



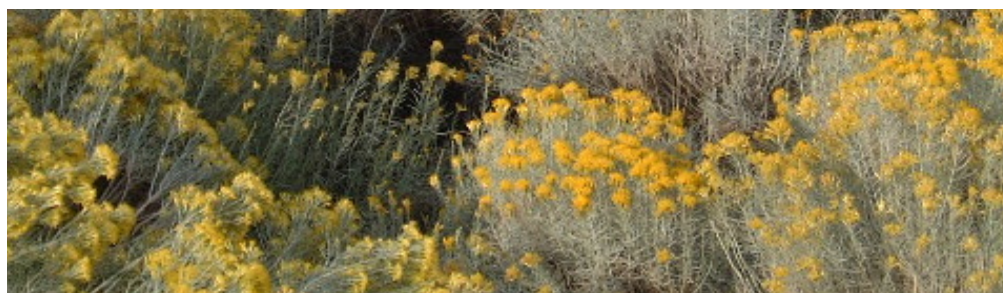
# Mitigating the Fragmentation and Development of BC's Grasslands

Problem Analysis and Strategic Plan

## Section 2: Strategic Plan



Grasslands Conservation Council of  
British Columbia, June 30, 2005



# Mitigating the Fragmentation and Development of BC's Grasslands

## Problem Analysis and STRATEGIC PLAN

### Section 2: Strategic Plan

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**Note:**

This document comprises Section 2 of a larger report entitled *Mitigating the Fragmentation and Development of BC's Grasslands: Problem Analysis and Strategic Plan*. This document should be used in conjunction with the Section 1 document of that report, entitled *Problem Analysis and Priority Solutions* and dated June 14, 2005.

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## **Executive Summary**

Grasslands are a small but significant component of BC's natural landscape. Although they represent less than 1% of British Columbia's land base, they provide critical habitat to over 30% of BC's species at risk. In fact, grasslands are considered one of Canada's most endangered ecosystems. They also provide a significant forage base to BC's ranching industry. Ranching in BC has been occurring for generations and has played a major role in shaping the social, economic, and cultural fabric of British Columbia.

Despite the ecological, social and economic importance of grasslands, BC is experiencing unprecedented rates of loss of this special landscape. In response to a strong call for action on this issue, the Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia initiated a provincial analysis and, from this analysis, forged a provincial strategy to mitigate future loss of grasslands.

The result of this analysis and strategy-building process is the *Mitigating Fragmentation and Development of BC's Grasslands: Problem Analysis and Strategic Plan* report.

The report is presented in two distinct but integrated sections. Section 1, comprising Chapters 1-4, is the problem (issues) and solutions analysis, while Section 2, comprising Chapter 5, is the Strategic Plan.

Municipal and regional governments are recognized as having a critical role in grassland fragmentation and development; key issues include lack of awareness, understanding or focus upon grassland values, inadequacy of inventory and other technical information and underutilization or ineffective use of existing policy, planning and regulatory tools.

While there are a wide range of provincial and federal regulatory, policy, planning and land/water allocation agencies with jurisdiction and/or influence over grassland fragmentation and development, the key issues fall within several common themes: conflicting mandates and priorities, incompatible policies and regulations, lack of coordination and limited capacity of government agencies to adequately respond to grassland issues. There are specific issues related to the treatment of grasslands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the changing regulatory framework and focus of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the relationship between the ALC and local/regional planning functions.

An overarching issue related to grassland fragmentation and development, however, is economic. Not only are there inadequate economic incentives - whether assessment/taxation or stewardship programs - for ranchers and other landowners to maintain grassland values, but there are inadequate valuation tools that can take into account both the full range of grassland conservation/economic values and the full range of public costs of land use change on grasslands.

Interviews and research yielded a large number and wide range of suggested approaches and solution options to address grassland fragmentation and development issues. A critical success factor analysis produced a list of potential solutions, based on the following themes: awareness and understanding; information, inventory and analysis tools; legislation and regulation; planning and policy tools; economic incentives/disincentives (conservation tools); coordination and cooperation; and public consultation and stakeholder involvement.

Section 2 (Chapter 5) of the report comprises the Strategic Plan. In response to a vision statement, “British Columbia’s grasslands secured against fragmentation and development,” six strategic priorities were identified:

- Enhance inventory and analysis tools to identify and assess and monitor changes to critical grassland areas;
- Support local governments in utilizing and/or developing policy/planning tools and guidelines to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development;
- Integrate grassland fragmentation and development issues into provincial and federal government planning and/or policy;
- Pursue partnerships to increase stewardship and conservation of priority grasslands;
- Promote development and/or utilization of economic and conservation incentives to encourage landowners to avoid fragmentation and development of grasslands; and
- Increase public awareness about grassland fragmentation and development.

The Strategic Plan defines specific objectives and actions as well as an implementation action plan (including measurable outcomes) for each of the strategic priorities. The Plan also provides for implementation and effectiveness monitoring and reporting of progress on Plan implementation.

*The Mitigating Fragmentation and Development of BC's Grasslands: Problem Analysis and Strategic Plan* report provides clear direction for the Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia and its partners over the coming years. In order to achieve this ambitious plan, collaboration with a wide range of interests, a strategic approach, and a commitment to sustainable solutions will be essential. The GCC and its partners look forward to bringing resolution to this long-standing conservation challenge.

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### **List of Acronyms:**

AAP	Agricultural Area Plans
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
BCAA	British Columbia Assessment Authority
BCAC	British Columbia Agriculture Council
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CWS	Canadian Wildlife Service
DND	Department of National Defense
EFP	Environmental Farm Plans
EC	Environment Canada
FPPA	Farm Practices Protection Act
GCC	Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia
IWMA	Identified Wildlife Management Area
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
LWBC	Land and Water BC
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
MEM	Ministry of Energy and Mines
MOF	Ministry of Forests
MOT	Ministry of Transportation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSRM	Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

NGO	Non-Government Organization
OCP	Official Community Plan
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy
SARA	Species at Risk Act
SRMP	Sustainable Resource Management Plan
WLAP	Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection

## Section 2: Strategic Plan

### 5 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan for mitigating grassland fragmentation and development is set in the context of the GCC Vision, Mission Statement, Guiding Principles and Partnership commitment as articulated in the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2 GCC Vision, Mission Statement, Guiding Principles and Partnership Commitment\***

#### **GCC VISION**

The vision of the GCC is of healthy and life-sustaining grassland ecosystems in British Columbia.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The GCC mission is to:

- Foster greater understanding and appreciation for the ecological, social, economic and cultural importance of grasslands throughout BC;
- Promote stewardship and sustainable management practices that will ensure the long-term health of BC's grasslands; and
- Promote the conservation of representative grassland ecosystems, species at risk and their habitats.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following values structure guiding principles that are fundamental to the development of the GCC and to the effective delivery of its programs:

- Respect each other's interests, values, goals and aspirations.
- Foster trust and promote inclusiveness.
- Solve issues in a collaborative manner.
- Strive to reach decisions by mutual consent.
- Ensure appropriate representation from the regions of the province that contain grasslands.
- Ensure broad representation on the Board of Directors.
- Represent and promote GCC decisions with unanimity and solidarity.

