ReClimate™

COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE

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THE PREPARE FRAMEWORK

for readying communities for climate change by building trust, care and agency

CASE STUDIES

A group works on their Hydrological Drought Response Plan in Southwest Saskatchewan (SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF WATERSHEDS)

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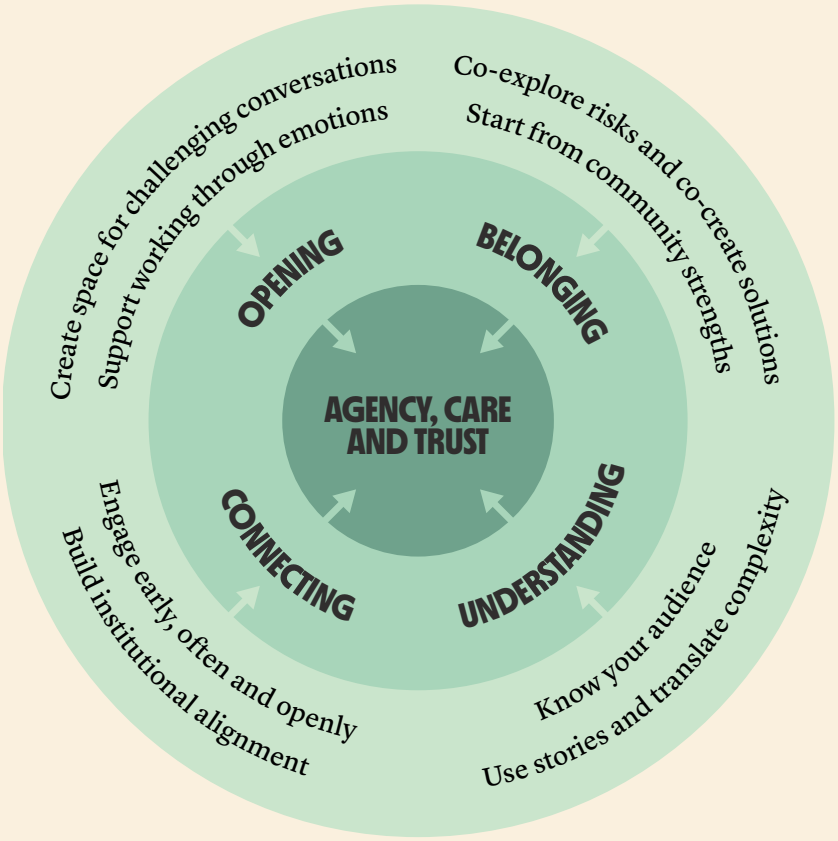
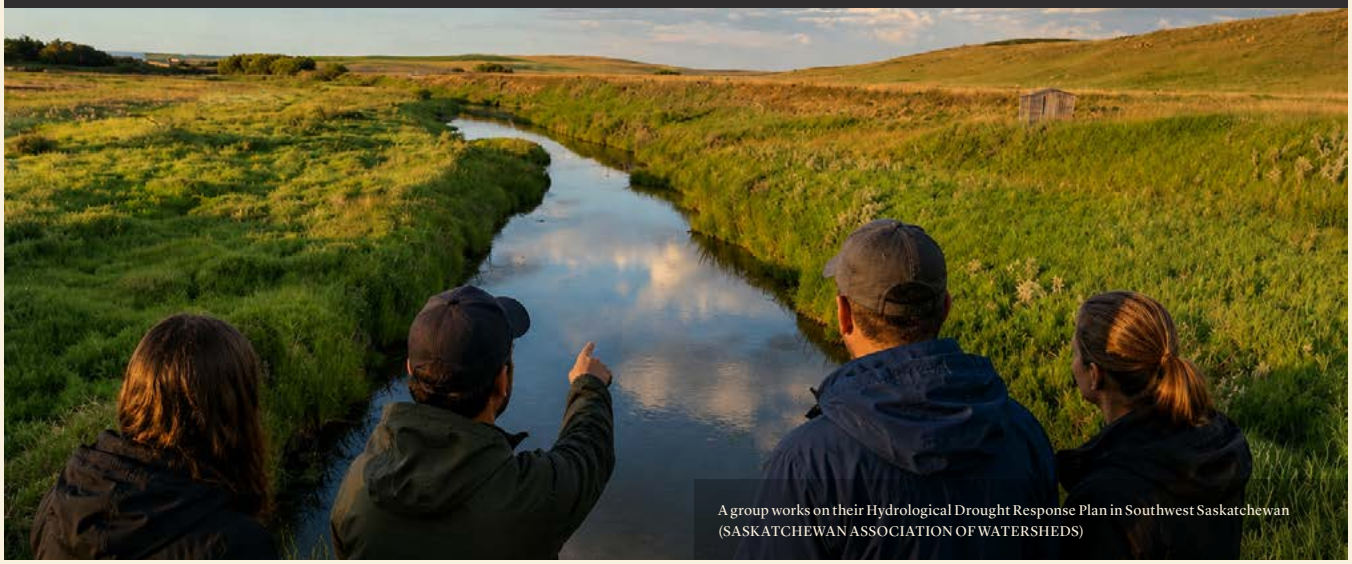
ClimateWest

Case studies

Four case studies from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba that show how the communication and engagement practices outlined in the Climate Ready Prairies Guide and PREPARE Framework can be put into practice.



