



Celebration of
Conservation

**EVENT
STARTING
SOON**

NATURE CONSERVANCY CANADA 

Good afternoon everyone. We still have a few people logging in so we're going to give them a minute or two to get settled and then we'll get underway.



Okay, I think we are ready to go. Thank you all for joining us for today's webinar, **Celebration of Conservation** in honor of Earth Day and Nature Manitoba's generous donation to the Nature Conservancy of Canada of its original conserved parcels of tall grass prairie.

Christine Chilton

**Community Relations Manager
Manitoba Region**

Nature Conservancy of Canada



My name is Christine Chilton; I am the **Community Relations Manager** at the **Nature Conservancy of Canada here in Manitoba** and I'm happy to be your moderator today.



I'd like to start by stating we at the Nature Conservancy of Canada respectfully acknowledge that the work we do across the country is on the traditional territories of many Indigenous Nations and communities, past and present.



For a millennia, they have worked to protect these landscapes and the life these areas sustain. I would like to thank these original caretakers, and acknowledge the ongoing work and presence of Indigenous Peoples in Canada today. I'd also like to acknowledge that the lands we'll be discussing today are on Treaty 1 territory.



The Nature Conservancy of Canada is a national charity and Canada's leading not-for-profit, private land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain.



Since 1962, NCC and its partners have helped to protect 14 million hectares (35 million acres), coast to coast to coast. To learn more, visit our website [natureconservancy.ca](https://www.natureconservancy.ca).



Marilyn Latta



Tim Teetaert



We'll be joined today by :

- **Marilyn Latta, Chair of the Habitat Conservation Committee with Nature Manitoba**
- **And Tim Teetaert, Natural Area Manager with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Manitoba Region.**

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES

May experience a glitch – thank you in advance for your patience!



Before we begin the webinar, I would like to quickly cover a few housekeeping topics:

- As we are being joined by people from across the province, you may experience a temporary glitch during the event. We thank you in advance for your patience.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES

Event is being recorded and will
be shared via email
after the event



Today's webinar is being recorded. We will be sharing a link to the recording after the event so keep an eye on your inboxes. We welcome you to revisit the content yourself and share it with colleagues, friends and family.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES

Use the chat feature to submit your questions for our speakers!



We also invite your comments and questions. You will notice a chat box on your screen. If you think of a question for the speakers at any point, just type it in there – include who the question is intended for – and we will answer them at the end of the webinar.

Marilyn Latta

**Chair, Habitat Conservation
Committee**

Nature Manitoba



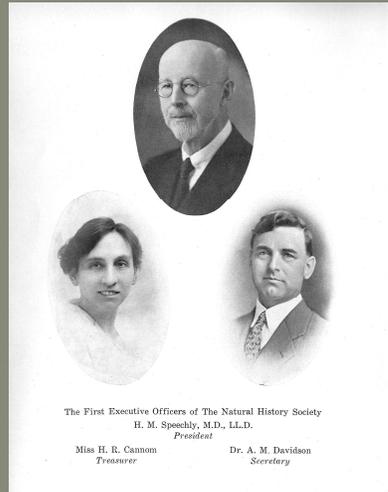
At this time, I would like to introduce our first speaker, **Marilyn Latta, Chair of the Habitat Conservation Committee with Nature Manitoba.**

Marilyn is a past president of Nature Manitoba and has served as chair of its Habitat Conservation Committee since 1985. Her work on the tall grass prairie has been widely recognized. She is the recipient of a Canadian Parks Service Heritage Award from the federal government, the Pimlott award from Nature Canada, and the Prairie Conservation Award from the Prairie and Endangered Species Conference.

Marilyn currently sits on the management committee for the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve and is on the board of the Henteleff Park Foundation.

