



SASKATCHEWAN
STOCK GROWERS
foundation

Working collaboratively with producers and landholders to protect native grasslands and conserve ranching landscapes in Saskatchewan.



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The Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation (SSGF) is a Federally registered non-profit charity. The mission of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation is to cultivate healthy future generations by supporting producer's conservation efforts and raising public awareness.

Total Agreements Summary 2000-2025

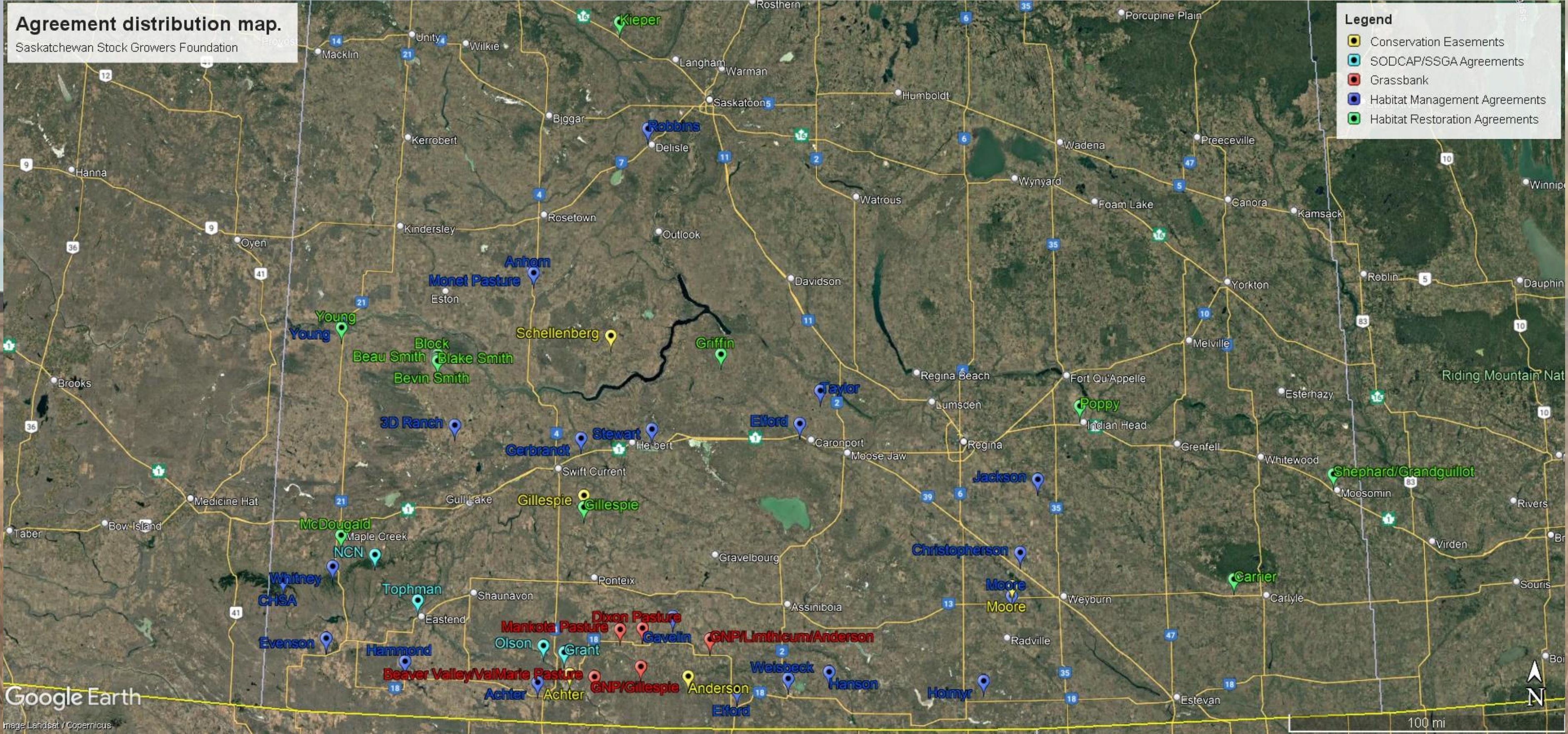
Conservation Strategy	Goal	Cumulative (acres)	# of Cooperating Producers
Conservation Easements	4000	7,343	6
Habitat Management Agreements	220,000	245,205	27
Habitat Restoration Agreements	2847	1,767	15
Result-based Conservation Agreements/Grassbank	125,000	154,580	9

Agreement distribution map.

Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation

Legend

- Conservation Easements
- SODCAP/SSGA Agreements
- Grassbank
- Habitat Management Agreements
- Habitat Restoration Agreements



PROGRAM OPTIONS

The SSGF offers a variety of programs for Saskatchewan landowners to enroll in. Our programs focus on grassland conservation, specifically native grasslands and protecting them in partnership with landowners.

Previously we've had a strong focus in the SW corner of the province but we are actively working to expand our programming to other regions of the province and have been met with great interest.

Available Programs

- Term Conservation Easements
- Perpetual Conservation Easements
- Conservation Agreements
- Birds Friendliness Index Pilot Project

CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS

- These agreements are 15 years in length aside from the Restoration Agreements.
- They are not tied to the land title but they are still a legal contract between the SSGF and the landowner.
- These agreements fund improvements or projects that benefit rangeland health.
- Flexible and non-prescriptive with a large emphasis on adaptive land management.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

- Invasive weed management, including controlling and mapping spread.
- Off-site water development
- Spring Development
- Cross fencing
- Wildlife friendly fencing
- Native and tame rejuvenation
- Grazing management plans

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

- For each agreement, our funding maxes out at \$35,000
- Agreement holders must contribute in-kind to the project.
 - Ex. A project may cost \$50,000 but SSGF only pays up to \$35,000 and the remaining is paid by landowner.
- This in-kind amount will vary depending on the project desired but will be discussed with landowner well before any agreement is signed.
- All agreements will be unique to each rancher's operation based on many factors including objectives, resources and circumstances present.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- Offer both Perpetual and Term Conservation Easements. We are the only organization to offer Term CE's in Canada.
- Term CE's are unique because they for a set term length and not in perpetuity. They still are put into place to protect the biodiversity and ecological function of the land but provide flexibility for the landowner to still make changes years down the road if needed.
- Both are tied to land title and transfer with ownership.
- Grazing and haying allowed under SSGF Conservation Easements.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- The landowner retains ownership and control over access and management subject to the restrictions in the easement. Landowners are free to sell, gift or will that property, but future landowners are still subject to the same land use restrictions.
- **No Break:**
 - No cultivation, breaking, seeding, plowing or other destructive activities of any land under easement. Must remain as intact grasslands.
- **No Drainage:**
 - The draining or significant alteration of naturally occurring lakes, ponds, streams or wetlands.
- **No Development:**
 - No division or subdivision of the property, no construction of additional buildings, structures, roads or facilities other than replacement of existing structures and agricultural improvements to support the existing ranching operation.
 - No extraction or removal of surface materials including soil, sand or gravel
 - May include limited additional restrictions that would be developed case-by-case taking into account the individual circumstances and characteristics of the property.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

- Term CE's must be a minimum of 25 years in length but can extend up to 30, 35, 40 & 45 years
 - The term length is flexible depending on the operational needs such as transition planning for the next generation.
- Once the term length expires, the current landowner has the option to re-negotiate another Term CE or continue managing the land without one and all the restrictions associated with the easement will expire.
- Do not require specific management actions and/or undertakings on the part of the landowner.
- The landowner agrees to employ good range management practices that will serve to maintain or enhance the current ecological health of the rangelands.

BIRDS FRIENDLINESS INDEX PROGRAM

- Results based agreement that uses grassland bird populations as a biodiversity indicator to trigger payments.
- Reward biodiverse farms and ranchers that support grassland bird populations and avoid conversion through financial incentives.
- Birds Canada conducts bird counts on your land that represents your entire land base.
- The Bird-friendliness Index considers two inputs: how many birds/what species are on your operation, and their conservation status. The bird community on your operation is compared to the bird community in the surrounding landscape to determine how your farm compares to the regional context.

