

Moving from ESA 'Identification' to ESA 'Conservation'

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Direction and Context

MARCHING ORDERS

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Parkland County Strategic Plan 2022-2025

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GOAL C1

To develop a policy framework that ensures protection of environmentally significant areas

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PRIORITY STRATEGY

Review and update the County's framework on environmentally significant areas to support responsible management of natural assets and amenities

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Parkland County Strategic Plan 2022-2025

GOAL C1

To develop a policy framework that ensures protection of environmentally significant areas

PRIORITY STRATEGY

Review and update the County's framework on environmentally significant areas to support responsible management of natural assets and amenities

- Policy
- Protection
- ESAs
- Responsible Management
- Natural Assets

EXISTING POLICY

CURRENT PARKLAND COUNTY POLICY

Municipal Development Plan:

- Encourages the conservation of ESAs and high values wetlands using reserve dedication and other mechanisms
- Conservation By Design approach required
- Biophysical impact assessment required
- Road networks may be required to be as far away as possible
- Designated OHV trails and parks located a sufficient distance away

Biophysical Assessment Policy:

- May require development to avoid and setback from ESAs and high value wetlands

Dedication and Use of MR, ER, and ERE Policy:

- Requires the dedication of ER and ERE for environmentally sensitive lands as per the MGA unless land is required for stormwater management
- Suggests consideration of other conservation tools if land does not meet ER/ERE requirements

Environmental Policy & Procedures:

- Lists ESA protection as a management objective
- Only requires what is legislated at higher levels of government (ER) and encourages voluntary protection
- Some broad feature-specific statements (ie. Protect water quality)

Biodiversity on County Lands Policy:

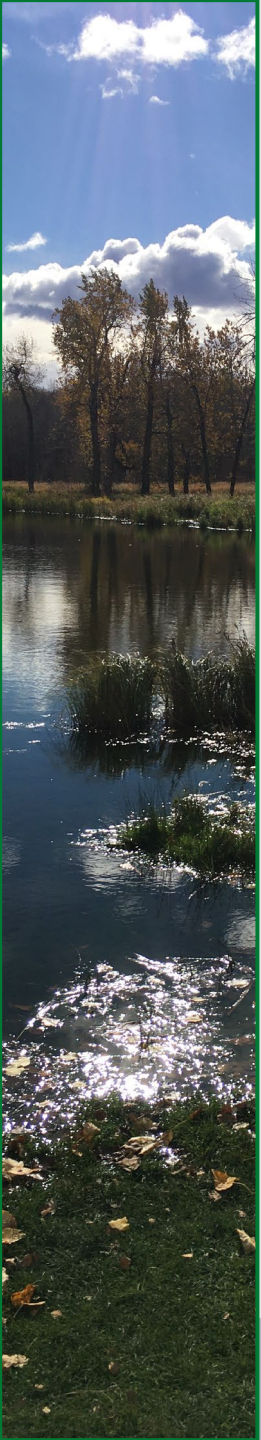
- Prioritizes County land in ESAs for naturalization/restoration projects, as resources allow

Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan:

- Suggests use of conservation easements and designation of new Conservation Parks to protect ESAs

Conservation Strategy

GENERAL APPROACH





GENERAL APPROACH

Moving from ESA 'identification' to 'conservation'



GENERAL APPROACH

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IDENTIFICATION

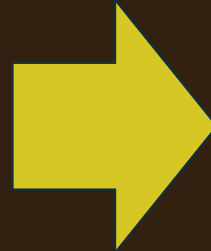
- Note their importance
- Catalogue
- Map them

GENERAL APPROACH

Moving from ESA 'identification' to 'conservation'

