2015-2016 Carnivores and Communities Program

As Per Grant Agreement 16GROSS02
between
Alberta Environment & Parks (AEP)
and
Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association (WBRA)

Final Progress Report

June 2016

Prepared by Nora Manners & Jeff Bectell, WBRA
Introduction

In June 2015 the Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association (WBRA) received a grant of $100000 from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to support the work of WBR’s Carnivores and Communities Program (CACP), including its Carnivore Working Group (CWG). The CWG is a community-based group from the municipalities of Ranchland, Willow Creek, Pincher Creek, and Cardston. These communities have been working with AEP and others since 2008 to reduce human-carnivore conflict. The CACP is a multi-faceted program and targets reducing attractants for large carnivores, reducing the economic impact on landowners coexisting with large carnivores, and enhancing the safety of all residents. Please visit the WBRA website at http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/projects/carnivores-communities/ for further background information about the CACP and the CWG.

This document is the final report for the 2015-2016 program year and presents progress made between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016. It highlights major accomplishments, details funds spent from the AEP grant agreement and grants leveraged elsewhere, and provides a discussion of program highlights and future direction for the Carnivores and Communities Program. Reporting is structured based on the five goals and related key activities identified in the workplan. Note that this workplan was updated by the CWG on November 26, 2015, and so there are a few minor changes from the goals and activities presented in the interim report (October 2015); statements where changes have been made are indicated with an asterisk symbol.

Activities and Accomplishments

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<tr>
<th>GOAL#1: To maintain an effective carnivore working group with strong collaborative partnerships.*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strategies identified in the MOU (2011):</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ establish a community-based, landowner driven, working group including local representatives of SRD-FWD, and other agencies/ NGO / stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ actively engage wildlife management and other relevant agencies and partners to provide feedback/input on large carnivore management and local program needs</td>
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<td>Key Activities</td>
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<td>&gt;maintain and strengthen the CWG with regular communication via email and meetings as required (at least 3 per year)</td>
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<td>&gt;E-mail and phone communication is ongoing.</td>
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<td>&gt;The CWG continues to be supported on a part-time basis by Coordinator Jeff Bectell, Area Coordinator Tony Bruder, WBRA Executive Director Nora Manners, WBRA Communication Coordinator Jen Jenkins, and MD of Ranchland employee Susan Christianson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;review the CWG membership and Terms of Reference annually and modify if required*</td>
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<td>&gt;actively engage other agencies / NGOs / stakeholders as appropriate to meet program needs</td>
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<td>&gt;WBRA worked with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y), Bow Valley Wildsmart, Mount Royal University, Southern Alberta Land Trust (SALTS), and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) to publicize/carryout the showing of Sharing The Range in Calgary and Canmore.</td>
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Bear Safety workshops continue to be a cooperative effort with WBRA, AEP, NCC, and Bear Conflict Solutions.

CACP Coordinator Jeff Bectell was invited to attend a meeting on November 14, 2015 sponsored by CPAWS and attended by an AEP representative and NGOs including Y2Y and Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) to discuss grizzly bear recovery, and exploring ways to work constructively on shared goals.

On October 2, 2015, WBRA, along with NCC and SALTS, received the Ted Smith Award for collaborative conservation from Y2Y in recognition of the work we have been doing to reduce conflicts between people and large carnivores in southwestern Alberta. See [http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/conservationaward/](http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/conservationaward/) for details.

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<th>GOAL#2: To support the completion of landowner-driven projects &amp; other agricultural practice change efforts that reduce human carnivore conflicts.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies identified by the MOU (2011):</strong></td>
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<td>➢ support existing landowner-driven projects and efforts that reduce human-carnivore conflicts (risk management) with a focus on attractant management and additional agricultural practice change that strives / is known to reduce risk of conflict, etc.</td>
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<td>➢ provide coordination and support to local existing landowner groups (related to local project/program efforts) and generate/establish others to follow suit</td>
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<td>➢ provide financial support to projects</td>
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<td><strong>Key Activities</strong></td>
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<td>&gt;solicit and implement attractant management projects at conflict sites</td>
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<td>&gt;Extra bear-proof doors (grain bin and man-doors) were also purchased to have on hand for quick response to grain bin and stored feed issues.</td>
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<td>&gt;support a bear-proof garbage bin program as part of attractant management *</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;continue to support the deadstock pickup program in high carnivore conflict areas within the municipalities of Ranchland, Willow Creek, Pincher Creek and Cardston</td>
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Creek and Cardston and provided on-farm pickup in all four municipalities

>At least 424 carcasses were collected in 2015 and 87 producers participated in the program. An overall decline in number of animals picked up in 2015 might be partly due to fewer mortalities, but this cannot be confirmed. The number of producers participating in the program has remained relatively constant, with a slight decline seen in Cardston County – probably due to the termination of local pickup and composting.