BIRDS FRIENDLINESS INDEX PROGRAM

- Landowners can be either in an existing agreement with SSGF or access the Bird Friendliness Index Program as a stand-alone program.
- Birds Canada will conduct bird surveys from May to July.
- The scale is 0-1 and if you score above 0.5, you are eligible to receive a per-acre payment annually for each year of participation through 2029.
- Payments increase with higher Bird-friendliness Index.
- Both landowners and community pastures are eligible for this program.



BIRDS FRIENDLINESS INDEX PROGRAM

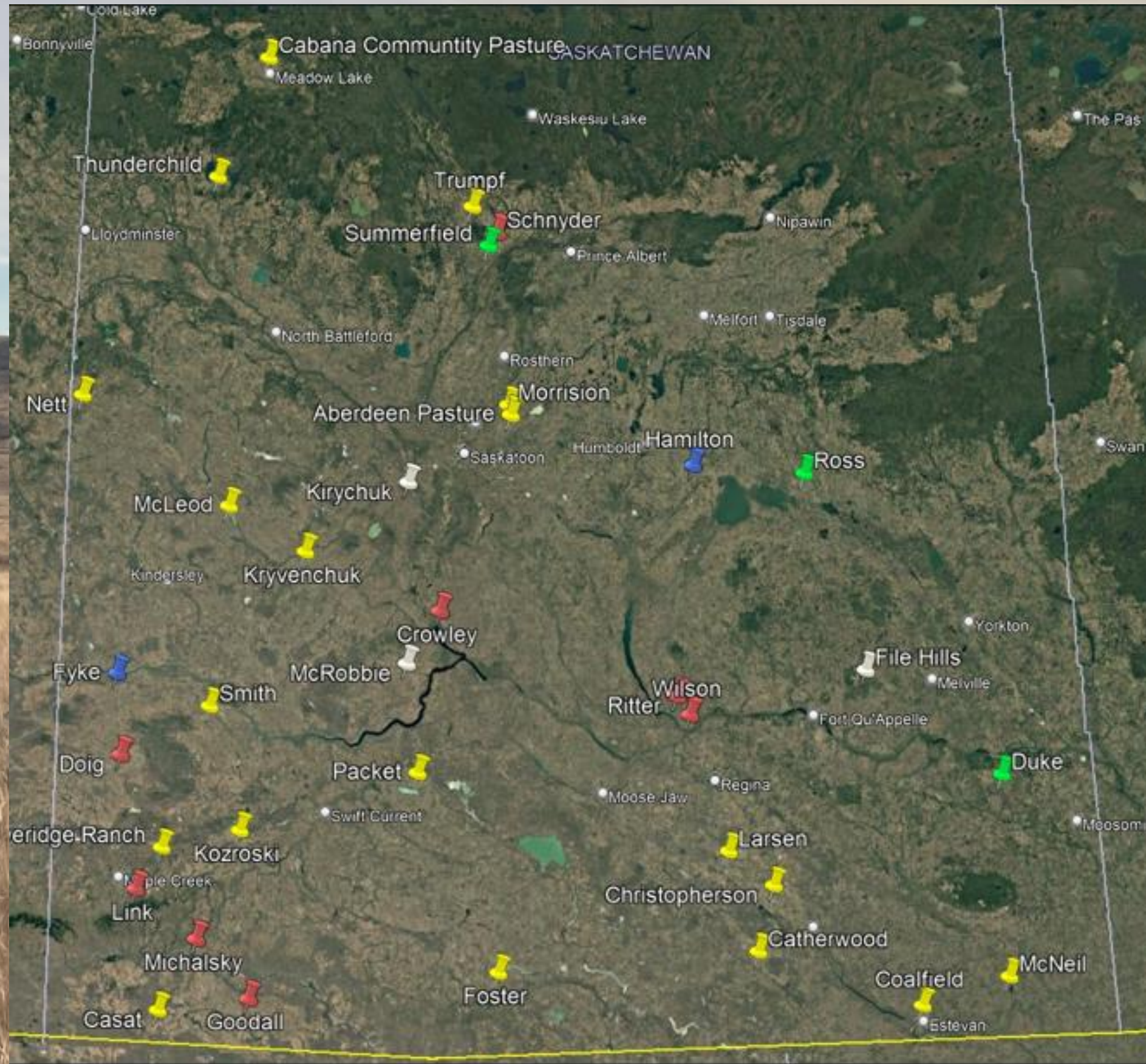
2027-2029 Payment Schedule

Bird Friendliness Index Score	\$/ACRE
<0.5	\$0.00
0.5-0.59	\$0.56
0.6-0.79	\$0.75
0.8-1.0	\$1.25

INTERESTED IN PROGRAMMING?

- Contact the SSGF about programs.
- Range Techs will complete rangeland health assessments between May-August.
 - SSGF will create maps about soil types, wildlife, SAR, ecoregions and other data to help guide assessments
 - Vegetation, plant structures/layers, invasive weeds & litter levels
 - Make note of habitat challenges
- Meet with landowners and provide reports about field findings.
- Build a plan for potential project funding with the landowner.
- SSGF staff present project to Producer Advisory Committee & Board of Directors to approve funding.

