



Minutes

What: BiodiverCity Advisory Committee
When: 12 October 2016
 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Where: Heritage Boardroom, 6th floor
 Calgary Public Building
 205 - 8th Ave SE
Contact: Chris Manderson (Acting Chair)
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In attendance: Katie, Chris, Jason, Robert, Sam, John, Steven, Natasha, Polly, Geoff, Ethan
 Regrets: Laura, Meaghan

Item	Who	Duration	Action
1 Welcome and carry over agenda items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve previous minutes Report from Literacy Subcommittee meeting Feedback from Ethan on his Oct. 4th presentation to UofC EVDS Faculty Feedback from Polly and Katie on the Sept. 27-30 <i>Under Western Skies</i> conference, Mount Royal University 	Chris, Meaghan, Ethan, Polly, Katie	15 mins To 5:15	(Decision on minutes; Discussion)
2 Speaker, Mathew Swallow Soils, worms and biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD. Soil Science from the University of Alberta Assistant Professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Mount Royal University (since 2014) 	Mathew	30 mins To 5:45	(Information)
3 Bee City Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please review email information/discussion prior to meeting Context/City interest, Steven Discussion: City involvement in domestic 	All	30 mins To 6:15	(Decision)



	(honeybee) livestock management: conservation and literacy			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: endorsement or clarification statement from BAC to City? 			
4	Review and approval of BAC Letters of Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Template • Alex Kent • Brentwood Biodiversity Bee – volunteer needed • Monastery/artists – volunteer needed 	Polly, Chris	20 mins To 6:25	(Information)
5	Nov. 19 Workshop Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need volunteers to work on agenda/facilitation (Laura will support) • Discuss location, topics, outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Future BAC budget • Open floor discussion 	Chris	20 mins To 6:45	(Planning)
6	Plans for next meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda discussion/next speaker • Subcommittee meeting date and areas of focus discussion 	Meaghan	5 mins To 6:50	(Next steps)

ITEM 1: Welcome and carry-over agenda items

- Kudos to Meaghan for her thorough notes taken at the last meeting
- Two items proposed for addition to agenda, discussion (Geoff, John)
- John reported on the subcommittee: the survey of City business units was discussed, but primarily the discussion focused on the Bee City application and a draft document was circulated within BAC generating further discussion by email – refer to Item 3.
- Ethan reported that his 40 min presentation to UofC EVDS was well received and generated 30 min of Q&A and discussion on broad ranging aspects of “the interface of nature and infrastructure” in Calgary, including biodiversity conservation initiatives
- Katie and Polly reported on their participation at the MRU conference where there were very diverse and inclusive perspectives, with a large First Nations presence. Katie presented on CPAWS activities in the Eastern Slopes and on recreation, while Polly presented on stormwater management approaches (“Basins, Burns and Biodiversity”).

ITEM 2: Guest speaker Dr. Matthew Swallow, “Soils and Soil Biodiversity”

Following are some of the key points from Dr. Swallow’s presentation:

- The “pedosphere” (soil) is at the nexus of atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere; soils are complex entities with chemical and biological properties and physics involved. Outline of soil properties and soil formation.
- The pedosphere is the source of food, antibiotics, home building materials and other key materials we rely on; of key importance.
- Soil biodiversity occurs at vastly different scales: from microscopic soil bacteria to beetles, analogous to the difference in scale from individual person to a city.



- At the micro/mesofaunal scale are mites (Dr. Swallow's specialty), while ants and worms are soil macrofauna, and ground squirrels are soil megafauna; they all contribute to processes of decomposition and soil formation
- All scales are connected through the soil (detrital) food web which in turn is connected other food webs (ie. birds, mammals) and ecosystems
- Soils are important component of broader ecosystems and even global cycles e.g. carbon sequestration
- The Great Depression era "dust bowl" phenomenon involving soil loss may have been the single biggest ecological disaster in modern history.
- BAC fun fact: earth worms are an invasive species, from Europe (post glaciation)