#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

The GCC is a strategic alliance of organizations and individuals committed to the conservation and stewardship of grasslands. These partnerships bring together a wide range of experience and knowledge from a variety of fields and backgrounds. The breadth of knowledge, experience, and the high level of commitment from its partners provide the GCC with credibility and a strong platform from which to deliver its programs. Continuing to build and formalize new partnerships will be essential to the success of the Grasslands Conservation Council.

\*Source: Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

The grasslands fragmentation and development Strategic Plan includes the following components:

- Vision
- Strategic priorities
- Objectives and actions
- Implementation action plan
- Evaluation and monitoring framework

The vision describes the desired future for grasslands to be achieved as an outcome of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic priorities represent the focal themes that need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision. These are derived from the assessment of issues and potential solutions in Chapters 3 and 4.

Objectives and actions are the steps that must be undertaken and results that must be achieved in order to meet the strategic priorities.

Strategic priority objectives and actions have been developed to be consistent with the GCC 2003-2008 Strategic Plan and are based on the assumption that GCC will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the objectives and actions.

The implementation action plan defines the responsibilities, target completion dates and expected outcomes for each of the actions in the Strategic Plan. The time frame for substantial completion of the actions and achievement of the desired results in the Plan is three years.

At the end of each year, an evaluation should be undertaken to determine whether implementation of the Plan is on track and performance outcomes are being met.

## 5.1 *Vision*

The mitigating fragmentation and development vision is as follows:

*“British Columbia’s grasslands secured against fragmentation and development.”*

## 5.2 Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Plan is built upon the following themes. Recognizing that everyone has a role in mitigating the fragmentation and development of grasslands, the strategic priorities reflect the scope and breadth of both the issues and the solutions. The order in which they are listed is arbitrary and is not intended to imply order of priority.

**Strategic Priority 1:** Enhance inventory and analysis tools to identify and assess and monitor changes to critical grassland areas.

**Strategic Priority 2:** Support local governments in utilizing and/or developing policy/planning tools and guidelines to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development.

**Strategic Priority 3:** Integrate grassland fragmentation and development issues into provincial and federal government planning and/or policy.

**Strategic Priority 4:** Pursue partnerships to increase stewardship and conservation of priority grasslands.

**Strategic Priority 5:** Promote development and/or utilization of economic and conservation incentives to encourage landowners to avoid fragmentation and development of grasslands.

**Strategic Priority 6:** Increase public awareness about grassland fragmentation and development.

## 5.3 Objectives and Actions

**Strategic Priority 1:** Enhance inventory and analysis tools to identify and assess and monitor changes to critical grassland areas.

### Background

A key concern identified during the issue analysis was the lack of adequate information upon which to base land and water use decisions related to grasslands, including inadequate inventory of critical grasslands, lack of analysis tools to assess the impacts of grassland fragmentation and development and lack of monitoring tools and procedures.

While the GCC has recently completed the '*BC Grassland Mapping Project: A Risk Assessment*', there remains an urgent need for inventory that identifies, at a local and regional scale, priority grasslands (from both biodiversity and socio-economic perspectives) under the greatest threat of fragmentation and development. Distribution of this inventory information, however, will require careful balancing between the needs of decision makers for information and the

potential for misuse of the information, which could be detrimental to grassland conservation objectives. Pending the completion of the inventory, interim knowledge will need to be relied upon in order to move forward with many of the actions identified in the Strategic Plan that, ideally, should be based on the science that a priority grasslands inventory would provide.

Valuation tools to more comprehensively assess the social, economic and environmental costs of grassland fragmentation and development are needed for improved land and water use planning and decision-making. Existing valuation tools are regarded as too narrow in scope, biased towards short-term economic parameters and inadequate for identifying the full range of grassland values or the true costs of urban sprawl.

Monitoring is considered key to understanding the cumulative impacts attributable to grassland fragmentation and development but there is need for appropriate indicators and assessment procedures that can be used to track both the rate of loss and the results of mitigative efforts on a periodic and consistent basis.

**Objective 1.1** Complete the Priority Grasslands in BC inventory project.

**Actions:**

- 1.1.1 Finalize criteria to define 'critical grasslands' related to fragmentation and development<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.1.2 Link project to *BC Grasslands Mapping Project: A Conservation Risk Assessment 2004* and assign inventory priority to those areas under imminent threat of fragmentation or development.
- 1.1.3 Produce inventory maps at a scale and in a format that meets the information needs of individual regions and key decision makers.

**Objective 1.2:** Develop analysis tools to assess the full costs of fragmentation and development of grasslands.

**Actions:**

- 1.2.1 Establish a technical steering committee to oversee development of valuation tools.
- 1.2.2 Assess existing valuation tools (e.g., socioeconomic and environmental assessment, multiple accounts analysis, triple-e bottom line, etc.) and identify tools and/or methods appropriate for grasslands valuation.

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<sup>1</sup>While not mutually exclusive, the term 'critical grasslands' has generally been used to refer to the current state of knowledge, whereas the term 'priority grasslands' is intended to reflect the formal definition and delineation that is expected to result from the completion of the Priority Grasslands in BC inventory project.

- 1.2.3 Select environmental, social and economic indicators for measuring benefits (full range of grassland values) and costs of grassland fragmentation and development.
- 1.2.4 Develop criteria for assessing indicator results (e.g. environmental; risk thresholds, monetary value etc.).
- 1.2.5 Prepare draft methodology for conducting full cost grassland valuations. (See Action 5.4.3)
- 1.2.6 Conduct a peer review and prepare final methodology.

**Objective 1.3:** Develop procedures and guidelines for monitoring performance in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.

**Actions:**

- 1.3.1 Select indicators (e.g. hectares of grasslands lost, hectares with conservation measures in place, etc.) and develop monitoring procedures.
- 1.3.2 Develop reporting mechanisms (e.g. annual “report card”) to communicate performance with respect to mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.
- 1.3.3 Conduct monitoring assessments and distribute results on an annual basis.
- 1.3.4 Support the establishment of oversight bodies to monitor compliance with Conservation Covenants.

