

forage VIEWS



January 2018



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IMPORTANT DATES

- Feb 1:** Ladies Ranching Retreat
Feb 6: AMR Lunch & Learn-Peers
Feb 10: Curt Pate Stockmanship
March 15: AGM
March 30: Deadline for 2018
Membership Renewals

Walking with the bison

The sun slowly emerges from under the horizon line along the Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC's) Old Man on His Back Prairie and Heritage Conservation Area (OMB) in southwestern Saskatchewan. There is a gentle, but cold, breeze rolling in, creating a thin fog over the tall grasses cascading across the prairie. In the distance, a small herd of plains bison are consuming a hearty breakfast, their quiet grazing adding to the picture-perfect scene.

Plains bison, once numbering in the millions are now considered threatened in Canada. Commercial herds are slowly increasing across the

prairies, but not many herds are managed like the herd at OMB, where less than 100 bison have 6,000 acres (2,428 hectares) to graze and very little contact with humans.

New research on this iconic landscape will help shed light on the grazing patterns of bison versus cattle — hopefully leading to conservation practices that can help protect species at risk that evolved with thousands of years of bison grazing. The project is being led by former NCC conservationist Dale Gross and his supervising professor, Eric Lamb, of the University of Saskatchewan.



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Walking with the bison

Grazing is an important part of grasslands landscapes. The ecosystem evolved to have bison run on it, eat the grass and fertilize it with their manure. NCC uses cattle grazing on our properties to emulate natural processes to conserve biodiversity.

Since settlement, bison have been replaced by cattle on the landscape. Gross's team wants to quantify the differences between the two species to provide ranchers and conservation groups with information to better manage these grazers for economic and ecological outcomes.

Luckily, NCC has the perfect environment for the research. Old Man on His Back is a more than 13,000-acre (5,261-hectare) ranch with pastures reserved for bison and cattle grazing. There are currently 11 patrons that graze cattle on OMB. The ranch is also home to approximately 100 bison. The high-quality ecosystem and size of the property are ideal for this scale of research.

In order to take a closer look at the two species, NCC staff and partners from the University of Saskatchewan worked with OMB's neighbours and patrons to fit collars onto 17 cattle and nine bison. The collars fitted

on bison during this winter's round up will stay on until next year's round up. During the next year, the collars will record the bison's location every 30 minutes, giving the researchers a map of where the bison spend their time. Likewise, collars fitted onto patrons' cattle this spring, recorded livestock movement during the summer. This three-year project could easily be extended into a long-term study with the potential to answer management questions for the livestock industry as well as conservationists. The hope is that OMB will be a hub for this and other fascinating research projects into the future.

As part of our commitment to science-based conservation, NCC is redeveloping our bison herd management plan. The timing is excellent as NCC will be able to incorporate some of the preliminary findings of the research while working with other bison experts to improve the management of these majestic animals and the prairie they call home.

Article originally published on Nature Conservancy of Canada's website <http://www.natureconservancy.ca/>

(Home > Where We Work > Saskatchewan > Stories From the Field)

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WATCH FOR THE CATALOG ONLINE AT www.globalauctionguide.com

Upcoming Events

FEB 2: LADIES RANCHING RETREAT

- 📍 Parkland Village Community Centre, Spruce Grove
- 🕒 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
- 💰 Cost: \$85 (3 meals & wine included)
- 📅 RSVP by January 25, 2018
(www.westcentralforage.com/events)

Featuring: Leona Dargis as the keynote speaker, along with a number of sessions on topics from calving, livestock nutrition, health & wellness for us, cost of production, cost of raising replacements and more! A tradeshow and wine tasting will also be a part of the day.

FEB 6: LUNCH & LEARN: ANTIMICROBIALS & UPCOMING CHANGES

- 📍 Peers Multiplex
- 🕒 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
- 💰 Cost: FREE (lunch provided)
- 📅 RSVP by January 30, 2018
(780.727.4447)

There are changes coming in to effect later this year that will affect the way in which producers are able to access and administer antibiotics for all livestock. This information session will help answer some of the questions you may have

FEB 10: CURT PATE STOCKMANSHIP

- 📍 Thorsby Haymaker Centre
- 🕒 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
- 💰 Cost: \$20
- 📅 RSVP by January 30, 2018
(www.westcentralforage.com/events)

Featuring: Live cattle handling demonstrations and classroom instruction with Curt Pate and a Verified Beef Production Plus presentation.

For more information or to register for any of our upcoming events, and to keep up to date on what we have upcoming visit our Facebook page or www.westcentralforage.com/events

Vendors Needed LADIES RANCHING RETREAT TRADE SHOW

*Interested in showcasing your talents, crafts, business, etc. to a large group of ladies in Agriculture?
We're looking for you!*

February 2, 2018

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM (Approximately)

Parkland Village Community Centre, Spruce Grove

Deadline: January 26, 2018

Cost: \$115 (includes 1 registration & a table)

For more information please contact WCFA at 780.727.4447



May the forage be with you

DUC & CPS offer financial break for grassland conversions



On land not so far away, Alberta cattlemen will see their herds go to the green side thanks to a forage program with cash back incentives offered by Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and Crop Production Services (CPS).

