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# CROWN MANAGERS PARTNERSHIP

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2015/2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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## CMP Facts

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Since 2001, government representatives from over twenty land and resource management agencies in the Crown gathered to explore ecosystem-based ways of collaborating on shared issues in the transboundary Crown of the Continent.

Participation has included federal, aboriginal, academic, provincial and state agencies or organizations.

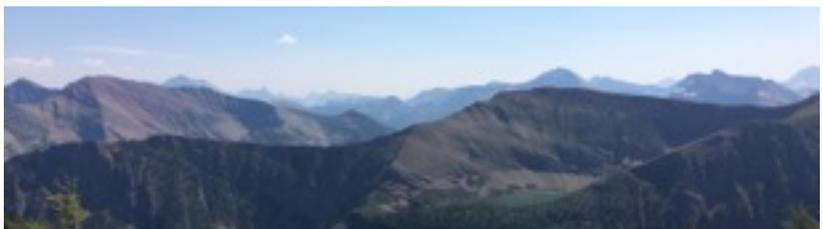
The valleys in the Crown of the Continent serve as important wildlife movement corridors, representing one of the largest areas in North America with such large-scale connectivity.

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## *The Crown*

Imagine pristine, mountain meadows; unspoiled habitat that supports a wide range of species including westslope cutthroat trout and grizzly bears. A place where large populations of elk, deer, moose and bighorn sheep travel across mountain ranges, foothills and grassland. A place where glacier fed streams turn into rivers that flow into the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Hudson's Bay. This Place is the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem; one of North America's most ecologically diverse and jurisdictionally fragmented ecosystems. Encompassing the shared Rocky Mountain





## CMP Steering Committee

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The Steering Committee takes its direction from the Partnership through the Annual Forum and implements that direction through an annually reviewed Strategic Framework and work plans. The Steering Committee responsibilities include:

- Design and implementation of the Strategic Framework and annual workplan;
- Fund development to support the CMP's work;
- Promotion of the CMP;
- Oversight of the Secretariat
- Maintenance of the Steering Committee membership.

Steering Committee members are responsible for attending in-person meetings and participating in monthly conference calls. All members have the opportunity to participate in various working groups that support the Transboundary Conservation Initiative.

region and immediately adjacent landscapes of Montana, British Columbia and Alberta, this 28,000 square mile / 72,000 square kilometer ecological complex spreads across two nations; one state, two provinces; and includes numerous aboriginal lands, municipal authorities, public land blocks, private properties, working and protected landscapes.

The long term ecological integrity of the Crown is challenged because the ecosystem faces intensification in all areas of human activity, including urban and rural residential expansion, increased and diversifying recreational use, intensified demands for resource use and extraction, and the growth of the physical infrastructure needed to support all of these. These pressures exist at different intensities in different locales throughout the Crown. The effectiveness of responding to these issues is complicated by jurisdictional fragmentation.



## *A Vision for a Healthy Crown of the Continent Ecosystem*

The Crown Managers Partnership (CMP) operates under the Strategic Conservation Framework completed in the spring of 2016. It provides direction for the CMP until the end of 2020. The plan commits the CMP to create an informed and collaborative regional approach to achieving an ecologically healthy Crown of the Continent Ecosystem. In addition, the CMP will collectively develop defined measures of ecological health and the adaptive capacity to meet them, across borders, amongst jurisdictions and with stakeholders by the end of the decade.

### *CMP Steering Committee*

The Crown Managers Partnership is coordinated through an Interagency Steering Committee (Steering Committee) from their participants, which has included representatives from aboriginal agencies; Federal, Provincial and State agencies; the Universities of Calgary and Montana; and the Secretariat. The Steering Committee strives for representation from a variety of agencies, geographic areas and resource management sectors, and any CMP agency, that wishes can be represented.

The CMP Steering Committee met 12 times in 2015/16. Nine of those meetings were conference calls (April 28, June 25, Aug 25, Sept 24, October 29, Dec 9, January 28, February 25 and March 24). Three of those meetings were face-to-face meetings in various places around the Crown region (May 28-29 in Waterton, August 20-21 in West Glacier and again in Waterton on November 16-17).

