

Alberta Fish & Game Association

News from ALBERTA

THE ALBERTA FISH & GAME ASSOCIATION (AFGA) supports the Alberta Government on the proclamation of September 28th, 2019 as Provincial Hunting Day, to increase the awareness of hunting as an acceptable and highly important part of environment and wildlife management not to mention a reminder of our provincial heritage. 🐦

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MOVING?

Please send your change of address to :
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*Please note that \$15 of your annual membership dues are allocated to *Outdoor Canada West Magazine*



Alberta Fish & Game Association

President's Report

BY BRIAN DINGREVILLE
PRESIDENT



IT HAS BEEN a busy couple of months for the AFGA executive! First I would like to thank Robert Loewen for all he has done over the past number of years, you will be missed my friend! Robert has had to step down because of health reasons from his position as Finance Chair. Past President Wayne Lowry has agreed to take on the finance chair, thank you Wayne! Wayne's past experience as finance chair will be welcomed with open arms!

Also moving on is our Executive VP, Martin Sharren, who has informed the AFGA executive that as of February 26, 2020 he will be retiring. Martin has been with AFGA for many years now and his wealth of knowledge will be greatly missed along with his warm and pleasant personality. Martin has agreed to help with the hiring of the new Executive Director position. As I write this article, AFGA is in the process of searching for a suitable candidate. Your senior executive also met in Edmonton to go over the EVP job description, as well as discuss the direction we need to take in the coming months.

In June the senior executive met with Alberta Environment and Parks to go over a number of issues. Firstly, all resolutions that were passed by a minimum vote of 75% as well as AFGA position statements which were also forwarded on to Honourable Jason Nixon, including copies to Travis Ripley Executive Director, Fish & Wildlife Policy, Alberta Environment and Parks.

In mid-June, Andrea and I as well as Doug and Robyn Butler went to Halifax where Doug and I attended the Canadian Wildlife Federation conference. Andrea and I arrived in

Halifax on the Monday prior to the conference giving us a few days to explore this wonderful area! If you ever get the opportunity to travel to this area I would highly recommend going! I do have to admit I much prefer our 5% GST tax over what they have to pay there. Saturday, we attended the Federation banquet. It gives me great pride to congratulate Duane Radford who was awarded the Roderick Haig-Brown Award. Congratulations Duane from all of us at AFGA!

On Thursday, June 20th I received a call from the Minister's office asking if we could meet Monday at 4:00 pm, giving us a one hour time slot, with the only other option being that if an opening came up possibly in August or in early fall. As you all know AFGA has requested to meet with the minister several times. Feeling that AFGA needed to take advantage of this opportunity, I accepted. Unfortunately, Past President Doug Butler, Finance Chair and Past President Wayne Lowry were not available as well as 2nd Vice President Matt Zazula, because of previous commitments. The meeting went very well, by my thoughts. Ian had prepared a list of priorities which were discussed.

We first addressed that it appears that a number of smaller interest groups have been given priority over AFGA when being asked to the table

regarding consultation. We expressed AFGA is the oldest and largest conservation association in Alberta, being the voice of hunters & anglers in Alberta! Minister Nixon was very receptive to our concerns! Travis from AEP was present to answer questions relating to his office, the turkey, bear, and a few other management plans that have been sitting on his desk for some time waiting for the minister to sign off on them. We asked for an extension to the minister's special license raffle which hopefully will happen. Sale of public land and leased land access were discussed, as well as the fee for access to public lands. Over the years numerous resolutions have gone forward to the minister with little to no response. We are asking Minister Nixon that in future we would like honest answers, whether it be yes or no. Again hopefully that will happen! We touched on the Métis harvest agreement and feral horses. Darryl spoke on a number of fisheries issues which I am sure he will be providing an in depth report to all in the near future on those items.

Minister Nixon was very receptive to future meetings with AFGA which I will be sure to contact all executive to try to attend. Being the amount of time we had with the minister I feel we covered a lot of ground. 

Brian Dingreville
President



Past President's Report



DOUG BUTLER

PAST PRESIDENT

SEPTEMBER IS UPON US. Hope you all had a great summer spending time outdoors. It's early July writing this and it has been a very busy spring! I attended the BC Wildlife Federation AGM in Fort St. John and brought back some good knowledge of their agendas. I also attended the AGM of the Canadian Wildlife Federation where all the provinces get together and work on conservation. It's amazing how different each area is, yet how familiar the problems each one has.

We have much going on right now but top priority is working with our new government to make sure our outdoors gets the respect it deserves. We met with the AEP Fish & Wildlife department in May and in addition to reviewing all our resolutions, we stressed the need for Fish & Wildlife in Alberta to get a higher role in our government structure. We followed that up with the new Minister of Environment and Parks, Jason Nixon, and stressed the same topics, a need to improve our fisheries management was among several key topics discussed. We will continue to meet as much as possible to stress the need for our government to enforce a higher value on

our wildlife.

The Minister's Special Licence (MSL) draws were all held in August and congrats to the winners and a big thank-you to all who purchased tickets as these funds all go directly into conservation.

We continue to pay down our mortgage and we are getting closer to our goal. Thanks again to all who have supported the AFGA in this. It's still not too late to get your name on the plaque that will recognize all supporters of our building fund.