>The cash cost for the 2015 calendar year was $40269.40 with the municipalities and landowners contributing in kind maintenance and administration over and above. Average cost per head has increased from $53.98 in 2014 to $94.98 in 2015 due to closing of the composting facility and a steep increase in rates charged this year by West Coast Reductions (from 9 cents/lbs. to 14 cents/lbs., and minimum charge rising from $75 to $120)

>bring together involved parties to resume local deadstock pick-up and composting in Cardston County, including development of a transferable model *

>The pilot carcass composting facility in Cardston County has not yet been re-opened, however, efforts continue to eliminate barriers and get the facility up and running again.

>Progress is being made on the possibility of using compost for reclamation at landfill.

>explore the merits of on farm composting of deadstock where appropriate, including public meetings, guidelines and a pilot project *

>The CACP Coordinator has begun to collect information on Best Management Practices for on farm composting. This has included information from area producers, as well as Alberta Rural Development and the Lethbridge Research Station. The CACP Coordinator travelled to Rochester Alberta with presenters from ARD and Lethbridge Research Station on November 24, 2015 to present on this topic.

>identify, promote and support new and existing husbandry and agricultural practice change to reduce carnivore conflicts

>The CWG continues to discuss new alternatives. This year in particular, the use of ‘FoxLights’ and the use of electrification of existing barbed wire fences as a temporary fast response to predation are being explored. The applicability of livestock guardian dogs with cattle continues to be discussed as well.

**GOAL#3: To develop a common knowledge base and effective communication strategies related to large carnivore issues.**

**Strategies identified by the MOU (2011):**
- build on trust and commitment from all parties; collaborate on commonly shared issues, goals, and resources
- encourage strong understanding of issues
- communicate past and current successes at finding solutions (what's worked, what hasn't and what's needed)
- create an environment of sharing and transparency related to large carnivore issues
- generate key messages to allow for better decisions by appropriate decision makers
- facilitate, create, and support workshops, tours, field days and other forums
- provide necessary tools and information for rural and urban communities to make better decisions related to living with large carnivores

**Key Activities**

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016</th>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;continue with distribution of 2008-2012 and 2013-2014 summaries of attractant management projects *</td>
<td>Layout of the Large Carnivore Attractant Management in Southwestern Alberta 2013-2014 report was completed by AEP in-house in March 2016 and 300 copies were printed for distribution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Distribution of the 2013-2014 and 2008-2012 reports is ongoing.</td>
<td>Layout of the Large Carnivore Attractant Management in Southwestern Alberta 2013-2014 report was completed by AEP in-house in March 2016 and 300 copies were printed for distribution.</td>
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The reports can also be found online at [http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/resources/carnivores/](http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/resources/carnivores/).