The Steering Committee in 2015/2016 consisted of the following representatives:

- ✦ Mary Riddle - Glacier National Park, MT (Chair)
- ✦ Bill Dolan - Alberta Environment and Parks, AB
- ✦ Rob Davies, Flathead National Forest, MT
- ✦ Ian Dyson - Alberta Environment & Parks, AB
- ✦ Caryn Miske - Flathead Basin Commission, MT
- ✦ Erin Sexton - University of Montana, MT
- ✦ Len Broberg - University of Montana, MT
- ✦ Mike Quinn - Mount Royal, AB
- ✦ Greg McDermid - University of Calgary, AB
- ✦ Dennis Madsen - Waterton Lakes National Park, AB
- ✦ Steve Frye - Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, MT
- ✦ Greg Watson - United States Fish and Wildlife, MT
- ✦ Linh Hoang - United States Forest Service, MT
- ✦ Cindy Sawchuk - Alberta Environment and Parks, AB
- ✦ Mike Munoz - Lewis and Clark National Forest, MT
- ✦ Mike Bruised Head - Kainai First Nation, AB
- ✦ Rob Simieritsch - Alberta Environment and Parks, AB
- ✦ Sasha Harriott - Secretariat - AB



## **Promoting Collaboration**

*As no one agency has the mandate, resources or scope to address issues at the regional scale, a collaborative approach, based on shared understanding and respect, is required which includes partnerships with academics and universities. 2011-2015 CMP Strategic Plan*

### *Secretariat Support*

The Steering Committee, on behalf of the Partnership, delegates the day-to-day management and coordination of CMP activity to a standing Secretariat. The Secretariat operates under the on-going direction of the Steering Committee

In 2015/2016, the responsibilities of the Secretariat have included:

- General coordination and facilitation of the CMP;
- Agenda development, facilitation and meeting summaries for all Steering Committee meetings and the annual Forum;
- Financial management for the CMP;
- Maintenance of the CMP website;
- Administrative and logistical support for sub-committees of the CMP;
- And coordination of internal and external communications, including website, communications to the Partnership and communications within the Steering Committee.



## **Key Accomplishments for 2015/2016**

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### *2016 Crown Managers Partnership Forum - We Need the Needles: Coordinating Action to Conserve Five Needle Pine in the Crown of the Continent*

The 2016 CMP annual forum was held in Fernie, British Columbia on March 15-17. The topic of the 16th annual forum was focused on five needle pine conservation in the Crown. The forum was the fourth workshop of a series organized by a collaboration of the CMP, the Crown Conservation Initiative, The Wilderness Society and the Northern Rockies Adaptation Partnership.

The forum was very successful bringing in eighty-seven people from 43 different state, federal, provincial, municipal, tribal and First Nation governments, as well as conservation organizations, universities, industry and community.

The forum focused on four objectives:

- Deliver best available science and data products on the climate adaptation strategies and tactics necessary to maintain 5-needle pine in the CCE in an era of rapid climate change;
- Discuss existing challenges and/or barriers that may be impeding 5-needle pine restoration, and develop recommendations to address these issues;
- Catalyze a formal CCE-wide working group whose purpose is to promote the long-term viability of 5-needle pines in the CCE by sharing information, leveraging capacity and resources, and promoting 5-needle pine protection and restoration; and
- Initiate a process to develop a CCE-wide 5-needle pine restoration strategy that identifies and prioritizes the type, amount and location of restoration activities, protection measures and monitoring that are necessary to restore 5-needle pine in the CCE.

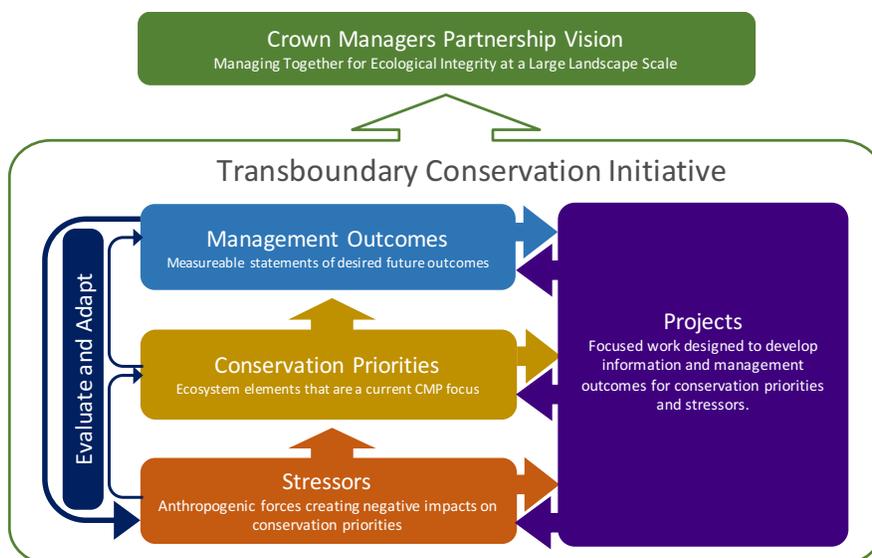
For a full report on the 2016 Forum and to view presentations and other information visit the Crown Managers Partnership website at [www.crownmanagers.org](http://www.crownmanagers.org).

