

**Beaver Hills Initiative**  
**Policies & Procedures**

**Approved by BHI Board**

**April 29, 2015**

# General Policies

## 1.1 Amendments to Policies and Procedures

The BHI recognizes that the policies in this manual will require periodic amendments.

### Procedures for amending, deleting or adding policies:

1. A policy amendment, deletion or change is submitted in writing to the Executive Director or initiated by the Executive Director.
2. The Executive Director has the responsibility of forwarding suggested policy changes to the Executive Committee, who will schedule discussion of the change on the agenda of a subsequent Board meeting.
3. Policy changes will be considered by the Board, who will approve, amend or deny all policy change requests.
4. Board approved policy additions, amendments or deletions will be administered by the Executive Director, who will have the responsibility of keeping all the Policy & Procedures updated and current.

## 1.2 Expenditure Approval

The BHI will require quotes and approvals on the following

- Operational expenses: Board approval required for all expenditures exceeding approved budget amounts.
- Capital purchases: Three bids or quotes are required for all capital purchases exceeding \$10,000.

### Procedures for approving expenditures:

1. The Executive Director will bring forward the recommendation for approval by the Board.
2. The Board will review the recommendation and make a decision.

## 1.3 Contracting

The BHI will not enter into a contract that places the BHI in financial jeopardy. To maintain the confidence of the public and the membership, all contracts will be awarded against the criteria outlined in the Request for Proposal. The Executive Director will review contracts to ensure that:

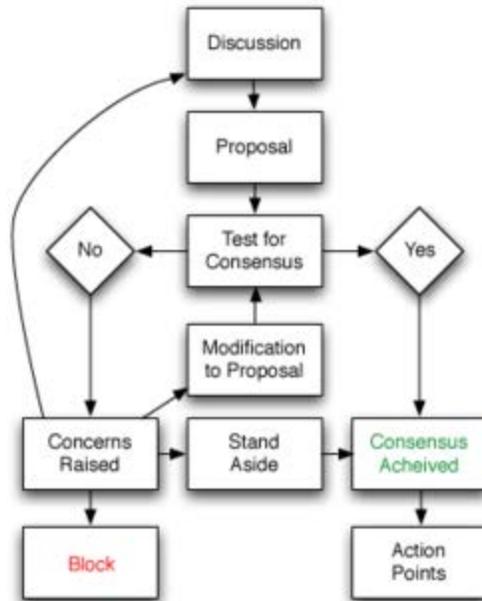
- Standard contract formats are used.
- Budgeted monies are available as outlined in the contract.
- Optional clauses are correctly outlined.

Contracts over approved budget will require Board approval.

## 1.4 Consensus-based Decision Making

Consensus-based decision-making is a group decision-making process that seeks the consent of all participants. Typically, each decision arising from an agenda item follows through a simple structure:

- Discussion of the item: The item is discussed with the goal of identifying opinions and information on the topic at hand. The general direction of the group and potential proposals for action are often identified during the discussion.
- Formation of a proposal: Based on the discussion a formal decision proposal on the issue is presented to the group.
- Call for consensus: The facilitator of the decision-making body calls for consensus on the proposal. Each member of the group usually must actively state whether they agree or consent, stand aside, or object, often by using a hand gesture, to avoid the group interpreting silence or inaction as agreement. The number of objections is counted to determine if this step's consent threshold is satisfied. If it is, dissenters are asked to share their concerns with proceeding with the agreement, so that any potential harms can be addressed/minimized. This can happen even if the consent threshold is unanimity, especially if many voters stand aside.
- Identification and addressing of concerns: If consensus is not achieved, each dissenter presents his or her concerns on the proposal, potentially starting another round of discussion to address or clarify the concern.
- Modification of the proposal: The proposal is amended, re-phrased or ridered in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process then returns to the call for consensus and the cycle is repeated until a satisfactory decision passes the consent threshold for the group.



### 1.5 Conflict of Interest

The BHI members and contractors will not place themselves in situations where their financial interest will benefit or conflict with those of the BHI. The BHI wishes to maintain the integrity of the organization by ensuring that all of its operations be conducted in a professional and objective manner.

#### Definition of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest includes a potential conflict of interest and exists when a member or employee:

- a. is themselves, party to a material contract with the BHI
- b. has an interest in; is a member of; employed by; or connected in any way, directly or indirectly with a third party that is party to a material contract with the BHI.

