



NEWS FROM ALBERTA

President's Report

By Victor Benz

President

Now that I have found my "sea legs" as the AFGA's president, it's appropriate to review what we've done since you gave your consent at last fall's Special General meetings.

In response to the challenges faced by the AFGA, the Executive struck five committees, each with specific terms of reference and objectives.

The Annual General Meeting Advisory Committee (AGMC) was charged with delivering a pared-down, virtual Annual General Meeting that would discharge the minimum requirements of presenting the previous year's audited financial statements and permit delegate voting for a new AFGA Executive. This also included passing yet another Special Resolution to:

... suspend all clauses of the AFGA Operations Manual dealing with Annual General Meetings and Annual Conference to permit the holding of a 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting and Annual Conference, that permits participation by video and/or audio, voting, the identification of participants who seek recognition to speak, and the display of motions, subject to any rules regarding said meeting that the AFGA Executive may promulgate.



The 2021 Annual General Meeting was successfully held on April 10th, 2021. The AGMC committee was disbanded on May 15th, 2021.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee (FAR), under the direction of the Finance Chair, was given full responsibility for financial oversight of the AFGA, including the annual Audit, and to develop a financial risk assessment strategy for the AFGA. It replaces the former Audit Committee of the AFGA.

The Focus, Priorities, Programs Committee (FPPC) was tasked with making recommendations regarding the focus, priorities, and programs of

AFGA to ensure they are relevant and valued by our conservation, hunting, angling, and firearm community. This is fundamental, as the current goal of AFGA is to increase membership as a component of developing a sustainable funding base. The task is to ensure the goals, objects, mission statement, focus, priorities, and programs align within a reorganized AFGA.

The Governance Committee (GOV) was set up to review current AFGA governance documentation, identify any inconsistencies and contradictions across those documents, and between those documents and current practice. In addition, any required >

MOVING?

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board policies would be developed.

The Membership Committee (MEM) was assigned development of a framework that will lead to a significant increase in membership of AFGA across all societal and population demographics in the province of Alberta. The task will be to provide recommendations on how to renew membership support and ensure the organization has the appropriate communication channels in place to increase our membership base.


The GOV has delivered a number of assessments of current AFGA governance documentation, and three major board policies, all approved or ratified at various Executive Meetings.

The FPPC held their first webinar on June 9th. Although some 22,000 email invitations were sent out to past and present AFGA affiliated club members, only 92 registered, and only 46 attended; a disappointing level of interest in the future of the AFGA. However, the feedback has given the committee and the Executive an initial perspective as a starting point for future surveys and communication efforts.

To that end, A new Communications Committee (CC) has been created to change how the AFGA should communicate going forward; how frequently, and on which platforms. The committee will also access outside communications and marketing specialists.

Finally, the FPPC and the MEM have merged into a single new committee, the Members Focus Priorities Programs Committee (MFPP).

The FAR and the GOV continue with their mandates.

Expect to hear much more from these committees as we ramp up to achieve our target DRAFT new Objects and Bylaws for year-end sharing with you. This is a very tall order, and requires the commitment, participation, and input of all of the AFGA family, Affiliated Club Members, Direct Members, and Life Members! 

Executive Director's Report

Delinda Ryerson

Executive Director

As many of you are likely aware, the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA) can celebrate our proud 112-year history. We established the first land trust in Alberta and are the largest membership-driven conservation organization in the province. We have been hearing from our membership over the past year or so however, that we need to evolve with the changing world, and to be more relevant to better represent the conservation, hunting, fishing and outdoor community in Alberta. To respond to this important call for action by our membership, the AFGA is undertaking a process of renewal.

Strategic management is the development and implementation of strategies to accomplish the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of an organization. All of the strategic management experts would tell you that organizational renewal is critical to improve organizational culture, increase efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness. As stated by Taneja et.al. (2012), "In order to survive and flourish in the long-term, organizations must experience continuous renewal" and "organizations that are continuously renewed and redesigned to meet competitive demands survive and emerge stronger than ever".¹

Managing an organization based primarily on past practices and "the way they have always been" is comparable to trying to drive a vehicle safely to a destination by only looking in the rear-view mirror, and not being able to look through the windshield. Peter Drucker, the founder of modern man-

agement would say, "You cannot predict the future, but you can create it". And that is exactly what we want to do; we want to, with the essential involvement from our membership, create a thriving AFGA into the future. We are in the process of determining where we are now, where we need to go, and what we need to do to get there. Part of this process involves updating our by-laws, policies and Operations Manual to turn our outdated and sometimes unclear strategies and conflicting priorities into a clear and compelling direction for success. We want to attract people of all ages to become involved in the AFGA, so we need to clearly identify what Albertans of various demographics want to see in us.