I urge each club to put a special effort into increasing memberships. It's so important to have all outdoors people belong, as our government looks at this number and there is definitely power in numbers. It's also the way to get your voice heard. I'd be happy if every club met its membership incentive goal and I could give a great gift package to each one at the end of the year. We held executive meetings in August and I'm sure it was a full weekend. Our agenda is always full but it seems even more so right now! Your executive works very hard for all outdoor people and listens to what our membership tells us.

Our Narrow Lake facility is booked full again this summer and I'm looking forward to being at some of the camps again this year.

The Wildlife Trust Fund continues to flourish with more and more properties being protected for wildlife.

We're working very hard right now on a new Alberta Wildlife Records Book (4th Edition) which should be 'hot off the press' in early October.

Planning is also underway for our next AGM and Sherwood Park is hosting this conference.

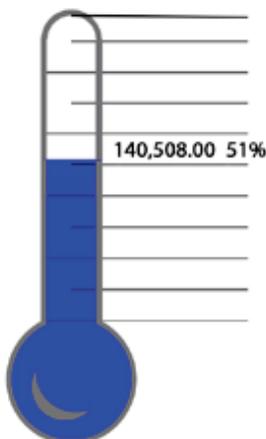
I still have some walleye tags to fill and am awaiting the hunting draw results right now. Wishing you all a great fall season and success in the field.

I hope you took a youth with you this year and had great times with family and friends. 

Tight lines and straight shooting...

Doug Butler
dougbutler@live.com
(780) 895-7799

AFGA BUILDING FUND



We're 51% there! A huge THANK YOU to all those who have donated to the AFGA Building Fund, to become debt free.

Our goal is set at \$275,000.00, at a cost of \$1,000.00 to become debt free at the earliest date and to set-up such things as signage, IT and phone systems. In order to accomplish this we are asking Zones, Clubs, individuals, outside grantors, businesses to contribute and insofar as they do will be recognized.

For more information visit our website:
www.afga.org/building-fund



Executive Vice-President's Report



MARTIN SHARREN
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

THE CONFERENCE ON CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE: Word comes from Past President and Life Member Rod Dyck, who attended a Conference on Chronic Wasting Disease on behalf of AFGA in March of this year, that there were some highly interesting presentations and he recommends reading and viewing all of them especially those dealing with Alberta and Saskatchewan. There was also a panel discussion which provided information from the game ranching perspective.

The Conference featured top experts from natural resource management, ecology, molecular biology, human health, epidemiology, wildlife policy, psychology, sociology, economics, Indigenous perspectives, and veterinary medicine to help establish the need for an integrated approach to addressing the threats posed by CWD. In all, over 50 organizations were represented at the event.

You can download the Conference report at www.ofah.org/ccac and the presentation videos at www.ofah.org/ccac.

2020 CONFERENCE: The 91st Annual Conference and General Meeting being co-hosted by Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association will be held February 20-22, 2020 at the Clarion Hotel in Sherwood Park. Conference Chair Steve Witiuk has assembled a great group of people to be on the organizing committee and looks forward to planning an outstanding event.

Currently two openings exist for a Companion Coordinator and a Youth Coordinator so if you or someone you know is interested please contact myself or Sandie Buwalda at the office for more details. Maybe you and a friend might want to share a position; that would be more than acceptable.

SPECIAL HUNTING DAYS: September features several special days recognizing and promoting the Alberta traditions of hunting and conservation of our wildlife resources. The first of these are:

Waterfowler Heritage Days - First Saturday And Sunday In September

Eligible youth can hunt migratory game birds on these two days without a Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit or a provincial Game Bird Licence. Water fowler Heritage Days occurs throughout Alberta (in all WMUs where there is, or will be, an open migratory game bird hunting season). Youth can hunt migratory game birds for which there is or will be an open season in that WMU. Regular bag limits apply. See the Alberta Guide to Hunting Regulations for bag limits for each species.

Youth are defined as being 12-17 years of age that have passed the Hunter Education course. They must also be accompanied by an adult who is in possession of a Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit. Next on the list is:

Provincial Hunting Day - Fourth Saturday in September
AFGA played a major role in the establishment of this day which the Government of Alberta has designated as Provincial Hunting Day.

Aside from the opportunities for eligible youth to hunt upland game birds, hunting groups will be hosting events throughout Alberta and will be providing mentoring opportunities for first-time hunters. Check out the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association (AHEIA) for a list of their events, as well as other organizations. Also if you or your Club is involved in a special event please let me know and we can put it on the Provincial calendar.

In any event I encourage you to participate in any/all of these days and take a young person along! 

**Martin Sharren,
Executive Vice- President**



1st Vice-President's Report



IAN STUART
1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

FALL WILL BE here, or nearly so when this reaches you, and I sincerely hope you were able to enjoy some quality time in our great outdoors over the summer and will continue to do so through the fall.

Your AFGA executive had reached out to the new Minister of Environment and Parks immediately after the Provincial election, but we had not received a response to our requests to meet with him. Following up with his constituency office (which is not far from where I live) revealed that our request had got lost in the transition and staff turnover, and that the Minister was in fact eager to meet with us, which Brian Dingreville, Darryl Smith and myself did on very short notice. While we only had one hour of the Minister's time and did not have all of the senior executive and key chairs present due to the short notice, I think it was very worthwhile to go ahead in somewhat of a rush without all of the key AFGA chairs present. The

alternative was waiting until fall, as the Minister's staff couldn't commit to any other space on his schedule. We have asked for a follow up meeting which hopefully can be both better planned and somewhat longer.