#### Procedures:

1. All conflicts of interest shall be resolved in the best interests of the BHI.
2. BHI members or employee shall report any conflict of interest, that they know of or ought reasonably to know of, as follows,
  - a. by the Executive Director to the Executive Committee
  - b. by a member of the Executive Committee to the Board Chair
3. All conflicts of interest shall be reported:
  - a. orally, as soon as is reasonable, after the conflict of interest arises; and
  - b. in written form within seven (7) days of making the initial oral report.
4. The Board Chair, acting in conjunction with the Executive Committee or the Board shall in a timely manner:
  - a. review all reports in which a conflict of interest is declared
  - b. determine whether or not a conflict of interest exists, and
  - c. decide what action, if any, is required to resolve the conflict.
5. All written reports by either the Executive Director or a member of the Board shall be forwarded the Board Chair.
6. Any conflict of interest that arises during the course of a meeting shall be reported during the meeting. Once reported, the Chair of the meeting or committee may require that the person reporting the conflict interest:
  - a. withdraw from participating in the meeting or the discussion of the issue in which they have a conflict of interest;
  - b. a conflict of interest reported during a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.
8. The lack of a declaration of a conflict could result in the termination of membership with the BHI as follows:
  - a. if a member, by the Executive Director;
  - b. if the Executive Director, by the Board Chair;
  - c. if a Board member, by the Board;
  - d. if the Board Chair, by the Executive Committee.

### 1.6 Privacy Policy

To provide services to our members and the public, the BHI may need to collect and use individual member's information. The organization will protect the privacy of individuals and will ensure that inappropriate access is prohibited.

## **Personal Information of BHI Members**

The *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) protects individual privacy by requiring the BHI to obtain consent for the collection, use and disclosure of personal information and providing individuals with a right of access to their own personal information. The collection and use of some personal information is fundamental to the BHI's operations. Personal information is any information about an individual, or is information that allows an individual to be identified.

### **Disclosure and Use of Personal Information of BHI Members**

The BHI is responsible for all information under its control and access will be authorized only with the knowledge it is necessary for the organization or its representative to meet their responsibilities. Anyone who has access to personal information collected by the BHI must abide by this policy. Personal information will also be made available to those authorized by law to have such access. Under no circumstances shall BHI sell, trade or otherwise distribute any personal information for any other purpose than for which it was collected. Names, phone numbers and/or email addresses may be shared with BHI members to facilitate participation in programs. Email communication may be used to promote BHI events and for general communication.

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) does not apply to private businesses, non-profit organizations or professional regulatory organizations operating in Alberta. In these cases, the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) will apply.

### **Accuracy**

The BHI will strive to maintain accurate personal information. It is up to the individual to inform the BHI of any changes.

### **Storage and Protection**

The BHI maintains hard copy files and electronic files of personal information in a secure manner. Personal information will be maintained only for as long as it is needed or as required by law and will be destroyed in a secure manner.

### **Access and Compliance**

Upon written request by an individual to the BHI Executive Director, information of the existence, use and disclosure of their personal information can be accessed. Concerns or complaints about this policy or the use of personal information should be sent in writing to the BHI Executive Director.

### **1.7 Speaking on Behalf of the Organization**

The Board Chair and/or the Executive Director or their authorized designate speaks for the organization. Authorized designate may also be delegated by the Board. The Mission and Vision of the BHI is as follows:

BHI Mission: Working together for a sustainable region, through shared initiatives and coordinated action.

BHI Vision: The Beaver Hills Initiative values the region for its natural beauty, quality of life, and supports co-operative efforts to sustain quality of water, land, air, natural resources and community development.

### **1.8 Representation of Affiliation**

Members or contractors may not use their organizational affiliation in connection with matters or issues contrary to positions taken by the BHI. If any member or contractor is in doubt, they are asked to discuss the situation with the Executive Director and/or Board Chair. Please reference Policy 1.7.

### **1.9 Advocacy**

Advocacy is a political process by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. The BHI is not an advocacy group.

# Member and Membership Policy

## Purpose

The BHI believes that as a multi-stakeholder group, membership is vital to the ongoing work and growth of the organization. The Executive Director will maintain a membership list in the BHI office.

The BHI needs to recognize a variety of members in order to ensure participation of a suitable range of public authorities, local communities and private interests in the development and implementation of the BHI functions. Three categories of members have been recognized:

1. organizations that participate through resources but do not provide any direct funding to the BHI
2. organizations that both participate and provide funding
3. organizations that provide funding, but do not participate

## Operational Contribution

The annual operational contribution will be set by the Board based on recommendations by the Councilor Working Group (CWG).