**Strategic Priority 2:** Support local governments in utilizing and/or developing policy/planning tools and guidelines to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development.

**Background**

Local governments are recognized as having a key role in both increasing and mitigating grassland fragmentation and development. While municipalities and regional districts have a wide range of planning, regulatory and land securement tools at their disposal, a key concern is that their primary focus is on accommodating growth (or in the best cases, containing growth), not on biodiversity conservation or ranching industry viability.

In addition to a general lack of awareness, information and understanding of grassland values and the impact of fragmentation and development, (including negative impact on local and regional economies), there is concern regarding the underutilization or ineffective use of local government tools to serve grassland conservation objectives.

**Objective 2.1:** Develop a local government grassland planning guide to assist in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.

**Actions:**

- 2.1.1 Prepare a generic context statement (1-2 pages) for the information of local governments that describes the:
  - value of grasslands;
  - risks and public costs associated with fragmentation and development; and,
  - role of local governments in mitigating fragmentation and development.
- 2.1.2 Prepare an 'interpretation and use for local planning purposes' guide to accompany priority grasslands mapping inventory as it becomes available for each region and strategic decisions are made regarding its distribution. (See Action 1.1.3).
- 2.1.3 Draft sample grassland policy statement options for inclusion in RGSs (and therefore, in component OCPs), including options for designating grasslands as environmentally sensitive areas.
- 2.1.4 Compile and maintain a registry of local/regional grassland conservation resource people that municipalities and regional districts can consult during OCP/RGS reviews and other planning/regulatory exercises.
- 2.1.5 With partners, develop sample site development and subdivision Bylaws that could be used by local governments to reduce fragmentation and development impact on grasslands.
- 2.1.6 Form a working group to explore innovative changes to development cost charge schedules and development permit area policies that would provide incentives to developers to minimize negative impact on grasslands. (Pilot innovations with receptive local governments to assess effectiveness in mitigating fragmentation and development.)
- 2.1.7 Utilize the flexibility of the Agriculture Area Plan tool (OCP-equivalent for agriculture) in selected ranching areas containing grasslands (whether inside or outside the ALR) that are currently being overwhelmed by settlement, fragmentation and other development pressures.

**Objective 2.2:** Increase local government awareness about grassland values and the opportunities to mitigate their fragmentation and development.

**Actions:**

- 2.2.1 Offer workshops at UBCM on:
- ecological, socio-economic and cultural role of grasslands;
  - sources of information for planning purposes, including where to access and how to use; and,
  - range of planning/policy tools available to address grassland fragmentation and development issues.
- 2.2.2 Distribute and present to Municipal Councils and Regional District Boards components of grassland planning guide as they become available.
- 2.2.3 Conduct regular surveys to monitor awareness and utilization of grassland planning guide components and solicit suggestions for improvement.

**Strategic Priority 3:** Integrate grassland fragmentation and development issues into provincial and federal government planning and/or policy.

**Background**

Within the Provincial Government, there are several ministries and agencies with jurisdiction or influence over the fragmentation and development of Crown grasslands (and in the case of the ALC, private grasslands). This fragmentation of mandate is seen as a key factor in the lack of clarity and coordination around provincial objectives and the incompatibility of provincial policies and regulations related to Crown grasslands.

At the federal level, there are three ministries that share responsibility to protect critical habitat and provide recovery of plant, animal and plant communities at risk, including the significant number of nationally endangered species associated with grassland ecosystems.

With the reduced capacity of provincial and federal regulatory, planning and/or allocation agencies and the priority of both governments to move away from the traditional tools of legislation, regulation and interagency referral processes in favour of tools that rely on shared responsibility, voluntary guidelines and results-based programs, the opportunities to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development are most likely in the areas of MOUs, protocols, BMPs and stewardship agreements.

**Objective 3.1:** Develop and promote the use of grasslands-specific best management practice components to assist decision-makers,

property owners and users in mitigating fragmentation and development.

**Actions:**

- 3.1.1 Establish a working group comprising representatives from target user groups to provide advice and direction on grassland-specific BMPs related to fragmentation and development.
- 3.1.2 Review all BC land/water-related BMPs recently completed or currently underway to determine opportunity to add, amend, and/or integrate grasslands-specific practices to mitigate fragmentation and development.
- 3.1.3 Prepare BMP summary guidelines (1-2 pages) for specific user groups (e.g. government agencies, First Nations, developers, ranchers, recreationists, etc.).
- 3.1.4 Promote utilization of grasslands-specific BMP components through appropriate media and presentation venues (e.g., press releases and media packages, selected newsletters and trade journals, UBCM, agriculture commodity associations, conservation/ stewardship workshops, non-government organization AGMs).
- 3.1.5 Conduct regular surveys amongst target stakeholder groups to monitor awareness and utilization of grassland BMPs.
- 3.1.6 Revise and update BMP summary guidelines as appropriate.

**Objective 3.2:** Utilize existing policy/planning tools to address specific provincial government agency issues related to grassland fragmentation and development.

**Actions:**

- 3.2.1 Prepare a summary background/policy paper (3-5 pages) on grassland values/principles and issues/solutions as a basis upon which to begin discussions with key provincial agencies/ministries.
- 3.2.2 Pursue MOUs and/or protocol agreements to address grassland fragmentation and development issues from both the biodiversity conservation and the agriculture/range perspective; target appropriate agency/ministry combinations.
- 3.2.3 Negotiate with appropriate ministries to:
  - increase public, stakeholder and GCC consultation prior to allocation or disposition of Crown grasslands;
  - implement grassland management directions where they have been identified in LRMPs and specifically address grassland fragmentation and development in subsequent SRMPs, including the coordination of Crown land/private land planning processes to maintain grassland contiguity;

- assess feasibility of establishing objectives under the Land Act to avoid disposition/development of priority grasslands; and,
- achieve approval-in-principle to work towards a coordinated provincial grasslands conservation policy.

**Objective 3.3:** Increase the profile of grassland ecosystems and prepare for opportunities to influence federal/provincial policies/actions focused on Species at Risk.