The floor is all yours, **Marilyn.**

Nature Manitoba 100th Anniversary



May 1, 1920
Natural History Society of Manitoba

1971
Manitoba Naturalist Society
(MNS)

2008
Nature Manitoba (NM)

Thanks Christine for having me here today and I can't think of a better way of celebrating Earth Day and celebrating Nature Manitoba's 100th Anniversary than talking about the tall grass prairie

For those who may not know much about Nature Manitoba, I do want to say a few words

May 1, 1920 – Natural History Society of Manitoba

1971 – Manitoba Naturalists Society

and was rebranded as Nature Manitoba in 2008



Opening of the Victoria Beach Club House by President V. W. Jackson.
August 25, 1923. — Photo by: Dr. A. M. Davidson.

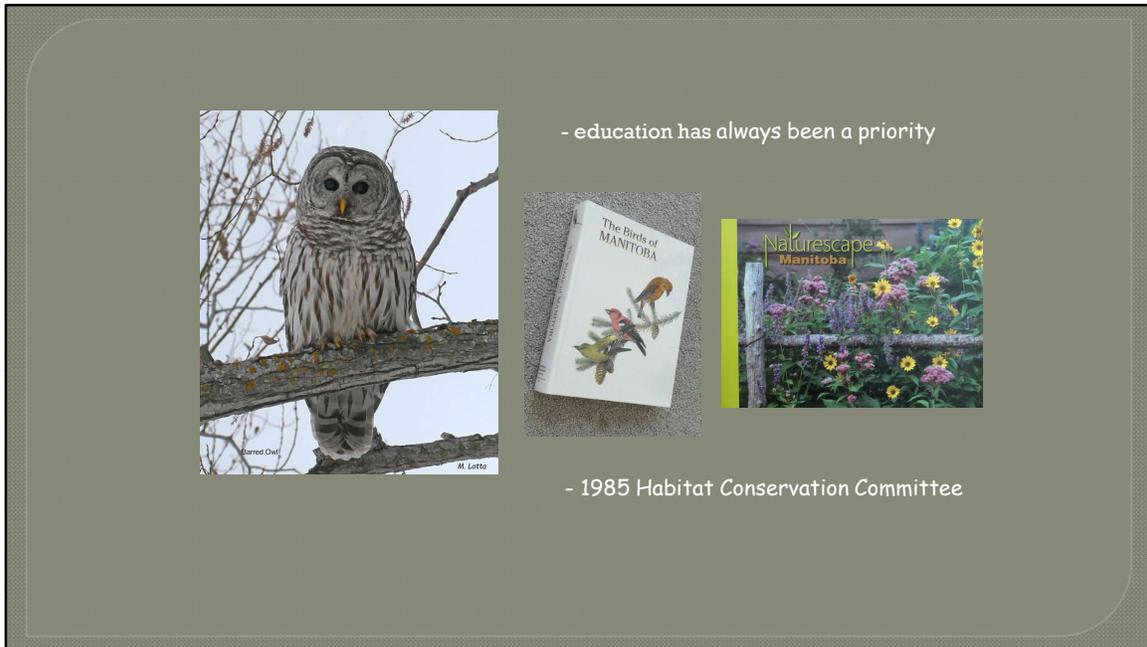
Nature Manitoba's original purpose was to encourage popular interest in natural history, and to foster scientific study of the Province's geology, flora and fauna

However, over time the organization developed a very strong outdoor recreational component (in fact until COVID) we usually had outdoor activities every week on the year and also became more involved with environmental concerns



Watching and studying birds has continued to be one of the most popular activity over the years