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<td>&gt; continue to distribute the WBRA Carnivores and Communities Program technical guides *</td>
<td>&gt; Three technical guides were completed 1) Deadstock Removal Program 2) Electric Fencing 3) Securing Your Grain Storage  &gt; The Technical Guides are distributed at community events, provided to landowners by the CACP coordinators, and made available as PDF files on the WBR website at <a href="http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/resources/carnivores/">http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/resources/carnivores/</a>.</td>
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<td>&gt; bring together information on husbandry and agricultural practice changes that have been shown locally and elsewhere to reduce the risk of carnivore conflicts and share with producers</td>
<td>&gt; Information gathered from Montana and Wyoming was shared with producers as part of the CACP public meetings on March 2-3, 2016.</td>
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<td>&gt; host at least one bear safety training workshop annually to raise awareness, increase the safety of ranch families, and encourage the adoption of best practices to reduce conflict with large carnivores *</td>
<td>&gt; Two ½ day bear safety workshops were held with assistance of Jay Honeyman (AEP, Bear Conflict Solutions) and Mike Gibeau (NCC). One in Maycroft on May 27, 2015 (42 adults) and one in Chain Lakes on July 20, 2015 (28 adults, 9 children).  &gt; Supplies were purchased for a third workshop, but the decision was made to delay the workshop until the new year (it was held on June 18, 2016).</td>
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<td>&gt; in cooperation with AEP, update conflict mapping annually, strengthen documentation of attractant management initiatives, and implement a program to monitor carnivore response to attractant management projects (cameras), and identify any required changes (adaptive management)*</td>
<td>&gt; Conflict mapping (AEP/SoIGen data) was completed for 2015 in collaboration with the Black Bear Monitoring Project (Anne Loosen and Troy Malish). The report is posted on the WBR website at <a href="http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015-Carnivore-Occurrence-Summary-7Jun2016.pdf">http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2015-Carnivore-Occurrence-Summary-7Jun2016.pdf</a>  &gt; Eight trail cameras were installed at five locations to monitor conflict sites in 2015. Cameras continue to be a useful tool both for education of landowners and documenting project success. For example, at one location landowner used a camera to monitor a site where he was trying on-farm carcass composting in a manure pile – the camera captured images of a bear digging up a calf carcass, demonstrating the need for deeper burial, and possible electric fencing to the landowner. At another site, a camera showed that a 3D electric fence was effective at excluding both elk and bears  &gt; Continued collaboration with AEP is required to ensure that conflict mapping, project documentation and monitoring of carnivore response is completed in a way that meets the needs of the CACP, the local community, and GOA staff responsible for bear management</td>
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<td>&gt; continue to support the grizzly and wolf monitoring projects through encouraging landowner participation, communicating results, collaborative fundraising, and research grant administration</td>
<td>&gt; The final report for <em>Testing monitoring techniques for wolves in southwest Alberta</em> was received (and submitted by the researchers to AEP) in June 2015.  &gt; Grizzly DNA analysis was completed in June 2015. Andrea Morehouse’s thesis defence was scheduled for April 29, 2016 and several papers arising from the dissertation are under review. (Note, as of June 30, 2016 – Dr. Morehouse successfully defended her thesis and the population paper <em>Grizzly bears without borders: Spatially explicit capture–recapture in southwestern Alberta</em> has been published in the Journal of Wildlife Management <a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jwmg.21104/abstract">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jwmg.21104/abstract</a>)</td>
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WBRA continues to administer Alberta Innovates – Bio Solutions grant supporting these monitoring projects (final report June 2016).

WBR’s movie *Sharing the Range* (highlighting the challenges of living with large carnivores, and how people in the Waterton Biosphere Reserve are meeting those challenges) was launched on May 8, 2015. The movie can be viewed at www.sharingtherange.com. Several in-person showings of the movie have been made (see list of presentations attached) reaching almost 1100 people. Digital files have been provided to a number of other groups in Canada and the United States so that they could show the film on their own. During the period of this report, the *Sharing the Range* website also received 6129 unique visits and there were 4090 views of our YouTube channel.

>More than 25 presentations and tours about the *Carnivores and Communities Program* and *Sharing the Range* were made over the project period (see list of presentations attached) to a variety of audiences. In addition to local venues, other communities have been seeking out information from our program and presentations have been given throughout Alberta and into British Columbia, Montana, and Wyoming. Also, 10 additional presentations were made by Dr. Andrea Morehouse to local, national and international audiences that focussed on the *Grizzly Bear Monitoring Project* but also highlighted the conflict between people and grizzly bears in southwestern Alberta and efforts being made to reduce those conflicts.

The WBR website continues to be a source of information about the CACP. During the period of this project the CACP page received 840 views, the Carnivore Resources page 292, and the Large Carnivore Report article on the news page 442 page views. Our Facebook page and e-newsletter often feature large carnivore related materials; email is still used as a good tool to reach the local and regional audience (almost 400 contacts on the distribution list).

