



# ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009



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### **MISSION**

*To represent the land trust community and build capacity in land trusts to conserve diverse and ecologically important landscapes in Alberta*

### **VISION**

*Alberta’s future landscapes are rich in biodiversity and have strong ecological integrity*



**Alberta Land Trust Alliance**

*Photos by Alan Dodd*

**For copies of this document please contact:**

**1400, 9915 108 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8  
Telephone: (780) 644-7384  
Fax: (780) 644-7385**

**E-mail: [albertalandtrust@shaw.ca](mailto:albertalandtrust@shaw.ca)**

**Website: [www.landtrusts-alberta.ca](http://www.landtrusts-alberta.ca)**



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## **ALTA Member Groups**

- \* **Alberta Environmental Law Centre**
- \* **Alberta Fish and Game Association**
- \* **Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca**
- \* **Ducks Unlimited Canada**
- \* **Edmonton & Area Land Trust**
- \* **Foothills Land Trust**
- \* **Land Stewardship Centre of Canada**
- \* **Miistakis Institute**
- \* **Municipal District of Rocky View No. 44**
- \* **Nature Conservancy of Canada**
- \* **Southern Alberta Land Trust Society**
- \* **Western Sky Land Trust**
- \* **Wild Elk Federation**

*A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and an organization whereby a landowner agrees to relinquish certain rights of the land in exchange for long term conservation of the ecological values of the land. Ecological values can include but are not limited to wetlands, trees and native grasslands.*

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Formed in 2008, the Alberta Land Trust Alliance (ALTA) is a not for profit organization. We are currently seeking charitable status.

We are governed by a Board of Directors which includes representatives from land trusts, landowners and municipalities. Please contact us at [albertalandtrust@shaw.ca](mailto:albertalandtrust@shaw.ca) if you are interested in joining the ALTA Board of Directors.

The ALTA is an umbrella group for Alberta's land trusts and land trust community. As of March 31, 2009, Alberta had 12 land trusts. ALTA's definition of a land trust is a not for profit charitable organization that has as one of its main objectives the conservation of private lands for the purpose of conservation.

### **A Brief History**

In the summer of 2006, Alberta Environment brought together representatives from Alberta's land trust community to discuss ways to increase the conservation of private lands with the use of the conservation easement. At that time, Alberta Environment was responsible for conservation easement legislation and recognized that land trusts played an important role in securing conservation easements on private land.

The discussions in 2006 resulted in several recommendations to Alberta Environment. The number one recommendation was the request for Alberta Environment's help to create and facilitate a connected and networked provincial Alliance. This resulted in the formation of the Alberta Land Trust Alliance.

With the help of several volunteers, a business plan was created in November of 2006 and was submitted to Alberta Environment. Shortly after, Alberta Environment agreed to provide \$300,000 in seed funding as well as a staff person for up to 3 years to help create and facilitate the newly named Alberta Land Trust Alliance.

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## ***ALTA Board of Directors***

### **CHAIRMAN**

*Ernie Ewaschuk  
Land Stewardship Centre of Canada*

### **VICE-CHAIRMAN**

*Renny Grilz  
Nature Conservancy of Canada*

### **SECRETARY/TREASURER**

*Barry Bishop  
Ducks Unlimited Canada*

### **DIRECTOR**

*Alan Gardner  
Southern Alberta Land Trust Society*

### **DIRECTOR**

*Brenda Wispinski  
Beaver Hills Initiative/Strathcona  
County*

### **DIRECTOR**

*Grant Pearsell  
City of Edmonton*

### **DIRECTOR**

*Margaret Van De Pitte  
Landowner*

*The land trust community includes conservation professionals (e.g. lawyers, accountants, land appraisers), municipalities, Provincial and Federal Government, landowners and supporters.*

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## **ALTA Goals**

### ***Alberta land trusts have the capacity to operate effectively***

- \* Create and manage a virtual resource centre ([www.landtrusts-alberta.ca](http://www.landtrusts-alberta.ca))
- \* Provide training to land trusts and the land trust community (e.g. annual conference/workshops)
- \* Develop a grant program to distribute funds out to Alberta's land trusts (subject to funding)
- \* Act as a referral agency for landowners