## Member Recognition

Members may be recognized in promotional materials, including, but not limited to, website, banners, organization-sponsored session or presentations.

## Project Support Opportunity

The BHI values long term memberships and acknowledges short term or single project supporters.

The short term or single project support amount shall be set by the Board based on recommendations by the Research & Monitoring Working Group (RMWG) or other Working Group.

Sponsorship Level	Support Amount
Bronze (Boreal Chorus Frog)	\$0 – 1,000 annually
Silver (Beaver)	\$1,001 – 5,000 annually
Gold (Trumpeter Swan)	\$5,001 – 10,000 annually
Platinum (Bison)	\$10,001 + annually
Specific Project (Fisher)	Defined by project budget (whole or in part)
Single Donation (Damselyfly)	Undefined by project budget

## Procedures:

1. The Member Group (Public, Industry, Non-Government Organization, Government) in which the member shall be included will be, if applicable, determined by the Board.
2. Members are responsible for behaving in accordance with the policies and procedures of the BHI and in pursuit of the BHI's mission and vision.
3. Representatives shall be appointed by each organizational member. One individual will be designated to act as the representative of the organization at all applicable BHI meetings. Each organization shall notify the Executive Director of the name, address, telephone number, email and occupation of the representative to the BHI.
4. Any member wishing to withdraw from membership may do so upon a notice in writing to the Board through the Executive Director.
5. Any member may be expelled from membership by the Board, for any reason deemed by the Board, to be injurious to, or at odds with, the objectives of the BHI.

## Board Related Policies

### 2.1 Board Members

The Board shall have full control and management of the BHI.

The Board shall meet as often as may be required, but at least once every three months.

### 2.2 Quorum

Quorum is defined as the minimum number of members necessary to conduct the business of the group. Typically, quorum is described as a proportion of the total number of members. It may be “a majority”, which is a half of the total plus one, or a “special or qualified majority”, such as two-thirds of the total. Board quorum will constitute half of the total members plus one. If quorum is not met at a Board meeting, decisions can be made via email to the Board to determine if there are any Blocks (refer to Policy 1.4). Quorum is required to finalize decisions. A meeting can be held without quorum.

### 2.3 Meeting Protocols

The BHI has set out procedures for meetings to ensure they are efficient and effective.

#### Agendas

The draft agenda for Board meetings will be sent to all Board members prior to the meeting. All members shall read the agenda and any attachments prior to the meeting. In this way, proper consideration can be given to all matters of the Board at the meetings. The agenda and supporting documentation will be sent to the Board members five (5) days prior to the Board meeting.

#### Time and Place

Board meetings will be set for an acceptable time on a regular basis. A location for all meetings will be arranged in advance. Any changes in meetings date, time or venue need to be forwarded to all Board members as early as possible.

The Working Group members will set Working Group meetings for an agreeable time on a regular basis.

#### Participation

All members are encouraged to actively participate in meeting discussion. In the interest of achieving the best results possible, all members are encouraged to seek to understand before seeking to be understood during discussions.

Members bringing recommendations or motions to the Board should be prepared to provide background information and answer questions to give clarification.

#### Procedures

A consensus model will be used for decision-making (refer to Policy 1.4).

#### Meeting Minutes or Reports

Board and/or Working Group minutes, should be prepared and distributed in a timely manner to the identified distribution group. Copies of all reports and meeting minutes are maintained by the Executive Director and stored at the BHI office (Strathcona County Electronic Business Records Tool).

### 2.4 Board Chair and Vice Chair

The Board will elect one Chair and one Vice Chair with staggered terms of 2 or 3 years. Elections shall occur in November. The election shall follow the rules and procedures of an organizational meeting (as per Roberts Rules).

# Financial Management

## 3.1 Accounting

The BHI will use an accrual basis of accounting that recognizes revenues when they have been earned and expenses when they have been incurred.

## 3.2 Financial Statements

Financial statement will be audited within the processes of Strathcona County.

## 3.3 Cheque preparation and mailing

The BHI will prepare and mail cheques for vendor payments within 30 days after the invoice date. The Executive Director, as well as one other member of the Executive Committee, will approve all expenses.

## 3.4 Expense reimbursements

Expense reimbursement requests for the Executive Director will be approved by the Board.

## 3.5 Financial Reports

The Executive Director will prepare and distribute monthly financial reports to the Board.