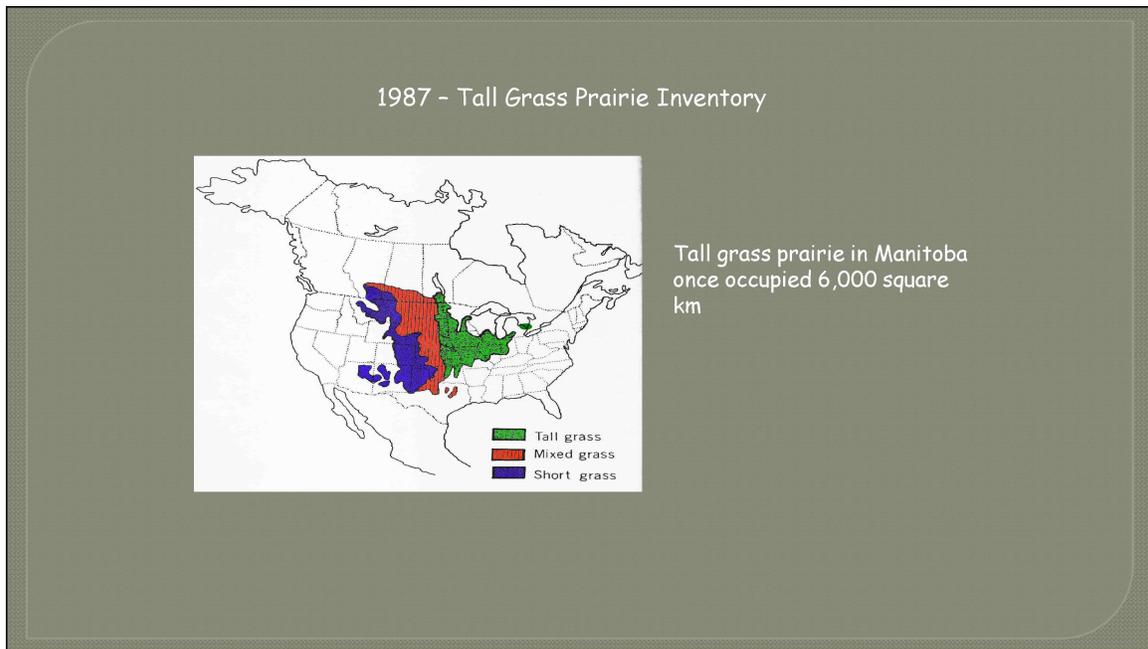
Education has always been a priority with a number of publications and our Discovery Evenings and Workshop presentations are well attended



Recognizing that habitat loss was a key component in declining numbers of both birds and other species, The Habitat Conservation Committee was established in 1985

The Committee's mandate was not only to find worthwhile projects to participate in but also to raise necessary funding.

Initially we had a small part in several projects, but we were looking for something where we could really make a difference, something that was being ignored and desperately needed help, and that something was prairie, specifically tall grass prairie.



The map shows the Tall Grass Prairie in green;

Manitoba is the only prairie province with tall grass prairie but there is still some near Windsor, Ontario

Initial attempts to generate interest in an inventory were not met with great enthusiasm but in 1987 after some fundraising efforts, a grant from WWF and logistical support from the Province, we were able to start the inventory.

1987 - Tall Grass Prairie Inventory



Rosser Pioneer Cemetery

- ½ were railway right-of-ways
- largest site only 20 hectares

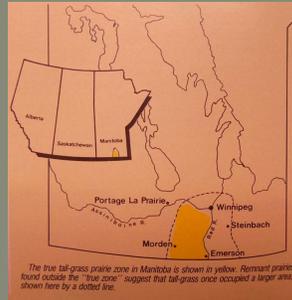
It was soon established that not a lot was left in the Red River Valley and what remained was small disconnected patches, some of which were being dug up even as we looked for them

1/2 of these were along railway right-of-ways; there were also some in pioneer cemeteries

The largest site was only 20 ha

However, this was enough to spur the interest of both government and other organizations and with increased funding the project became the Tall Grass Prairie Conservation Project in 1988

1988 - Tall Grass Prairie Conservation Project



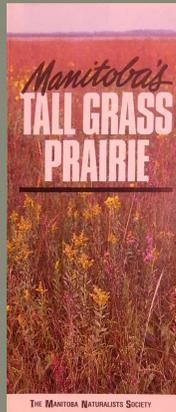
RM of Stuartburn

Efforts were expanded outside of the Red River valley or the true tall grass prairie zone into the peripheral area and soon centered on the RM of Stuartburn which is located adjacent to the US border, south of Steinbach.

This area is often referred to as sparsely wooded grassland or grove lands.

Due to the high water table and abundance of rocks, this area had been used primarily for grazing and haying.

