

August 10, 2011

New grant program benefits land conservation in Alberta

Funding available to land trust organizations

Edmonton... A new provincial grant program will help further the conservation and protection of ecologically important lands in the province.

The Alberta Land Trust Grant Program will make grants available to land trust organizations for the purchase of conservation easements on private land and to manage land administered under trusts. Conservation easements are legally binding voluntary agreements between a landowner and a land trust. When placed on the land title, an easement restricts future surface development but current activities, like grazing, continue. The landowner retains title.

“Whether we are maintaining large areas of native landscape or conserving corridors for biodiversity, the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program will help us achieve long-term conservation goals,” said Sustainable Resource Development Minister Mel Knight. “Land trusts are worthy partners and a good resource to help identify and protect high-value conservation lands.”

A land trust is a not-for-profit, non-government organization established to promote biodiversity conservation on private land. Any land trust currently operating in Alberta is eligible to apply for grant funding but must provide other funding and demonstrate that their project aligns with the government’s overall conservation objectives. The grant and matching funds must go towards a specific project. A total of \$5 million will be available for 2011-12.

The Alberta Land Stewardship Fund was established following changes in 2010 to the *Public Lands Act*, resulting from the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*.

The application deadline is Sept. 26. For information or to obtain an application package, contact Landtrust.grantprogram@gov.ab.ca

The Alberta government is working to build a better Alberta by fostering economic growth, strengthening our health and education systems, investing in infrastructure, supporting safe and strong communities and ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

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Editor’s Note: Minister Knight is available for media interviews Wed. Aug. 10 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

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