Available to all Alberta ranchers and landowners, the DUC/CPS forage program provides cash-back incentives on all Proven® Seed forage seed purchases paid at full-retail price when producers convert cultivated land to hay or pastureland.

With the growing need for high quality pastureland, it's expected that this year's

program will be an attractive option for producers, says Craig Bishop, DUC's regional forage lead, especially in light of economic and climatic conditions.

"When landowners want to increase the size of their herd, it spurs a demand for more forage," says Bishop. "Last year's weather conditions also resulted in poor hay crops and further motivated producers to convert more land to forage. In 2017 in Alberta, 13,000 of cultivated fields were seeded to grass under this program."

Bishop adds that reducing input costs, especially at a time when expenses are

rising more quickly than revenues, makes a real difference to the bottom line for farmers. "Offering incentives to producers to convert cultivated acres to forage is an extremely cost-effective means for increasing grassland and it makes good agronomic sense. Essentially, the program covers approximately 40–50 per cent of a producer's seed investment."

In addition to helping cattle producers, more forage acres benefits waterfowl. Bishop explains that research shows that the level of waterfowl nesting is significantly higher in areas of perennial cover than in cultivated fields. It also helps with other conservation measures such as wetland restoration.

"The link between wetlands, associated grasslands and waterfowl productivity is well understood," says Bishop, "and initiatives like our forage program ensures that Alberta farmers also receive benefits from increasing their forage base."

While the DUC/CPS forage program is best suited for producers in the parkland and prairie regions, anyone who wants to seed forage can take advantage of the program and should contact Craig Bishop at 1-403-607-5805 or c_bishop@ducks.ca, or their local CPS retailer.

Meet Our Event Speakers!

We would like you to meet the wonderful speakers we have for some of our upcoming events! If you haven't RSVP'd for these events make sure you do so soon, you don't want to miss this great line-up!

LADIES RANCHING RETREAT SPEAKERS (FEB 2, 2018)

LÉONA DARGIS--KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Léona is the eldest of five daughters raised on their family farm in northeastern Alberta near St. Paul. At one point Dargis Seed & Feed Ltd. owned and fed 4,000 head of cattle all while managing over 7,000 acres of land, both in pasture and crop. Together they learned the values of hard work, perseverance and gratitude from their parents the late Jean & Joanne Dargis. Léona graduated from Olds College with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Agribusiness and in 2011 was awarded a Canadian Nuffield Scholarship. This enabled her to study succession planning around the world. As a new resident of the Yukon Territory, Léona embarks on a new farming adventure. She strives to breakdown the barriers within Canada's agricultural industry and is a proud Advocate. She will share her global stories that exemplify how to take unimaginable change, adapt to it and succeed.

KATHY LARSON--COST OF PRODUCTION & COST OF RAISING REPLACEMENTS

Kathy Larson joined Western Beef as their Research Economist in April 2010. She has a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from the University

of Saskatchewan. Her research is focused on getting producers to understand the value in measuring costs and production performance to increase their profit potential. Her research and extension interests include: tools and training on cost of production, the management and marketing practices of cow-calf producers, and management practice adoption and exploitation. She also provides economic analysis and training to support the forage and cow-calf research conducted by Dr. Bart Lardner and his graduate students. Originally from a purebred cattle and grain farm near Francis in southeastern Saskatchewan, she now resides with her husband and children at Prince Albert where she works from a home office.

ALY PRICE & MONTANA LAYE, W4W-- NUTRITION & WELLNESS FOR US



Aly Price and Montana Laye, co-founders of W4W--West of the Fourth Wildflowers both come from agricultural backgrounds and currently reside on ranches in rural East Central Alberta. Despite the trials and tribulations that come with this way of life, they have always loved and appreciated it. Their W4W journey started because of their rural location, country based lifestyles, similar ideas and values and of course their desire to help and influence other women!

They co-founded West of the fourth Wildflowers with the intent of starting a Women's Empowerment movement and quickly realized that to be your truest and most empowered self, we must take a Whole-Body Wellness Approach; mind, body, spirit

Together these two ladies bring a lot to the table. Aly with a certificate in Holistic Nutrition and Wellness, as well as actively working as a Licensed Practical Nurse and Montana as a certified Life Coach with a Diploma in Human Services. They know that in society today, especially in rural communities, it is hard to find likeminded people and to make genuine connections. That is why they created a positive and encouraging online community where women can feel supported and inspired in personal growth, self-discovery and improved wellness. Aly and Montana love trying alternative therapies and being informed on non-mainstream ideas so much that they make these services available in rural Alberta for everyone to enjoy.

Other speakers participating in our Ladies Ranching Retreat include: Dr. Clair Ainsworth with the Mayerthorpe Veterinary Clinic and Courtney O'Keefe with Blue Rock Animal Nutrition Ltd. Birds and Bees Winery will also be present with information on their selection of wines.

