

What you can do...

Retain healthy grassland habitat on acreages, ranches and in agricultural areas.

Manage invasive plants, which compete with native plants and degrade our grasslands. Clean seeds and soil off vehicles and equipment. Managing these invaders helps prevent serious losses of productivity.

Landscape with native plants rather than introduced species that could spread into the grassland.

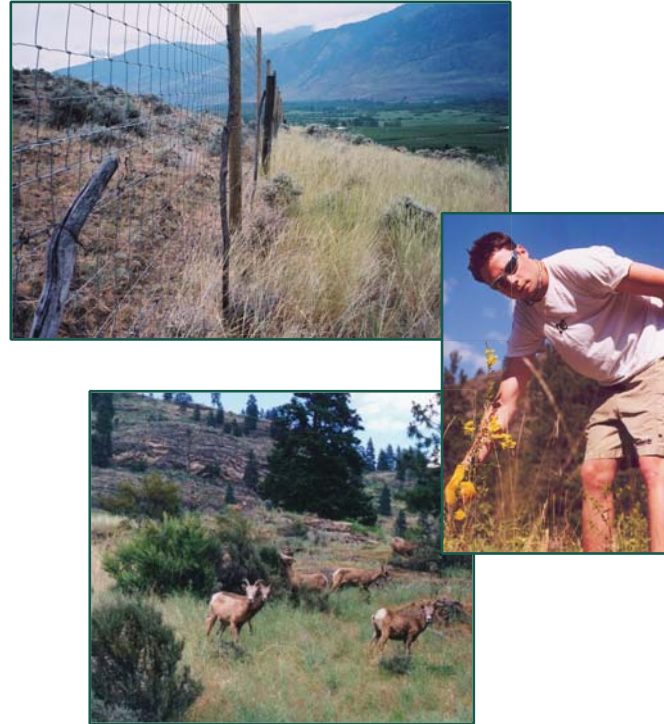
Tread lightly. Stay on established paths or roads when hiking, cycling, horseback riding or using off-road vehicles. Grassland habitats are sensitive and easily damaged, and take a very long time to recover.

Avoid disturbing known wildlife breeding sites.

Encourage others to take pride in grasslands and their inhabitants – doing even a little can make a difference.

Consider long-term protection of grasslands through agreements such as conservation covenants

Help monitor wildlife species at risk by reporting sightings to 1-866-699-WILD (9453)



Further Readings:

Stewardship Series: BC Grasslands Stewardship Guide: A guide for ranchers and recreation users
http://dev.stewardshipcanada.ca/sc_bc/stew_series/NSCbc_stewseries.asp#grass

Habitat Atlas for Wildlife at Risk: <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/sir/fwh/wld/atlas/>

BC Grasslands Conservation Council: www.bcgrasslands.org

Tread Lightly on Our Dry Grasslands

Antelope-Brush Habitats: a rare beauty.

Living in Nature Series: Butterflies of the Antelope-brush Plant Community.

Photos by TLC and L.Scott

If you would like more information or to obtain factsheets, please contact:
South Okanagan-Similkameen (SOS) Stewardship Program
at (250) 492-0173
or visit us online by following our link at www.conservancy.bc.ca/okanagan

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Living in Nature Series

GRASSLANDS: more than just grass!!

BC's grasslands are magical places, rich in biological diversity. The grassland ecosystem defines the exceptional character of the south Okanagan and lower Similkameen valleys. Grasslands are sensitive landscapes that are home to a wide range of plant and animal species, some of them found nowhere else in the world. It is our unique responsibility to protect them before they are gone.