## 3.6 Financial planning and budgeting

The BHI will ensure there are budgets developed prior to the start of a new fiscal year (January 1).

The BHI will engage in a budget planning process prior to the end of the fiscal year to be approved by the beginning of the next fiscal year with input from the Working Group Chairs and other relevant individuals.

To ensure that the BHI continues to exist and stays financially sound, the Executive Director shall develop the budget, based on the mission, the Board's priorities, and the organization's long-term plan. Budgets will not place the organization in financial jeopardy, and will show acceptable levels of foresight.

1. Budgets will provide:

- a. Enough detail to give reasonably accurate projections of revenues and expenses.
- b. Separation of capital and operational items.
- c. Appropriate detail for the annual fiscal audit.
- d. Disclosure of planning assumptions.
- e. Annual budgets will not plan to expend more funds than are conservatively projected to be received.
- f. Budgets must be based on Board-stated priorities and on a long-term administrative plan.
- g. Budgets must be submitted for approval a minimum of one month before the fiscal year end.
- h. All unbudgeted expenditures must be pre-approved by the Board.

### Procedures:

- a. The Board gives the intent and regulations to the Executive Director to develop the budget.
- b. The Working Groups will have input into the budget to ensure that objectives will be financially supported.

## 3.7 Purchasing policies

See Contracting Policy 1.3.

## 3.8 Records Retention

The BHI will retain records as required by law and destroy them using secure methods when appropriate.

## 3.9 Risk management

It is an absolute necessity that an effective back-up system for computer files is maintained and adhered to without exception; lack of effective back-up could result in an expensive and time-consuming reconstruction.

The financial records will have a back-up saved in two separate files on the computer and server and on a method that is removed from the computer, i.e. off-site storage or the cloud.

## Beaver Hills Initiative Board Members

### 4.1 Area of Responsibility

The Beaver Hills Initiative (BHI) Board Members (Board) is the governing board of the BHI. On behalf of its members, the Board is responsible for ensuring that the BHI be guided by its vision and mission, achieves the Business Plan goals and operates within its policies and procedures.

### 4.2 Key Duties

- a) Provide direction and make decisions on behalf of the members of the BHI.
- b) Implement the Business Plan.
- c) Implement the Governance Policies.

### 4.3 Composition

The Board is composed of representatives of local, regional, national, public, and community interest groups (Refer to Appendix A).

## Beaver Hills Initiative Chair

### 5.1 Area of Responsibility

The role of the Chair is to ensure the integrity of the Board's processes and to represent the Board to external members and audiences. The Chair is the only Board member authorized to speak for the Board, except when he/she temporarily delegates this authority to another person. Confirmation of delegated spokesperson authority will be made jointly by the Chair and the Executive Director, verbally or in writing.

### 5.2 Key Duties

Ensure that the BHI Board complies with its policies and procedures, communications protocols, and business plan schedule of activities.

- a) During Board meetings, the Chair will ensure:
  - Discussions and information provided are on task.
  - Consensus-based decision making is followed.
  - Minutes are taken as assigned and sent to Board Members along with next meeting materials prior to the next Board meeting.
- b) The Chair has authority to make reasonable interpretations of Board policies and procedures and Board-Executive Director relationship, with the exception of (a) employment or termination of an Executive Director and (b) instances where the Board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others.
- c) The Chair has no authority to supervise or direct the Executive Director.
- d) The Chair may represent the Board to outside parties in communicating Board-stated positions or information.
- e) The Chair may delegate spokesperson authority, by joint decision with the Executive Director, but remains accountable.
- f) The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all Working Groups of the Board and has signing authority on behalf of the BHI as well as the Executive Director.

### 5.3 Composition

The BHI Board Chair will be selected from the Board, along with a Vice-Chair who will serve in the absence of the Chair or as otherwise required.

# Beaver Hills Initiative Executive Director

## 6.1 Area of Responsibility

The Executive Director is accountable to the Board. The Executive Director is responsible for implementing all staffing actions, operational requirements, work plan activities and fulfilling reporting requirements to the Board.

The Board will review the Executive Director performance annually in alignment with Strathcona County's Performance Planning and Review. This may include feedback opportunities such as questionnaire, 360 review, and/or one-on-one sessions. Consequently, the Executive Director responsibilities are stated as performance in two areas:

- a) Organizational achievement of vision and mission and Business Plan implementation.
- b) Organizational operation and compliance with policies and procedures.