1988 - Tall Grass Prairie Conservation Project



- produced a brochure
- produced a film/video
- contacted 400 landowners
- nearly 3400 potential sites visited



The project also had a Stewardship component;

Produced a brochure, film/video, contacted 400 landowners and nearly 3400 potential sites were visited

1988 - Tall Grass Prairie Conservation Project



Banded Hairstreak

Historic tall grass prairie area

- 22 sites
- 102 ha
- 5 ha average size

Peripheral area

- 66 sites
- 1906 ha
- 29 ha average size

Proposed the establishment of a 1000 ha preserve in Stuartburn RM

Here are some of the results

In the end, we proposed the establishment of a 1000 ha preserve in Stuartburn RM



Critical Wildlife Habitat Program

- 5 year co-operative initiative, established in 1989:
 - Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation
 - Manitoba Natural Resources (now MB Conservation)
 - Manitoba Naturalists Society (now Nature Manitoba)
 - Wildlife Habitat Canada
 - World Wildlife Fund
 - Nature Conservancy of Canada (1993)
 - Environment Canada – Can. Wildlife Service (1994)
- Assumed administration of the TGP Conservation Project and adopted goal of 1000 ha preserve

Wildlife Habitat in agro MB;

Started with the first 5 organizations listed

At the end of the 5 years World Wildlife Fund and Wildlife Habitat Canada did not renew their participation but the Program was joined by NCC and Environment Canada and these organizations have continued to work together since that time.

The Critical Wildlife Habitat Program assumed administration of the TGP Conservation Project and adopted the goal of 1000 ha preserve, however there was not enough money in the program to achieve that goal

Prairie Patrons Program



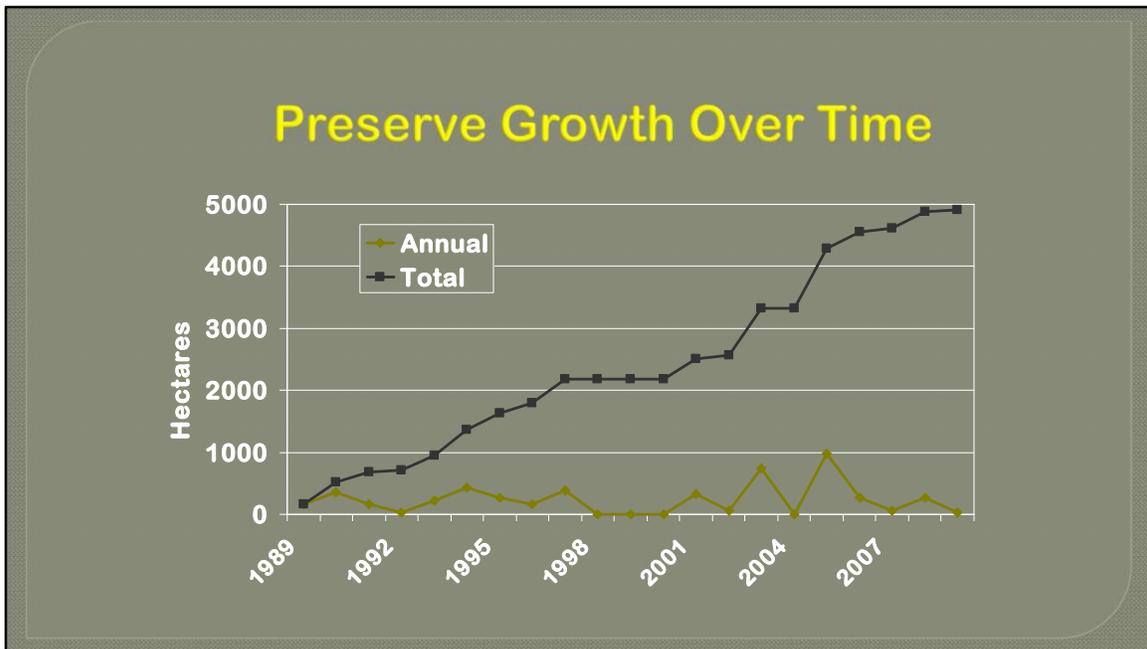
Official opening of Loewen Prairie - September 1990

