

College of Agriculture  
and Bioresources

51 Campus Drive  
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A8 Canada  
Telephone: (306) 966-5855  
Facsimile: (306) 966-5015

Amanda MacDonald  
PCESC 2023 Social and Awards Committee Member  
amanda.macdonald@ab-conservation.com

December 22, 2022

Re: Nomination Renny Grilz for the Prairie Conservation Award

I am writing this letter to nominate Renny Grilz for the Prairie Conservation Award. I have worked with Renny on many grassland conservation questions for more than 14 years, and can confidently say that I know no-one who has done more to advance grassland conservation in Saskatchewan.

Renny is a leader in the grassland prescribed fire community. He is one of the most experienced burn bosses in western Canada, and under his leadership the Meewasin Valley Authority has carried out more prescribed fires than any other agency. In addition he is extremely generous with his time and expertise assisting other agencies with prescribed fire. Personally, this has been essential to my work, allowing my research group to safely conduct six prescribed fires for research purposes over the last five years. This is “on-the-ground” leadership producing tangible results, restoring the natural disturbance regime to remnant grasslands.

Renny has been instrumental in the successful funding and establishment of the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire exchange (CPPFE). The goal of the fire exchange is to standardize and professionalize the practice of prescribed fire in western Canada. The new agency has had a number of early successes including the development of online training materials, several co-operative prescribed fires, and in October 2022 a week long practical training course taken by more than 30 people. Renny’s contributions to the are numerous and include his expertise in fire, his leadership among the partner agencies overseeing the CPPFE, and his vision of a restored grassland disturbance regime. I don’t think it is a stretch to say that without Renny’s leadership, the CPPFE would not exist today. Long-term I think these efforts are going to result in thousands of hectares of restored grasslands.

In addition to fire, I have had the pleasure of working with Renny on numerous other questions of grassland conservation in the Saskatoon area. He takes a strongly science based approach to his work, and always listens to the advice from researchers. He is also very supportive of research work, and has frequently allowed my group to access lands under his management for data collection.

Finally, Renny has provided mentorship to many many students over the years. He frequently will come to the University to provide guest lectures for our students, and to the Range Team. He has hired many of our students into summer positions over the years. When he hires students, he always provides exemplary mentorship and training; our students return from these jobs enthusiastic about grassland conservation and with specific training in important skills such as invasive plant control. In some cases this extends to co-supervising undergraduate research projects. Many of these students have gone on to careers in grassland conservation with a variety of

agencies. In short, though not in a formal teaching role, Renny has done a great deal to train and encourage the next generation of grassland conservationists.

In short, I can't think of anyone more deserving of the Prairie Conservation Award than Renny Grilz for his many contributions to on-the-ground conservation, organizational capacity to deliver conservation programs, and the training and mentoring of new conservationists.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'EL', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Eric Lamb  
Professor, Department of Plant Sciences  
University of Saskatchewan

## RENNY GRILZ

402 3 Ave S, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G5

Email: rgrilz@meewasin.com

### PERSONAL PROFILE

Renny is Meewasin's Resource Management Officer in Saskatoon, and one of the founding members of the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange ([www.grasslandfire.ca](http://www.grasslandfire.ca)). He is a highly sought-after speaker and advisor across the prairie provinces and into the United States regarding prairie conservation topics including prairie restoration, prescribed fire, targeted grazing, prairie ecology, invasive species management and biodiversity conservation. He has led numerous teams over his career across the 3 prairie provinces in conservation programming including land securement, land stewardship and conservation planning initiatives. Renny is an active supporter of grazing and fire as key ecological drivers for ensuring the conservation of prairie grasslands.

### EDUCATION

Institute of Conservation-  
Leading from Within the Program 2009

University Saskatchewan 1997  
*Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Plant Ecology / Range Management*

### LICENCES AND ACCREDITATIONS

- Professional Agrologist
- Instructor: Introduction to Prescribed Fire in the Grassland Environment

### EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Resource Management Officer  
Meewasin Valley Authority  
2015 - Present · 8 years  
Saskatoon, SK

Owner  
Prairie Conservation Services  
2014 - Present · 9 years  
Aberdeen, SK

Native Plant Specialist  
Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company  
1993 - Present · 30 Years  
Aberdeen, Saskatchewan

Watershed Manager  
South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards  
2014 - 2015 · 1 Year  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Acting National Wildlife Area Manager

Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada

Oct 2012 - Oct 2013 · 1 Year

Last Mountain Lake National Wildlife Area

Director of Stewardship - Saskatchewan

Nature Conservancy of Canada

2009- 2012 · 3 Years

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Director, Conservation - Alberta Region

The Nature Conservancy of Canada

May 2002 - Aug 2009 · 7 Years

Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta

Agrologist

Ducks Unlimited Canada

1997 - 2002 · 5 Years

Melfort and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Minnedosa, Manitoba

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Member- Board of Directors

Society For Range Management, Prairie Parkland Chapter

2010 - Present · 13 Years

Member- Board of Directors

South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards

2016 - Present · 7 Years

Member- Board of Directors

Society for Range Management, Northern Great Plains Section

2016 - Present · 7 Years

Member- Board of Directors

Saskatoon Farmer's Market

2017 - Present · 5 Years

Member- Board of Directors

Saskatchewan Invasive Species Council

2011 - Present · 12 Years

Founding Member

Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange

2021 - Present · 2 Year

Board Member

Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds

2022 - Present · 1 Year