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# CMP Annual Report - 2010/2011



## Introduction

The 'Crown of the Continent' ecosystem is one of North America's most ecologically diverse and jurisdictionally fragmented ecosystems. Encompassing the shared Rocky Mountain 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 Crown is internationally recognized for its biodiversity and landscape form. This varied landscape sees a likewise varied range of wildlife species and vegetation communities, including a full complement of large carnivores and ungulates. The valleys in the Crown of the Continent serve as important wildlife movement corridors, representing one of the last areas in the world with such large-scale connectivity.

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.

Since 2001, government representatives from over twenty land and resource management agencies in the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem have gathered to explore ecosystem-based ways of collaborating on shared issues in the transboundary Crown of the Continent. Participation has included federal, aboriginal, provincial and state agencies or organizations.

## A Vision for an Ecologically Healthy Crown of the Continent Ecosystem

As we head into 2012, the Crown Managers Partnership (CMP) is in the process of reviewing their goals and will produce a revised strategic plan by the end of 2011. The plan will guide the CMP's efforts over the next 5-year term. The vision will remain

unchanged and the CMP will continue to work towards “An ecologically healthy Crown of the Continent ecosystem.

### **CMP Steering Committee**

The Crown Managers Partnership is coordinated through an Interagency Steering Committee (Steering Committee) from their members, 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 geographic areas and resource management sectors, and any CMP agency can be represented.

The Steering Committee takes its direction from the Partnership through the Annual Forum, and implements that direction through annually-reviewed Strategic Plans and Annual Workplans. Steering Committee responsibilities include:

- Design and implementation of the strategic and annual work plans;
- fund development to support the CMP’s work;
- promotion of the CMP, both within and outside of their own agencies;
- oversight of the Secretariat, and any other entities operating on the CMP’s behalf; and
- maintenance of the Steering Committee membership.

The CMP Steering Committee met 13 times in 2010/11. Eight of those meetings were conference calls (May 18, June 18, September 20, October 4, February 11, February 18, March 2, March 21). Five of those meetings were face-to-face meetings in various places around the Crown region (April 13-15 in Fernie, BC, May 26-27 in Waterton, AB, September 8-10 in Glacier National Park, MT, December 2 in Lethbridge, AB and January 10-11 in Kalispell, MT).

The Steering Committee in 2010/11 consisted of the following representatives:

- Bill Dolan - Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, AB (Chair)
- Travis Ripley - Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, AB
- Jimmy DeHerrera, Flathead National Forest, MT
- Ian Dyson - Alberta Environment, AB
- Caryn Miske - Flathead Basin Commission, MT
- Mary Riddle - Glacier National Park, MT
- Erin Sexton - Flathead Lake Biological Station, MT
- Tom Bell - BC Ministry of Environment, BC
- Len Broberg - University of Montana, MT
- Mike Quinn - University of Calgary, AB
- Dennis Madsen - Waterton Lakes National Park, AB
- Steve Frye - Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, MT
- Sasha Harriott - Secretariat - AB



## Secretariat Support

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

In 2010/2011, the responsibilities of the Secretariat have included the following:

- General coordination and facilitation of the CMP;
- Agenda development, facilitation and meeting summaries for all Steering Committee meetings;
- Financial management for the CMP;
- And coordination of internal and external communications, including the web site, communications to the Partnership, and communications within the Steering Committee.

## Key Accomplishments for 2010/2011

- Continuation and evolvement of the Ecological Health Project. The Ecological Health Project continues to move forward and is supported by a strong relationship between the University of Montana, the University of Calgary and United States National Park Service.
- The 2011 CMP Forum held in Polson, Montana was determined a success. Feedback provided by an evaluation survey showed that nearly all (88%) survey respondents felt the forum was very successful and 93% found the presentations very useful.

## The Crown Managers Forum 2011

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Crown Managers Forum was hosted in Polson, MT in March 2011. The Forum brought together land and resource management agencies from across the three jurisdictions of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem to discuss collaborative ecosystem management issues.