IDENTIFICATION

- Note their importance
- Catalogue
- Map them

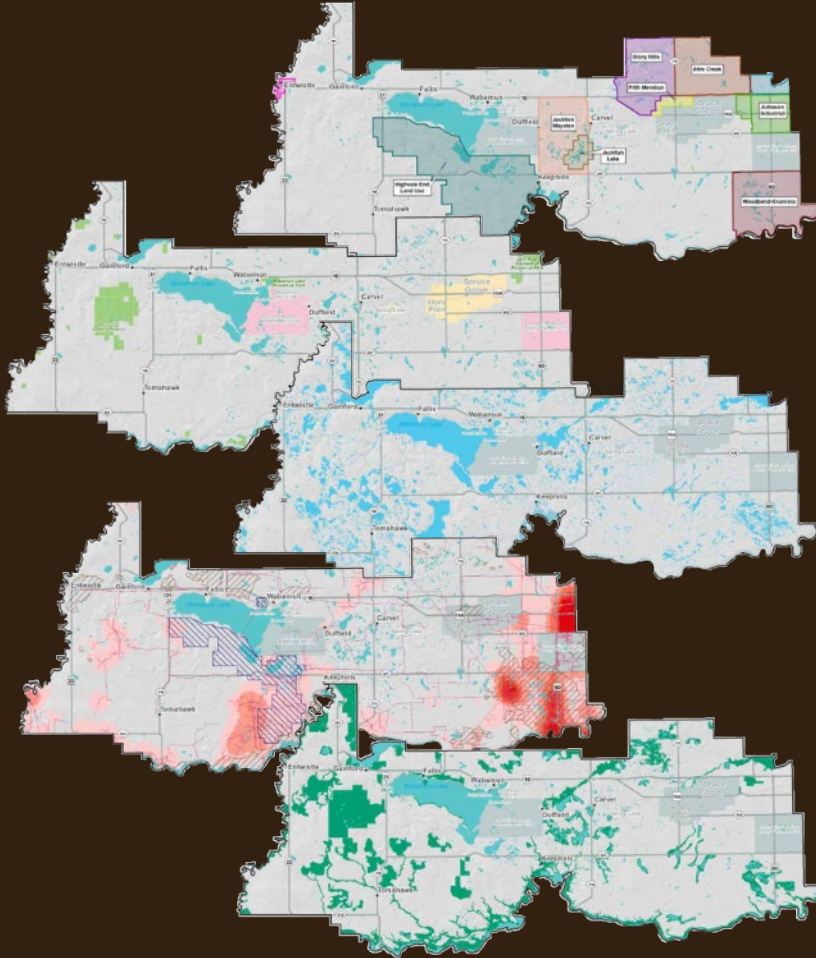


CONSERVATION

- Maintain their identified values
- Action-oriented
- Restrictions and requirements

GENERAL APPROACH

21st Century Conservation



- ‘Systems’ not ‘pieces’
- Humans and nature
- Resilience
- Development aware
- Function focused

GENERAL APPROACH

NATURAL FEATURE

FUNCTION

SERVICE

GENERAL APPROACH

NATURAL FEATURE

The “things”, the “parts”

FUNCTION

What is does even if
people are not around

SERVICE

The value people derive from
that function

GENERAL APPROACH

NATURAL FEATURE

The “things”, the “parts”

IN THE ESA

FUNCTION

What is does even if
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WHY WE CARE

GENERAL APPROACH

NATURAL FEATURE

The “things”, the “parts”

IN THE ESA

FUNCTION

What is done when
people are not around

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

SERVICE

The value people derive from
that function

WHY WE CARE

GENERAL APPROACH

RESTRICTION

Saying 'No'

Identifying proponent request circumstances where Council would say 'no' to the proposed activity.

GENERAL APPROACH

RESTRICTION

Saying 'No'

Identifying proponent request circumstances where Council would say 'no' to the proposed activity.

GUIDELINE

Saying 'Yes, but ...'

Identifying proponent requests circumstances where Council would say 'yes' to the proposed activity, but caveat that with guidelines that must be followed.

GENERAL APPROACH

RESTRICTION

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GUIDELINE

Saying 'Yes, but ...'

Identifying proponent requests circumstances where Council would say 'yes' to the proposed activity, but caveat that with guidelines that must be followed.

INNOVATION

Saying 'No, but ...'

Identifying proponent request circumstances where Council would say 'no' to the proposed activity, but immediately identify innovative efforts that a proponent could take to secure a 'yes'.

