Bow River and Area Wetland Datasets

In early 2020 many of you attended a workshop to discuss development of a regional wetland inventory for the Bow River Basin and extended area (see map of study area) to support wetland conservation. We are pleased to inform you The City of Calgary is supporting this important work to develop four wetland inventory datasets that will be made freely available to you.

WETLAND DATASETS – BOW RIVER BASIN STUDY AREA

Using data generously provided by Alberta Environment and Parks we are working with Fiera Biological Consulting to develop:

1 **Current wetland inventory** – will include location and wetland class. Wetlands will be classified into one of the five classes (Bog, Fen, Marsh, Shallow Open Water, or Swamp) as per the Alberta Wetland Classification System. This wetland inventory will meet the inventory standards[1] developed by the GOA.

2 **Current land cover inventory** – we will integrate the wetland inventory into the land cover inventory to create a single, seamless spatial product for the basin. The land cover will be classified at two hierarchical levels, with the more detailed Level 2 classification consisting of 15 classes, which collapse down into 8 general Level 1 classes. The Level 1 classes include: open water, forest, natural grassland, agriculture, disturbed vegetation, natural bare ground, built-up exposed and wetlands.

3 **Restorable wetland inventory** – an attribute field will be added to the wetland inventory to help identify wetlands that could be restored based on visible evidence of drainage (with an assigned confidence score of low, medium to high).

4 **Historic wetland inventory** – we will map the historic extent of wetlands in the watershed using historic air photos. The extent of historic wetland can be compared to the current wetland extent to highlight areas where the loss of wetland area has been high.

Products will be available for download in Fall of 2023 via a project partner website. In addition, a series of products will be generated to demonstrate the utility of these datasets to support communities in the Bow River Basin to advance wetland conservation.

[1] Following the current provincial standard for wetland mapping, the minimum mapping unit will be 0.04 ha, with a target class accuracy of 80%. A copy of the standard can be accessed here.

FIERA Biological Consulting

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If you are interested in participating in development of the demonstration products, please contact tracy@rockies.ca.