### ***The Alberta Land Trust Alliance is the recognized voice of a unified land trust community***

- \* Speak as a unified voice for Alberta's land trusts and land trust community
- \* Build and maintain relationships with land trust community
- \* Increase membership in ALTA and provide excellent service to members
- \* Engage in policy discussions as appropriate (e.g. Alberta's Land Use Framework & Plan for Parks)

### ***The Alberta Land Trust Alliance is Sustainable***

- \* Ensure long term sustainability of the ALTA
- \* Sustain a credible and value added organization for members



## Chairman's Message



With all the activity in the ALTA office it's hard to believe that it has only been just over a year and a half since we were incorporated and began functioning as an entity. The year of 2008 saw the Executive Director and the Board working on several key issues to advance the Alliance to position itself to assist land trusts in Alberta.

One of the key undertakings was a review of the original business plan leading to development of a strategic approach and an implementation plan for the next three to five years. The Board further, participated in a retreat and an information session in which the governance structure was formulated and advanced with development of key working committees. The Government Policy Committee quickly became active and held several meetings and generated a report and letter describing ALTA's relationship to the implementation of the Land-Use Framework, following a survey of all members for input. A second survey focused on gathering input for a communications plan and a fund development plan was conducted and used to complete the two plans.

In addition, a successful annual conference was conducted and resulted in much positive feedback from participants. I would personally, like to thank all the Board members for their hard work to accomplish all they have in such a short time; this however, could not have been completed without the superior effort of our Executive Director, Laurel Murphy who provided the energy and organization for this task. Funding support provided by Alberta Environment was critical for getting the Alliance up and running and is very much appreciated.

## Executive Director's Message



This past year with the Alberta Land Trust Alliance has been very busy and exciting. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in ALTA's communication and Land Use Framework interviews/surveys. The information you provided is extremely valuable and will help us to serve you better in upcoming years. I would also like to thank the ALTA's Board of Directors who have contributed their time and expertise to make ALTA the best it can be and a special thanks to Ernie Ewaschuk as Chairman!

Please join us in September 2010 at the Banff Centre in Banff, AB for the next ALTA conference which will be hosted jointly by ALTA and the Canadian Land Trust Alliance.