The meeting started out on a positive note, with Minister Nixon asking for the opportunity to address the 2020 AFGA conference just after introductions, a very pleasant change from our invitations to the previous Minister going unanswered a couple of times. It was also positive to be able to skip over an explanation of who and what AFGA is; Minister Nixon already knows, and while AFGA must remain apolitical, it's a very long time and several Ministers ago since that has been the case!

Since we only had one hour of his time scheduled, we focused on high priority items such as recognizing the value of public lands, habitat, and fish and wildlife, access to public lands and wildland parks, re-establishment of a Government department focused on such issues reporting through the same Ministry, access and the sad state of Alberta's fisheries management which Darryl provided extensive documentation on. We just touched briefly on many other issues such as caribou recovery, predation, grizzly bears, feral horses and others, and the difficulty the Government faces when confronted with situations where emotion gets in the way of facts. Minister Nixon conveyed a good understanding of the need for balanced management and a step by step approach to getting back there, and we stressed AFGA's desire to work with the Minister's staff on possible solutions.

At the Federal level, it appears from news reports that Minister of Public Safety Bill Blair listened to at least some of what AFGA and others had to say regarding the idea of "A complete ban on handguns and assault rifles"(see my

report in May/June Outdoor Canada West) and that idea is on hold for now, but the debate is far from over and it will almost certainly be an issue in the upcoming federal election campaign that will be in full swing when this reaches you.

Closer to home, Chronic Wasting Disease testing from the 2018/19 hunting seasons in Alberta has now been posted here <https://www.alberta.ca/chronic-wasting-disease-updates.aspx> and as expected, it continues to expand. This issue is finally starting to get national and international attention; more information can be found here: <https://www.ofah.org/ccac/>. Recognizing the potential seriousness of the problem is one thing, reaching a consensus on what to do about it is much more difficult. Unfortunately, even within the hunting community, short term selfish concerns about the impact of proposed CWD management strategies on "my backyard deer herd/ my business/my hunting strategy/ et cetera" derailed any meaningful attempts to minimize its spread in the past. Now what?

Fall zone meetings will be imminent when this is in your hands and once again, please get any resolutions through your club and to the Zone directors as soon as possible. The procedure is outlined in my report in the July/August Outdoor Canada West, and in the AFGA Operations Manual which can be found on our web site. Resolutions have to be passed at the Club and Zone level before coming to the December full Executive meeting, and I will gladly help anyone with the wording and through that process. 🐦

**Yours in support of the wise use of
the earth's resources,
Ian Stuart
1st Vice President
Email: ianstuart@ccewireless.ca**



Alberta Fish & Game Association

2ND Vice-President's Report



MATT ZAZULA
2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

I HOPE EVERYONE had a great summer. I've had a chance to do some camping and some fishing. I'm seeing many campgrounds as busy as ever, with lots of families taking advantage of our parks and recreation areas. I'm also pretty happy with what I've seen while fishing our southern Alberta lakes and reservoirs. Some are showing promising results with a wide variety of fish sizes. This means some good recruitment and hopefully some good fishing for years to come.

Speaking of fishing, a lot of talk lately has been about reduced numbers of fishing licences being purchased by Alberta residents. Reasons seem varied, but one I am still hearing the most whether it's talking to people at campgrounds, listening to feedback through on-line forums, or even talking to my own nephews, is that 'the limitations and catch-and-release restrictions frustrate me, so I didn't even buy a licence this year'. I kind of get that. Catch and release fishing is fun, but eventually everyone wants

to bring home some fresh fish for the frying pan or barbecue. This is a stand your AFGA Fish Chair and various members have long been advocating for. Well, at a recent meeting held with senior Alberta Environment and Parks staff in Edmonton the topic did come up. We got some indication steps will be taken to enhance some of our fisheries and to increase catch-and-keep opportunities. I personally left that meeting feeling pretty positive about this and other topics. I'm sure the other executive reports will touch on those.

Also on the fishing front, I was introduced this summer to crayfish. Now, I knew crayfish existed in some of our waterbodies. What I didn't know was just how many there are in some waters, how easy they are to trap or how tasty these little guys can be! They are a lot of work to clean, but if you have some patience and you like the taste of lobster / crab, you'll enjoy them as much as I do. I was able to take part in a potluck crayfish boil

one evening. What an event! I think a crayfish trap or two might just become part of my camping and fishing gear.

Now, on to other topics. A HUGE pat on the back to the Drumheller Fish and Game. Some of you might have read my article in the last Outdoor Canada West and noted my challenge to members and clubs to donate \$4 per member toward pay-down of the AFGA Office mortgage. Well, the Drumheller club really took this to heart. Not only were they the first club I am aware of to take up the challenge and send in a cheque, they also posted and re-posted the challenge on the Zone 2 Facebook page, shared it with other clubs, and challenged Zone 2 clubs and others to do the same. This was then shared by the AFGA. Since then, many other clubs have also stepped up and met the challenge. I know the Drumheller club, like many others, has always been a strong supporter of AFGA, Zone and local organizations both within and outside fish and game circles. I want to thank



Alberta Fish & Game Association

them for their initiative, as well as thank all the other clubs and members who have so far met the challenge. And to those that still haven't had the time, please consider doing so if you can.

