



Marsh Grassbank

Request for Proposal

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is renewing the Grassbank project in the Waterton area.

Introduction

The Nature Conservancy Canada is committed to the goal of healthy, functioning landscapes and sustainable rural communities. To work towards this goal, we are looking to partner with the local ranching community. We are offering a competitive and open grazing opportunity to local ranchers as incentive to enhance their own properties through beneficial stewardship and management practices, while managing NCC's property with sustainable grazing practices.

Grassbanking is a relatively new practice where property owners lease land to ranchers, and then offer the opportunity to give credit toward grazing fees for conservation-related projects on their own properties.

The intent of this project is to:

- provide grazing opportunities for local ranchers to improve the rangeland health and ecological integrity of their private landholdings by implementing sustainable grazing strategies (rotational grazing, deferred grazing, late season grazing, etc.) and beneficial stewardship practices (riparian fencing, off-site water systems, carnivore conflict mitigation, etc.).

- maintain or improve the rangeland health and ecological integrity of the NCC grassbank property by implementing sustainable grazing strategies and beneficial stewardship practices
- provide an opportunity for producers to earn monetary credits towards their grazing fees for implementing sustainable grazing strategies and stewardship actions on their private property as well as the NCC grassbank property

This project is not meant to be an opportunity for expanding partnering ranching operations, but a means to improve current landholdings and management practices.

Proposal

The proposal will have five main components:

1. a grazing plan for the NCC grassbank property
2. a management plan for the private landholding
3. a competitive bid per animal unit month (AUM)
4. proof of land ownership
5. references (minimum of two)

The proposal should take into consideration the following stewardship goals:

- *maintain and enhance the health of the landscape*
- *maintain and enhance the natural structure and function of the rangeland*
- *quality wildlife habitat and connectivity*
- *carnivore conflict mitigation*

1. The grazing plan for the NCC grassbank property should include:
 - number and age class of animals to be grazed
 - rotation and season of grazing
 - management of the livestock
 - stewardship practices

2. The management plan for the private landholding of the proponent should include:
 - grazing strategies and stewardship practices already in place
 - general outline of grazing strategies and stewardship practices that they would like to implement on their private property with the use of the grassbank
 - future objectives and plans to improve the current state of ecological function and health of their property

3. The bid per animal unit month (AUM) should be a minimum of \$30.00.

4. Must have private landholding within the M.D. of Pincher Creek or Cardston County.

5. References must be submitted with the proposal.

Background Information for Proposal

The grassbank property is known as the NCC Marsh Property (Figure 1) and has been split into two parcels which are referred to as Marsh North and Marsh South.

Proposals can be made for either Marsh North or Marsh South; a proposal for both parcels combined may be considered as well.