## *Alberta's Land Trusts*

*Alberta Conservation Association*

*Alberta Fish and Game Association*

*Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation\**

*Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca*

*Ducks Unlimited Canada*

*Edmonton & Area Land Trust*

*Foothills Land Trust*

*Land Stewardship Centre of Canada*

*Nature Conservancy of Canada*

*Southern Alberta Land Trust Society*

*Western Sky Land Trust*

*Wild Elk Federation*

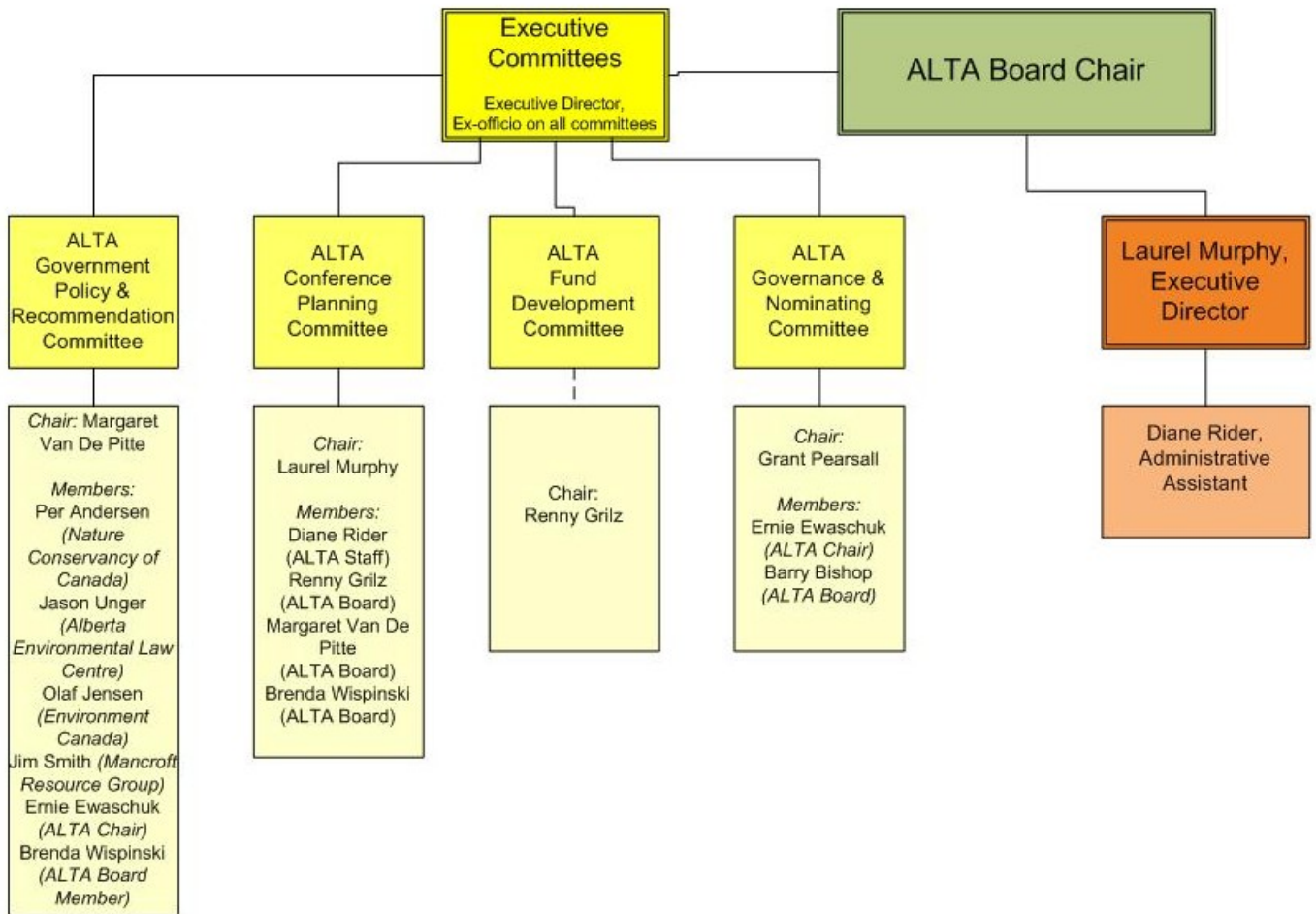
*\*public land trust*

## ALTA Activities and Progress 2008-2009

Business and Implementation Plan Components		Area of ALTA Activity in 2008-2009**
Goal	Strategy	
1. Alberta Land Trusts have the capacity to operate effectively	1.1. Develop a virtual resource centre	*Launched in October 2008.
	1.2. Develop funding models for grants supporting capacity and training, securement, stewardship and sponsorship	*Targeted for the 2009-10 fiscal year
	1.3. Develop a training program	*Training/capacity building program developed in December 2008 *March 11-13th conference
	1.4. Develop a toolkit for establishing new land trusts in identified gap areas	*Map of where land trusts work in Alberta was created-shown at ALTA conference *Public presentation was delivered in Grande Prairie focusing on starting a local land trust *Met with County of Vermillion Administration and spoke about starting a local land trust
2. The ALTA is the recognized voice of a unified land trust community	2.1. Develop a communications plan for collaboration and sharing	*Communication mini audit was conducted with Alberta's land trusts and several others in Nov/Dec. 2008 *Communications Plan created in January 2009) *Conducted a survey with Alberta's land trusts on Alberta Government's Land Use Framework *13 Memorandums of Understanding were signed resulting in 13 ALTA Members *Presentations were given to County of Vermillion and Grande Prairie councils as well as the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties *ALTA Executive Director continued role as Logistics Chair for the Strengthening Stewardship-Investing At Every Step conference
	2.2. Provide advice and encouragement of appropriate policy supportive of effective land conservation	*Created the Government Policy Recommendations Committee who authored and distributed a Land Use Framework Recommendations Report to the Land Use Secretariat
	2.3. Develop a plan for measuring the success for land trusts	*Targeted for the 2009-10 fiscal year
3. The ALTA is sustainable	3.1. Develop a revenue model for the ALTA	*A revenue development model for the ALTA was created in March 2009
	3.2. Create an efficient and effective organizational structure for the ALTA	*A part-time Administrative Assistant was hired in October 2008 *Board meetings were held in April, May, September and December 2008 and March 2009 *A board development workshop was held in December 2008 *The ALTA created 3 Executive Committees: Government Policy Recommendations Committee, Governance and Nominating Committee and Conference Planning Committee