The 2011 Forum focused on the theme of aquatic invasive species in the Crown of the Continent. As well as providing the agency updates, CMP activity review, and networking opportunities, this Forum provided a number of presentations and discussion opportunities that focused on aquatic invasive species prevention strategies, economic implications, legislative controls and the importance of

collaborative management of aquatic invasive species within the Crown of the Continent.

Objectives of the Forum included:

- 1) Understand the activities and challenges currently facing partner agencies with a particular focus on aquatic invasive species;
- 2) Provide a formal and informal networking opportunity for various jurisdictions in CCE;
- 3) Report on and seek direction from the partnership on key aspects of the CMP work plan and function.

The Crown Managers continue to seek public participation in the forum and invited the public to attend the presentation by Eileen Ryce titled: *Don't Move a Mussel, meeting the invasive species challenge*, on the evening before the Day One sessions. Public attendance was also encouraged for the Day One sessions on March 15, which opened with a welcome from Steve Lozar, a representative from Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribe.

As well as the regular features of the Forum (Steering Committee report to the Forum, agency updates, and confirmation of direction from CMP to Steering Committee), the 2011 Forum featured several presentations and a panel discussion concentrated on aquatic invasive species implications for the Crown of the Continent. These discussions helped provide direction for the 2011/2012 CMP work plan and input into the Ecological Health project.



A series of presenters focused their presentations on a variety of aquatic invasive species topics including: aquatic invasive species prevention strategies (Doug Jensen, Minnesota AIS Coordinator), invasive fish species (Travis Ripley, Fish and Wildlife Manager, Alberta), Eurasian water milfoil (David Lamb, Coeur d'Alene Tribe Lake Ecologist), AIS policy and legislation (Erik Hanson, Flathead Basin Commission Consultant), AIS potential in Flathead Lake (Bonnie Ellis, Flathead Lake Biological Station), AIS risk assessment and potential in Glacier National Park (Chris Downs, Fisheries Biologist, Glacier National Park) and economic risks of quagga mussel establishment (John Duffield, University of Montana).

The presenters returned for two panel discussions addressing topics which included: *potential pathways for AIS and how the Crown can work together to stop AIS and once AIS is established what can we do?* Each panel participant was given the opportunity to address the topic and then the panel answered questions from the audience. Many of the forum participants were very keen and excited to take back AIS prevention strategies to their organizations.

Dr. Jack Stanford, director of the Flathead Lake Biological Station was the keynote presenter on March 15<sup>th</sup> and he shared his knowledge and experience in a presentation titled “Myths and truths in the quest for sustainability of ecosystem goods and services. ”

The CMP Steering Committee presented the first draft of the revised Strategic Plan at the member agency meeting and received very positive feedback and has incorporated suggestions from the attending agencies into the final plan.

## Projects and Workshops

### Ecological Health in the Crown of the Continent:

The Ecological Health Project is a long-term multi-faceted project that is aimed to define a level of ecological health in the Crown of the Continent that can inform agency management decisions.



The CMP is partnering with the US National Park Service Vital Signs Program and its Rocky Mountain Monitoring Network and the Geography Department at the U of C counterparts to develop and acquire geospatial data sets from

remote sensing and other GIS sources to track changes in habitat and human footprint consistently and reliably across the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem. The initial ‘data mining’ of targeted data sets was undertaken in 2009/10 and the analysis phase is now commencing.

The report produced by the Ecological Health Committee titled: *CMP Landscapes Data Review Report - A Review of Baseline Geospatial Datasets for the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Landscape Project* summarizes the ‘data mining’ phase of the project.

The committee is also partnering with the National Park Service project, NPScape. NPScape is a landscape dynamics monitoring project that provides landscape-level data, tools, and evaluations for natural resource management and planning at local, regional, and national scales.

Several baseline datasets for the Crown of the Continent have been compiled including: *roads, census, streams, watersheds, riparian buffer zone, density of road and stream intersections, land cover, phenology, fire and insects.*

Next steps for the Ecological Health Project include conducting a quantitative accuracy assessment for baseline maps leading to trend Monitoring; habitat connectivity analysis (i.e. connectivity maps for grizzly bear, lynx, westslope

cutthroat and bull trout); sensitivity analysis (address effects of uncertainty in basemaps as magnified through analysis) and outreach and education (workshops, 2013 Forum, website, data-sharing).