### *Transboundary Conservation Initiative*

In 2015 the CMP’s Ecological Health Project was updated to the Transboundary Conservation Initiative (TCI). It remains focused on managing transboundary environmental outcomes for the whole environment, but is more coherently structured to reflect projects addressing foundational analytical work, or conservation priorities that

lead to management outcomes which mitigate environmental stressors or achieve environmental objectives (biotic/abiotic).

The Transboundary Conservation Initiative provides a framework for addressing key regional stressors and developing management outcomes for discrete conservation priorities. From these



priorities the CMP and partners pursue project-based work that informs collective actions by individual agencies, toward achieving collaborative management outcomes at a landscape scale.

### *Conservation Priorities:*

#### Five Needle Pine

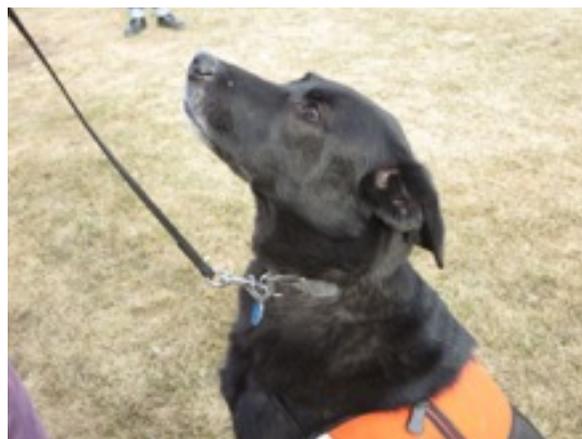
In addition to the 2016 CMP Forum on five needle pine, the CMP conducted modelling of five needle pine in the Crown in the Fall of 2015 and in preparation for the 2016 Forum. The modelling was supported with funding from the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative. Initially, spatially explicit presence and absence data was gathered from numerous different federal, provincial, state agencies and non-government organizations. The model initial results of the model are representative of white bark pine exclusively as there was minimal data available on other five needle pine species. The multi-jurisdictional crown-wide model shows the relative probability of occurrence of white bark pine.

#### Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are one of the greatest threats to the Crown. The CMP is leading the effort in the Crown to prevent the introduction of new invasive species and contain the spread of existing invasive species by working to develop a transboundary prevention, response and containment plan between Alberta, British Columbia and Montana. A key component of the plan is a Transboundary Cooperative Management Strategy, expanding the perimeter of defence to the mesa-regional scale.

The CMP AIS pilot program in the Crown in was the catalyst for the creation a province wide AIS program. Alberta and the Flathead Basin Commission continues to partner with Working Dogs for Conservation and now has incorporated six dogs into provincial and Flathead Basin region inspection stations.

Work on aquatic invasive species continues with the priority to keep the Crown free of Zebra and Quagga mussels and Eurasian Water Milfoil. There has been extensive collaboration in developing inspection, education and monitoring programs, especially between AB/MT. New partnerships in AIS control efforts have emerged with the Blackfeet Tribe and an inspection stations have been established on the reservation at Browning and Seville.



## Landscape Conservation

Landscape connectivity is the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes movement of organisms or ecological processes. Following two landscape patterns workshops held in 2014 four areas of interest in the Crown were selected as high priority. They are as follows:

- Establishing wildlife connectivity crossings on major highways that cross the continental divide;
- Securing wildlife connectivity across the Alberta/British Columbia divide;
- Maintaining wildlife and fisheries connectivity in the Transboundary Flathead; and
- Reducing the ecosystem impact of human footprint/fragmentation in Alberta's Southern East Slopes and Oldman River headwaters.

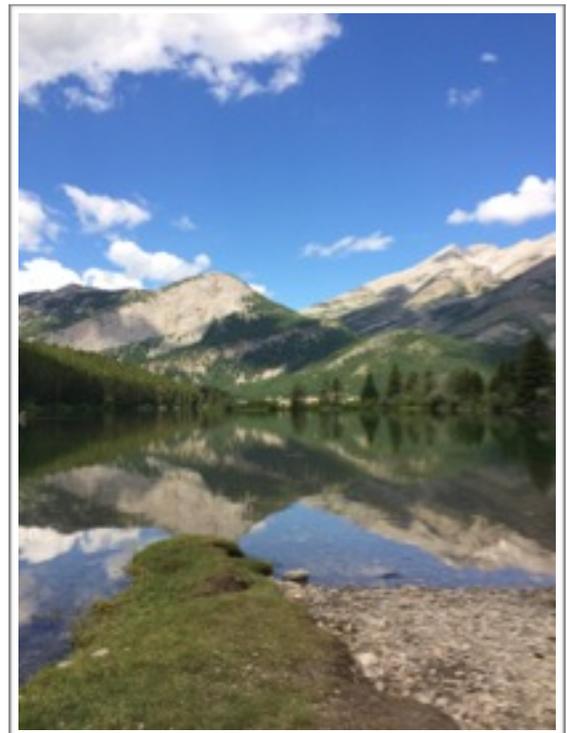
In partnership with the University of Montana, the CMP is working with a graduate student who is looking physical and process barriers to landscape connectivity within the Crown.