**Actions:**

- 3.3.1 Identify priority grasslands under federal jurisdiction and those containing federally-managed species at risk.
- 3.3.2 Enhance representation on behalf of grasslands in all federal/provincial species at risk policy consultations in BC with potential to impact grassland fragmentation/development issues.
- 3.3.3 Prepare a summary document that demonstrates how addressing grassland fragmentation and development issues meets specific Recovery Planning objectives and requirements for species at risk. (See Action 5.2.1.)
- 3.3.4 Pursue inclusion of grassland ecosystems-specific statements within provincial Biodiversity Strategy/federal Species at Risk documents.

**Strategic Priority 4:** Pursue partnerships to increase stewardship and conservation of priority grasslands.

## **Background**

With increasing pressure on grasslands and the accelerating loss of critical grasslands and grassland values, there is recognition that greater cooperation and coordination of effort amongst the wide range of interests and agencies, both government and non-government, is needed to effectively mitigate grassland fragmentation and development. Over the decades, there have been many initiatives at various scales of endeavour aimed at more integrative management of complex land and water use issues. By their very nature, grasslands require such integrative thinking.

While several partnership initiatives and projects are already underway in the grassland regions of the province, there is need for a more deliberate partnership approach amongst all those with interests in mitigating fragmentation and development of BC's increasingly scarce and valuable grassland resources.

**Objective 4.1:** Partner with the ALC and local government to build upon their long established legal and administrative relationship with respect to lands within the ALR.

**Actions:**

- 4.1.1 Develop an information package (3-5 pages) for presentation to the ALC on grassland values/principles and fragmentation and development issues/solutions as the basis upon which to pursue a closer working partnership.
- 4.1.2 Derive ALC/GCC/local government shared objectives to achieve mutual benefits of ranching viability, grassland conservation and urban containment.
- 4.1.3 Pursue MOUs or protocol agreements with ALC and local governments pertaining to consolidation of individual legal parcels within priority grassland areas as a condition of ALC subdivision, non-farm use or ALR exclusion approvals and of local government rezoning and development approvals.
- 4.1.4 Work with the ALC to utilize its mandate and flexibility to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development through its own actions and to advocate with local government and other provincial ministries on behalf of grasslands with livestock grazing values.

**Objective 4.2:** Work within existing government//First Nations/NGO partnership programs to achieve a more focused partnership approach to the stewardship and conservation of priority BC grasslands.

**Actions:**

- 4.2.1 Engage current/potential partners, including agencies from all levels of government, First Nations, conservation and other non-government organizations and stakeholder interests, to discuss key grassland fragmentation and development issues and opportunities for more effective cooperative and coordinated action to address the issues.
- 4.2.2 Set principles and objectives for a more integrated partnership approach to mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.
- 4.2.3 Pursue tangible projects that mitigate grassland fragmentation and development through joint venturing (sharing of knowledge, experience, technical and financial resources), utilizing securement tools collectively available, including:
  - stewardship agreements;
  - Conservation Covenants (including compliance monitoring);
  - land lease arrangements;
  - multiple titles consolidation;

- land swaps (Crown/private, grassland/non-grassland);
  - acquisition (with upfront financial resources committed to ongoing land management); and,
  - purchase of development rights (perhaps in exchange for consolidation of separate legal parcels).
- 4.2.4 Support the establishment of First Nations' conservation positions/functions related to grasslands on Reserve lands.
- 4.2.5 Evaluate the adequacy of current partnerships (including capacity) and explore potential alternatives (including, but not limited to, a new partnership organization with its own contract language and financing) to address the stewardship and conservation of BC grasslands.

**Strategic Priority 5:** Promote development and/or utilization of economic and conservation incentives to encourage landowners to avoid fragmentation and development of grasslands.

## **Background**

A key issue related to the fragmentation and development of BC grasslands is the overall lack of economic incentives for landowners to maintain grassland values and integrity. Indeed, it is felt that most federal, provincial and local government policies, regulations and tax systems – and certainly the marketplace – provide disincentives that actually work to facilitate grassland fragmentation and development rather than encourage voluntary conservation.

Grasslands are attractive real estate. Most people own large areas of grassland in order to make a living. Even owners of smaller grassland parcels nonetheless regard their land as having a certain market value. There is a need to better utilize current and emerging economic incentives, remove current barriers to voluntary conservation and develop innovative, pragmatic and mutually acceptable future economic incentives to mitigate fragmentation and development of grasslands.

**Objective 5.1:** Evaluate and increase awareness of existing economic incentives/ opportunities to secure BC grasslands against fragmentation and development.

### **Actions:**

- 5.1.1 Pending actions under Objective 5.4, assemble BC expertise to carry out preliminary evaluations of the validity and usability of current conservation options in BC that have monetary value (e.g. ecogifting tax credits, Conservation Covenants, Environmental Farm Plan

funding, stewardship agreements, property assessment appeals, acquisition/leasebacks).

5.1.2 Assemble and distribute a succinct and pragmatic information brochure for grassland owners that briefly describes current incentive options; include listings of agencies and organizations to contact for more information.

5.1.3 Assess the feasibility of funding a resource person liaison that can assist owners of grasslands to access current programs and provisions to meet voluntary grassland conservation objectives.

**Objective 5.2:** Ensure grasslands qualify for any existing or future federal/provincial incentive/grant programs.

**Actions:**

5.2.1 As opportunity arises, negotiate monetary components under SARA or other stewardship agreement programs that would apply to Indian Reserve and private grasslands.

5.2.2 Pursue additional funding for public conservation initiatives, outreach and stakeholder programs directly related to grassland fragmentation and development.

**Objective 5.3:** Pursue specific changes to BC Assessment Authority policy related to grasslands managed for conservation purposes.

**Actions:**

5.3.1 Prepare a summary background paper (3-5 pages) upon which to begin targeted discussions with BC Assessment Authority on specific economic disincentives to the conservation of grasslands.

5.3.2 Propose a joint (GCC/BCAA) working group of individuals with grasslands (biodiversity and livestock grazing values) and local/provincial government assessment/taxation/policy expertise to formulate practical solutions for grasslands related to farm land classification, assessment penalties and conservation as an accepted land use for assessment/taxation purposes.

**Objective 5.4:** Target any future studies related to grassland fragmentation and development on economic incentives in the areas of greatest complexity and opportunity.

**Actions:**

5.4.1 Assess the feasibility and conditions of a Consolidation Assistance Fund (either as a stand alone or as a component of a larger grassland conservation initiative) to offset survey and other costs (perhaps including loss of market value) incurred by landowners who voluntarily consolidate grasslands currently in separate legal parcels.