Range Inventory and Health Assessments Summer 2026

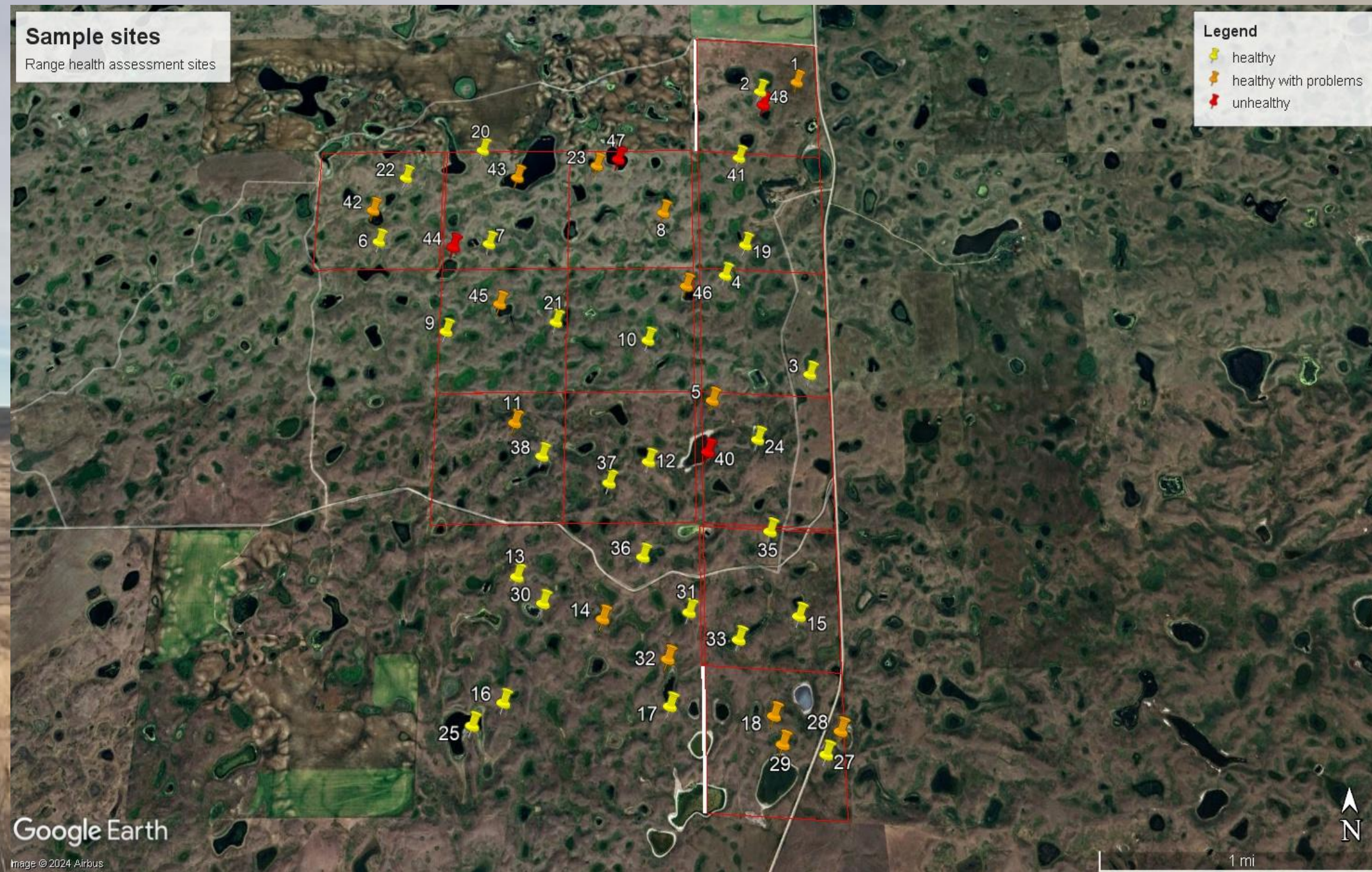


Once Interest is Indicated in SSGF Programming A Number of Steps are Initiated