Your executive is working hard on many fronts to represent our best interests. The AFGA / AEP meeting I mentioned earlier gave us a chance to talk about our recent conference resolutions as well as our AFGA position statements. We talked about some important fishing and hunting issues, and as I said I left with a pretty good feeling about our government relationships. The senior executive

also had a meeting scheduled with the new Minister of Alberta Environment and Parks. I wasn't able to attend that meeting, but I'm sure you'll read about it in this magazine. Committees have been working hard to update and revamp some of our policies and guidelines. There should be lots to share and discuss in the future, all of it good. And, of course, the fall club and Zone meetings are approaching. Do try to attend. And, don't forget about those Resolutions! They are important, so put some work into preparing them and getting them to your Zone meetings.

I know we're looking at September,

which traditionally means the end of summer holidays and start of school. But, don't despair! There is still some good weather ahead for outdoor activities. I hope to do some fall fishing, maybe clean up on a few more of those crayfish. Of course, the fall hunting season is also upon us. My draws this fall are very limited, but I did have a good season last year so can't complain. I wish everyone a good fall. Stay safe out there, and remember to give back to the resource whenever you can. 

Matt Zazula,
2nd Vice President
mattzazula.afga@gmail.com

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Club Events

Alberta Black Powder	January 19, 2019	11:00am	AGM – Quality Inn North Hill, Red Deer – bp.quilter@shaw.ca
Athabasca Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:00pm	Provincial Building – Sept to June
Barrhead Fish & Game:	Last Wednesday	7:00pm	Barrhead Legion – Sept to April
Beaver River Fish & Game:	1st Tuesday	7:30pm	Except July & August
Breton Fish & Game:	4th Wednesday	7:30pm	Breton Golden Age Centre – 50th Avenue – except July/Aug/Dec
Busby & District Fish & Game:	2nd Monday	7:30pm	Lone Goose Club House
Calgary Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:00pm	Curve Distribution – 11056 48 Street SE
Camrose Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	7:00pm	Superstore meeting room
Cardston Fish & Game:	2nd Thursday	7:00pm	Civic Center
Clandonald & District Fish & Game:	3rd Thursday	7:30pm	Clandonald Coffee shop
Claresholm Fish & Game:	3rd Monday	N/A	Claresholm indoor range
Coaldale & District Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:30pm	The Range
Dickson Fish & Game:	2nd Monday	8:00pm	Dickson Fish & Game Hall: Contact Ike: 403-588-2646 or 403-728-3818
Devon Fish & Game:	4th Thursday	7:30pm	Pioneer 73 Centre: #29 St. Lawrence Avenue
Dunvegan Fish & Game:	3rd Wednesday	7:30pm	Except July/Aug – Scouts Hall, Fairview, AB
Drumheller Fish & Game:	3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	Except July/Aug
Edmonton Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	7:30pm	no info
Edmonton Old Timers:	2nd Tuesday	7:00pm	Spruce Avenue Hall – 10240 115 Avenue
Edmonton Trout Fishing	1st & 3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	Queen Mary Park Community League – 109 Ave & 117 Street
Ft. MacLeod Fish & Game:	3rd Wednesday	7:00pm	NWMP Library –back door
Ft. Saskatchewan Fish & Game:	3rd Wednesday	7:00pm	Old Train Station – Sept to June
High Level Sporting Association:	3rd Wednesday	N/A	no info
High Prairie Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:00pm	Summer @ Range – Winter @ Amiro's
High River Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	7:45pm	For more info: www.hrfishandgame.wordpress.com
Hillcrest Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	7:00pm	Hillcrest Fish & Game Hall – 22802 8th Avenue (October to June)
Innisfail Fish & Game:	1st Monday	7:00pm	Innisfail Royal Canadian Legion – except July and August
Iron Creek Fish & Game:	2nd Thursday	7:30pm	Lougheed Lions Den - Mainstreet
Lacombe Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:30pm	Lacombe Legion (except July & August)
Lamont Fish & Game:	Last Monday	7:00pm	Lamont Lions Den – Contact Robyn Butler: 780-895-7799
Leduc Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	7:30pm	Leduc Clubhouse – for more info – (780) 986-1807 - Sept to June
Lethbridge Fish & Game:	3rd Monday	7:00pm	LFGA Clubhouse – 9th Avenue & 10th Street South (except – July/Aug)
Lloydminster Fish & Game:	Last Tuesday	7:30pm	Except July & December – Grace United Church
Magrath Rod & Gun Club	3rd Thursday	7:00pm	Magrath Library
Medicine Hat Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	8:00pm	Ricky's Rest. private dining room (see Facebook page) - Sept to June
Millet Fish & Game:	1st Tuesday	7:30pm	Millet Fish & Game Hall
Morinville Fish & Game:	2nd & 4th Thursday	7:30pm	Morinville F&G Clubhouse – except July/Aug
Mundare Fish & Game:	Last Monday	6:30pm	Mundare Gun Range – May - August
Okotoks Fish & Game:	3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	For more info visit our website: www.okotoksfishandgame.com
Onoway & District Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:00pm	Education Centre @ gun range – (780) 924-0005 - Sept to June
Peace Wapiti Fish & Game:	1st Tuesday	7:30pm	Better than Fred's – 9903 101 St, Gr. Prairie - Sept to June
Picture Butte Fish & Game:	1st Tuesday	7:00pm	Archery Range – 464 Crescent Ave. (except Jul/Aug)
Ponoka Fish & Game:	1st Thursday	7:30pm	Clubhouse
Provost Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	8:00pm	Indoor Gun Range – 2km East of Provost (except July/August)
Red Deer Fish & Game:	3rd Monday	7:00pm	Red Deer Legion (use Molly B door) – Tues if stat –except July/Aug
Red Earth Creek Rod & Gun Club:	3rd Tuesday	7:30pm	No other info
Rimbey Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	7:00pm	Canalta Hotel: 5702 43rd Street – Sept to June
Rocky Mtn House Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	7:00pm	Rocky Museum Basement meeting room
Sarcee Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:30pm	Mtn View Funeral Home Auditorium – September to June
Sherwood Park Fish & Game:	Last Thursday	7:30pm	50 Spruce Avenue
St. Albert Fish & Game:	2nd Tuesday	7:30pm	St. Albert community Hall on Perron St. – September to June
St. Paul Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	7:30pm	Town Hall - Downstairs
Southern AB Outdoorsmen:	2nd Tuesday	N/A	Kings Home – 108 – 5th Avenue NE – Milk River
Spedden Fish & Game:	2nd Sunday	7:30pm	Ashmont
Spruce Grove Fish & Game:	1st Thursday	7:00pm	Pioneer Centre – 301 Jespesen Ave. – Sp. Grove – (Except Jul/Aug & Nov)
Stony Plain Fish & Game:	2nd Monday	7:30pm	Stony Plain Community Centre, 51 Ave. – Jimmy: (780) 405-0015
Sundre Fish & Game:	3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	Sundre Community Center
Sylvan Lake & District:	1st Monday	7:00pm	Community Partner Hall
Taber Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	N/A	Kid Zone in Taber
Thorsby Fish & Game:	3rd Monday	7:00pm	Sunnybrook Hall
Vegreville Wildlife Federation:	1st Thursday	7:00pm	VWF Alder Centre – 5121 50 Street - Vegreville
Vermillion Fish & Game:	2nd Wednesday	N/A	Vermillion Provincial Building – Conference room
Viking Sports & Wildlife Society:	1st Tuesday	7:30pm	Clubhouse located near Viking
Vilna Fish & Game:	3rd Wednesday	7:00pm	Cultural Centre in Vilna
Wheatland Conservation & Wildlife:	2nd Thursday	7:30pm	254073 RR 252 (north of Strathmore)
Whitecourt Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	7:00pm	Forestry Training Centre
Wildwood & District Rod & Gun Club:	2nd Thursday	7:30pm	Range in the clubhouse
Willingdon & District Fish & Game:	Last Tuesday	7:30pm	Willingdon Arena – upstairs clubroom – Sept to June
Wimborne & District Fish & Game:	1st Wednesday	N/A	Wimborne Hall