*Goal #4: To encourage development of a long-term strategy for balancing coexistence of large carnivores and humans in Southwestern Alberta that recognizes the need for conflict reduction, predation compensation, and wildlife management.*

**Strategies identified by the MOU (2011):**

- consider/review economic burden landowners currently facing
- determine cost effective program policy or legislative recommendations
- secure additional funding resources (public and private; local and long-term)
- identify workable long-term solutions that balance social and biological interests on both private and
- **public land**
  - develop a long term vision, goals and long-term plan beyond next three years

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<tr>
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| >continue to support implementation of a modified/enhanced predator compensation program | >Enhancements to the predator compensation program continue to be highlighted within the community as a pressing need. The recommendations contained in the WBRA report ([http://watertonbiosphere.com/uploads/biosphere-resources_36_3809318697.pdf](http://watertonbiosphere.com/uploads/biosphere-resources_36_3809318697.pdf)) remain the basis for discussion of these enhancements.  
>Continued support for the implementation of a modified/enhanced predator compensation program is highlighted within the community as a pressing need. The recommendations contained in the WBRA report remain the basis for discussion of these enhancements.  
>Scheduling of meaningful meetings with government to move these recommendations forward has been a challenge. However a meeting was held with Minister Phillips on October 2, 2015, and the compensation program was one of the items discussed. Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) sponsored a ‘Wildlife Forum’ in Edmonton on January 26, 2016. This was a facilitated meeting involving WBRA, ABP, Alberta Conservation Association (ACA), Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA), Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC), and AEP. AEP provided the meeting room. This meeting discussed many issues pertaining to wildlife. The compensation program, in particular was an area of focus.  
>It is hoped that at least some of the WBRA recommendations could be implemented in the near future.
| in partnership with government and other groups and agencies, identify and begin to quantify economic impacts/funding needs beyond those addressed by the predator compensation program, this could include discussions on the merits of ecosystem services models | Limited progress has been made on this activity – additional capacity and partner/funding is required.  
>WBRA has connected with the Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity Network ([https://ecoservicesnetwork.ca](https://ecoservicesnetwork.ca)) and will continue to move forward as capacity allows.
| >continue to build relationships with government departments, NGOs, foundations, and others in an effort to secure ongoing and future support for coexistence of large carnivores and communities; must include program security, staff support, and financial resources | >CACP funding for 2015-2016 was received from AEP, Environment Canada - National Conservation Plan (Habitat Stewardship Program – Prevention Stream funding), Canadian Agricultural Safety Association/Farm Credit Canada; and Y2Y.  
>CACP continues to receive critical in-kind support from landowners, municipalities, AEP, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officers, Canadian Food & Inspection Agency, and others  
>Securing additional project funds is ongoing. Multi-year funding would allow for program security, long-term planning, staff retention, and effective leveraging of other funds.
| >provide a conduit for information and a voice for the community in development and implementation of the grizzly bear recovery plan | >As of March 31, 2016, the end of the project year, we were still awaiting release of *Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan* for public comment. It was subsequently released on June 1, 2016. As of the writing of this report, the recovery plan has been discussed by the CWG and with the public at the WBRA annual general meeting held on June 28, 2016.
| >complete a cost-benefit analysis of deadstock program strategies and work to decrease costs of program delivery while maintaining effectiveness | >Deadstock reports continue to be assembled for each calendar year. These reports are used to evaluate the level of producer participation year to year, cost projections for upcoming year, and ways to improve effectiveness and affordability of the deadstock removal program. A full cost benefit analysis continues to be a goal, but capacity has not yet been found to complete this goal. |
## GOAL#5: To ensure effective project management and evaluation

### Strategies identified by the MOU (2011):
- develop a 3-year strategic and operations plan for a community-based carnivore program
- outline timelines related to deliverables in operations plan
- work with partners and working group members to assess and evaluate the progress and overall success of program efforts annually and over the 3 year period

### Key Activities

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<td>update workplan annually with CWG</td>
<td>A review of the workplan was completed at the November 26, 2015 CWG meeting and the updated wording for goals and key activities is reflected in this report; statements where changes have been made are indicated with an asterisk symbol. A comparative document highlighting the changes can be provided upon request.</td>
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<tr>
<td>complete progress reports / final reporting for funders and partners as required*</td>
<td>Interim and final reports were submitted to Environment Canada, Alberta Innovates, Y2Y, Canadian Ag Safety Association and AEP as required.</td>
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<td>work with AEP to develop a framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the carnivore conflict reduction initiatives</td>
<td>Evaluation of the program's effectiveness has been largely anecdotal to this point. As measured by producer participation and feedback, the program is successful and effective. Long term, area wide decrease in conflict has not yet been demonstrated, however, 2015 was the first year where reported grizzly bear conflict was lower than the previous year. Occurrence report summaries should continue to be generated annually to see if this is a trend. These metrics together with producer feedback (including through the production of 'Large Carnivore Attractant Management Projects Reports) will continue to be used to monitor effectiveness of conflict reduction initiatives, keeping in mind that measuring effectiveness may be challenging in an era of increasing grizzly bear population and distribution. WBRA is willing to work with AEP to develop a more rigorous evaluation framework if this is desired.</td>
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<td>continue to seek resources to fully fund ongoing program*</td>
<td>Fund development and collaboration with governments and other organizations is ongoing.</td>
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Financial Update

