

## **Manitoba Conservation Trust Investments Continue to Support Healthy Rangelands and the Livestock Industry**

Manitoba's grazing lands provide multiple environmental benefits for the Province: forages for livestock and wild game, biodiversity, nutrient and water cycling, wildlife habitat, water and carbon storage, among others. Grazing lands are resilient and require ongoing management to optimize these benefits. For half a decade, the Manitoba Conservation Trust has committed key grant funding to the Association of Manitoba Community Pastures to complete new grazing stewardship projects geared to managing for healthy pasture lands.

Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation has partnered with AMCP to support nature-based approaches to climate change. The Conservation Trust is a Manitoba Climate and Green Plan Initiative, administered by MHHC. Trust funds provide new opportunities to improve wildlife, water, and soil conservation across the province and connect people to nature. Originally envisioned in the 2017 Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan, the historic \$204 million Provincial endowment to create the Conservation, GROW, and Wetlands GROW Trusts with The Winnipeg Foundation generates annual interest revenues for conservation projects in perpetuity.

In 2023 alone, the Conservation Trust has approved up to \$400,000 for AMCP to implement new range management investments at Community Pastures within the Interlake, Parkland, central, and in the Southwest and Southeast regions of Manitoba. Priorities include:

- New cross fencing to support rotational grazing;
- Brush management controls to restore grasslands; and
- Water improvements and cattle crossings to improve livestock distribution.



Thanks to 3 years of major grant funding (2020 to 2022), AMCP has delivered a series of major project works thanks to the Conservation Trust and match support: over 20 miles of new fencing, 70 new or improved water sources, and 40 livestock crossings. Not only does new grant funding enhance the environment, it also provides better grazing for producers as well as a boost to rural economies.

Wildlife and vegetation surveys are an important component of AMCP's project work. The Community Pastures host wetlands, grasslands and forests – all of which helps to provide landscape connectivity and habitat for a variety of wildlife. Bird surveys over the last three years have confirmed that multiple species-at-risk make the Pastures home over the summer. Range health assessments are also done every year. These help to document health trends of the Pastures, create baseline data to monitor the success of investments and grazing management, and are used to document rare vegetation growing on the Pastures.