5.4.2 Engage conservation taxation expertise to:

- review updated BC studies on conservation tools for direct applicability to grassland fragmentation and development issues (see reference list);
- identify specific sections of provincial and federal taxation legislation/policy that negatively impact landowner options for grassland conservation;
- draw the linkages between taxation incentive/disincentives and other policy/planning programs that impact grassland fragmentation and development; and,
- evolve and assess a range of specific options for legislative/policy change (including revenue-neutral tax shifting) and prepare a list of priority incentives to pursue with provincial/federal agencies.

5.4.3 As methodology is completed enabling assessment of the full costs of grassland fragmentation and development (see Action 1.2.5), engage expertise to evolve specific proposals that would reduce public costs through the removal of subsidies (disincentives to grassland conservation) and encourage grassland stewardship (economic incentives to avoid grassland fragmentation and development).

**Strategic Priority 6:** Increase public awareness about grassland fragmentation and development.

### **Background**

In addition to most planning, regulatory and allocation agencies being unaware of grassland values and the significance of grassland loss through fragmentation and development, owners and users of grasslands and the public in general are equally unaware of how important grasslands are to species at risk, the ranching industry and future generations or how threatened they are by fragmentation and development. Grasslands don't have the same emotional appeal as old growth forests, for example, and therefore grassland conservation issues are seldom profiled in the media.

While there are currently several GCC initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness and education around grassland issues, there is need for strategies specifically related to fragmentation and development and specifically targeted to groups such as hobby farm owners, youth, recreationists and land developers. Through comprehensive and effective education and awareness programs, all citizens can become better informed, prepared and motivated to participate in public debate and consultation processes on behalf of grassland conservation.

**Objective 6.1:** Develop and implement an education/awareness strategy specifically on grassland fragmentation and development as a component of the Education and Outreach Program in the GCC Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

**Actions:**

6.1.1 Develop and distribute a series of targeted public information pamphlets (e.g. targeted to youth, recreationists, developers) that describe the:

- range of grassland values and potential threats from fragmentation and development (see also Action 2.1.1);
- location of grassland areas (see also Action 1.1.3);
- tools that are available to assist in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development (see also Actions, 3.1.3 and 4.1.3); and,
- role for citizens (targeted public group) in grassland conservation and stewardship.

6.1.2 Develop a specific fragmentation and development education strategy as part of the broader GCC education and awareness program that utilizes a wide range of venues, including, but not limited to:

- presentations and workshops;
- print media, including publications, trade journals and newsletters;
- television and radio, including BC Broadcasters public advertising program;
- interpretive sites and displays, including Royal BC Museum living landscape display;
- GCC website;
- teaching modules for schools; and,
- awareness raising report cards on grassland loss/degradation (see also Action 1.3.3).

6.1.3 Monitor results and amend education strategy on a regular basis.

## **5.4 *Implementation Action Plan***

The following implementation action plan (Table 7) provides a framework for moving forward with the implementation of the Strategic Plan. It specifies the lead/coordinating agency, target completion date and expected outcome for each action identified in the Strategic Plan.

While the implementation plan provides specific direction, many of the details related to the actions will require decisions by the GCC as an organization. For

example, GCC will need to determine whether it will implement particular actions on its own or in collaboration with government agencies and/or other NGOs. Similarly, GCC will need to determine funding sources and budgets for each of the action items. Additionally, GCC will need to review the target completion dates to ensure that they are consistent with GCC's priorities and that they are realistic in terms of funding and staff resources.

**Table 1 Implementation Action Plan**

**Strategic Priority 1:** Enhance inventory and analysis tools to identify and assess and monitor changes to critical grassland areas

**Objective 1.1:** Complete the Priority Grasslands in BC inventory project.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
1.1.1 Finalize criteria to define 'critical grasslands' related to fragmentation and development	GCC/project team	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project definition of critical (priority) grasslands.</li> </ul>
1.1.2 Link project to BC Grasslands Mapping Project: A Conservation Risk Assessment 2004 and assign inventory priority to those areas under imminent threat of fragmentation or development	GCC/project team	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generalized map of grassland areas under imminent threat of fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>
1.1.3. Produce inventory maps at a scale and in a format that meets the information needs of individual regions and key decision makers	GCC/project team	\$xxx	Year 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory maps identifying 'priority grasslands' in BC.</li> </ul>

**Objective 1.2:** Develop analysis tools to assess the full costs of fragmentation and development of grasslands.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
1.2.1 Establish a technical steering committee to oversee development of valuation tools.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation of a technical steering committee.</li> </ul>
1.2.2 Assess existing valuation tools (e.g., socioeconomic and environmental assessment, multiple accounts analysis, triple-e bottom line, etc.) and identify tools and/or methods appropriate for grasslands valuation.	Steering committee	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed assessment of valuation tools.</li> </ul>
1.2.3 Select environmental, social and economic indicators for measuring benefits (full range of		\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selection of valuation indicators.</li> </ul>

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grassland values) and costs of grassland fragmentation and development.

1.2.4	Develop criteria for assessing indicator results (e.g. environmental; risk thresholds, monetary value, etc.)	Steering committee	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment criteria.</li> </ul>
1.2.5	Prepare draft methodology for conducting full cost grassland valuations. (See Action 5.4.3.)	Steering committee	\$xxx	Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft valuation methodology.</li> </ul>
1.2.6	Conduct a peer review and prepare final methodology.	Steering committee	\$xxx	Year 3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final valuation methodology.</li> </ul>

**Objective 1.3:** Develop procedures/guidelines for monitoring performance in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Coordinating Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>	
1.3.1	Select indicators (e.g. hectares of grasslands lost, hectares with conservation measures in place, etc.) and develop monitoring procedures	GCC/Priority Grasslands project team	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassland fragmentation &amp; development mitigation performance indicators.</li> </ul>
1.3.2	Develop reporting mechanisms (e.g. annual "report card") to communicate performance with respect to mitigating grassland fragmentation and development	GCC	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication tool and procedures for reporting on grassland fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>
1.3.3	Conduct monitoring assessments and distribute results on an annual basis	GCC/Priority Grasslands project team?	\$xxx	Dependent on Action 1.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of annual grassland fragmentation/development performance report.</li> </ul>
1.3.4	Support the establishment of oversight bodies to monitor compliance with Conservation Covenants	GCC and ?	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more Conservation Covenant oversight bodies established.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 2:** Support local governments in utilizing and/or developing policy/planning tools and guidelines to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development.

