

THE CENTRAL GRASSLANDS ROADMAP:

A Collaborative Strategy for a Working Lands Biome



2022 SUMMIT REPORT

A SUPPLEMENT TO ROADMAP EDITS

GUIDING US TOWARDS RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE
GRASSLANDS AND HUMAN COMMUNITIES



SUMMIT OBJECTIVES & OVERVIEW

The first summit focused on defining the Roadmap's vision and defining high level priorities that elevated grasslands across the 3 countries and 8 sectors. The executive summary produced during that 2020 virtual summit has been guiding conversations and actions in the interim. Working groups have been working on policy, communications, metrics and biological and science tools that are needed to help save our grassland landscapes and human communities.

The 2022 Summit (May 23rd- May 25th, 2022 in Fort Collins, CO), was designed to meaningfully engage participants, encourage interaction, increase trust and collaborative will, and build shared understanding through story circles, roundtable conversations, and diverse opportunities for networking and dialogue that will propel the collective work forward.

As a diverse community of more than 300 Roadmap Ambassadors, we came together to:

- Provide guidance on the Roadmap's next steps, representing the 8 sectors and three countries of the Central Grasslands Roadmap.
- Solidify and celebrate leaders' and delegates' current and future contributions to reaching the Grassland Roadmap's goals
- Participate in cross-sector discussions to learn from one another and find areas of collaboration and overlap
- Collectively identify and prioritize immediate action steps to implement the Roadmap in the next 1 – 3 years and make measurable changes toward our collaborative scorecard
- Affirm steering committee leaders to steward the Roadmap for the next 2+ years

Virtual Participation: Given the travel restrictions placed on some agencies through May 2022, the Summit Planning Team and Facilitators created virtual options (explained in the last section of this document). While not a hybrid Summit as interactions between in-person attendees and those attending virtually were limited, virtual approaches included:

- Key leadership messages and speakers during the Summit were live-streamed
- Virtual-only breakouts were available for discussing key topics
- Virtual participants thoughts and ideas were captured and brought into the Roadmap

SUMMIT OUTCOMES: PRIORITIZED ACTIONS

The extensive raw data from all of the sessions at the 2022 Summit (raw data can be found cited on the homepage of the website), was themed, studied and synthesized in the weeks following the Summit. To most easily utilize the results from the brainstorming and prioritization activities at the Summit, and to present these in the context of the existing Roadmap, the actions were integrated with annotations into the newest draft of the Roadmap.

This can be best understood on p. 12 of that draft, which states the following:



Given the deep interconnection between the seven Goals, the Roadmap establishes an array of priorities and actions that can be implemented to collectively meet them. The three Strategy Areas that follow serve as an organizing tool for large buckets of this work: Partnerships & Engagement, Policy & Funding, and Research & Evaluation. Combined, the actions in these three Strategy Areas will achieve the Vision and Goals of the Roadmap.

2022 Roadmap Summit Update. On May 23-25, 2022, the Roadmap Community gathered for a second Summit in Fort Collins, Colorado to collectively identify and prioritize immediate action steps to implement the Roadmap in the next 1–3 years. These actions, resulting from iterative and cross-sector dialogues, have been integrated into the existing Roadmap actions listed in each Strategy Area below. Note that only those actions identified by Summit attendees as high priority, or actions that have emerged recently from topic or sector workgroups, are included here (see the Roadmap website for more detail). Actions from the Summit are identified as follows:

- Existing Roadmap actions **affirmed** at the Summit, including minor language updates.
- Existing Roadmap actions **strongly affirmed** (high votes) at the Summit, including minor and major language updates.
- **New actions** emerging from the Summit.

SUMMIT OUTCOMES: SECTOR REPORTS

In addition to the edits made to the Roadmap from the many different Summit workshops and sessions, each sector gathered during the penultimate session to discuss what they learned at the Summit, and to prioritize a set of sector-specific commitments. The following offers documentation of the report outs that were provided to all Summit attendees (virtual and in-person) during the closing session. **Please note:** this does not include all sectors yet, as not all sectors have provided writer reports. This document will be updated as those reports are submitted.