## 6.2 Key Duties

The Executive Director will ensure compliance with Board policies and procedures, the Business Plan, Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles. The Executive Director will implement operational requirements under advisement of the Board, and follow instructions outlined in communications and directives from the Board.

- a) The Board will develop an annual work plan with the Executive Director to achieve targeted outcomes and the Business Plan. Within the work plan, specific projects may be identified which include detailed requirements with specific timelines in order to satisfy requirements of the Business Plan.
- b) The Executive Director will be expected to exercise reasonable, ethical and sound judgment in daily operational requirements, and in achieving the Business Plan.
- c) The Executive Director will prepare an annual budget reflecting financial requirements, project costs, and other resource requirements of the annual work plan.
- d) The Executive Director will prepare project reports or contract milestones at Board meetings.
- e) The Executive Director is a non-voting member of the Board, is an ex-officio member of all Board Working Groups and has signing authority on behalf of the BHI.
- f) The Executive Director may act a delegated spokesperson for the Chair of BHI, when required to do so, and in joint agreement with the Chair.
- g) The Executive Director reports to the Board through the Board Chair.

## 6.3 Composition

The BHI Board will appoint the Executive Director who will be employed under the terms laid out in the Fiscal Manager Memorandum of Understanding. As the Executive Director is a Strathcona County employee, a contingency plan for coverage will be in place if circumstances require an Acting Executive Director.

# Beaver Hills Initiative Fiscal Manager

## 7.1 Area of Responsibility

The Fiscal Manager (Strathcona County) will execute the legal responsibilities of the organization. The Fiscal Manager is responsible and liable for:

- a) Legal requirements and responsibilities
- b) Human resources
- c) Protection from risk (insurance)
- d) Fiduciary trust

## 7.2 Key Duties

The Board will enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Fiscal Manager. The duties of the Fiscal Manager will be to:

- a) Provide legal authority and administrative processes to receive, hold, and expend funds
- b) Conduct all staffing actions, and provide timely and accurate payroll and benefits to staff
- c) Own property, as required, on behalf of the BHI
- d) Account for and regularly report on all income, expenditures, assets and liabilities related to BHI including audited financial statements
- e) Extend risk protection to the activities of the BHI

The Fiscal Manager acts on behalf of the BHI. The Fiscal Manager does not direct the expenditure of money or the activities of the Executive Director.

## 7.3 Composition

The BHI Board has agreed that Strathcona County will act as the Fiscal Manager for the BHI and enter into a memorandum of understanding that clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, timelines and limitations of the agreement.

## Beaver Hills Initiative Executive Committee

### 8.1 Area of Responsibility

The Executive Committee is a Board Working Group that serves as a coordinating body to ensure consistency of purpose, shared use of resources, communications, and timely direction on specific projects which will assist the Executive Director and Chair to set agendas and priorities for Board consideration.

### 8.2 Key Duties

The Executive Committee will assist the Executive Director and Chair to:

- a) Set Board meeting agendas
- b) Establish priorities for Board consideration
- c) Coordinate activities of Working Groups
- d) Provide information to the Executive Director in preparing the annual work plan, Business Plan and budget.

### 8.3 Composition

The Executive Committee will be composed of:

- a) All Working Group Chairs
- b) Board Chair
- c) Executive Director

# Beaver Hills Initiative Working Groups

## 9.1 General for All Working Groups

- a) The Board is the governing board of the BHI. On behalf of its members, it is responsible for ensuring that the BHI achieves its Business Plan goals and objectives, vision, mission and guiding principles operating within its governing policies and procedures.
- b) The Working Groups are established under the Board. The Working Groups will work independently from the Board, reporting regularly to the Board.
- c) The Chair of the Working Groups will provide updates on activities at scheduled Board meetings and Executive Committee meetings as required. The Chair of the Working Group forms part of the Executive Committee.
- d) Resources for activities of the Working Group will be in-kind time and approved funding through the Business Plan, Executive Director and the Board.
- e) The Working Groups will establish annual work plans and adjust priorities as required.
- f) The Working Groups will maintain a flexible membership policy to enable the addition of new members who share the mission and vision of the BHI and the Working Group. New member invitations will be considered and approved through a consensus among the existing Working Group members. The intent is to introduce new members to the BHI via a Working Group assignment.
- g) The Working Groups will comply with Policies 1.4 and 2.2 regarding consensus-based decision making and quorum.