OTHER EVENTS	DATE	TIME	DETAILS
Zone 1	September 22, 2019	TBA	Zone 1 Fall Meeting – Lethbridge F&G Hut
Beaver River Fish & Game:	Every Wednesday	6:00 – 8:00pm	Youth / Adult Archery

Edmonton Old Timers Fishing Club is looking for you! Calling all fishermen over 50! You'll find lots of people to go fishing with both summer & ice fishing in the winter. We have meetings once a month with a guest speaker. For more info: Randy Collins 780-868-3944

*IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR EVENT/MEETING PLACED IN THE OUTDOOR EDGE OR ON OUR WEBSITE...PLEASE EMAIL OR FAX INFORMATION TO OUR OFFICE: info@afga.org or fax: (780) 438-6872 (CHECK OUT OUR EVENTS CALENDAR ON THE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION or EVENTS NOT LISTED HERE: www.afga.org)

THE ALBERTA FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION 91st ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 20-22, 2020

The AFGA is excited to announce
Sherwood Park Fish & Game Association
will host the 2020 conference
Conference registration packages are available
September 2019
REMEMBER to REGISTER EARLY
and receive the earlybird discounted rates!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR HOW TO REGISTER
CALL THE AFGA OFFICE (780) 437-2342 or
REGISTER ONLINE: www.afgaregister.com**

**SHERWOOD PARK FISH & GAME ASSOCIATION
REQUIRE YOUTH & COMPANION COORDINATORS
FOR THE 2020 CONFERENCE
Please reply to AFGA office**



Alberta Fish & Game Association

Hunting Chair Report



JIM CLARKE
HUNTING CHAIR

I HOPE EVERYONE had a great summer but we are now approaching the time of year for most hunting seasons to open or continue here in Alberta. I know I look forward to this time of year as soon as the previous hunting season is over. Hopefully everyone was at least a little bit successful in the draws for special licences. Sitting here in June writing this, I am full of wonder what my family and I have drawn and as soon as the results are out, the planning process of the logistics of each person's hunts will begin. It is definitely part of the whole experience. I know I am looking forward to seeing if our daughter Miyah was successful in finally pulling a tag after several years of building up priority for bucks and bulls. Lately I have been more excited to see her be successful in her outdoor pursuits than I am concerned about myself. Have you taken a youth hunting? Have

you considered being a mentor to a youth...it is very rewarding.