CASE STUDY 1



A group works on their Hydrological Drought Response Plan in Southwest Saskatchewan (SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF WATERSHEDS)

Who

Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW)

What

Make the hydrological drought response plan for Herbert, Sask., accessible, engaging and relatable

How

Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) knows its audiences. When developing a hydrological drought response plan for Herbert, Sask., for example, the organization was focused on making the plan accessible, engaging and relatable for the residents. A SAW team met with community stakeholders in person twice to build trust. They shared SAW's previous work, brought in a respected hydrologist and paired their drought data with easy-to-understand graphics. During the meetings, they focused more on changing climate patterns and extreme events than on climate change. The eventual plan's recommendations were based on local experiences and knowledge about drought, and suggested a range of individual actions, like checking that toilets aren't running after flushing, as well as municipal actions, like implementing odd-even watering days. There is no scientific jargon in the plan and it is short: just five pages long.

> **"This work should be about knowledge sharing. It shouldn't just be about us saying 'this is how it is.'"**
>
> *—Samantha Kerr, Director of Water Resources SAW*

PREPARE Framework practices

Understanding:

- Know your audience
- Use stories and translate complexity

Belonging:

- Co-explore risks and co-create solutions

CASE STUDY 2

Alberta Wildfire crews return from fighting wildfires near Fort McMurray, Alta., Thursday, May16, 2024. (JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Who

Department of Emergency Management at the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations

What

Make monthly meetings with emergency managers more engaging

How

Michael Martineau, the lead for the department of emergency management at the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, wanted to host monthly meetings with emergency managers from each Nation to talk about how to coordinate their efforts, especially after the 2023 wildfire season, when twelve of the sixteen Nations were dealing with fires and five concurrent evacuations. Fires are now a year-round concern. Initially, however, these meetings weren't met with much interest. But when Michael asked "what is an emergency in the Nations?" he started to see more engagement. The group started to share information and strategies which have built momentum. They focus on one issue at a time and talk about it until everyone is on the same page. These meetings with the Nations are always in person, unless people need to join virtually. Whenever a new person joins the group, Michael takes a step back to onboard them and will go out to Nations to present to their departments. Building these networks has led to conducting mutual aid instead of calling the province to help when wildfires come. This has been a game changer, as they now share training and have great working relationships. They see fires as a cycle now and work to prepare for future ones. Another coordinated effort has been Fire Prevention Week activities in the Nations, where firetrucks go to the schools to show the kids how to be fire smart. They are also working with Fire Smart Canada to get assessors trained in every Nation so they can sit with families and talk about hazards in their houses.

"Naming the firefighters 'modern warriors' has resonated among many, and the network in Treaty 6 is using that language to reflect their work in adaptation."

—Michael Martineau, emergency management lead, Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations

PREPARE Framework practices

Understanding:

- Know your audience
- Use stories and translate complexity

Connecting:

- Build institutional alignment

Belonging:

- Start from community strengths

CASE STUDY 3

A participant at the Climate Ready Prairies Regional Summit looks at City of Edmonton's Neighbouring for Climate action cards on May 12, 2026. (PJ JORDAN/FRIENDLY VISUAL)

Who

City of Edmonton's Neighbouring for Climate program

What

Give Edmontonians the tools to make their neighbourhoods climate ready

How

Edmonton's Neighbouring for Climate program began in 2024, with the goal of inspiring communities to take adaptation actions with their neighbours. The city used a combination of paid marketing and grassroots promotion in rec centres and libraries to encourage people to sign up to become climate connectors, order the Neighbouring for Climate Toolkit—a set of cards with various mitigation or adaptation actions communities take—and start adaptation actions in their neighbourhood. The Neighbouring for Climate toolkit was designed to meet the needs and capacities of a wide range of audiences. Action cards include the following information:

- **Level:** to indicate if an action is a good starting place or if it requires advanced effort
- **Tags:** like "family-friendly" or "low-cost" to help narrow down your choices
- **Seasons:** shows the best time of year to prepare or complete a seasonal action
- **Next up:** shows you which action cards can be done together to maximize results

After two years, the program now has 120 climate connectors. Ashlyn Renner, the project coordinator, checks in with them regularly and shares their stories on the City's various platforms. Ashlynn and her team host virtual workshops, respond to the needs of Climate Connectors (e.g. make new action cards for renters) and are hoping to host more in-person events in 2026.

