



CHALLENGES FACING THE LAND TRUST COMMUNITY

ALTA and its Land Trust members are facing some unique challenges as we work together to conserve ecologically important landscapes in Alberta. We want to ensure that Albertans have clean air, healthy land and abundant fresh water, habitat for wildlife including wildlife corridors, a diverse array of flora and fauna, natural landscapes and appropriate recreational landscapes for outdoor enthusiasts. Private land conservation ***will guarantee this for future generations.***

Challenges for Land Trusts

- ❖ As of June 2009, there are 2 Conservation Easements (CE) being challenged in court. The legal costs and staff time that are required to mitigate the infractions are overwhelming.
- ❖ Land Trusts are not using the CE tool as much as they could because of potential legal costs due to infractions and land purchase costs are high in Alberta. As a result, several Alberta landowners who wish to conserve their land yet cannot afford to donate it outright, are being put on hold or are not being helped at all.
- ❖ The disbursement of federal funds through the Nature Conservancy of Canada required the identification of priority areas which has slowed access to funds for land trusts operating in the priority areas. In addition, Land trusts outside the priority areas will have no access to these funds.
- ❖ The recession has diminished financial support from grantors, sponsors and donors.
- ❖ There are many areas not serviced by land trusts or well served by municipalities.
- ❖ The land trusts are unclear about the impact of some measures, such as agricultural easements and the Land Stewardship Fund, on their already considerable work.

Challenges for ALTA

- ❖ ALTA must ensure its own sustainability if it is to help educate the public about land conservation and help the land trusts build capacity. ALTA has created a fund development strategy yet it is still awaiting its charitable status so that it can give charitable tax receipts to potential donors. This coupled with the recession has made it more difficult to receive funds for its important work.
- ❖ ALTA's successful start-up in large measure is indebted to an initial grant and a secondment from the Alberta Environment. Grant monies will be expended by December 2010 and the secondment is to end in July of 2010. This is not good timing and the current volunteer Board of Directors are not well positioned to lead the organization without the help of an Executive Director (ED). In order to continue educating the public and deliver the capacity building programs to land trusts, we need an ED of the calibre of our current one. This could be accomplished through extension of the Alberta Environment secondment or a new secondment from SRD. Without the leadership, level of experience in land trust work, knowledge of public policy, interest in fund raising and commitment that we have with our current ED, we will struggle to succeed in the future.

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