FRAMEWORK CONCEPT



FRAMEWORK

Concept

FRAMEWORK

Concept

Gives
DIRECTION

Goals

Policies

Scope

Objectives

FRAMEWORK

Concept

Gives
DIRECTION

Ensures
COORDINATION

Goals

Hierarchy

Policies

Policy links

Scope

Operational links

Objectives

Role clarity

FRAMEWORK

Concept

Gives DIRECTION	Ensures COORDINATION	Enables TOOLS
Goals	Hierarchy	Proactive
Policies	Policy links	Reactive
Scope	Operational links	Understood
Objectives	Role clarity	Resourced

FRAMEWORK

Concept

Gives DIRECTION	Ensures COORDINATION	Enables TOOLS	Provides OPTIONS
Goals	Hierarchy	Proactive	“No, but ...”
Policies	Policy links	Reactive	Contributory
Scope	Operational links	Understood	Innovation
Objectives	Role clarity	Resourced	Incentives

FRAMEWORK

Concept

Gives DIRECTION	Ensures COORDINATION	Enables TOOLS	Provides OPTIONS	Creates CLARITY
Goals	Hierarchy	Proactive	“No, but ...”	Requirements
Policies	Policy links	Reactive	Contributory	Consequences
Scope	Operational links	Understood	Innovation	Authorities
Objectives	Role clarity	Resourced	Incentives	Opportunities