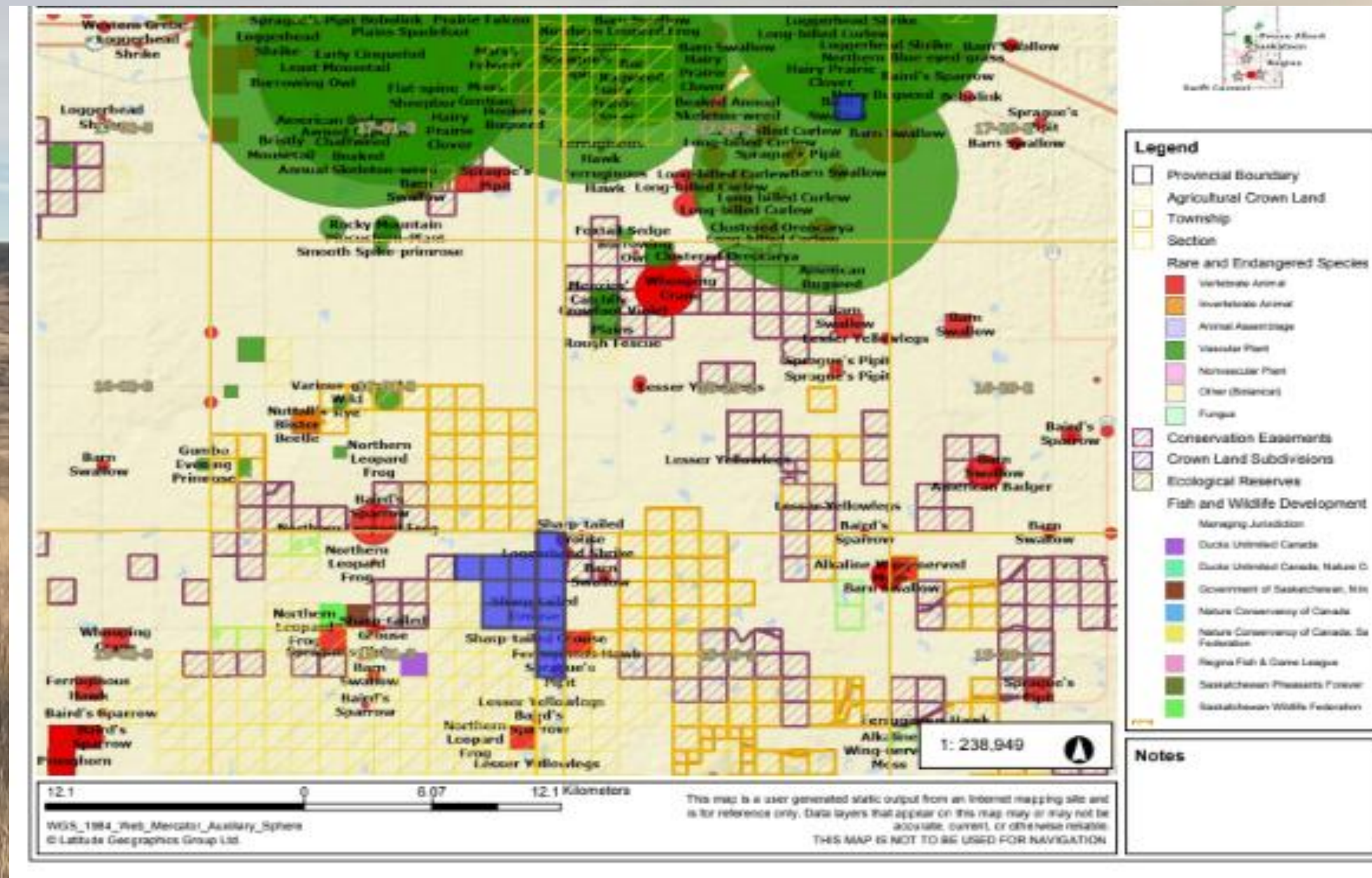
- Full range inventory and health assessment completed.
- Management observations.
- Discussion with landowner