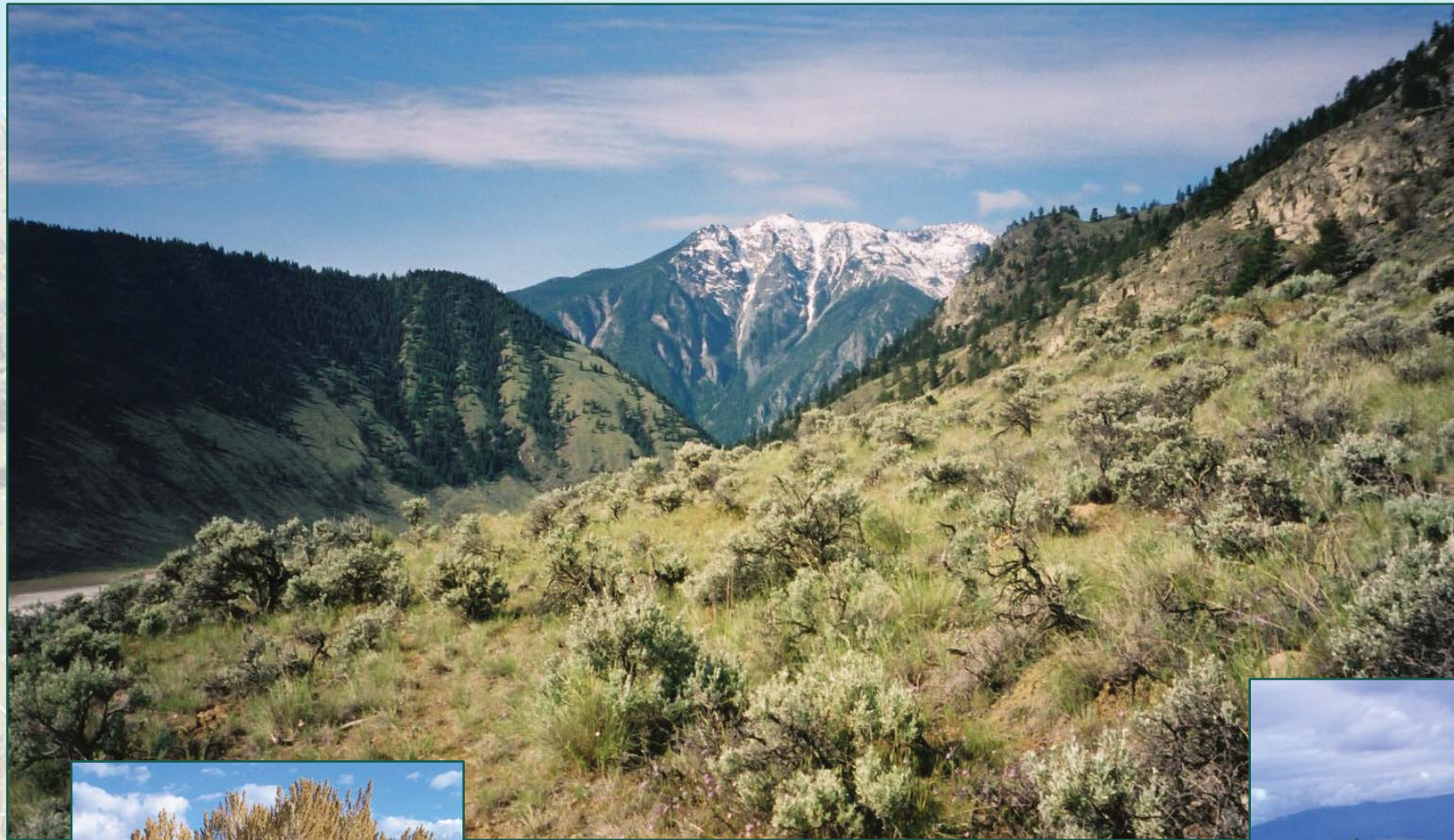
Taking care of our natural grasslands is essential to sustain a healthy ranching industry, diverse wildlife, and valuable recreation opportunities.