\*\*ALTA's fiscal year is April 1 to March 31

## ALTA Organizational Chart and Executive Committees



**ALTA Government Policy Recommendations Committee:** This committee was formed in November of 2008 and met 3 times to discuss legal, tax and policy issues affecting land conservation. Based on their discussions and the results of a survey responded to by Alberta's Land Trusts, the Committee created the Land Use Framework (LUF) Recommendations Report. The 1<sup>st</sup> Draft of the Recommendations Report was submitted to the LUF Secretariat in March 2009 for their review and comment.

**ALTA Conference Planning Committee:** This committee met several times starting in October 2006 through to March 2009. The conference committee recruited speakers for the conference program. The conference evaluations indicated that the majority of attendees felt the conference was very successful due to the diversity of speakers and their topics and the opportunity they had to network.

**ALTA Fund Development Committee:** This committee formed in April 2009 in response to the Fund Development Plan.

**ALTA Governance and Nominating Committee:** This committee formed to make sure the structure, composition and organization of the Board are effective in furthering the interests of the Alberta Land Trust Alliance's members and supporters. This Committee met in February 2009 and will be recruiting new ALTA Board Directors in the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

# ALTA Financial Highlights

## AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of **Alberta Land Trust Alliance**:

We have audited the statement of financial position of **Alberta Land Trust Alliance** as at March 31, 2009 and the statements of changes in net deficit, operations and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Alliance's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

Except as explained in the following paragraph, we conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many charitable organizations, the Alliance derives revenue from sponsorships, the completeness of which is not susceptible of satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of this revenue was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the organization and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to this revenue, excess of revenue for the year and net deficit at the end of the year.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of revenue referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Alliance as at March 31, 2009 and the results of its operations, changes in its net deficit and its cash flows for the period then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Edmonton, Alberta  
May 8, 2009

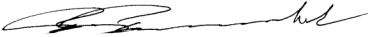

Chartered Accountants

## ALTA Financial Highlights Continued

### ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2009

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash .....	\$ 33,183	\$ 22,993
Term deposits .....	176,365	267,061
Accounts receivable .....	14,279	10,717
Prepaid expenses .....	<u>2,436</u>	<u>3,622</u>
Total current assets .....	226,263	304,393
OFFICE EQUIPMENT (Note 3) .....	<u>2,872</u>	<u>2,876</u>
TOTAL .....	<u>\$229,135</u>	<u>\$307,269</u>
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET DEFICIT</u>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities .....	\$ 5,348	\$ 19,855
Deferred revenue (Note 4) .....	<u>224,897</u>	<u>286,420</u>
Total current liabilities .....	<u>230,245</u>	<u>306,275</u>
NET (DEFICIT) ASSETS:		
Invested in office equipment .....	2,872	2,876
Unrestricted .....	<u>(3,982)</u>	<u>(1,882)</u>
Total net (deficit) assets .....	<u>(1,110)</u>	<u>994</u>
TOTAL .....	<u>\$229,135</u>	<u>\$307,269</u>

Approved on behalf of the Board:

 Director  
 Director

## ALTA Financial Highlights Continued

### ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET DEFICIT  
FOR THE YEAR END MARCH 31, 2009

	Invested in office equipment	Unrestricted	<u>2009</u> <u>(12 months)</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>2008</u> <u>(1 month)</u>
Balance at beginning of period .....	\$2,876	\$(1,882)	\$ 994	\$ -
Excess of (expenses) revenue for the period .....	(676)	(1,428)	(2,104)	994
Purchase of equipment .....	<u>672</u>	<u>(672)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at end of the period .....	<u>\$2,872</u>	<u>\$(3,982)</u>	<u>\$ (1,110)</u>	<u>\$994</u>

### ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009

	<u>2009</u> <u>(12 months)</u>	<u>2008</u> <u>(1 month)</u>
<b>UNRESTRICTED REVENUE:</b>		
Sponsorships - ALTA conference (Note 5) .....	\$ 6,565	\$1,582
Conference registration and workshop .....	<u>5,785</u>	<u>2,600</u>
Total unrestricted revenue .....	12,350	4,182
RESTRICTED REVENUE (Note 6) .....	<u>92,824</u>	<u>26,317</u>
Total revenue .....	<u>105,174</u>	<u>30,499</u>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>		
Administration fees .....	-	3,165
Amortization .....	676	320
Bank charges .....	108	30
Conference and workshop .....	18,696	9,629
Insurance .....	2,242	-
Office .....	4,413	4,419
Professional fees .....	7,268	4,000
Project costs (Note 7) .....	45,966	-
Telephone .....	919	-
Travel and meetings .....	13,298	7,942
Training .....	1,938	-
Wages and benefits .....	<u>11,754</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenses .....	<u>107,278</u>	<u>29,505</u>
EXCESS OF (EXPENSES) REVENUE FOR THE PERIOD .....	<u>\$ (2,104)</u>	<u>\$ 994</u>

## ALTA Financial Highlights Continued

### ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009

	<b>2009</b> <b>(12 months)</b>	<b>2008</b> <b>(1 month)</b>
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Cash from operations:		
Excess of (expenses) revenue for the period .....	(2,104)	\$ 994
Item not involving cash for operations – amortization .....	<u>676</u>	<u>320</u>
	<b>(1,428)</b>	1,314
Increase (decrease) in non-cash working capital balances related to operations:		
Accounts receivable .....	(3,562)	(10,717)
Prepaid expenses .....	1,186	(3,622)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities .....	(14,507)	19,855
Deferred revenue .....	<u>(61,523)</u>	<u>286,420</u>
Net cash (used in) from operating activities .....	<b>(79,834)</b>	293,250
INVESTING ACTIVITY – purchase of equipment .....	<u>(672)</u>	<u>(3,196)</u>
(DECREASE) INCREASE IN CASH FOR THE YEAR .....	<b>(80,506)</b>	290,054
CASH AT BEGINNING OF THE YEAR .....	<u>290,054</u>	<u>-</u>
CASH AT END OF THE YEAR .....	<b><u>\$209,548</u></b>	<b><u>\$290,054</u></b>
CASH REPRESENTED BY:		
Cash .....	\$ 33,183	\$ 22,993
Term deposits .....	<u>176,365</u>	<u>267,061</u>
	<b><u>\$209,548</u></b>	<b><u>\$290,054</u></b>

**ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE**  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
MARCH 31, 2009

**1. PURPOSE OF THE ALLIANCE:**

The Alberta Land Trust Alliance was incorporated on March 12, 2008 as a non-profit organization under the Alberta Companies Act.

The Alberta Land Trust Alliance is established for the charitable purposes of conserving and protecting Canada's environmental heritage by undertaking activities, and by supporting organizations and activities that conserve landscapes of natural and cultural significance in Alberta.

The Alberta Land Trust Alliance is exempt from income taxes under the Income Tax Act as a non-profit organization.