FIRST NATIONS

- Always have space for Indigenous youth and YPs at gathering. Focus on supporting their learning and growth and interconnection.
- Developing NDN-led nonprofits aimed at conservation efforts that prioritize biodiversity, paradigm shifts e.g., "management of livestock" toward ecological integrity of the land and relatives on it.
- Support the Grasslands comity to make needed shifts in reorienting from "___ scientific terms" to cultural values and traditional knowledge (not separate from Western science).
- Create more "ethical spaces" at these gatherings for ceremony, as well as Indigenous histories/sharing from local tribes for cultural awareness during Grassland comity to learn (can some learning happen in between gathering?? Especially the white folks?).



- Add on "ethic" piece to the roadmap for the whole Roadmap that's well- informed by Indigenous people.
- More "cluster-hiring" of Indigenous people at nonprofits, foundations, even the Grassland comity for evading tokenization and assimilation.
- Bigger focus on/recognition of treaties and tribal gov'ts as gov'ts in Grasslands comity.
- More than just land acknowledgments. "How can the Grasslands comity understand where we're coming from more?".
- Indigenous people being more assertive with their traditional knowledge in research spaces and with problem identification and problem solving.
- More youth at the conference, period.
- Ensure a regular, "set component" of and for Indigenous people at gatherings.
- Don't separate out the species into subgroups in the future.

ACADEMIC/RESEARCH

Three main actions or groups of actions:

1. (Help to) deliver the science specified/required by species-level biodiversity metrics. Contribute to filling knowledge gaps in annual cycle threats, habitat requirements, etc for species already identified previously in scorecard. As a sector, we expressed that, unlike some agencies or NGOs, we typically are "islands"... single PIs with students rather than teams of scientists all pulling together in a coordinated way. As such, we need to make extra sure that our efforts are not duplicating efforts elsewhere and must use roadmap process to identify the areas we are most needed. As PIs, we need to make sure that we open up time in our research agenda to be able to respond to research needs of the whole roadmap effort. We also want to remind others that we and our students are here and keen to DO the work.

2. Kind of the flip side of the previous point... we as a sector need to change HOW we approach how we do science. We need to enhance multi-lateral science collaboration—across national boundaries, co-produced with indigenous communities & involving traditional ecological knowledge, incorporating social science/human dimensions. We need to be better at inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary work. This is necessary to overcome the challenge of working at SCALE. We can't afford to re-invent the wheel across the landscape and we need conclusions that apply to broad geographic regions. We need to learn how to do new kinds of research—research that takes advantage of local knowledge in rigorous ways, hand and hand with traditional western science.

3. Communication. We acknowledge that academics have a bad rep to live down. We come to this conversation from a position of humility and respect for the diverse types of knowledge within the group. Communications goals fell into three sub-types.

(a) Academics need to learn how to effectively work with tribes and landowners. We need to devote time and energy to going to their spaces and listening. We have the skills to connect those folks to information or other researchers that can help solve their



problems. We can also find ways to do research that simultaneously addresses landowner information needs with additional science goals when the two have sufficient overlap.

(b) We need to do a better job at communicating the results of scientific research to landowners and others with the capacity to put outcomes into practice. This could be infographics, short popular articles, brochures... we could use help from professional communications folks to collaborate on producing these things.

(c) Similarly, we need to communicate better to the general public about our science and the value of grasslands. Messaging, production, and dissemination are all things that we—as islands—end up struggling to do effectively and regularly. We are interested in tapping into resources within the roadmap network to get these messages out.

NGOS

Mexico

We capitalize on our strengths. Traditionally known as Non Government Organizations (NGO's) or Non Profits, we prefer to see ourselves as Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) and be defined in a positive term.

As CSO's, and having worked most of my professional life in this sector, we see ourselves as the Research and Development Department, or the Innovation Lab of society, being often the first investors in the market of ideas and solutions. We are flexible, a practical mean of funding, we take risks, organize complex systems and bridge partnerships and opportunities.