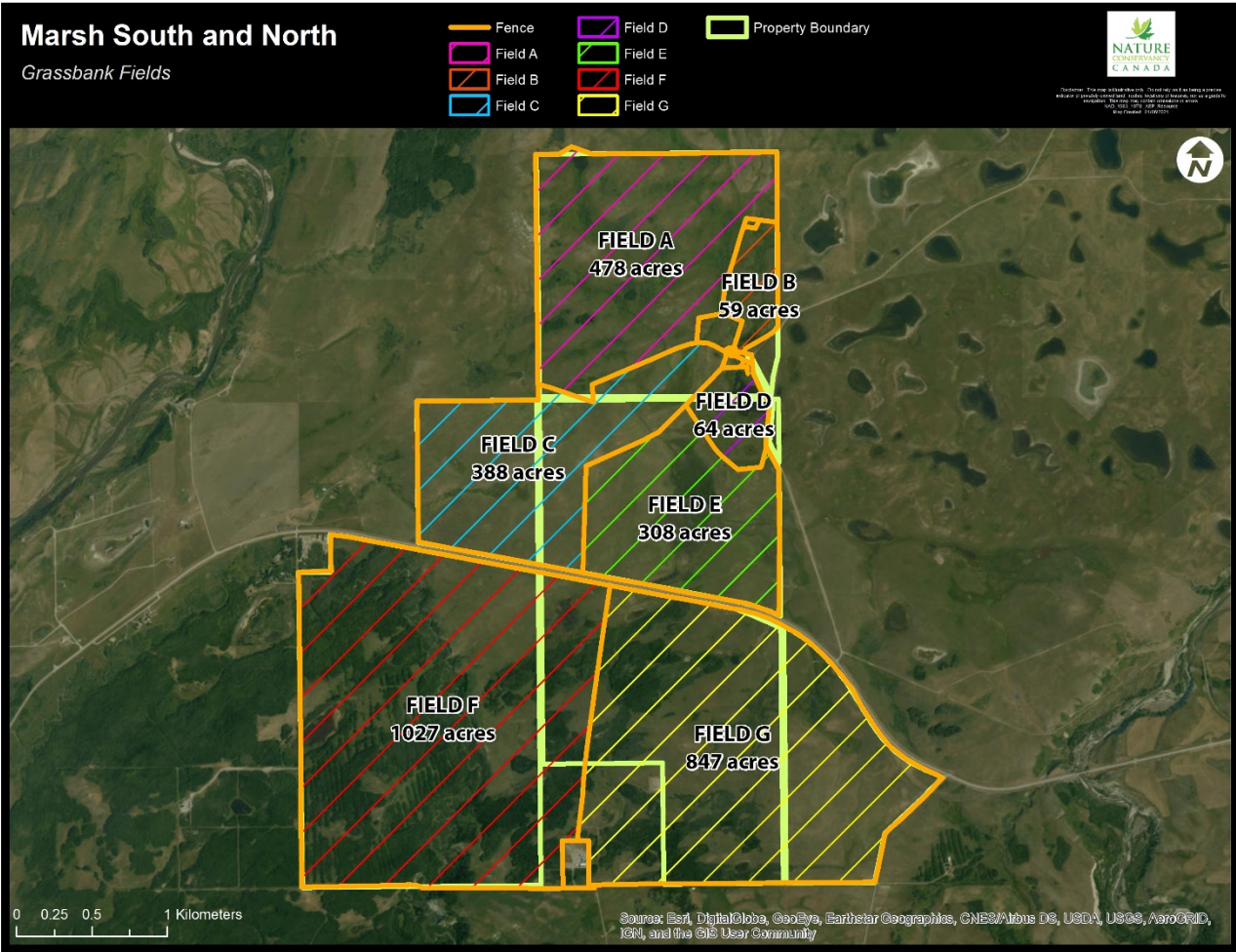


Figure 1. NCC Marsh property grassbank fields.

Marsh North

Marsh North consists of approximately 1200 acres of native and modified grassland in the Foothills Parkland and Foothills Fescue subregions of Alberta. The property is located just north of Highway 5, the legal land descriptions are: section 25- 2-29 W4M; NE 23-2-29 W4M, N1/2 24-2-29 W4M, portion of S1/2 24-2-29 W4M that is north of Highway # 5; portion of SE 23-2-29 W4M that is north of Highway # 5.

Approximately 534 animal unit months (AUMs) are available for grazing. There are 3 main pastures (Figure 2):

- Field A – 480 acres – mostly native grasses
- Field C – 388 acres – modified grassland with tame species present
- Field E – 308 acres – modified grassland with tame species present

There are two smaller holding pastures (field B and D) as well as a central corral system. Water is available in all the main fields.

