

Report prepared for Peace River Agriculture Development Fund

Title of Project: Wildlife Management & Environmental Stewardship Awareness for BC Grain Producer's
Report Title: Final Report
Covering Period: April 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006
Organization(s): BC Grain Producers Association.
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Objective

This objective of the Wildlife Management and Environmental Stewardship Awareness project is to give the grain sector representation on the numerous local, provincial and national environmental and wildlife working groups and committees. The British Columbia Grain Producers Association's (BCGPA) involvement allows the grain producers perspective to be represented on environmental and wildlife issues. This also allows the BCGPA return to the grain producers with information and solutions to the environmental and wildlife conflicts.

Description of Activities:

The PRRD Wildlife Committee is essential in the reduction of wildlife conflicts in all Ag sectors in the Peace Country. Irmi Critcher, director with BCGPA attends several stakeholder meetings a year to represent the grain farmer's perspective on this committee. Through cooperation with various agencies and interest groups wildlife impact mitigation measures are being implemented on a local level. This group also assists with advice and technical expertise to various agencies to develop programs for mitigation and compensation to landowners. Specifically the BCGPA has recently started a project to document the economic impact of the wildlife in the grain growing regions.

Pesticide Container Collection Council was established in 1992 with the goal to develop environmentally sound options for the collection and disposal of pesticide containers. There have been some changes to the collection program, which needed direction from the members, and this committee has been revitalized in the year 2004. The BC Grain Producers have been actively involved in setting new standards and direction to maintain this collection program as well as looking for alternative methods and educating the public in the use and disposal of pesticide containers. Edmund Rath, director with BCGPA has volunteered his time on this environmental issue.

The BC Grain Producers also have representation on the North East Invasive Plant Committee. The NEIPC has established objectives to conduct an invasive plant strategy for the region, including encouragement to the public to report invasive plants, have a systematic approach to record the presence of invasive plants, develop and maintain invasive plant inventory as well as prevent establishment of invasive plants. Having input in this strategy session is essential for grain farmers as the management of weeds directly

impacts the use of herbicides on the farm and keeping them off the farm is the most environmental friendly alternative. Currently the NEIPC is starting a project to track in invasion of the oxeye daisy through the Pine Pass towards the Peace area.

The main focus of the Environment and Wildlife committee this year was the implementation of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and the issue with wildlife excreta in the grain crops of the Peace country this year.

Robert Vanderlinden is the chair of the EFP Steering Committee, which oversees the delivery of Environmental farm plans for the BCGPA. The planning advisors have held 8 workshops, had 29 participants, issued 13 "statements of completions" and 6-implemented plans. Currently there are two planning advisors working to provide their services to the grain producers of the Peace.

The Environment and Wildlife committee is also involved with the PRRD Wildlife committee, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Land, and Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative in a study to find the economic damage that wildlife is causing in the grain growing areas of the peace. This is seen as a first step in starting to formulate solutions to the wildlife issues in the Peace River area. The issuance of Canadian Grain Council order No. 2004-75 which does not allow the delivery of grain or oilseeds with any visible excreta has caused problems for some farmers in the Peace.

Irmi Critcher is also a director on the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative Management Committee (AEPI) and the Partnership Committee in addition to being a part of the Provincial EFP Working group. The AEPI approves applications for projects from the entire province to deal with Agriculture & Environmental conflicts (i.e. Stewardship Initiatives, Demonstration projects, wildlife conflict prevention, predator damage compensation programs). The Partnership Committee (PC) meetings deal with regulatory requirements and liaisons with agencies & agriculture industry, assisting in the prevention of Agriculture & Environmental conflicts and helps achieve workable solutions. The Provincial Environmental Working Group was formed under the Agriculture Policy Framework (APF) Environment pillar. This working group and the BC Ag Council were responsible to launch an industry led voluntary Environmental Farm Planning Program (EFP) for the Province of BC. With co-operation with AAFC, MAFF, WLAP, Environment, DFO and other agencies the producer representative had input into the compiling of EFP workbooks, reference materials, Riparian & Nutrient management resource materials, EFP planner training guidelines, delivery group application guidelines as well as acceptance and funding of Beneficial Management Practices.

The BCGPA also sits on the Peace River Enfranchisement Pilot. It is a program looking at using enfranchisement as a possible solution to the current wildlife issues.

General Involvement:

The BC Grain Producers are affiliated with the Grain Grower's of Canada and the Canola Council of Canada. Through this communication we have been able to obtain information on what is affecting the grain industry on a national level in regards to environmental research, environmental regulatory requirements.

Extension and demonstration:

1. Reported at BCGPA directors meetings and various e-mails
2. Interaction with AAFC through Working Group consultations
3. Membership mail out
4. Committee reports at Annual info seminar & Verbal updates to producers

Accomplishments:

BC Grain Producers have taken a lead in the delivery of Environmental Farm Plans in the BC Peace River. We have decided to become a commodity based EFP delivery group and have been approved for funding. We have hired a provincially approved Planning Advisors and launched our EFP program in 2004. The directors of the BC Grain Producers have participated in the first EFP workshop and our planner has since offered workshops to the Grain Producers in the BC Peace. A Steering Committee from the BC Grain Producer's directors has been formed to assist the Planning Advisor. There is currently a Wildlife assessment in progress working towards defining the scope of the wildlife problem. The Pesticide Container Collection Program has removed a tremendous amount of waste from the environment and is very popular with farmers.

Finances:	Budget:	Actual:
Income:	\$9,520.00	\$5,594.83
Expense:	\$9,520.00	\$5,594.83

Details on separate sheet

Summary comments, conclusions:

The Environmental Farm Plan delivery is now a stand-alone program and is completely funded through the Agriculture Policy Framework. Being pro-active in the implementation of environmental farm planning was a step to help farmers become more environmentally aware in our region. The BC Grain Producer's need to maintain a strong presence on these committees and establish new committees as issues arise, a quick response to problems involving the environment is essential to avoid further conflicts, costs and or new regulations.

Variations from original work plan:

None identified

Attachments: Financial Actual vs. Budget summary
"In kind" listing
Environment Project Report to farmers
News article
BCPGA Members Update Fall/Winter