We also provide leadership and help build human capital which is the backbone of all successful social and environmental projects. As hands on operators, CSO's make a constant effort to decolonize conservation efforts, elevating communities rural stakeholders and indigenous people, by providing knowledge and resources when needed. Interesting enough, this exchange is a two way process that benefits from extremely valuable traditional knowledge.

Our constant efforts to achieve conservation in North America and the world, will continue to go from strength to strength, joining forces with other national and international agents of change, fully committed to the vision of flourishing life on Earth for all beings.

Forthcoming: Mace (U.S) and Carolyn (Canada)

FEDERAL AGENCIES

- Spread the word and commit to implementing the road map vision - bottom up and top down.
- Agree to share/coordinate measurements - biodiversity, social, economic.



- Inspirational messaging - what is working well, local successes. Include Joint Ventures or JV8 as appropriate and also work on what we can do right now without any additional resources and make things happen.
- Building infrastructure to partner within and across agencies including agencies from other countries/sovereign nations. Continental Grasslands Task Force?
- Coordinate Strategic Funding - where can we leverage within and across agencies to defend and grow our core grasslands.
- Re-prioritize Staffing to priority grassland issues.
- **Canada-specific:** need to develop bigger levers to keep grass in grass through a policy framework that is supportive of ranches, increase carbon storage opportunities for ranchers and First Nations communities, include Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge ("2-eyed approach"), and participate/build a Grasslands Campaign.

STATE AGENCIES

- Identify & support producer driven and focused collaboratives between landowners, producers, tribal councils, state agencies and local champions such as coalitions, task forces, conservation districts.
- Hire a marketing firm to tell the story of the cow, ranch life and the connection to the grasslands.
 - This would be a national campaign targeting urban communities, promoting best management practices, creating support for ranches, and promoting keeping grassland intact.
- Develop a 'Tri-Nation' grassland federal policy work group highlighting the following programs:
 - 2023 Farm Bill (Farm the best, conserve the rest).
 - Sod Saver
 - Dis-incentives crop insurance subsidies on marginal cropland, that slows down row-crop conversion.
 - Grassland CRP and CREP.
 - Support programs that put cattle and bison back on the landscape.
- Fund a position that keeps the roadmap work going. Tri-Nation and Tribal Involvement.

INDUSTRY

- Overall commitment to the Roadmap
- Food production and biodiversity conservation are key to the future
- Economic and ecological support for landowners is a must
 - How might we reward early adopters?
- Let's continue to foster communication and cohesive narrative to have positive impact across sectors.



- Use voices to champion innovative agricultural producers and champion grasslands.

PRODUCERS

- Ranch viability improvement
- Stewardship- losing people on landscape- need to build stewards
- Increase students at university studying ag and learning about private land stewardship and partnerships
- Natural ambassadors for the grassland's cause: earn more through sharing
- **Mexico specific:** Elevate consciousness for grasslands, continue amazing interconnection between sectors and countries, honor our relationships, increase shared databases and informational resources including cross-training among ranchers and Ejidos, refine the specific implementation action plan for Mexico



HOW VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION WAS IMPLEMENTED

Tuesday, May 24th, 2022

LIVE STREAM: Session 1 ~ 8:45 am – 9:30 am: Opening Ceremony

Please join us as we kick-off the Summit through a welcoming planned by the Roadmap Indigenous/First Nations Workgroup, local Fort Collins-area leaders, and special guests Ava Hamilton and Monica Terkildsen.

ZOOM ROOMS: Session 2 ~ 9:30 am - 10 am: Story Circles

Attendees bring an object/photo that epitomizes what the grasslands mean to them and/or why they are champions of the grasslands, and we'll take this opportunity for everyone to share and explain their story to others. **Monolingual cross-sector ZOOM breakout rooms provided for participants to interact and share stories.**

LIVE STREAM: Session 3 ~ 10 am – 11:15 am: Highlights Structured by Strategy Areas

The Roadmap is structured under the three Strategy Areas of Partnership & Engagement, Policy & Funding, and Research & Evaluation. This session is designed to frame and illuminate for attendees six key initiatives, opportunities, or examples of how the Roadmap can enact change through its three strategy areas.