## 9.2 Area of Responsibility

- a) Co-ordinate, update, and make data and information available to members as directed by the overall Business Plan, Board and subsequent Working Group work plans.
- b) Build awareness, understanding and support for the activities of the BHI.
- c) Strive to apply leading edge concepts, innovative and science-based approaches, and adaptive management based on the best available information to establish an understanding and appreciation of the ecological integrity and landscape character of the Beaver Hills to achieve a bioregional approach to sustainable development.
- d) Build on the foundation of Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles approved by the Board.
- e) Optimize inter-agency cooperation and collaboration to advance the goals and principles of the BHI.

## 9.3 Key Duties

- a) Support the Board in the fulfillment of its responsibilities.
- b) Work with consultants when required, understanding that the project management is the responsibility of the respective Working Group Chair and/or the Executive Director.
- c) When requested by the Board, to undertake in-depth analyses of specific planning related issues and to report on the implications and alternative options for addressing these issues.
- d) Actively support and pursue fulfillment of the BHI's three Mandates and Activities:
  - Data and information sharing
  - Land Management Planning and Strategic Planning; and
  - Membership Building.
- e) Develop and implement management programs/activities that advance the BHI Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles.
- f) Increase basic knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the Beaver Hills' unique landscape and the life it supports.
- g) Provide an advisory role for all members and stakeholders with respect to advancing natural and social science-based land-use planning, and landscape management policies and practices.
- h) Work collaboratively with other Working Groups, organizations and agencies to expand the BHI membership and advance the BHI Vision and Mission.
- i) Each Working Group Chair may speak or act on behalf of the Board when formally given such authority for a specifically defined purpose.
- j) Individual members will fully maintain their jurisdictional autonomy and are not expected to work outside the scope of their respective mandates.

- k) Working Group members are free to initiate their own projects and undertakings for the individual or mutual benefit of its member organizations. Project proposals initiated from within Working Groups will be presented to the Research and Monitoring Working Group, or other relevant Working Group, and evaluated using the Matrix process (refer to Appendix B) or other similar evaluation method. Results will be brought forward to the Executive Committee and then Board for review and endorsement.

#### **9.4 Composition**

Working Group memberships are comprised of the organizations that have significant land bases and programs within the Beaver Hills, expertise, research, interest, knowledge and desire to share a mandate to provide some or all of the following functions: environmental education, research, conservation, nature-based recreation/tourism and/or heritage appreciation services, planning policy recommendations, GIS and land management. Membership also includes an academic element to bring leading-edge protected areas management theory into the Working Groups dynamic.

## Planners Working Group (PWG)

### 10.1 Outcomes

- a) Completion and implementation of a land use planning framework that:
  - Recognizes and protects the distinctive qualities and essential character of the Beaver Hills' environment and landscapes;
  - Supports and complements the role of protected areas in maintaining the diversity of landscape types and habitat, and associated species and ecosystems throughout the Beaver Hills; and
  - Protects and enhances the natural, social and economic capital of the Beaver Hills.
- b) Innovative development where the type, size, design and location is in harmony with:
  - The social, economic and cultural fabric of the communities concerned;
  - The environmental and ecological capacity of the area; and
  - The distinctive character of the Beaver Hills
- c) Provide an advisory service to members and stakeholders concerning land use planning, policies and practices that contribute to the objectives of the BHI.
- d) Community collaboration and participation when requested.
- e) Coordinated, consistent and complementary messaging (internal and public) among the participating organizations and through organization resources.
- f) Opportunities for local residents and visitors to appreciate, interact, and connect with nature through coordinated planning and programming involving all relevant organizations and stakeholders of the Beaver Hills.
- g) Scientific and educational activities, which contribute to the long-term well-being of residents and to the development of public support for environmental protection of the Beaver Hills.
- h) Activities and employment opportunities that are appropriate in type and scale to the essential qualities of the area bring benefits to the area, and contribute to the social and economic viability of the Beaver Hills.

### 10.2 Composition

The BHI Planners Working Group may be composed of members from all interest groups.

## Communication and Outreach Working Group (COWG)

### 11.1 Outcomes

- a) Involvement of community collaboration and participation as needed.
- b) Coordinated, consistent and complementary messaging to the public among the participating organizations and through organization resources.
- c) Information in the form of website, newsletters, brochures, presentations, posters, coordinated with Board and Working Groups and delivered to the public and internal stakeholders.
- d) Coordinated, consistent and project specific messaging and information developed and delivered to the Board and Working Groups through the website, minutes, agendas, Business Plan, Board policies and procedures, and presentations.
- e) Coordinated planning and programming involving all relevant organizations and stakeholders of the Beaver Hills and opportunities for local residents and visitors to experience, appreciate, interact, learn and connect with nature occurs.
- f) Participation and initiation of celebrations, conference and events around the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity values that reflect and integrate the natural and cultural history of the Beaver Hills.