A statement of revenue and expenses for the WBRA Carnivores and Communities Program from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 is presented in Table 1. All funds from the initial AEP grant plus interest earned and other leveraged funding is included. Over the 12 months covered by this project, the entire amount of the funds granted under the agreement ($100000) plus interest earned ($75.53) was spent for a total of $100075.53. A total of $108763.33 from other sources was also spent on the Carnivores and Communities Program bringing the total annual program to $208838.86 (not including an additional $91153.56 spent for grizzly and wolf monitoring research, and $11000 on black bear monitoring research). This AEP grant, plus interest earned, therefore provided 48% of the program funding. The highest program costs (again, not including grizzly, black bear and wolf monitoring research) are for contract staff (34%), the deadstock pickup program (34%), and materials for attractant management projects, bear bins, and bear safety workshops (16%).

It should be noted that these numbers do not represent the full extent of resources directed towards human-carnivore conflict reduction initiatives in southwestern Alberta during the project period. In-kind resources provided by landowners, AEP, municipalities, and others to the initiatives completed during this project were not fully tracked, but were significant.
Table 1. Revenue and expenses for the WBRA Carnivores and Communities Program from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.
2015-2016 Program Highlights & Discussion

With support provided by this grant, Waterton Biosphere Reserve’s (WBR) Carnivores and Communities Program made significant progress in 2015-2016, particularly in the areas of communication and outreach, reduction of large carnivore attractants, and improvement of safety for ranch families. Highlights are provided below.

Maintained and Expanded Communication and Outreach

WBR’s Carnivore Working Group (CWG) continues to function as an effective working group, maintaining connections with and receiving input from landowners, municipalities, and government staff. Through numerous presentations and tours, WBR has engaged a number of agencies, groups, and agricultural producers from other areas of Alberta, British Columbia, Montana and Wyoming. As it has become apparent that the bears in southwestern Alberta are part of a much larger cross border population, communication between neighboring landowners in Alberta and Montana will become increasingly important to allow communities to share information and ideas.

The WBR website continues to be a source of program information and Facebook and email have proven to be useful tools for sharing information and spreading awareness. WBR continues to distribute two reports presenting producer stories about large carnivore attractant management projects completed in southwestern Alberta from 2008-2014. Distribution of three technical guides on Deadstock Removal Program, Electric Fencing, and Securing Your Grain Storage also continues.

A short documentary film, Sharing the Range was completed to tell the “story about the challenges of living with large carnivores, and how people in the Waterton Biosphere Reserve are meeting those challenges”. The film was released on May 8, 2015 (www.sharingtherange.com) and has been screened and distributed as described under Goal #3 above. The film has been well received by a number of different audiences and has opened the door for more respectful and productive communication between ranchers and other supporters of large carnivore conservation.

WBR’s Carnivores and Communities Program hosted two community meetings on March 2 and 3, 2016. The meetings provided good opportunities to update the community on large carnivore incidents and activities during the year, as well as to receive feedback on community perceptions of the efforts of the Carnivores and Communities Program. The attendance of numerous AEP staff was appreciated by the community and WBRA. While the community continues to be engaged, there is a growing sense of frustration among many people that some initiatives seem to be stuck ‘in process’. In particular, there is frustration with the delay in releasing the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, and instituting changes in bear management, as well as continued frustration with some aspects of the current Livestock Predator Compensation Program (see discussion below).