Fishing season is still underway across Alberta and I know Darryl Smith has been very busy representing "all angling interests - including the chance to catch and keep fish". I have recently had a chance to try my hand at trapping an "invasive species" here in the Prairie area of Alberta.... Crayfish! On a recent fishing trip, I had purchased a couple of specific crayfish traps and set them out over a couple of days in a Reservoir in the South. I think for my first attempt, I was very successful as I collected 98 of them. Are they ever delicious but you do need a lot of them to make a meal out of them. Thank heavens for YouTube as prior to going, I viewed videos of how to catch them, clean them and cook them as I have never had the opportunity at any of that before. Why not give it a try and at the same time, reduce the

population of them in the Reservoirs!

As of this week, the Senior Executive had a chance to have a meeting with Minister Jason Nixon. I will say that it happened a lot faster and more positive than the previous Government. It seems we are going to have more cooperation than we have in the past. With the time passing, it looks like AEP is set to "get back to business" post-election as we have just today received confirmation about the next scheduled AGPAC meeting as it has actually been "quiet" waiting for things to get back to normal. As you have hopefully seen in the draw booklet for this year, as of next year you will have to purchase your yearly Wildlife Certificate PRIOR to applying for any draws in 2020. This is a direct result of our participation in the AGPAC meetings. I will report on the meeting in my next report here. Previously, I have reported on this; but did you



know a full 25% of people who apply in the draws do not even hunt that year? This is adding to everyone's wait time and number of years priority to draw tags. We will see if the projected outcome of lowering draw wait times drop and our revenue gained from purchasing the Wildlife Certificates go up which can help to offset the loss of some funding when the lower priced senior tags were announced under the previous government.

Finally, don't forget to sight in your rifles and practice with your shotguns before heading afield. Now is the time to ensure all your gear is in good working order and everything is clean and ready. Check all your boots too as I had to replace shoelaces after the first day out last year. A little proactive preparation goes a long way to ensuring your success afield! 

Victor Benz
Environment Chair

Youth Chair Report

BY TERILYNN NICE

YOUTH CHAIR

There was an amazing turn-out at the Dunvegan Hunter Education course, 24 youth and adults attended and all passed the test, congratulations! This event was held by the Dunvegan Fish and Game Association.

My own Lamont Fish and Game club are planning to have a pheasant hunt in the

fall of 2019 or 2020. They would like to encourage as many young people to come out and have fun. Our volunteers will teach, and also provide guidance and safety with guns. As soon as I get more information I will let everyone know what is planned as well as the dates. 



Dunvegan Fish and Game Association with the graduated Hunter Education youth who attended.



Fishing Chair Report



DARRYL SMITH
FISHING CHAIR

ARE WE COLLECTIVELY ON A NEW PATH?

I pondered in mid-June what would be the subject matter of this column? The Senior Executive and Hunting Chair of the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA) had met with Travis Ripley, Executive Director of Policy Division Fish and Wildlife and his team in late May. Unfortunately, at the last second I could not attend. Those there did address topics that had been put on the agenda related to fisheries. The topics could be summarized as updates and reintroduction of themes the AFGA had been pursuing that possibly might gain some traction under the new government's leadership.

This was still a time when the bureaucracy was adjusting to the reality of the change at the political level. For example, an email from John Conrad, Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations Division on May 14, 2019 to the Fisheries Stakeholder Advisory Committee tasked with the third-party science review of fisheries management in Alberta stated:

"Thank you for your patience during this period while we form our new government. I am actively sharing information with our executive, including the work underway with

the Fisheries Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and the opportunity this committee provides. Please continue to stand by and I will keep you apprised as more details are available."

After the meeting, was able to have further discussions with Dave Park, Director, Fisheries Management Policy. The tone and topics gave me hope that perhaps a resetting of relationships, agenda, and charting a different path forward related to fisheries management in Alberta was possible!

On very short notice, the AFGA was invited to meet with the Minister of Environment and Parks, Jason Nixon on June 24, 2019. The topics put forward were the key issues from the AFGA perspective including fisheries. The dialogue was two-way. For the first time in recent memory, we felt the concerns of the AFGA were being taken seriously. Perhaps it is because we now have a minister who is an outdoorsman, hunter and fisherman. Regardless of who is in this role, it must be about environmental stewardship which at the same time addresses economic and social consequences plus transparently discloses tradeoffs. I expect other members of the AFGA Executive who were in attendance will discuss the

meeting as well in their columns.

