

Society of Grassland Naturalists
Minutes of Annual General Meeting – March 26, 2013
Medicine Hat Public Library Theatre

1. **Call to Order** at 6:35 pm. John Slater – Chair; Barry Anderson – Secretary
2. **Minutes:** The minutes from the AGM held March 27, 2012, were reviewed. John moved the minutes to be accepted; seconded by Simonne Flynn. CARRIED.
3. **Committee Reports:** The following annual reports were briefly summarized by each of the individuals identified. Complete reports are available for detailed perusal on the GN website and in the February and March issues of the Chronicle.
 - President’s Report - John Slater
Treasurer’s Report - Eileen Cowtan (**Eileen moved that her report be accepted; Rob Gardner seconded. Motion carried.**)
 - Operation’s Committee Report - Elaine Spitzer
 - Interpretive Program Report - Corlaine Gardner
 - Field Trips Report - Mike O’Shea
 - Issues Committee Report - Martha Gue
 - Carol Porter Bluebird Trail Report - Milt Spitzer
 - Birding Trails Project Committee Report - Milt Spitzer

Other secondary annual reports will also be available on the GN website and in the April issue of the Chronicle.

4. **Elections:**
The following individuals were voted in as the GN Executive Officers for 2013:
 - President - Anne Bernhardt
 - Vice President - Jim Black
 - Treasurer - Eileen Cowtan
 - Secretary -Barry Anderson
5. **Other Business:**
 - The appointment of the other directors, committees and external organization representatives will take place at the next GN Board meeting to be held April 9, 2013.
6. **Announcements:**
 - The ad hoc Committee for Drafting GN Policies and Procedures met February 27. One item of discussion concerned procedures for approval of expenditures. It was recommended that “GN should form a Budget Committee. This committee should be separate from Board members but with President or Past-President as ex-officio member. The GN Board will vote on this budget.” Consequently at that Committee Meeting, **Bill Knibbs so moved the recommendation that the GN Board establish a Budget Committee; seconded by Eileen Cowtan. Motion Carried.**
 - Ben Verner has been nominated for a “Life-Time GN Membership.” Ben has accepted the nomination and will receive his award at the next GN general meeting April 23rd at the Nature Centre.

7. Field Trips and Up-Coming Events:

- Ben Velnor will travel to Manyberries and surrounding area to look for the greater sage grouse and other species on Saturday, April 6. Please meet at the Tim Horton's Dunmore Road location at 6:30 am. This will be a long day so dress warm and pack a lunch.
- **The Easter Program "Chicks and Bunnies"** will run this weekend from March 29 – April 1 at the Nature Centre with volunteers still needed for the afternoons from Good Friday to Easter Monday.
- On Saturday morning, April 20 at 9:30am Ron Linowski will give a short presentation at the Nature Centre on the **Tiny Cryptanthe Recovery Plan** to be followed by a walk through CH Ranchlands to search for plants as well as observe other wildflowers. John Slater has received city permission to access this area and ensured that GN has insurance to cover liability. Check the Chronicles for updates on similar walks by Michael O'Shea in East Ross Glen and Cathy Linowski in the College area.
- **Alberta Plantwatch** program is encouraging participation during April to June to watch the blooming of one or two selected wildflowers in a specific location. When reported annually to the website, this information gives indication of the advance of spring and climate change. Martha encourages members to participate in various locations around Medicine Hat. Currently, Mike does Ross Glen Creek, Martha NE Crescent Heights and Cathy Linowski the MH College
- The Alberta **Get Outdoors Weekend** will be held April 14 at the Nature Centre.
- A showing of **"Chasing Ice"** – a documentary about the disappearing glaciers – will be shown at the Monarch Theatre on Monday, April 15 at 7:30 pm.
- The **City-Wide Spring Cleanup** is fast approaching and needs volunteers to help. More details to follow.
- **Up-coming bird counts** include the Brooks Spring Bird Count (May 19), the Medicine Hat Spring Bird Count (May 26), and the Cypress Hills Spring Bird Count (June 2).
- A 2 night/3 day canoe trip from Medicine Hat to the Saskatchewan border is tentatively planned for mid-July sponsored by SEAWA. More details to follow.
- Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition is organizing an event "Walk to the Headwaters – Creating Partners in Water" planned for July 13 – 28. The 350km route will be divided into 20 to 25km sections to be assigned to various groups. More details to follow.

8. **Attendance tonight** – 50 members for the business portion and 60 for the presentation.

9. **Meeting adjourned** at 7:30 pm

10. **Indoor Program:**

Tonight's presentation by Lorne Fitch, Alberta Government Biologist from Lethbridge, entitled **"The Zen of Fish and Watersheds"** detailed the changes in the Eastern Slopes Watersheds during the past one hundred plus years, linking these changes to over-fishing and watershed habitat changes as a result of man's industrial, logging, and farming practices as well as due to direct stream changes with the construction of dams and diversion works. A significant change to the water environment was also affected by the direct introduction of non-native species such as Rainbow, Eastern Brook and Brown Trout. The three original eastern streams native game fishes were Cutthroat Trout, Bull Trout and Mountain White Fish. The watershed changes have seriously affected spawning success and have put the numbers of successful spawning to critically low levels such that Bull Trout are an endangered species in the eastern slopes. Mr. Fitch's presentation was a well crafted talk by a very dedicated and concerned individual as was highlighted with a large number of slides of past and present conditions detailing the changes that have been wrought.