Reduction of Large Carnivore Attractants

The WBR Deadstock Removal Program continued to serve four southwestern municipalities with approximately 424 carcasses removed from the landscape during the 2015 calendar year, bringing the total since the program began in May 2009 to over 3100 carcasses. The 2015 total is fewer than in 2014, and variability year to year is expected depending on weather at calving and other factors. Average cost per head has increased from $53.98 in 2014 to $94.98 in 2015 due to closing of the composting facility and a steep increase in rates charged by West Coast Reductions (from 9 cents/lbs. to 14 cents/lbs., and minimum charge rising from $75 to $120). These increased rates were offset by the decrease in number of carcasses removed in 2015. Annual costs in 2015 of $40,269.40 have the potential to be much higher when more carcasses are removed, potentially rising to more than $70000. West Coast Reductions continues to be contracted to empty dead stock bins and do on-farm pickups.

Cardston County decided to suspend operation of their carcass composting facility at the end of April 2015 due to concerns over regulatory difficulties and perceived costs. The Carnivores and Communities
Program will continue to work towards reopening of the carcass composting facility as it is an important component of a successful deadstock removal program not only because it can provide a more economical solution than a commercial rendering company, but also because it can potentially support a more frequent pickup schedule which is desirable when trying to decrease large carnivore conflict. There has been some progress on reopening the facility, with agreement being reached between the county and WBRA to develop a plan for operational procedures and funding. It is hoped that this plan can be completed and implemented by the end of 2016.

As described in the table above, attractant management projects were completed at eight locations during the 2015-2016 program year, including four electric fences, two modified Sea Cans for grain and feed storage, six bear proof grain bin doors, and two cement floors in grain bins. One of the electric fence projects involved two designs new to the CACP program. These were the electrification of large free standing steel panels and a 3D fence. Both of these were for multispecies conflict reduction, as they were meant to deter both bears and ungulates from accessing stored silage bales. Thirty three bear resistant garbage bins were purchased. Twelve have been distributed with plans to distribute the remainder in 2016-2017. Extra bear-proof doors (grain bin and man-doors) were also purchased to have on hand for quick response to grain bin and stored feed issues. A number of other potential projects are in development. Projects completed up to the end of 2014 are summarized in Large Carnivore Attractant Management Projects in Southwestern Alberta 2008-2012 and 2013-2014.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Conflict mapping for 2015 was completed in cooperation with AEP, Fish and Wildlife (Solicitor General) and the Black Bear Monitoring Program. Occurrence reports and conflict mapping continue to be viewed by WBRA and the community as important ways to evaluate progress and communicate reported conflict levels. We wish to see this reporting continue. The question of who should be responsible for completing these reports in a timely manner comes up frequently. For the last few years these reports have been completed in conjunction with the grizzly and black bear monitoring research. Going forward, the role of WBRA in generating these reports using Government of Alberta (GoA) data needs to be clarified. Should GoA generate this report, or continue to provide data and funding to WBRA to have the report generated?

Trail-camera monitoring was utilized at a limited number of sites this year, specifically to monitor conflict sites. Cameras continue to be a useful tool both for education of landowners and documenting project success.

The Southwest Alberta Grizzly Bear Monitoring (GBMP) and Developing a Wolf Population Monitoring Framework in Southwest Alberta (WMF) projects were both completed this year. Strong relationships were built with the community throughout the completion of these projects, in particular the GBMP. WBRA supported both the grizzly and wolf monitoring projects through assisting with communicating results to the community and research grant administration and reporting.

Improvement of Safety for Ranch Families

As grizzly bears have become more common on local ranches, concern for safety of producers and their families has increased. Two bear safety training workshops were delivered in 2015 based on the program developed by WBRA and partners in 2014. Response to the workshops continues to be positive. The need for bear safety awareness and training targeted at ranch families will continue to exist as long as bears continue to frequent the agricultural interface. Support for continued training should be included in the implementation of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan.

Livestock Predator Compensation Program

During this past year, the Livestock Predator Compensation Program has remained a priority for the community and WBRA. Unfortunately there has been little measureable progress in addressing community concerns with the program. Approximately three and a half years have passed since WBRA
first submitted its reports and recommendations on the predator compensation program to the Government of Alberta. During this period there have been some good discussions with elected officials and government staff about the justification and feasibility of implementing the proposed recommendations. Despite these good discussions, little has changed. The efforts to meet with WBRA have been appreciated, as have the efforts of government staff to address some shortcomings of the program with respect to setting value for sheep kills by predators. The core question of the recommendations has remained unaddressed. The anticipated availability of Growing Forward 2 funding for use in the compensation program, transpired well over a year ago, allowing 60% of 80% of verified claims to be covered with federal dollars. This effectively meant that the available budget increased by 48%. This has contributed to the sustainability of the compensation program, but unfortunately this has not resulted in any improvement of the program yet. The new funding has so far been used to decrease the amount that the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) must contribute to the compensation program, but has not been put towards implementing any of the recommendations put forward by WBRA, the CWG and the community. We continue to hope that some or all of our recommendations may be implemented, with the federal funding being used (at least in part) to facilitate this.