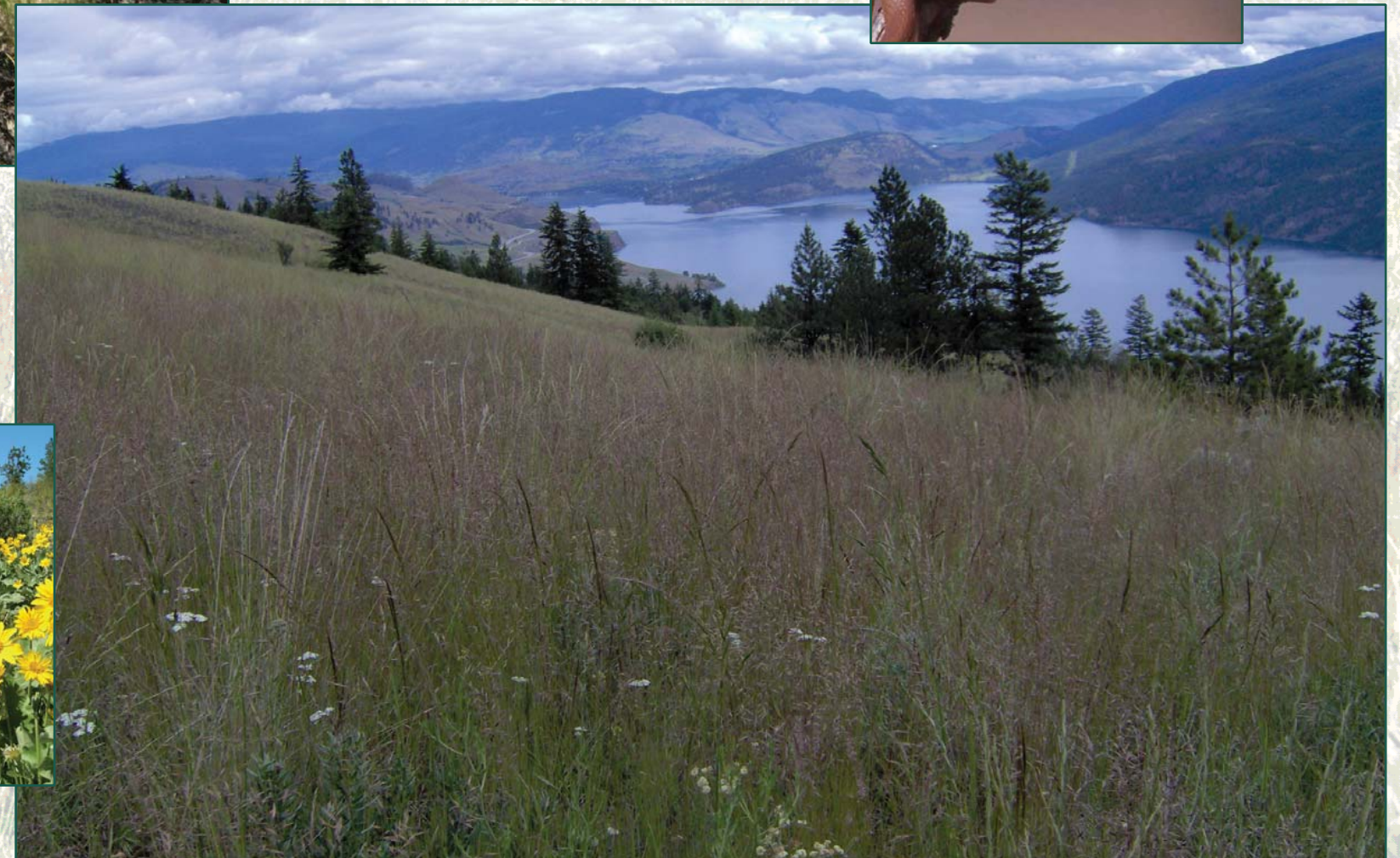
The primary threat to grasslands in the Okanagan is the continued loss and fragmentation due to agricultural and urban development. Only about 10% of grasslands in the south Okanagan remain in a relatively natural state.

Photos by L.Scott and A. Pulham

HELP CONSERVE OUR GRASSLANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



Many ranchers, agriculturalists and recreation users are leaders in grassland stewardship. Their achievements challenge us to take action to maintain healthy grasslands for the future.



The Okanagan and Similkameen watersheds form vital corridors that connect the dry landscapes of British Columbia's interior with similar natural systems to the south.