To kick-start this revitalization process, we held a Zoom event on June 9, 2021 to solicit feedback from our membership. We obtained some very valuable input from this event. You can check out the presentation delivered, and reports prepared by our Membership, Focus, Priorities & Programs Committee as well as the results of the polling questions we asked the webinar participants at: Menu=> Resources=> AFGA Document Download=> Zoom Event Documents on our website www.afga.org.

Although we received excellent input from webinar participants, of the more than 20,000 people invited to the webinar, less than 50 people attended. As a result, we realized that we had to dramatically increase the level of involvement in this process for it to be successful and reflect what our members want the AFGA to be in the



future, so we decided to partner with Michael Short and Let's Go Outdoors to deliver an interview series.


Every Monday, a new interview is posted on our website and social media as we bring you someone different to update you on what projects and activities the AFGA has been involved in, what advocacy topics our Execu-

utive, Hunting, Fishing and Environment Chairs have been focusing on, as well as what our four volunteer-based committees (Communications; Membership, Focus, Priorities & Programs; Finance Audit Risk; and Governance Committees) have been working on.

We are hoping that the combination of the interview series and feedback

surveys will stimulate discussion and feedback and keep our membership and potential members informed of our progress during this period of rejuvenation.

There have been several interviews released already so go check them out at: Menu => Resources => Media on our website www.afga.org!

Without your involvement and input this renewal will not be successful, so please check out the new interview every Monday and get involved in this important process by emailing me (delinda@afga.org) your questions, feedback and input as well as your suggested topic areas for future interviews. 

¹Taneja, S., Pryor, M.G., Gibson, J.W., Toombs, L.A. (2012). *Organizational Renewal – A Strategic Imperative*. Delhi Business Review, Vol 13. No. 1, 40 pp.



Alberta Fish and Game Association

Annual Parade of Donations

We are pleased to continue with our annual tradition of the Parade of Donations and gratefully recognize the following Clubs, Zones and individuals who have donated a total of \$49,600 to assist with the Wildlife Trust Fund program and the continued legacy of the Alberta Fish and Game Association.

- Camrose Fish & Game
- Dickson Fish & Game
- Dunvegan Fish & Game
- Drumheller & District Fish and Game
- Edmonton Old Timers Fishing Club
- Edmonton Fish & Game
- Lacombe Fish and Game
- Lethbridge Fish & Game
- Lloydminster & District Fish & Game
- Zone 1 - Southern Alberta Fish & Game Society
- Okotoks & District Fish & Game
- Picture Butte Fish & Game
- Sarcee Fish & Game
- Sherwood Park Fish & Game
- Spruce Grove Fish & Game
- St. Paul Fish & Game
- Whitcourt Fish & Game

- Jim & Deb Clarke
- Colin Jackson
- Dan, and sons Dexter and Scott Johnson
- Richard & Joyce Logan
- Ken Piecharka
- Faran Schaber
- Fred Watmough
- Matt Zazula

Thank you

1st Vice-President's Report

By **Faran Schaber**

1st Vice-President

As I write this, we are experiencing an unprecedented heat wave. There is, however, rain and some cooler temperatures in the forecast; if mid 20s can be considered cooler.

I got my hay up in six days, made three bales late last week, almost burned up my baler, and had to get the fire department out to put out the

third bale. Guess I should not work on Sunday. I got the baler fixed and finished baling on Canada Day.

The Senior Executive and the Full Executive continue to meet monthly and move our organization forward during this period of change. Any relevant information will be posted to the website, social media, or the Hook and Bullet-in emailed newsletter.

We have a youth project being run

by Miyah Clarke to get the youth engaged in a great project over the summer.

Hunting Draws have just closed, and in a couple of weeks we will find out how we all did. Then we can start planning our fall hunting trips.

I have a Zoom meeting with Teck Coal on July 17th. This is their annual Trails Committee meeting, with information going out to all stakeholders. 🐦

people put into the protection and development of habitat, the enhancement of fisheries and the protection of wildlife, they would be asking "How can I help?"

Another positive is that it has forced us as an organization to modernize ourselves and get with the times so to speak, to reevaluate our purpose and relevance to the outdoor community that we serve. Out of necessity we held our first virtual AGM. Many of the clubs and zones have also been holding Zoom meetings or using Google Meet and a host of other online meeting apps to continue their club meetings. The fundraising events and activities and projects have been a little more difficult to continue with, but I see some clubs have been getting very creative and using online auctions, drive-in fundraising suppers and online raffle sales to name a few.

Communicating all the virtues of the AFGA, its clubs and its zones to members of the outdoor community is one of the many tasks at hand faced by the Executive. Communication is something that we as an organization must work harder at. We must develop processes that better communicate with our membership, with the outdoor community, government, and other non-government organizations. I am fully aware of the benefits of this organization, but a large portion of the outdoor community and our own membership are unaware of these benefits.