### 11.2 Composition

The BHI Communications and Outreach Working Group may be composed of members from all interest groups.

## Councilor Working Group (CWG)

### 12.1 Outcomes

- a) Coordinated, consistent and complementary messaging (internal and public) supporting the BHI Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, and Business Plan.
- b) Policy outcomes promoting the retention and enhancement of the ecological health, integrity, biodiversity and character of the Beaver Hills.
- c) Policy and Procedure implementation.
- d) Annual assessment of Membership fees.

### 12.2 Composition

The BHI Councilor Working Group will be composed of elected officials from municipal members.

## Protected Areas Working Group (PAWG)

### 13.1 Outcomes

- a) The retention and enhancement of the ecological health, integrity, diversity and character of the Beaver Hills.
- b) The promotion of appropriate development (design and location) that is harmonized with the ecological features, function and aesthetic and cultural character of the Beaver Hills.
- c) Promote community collaboration and engage in participation processes to support the objectives of the Protected Areas Working Group and the BHI.
- d) Support the balanced integration of and environmental, social, and economic values that support sustainable conditions for all individuals and communities (e.g. vigorous and healthy human communities, a wealth of natural capital, robust environmental communities providing a range of ecological goods and services etc.).
- e) The establishment of landscape linkages that secure the ecological connectivity between core protected areas within the Beaver Hills and between the Beaver Hills and surrounding regional habitat.
- f) The protection and celebration of biodiversity values that reflect and integrate the natural and cultural history of the Beaver Hills.
- g) Coordinated, consistent and complementary messaging (internal and public) among the participating organizations.
- h) The delivery of a range of opportunities for the public to interact and connect with nature through a combined and coordinated planning and programming effort of protected area organizations in the Beaver Hills.
- i) Examine, support and promote the development of a spectrum of recreation and tourism opportunities that are in keeping with the ecological capacity and landscape character of the Beaver Hills and the principles of the BHI.

### 13.2 Composition

The BHI Protected Areas Working Group may be composed of members from all interest groups.

## Research and Monitoring Working Group (RMWG)

### 14.1 Outcomes

- a) Contribute to community collaboration and participation when requested.
- b) Participate in opportunities for local residents and visitors to appreciate, interact, learn, experience and connect with nature through coordinated volunteer science based research projects.
- c) Scientific and educational activities, which contribute to the long-term well-being of residents and visitors population and to the development of public support for the environmental protection of the Beaver Hills.
- d) Activities and research opportunities that reflect and support the essential qualities of the Beaver Hills region and contribute to the social, ecological and economic viability of the Beaver Hills.

### 14.2 Outcomes - GIS

- a) Data integrity is ensured through standardized methods of data collection, management, analysis, and dissemination.
- b) Timely and relevant geographic information about the status and trends of the Beaver Hills is available and accessible by the members of the BHI and the public to support land use decisions.
- c) GIS advisory and technical support services are available to the members of the BHI community.

### 14.3 Composition

The Research and Monitoring Working Group may be composed of members from all interest groups.

## Appendix A – Board Members (2015)

Interest Group	Member Group	Authorized Representative
Local	Beaver County	1
	Lamont County	1
	Leduc County	1
	Strathcona County	1
Regional	Alberta Government (Agriculture and Rural Development, Environmental and Sustainable Resource Development, Municipal Affairs, Culture and Tourism)	2
	Research Organization (Alberta Innovates Technology Futures)	1
	Academia (University of Alberta Main Campus, Augustana Campus)	1
	Industrial (to be determined)	n/a
National	Elk Island National Park, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	2
Public	Resident, Volunteer, Friends of Elk Island Society, Friends of Cooking Lake, Treaty 6 First Nation, Metis Nation of Alberta	1
Community	Non-Government Organizations (Alberta Fish and Game Association, Alberta Lake Management Society, Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Edmonton and Area Land Trust, Land Stewardship Centre of Canada, Miistakis Institute, Nature Conservancy of Canada, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, Royal Astronomical Society)	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>13</b>