FRAMEWORK

Where it fits

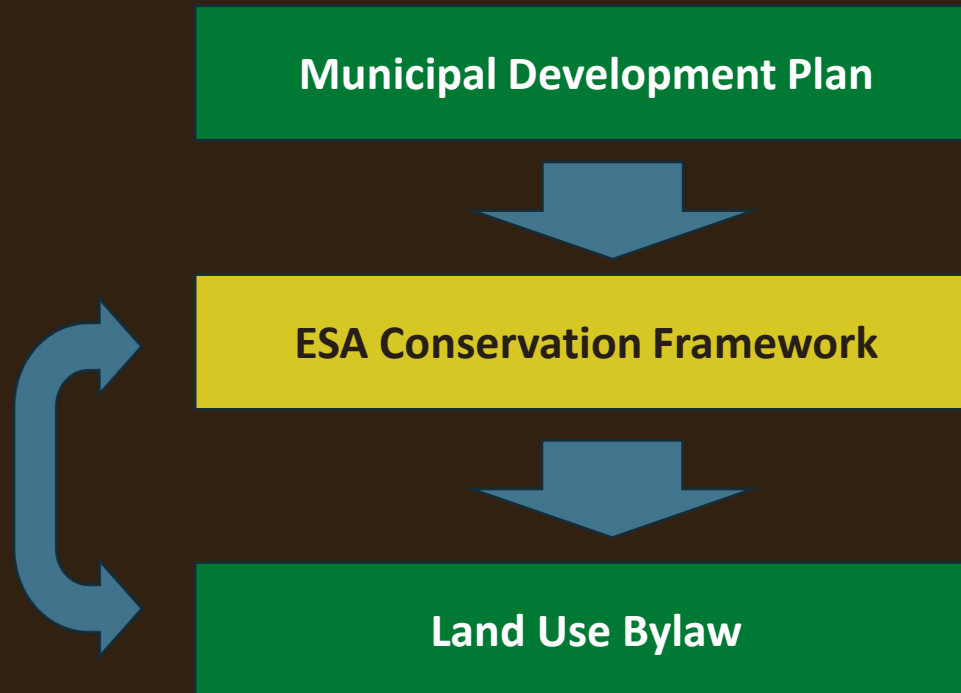
Municipal Development Plan



Land Use Bylaw

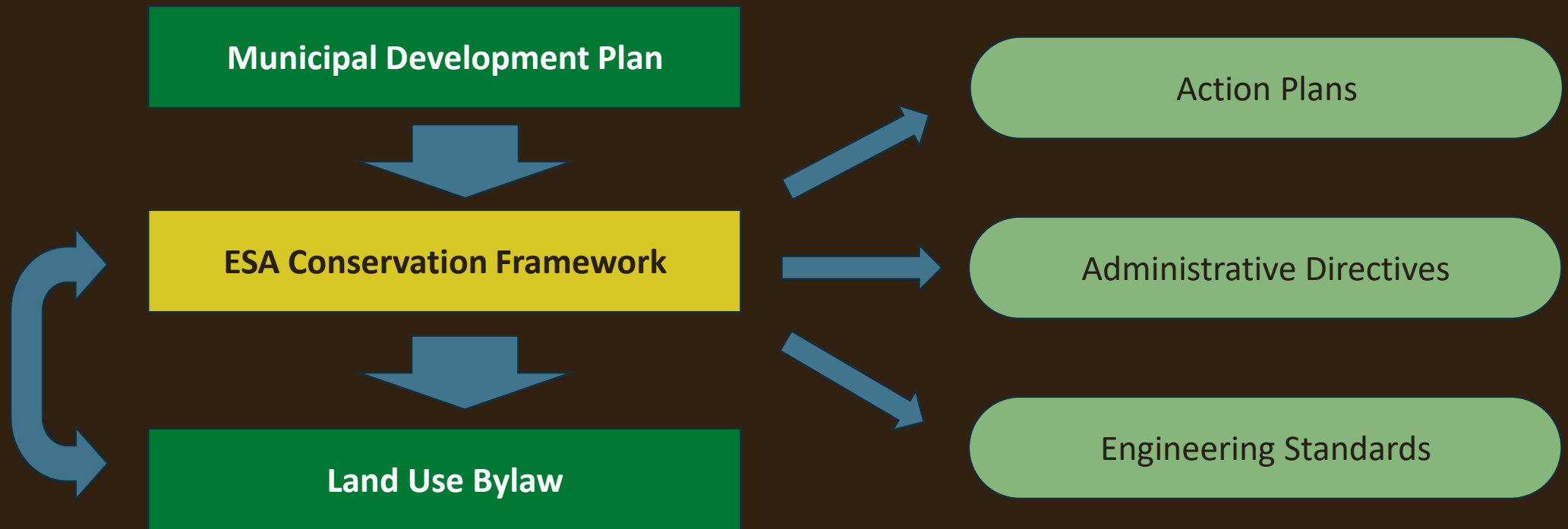
FRAMEWORK

Where it fits



FRAMEWORK

Where it fits



DRAFT GOALS



DRAFT GOALS

- Goal: Identified Environmentally Significant Areas are available to anchor the water conservation, disaster mitigation, habitat and biodiversity provision, and wildlife movement functions needed across the County.
- Goal: The County's surface water and groundwater resources (lakes, rivers, streams, and aquifers) are able to provide the potable water, aquatic habitat, disaster mitigation, and pollution filtration services on which the County depends.



DRAFT GOALS

- Goal: The ability of the County's wetlands to provide habitat, retain stormwater, filter pollution, promote wetness, and discharge/recharge groundwater is maintained or enhanced.
- Goal: Riparian areas are able to perform their functions of soil stabilization, habitat provision, wildlife connectivity, flood mitigation, and pollution filtration.



DRAFT GOALS

- Goal: **Forest canopy** and vegetation cover across the County provides the natural rural character, wildlife habitat, and disaster mitigation services that citizens need and desire.
- Goal: **Wildlife species** in the County are **able to move** in order to achieve their habitat access, migration, seasonal movement, and dispersal needs.