So Nature Manitoba embarked on a new program called the Prairie Patrons Program

People were asked to donate \$50 to help buy an acre of prairie for which they received a personalized certificate and we committed to raising matching funds

The first \$25,000 raised and a matching grant from the Province's Special Conservation Fund allowed for the purchase of the 320 acre Loewen Prairie

A second certificate featuring the white fringed orchid raised another \$25,000, and along with some funding from NCC and another grant from the Provinces led to the acquisition of an additional 500 acres



1000 ha goal was met by the end of the program in 1994

and by that time NCC was a full partner in the program and took over land acquisitions and you can see how well that went over time



Burn boss John Morgan



School program field trip



Annual Spurge Purge

Nature Manitoba continued our participation in the prairie preserve, both with management and educational activities, including

- prescribed fire,
- School programs
- And our annual spurge purge



Western Prairie Fringed Orchid

Species At Risk (SAR)

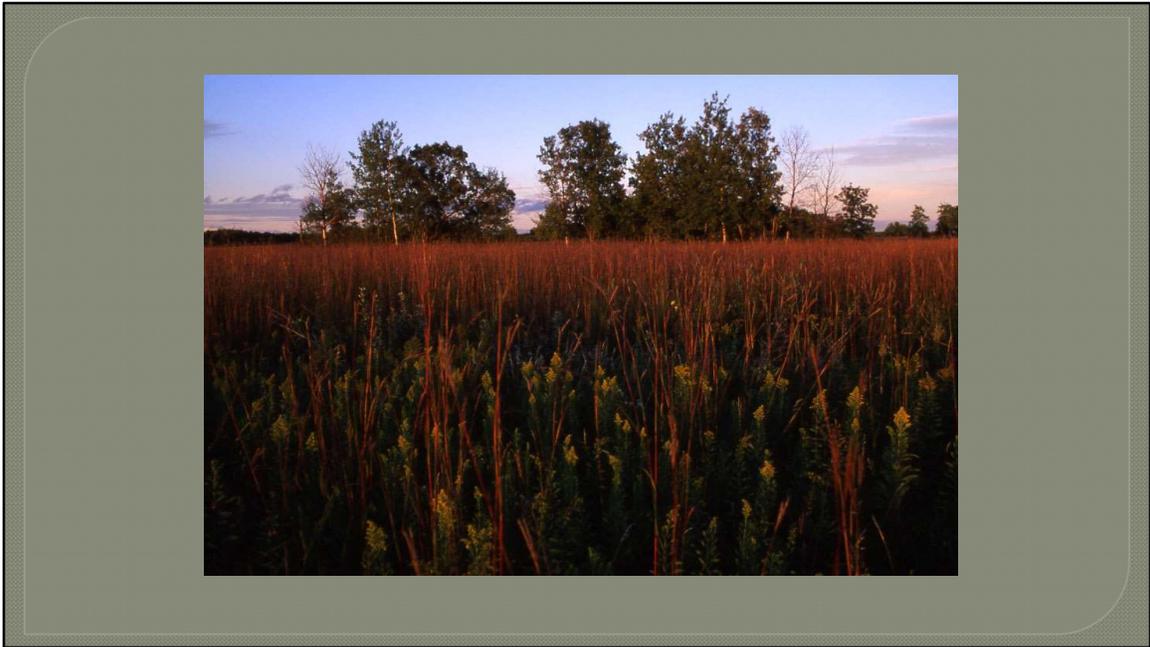
- Small white lady's slipper
- Western Prairie Fringed Orchid
- Great Plains Ladies'-tresses
- Powesheik Skipperling
- Eastern Whip-poor-will

Multi-SAR management plans

These days though management has become much more complicated and expensive with both federal and provincial legislation to be followed

When you have some species at risk (SAR) plants blooming in May, others in early July and some in September things become complicated. And when you add in species that are more mobile, the complexity increases.

