



Saskatchewan
Prairie Conservation
Action Plan

Native Prairie Speaker Series *Webinar*

Woody Plant Encroachment in the Aspen Parkland Ecoregion



Tuesday August 25th, 2026 at 12:00pm MT

Speaker: Andrew Williams, Masters of Science Student, University of Saskatchewan

Register Free: <https://shorturl.at/d180M> or https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oPEs6-56S9GiLglawCW3UQ (Best for government computers)

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About this Webinar:

Woody encroachment is a significant range management issue in western Canada. Here we examine the impact of woody encroachment on forage quality and quantity in the Aspen Parkland ecoregion of Saskatchewan, Canada by estimating the rate of scale of woody plant encroachment over the last 40 years in a representative Aspen Parkland pasture, and by quantifying the effects of increasing woody cover on forage production and quality. Forage production declined with increasing tree cover, with a 10% increase in tree cover resulting in a loss of approximately 80 kg of grass production and 58 kg of forb production per hectare. Shrub cover did not impact forage production, but forage quality declined with increasing shrub cover. The current extent of woody plant cover on the pasture, and changes over time, were estimated using remote sensing methods. Estimates for 2024 using high-resolution (10 m) Sentinel imagery are that 16.93% (7.55 km²) of Foam Lake pasture has tree cover, and an additional 7.87% (3.51 km²) of Foam Lake pasture has shrub cover. Tree cover was estimated from historical Landsat imagery to be 27.07% in 1985, increasing to 32.34% in 2009 and followed by a drop to 18.75% in 2024. While woody cover on this pasture is currently relatively stable, further research is needed to assess longer-term historical trends in cover.

About the Speaker:

My name is Andrew Williams, I was raised in Saskatoon and attended University at the University of Saskatchewan (UoS), where I achieved my BSc in Agriculture and Bioresource. Currently enrolled in my MSc program with Dr. Eric G. Lamb at the UoS, where I am working on remote sensing fire intensity.

PCAP's Native Prairie Speaker Series is a monthly webinar about prairie conservation or species at risk.

Hosted by: Caitlin Mroz-Sailer, Stewardship Coordinator, Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional territories of many Indigenous Nations and communities, past and present. For a millennia, they have worked to protect these landscapes and the life these areas sustain. I would like to thank these original caretakers, and acknowledge the ongoing work and presence of Indigenous Peoples in Canada today.

This webinar is in conjunction with Transboundary Grassland Partnership - Webinar, Saskatchewan Edition