## ALTA Financial Highlights Continued

### 2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Significant accounting policies are as follows:

*Revenue recognition:*

The Alliance follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Amounts received from grants and donations which must be expended for specific purposes are recognized as revenue to the extent of the related expenses incurred. Unexpended funds are deferred to subsequent years and are either expended or refunded at that time.

Conference sponsorship, registration and workshop revenue is recognized when the function to which the revenue related to has been presented or completed.

*Donated services:*

The work of the Alliance is dependent on the voluntary service of many individuals. Since these services are not normally purchased by the Alliance and because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, donated services are not recognized in these financial statements.

*Term deposits:*

Term deposits bear interest at 2.45% and 0.5% per annum. Term deposits are classified as held-to-maturity financial instruments and are valued at cost plus accrued interest.

*Office equipment:*

Office equipment is stated at cost. Amortization is provided using the diminishing-balance method at 20% per annum for furniture and equipment and 30% per annum for computer equipment.

*Cash and cash equivalents:*

Cash and cash equivalents consist of balances with banks and short-term investments with maturities not exceeding 90 days.

*Use of estimates:*

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### 3. OFFICE EQUIPMENT:

The major categories of office equipment and related accumulated amortization are as follows:

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net Book Value</u>	
			<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Furniture and equipment.....	\$3,196	\$895	<b>\$2,301</b>	\$2,876
Computer .....	<u>672</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>571</u>	<u>-</u>
Total.....	<u>\$3,868</u>	<u>\$996</u>	<b><u>\$2,872</u></b>	<u>\$2,876</u>

## ALTA Financial Highlights Continued

### 4. DEFERRED REVENUE:

Deferred revenue consists of the following:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Balance at beginning of the period .....	\$286,420	\$ -
Grant received - Alberta Environment .....	-	300,000
- Alberta Real Estate Foundation .....	20,000	-
Interest earned .....	5,612	12,737
Expenses incurred .....	<u>(87,135)</u>	<u>(26,317)</u>
 Balance at end of the period .....	 <u>\$224,897</u>	 <u>\$286,420</u>

### 5. SPONSORSHIPS - ALTA CONFERENCE:

Sponsorships are comprised of the following:

	<u>2009</u> <u>(12 months)</u>	<u>2008</u> <u>(1 month)</u>
Strathcona County .....	\$3,500	\$ -
Nature Conservancy Canada .....	500	-
Ducks Unlimited Canada .....	500	-
Land Stewardship Centre of Canada .....	1,000	1,582
Environment Canada .....	<u>1,065</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$6,565</u>	<u>\$1,582</u>

### 6. RESTRICTED REVENUE:

Restricted revenue is comprised of the following:

	<u>2009</u> <u>(12 months)</u>	<u>2008</u> <u>(1 month)</u>
Alberta Environment .....	\$77,135	\$26,317
Alberta Real Estate Foundation .....	10,000	-
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks, & Wildlife Foundation .....	<u>5,689</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$92,824</u>	<u>\$26,317</u>

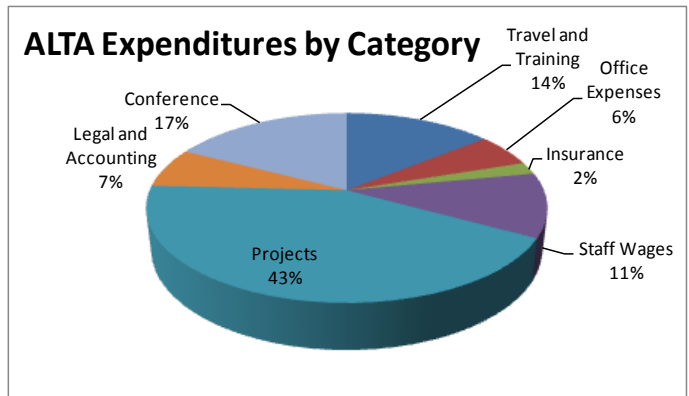
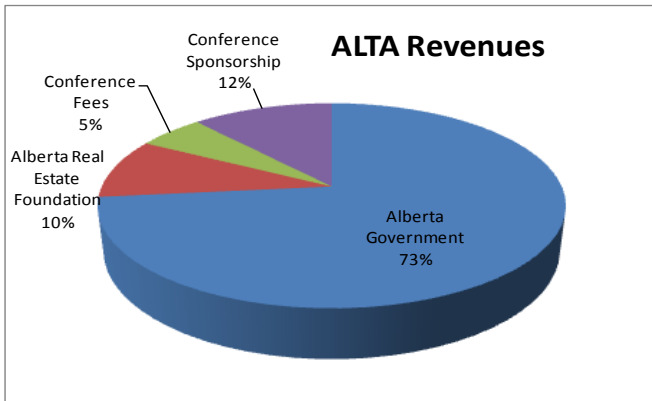
The Alberta Real Estate Foundation grant was used to fund specific project costs. The Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks & Wildlife Foundation grant was used to fund conference expenses. The Alberta Environment grant was used to fund other general expenses and project costs.