#### Aquatic Invasive Species:

Crown Manager Partnership agencies, University of Montana, United States Park Service/Glacier National Park, are collaborating to produce an aquatic invasive species information and identification guide for the COC. The guide is an anticipated product of a masters' study and the CMP will facilitate information gathering from the three jurisdictions in the COC and distribution when the final product is completed.

#### Climate Change Working Group:

Members of the Steering Committee formed a sub-committee to further look at actions the CMP could be taking to address climate change in the Crown of the Continent. The members also summarized the key messages from the 2010 Crown Managers Forum on climate change to help direct their efforts.

#### Crown of the Continent Mapping Project

The CMP contracted the Miistakis Institute of the Rockies (MIR) to create a series of maps and mapping products. The final products consist of 3 Continent-Scale maps, 5 Crown-Scale maps, and 1 Focal area map and a custom mapping template that will enable the CMP to produce maps that have a consistent look going forward. The context of the maps stresses the importance of the COC and include data on a range of themes including: ecoregions, fire history, road density, jurisdictional complexity, Waterton Lakes National Park, current range of grizzly bears, major drainages and locations of national parks across the continent.

In addition to the maps, MIR also created a custom Google Earth mapping tool. This tool will facilitate the production of interactive maps that can be created for presentations or for specific projects by CMP members as needed. The maps and the Google Earth mapping tool will be made available for all CMP member agencies.

#### Conferences and Presentations

Members from the CMP Steering Committee attended and prepared a presentation focusing on water issues, showcasing the COC and collaboration within the CMP at the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit in Calgary, July 2010. Conference participants were made up of members from the United States and Canadian legislatures.



#### Reports and Letters

Members of the steering committee deemed it necessary to summarize and provide linkages between the UNESCO Report and Montana/British Columbia MOU. They achieved this by writing a summary document that lists key items that came out of

UNESCO report and the BC/MT MOU and identifies the linkages. It also identifies where the CMP is taking action, what we plan on doing, what we are not doing. The document is a factual means for informing whoever is working within the trans-boundary region.

The CMP drafted a letter to the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee to represent the CMP's encouragement and support of a trans-boundary data set on grizzly bears. The data set is closely connected to the Ecological Health project and the Crown scale data set. Grizzly bear monitoring data fits into the EH project by providing fine scale data that will support the coarse scale landscape analysis.



## **Funding Summary**

The following funding summary provides the actual revenues and expenditures managed by the Miistakis Institute of the Rockies on behalf of the Crown Managers Partnership for the period of April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

<b>CMP 2010/2011 Summary</b>	
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Carry Forward	\$ 43,435.90
Parks Canada	\$ 20,000.00
Alberta Environment	\$ 10,000.00
State of Montana	\$ 219.00
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation	\$ 15,495.00
Centennial Fund	\$ 21,453.00
Forum	\$ 10,024.37
<u>In-Kind Contributions*</u>	\$ 250,000.00
<u>Other Contributions</u>	
United States National Parks Service	\$ 50,000.00
BC Ministry of Environment	\$ 1,500.00
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 417,102.90</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Secretariat Contract	\$ 23,385.48
Secretariat Expenses	\$ 2,290.81
Miistakis	\$ 4,437.64
Display	\$ 946.06
Ecological Health	\$ 16,174.50
2009/2010 Forum	\$ 13,316.65
Website	\$ 268.72
<u>In-kind Expenditures*</u>	\$ 250,000.00
<u>Other Expenditures</u>	
Aquatic Invasive Species Pamphlet	\$ 50,000.00
2010 Forum (Room Rental)	\$ 1,500.00
NAS Unit for data storage	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 310,819.86</b>
Surplus (deficit)	\$ 106,283.04
<p><i>*In kind assistance includes CMP member agencies' contributions of time and travel to the Steering Committee and planning committees, logistical support for events, meeting space, provision of data and background information, etc. It is estimated to be approximately \$250,000 per year.</i></p>	

## Conclusion

Moving forward into 2011/2012, the CMP 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 2012 CMP Forum, visit the website at [www.crownmanagers.org](http://www.crownmanagers.org).