CURT PATE STOCKMANSHIP SPEAKERS (FEB 10, 2018)

CURT PATE -LIVE DEMONSTRATION

For more than a decade, Curt Pate has been conducting demonstrations and clinics on stockmanship, colt starting, horsemanship and safety. His abilities conducting both horsemanship and stockmanship demonstrations along with his ability as an effective communicator have made him a sought after clinician both on the national and international scene.

His personal experience incorporating effective stockmanship principles supports a "for



profit" mindset and focuses on highlighting the increased economic benefits of handling stock correctly. In addition, Curt recognizes the growing public scrutiny surrounding livestock production and the impact that improved livestock handling practices create for the sustainability of the cattle industry.

Curt brings great value to the livestock industry. He spends his time conducting stockmanship demonstrations and trainings and also manages a small grazing operation in western South Dakota. With his ability to think outside the box, his ability to challenge others to do the same, and a willingness to share his skills, Curt has set himself apart in conducting stockmanship clinics. His lifelong experience in ranching adds credibility and enables him to communicate his methods effectively to cattle ranchers throughout the country. In addition, Curt continues to seek out new learning opportunities to increase and hone his knowledge and skills and enjoys sharing this knowledge with others.

Melissa Downing will also be speaking on Verified Beef Production at this clinic.

For more information or to register for on any of these events visit our Facebook page or www.westcentralforage.com/events.

Alberta EFP is instituting a renewal period

LISA NADEAU JANUARY 2, 2018

Effective April 1, 2018, producers will need to have an EFP completion letter dated within the last 10 years to be considered current and eligible for cost-share funding with the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change programs of the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP). That means, for example, if you apply in September 1, 2018, your EFP will need to have been approved on or after September 1, 2008 to be considered for current funding.

I'm sure the first question you'll ask after reading the title is "Why?". There has been a movement to harmonize EFPs nationally to make EFPs more useful to sustainable sourcing programs, and Alberta is the only province without a renewal period; therefore, we are doing it to make EFPs useful to sustainable sourcing programs across Canada.

I'm sure the next question is "How often?". The Alberta EFP program has a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (an industry advisory group) that set the renewal period at 10 years. We are waiting to see if the renewal period becomes part of the harmonized national standard. If it does, we anticipate we will need to move the renewal period to 5 years or less in the future.

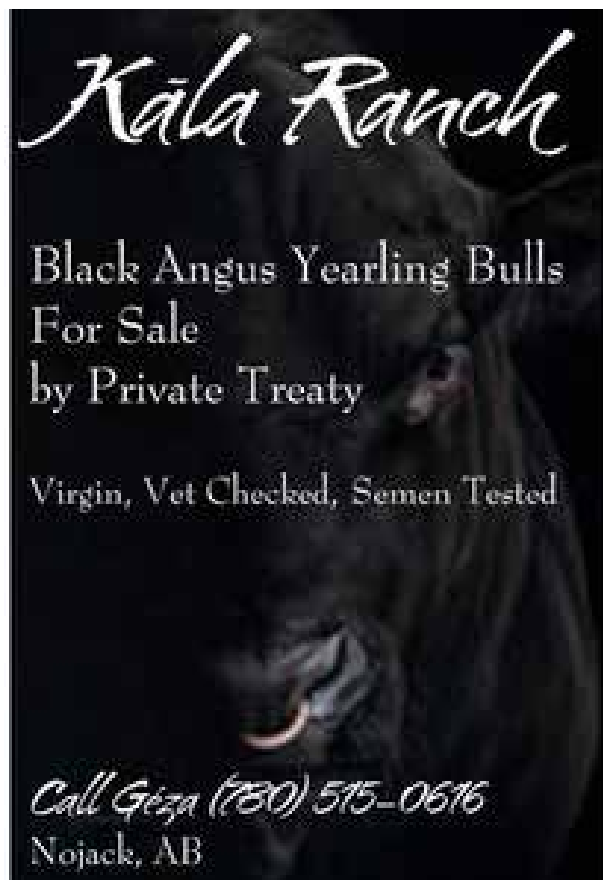
What does this mean for producers?

- If you want to apply for Growing Forward/ CAP grants, you will need a current EFP
- If a sustainable sourcing program requires it (e.g. the potato sustainability initiative), you will need a current EFP
- If your completion letter is older than 10 years, you will need to do a new workbook and action plan.
- If you cannot find your completion letter, you will need to start and complete a new EFP to be considered current, regardless of the completion date; unless your EFP is online.
- Technicians cannot give out completion letters without doing a full review of a new EFP (both workbook and action plan).

Producers should use the online workbook! ~ Why?

- The online workbook does many of the calculations for you and carries data forward to other parts of the online workbook where needed
- Future renewals will be easier. The data are stored online on a secure virtual private server accessible only to ARECA staff entrusted to deliver the EFP Program.
- When the next version change comes, your data will be migrated to the newest version, making updates easier and simpler.
- If available, you should use your original binder as a reference for your EFP renewal. Producers who have done this have told us putting the paper version online takes a few hours

WCFA is happy to help you with your EFP. For more information or to start your EFP please contact Jessica at 780.727.4424 or conservationag@westcentralforage.com



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