From a fisheries perspective, the AFGA direction is born from discussions with members, zones, executive, resolutions, position statements, policy and the document introduced at the February 2018 Annual General Meeting, Redefining Fisheries Management in Alberta "Call for change from the Alberta Fish and Game Association" <https://www.afga.org/redefining-fisheries-management-in-alberta/>. Our position is not static as it is constantly evolving as new information comes to the table. We did leave the Minister with the following:

There are seven key elements that require fundamental change, rethinking, or refocus within the Government of Alberta as it relates to angling, fish, and habitat:

1. Coldwater fish species management (Trout, Char, Arctic Grayling and Mountain Whitefish)
2. Coolwater fish species management (Walleye, Northern Pike, Yellow Perch, Lake Whitefish)
3. Operation Branch/Policy Branch/ Departmental/Inter Ministerial disconnects including lack of transparency
4. Communication narrative and lack of meaningful consultation
5. Methodology, benchmarks, metrics and models as they relate to Species at Risk Act (SARA), Fish Sustainability Index (FSI) and management frameworks
6. Sportfishing Regulation simplification versus standardization
7. Failure to utilize a wide range of tools to manage our fisheries resource and required habitat

At the same time the AFGA was also invited to present to a United Conservative Caucus Committee chaired by UCP Caucus Chair Todd Loewen that is advising the minister. This meeting took place on July 3, 2019. Presenting at the same time was Ray

Makowecki on behalf of the Next Step Team. Both presentations had synergy with numerous common themes. Questions from the committee members show knowledge of the issues and desire to chart a different course. Whether and what will translate down from the political level to the bureaucracy is an unknown?

The AFGA during the committee meeting reinforced key points related to the direction we believe that fisheries management must head:

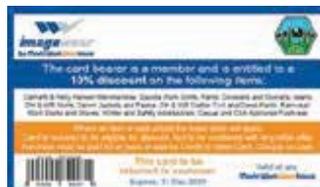
- Protecting, enhancing and restoring habitat is the critical issue in ensuring the long-term sustainability of fisheries
- Habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration which is considered secondary to monitoring, research and regulating anglers must come to the forefront
- Linear access management is a key element in any integrated land-use plan as it linked to habitat, illegal activity and angling pressure concerns
- Policy and plans must extend to both private and public lands with focus on environmental stewardship
- Environmental education, communication and awareness must be part of any ongoing plan
- Heightened enforcement and compliance monitoring of not only anglers, but of other users on the landscape including industry
- Angling Education and adoption of citizen science

- Use all the tools available including fish stocking, predator management, invasive aquatic species control and habitat creation
- Current Fishery Zones would be realigned and renamed based on habitat and species composition
- New angling regulations with emphasis on simplified conservation-based approach with sustainable harvest objective
- Creating angling opportunity offsets as a result of more restrictive angling regulation paradigm must become a major priority for managers
- Management of species at risk (Athabasca Rainbow Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Bull Trout and Arctic Grayling) to focus on overall ecosystem not species
- Enhanced Fisheries Stamp or Coldwater Fish Stamp as part of sportfishing licence
- Robust fish stocking program with emphasis on Walleye, salmonids, and other fish species for both restorative stocking and put and take opportunity
- Dedicated Fish and Wildlife Ministry or Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Risk metrics must not be confused with health and status of a fish population
- Fisheries management must focus on the ecosystem, not single species metrics

I left both meetings invigorated! Possibly a new era where politicians, bureaucrats, fisheries managers, anglers,

and stakeholders can be on the same page, talking about the positives, not the negatives, in a spirit of mutual respect is on the horizon.

This culminated in a bit of a road trip. I managed to drop into Lacombe to see the new “Guinness World Record” for the largest fishing lure, the iconic “Five of Diamonds” located at the Lacombe Fish and Game Club Len Thompson Trout Pond. While seeing the lure was the intention of the visit, exciting was to see the partnerships. Even more heartening was the fact that every dock around the pond was occupied by kids and families taking part in our heritage of angling which is a cornerstone. The fact that this was National Fishing Week gave renewed hope that angling will be embraced by Canadians in the coming decades! 🐟



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Alberta Fish & Game Association

Environment Chair Report

BY VICTOR BENZ
ENVIRONMENT CHAIR



HOW QUICKLY TWO months can pass! I wish to start by recognizing the Alberta AFGA Zones 1 through 5 in electing Zone Environmental Chairs. This will greatly facilitate spreading the “news”.

The recommendations of the Alberta Environmental Appeals Board in the case of the Phelan Pit on the Freeman River were submitted to the minister by the end of May, but the change in provincial government may delay the final decision in this case.

Your Alberta Fish and Game has submitted a Feral Horse Fact Sheet Request to the Alberta Invasive Species Council. This is the first step in a formal process to have feral horses defined as an invasive species.

The office of the Auditor General of Canada has issued an independent report on whether Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency implemented

adequate measures to prevent aquatic invasive species from becoming established in Canadian waters. Preventing introduction of new invasive species is very important, since elimination of that new invasive species is only really possible in the very early stages if discovery. After that, we are dealing only with preventing the spread and managing the impact. Overall, both departments have failed in this regard. A key component was a failure of Fisheries and Oceans Canada to distinguish its responsibilities from those of the provinces and territories. Not knowing who should do what and when prevents an aggressive response to initial invasion threats. Credit was only given to the action taken to address Asian carp species on the Great lakes.

