Grass Banking

The Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association (SSGA) in partnership with the South of the Divide Conservation Action Program Inc. (SODCAP Inc.) have secured funding to establish Grass Banking projects in southwest Saskatchewan.

The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) defines a “Grass Bank” as a physical place where forage is made available to ranchers, at a reduced fee, in exchange for tangible conservation benefits being produced on participants’ home ranches. The main goal of grass-banking is to have a community-based conservation plan that provides meaningful benefits for both the environment and participating ranchers. Several grass banks have emerged across the U.S. Lands in grass banks can be entirely private, public, or a mix of both. Typically, grass banks are operated by a conservation organization and include a privately owned or managed base property with associated public land grazing allotments.

Native grasslands in southwest Saskatchewan are the last refuge for many species at risk in the province and are also an important forage resource for cattle producers.

These grasslands are valuable from an ecological and cultural perspective and are also economically important.

SSGA and SODCAP Inc. are seeking to establish a grass bank in southwest Saskatchewan in cooperation with partner agencies. Voluntary agreements between a conservation or producer organization and a group of local producers will provide habitat for species at risk.

Existing Grass-Banks:

- The Nature Conservancy’s Matador Ranch- a grass-banking agreement with the Montana Rancher’s Stewardship Alliance Inc.

- Nature Conservancy of Canada’s Sandstone Ranch, which has an agreement with five members of the Sandstone Ranch Grazing Co-op in Alberta.

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**All agreements confidential & privacy is ensured.**

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