Provided to Landowner and Used in Management Plan



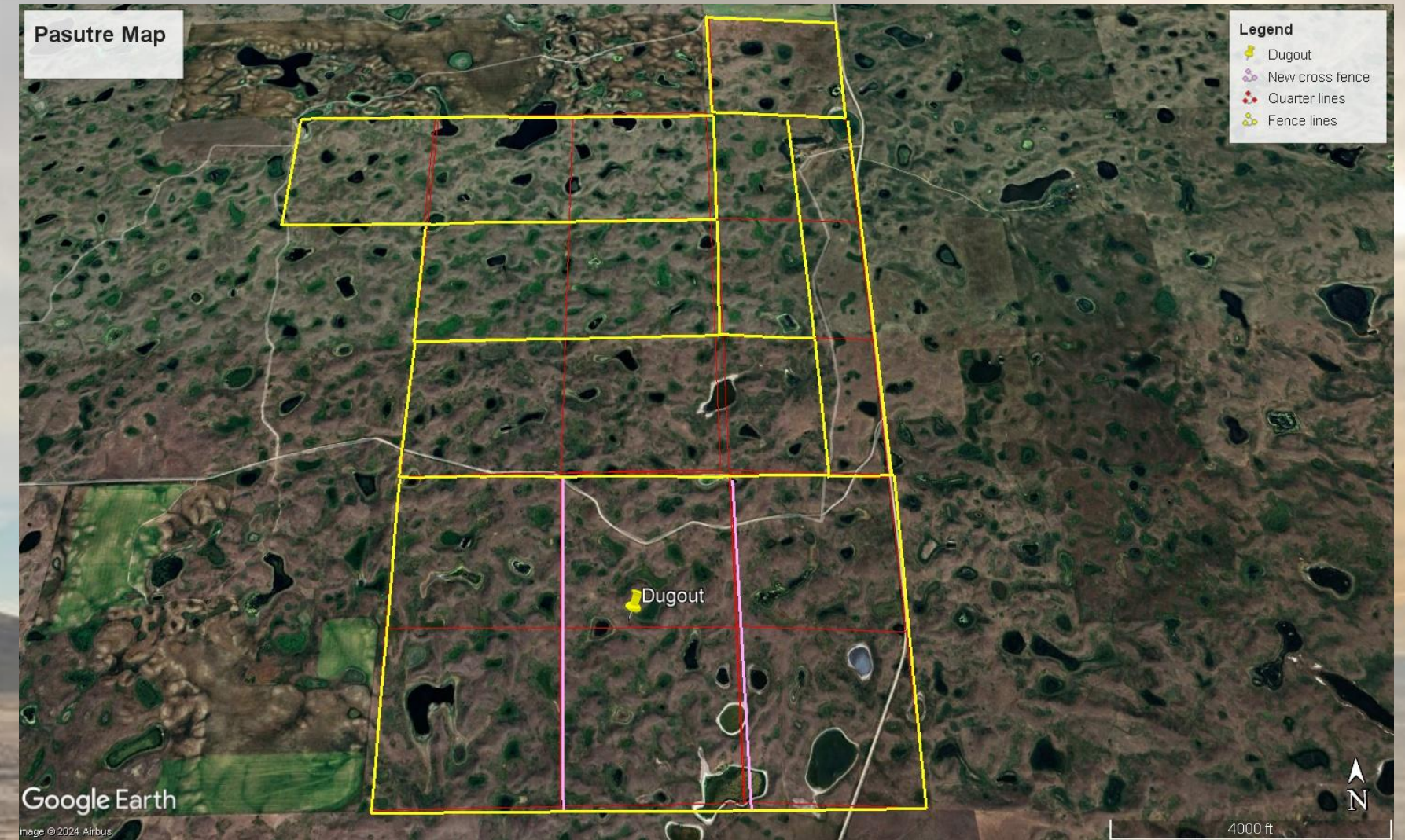
- Range Health Map
- Detailed Range Inventory and Range Health Tables
- Carrying Capacity and Stocking Rate Tables