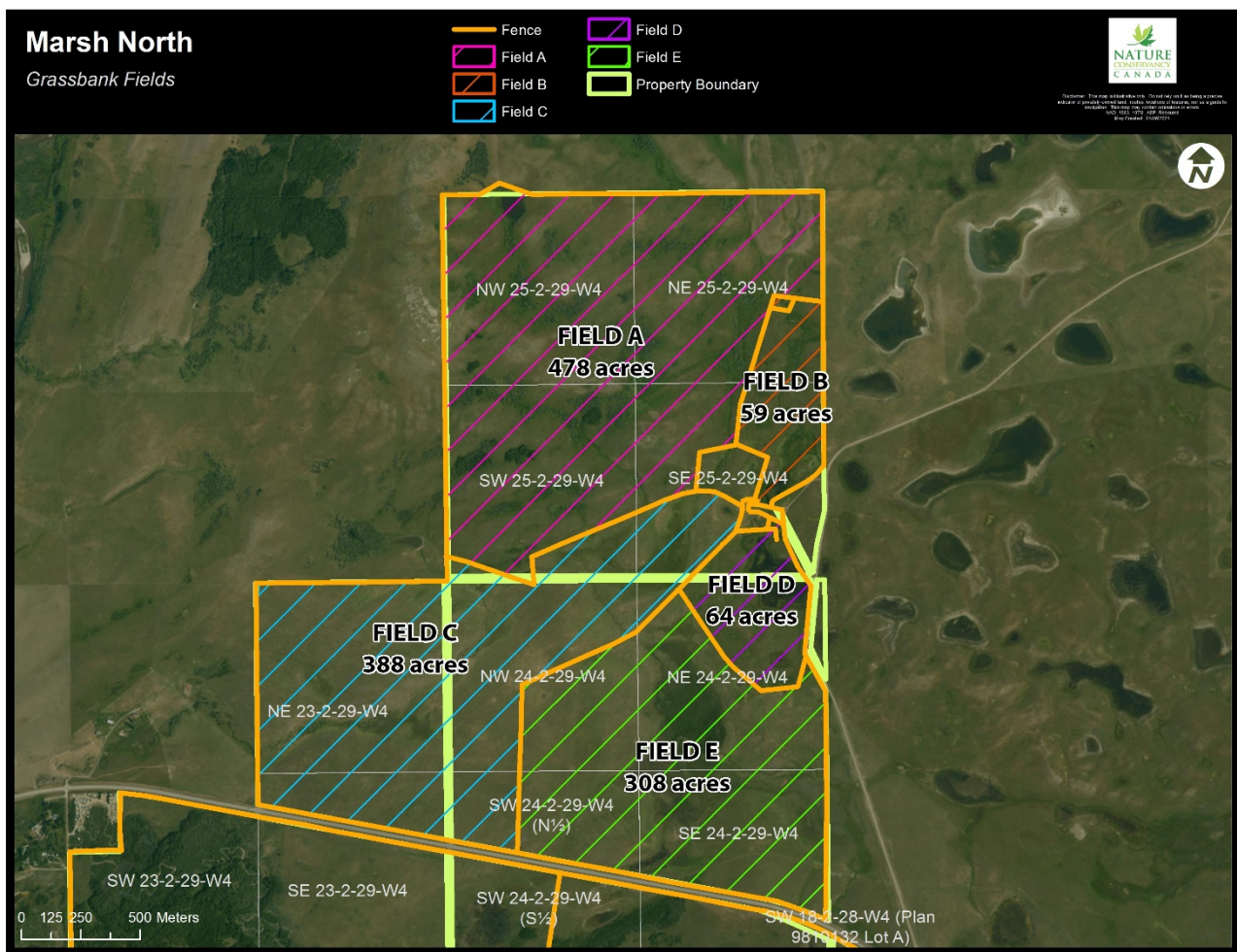


Figure 2. Marsh North grassbank fields.

Marsh South

Marsh South consists of approximately 1874 acres of mostly native grasslands in the Foothills Parkland and Foothills Fescue subregions of Alberta. The property is located just south of Highway 5, the legal land descriptions are: section 14-2-29-W4; SW 23-2-29-W4; N1/2-13-2-29-W4; SE13-2-29-W4; W1/2 18-2-28-W4; portion of SE 24-2-29 W4M that is south of Highway # 5; portion of SE 23-2-29 W4M that is south of Highway # 5.

Approximately 423 animal unit months (AUMs) are available for grazing. There are 2 main pastures (Figure 3):

- Field F – 1027 acres – mostly native grasses with tame species present
- Field G – 847 acres – mostly native grasses with tame species present