**Objective 2.1:** Develop a local government planning guide to assist in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
2.1.1 Prepare a generic context statement (1-2 pages) for the information of local governments that describes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the value of grasslands;</li> <li>• the risks and public costs associated with fragmentation and development; and,</li> <li>• the role of local governments in mitigating fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed BC grassland fragmentation and development context statement for local governments.</li> </ul>
2.1.2 Prepare an 'interpretation and use for local planning purposes' guide to accompany priority grasslands mapping inventory as it becomes available for each region and strategic decisions are made regarding its distribution. (See Action 1.1.3).	GCC and Priority Grasslands project team?	\$xxx	Dependent on Action 1.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed grassland inventory interpretation and use for planning purposes guide.</li> </ul>
2.1.3 Draft sample grassland policy statement options for inclusion in RGSs (and therefore, in component OCPs), including options for designating grasslands as environmentally sensitive areas.	GCC and Smart Growth partners?	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed sample RGS grassland policy statement options.</li> </ul>
2.1.4 Compile and maintain a registry of local/regional grassland conservation resource people that municipalities and regional districts can consult during OCP/RGS reviews and other	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial registry of grassland conservation resource people for local government contact</li> </ul>

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planning/regulatory exercises.

2.1.5	With partners, develop sample site development and subdivision Bylaws that could be used by local governments to reduce fragmentation and development impact on critical grasslands.	GCC and partners	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sample Bylaws designed to reduce grassland fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>
2.1.6	Form a working group to explore innovative changes to development cost charge schedules and development permit area policies that would provide incentives to developers to minimize negative impact on priority grasslands (Pilot innovations with receptive local governments to assess effectiveness in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development).	GCC, Smart Growth and willing local government partners	\$xxx	Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested changes to development cost charge schedules and development permit area policies.</li> </ul>
2.1.7	Utilize the flexibility of the Agriculture Area Plan tool (OCP-equivalent for agriculture) in selected ranching areas containing priority grasslands (whether inside or outside the ALR) that are currently being overwhelmed by settlement, fragmentation and other development pressures.	GCC and specific local governments	\$xxx	Year 3 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Agriculture Area Plan(s) that incorporate(s) protection of priority grasslands against fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>

**Objective 2.2:** Increase local government awareness about grassland values and the opportunities to mitigate their fragmentation and development.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Coordinating Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>
2.2.1 Offer workshops at UBCM on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ecological, socio-economic and cultural role of grasslands;</li> <li>• sources of information for planning purposes, including where to access and how to use; and,</li> <li>• range of planning/policy tools available to address grassland fragmentation and development</li> </ul>	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of a minimum of 2 grassland fragmentation/development workshops at UBCM.</li> </ul>

issues.

2.2.2	Distribute and present to Municipal Councils and Regional District Boards components of the grassland planning guide as they become available.	GCC	\$xxx	Dependent on availability of 2.1 components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribution and presentation of grassland planning guide components to local governments.</li> </ul>
2.2.3	Conduct regular surveys to monitor awareness and utilization of grassland planning guide components and solicit suggestions for improvement.		\$xxx	Year 3 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed survey of awareness and utilization of grassland planning guide.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 3:** Integrate grassland fragmentation and development issues into Provincial and Federal Government planning and/or policy.

**Objective 3.1:** Develop and promote the use of grasslands-specific best management practice components to assist decision-makers, property owners and users in mitigating fragmentation and development.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome	
3.1.1	Establish a working group comprising representatives from target user groups to provide advice and direction on grassland-specific BMPs related to fragmentation and development.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a BMP working group.</li> </ul>
3.1.2	Review all BC BMPs recently completed or currently underway to determine opportunity to add, amend, and/or integrate grasslands-specific practices to mitigate fragmentation and development.	BMP working group	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition, amendment and integration of grasslands-specific practices to BMPs in BC.</li> </ul>
3.1.3	Prepare BMP summary guidelines (1-2 pages) for specific user groups (e.g. government agencies, First Nations, developers, ranchers, recreationists, etc.).	BMP working group	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 5 BMP summary guidelines for specified user groups.</li> </ul>

3.1.4	Promote utilization of grasslands-specific BMP components through appropriate media and presentation venues (e.g., press releases and media packages, selected newsletters and trade journals, UBCM, agriculture commodity associations, conservation/ stewardship workshops, non-government organization AGMs).	GCC	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 5 personal presentations to target user groups and a minimum of 10 media/newsletter insertions of BMP summary guidelines.</li> </ul>
3.1.5	Conduct regular surveys amongst target stakeholder groups to monitor awareness and utilization of grassland BMPs.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 3 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed survey of awareness and utilization of grassland BMPs among target groups.</li> </ul>
3.1.6	Revise and update BMP summary guidelines as appropriate.	GCC and working group?	\$xxx	Year 3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated BMP summary guidelines.</li> </ul>

**Objective 3.2:** Utilize existing policy/planning tools to address specific Provincial Government agency issues related to grassland fragmentation and development.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome	
3.2.1	Prepare a summary backgrounder/policy paper (3-5 pages) on grassland values/principles and issues/solutions as a basis upon which to begin discussions with key provincial agencies/ministries.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed grassland backgrounder/policy paper.</li> </ul>
3.2.2	Pursue MOUs and/or protocols to address grassland fragmentation and development issues from both the biodiversity conservation and the agriculture/range perspective; target appropriate agency/ministry combinations.	GCC and participating provincial agencies.	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of 2 or more MOUs and/or protocol agreements among provincial agencies.</li> </ul>

3.2.3	Negotiate with the appropriate ministry to:	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised provincial consultation policy involving allocation or disposition of grasslands (based on interim knowledge prior to completion of Action 1.1.3).</li> </ul>
				Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of level of implementation of grassland management directions in strategic land use plans.</li> </ul>
				Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feasibility assessment of establishing grassland objectives under the <i>Land Act</i>.</li> </ul>
				Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval-in-principle to proceed with development of a provincial grasslands policy.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase public, stakeholder and GCC consultation prior to allocation or disposition of Crown grasslands;</li> <li>implement grassland management directions where they have been identified in LRMPs and specifically address grassland fragmentation and development in subsequent SRMPs, including the coordination of Crown land/private land planning processes to maintain grassland contiguity;</li> <li>assess feasibility of establishing objectives under the Land Act to avoid disposition/development of priority grasslands; and,</li> <li>achieve approval-in-principle to work towards a coordinated provincial grasslands conservation policy.</li> </ul>				

