

ALTA VISION: Alberta's future landscapes are rich in biodiversity and have strong ecological integrity

ALTA MISSION: to represent the land trust community and build capacity in land trusts to conserve diverse and ecologically important landscapes in Alberta



Alberta Land
Trust Alliance

Newsletter

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FALL/WINTER 2009

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NEW ACT FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS IN ALBERTA

The Alberta Land Stewardship Act was proclaimed in October 2009. ALSA now presides over Conservation Easement Legislation in Alberta and includes agricultural land. For more information on ALSA please visit the Alberta Land Trust Alliance website at: www.landtrusts-alberta.ca.

Message from ALTA

www.landtrusts-alberta.ca

Welcome to ALTA's first newsletter and thank you to ALTA Members who provided information! The purpose of this newsletter is to let members of Alberta's land trust community know what each other is doing. ALTA's next newsletter will be in spring/summer 2010.

Grant Pearsell is ALTA's new Chairman and he fills the shoes of Renny Grilz who moved to Saskatchewan to continue his work with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. ALTA has also appointed 2 additional board directors, Per Andersen from the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Dave McInnes with Field Law. A complete listing of ALTA Board Directors is available at www.landtrusts-alberta.ca.

ALTA is currently working on a Stewardship Training Module and with input from ALTA Members and others, we hope to compile a module that includes guidelines and templates on baseline and monitoring reporting, guidelines for best management practices for conservation lands (easement and owned) and information on setting up an endowment. We anticipate the Stewardship Training Module being completed in Spring 2010. We are also working with the Foothills Land Trust on this project and hope to jointly deliver a workshop on it in 2010.

ALTA is working with the Canadian Land Trust Alliance to plan the annual conference at the Banff Centre in Banff, AB from September 30-October 02, 2010. Please mark your calendars!

Announcements

Alberta Conservation Association has \$850,000 of funding available through its 2010/11 Grant Eligible Conservation Fund. For more information please visit <http://www.ab-conservation.com/go/default/index.cfm/grants/grant-eligible-conservation-fund/>.

Alberta Environmental Law Centre recently hired two new staff council, Laura Bowman and Adam Driedzic.

Alberta's Recreational Access Management Program (RAMP) is now up and running. RAMP is a three-year pilot project which aims to improve hunting and fishing access and wildlife habitat stewardship on private land in Wildlife Management Units 108 and 300. For more information please visit <http://srd.alberta.ca/fishwildlife/fishinghunting/ramp/default.aspx> or contact Grant Chapman at srd.ramp@gov.ab.ca or (403) 388-7777 (toll free by calling 310-0000).

Brian Innicki is the new Executive Director for the Land Stewardship Centre of Canada. Brian took over for Ernie Ewaschuk because Ernie is retiring. You can contact Brian at 780-483-1885 or brian@landstewardship.org.

Edmonton & Area Land Trust is aiming to move into an Edmonton based office in the near future and to hire a Program Manager in the fall of 2009.

Ernie Ewaschuk received a Countryside Canada Award from Wildlife Habitat Canada for his long time dedication to promoting land stewardship across Canada. The Land Stewardship Centre of Canada where Ernie was the Executive Director for over 10 years, also received a Countryside Canada Award. Awards were handed out at the 4th National Stewardship and Conservation Conference: Strengthening Stewardship held in Calgary, AB in July 2009. The Alberta Land Trust Alliance would also like to thank Ernie for his contributions to ALTA as past chair.

Olaf Jensen, Ecological Gifts Advisor, has accepted a new position with Environment Canada in Ottawa, ON. The new Ecological Gifts Advisor is Robin Bloom. Robin is located at Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, Room 200, 4999 98th Avenue NW Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2X3 as of October 19, 2009. You can reach him at (780)951-8826 office, (780)991-1906 cell, or e-mail him at Robin.bloom@ec.gc.ca.

Western Sky Land Trust recently hired Cynthia Goddard as their Project Assistant.

New Conservation Lands*



Photo by Nature Conservancy of Canada

Feature Project-Golden Ranch-ACA, AFGA, DUC, EALT, NCC, and Strathcona County/Beaver Hills Initiative have partnered to conserve Golden Ranches, a 1500 acre Ranch located 27 km east of Edmonton, AB in the Cooking Lake Moraine area. The Ranch is the largest of its kind in the Moraine and supports a high diversity of vegetation, waterfowl, mammals and birds. In addition, it is an important ecological link between Elk Island National Park, Blackfoot Grazing Reserve and Ministik Lake Bird Sanctuary. Conservation of the Ranch is happening in several stages and the partners are currently fund raising. One of the ways the partners are raising funds is through a raffle with the winner receiving a 2010 Camry Hybrid (donated by Sherwood Park Toyota). ACA is administering the raffle with all proceeds going to securement of the Ranch. Tickets are \$25 and the draw is on December 5, 2009. You can buy your ticket by visiting

<https://secure.ab-conservation.com/getYourTicket.cfm>.