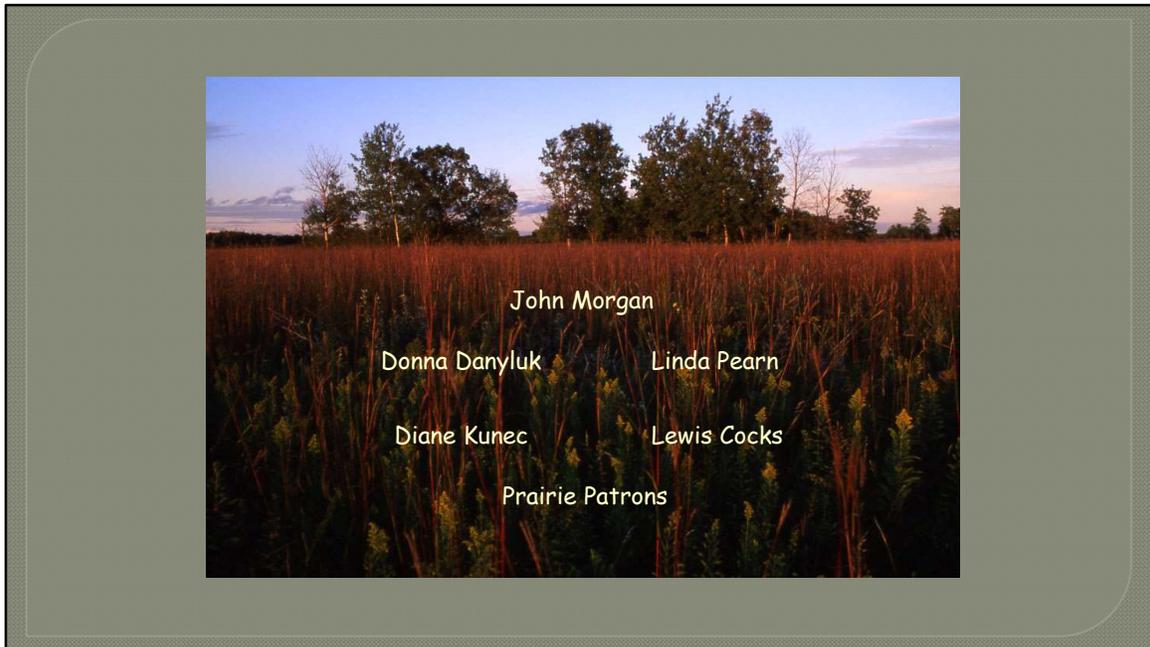
The production of Multi-SAR management plans and the ability to carry out these plans requires considerable expertise and resources.



When Nature Manitoba first started working on tall grass prairie, NCC had no staff in Manitoba. They now have a considerable presence in the province with over 20 staff.

Their science-based approach to management bodes well for all of Manitoba and particularly the tall grass prairie

Nature Manitoba is very pleased to entrust them with our tall grass prairie legacy as we transfer the title to NCC of all of our tall grass prairies in this our 100th Anniversary year.



And I would be remiss if I didn't say a few works of thanks

A number of people have served on the Habitat Conservation Committee over the years but the people listed here are the stalwarts of the committee especially "mister enthusiasm" John Morgan who has been there since the beginning.

Thanks also to the 100's of Prairie Patrons - we couldn't have done it without you

And to all the participating organizations and funders over the years - Thank you

Tim Teetaert

Natural Area Manager

Nature Conservancy of Canada



Thank you, Marilyn– we appreciate you providing your insights on Nature Manitoba’s history in the tall grass prairie, and its successful grassroots initiative to recognize the importance of the tall grass prairie ecosystem in Manitoba.