Climate Connectors have taken all kinds of actions in their neighbourhoods. Some have installed rain gardens and rain barrels on their own properties. Others have hosted in-person workshops with their neighbours to talk about their vision for the neighbourhood. One Climate Connector, Idris, led a community workshop in the Keegano Housing Co-op in south Edmonton. The group discussed emergency personal water filters, an updated rain barrel program and improved access to climate retrofit programs. People were eager to shape the co-op's future. To foster this work, they are now hosting these conversations every month.

PREPARE Framework practices

Connecting

- Engage early, often and openly

Belonging

- Co-explore risks and co-create solutions
- Start from community strengths

CASE STUDY 4

Members of the Prairie Farmers and Ranchers Forum gather to develop recommendations on sustainability and land stewardship in agriculture. (FARMERS FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS)

Who

Farmers for Climate Solutions

What

Build consensus among producers in the Prairies on how to build a prosperous agriculture sector

How

In early 2024, Farmers for Climate Solutions (FCS) brought together 36 producers to create The Prairie Farmers and Ranchers Forum, to develop recommendations for a strong, sustainable, and prosperous Prairie agriculture sector. Farmers and ranchers were chosen by randomly selecting individuals from the group of people who applied to join the forum, and FCS used a citizens' assembly model for the engagement. Forum members were selected to represent the diversity of producers on the Prairies. This explicitly included different opinions on climate change, which ranged from denial and skepticism to a sense of urgency and anxiety about climate impacts. Forum members met three times in person over two days, followed by virtual sessions. They also connected with each other in between meetings.

At the first meeting, the producers had some serious disagreements about the role and existence of climate change. As a result, forum members decided to shift focus from climate change to sustainability and good land stewardship. The forum was then able to move forward, acknowledging disagreements, but finding common ground through honest, challenging conversation.

"Early in the process, there were tensions, doubts, and apprehension. Some members feared that there were predetermined outcomes or hidden agendas in the process. But trust formed through respect and open dialogue. Forum members were selected for their differences, but they soon learned that they had much in common. We had a lot of fun, too."

—Mary Smilie, Chair of the Prairie Farmer & Rancher Forum

PREPARE Framework practices

Understanding

- Know your audience

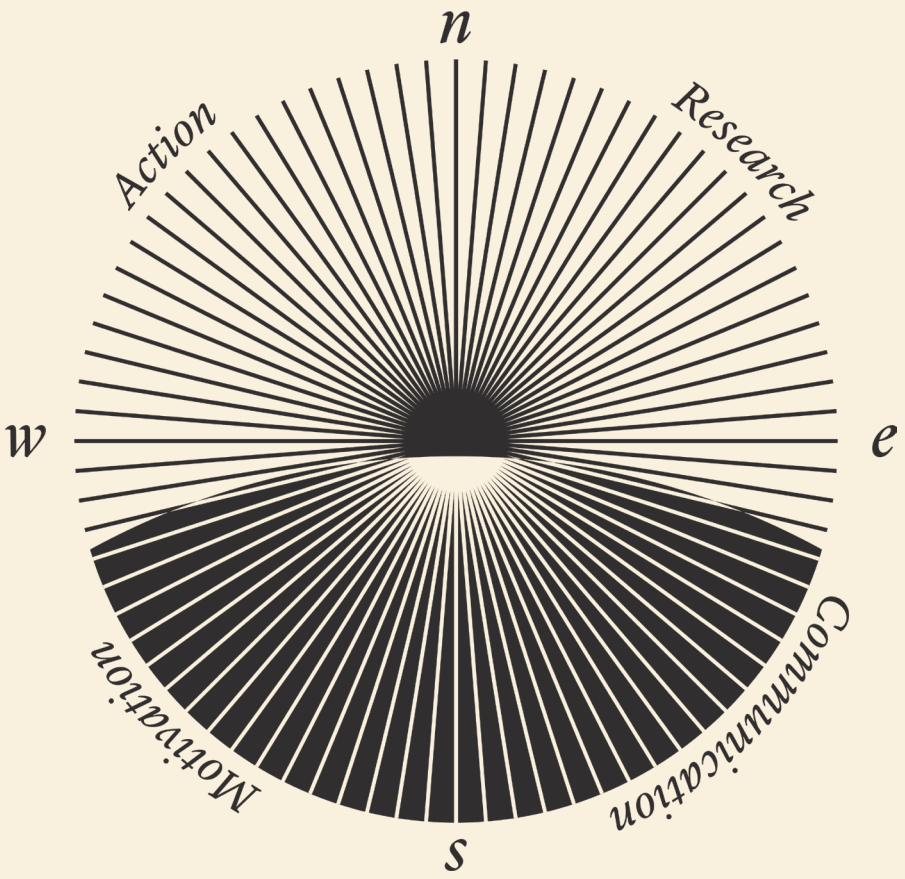
Connecting

- Engage early, often and openly

Opening

- Create space for challenging conversations

Carleton University | Centre for Climate Communication and Engagement



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