ACA Projects-ACA is working with AFGA to complete a land purchase in the Milk River Ridge area and is working on conserving Golden Ranch.

AFGA Projects-AFGA recently acquired Beltz Lake, Peigan 2, Sandstone and Milk River Ridge projects in addition to working on Golden Ranch. AFGA will have an up to date Atlas on their website shortly (www.afga.org).

CCCSA Project-CCCSA has been working with landowners and Ecological Gifts Program staff to explore opportunities to put conservation easements on lands in the Crooked Creek and Pine Creek areas near Athabasca, AB.

DUC Projects-Since April of 2008, DUC has secured approximately 20,000 acres in Alberta. This includes 600 acres of purchased lands, 1,800 acres under paid Conservation Easements and 11,000 acres under donated Conservation Easements. Some of these acres are represented by the OH Ranch-Bassano and Dorothy project at 11,000 acres, the Rath project in Cypress Hills at 1,500 acres and the Sawchuk purchase in the Bonnyville area at 320 acres.

FLT Projects-FLT has secured two conservation easements.

SALTS Projects-SALTS has secured the Pekisko lands (part of OH Ranch project) as well as a conservation easement west of Longview, AB. They are also working on a conservation easement in the Porcupine Hills area of AB that they are hoping to close by December 2009.

*this is not a full representation of all the lands conserved and is based on information provided by the land trusts to ALTA

Events

AFGA's annual conference will be held from February 18-20, 2010 at the Ramada Inn in Edmonton, AB. Please visit www.afga.org for more information.

CCCSA will be hosting an Athabasca Basin Water Conference and Stewardship Workshop in January 2010. More details TBA.

FLT will be planning a Conservation Celebration Award ceremony to recognize landowners who have conserved their land with FLT. Date to TBA.

The Prairie Conservation Forum held it's 20th anniversary celebration in Hanna in late October 2009. The Special Areas Board was a founding member in 1999, and has been actively involved since. The PCF includes 45 member agencies from Government, industry, academia, and the non-government environmental sector.

WSLT will host a Landowner Forum on Saturday, November 7, 2009 from 8:30 to 11:30a.m., at the Carseland Community Hall. The forum is free of charge and will feature a number of presentations on the mandate of Western Sky, land conservation easements, charitable tax benefits, estate planning and how voluntary conservation tools can assist with conserving landscapes for future generations. WSLT will also be doing a Watershed Forum in 2010.

ACA-Alberta Conservation Association

AFGA-Alberta Fish and Game Association

ALTA-Alberta Land Trust Alliance

CCCSA-Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca

DUC-Ducks Unlimited Canada

EALT-Edmonton & Area Land Trust

ELC-Environmental Law Centre-Alberta

FLT-Foothills Land Trust

LSCC-Land Stewardship Centre of Canada

NCC-Nature Conservancy of Canada

SALTS-Southern Alberta Land Trust Society

WEF-Wild Elk Federation

WSLT-Western Sky Land Trust

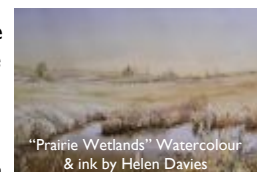
New Programs and/or Research

AFGA is working on an Antelope-friendly Fencing Project, are looking for land stewards for some of their properties, and are exploring carbon offsets and trading.

CCCSA has been working on the Athabasca Basin stewardship coalition, is currently organizing the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup on their riverfront and adjacent creeks and is organizing the Audubon Athabasca Christmas Bird Count and other regional counts.

DUC's work over the past 20 years has been influenced by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan priority areas and much of their work has focused on restoration of wetlands. They are currently working on developing protocols for carbon offsets in restored wetlands.

EALT has created a Virtual Art Gallery which connects the Cultural community and the Conservation community. The Art Gallery features over 20 regional artists one of which is Jim Visser who is a known artist and conservationist. Please visit (<http://www.ealt.ca/gallery/>).



ELC has ongoing public programs that give landowners access to conservation related environmental law and policies as well as give a landowner an opportunity to speak with a lawyer. They are also monitoring and reviewing the Alberta Land Stewardship Act and how the Act addresses Conservation Easements.

FLT is working on Baseline and Monitoring Protocols, a Risk Management Assessment and on determining what land trusts need for Stewardship dollars. When completed, information will be available on a database on their website at <http://www.foothillslandtrust.org>. As part of this project, FLT plans to deliver workshops, one of which is targeted to accountants and lawyers on conservation easements.

LSCC is currently delivering its outreach phase of the Green Communities Guide. They are talking to audiences responsible for planning, development and administration of both urban and rural municipalities. To date, the response to the Guide has been tremendous, with all 2000 print copies being distributed, and production of an additional 2000 digital version copies is currently underway. The guide is on the LSCC website at www.landstewardship.org.