### 7. PROJECT COSTS:

Project costs are comprised of the following:

ALTA Communication Plan .....	\$ 9,225
ALTA Fund Development Plan .....	12,813
ALTA Strategic Plan .....	5,225
ALTA website .....	10,736
Land Use Framework Survey .....	7,892
Other .....	<u>75</u>
	<u>\$45,966</u>

## ALTA Financial Summary Graphs



**The ALTA wishes to thank several organizations that helped ALTA achieve its goals in 2008-2009.**

### **Alberta Environment**

- Provided \$300,000 in November 2006 to help ALTA with operating and project costs until December of 2010
- Provided a seconded staff person (includes wages, benefits and some training) for 3 years ending in July 2010
- Provided ALTA with cell phone and internet

### **Alberta Water Council**

Invited the ALTA to share their office space in April 2008.

### **Alberta Real Estate Foundation**

Awarded \$40,000 in grant funds for the ALTA's communication and fund development plans, governance terms, policies and procedures and training modules.

*The following individuals have contributed their time and expertise:*

<i>Alan Gardner*</i>	<i>Avelyn Nicol</i>	<i>Barry Bishop*</i>	<i>Bernie MacDonald</i>	<i>Brad Fenson</i>
<i>Brenda Wispinski*</i>	<i>Brian Ilnicki*</i>	<i>Brock Carscallen</i>	<i>Carla Klassen</i>	<i>Darren Dorge</i>
<i>Dave Walker</i>	<i>Diana McQueen</i>	<i>Doug Manzer</i>	<i>Dree Thomson-Diamond</i>	<i>Dug Major</i>
<i>Ernie Ewaschuk*</i>	<i>Evan Berger</i>	<i>Glen Lawrence</i>	<i>Grant Pearsell*</i>	<i>Guy Greenaway*</i>
<i>Jack Sherman</i>	<i>Jason Unger</i>	<i>Jay Slep</i>	<i>Jim Pearse</i>	<i>Jim Smith</i>
<i>Kathy Hawkesworth</i>	<i>Karen Wirtanen</i>	<i>Karen Haugen Kozyra</i>	<i>Karely Coleman</i>	<i>Kin Good</i>
<i>Lorna Visser</i>	<i>Margaret Van De Pitte*</i>	<i>Marian Weber</i>	<i>Martin Sharren</i>	<i>Maureen Heffring</i>
<i>Mike Verhage</i>	<i>Morris Seiferling</i>	<i>Pam Boutilier</i>	<i>Pam Wight</i>	<i>Per Andersen</i>
<i>Simon Dyer</i>	<i>Renny Grilz*</i>	<i>Ron Reid</i>	<i>Tracy Tarves</i>	<i>Vic Adamowicz</i>

*Special thanks goes out to the ALTA Board\* and Staff*



**ALBERTA LAND TRUST ALLIANCE**

**Suite 1400, 9915 108 Street**

**Edmonton, AB T5K 2S3**

**Website: [www.landtrusts-alberta.ca](http://www.landtrusts-alberta.ca)**

Photo by Ernie Ewaschuk