**Objective 3.3:** Increase the profile of grassland ecosystems and prepare for opportunities to influence federal/provincial policies/actions focused on Species at Risk.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
3.3.1 Identify priority grasslands under federal jurisdiction and those containing federally-managed species at risk.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map of priority grasslands under direct federal influence (based on interim knowledge prior to completion of Action 1.1.3).</li> </ul>
3.3.2 Enhance representation on behalf of grasslands in all federal/provincial species at risk policy consultations in BC with potential to impact grassland fragmentation and development.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presence of a representative of grassland interests on all relevant BC federal/provincial working committees and/or stakeholder lists related to species at risk.</li> </ul>

3.3.3	Prepare a summary document that demonstrates how addressing grassland fragmentation and development issues meets specific Recovery Planning objectives and requirements for species at risk. (See Action 5.2.1)	GCC		Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribution of summary document to relevant federal/provincial agencies and Recovery Teams.</li> </ul>
3.3.4	Pursue inclusion of grassland ecosystems-specific statements within Provincial Biodiversity Strategy/Federal Species at Risk documents.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirmation of adequate grassland ecosystems-specific statements within Biodiversity Strategy/Species at Risk documents.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 4:** Pursue partnerships to increase stewardship and conservation of priority grasslands.

**Objective 4.1:** Partner with the ALC and local government to build upon their long established legal and administrative relationship with respect to lands within the ALR.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome	
4.1.1	Develop an information package (3-5 pages) for presentation to the ALC on grassland values/principles and fragmentation and development issues/solutions as the basis upon which to pursue a closer working partnership.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassland information package discussed with the ALC.</li> </ul>
4.1.2	Derive ALC/GCC/local government shared objectives to achieve mutual benefits of ranching viability, grassland conservation and urban containment.	GCC/ALC/local government representative	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statement of objectives that address ranching viability, grassland conservation and urban containment.</li> </ul>

4.1.3 Pursue MOUs or protocols with ALC and local governments pertaining to consolidation of individual legal parcels within priority grassland areas as a condition of ALC subdivision, non-farm use or ALR exclusion approvals and of local government rezoning and development approvals.	GCC/ALC/local governments	\$xxx	Year 1  Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of MOU/protocol between ALC and GCC.</li> <li>Adoption of a minimum of 2 MOUs/protocols between ALC, GCC and specific local governments.</li> </ul>
4.1.4 Work with the ALC to utilize its mandate and flexibility to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development through its own actions and to advocate with local government and other provincial ministries on behalf of grasslands with livestock grazing values.	GCC/ALC	\$xxx	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fewer ALC application approvals for subdivision, non-farm use or ALR exclusions involving grasslands.</li> <li>Livestock grazing values of grasslands highlighted in relevant ALC documents directed to local governments and other provincial agencies.</li> </ul>

**Objective 4.2:** Work within existing government/First Nations/NGO partnership programs to achieve a more focused partnership approach to the stewardship and conservation of priority BC grasslands

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Coordinating Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>
4.2.1 Engage current/potential partners, including agencies from all levels of government, First Nations, conservation and other non-government organizations and stakeholder interests, to discuss key grassland fragmentation and development issues and opportunities for more effective cooperative and coordinated action to address the issues.	GCC and partners	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-stakeholder workshop to evolve agreed upon list of mechanisms and opportunities available within current partnership structures that could be utilized to mitigate grassland fragmentation and development.</li> <li>Partnership decision on initial delivery model (i.e. as part of regular partnership meeting agendas or establishment of an ad-hoc grasslands partnership working group?).</li> </ul>

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4.2.2	Set principles and objectives for a more integrated partnership approach to mitigating grassland fragmentation and development.	GCC and partners	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of agreed upon principles and mutual objectives (based on interim knowledge pending completion of Action 1.1.3).</li> </ul>
4.2.3	<p>Pursue tangible projects that mitigate grassland fragmentation and development through joint venturing (sharing of knowledge, experience, technical and financial resources), utilizing securement tools collectively available, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stewardship agreements;</li> <li>• Conservation Covenants (including compliance monitoring);</li> <li>• land lease arrangements;</li> <li>• multiple titles consolidation</li> <li>• land swaps (Crown/private, grassland/non-grassland);</li> <li>• acquisition (with upfront financial resources committed to ongoing land management); and,</li> <li>• purchase of development rights (perhaps in exchange for consolidation of separate legal parcels).</li> </ul>	GCC and partners	\$xxx	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securement, using a combination of tools, of a minimum of 5 projects that specifically identify grassland fragmentation and development mitigation as one of the stated objectives/rationales for the securement project.</li> </ul>
4.2.4	Support the establishment of First Nations' conservation positions/ functions related to grasslands on Reserve lands.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of at least 3 new First Nations' conservation positions/functions..</li> </ul>
4.2.5	Evaluate the adequacy of current partnerships (including capacity) and explore potential alternatives (including, but not limited to, a new partnership organization with its own contract language and financing) to address the stewardship and conservation of BC grasslands.	GCC and partners	\$xxx	Year 3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed evaluation of the ability of current and potential new partnership structures to effectively address grassland fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priority 5:** Promote development and/or utilization of economic and conservation incentives to encourage landowners to avoid fragmentation and development of grasslands

**Objective 5.1:** Evaluate and increase awareness of existing economic incentives/ opportunities to secure BC grasslands against fragmentation and development.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
5.1.1 Pending actions under Objective 5.4, assemble BC expertise to carry out preliminary evaluations of the validity and usability of current conservation options in BC that have monetary value (e.g. ecogifting tax credits, Conservation Covenants, Environmental Farm Plan funding, stewardship agreements, property assessment appeals, acquisition/ leasebacks).				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary evaluations of current incentive options completed.</li> </ul>
5.1.2 Assemble and distribute a succinct and pragmatic information brochure for grassland owners that briefly describes current incentive options; include listings of agencies and organizations to contact for more information.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1 Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of grassland conservation financial incentives brochure.</li> <li>Distribution of brochure to grassland owners.</li> </ul>
5.1.3 Assess the feasibility of funding a resource person liaison that can assist owners of grasslands to access current programs and provisions to meet voluntary grassland conservation objectives.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed feasibility assessment of grassland resource liaison position.</li> </ul>

**Objective 5.2:** Ensure grasslands qualify for any existing or future federal/provincial incentive/grant programs.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
5.2.1 As opportunity arises, negotiate monetary components under SARA or other stewardship agreement programs that would apply to Indian Reserve and private grasslands.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 1 negotiated financial agreement with a First Nations and a minimum of 1 stewardship program accessible to private land owners to facilitate grassland conservation.</li> </ul>
5.2.2 Pursue additional funding for public conservation initiatives, outreach and stakeholder programs directly related to grassland fragmentation and development.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Securement of \$500,000 in cash or in-kind funding over 3 years to support mitigation of grassland fragmentation and development.</li> </ul>