The full report is here: http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_

cesd_201904_01_e_43307.html.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has prepared a Discussion Paper on harmonizing the Applications for Authorizations under the Fisheries Act with an amending Bill C-68 that passed the House of Commons in 2018. The changes proposed by the bill to improve oversight of development activities and the management of fish and fish habitat include:

- protection for all fish and fish habitats;
- restoring the previous prohibition against ‘harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat;
- restoring a prohibition against causing ‘the death of fish by means other than fishing;
- new authorities to amend, suspend, or cancel authorizations;
- a new requirement to make information on project decisions public through an online registry. The full Discussion Paper and a link to Bill C-68 can be found here: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/campaign-campagne/fisheries-act-loi-sur-les-peches/paper-document-eng.html>.

A concern has come to my attention with respect to a proposed commercial development for a full motorsports facility immediately adjacent to the Rosebud River in southern Alberta. More than half the proposed development falls in a High-2 classification for Environmentally Significant Areas. Stay tuned.

Finally, in response to those of you who asked the question: “Who is that aged garden gnome in the photograph with your report?” I include a cleaner, earlier version from a fishing trip on Brentwood Bay a few years ago. 🐦

Victor Benz
Environment Chair



Alberta Fish & Game Association

Zone 1 Report

GLENN HEATHER

ZONE 1 DIRECTOR

IT WAS TIME to write this Zone 1 report. Thinking of what all could be said, it occurred to me to look at all the Zone 1 clubs Facebook pages. From the AFGA Website under Clubs and Zones it lists all the clubs and zones in the province and links to websites as well as their Facebook page for any club that has one. Looking at Zone 1, we have 17 clubs with 11 clubs having Facebook pages. Looking at each Facebook page I was amazed and impressed with all the activities and events that have occurred and will be occurring. Gun shows; horn scoring, wild game suppers, photo contests, fishing derbies, park clean up, award days, youth mentoring programs, archery shoots, firearm safety courses and no doubt there are even more... Non-Club/AFGA members always ask, "why should I join?" Well, look at all these reasons. If it were not for the dedication and passion of

you the club members, look at what would be lost. You bring value to your communities. Please celebrate your club's successes, advertise your accomplishments. You all should be proud of what you are doing to enhance your communities and our youth. Additionally, you have a voice, always as an individual, however as a club and more so, as part of the AFGA to influence our local politicians, MLA's and biologists.

Zone 1 meeting will be held Sunday, September 22 in Lethbridge at the Fish and Game hut, time goes fast, please submit your resolutions by September 15.

By the time this is being read, the hunting draw results will have been released and fall hunting trips and

adventures being organized. Have a successful safe hunting season. Hope to see you at the Zone 1 fall meeting.

Great news! Appreciate all the extra effort being exhibited by our members.

April 27, we had our AFGA spring meeting in Edmonton, prior to the awards banquet. Prior to the election, no movement nor direction was given as to Hunting/Fishing regulation changes nor any policies. Now that we have a new government and with the announcements of our new ministers we can start a relationship and have an opportunity to renew AFGA's focus within Alberta.

A reminder to any Zone 1 clubs – resolutions, start to discuss them at your club level. You can submit them to our Resolution Chair at any time during the year. We will be reviewing these in our late September Fall meeting. 

Zone 5 Report

ROBYN BUTLER

ZONE 5 DIRECTOR

I'M SURE MANY of you are beginning or are in the middle of your hunting season. While out enjoying your adventures, please remember to be sure of your target, background and all safety aspects. It can be easy to forget some important things in the excitement of harvesting that elk, moose, deer, bear or whatever else you may be challenging. Speaking of bear, if you happen to see any grizzly bears, please record the area, take a picture, record the date and time and let us know. It's still important that we report all bear sightings.

The Narrow Lake Conservation Centre youth camps were all full to capacity again this year. The BOW camps at the same location were also successful again this year. Thanks to all who helped. After 13 years of co-ordinating this camp, I am now finished and passing the torch. Thanks for all the support and I'm sure the camp will continue to be in good hands. It has been a wonderful experience and I have met

so many wonderful ladies. I know many of them continue to enjoy the outdoors because of this camp. Big thanks to Ingrid Horner and Jane Willisko for their help all these years, we had a great team!

In Zone 5, I heard many reports from all the clubs. Please forward your information so it can be shared throughout our zone and province! Our "Kids Can Catch - Kids" events in Lamont and Fort Saskatchewan were a big success. The many archery shoots, fishing weekends, etc throughout our zone are great events and I'd like to hear about them all. Many of you are busy working on your Fall/Winter projects and I can help spread the word around.

In a few short months we will be gathering in Sherwood Park for the AFGA conference. We can exchange all our stories there (and some may even be a bit embellished). You should all have

your conference registration packages soon. If your club can help the conference committee with a donation (financial or prize), it would be greatly appreciated. I have attended many of our conferences and have met many good friends and acquaintances with vast knowledge that I have taken back to my club. It would be great if every Zone 5 club sent one or more delegates to this AGM. It not only helps your club, but gives you a voice in the many resolutions on the floor.

Our present executive is working very hard with our new government to keep Fish & Wildlife in a prominent role in our Ministries. Our resolutions give them their mandate for the year. We need you all, to have our voice heard.

Our Fall Zone meeting will soon be held in Willingdon and I do hope there are lots of resolutions to present at the AGM.

I hope your fall experiences are exciting and your freezer's in good shape. Continue to enjoy the outdoors. 

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