To further support the justification for these changes we highlight the following: The 2008-2013 Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan states as a goal “Improve the working relationship with ranchers (critical in southern Alberta), by improving the livestock loss compensation program to ensure fair reimbursement and no net loss by factoring in value lost (i.e., value at sale time), time, production costs and additional losses. Modify compensation policy to acknowledge that, in the absence of verified predation, the presence of grizzly bear at dead livestock justifies compensation.” In addition, the recently released draft of the updated Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (June 1, 2016) states as a recovery action on page 44 “Work with program delivery partners and affected stakeholders to ensure that the Alberta Predator Compensation Program adequately compensates livestock producers that co-exist with grizzly bears”.

Looking Forward

Since 2008, there has been significant progress made in southwestern Alberta on large carnivore issues. However, with stable or increasing large carnivore populations, opportunity for conflict will remain high and continued efforts by both landowners and wildlife managers will be required. Continued support for the deadstock removal program, on-farm conflict reduction initiatives, and bear safety education will be critical. In addition, as recognized by the updated Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (June 2016), predator compensation must be “adequate”. More than three years ago, livestock producers from southwestern Alberta presented suggested changes to the compensation program that would bring it closer to providing “adequate” compensation. Response from government on these suggested changes is long overdue and must be made a priority as the new grizzly bear recovery plan is implemented.

While we are far from done when it comes to conflict reduction initiatives, bear safety training, and continued grizzly bear population monitoring, these elements of the program have progressed in positive, measureable ways. Compensation is currently the weakest link and the probably the greatest cause of contention over large carnivore management.
Additional Resources

Carnivores and Communities Program presentations and events attended

- 6-Apr-15  Milk River Watershed Council - AGM (Milk River)
- 22-Apr-15  Pincher Meats - Earth Day Fundraiser (Pincher Creek)
- 28-Apr-15  Tour of Attractant Management Projects (group from Yukon)
- 08-May-15  Sharing the Range Premiere (Cardston)
- 13-May-15  Black Bear Conference & Sharing the Range (Canmore)
- 14-May-15  Sharing the Range - PC Library (Pincher Creek)
- 20-May-15  Kainai Environmental Protection Agency Summit (Standoff)
- 21-May-15  Sharing the Range - Waterton Opera House (Waterton Townsite)
- 27-May-15  Bear Safety Workshop & Sharing the Range (Maycroft)
- 24-Jun-15  Waterton Wildflower Festival and WBRA AGM (Waterton Townsite)
- 20-Jul-15  Bear Safety Workshop & Sharing the Range (Chain Lakes)
- 5-Aug-15  Tour of Attractant Management Projects (Alberta Environment & Parks)
- 13-Sep-15  Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Assembly (Waterton Townsite)
- 19-Sep-15  Joint NCC/WBRA Volunteer Event (Waterton Park Front)
- 22-Sep-15  Sharing the Range Screening (Calgary)
- 23-Sep-15  Sharing the Range Screening (Canmore)
- 23-Sep-15  Presentation & Sharing the Range (highschool class from Black Diamond)
- 11-Oct-15  Presentation & Sharing the Range (university class from Mt. Royal and University of Montana)
- 02-Nov-15  Non-lethal Predator Control Workshop & Sharing the Range (Conrad, MT)
- 24-Nov-15  Hwy 2 Conservation - composting workshop & Sharing the Range (Rochester, AB)
- 09-Dec-15  Alberta Beef Producers AGM & Sharing the Range (Calgary)
- 13-Jan-16  Upper Green River Cattlemen’s Association / Natural Resources Defense Council & Sharing the Range (Pinedale, WY)
- 5-Feb-16  Nature Conservancy of Canada Eat and Greet & Sharing the Range (Twin Butte, AB)
- 10-Feb-16  Predator Conference for MD of Bighorn & Mountain View County & Sharing the Range (Cremona)
- 23-Feb-16  Winter Speaker Series – Sharing the Range and joint presentation with Blackfoot Challenge – Montana (regional library video conference)
- 2-Mar-16  CACP Community Meeting & Sharing the Range (Cowley, AB)
- 3-Mar-16  CACP Community Meeting & Sharing the Range (Cardston, AB)