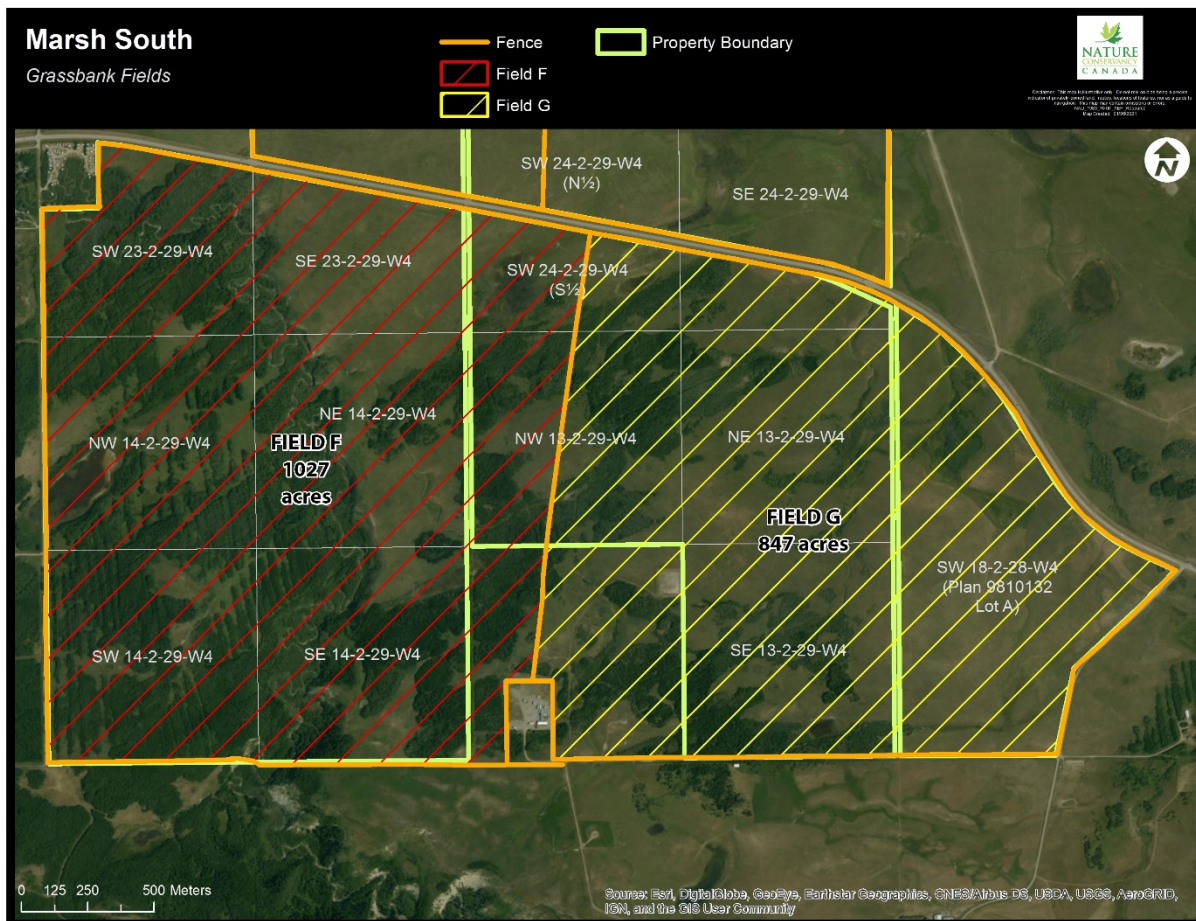


Figure 3. Marsh South grassbank fields.

Evaluation

The successful proposal will be selected based on the following criteria. **Dollar value will not be the main deciding factor**; management plans and stewardship practices will be also be considered.

Evaluation Category	Category Weighting
Current sustainable grazing practices for private property (rotational, deferred, dormant season, etc.)	10
Current beneficial stewardship actions on private property (off site water systems, carnivore mitigation, electric fencing, etc.)	10
Future management plans for private property, including grazing plan and stewardship actions	30
Grazing plan for grassbank property including stewardship actions	20
What the applicant can contribute additionally towards a successful partnership. (Use your imagination)	10
References (minimum 2)	20

Summary

A 5 year lease will be awarded. The lessee will receive credit towards the cost of AUMs for stewardship practices completed on his/her own property, as well as the grassbank property. A list of stewardship actions eligible for credit will be provided to selected interview candidates. The successful applicants livestock must have up to date vaccinations and be in good health.

Proposals must be received by 12:00 noon on 15 March, 2021

Questions regarding the proposal should be directed to Leta Pezderic.

Contact:



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