**Objective 5.3:** Pursue specific changes to BC Assessment Authority policy related to grasslands managed for conservation purposes.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
5.3.1 Prepare a summary backgrounder paper (3-5 pages) upon which to begin targeted discussions with BC Assessment Authority on specific economic disincentives to the conservation of grasslands.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed background paper.</li> </ul>
5.3.2 Propose a joint (GCC/BCAA) working group of individuals with grasslands (biodiversity and livestock grazing values) and local/provincial government assessment/taxation/policy expertise to formulate practical solutions for grasslands related to farm land classification, assessment penalties and conservation as an accepted land use for assessment/taxation purposes.	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1 Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of GCC/BCAA working group.</li> <li>Recommendations on provincial property assessment policies.</li> </ul>

**Objective 5.4:** Target any future studies related to grassland fragmentation and development on economic incentives in the areas of greatest complexity and opportunity.

Action	Lead/Coordinating Responsibility	Budget	Completion	Measurable Outcome
5.4.1 Assess the feasibility and conditions of a Consolidation Assistance Fund (either as a stand alone or as a component of a larger grassland conservation initiative) to offset survey and other costs (perhaps including loss of market value) incurred by landowners who voluntarily consolidate grasslands currently in separate legal parcels.		\$xxx	Year 2-3+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultant terms of reference set, contract let and study report completed.</li> </ul>
5.4.2 Engage conservation taxation expertise to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review updated BC studies on conservation tools for direct applicability to grassland fragmentation and development issues (see reference list);</li> <li>identify specific sections of provincial and federal taxation legislation/policy that negatively impact landowner options for grassland conservation;</li> <li>draw the linkages between taxation incentives/disincentives and other policy/planning programs that impact grassland fragmentation and development; and,</li> <li>evolve and assess a range of specific options for legislative/policy change (including revenue-neutral tax shifting) and prepare a list of priority incentives to pursue with provincial/federal agencies.</li> </ul>	GCC	\$xxx	Year 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultant terms of reference set, contract let, assessment completed and recommendations submitted on proposed changes to taxation policy.</li> </ul>

<p>5.4.3 As methodology is completed enabling assessment of the full costs of grassland fragmentation and development (see Action 1.2.6), engage expertise to evolve specific proposals that would reduce public costs through the removal of subsidies (disincentives to grassland conservation) and encourage grassland stewardship (economic incentives to avoid grassland fragmentation and development).</p>	GCC	\$xxx	Dependent on Action 1.2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultant terms of reference set, contract let, study completed and recommendations submitted.</li> </ul>
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**Strategic Priority 6:** Increase public awareness about grassland fragmentation and development

**Objective 6.1:** Develop and implement an education/awareness strategy specifically on grassland fragmentation and development as a component of the Education and Outreach Program in the GCC Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead/Coordinating Responsibility</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>
<p>6.1.1 Develop and distribute a series of targeted public information pamphlets (e.g. targeted to youth, recreationists, developers) that describe the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• range of grassland values and potential threats from fragmentation and development (see also Action 2.1.1);</li> <li>• location of grassland areas (see also Action 1.1.3);</li> <li>• tools that are available to assist in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development (see also Actions, 3.1.3 and 4.1.3); and,</li> <li>• role for citizens (targeted public group) in grassland conservation and stewardship.</li> </ul>	GCC	\$xxx	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of targeted grassland information pamphlets.</li> <li>• Distribution of pamphlets to target audiences.</li> </ul>

<p>6.1.2 Develop a specific fragmentation and development education strategy as part of the broader GCC education and awareness program utilizing a wide range of venues that include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentations and workshops;</li> <li>• print media, including publications, trade journals and newsletters;</li> <li>• television and radio, including BC Broadcasters public advertising program;</li> <li>• interpretive sites and displays, including Royal BC Museum living landscape display;</li> <li>• GCC website;</li> <li>• teaching modules for schools; and,</li> <li>• awareness raising report cards on grassland loss/degradation (see also Action 1.3.3).</li> </ul>	GCC	\$xxx	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 2 and ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education strategy developed.</li> <li>• Implementation of education strategy.</li> </ul>
<p>6.1.3 Monitor results and amend education strategy on a regular basis.</p>	GCC	\$xxx	<p>Year 3 and ongoing</p> <p>Year 3+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness review of education strategy.</li> <li>• Recommended improvements to education strategy.</li> </ul>

## 5.5 *Evaluation and Monitoring*

### 5.5.1 Implementation Monitoring

Implementation monitoring is a periodic assessment to determine the extent to which action items have been carried out in accordance with the direction in the implementation action plan. Implementation monitoring answers the question: “Did we do what the Plan said we should do?”

An evaluation of implementation progress should be completed each year. The process should include an assessment of all actions with a completion or milestone target for that year in order to determine whether or not the measurable outcome for each action was achieved. Where outcomes have not been met, further analysis will be required to provide explanations and recommend remedial measures.

### 5.5.2 Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring is a periodic measurement to determine the degree to which desired results in the Strategic Plan have been achieved (i.e. strategic priorities and objectives). Effectiveness monitoring answers the question: “How effective has the Plan been in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development in British Columbia?”

Objective 1.3 provides direction on developing procedures and guidelines for monitoring overall effectiveness of the Strategic Plan through the use of indicators, such as hectares of grassland lost or number of hectares with conservation measures in place.

When developing effectiveness monitoring procedures, it is important to select indicators that are meaningful and relevant and that can be measured in a consistent, timely and efficient manner. It will also be important to establish baseline measures as a basis for assessing performance over time.

### 5.5.3 Reporting

Reporting procedures need to be developed in order to communicate the results of implementation and effectiveness monitoring assessments. A determination of the target audience and appropriate reporting format for each type of assessment will be required.

In the case of implementation reporting, the audience will likely be GCC (and its partners) who are directly responsible for overseeing and carrying out the implementation action plan. An implementation report should summarize the

results of the assessment and include recommendations for improvement as needed.

In the case of effectiveness reporting, the audience will likely be broader and therefore will require a more informal reporting format, such as an annual 'report card' as described in Action 1.3.2. The purpose of an effectiveness report is both to communicate performance in mitigating grassland fragmentation and development and to inspire public support for bringing about necessary changes for improvement.

A review of monitoring reports by the GCC Board should be undertaken to determine remedial steps that need to be taken to improve progress/results in areas where targets have not been met.