Our next speaker today is **Tim Teetaert, Natural Area Manager for the Nature Conservancy of Canada right here in Manitoba.**

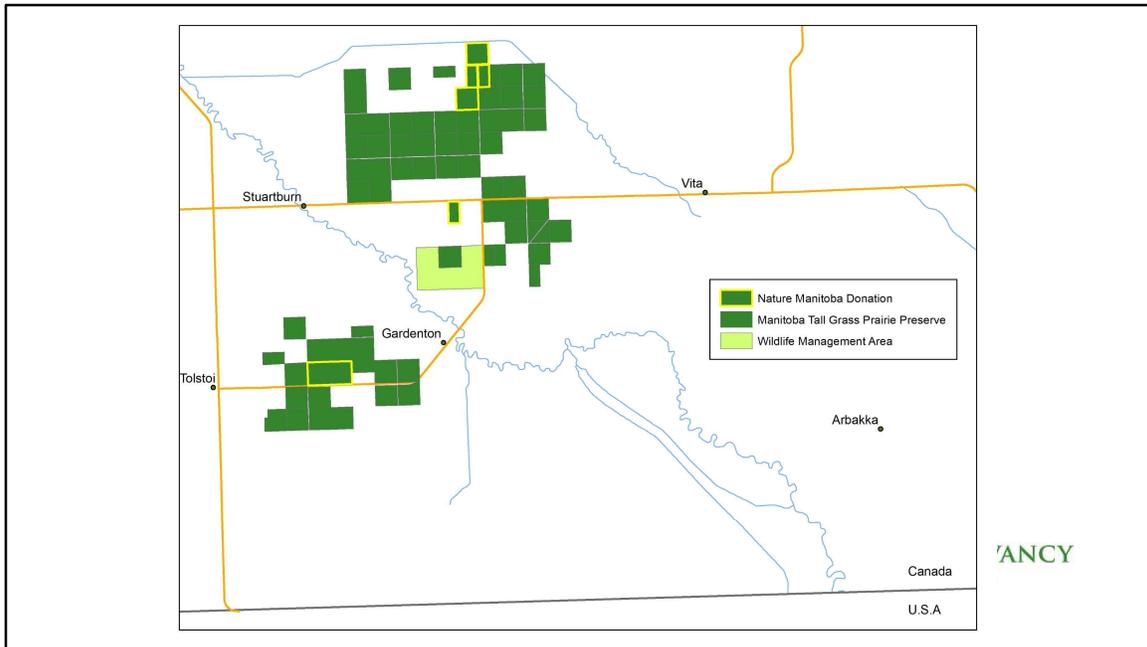
Tim is currently the natural area manager for the Tall Grass Prairie, Whitemouth River Watershed and Interlake

natural areas in Eastern Manitoba. Tim's responsibilities include land securement, stewardship and management activities, as well as the operation of The Weston Family Tall Grass Prairie Interpretive Centre. Tim works closely with private landowners, agricultural producers, and community members to conserve biodiversity across his natural areas using the best available science and land management techniques to guide his work.

Whenever you're ready, **Tim.**



Again, congratulations to Nature Manitoba on their 100th Anniversary. Nature Manitoba recognizing that habitat loss was a major factor in the declining numbers of a variety of species, along with their mandate to find ways to conserve habitat paved the way for the work of organizations like NCC in Manitoba. You can find evidence of their great work throughout Manitoba.



Nature Manitoba’s work identified the decline of tallgrass prairie, and highlighted the need for conservation. Who would have thought that their inventory of the remaining tallgrass prairie in Manitoba, along with their recommendation of a 2,500 acre preserve would lead to the present day Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve of over 11,000 acres. We are honoured to receive the donation of Nature Manitoba lands in the Preserve, and for being entrusted to continue Nature Manitoba’s legacy in the area.

Habitat Conservation to Help Save Manitoba's Endangered Species



The Nature Manitoba lands are nationally significant; and in addition to supporting tallgrass prairie, a habitat listed as endangered under Manitoba's Endangered Species and Ecosystems Act, it also supports a number of (9 or 10) provincially and federally listed species at risk.

Of particular note, Nature Manitoba lands support 2 of only 7 locations known in Canada to have POSK (COSEWIC: endangered) within the last 5 years

And the Nature Manitoba lands are part of the land base that supports the largest population of WPFO (COSEWIC: Endangered) in its range, and the only Canadian site for this species.

NCC's Stewardship Endowment Fund



As identified by Nature Manitoba, acquisition is only the first step in the conservation of tallgrass prairie, and management is essential to maintain it in a good condition. NCC is unique amongst land conservation organizations with our stewardship endowment fund, which allows us to achieve long-term stewardship goals.