Part 1: 10:00 am – 10:30 am

- **Partnerships:** Ranchers and Producer Collaboratives (Bill Milton)
- **Partnerships:** First Nations Summit in Canada (Kansie)
- **Scaling Partnerships:** JV8 Updates (Graeme Patterson)

Part 2: 10:45 am – 11:15 am

- **Funding:** NFWF Grant Highlights (Seth Gallagher)
- **Research and Monitoring:** Integration of Bird Data (Chris Latimer)
- **Action:** Proactively Responding to Green/Yellow Areas on the Map (Dirac Twidwell)

ZOOM ROOMS: Session 4a ~ 11:15 am – 11:30 am: Respond to Opening Speakers

Each speaker will provide a different discussion prompt for attendees to discuss at their table. People are welcome to get up and move tables to meet other participants and join other conversations, or work through one or all of the prompts through discussion at their table. **Monolingual cross-sector ZOOM breakout rooms provided for participants to interact and share stories.**

LIVE STREAM: Session 4b ~ 11:30 am – 12:00 pm: Framing the Roadmap



We'll hear from Roadmap catalyst, Tammy VerCauteren, and facilitator, Matt Gray on how we arrived at today, key insights learned, and what to expect from the rest of the Summit, including directions on the afternoon sessions.

ZOOM ROOMS: Virtual Experience for Combined Sessions 5, 6, & 7 ~ 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Virtual participants will be able to brainstorm specific actions for each goal. A single facilitator will utilize breakout rooms which participants can move through, and either EasyRetro Boards or Trello for shared brainstorming on proposed actions. Participants will need to be self-directed after guidance from the facilitator. EasyRetro/Trello boards will be pre-loaded with directions as well as with the prompts being used in the in-person breakout rooms. Ideally, links to anything that in-person experts share ahead of the Summit will be linked to those EasyRetro/Trello boards. Interpretation could be available in select Goal rooms, rotating as will happen during the in-person sessions.

Wednesday, May 25th, 2022

HYBRID ZOOM/IN-PERSON OWL: Session 8 ~ 10:30 am – 12:00 pm: Canada Rendezvous

This is time focused on strategizing for Canada, including transboundary collaboration, policy planning, and discussion about priorities emerging from the Summit. Recurring Zoom meetings set possibly.

HYBRID ZOOM/IN-PERSON OWL: Session 9 ~ 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm: Mexico Rendezvous

This is time focused on strategizing for Mexico, including transboundary collaboration, policy planning, and discussion about priorities emerging from the Summit.

AYSYNCHRONOUS BRAINSTORMING (Trello or Easy Retro Boards)

Session 8 & 9 Combined ~ 11 am – 2 pm: Strategizing for Different Initiatives

Sessions 8 and 9 convene cross-sector, conversation-based forums for collaboration on specific policy, communication, and other wide-scale initiatives that are happening across the Biome. This is time focused on strategizing for these initiatives, so virtual participants will have the opportunity to answer prompts and help brainstorm using a couple of different online tools. This will not be a guided virtual session on Zoom, but the brainstorming boards will be open for three hours to participate. A Zoom room and chat will be available for tech support and to connect with others.

TIMED SURVEY: Session 10 ~ 2:15 pm – 2:45 pm: Prioritizing Actions by Sector

Virtual participants will be able to see a number of the priority actions that have arisen throughout the Summit. After reviewing those actions, virtual participants will complete a survey in which they will indicate their sector, and answer the same two prompts as those in-person will be discussing: what have we learned as a sector during the Summit and overall Roadmap process? And what do we want to elevate in 1-3 years as priority actions? The answers from virtual attendees to the second questions will be shared in raw form with sector participants in-person.



LIVE STREAM: Session 11 ~ 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm: Elevating Priority Actions by Sector, Close

Join back together as a full Summit to hear from Sector Leaders/Steering Committee Reps about the priorities discussed and elevated during the Sector Rendezvous.

Integration of Notes, Brainstorming, and Outcomes

All notes from virtual sessions, along with survey results and other synchronous and asynchronous participation was integrated into the organized raw data (see center column of the website homepage), which informed the new edits to the most recent draft of the Roadmap (see right column of the website home page).