Provide Species at Risk/Species of Interest and Other Ecological Information of Value



Management Plan Prepared

- Meet landowner goals.
- No set framework for plan as it is tailored to the individual land base.
- SSGF Funds/Other Programs/In-kind
- Presented to Producer Advisory Committee for technical review.
- Board of Directors for approval.
- Habitat Management Agreement signed and paid out upon signing/invoice.
- Follow Up annually.



EXPENDITURES/CONTRIBUTOR	NFWF	FRWIP	IN-KIND	TOTAL
Solar Powered Water System	—	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
Dugout	—	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
Fencing	\$11,820.00	—	\$11,820.00	\$23,640.00
Management	\$3,750.00	—	\$33,750.00	\$37,500.00
TOTAL	\$15,570.00	\$7,500.00	\$53,070.00	\$76,140.00

FUNDRAISING

- SSGF contracted DCG Philanthropic Services Inc. to perform a Fundraising Campaign Feasibility Study

FINDINGS

1. The ranching community and those aware of SSGF and their programs trust and support SSGF initiatives.
2. Producer led and developed programming 'Struck a chord with interviewees'.
3. However, the general public and agencies or groups not directly related to conservation or ranching have limited or no awareness of SSGF.
4. Where there is some awareness people do not differentiate between SSGA and SSGF.
5. When SSGF and its programming was explained to interviewees, there were some priority potential supporters identified.
6. Options for other methods of funding were identified.

FUNDRAISING

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Before we develop a full blown fund raising campaign, we need to increase public awareness complete with data, messaging targeted at the public and highlighted with testimonials.
2. Target potential donors and funders that have expressed an interest e.g. Crown Investment Corporation.
3. Join and participate on Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Beef to better network with potential funders and increase awareness of SSGF.
4. DCG will assist in soliciting potential donors under the current contract instead of performing additional interviews.

Conservation Through Collaboration: Advancing Grassland Resilience in the Cypress Hills

- The Cypress Hills Stockmen's Association plays a key role in maintaining the health of native grasslands in the West Block of the Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park.
- Historically, the main source of water for the cattle is down on Battle Creek.
- This bottleneck has resulted in a concentration of cattle around the creek
 - Has caused some degradation of the riparian area and the surrounding habitat.
 - Meanwhile, large areas of desirable vegetation on the bench away from the creek remain largely untouched.
- Joint efforts and collaboration between the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation, Cypress Hills Stockmen's Association, Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park and the South of the Divide Conservation Action Program worked to implement a solution.
- A project was implemented constructing a pipeline to carry water from Battle Creek up to the bench, where grazing is limited by lack of water.
- The project is a massive undertaking, with the lift from Battle Creek to the bench being over 700 feet and with having such a massive lift, the system would need a high-density pipe to account for the pressure needed at the pump station to get the water onto the bench and once the water reached the bench, then a smaller pipe could be utilized due to decreased pressure demands.

Conservation Through Collaboration: Advancing Grassland Resilience in the Cypress Hills

- <https://youtu.be/fwKZ7pKffNc>



SSGF Funders



Weston Family
Foundation



NFWF

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Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

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