We can look at the list of membership benefits like insurance or discounts at businesses, all things that clubs can shop around for a better deal if they so wish. What most people do not see is the countless hours spent by AFGA Hunting, Fishing and Environment Chairs writing letters, sitting in meetings and on committees trying to maintain this outdoor lifestyle now and into the future. They don't see the hours of work it takes to secure habitat so that there are places to go and enjoy your outdoor lifestyle, whether it's



berry picking, bird watching or going on a nature hike.

I can recall many years ago having that same mindset as to why I want to be a part of this fish and game thing. Once you attend a conference, once you sit in a meeting with government officials and see that you can make a difference, that they do listen to what you have to say, it is then that you realize the relevance of this organization and it is then that you answer the question "Why should I be a member of the AFGA?"

When you have a chance to go to a zone meeting to see all the great projects that are going on at the club level, you start to find your answer. Many activities and projects are geared to hunting and fishing habitat and development, but there are also a great many of them that are there to help out people in the community unrelated to fishing and hunting. When you see the dedication and commitment to the projects and activities that benefit the entire outdoor community you answer your question, "Why do I want to be a member?"

When you see the list of committees that have an AFGA Executive, staff member, club member or zone representative, when you see the hours they spend in meetings, fighting for the

rights of the outdoor community, the habitat, the fisheries and the wildlife of this great province you once again have your question answered.

We can liken this entire situation to a dog team, AFGA being the lead dog. If the team members pull in different directions, then we don't get very far, but when we all pull together, we get a great deal further with less individual effort. The view isn't always great if you're not the lead dog and the direction isn't always clear but pulling together will make for a stronger team. Sometimes you need to trust the lead dog to get you where you are going, even as each member of the team is equally important to the overall success of the team.

Can you imagine the audience we would have within the outdoor community if we joined together, all the fish and game clubs in the province? If we joined together and all pulled in the same direction to maintain and improve our outdoor experiences? If we shared with each other the resources and knowledge that we all have within our individual clubs? If we band together as one united voice for the continued enjoyment of our outdoor lifestyles, we would be the voice of the outdoor community that would be hard not to listen to. 🐦

2nd Vice-President's Report

By **Dave Doonanco**

2nd Vice-president

What's in it for me?", "What do I get out of it?". Common questions you hear when people are approached about being a member of their local club or a direct member of the Alberta Fish and Game Association. Many other like-minded organizations face the same question from members of the outdoor community. It is definitely a legitimate question as people work hard for their money and want to spend it wisely. This is especially true during these economic times and not knowing if or when your business or employer will be shut down and your income drastically altered. It is a difficult mindset to change.

This line of questioning is not only

a reality at the individual level of the outdoor community; it is also the case with many fish and game clubs, wildlife federations or rod and gun clubs. As organizations that represent outdoors people, they too want to get the best value for their members. Thus, they ask the question "Why affiliate with the AFGA?" "What's in it for our members?"

The pandemic has put a huge strain on our clubs and their members. The loss of fundraising activities, in some cases the lack of meetings and events, and not having an in-person conference have all contributed to a loss in membership for many clubs and the organization as a whole. This loss of revenue enhances this uncertainty around membership, affiliation and its importance. The world has handed

our clubs and members a basket of lemons.

As the old cliché says, when the world hands you lemons, make lemonade. One of the lemonade pitchers created from this whole shutdown has been that people are spending more time outdoors and enjoying the wonders that this great province provides. It could be because we are not allowed to gather inside, but nonetheless it appears to be happening as evidenced through the increase in fishing licence sales. The AFGA and our affiliated clubs need to take advantage of this renewed interest and enlighten the resource users as to the virtues of our organization. I believe that if the outdoor community were more aware of all the hard work and dedication that our various committees and chair



Fishing Chair Report

By Darryl Smith

Fishing Chair



Do We Need Wider Riparian Buffers On Alberta's Trout Streams?

It is June 30, 2021 and I find myself in the basement seeking respite from the extreme temperatures that are dominating Alberta and British Columbia this week. Just down the road from my home, Grande Prairie hit an all-time official high of 41.5° Celsius yesterday, shattering the previous record. When I do venture out, I walk down to the lake through the shelter belt that was planted many years ago as part of an Alberta Fish and Game Association habitat program. The last 100 meters are through a heavily forested riparian buffer, adjacent to the lake. The common dominator is “shade” and notably cooler temperatures. What would be the consequence if such shade was lost along our streams and creeks?