Challenges and Responses

CHALLENGES



CHALLENGES

We came across three challenges



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1. The 'Nature Policy Scavenger Hunt'



CHALLENGES

We came across three challenges

1. The 'Nature Policy Scavenger Hunt'

- When a proponent comes forward, they are challenged to find all of the policy that relates to conservation of natural features and systems
- Numerous policies exist that speak to conservation of natural features and systems regardless of proximity to ESAs
 - Transportation, planning and development, technical guidelines

CHALLENGES

We came across three challenges

2. ESAs Anchor the County's Entire Nature Network



CHALLENGES

We came across three challenges

2. ESAs Anchor the County's Entire Nature Network

- ESAs are anchors within your nature network, not isolated pockets
- Your natural assets spread across the County and require different types / levels of guidance
 - 1980's vs 2020's conservation: Focus on ESAs only leads to a sense that no development can happen in and around ESAs and no conservation can happen outside of ESAs

CHALLENGES

We came across three challenges

3. Many innovative options speak to the broad land base

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We came across three challenges

3. Many innovative options speak to the broad land base

- Want to be able to allow proponents to use (e.g.) Conservation Reserves, Conservation Easements, Transfer of Development Credits anywhere they work
- Want to allow conservation funds, programming, education, etc. to go beyond the ESAs

DOCUMENT NAME



DOCUMENT NAME

Want to reflect appropriate scope

- ESA Conservation Framework
- ESA Conservation Policy
- Nature Strategy
- Nature Framework
- ESA Policy
- Nature Policy
- Natural Area Policy
- Nature Conservation Policy
- Natural Systems Conservation Policy
- Nature Policy Framework

DOCUMENT NAME

Want to reflect appropriate scope

Nature Policy Framework



Policy Document

PROPOSED CONTENTS

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Context

- Role of the framework
- Regulatory hierarchy
- Existing Policy

Strategy

- Vision
- Approach
- Goals

Policies

- Environmentally Significant Areas
- Waterbodies
- Watercourses
- Vegetation and Soils
- Significant Landforms
- Natural Areas

PROPOSED CONTENTS

Applying the Policy

- Planning and Development
- Technical Reports & Studies
- Practices

Tools & Approaches

- ER / ERE, Sustainability Committee, Cons. Easement, Conservation Design
- Cons. Reserve,, Cons. Offsets, TDCs, Local Conservation Fund

Innovation

- Purpose
- Benefits for Proponents
- Potential Innovative Approaches

PROPOSED CONTENTS

Implementation

- Administrative Directives & Procedures
- Annual plans
- Investment Planning
- Enforcement and Assurance
- Education, Partnerships and Stewardship

Glossary

- New terms
- Reconciliation of all environment terms

Land Use Bylaw

- Overlays
- Districts
- Reciprocal clauses

EXAMPLE OF POLICY APPROACH

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Establish a goal

“The ability of the County’s wetlands to provide habitat, retain stormwater, filter pollution, promote wetness, and discharge / recharge groundwater is maintained or enhanced.”

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Create objectives under the goal

"Wetland loss in the County is reversed"

EXAMPLE OF POLICY APPROACH

Establish a goal

"The ability of the County's wetlands to provide habitat, retain stormwater, filter pollution, promote wetness, and discharge / recharge groundwater is maintained or enhanced."

Create objectives under the goal

"Wetland loss in the County is reversed"

Identify requirements

E.g., Biophysical Assessment

EXAMPLE OF POLICY APPROACH

Application of policy to P&D

"ASPs and
Conceptual Plans
must demonstrate
how wetland loss
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Application of policy to P&D

"ASPs and
Conceptual Plans
must demonstrate
how wetland loss
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Detail tools that can support goals

"The County will
take environmental
reserves whenever
possible to protect
wetlands and their
function."

EXAMPLE OF POLICY APPROACH

Application of policy to P&D

"ASPs and Conceptual Plans must demonstrate how wetland loss will be mitigated in support of no net loss."

Detail tools that can support goals

"The County will take environmental reserves whenever possible to protect wetlands and their function."

Identify innovation and incentives

"[This tool] will be deemed an acceptable approach for reversing wetland loss within development plans."

Timeline and Engagement

ENGAGEMENT



ENGAGEMENT

Presentations and discussions with

- Agricultural Service Board
- Sustainability Committee

Discussions and exchanges

- MDP team
- LUB team

TIMELINE



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Finish draft with Corvus Centre and Administration

- June to August
- Back to Council with draft in the fall

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Final document

- Before Council for approval before year end

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CORVUSCENTRE
for Conservation Policy