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Comments on:

Project 3: North American Grasslands: Management Initiatives and Partnerships to Enhance Ecosystem and Community Resilience

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Commission for Environmental Cooperation

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Dear members of the JPAC, Nature Canada appreciates the opportunity to comment on the CEC's draft cooperative work program for 2011-2012. Our comments relate to Project 3: North American Grasslands: Management Initiatives and Partnerships to Enhance Ecosystem and Community Resilience (draft). We applaud the continued focus for the CEC on restoring the health of North America's native grasslands.

As we've stated before, we strongly support the focus on stewardship and sustainable management, but we are disappointed that the CEC work program has not at this point incorporated efforts to create additional protected areas in native grasslands and to eliminate the use of the pesticides that kill birds and other wildlife. Nonetheless, Nature Canada believes this project will bring much needed coordination of existing efforts as well as the opportunity for establishing high standards of practice for activities in native and recovering grasslands (including the use of pesticides and the protection of habitat).

Nature Canada, as a partner in the Canadian Nature Network and in BirdLife International, is both uniquely positioned to and very interested in participating in the implementation of this project, in particular, Task 2 (Initiate a continental partnership to identify and implement actions for grassland conservation at regional, national and continental levels). The indication that this work might continue beyond 2012 is very encouraging.

The 2-year project is a very good first step, but for the collaboration the project seeks to facilitate to effectively impact grasslands conservation, follow-up work will surely be required. Once the project is approved, we hope more information will be available, including details regarding the process the CEC will follow to implement the project, and the interaction between the different components of the project.

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with the CEC in the implementation of its work for the conservation of North America's native grasslands.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely, Mara Kerry Director of Conservation, Nature Canada mkerry@naturecanada.ca Alex
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