## Native Salmonids

Native salmonids face significant challenges in an era of shifting climate. Increasing stream temperatures reduce the availability of suitable habitat for native salmonids and increase levels of hybridization between native and non-native populations.

Work continues on the conservation of native salmonids with the following actions identified at a workshop held in 2014 on increasing resiliency for native salmonids in the Crown :

- Conduct a population assessment of native salmonids in the Crown;
- Replicate, restore and/or translocate native salmonid populations to cold water transboundary watersheds East of the Divide;
- Export successful bull trout translocations piloted in the North Fork of the Blackfoot to other landscapes and;



- Suppress invasive rainbow trout in the Transboundary Flathead and export best management practices to other locales.

Clint Mulhfeld is leading efforts in developing a model to predict the risk of impact from stressors, including climate change, invasive species and lands, across the Crown for native salmonids. Once completed the model will be available via a web portal and is anticipated to identify conservation populations and alluvial bottoms where cold water upwellings will support refugia.

### Terrestrial Invasive Species

Terrestrial invasive species are one of the most severe treats to ecological integrity in the Crown. The 2015 CMP Annual Forum was focused on terrestrial invasive species and a thorough summary of the forum can be found on page the CMP website. Following the 2015 CMP Forum the CMP commissioned Bray Beltran, a spacial ecologist with the Heart of the Rockies; to update and enhance climate models for the distribution and occupancy of noxious weeds in the Crown. Bray will also be working on a second phase of the jurisdictional and management survey of terrestrial invasive species in the Crown.

## **Working Partnerships**

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### Crown Adaptation Partnership

The Crown Adaptation Partnership (CAP) is a broad suite of government and conservation representatives that have come together with a common goal of taking action on climate change. The partnership is made up of the Crown Managers Partnership, the Crown Conservation Initiative, The Wilderness Society and the Northern Rockies Adaptation Partnership (a United States Forest Service initiative). CAP facilitates efforts by state and federal agencies, Tribes, First nations, universities, non-government organizations and community stakeholders to implement coordinated, effective climate change adaptation strategies across the Crown based on the best available science.



## Financial Statement

Revenue	2015/2016	2014/2015
Beginning Balance:	\$ 59,695.59	\$ 40,361.51
<b>Funds Received</b>		
Forum Registrations	\$ 9,893.20	\$ 8,284.82
2016 Forum Contribution AB Environment and Parks	\$ 1,653.75	
2016 Forum Contribution GNP Conservancy	\$ 300.00	
Parks Canada	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Alberta Environment and Parks	\$ 13,239.00	\$ 12,095.00
Department of Natural Resource Conservation		\$ 10,978.00
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation		\$ 15,000.00
AB Tourism, Parks and Rec: EH Research Grant		\$ 10,000.00
Yellowstone to Yukon	\$ 2,562.20	\$ 20,137.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 80,648.15</b>	<b>\$ 153,420.62</b>
<b>CMP Project Grants (non Miistakis funds)</b>		
Great Northern LCC (US dollars)	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 59,925.00
Kresge Foundation	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 43,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 79,925.00</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 140,343.74</b>	<b>\$ 193,782.13</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Secretariat Salary	\$ 20,749.00	\$ 24,965.00
Secretariat Travel	\$ 2,096.70	\$ 2,873.84
GIS Technician	\$ 70,000.00	?
Miistakis Fiscal Agent	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Adaptation Management Initiative		\$ 4,700.00
Transboundary Conservation Initiative (TCI)		\$ 25,000.00
TCI (Kresge Funds)	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 79,925
Snow Pack Analysis	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 8,000.00
Forum	\$ 13,349.35	\$ 5,744.78
SC Meetings		\$ 58.34
Landscape Patterns Workshop II		\$ 378.86
Website	\$ 540.38	\$ 271.84
Paypal fees	\$ 118.38	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 124,535.43</b>	<b>\$ 156,917.66</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ 15,808.31</b>	<b>\$ 36,864.47</b>

## Conclusion

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*"We will collectively develop defined measures of ecological health and the adaptive capacity to meet them, across borders, amongst jurisdictions and with stakeholders by the end of the decade."*

*The Crown Managers Partnership will continue to pursue an ecologically healthy Crown of the Continent Ecosystem. To stay informed of progress on CMP projects and for information on the 2017 forum, visit the CMP website at [www.crownmanagers.org](http://www.crownmanagers.org).*

*To contact the Crown Managers Partnership send an email to [crownmanagers@gmail.com](mailto:crownmanagers@gmail.com).*

