide its volunteer work to Police Point Park.
  - The annual Fall Festival occurs on Sept. 23 from 12:00 – 4:00 pm at the Nature Centre. The day includes live music, face painting, hot dog roasting, scare-crow making, a farmers' market, etc. Contact Valerie Martins at the Nature Centre.
  - Marty announced that grant money has been received from Environment Canada to facilitate an awareness and recovery program for the Sprague's Pipit, a species-at- risk grasslands bird. This will be an on-going project over the next two years. More details to follow as they become available.
4. Outdoor Programs
  - Migrating songbirds birdwalk led by Phil Horch will take place on Sept. 8 at 8:00 am at Police Point Park.
  - From September 15-23 the Canadian Shoreline Cleanup will occur. The first scheduled event begins on Sept. 15 from 9:00 – 12:00. Meet at the Nature Centre: park cleanup, tree planting and tree wrapping activities.
  - For other upcoming field trips, check the September issue of the Sagebrush Chronicle.
5. Nature Alberta – The next NA meeting will be held Sept. 15.
6. SEAWA – Martha
  - Martha provided a brief summary of the activities for June, July and August.
  - One of the summer highlights was a 2 day canoe trip sponsored by SEAWA that began at Grassy Lake Forks and ended in Medicine Hat. Fifteen people of all ages participated (3 families). Four GN members joining Martha on this excursion were Bill Knibbs, Lawrence Pudwell, and Rob and Corlaine Gardner. Plans are already underway for next year's canoe trip – a 4 day paddle beginning at the City to Sandy Point Bridge.

### Other Business

1. The next Canadian Badlands Board meeting will be held Sept 5 in Drumheller with Birding Trails Project on agenda..
2. Some discussion took place regarding the need for renewed field trip waiver forms; tabled to our next board meeting.

**Adjournment at 9:20 pm.** Next Board Meeting, Tuesday, Oct 2 at 7 pm hosted by Bill Knibbs at #307 – 3090 15 Avenue SE.