ITEM 3: The Bee City Canada proposal

- Discussed at Literacy Subcommittee, and earlier this week in email exchanges
- BAC members acknowledge the "Bee City" mandate of protecting native bees (vs. honeybees) and other pollinators, and pollinator habitat
- There appear to be significant time, effort, commitment and resources required for Calgary to make application and become designated a "Bee City"
- What might be the benefits of such designation, what outcomes?
- Toronto ON and Chestermere AB are Canada's first two Bee Cities
- The Calgary and District Beekeepers initiated contact with The City and offered to help advance this initiative
- There is potential to raise the profile of biodiversity through expanded partnerships...
- However, there is no obvious "fit" of beekeepers and native species conservation
- BAC will prepare a letter to Parks, with the BAC evaluation table attached, summarizing 3 key points: 1) Bee City Canada mandate appears aligned with Our BiodiverCity strategic plan; 2) The City may wish to pursue "Bee City" designation, depending on resource requirements and benefit/cost evaluation; and 3) If The City does pursue designation, BAC recommends that Bee City mandate and objectives are not confused or conflated with those of beekeepers. **ACTION:** Ethan to draft the letter for BAC review

ITEM 4: Letters of Recognition

- This item was deferred to next meeting with participation of Laura and Meaghan.

ITEM 5: Planning for Nov.19 BAC workshop

- Geoff and Laura will take the lead for this workshop, with Steven's admin support
- Tentative location(s): first choice is Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, second choice is Water Centre. **ACTION:** Chris and Steven will look into availability.
- Potential topics for workshop: Parks habitat connectivity rating (HCR) and other tools, how used for biodiversity conservation and performance measurement; explore the "Healthy and Green City" Council priority and its "extent of urban forest canopy" performance metric, discuss its potential application and meaningfulness with respect to biodiversity conservation

ITEM 6: Next meeting

- The regular monthly BAC meeting will proceed on Nov.9, with new member attending
- Speakers and topics for next meeting to include: Biodiversity Implementation Plan; speaker on coyotes in Calgary; and (carry over) Letters of recognition.



ITEM 7: (added to agenda) Update on Parks biodiversity-related initiatives

Steven gave a very brief verbal update and committed to provide more detailed written updates for inclusion in the minutes, which are as follows for these four initiatives:

- Connectivity work: A multi-species model is under development describing which areas of The City have the highest potential for wildlife movement. It is being tested and validated using songbird and road kill data. Parks has initiated work with a consultant to identify priority corridors for development planning and park management purposes.
- BiodiverCity implementation plan: A basic framework for the plan has been drafted. Biodiversity indicators are under development in preparation for BAC workshop in November, with a final draft anticipated to be completed for end of 2016. Thereafter, implementation and reporting are to be ongoing.
- NAMP/IMP Plan revision: Scoping and research is ongoing to develop ecological indicators for management actions and subsequent standard operating procedures. External research consultant under review. Aiming to have literature review completed in part by end of 2016.
- HCR: Habitat Condition Ratings completed for all terrestrial parks >1 ha in size. City Ecologists are field verifying these scores while scoping has started to expand the HCR model to include aquatic (10% wetland/riparian area) parks.

Chris went online to demonstrate the “IPM Invasive Weeds Map”, showing current status and use of spatial database (weed mapping) managed by Parks to demonstrate our conformance with the Alberta Weed Control Act and Regulations. Parks will be including aspects of this – but not the raw data or interactive interface – in a “storytelling” type approach for a public facing website in the future.

ITEM 8: (added to agenda) Information item

- John, through his association with Nature Calgary, shared information with BAC that what may represent the only remaining breeding habitat for meadowlarks in Calgary may be threatened with development of the Aurora Business Park
- Nature Calgary is scheduled to meet with representatives of The City on Oct.25 to explore the possibility of reducing the extent of site development to preserve a larger portion of the 140 acres of native prairie as protected habitat for this native species
- The Corporate Planning & Applications Group (CPAG) has Parks representation
- The meadowlark does not have species-at-risk (SAR) “listed species” status
- Wildlife habitat management is under provincial jurisdiction, not municipal
- BAC mandate is to advise Council on strategic matters, not specific developments
- BAC could propose guidance to Council or Administration on approaches to land use decision-making that consider relative rarity or representativeness of species or habitats