Sharing the Range documentary launched May 8, 2015

WBR completed a documentary film “Sharing the Range” highlighting large carnivore conflict in southwestern Alberta and community-driven solutions to support co-existence. Visit the film website at www.sharingtherange.com
Selected resources available on Waterton Biosphere Reserve website

**Large Carnivore Attractant Management**
Large Carnivore Attractant Management Projects in Southwestern Alberta 2013-2014
Anne Loosen – 2016 – WBRA
Large Carnivore Attractant Management Projects in Southwestern Alberta 2008-2012
Anne Loosen, Nora Manners, and Andrea Morehouse – 2014 – WBRA

**WBR Carnivores and Communities Technical Guides**
WBR Technical Guide: Deadstock Removal Program
Annie Loosen – April 2015 – WBRA
WBR Technical Guide: Electric Fencing
Annie Loosen – April 2015 – WBRA
WBR Carnivores and Communities Technical Guide: Securing Your Grain Storage

**Carnivore Conflicts**
Carnivore Conflicts in Southwestern Alberta: A review of ESRD occurrence records 1999 to 2011
Matthew Urmson (University of Alberta) and Andrea Morehouse (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development) – May 2012
Large Carnivore Occurrences in Southwestern Alberta: 2012 Annual Report
Matthew Urmson and Andrea Morehouse – March 2013 – WBRA
Large Carnivore Occurrences in Southwestern Alberta: 2013 Annual Report
Troy Malish and Andrea Morehouse – March 2014 – WBRA
Large Carnivore Occurrences in Southwestern Alberta: 2014 Annual Report
Spencer Rettler and Andrea Morehouse – February 2015 – WBRA
Large Carnivore Occurrences in Southwestern Alberta: 2015 Annual Report
Troy Malish and Anne Loosen – April 2016 – WBRA

**Southwest Alberta Grizzly Bear Monitoring Project**
Grizzly bear population ecology and large carnivore conflicts in southwestern Alberta
Grizzly Bears Without Borders Spatially Explicit Capture-Recapture in Southwestern Alberta
Andrea T. Morehouse and Mark S. Boyce – June 2016 – University of Alberta

**Southwest Wolf Monitoring Project**
Southwest Alberta Wolf Monitoring Project – Final Report
David E. Ausband and Sarah B. Bassing – March 2016 – MCWRU

**Selected media related to the project**
May 22, 2015 – Barb Glen, Western Producer – Film shows challenges of living with grizzlies

June 1, 2015 – Jeff Bectell interview on the CBC Eye Opener - Cattle ranchers deal with grizzlies in southern Alberta

June 4, 2015 – Leslie Anthony, Pique Magazine – In plains sight: A different kind of bear story

July 21, 2015 – CBC - Alberta ranchers brush up on bear safety during workshop
August 2015 – Chris Davis, Pincher Creek Voice; Waterton Biosphere Reserve offers new bear-resistant garbage bin program

March 5, 2016 – Toni Lucas, Pincher Creek Voice: Carnivore Discussion Left Some Questions Unanswered http://www.pinchercreekvoice.com/2016/03/carnivore-discussion-left-some.html

Sticker used on Bear Resistant Bins

Don’t forget to latch!
This bin is not bear-resistant if the lid is not shut.

Poster for advertising Bear Resistant Bin Program

Bear-resistant storage of garbage & animal feed has the potential to reduce bear conflicts.

The Waterton Biosphere Reserve (WBR) has cost-shared bear-resistant garbage bins available through their Carnivores and Communities Program. Contact us to learn more about purchasing a bin at reduced cost!

Email: info@watertonbiosphere.com
MD of Pincher Creek, Willow Creek, Ranchland: Tony @ 403 827 8428
Cardston County: Jeff @ 403 653 2219

Visit our website for more information www.watertonbiosphere.com

Your Price
64 gallon - $90
95 gallon - $100

AEP- WBRA Grant Agreement #16GROSS02 - Final Progress Report – June 2016
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