Active land management to mimic natural disturbance regimes is critical to maintaining ecological processes and integrity of the habitats and species.

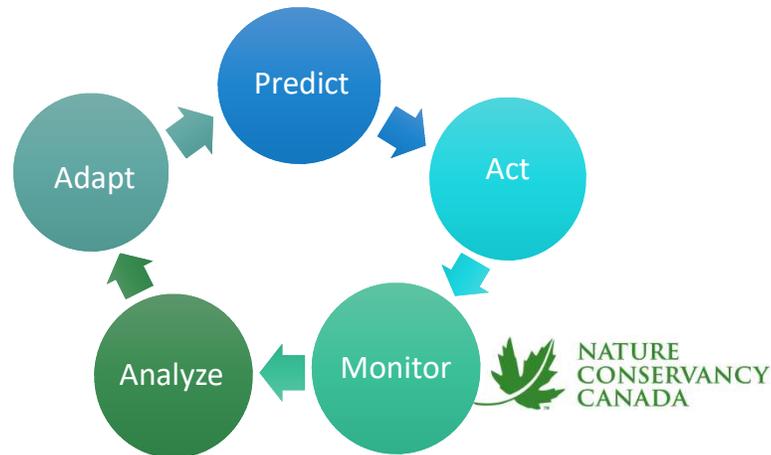
As noted by Nature Manitoba, long gone are the days when grazing bison and wildfires prevented woody encroachment, and introduced invasive species are a major concern in modern times.

The Nature Manitoba lands have been managed as conservation lands since been being acquired, with portions of the lands having received woody and invasive species control, been grazed, and most of the parcels

have documented fire, through both prescribed burns and wildfire. To ensure long term care of the lands, NCC undertakes Property Management Plans (5-year plans) and stewardship activities, including: wetland and prairie restoration, prescribed grazing and haying, and invasive species removal and control, continuing the way Nature Manitoba has managed the lands for the past 30 years.

Are there any Habitat Helpers present? If you are interested in removing old barbed wire fences and fence posts, please contact me.

Adaptive Management



Partnerships remain critical to the conservation of tallgrass prairie. The Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve Management Committee, made up of representatives from Nature Manitoba, NCC, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development – Wildlife and Fisheries Branch, and Environment and Climate Change Canada, provide support and direction.

Management decisions have been informed by the results of periodic species and ecosystem monitoring, assessments of management effectiveness, over 30 research studies, a climate-change adaptation process, and feedback from local agricultural partners. The Multi-SAR decision making tool is an evolution of over 30 years of habitat conservation which has brought many challenges and helped produce many positive changes to the landscape. Within the Multi-SAR decision making tool are corresponding 12 month SAR calendars which informs land management with consideration for SAR.



Thank you to Nature Manitoba for the generous gift of the lands in the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve

Thank you also to Nature Manitoba, the Zita and Mark Bernstein Family Foundation, and other individual funders who provided financial support for the transfer of these conservation lands

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Q&A PERIOD



Thank you, **Tim** – we’re grateful to you for your time today and for sharing your expertise on how NCC will continue to steward and manage land in the tall grass prairie preserve and how partnership is key to conservation.

We have several questions for the speakers that have been submitted by the audience.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Email

manitoba@natureconservancy.ca



If we didn't get to your question, have something else you would like to ask any of our panelists, or have a topic request for a future webinar, please reach out to us at manitoba@natureconservancy.ca.

FUTURE WEBINARS & EVENTS

Visit natureconservancy.ca/events



Thank you to everyone who joined us for today's webinar. **Marilyn and Tim** — thank you all for sharing your insights and expertise.

For updates on future webinars and events in your area, check out our Events Page at natureconservancy.ca/events.



On behalf of the Nature Conservancy of Canada – thank you again for joining us and have a wonderful rest of your Earth Day.

We hope you take some time today to get out and connect with nature and we’ll see you next time!

EVENT ENDING
THANKS FOR WATCHING!