# Appendix B – Proposal Evaluation Matrix

	Order	Criteria	Description	Scoring	Max score
Project management	1	Relevant to BHI	Is the project relevant to the BHI Principles? These are: 1. Quality of Life - Essential Character, Property Rights 2. Biodiversity- Wetlands, Native Upland Habitat and Corridors, Species of Concern 3. Water – Watersheds, Water Quality 4. Land - Land Use 5. Air - Air Quality	No relevance: 0 points, relevant to one Principle: 2 points, relevant to two or more Principles: 4 points	6
	2	Informs policy	Does the project have potential to inform a policy relevant to the BHI, including environmental, social, and economic related policies?	No: 0 points, Yes, indirectly (requires further development before the outcome of the research can be implemented as policy) informs: 2 points, Yes: directly informs: 6 points	6
	3	Addresses critical data/information gap	Does the project address a specific data/information gap identified by a BHI stakeholder or the Board?	Project does not address a specific data or information gap: 0 points, addresses a specific data or information gap: 6 points	6
	4	Leverages funding	Is there a potential for this project to leverage funding from other sources?	No: 0 points, Yes: BHI contribution >50%: 2 points, BHI contribution <50%: 4 points	4
	5	Supported by partner	Is the project proposed by, or supported by, a BHI partner? Support should be documented by a letter of support.	Project proposal unrelated to BHI partners: 0 points, project proposal coming from a BHI partner or supported by a BHI partner: 3 points	3
Conservation	6	Relevant to restoration/conservation of landscape	Is the project promoting restoration and/or conservation of native landscape and/or natural capital within the BHI? Natural capital acknowledges that certain types of land use (e.g. agriculture) still promote ecological function and have value for native plants and wildlife.	Does not promote restoration and/or conservation of landscape/natural capital: 0 points, contributes to the restoration and/or conservation of the landscape/natural capital: 3 points	3
	7	Addresses protected species or communities	Is this project addressing species listed under the federal SARA Act, provincial Wildlife Act, or as a species/community of conservation concern by Alberta Conservation Information Management System (ACIMS, formerly ANHEC)? This includes species listed as data deficient, of special concern, threatened, endangered, or extirpated.	Project not related to either listed species or species/community of conservation concern: 0 points, addresses conservation of one or more unlisted species: 2 points, addresses conservation of one of these listed species: 3 points	3
Human dimensions	8	Address quality of life and well-being	Does the project address the quality of life, well-being, and experiences of individuals, communities, and/or visitors to the Beaver Hills?	No: 0, Yes: 3 points	3
	9	Addresses human dimensions of conservation and land-use change	Does the project address the sustainability of the character of the Beaver Hills, including social, historical, economic, and cultural aspects from a human dimensions standpoint.	No: 0, enhances the character of the Beaver Hills from a human dimensions standpoint: 3 points	3
Methodology	10	Builds on existing projects/knowledge	Does the project build on existing data and/or knowledge (i.e., making use of previously collected data or applying consistent methods)?	Does not build on previous work: 0 points, project builds on existing knowledge from within the BHI, but continued research in this line is not considered critical: 1 point, project builds on existing knowledge from within the BHI and continued development in this area is desirable: 2 points	2
	11	Methods are innovative or established	Are methods used in this project original or are they proven methods applied to projects within the BHI (especially important if there are no existing effective methods being applied already within BHI)? New methods must offer an improvement over proven existing methods in terms of accuracy, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, etc.	Methods are neither innovative/original nor do they apply proven methods within the BHI: 0 points, methods are innovative/original or apply proven methods within the BHI: 2 points	2
	12	Sampling site distribution	Is the distribution of relevant sampling sites sufficiently representative of the BHI?	Project has an insufficient number of study sites: 0 points, the project has a sufficient number of study sites to be representative of the BHI: 2 points.	2
	13	Geo-spatial component	Will data, analyses and mapping outputs relevant to the project be supplied to the BHI at the end of the project?	No geospatial data will be shared: 0 points, limited data will be shared (e.g. only study site locations): 1 point, extensive datasets will be shared (e.g. landuse classifications, LIDAR products, etc.): 2 points	2
	14	Peer reviewed	Has this proposal been peer reviewed, letters from two reviewers should be provided with the proposal.	No: 0 points, Yes, by non-academic professionals: 1 point, yes, by academic professionals: 2 points	2
Outreach	15	Includes outreach component	How will the results of this project be communicated to partners, stakeholders, and the public?	No communication plan: 0 points, limited communication plan (e.g. one planned presentation or publication): 1 point, extensive communication plan (e.g. multiple planned presentations and/or publications): 3 points.	3

Total

50