NCC Alberta is developing a Stewardship Credit Program to maintain and enhance Natural Capital and reward the agricultural community for ecological goods and services derived from that natural capital. By maintaining and enhancing natural capital on their own farms and ranches, program participants will have the opportunity to earn stewardship credits that can be used to partially off-set grazing fees to access and use NCC properties. The Sandstone Ranch which has a grazing co-op, is a 4,100 acre Ranch 75 km south of Lethbridge, AB in the Milk River Ridge. The Co-op will have an opportunity to participate in the program which should be fully operational by summer 2010. NCC hopes to have the valuation for credits finalized by winter 2009. For more information, please contact Dana Blouin, Conservation Coordinator with the Nature Conservancy of Canada at dana.blouin@natureconservancy.ca or (403)308-0334.

SALTS is continuing their work on market based conservation by creating a tool to determine the conservation value of a particular piece of property. This project follows their Market Based Instrument Consultation conducted in September 2008. SALTS has hired Dave Poulton, former Executive Director of Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, to talk to organizations involved in landscape issues to gauge their interest in using this tool.

Special Areas Board has undertaken a project to identify sensitive landscape areas where surface development may be prohibited or constrained because of specific environmental conditions. The project, called Access Management Framework, will involve looking at the newly developed Environmentally Significant Areas (please visit <http://tpr.alberta.ca/parks/heritageinfocentre/environsigareas/default.aspx>) and working with Alberta Environment staff to identify the areas.

WEF partnered with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) and Parks Canada to relocate over 160 Elk over the last two years. WEF provided funding support, volunteers, trailers, trucks, drugs for the Elk, special weed-free feed and looked after upgrading and maintaining Elk enclosures as part of this project. Now WEF is working on reconditioning Elk traps supplied by ASRD and they want to make these Elk traps as well as trailers available to the research community (e.g. University of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge), and to organizations (e.g. ACA) who can help relocate Elk from areas of overpopulation. WEF's future plans include habitat enhancement projects like prescribed burns and mechanical clearing, and they are looking for partnership opportunities for land acquisition and land tenures with other conservation groups.

WSLT is working on their Bow Initiative Program that focuses on identifying conservation opportunities along the Bow River from Calgary to Siksika. This Initiative is a collective of efforts to promote voluntary land conservation, both on this stretch of the Bow River and elsewhere in the watershed region, and will be complimented by two forums: a Landowner Info Forum in November 2009 and a Watershed Forum in 2010. WSLT has also completed a baseline report for their Agrium-Nodwell Nature Preserve project.

As part of the 4th National Stewardship and Conservation Conference: Strengthening Stewardship...investing at every step, a State of Stewardship in Canada report was developed. This report can be found at <http://www.stewardship2009.ca/admin/contentx/default.cfm?PageId=10722>.

Funding Successes

AFGA received partial funding from the Alberta Ministers Special License Program and from ACA for modifying their Antelope Fencing Project.

CCCSA received a grant from Alberta Stewardship Network to help host their Athabasca Basin Water Conference and Stewardship Workshop in January 2010 and received sponsorship from Toronto Dominion and Vancouver Aquarium for their Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup (TBA).

DUC is receiving annual funding from Wildlife Habitat Canada for some of their wetland restoration projects across Alberta.

EALT recently received funding from the City of Edmonton Community Partnership Program for a project related to a development near Big Lake. EALT will help by developing interpretive signage and materials targeted to residents. For more information please visit www.ealt.ca.

FLT has received grants from Alberta Real Estate Foundation and the Calgary Foundation to help with the FLT's sustainability and to work on Baseline and Monitoring Protocols.

LSCC received funding for their Green Communities Guide from Alberta Real Estate Foundation, Government of Alberta, Shell Environment Fund and Ducks Unlimited Canada.

SALTS received funding to start the Conservation Value Tool research and received donations for 3 conservation easements.

ALTA Members

Alberta Conservation Association
 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 for the Rockies
 Rockyview County
 Nature Conservancy of Canada
 Special Areas Board
 Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
 Western Sky Land Trust
 Wild Elk Federation

Funding Opportunities

The partners involved in the Golden Ranch Project have acquired the NE35-51-21-4 and SE 35-51-21-4, however there are many more parcels of land still to conserve. The partners are approaching industry and outreach to all businesses and individuals to assist in completing the purchase of the entire ranch. There are tax incentives available for those involved in purchasing lands and a 3:1 dollar match for private donations. For further information on Golden Ranches, please contact Brad Fenson of the AFGA at (780)437-2342.

LSCC is seeking funding to help them deliver outreach of their Green Communities Guide to rural and urban municipalities.

FLT is seeking funding for stewardship dollars to support the ongoing monitoring and stewardship of their Conservation Easement properties.

SALTS is looking for funding for a conservation easement in Porcupine Hills area of Alberta.

WSLT is currently seeking funding for their Bow Initiative Project as well as a conservation easement they are currently negotiating.

Please feel free to forward the ALTA newsletter to others who you think may be interested.

If our newsletter was forwarded to you and you want to be added directly to our e-mail distribution list, please email us at info@landtrusts-alberta.ca