One only needs to Google Riparian Buffer Stream Temperature where research on this issue is clear. Higher water temperatures for prolonged periods is the result. In the case of coldwater species such as trout and arctic grayling, the impact can be lethal as it is easy to exceed the thermal tolerance of the species. Ironically, I have already heard of significant fish kills this week, likely the result of high prolonged water temperatures and associated oxygen depletion. These early reports are from lower reaches of the Little Smoky and Pembina Rivers and involve more tolerant species such as Walleye, Burbot, and White Suckers. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that the upstream sections of these rivers that are home to both Bull Trout and Arctic Grayling have escaped similar fish kills.

Alberta released the Draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan for public consultations in May. The critical need for high quality coldwater habitat for the survival of Bull Trout appears to have become blurred in the draft. Incidental mortality related to catch and release recreational angling, and fragmentation of habitat dominate the discussion. What we know for sure is stream temperatures above 20° Celsius for any extended period are lethal to Bull Trout. Much of the former range of Bull Trout in the province is no longer capable of supporting the species because the aquatic habitat is no longer cold enough. The reasons are varied. Dams prevent the coldwater release from melting snowpack from flowing far downstream, runoff from upland and watercourse disturbances are no longer adequately thermally buffered by intact forests, and the rise in ambient global air temperatures due to climate change creates a dire situation for not only Bull Trout, but all fish species that rely on coldwater habitat.

Recognizing this, what is Alberta prepared to do to maintain the integrity of our remaining coldwater habitat? Dan Healing of the Canadian Press posted on May 30, 2021 that Alberta Agriculture and Forestry want to increase the annual allowable cut of timber from our forests by over 30 percent. He quotes Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Minister Devin Dreeshen as having asked his department to re-examine the province's forest riches “as a true environmentalist” to come up with ways to most efficiently use its

bounty. Minister Dreeshen apparently went on to state, “they crunched the numbers and said about a 33 percent increase from the annual allowable cut is something we could sustainably harvest and make sure we do preventive measures such as forest fire protection and pest management.”

The troubling part of these comments are that the overall value of the forest as an ecosystem appears lost despite its contributions to biodiversity, clean air and water, and other economic generators that rely on the forest such as tourism. We instead continue to perpetuate those resources such as forests should only be viewed as a “commodity”. What is required is to incorporate our understanding of ecosystem function to determine what the actual timber supply available for harvest is, in order for the other values and use of our forests to be not be negatively impacted.

Where will this increased timber harvest come from? For the last thirty years I have participated in many forestry forums including sitting on Forest Management Advisory Committees. The issue or need to harvest timber from riparian buffers comes up constantly. The timber industry and the regulator (Alberta Agriculture and Forestry) have always been pro to enabling harvest from buffers. The arguments they use are varied including pest management, fire suppression, and need for forest regeneration. I would suggest that this is a one-sided perspective where the goal is simply to increase the annual allowable cut

(AAC). This is not ecosystem-based management which involves a multi-dimensional approach that goes far beyond the timber resource.

What I do agree with, is there is a need to look at riparian buffers in the context of the overall ecosystem function and dynamics. Recognize as well that the harvest of timber is an important industry and part of a green future for Alberta. What I have learned however, is that it is difficult to shift paths or beliefs based on past practices. It is paramount that we adopt approaches that consider broader societal needs and values if the true value of our forest resource is to be realized. Sustainability of our forest cannot be defined based on single species such as the value of white spruce when it is converted into lumber.

Current timber harvest rules are set out in the Alberta Forestry Management Standards and Guidelines. The general concept related to riparian buffers (unharvested) is that their width increases the further we move downstream. This may in fact be the wrong approach, if one of the goals is for there to be cold, clear water in our streams. Increasing the width of buffers in Strahler low order streams (headwaters and tributaries) is likely more efficacious than the current strategy if a true ecosystem-based approach becomes the driver of forest management.


Why is this critical? Alberta has a long history of developing documents for Species at Risk which ultimately lead to only limited or no action on the ground. You need to look no further than past efforts related to Bull Trout and Woodland Caribou to note this failure in recovery efforts where a cascade of earlier plans exist that have identified the same issues repeatedly. The result is the only significant actions are generally related to sportfishing or hunting regulation changes, academic study, and further monitoring.

The Draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan



should be viewed only in the context of further discussion and a legislated requirement to fulfill timeline obligations under the Species at Risk Act (SARA) or the Alberta Wildlife Act. From the outset the direct participation of not only Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), but other key ministries including Agriculture and Forestry, Energy, Infrastructure, Municipal Affairs, and Transportation is essential in the development of such plans. AFGA took it upon itself to send letters to all these ministries asking for them to declare their support so that the goal of having Bull Trout remain an iconic species on the Alberta landscape is achieved. Only through an ecosystem-based approach will this

be possible which must address the fundamental issue of habitat. In this case, ensuring that our trout streams continue to have a consistent, constant flow of cold, clear water.

The Alberta Fish and Game Association through its volunteers and staff continue to work on issues that are important to the angling, hunting, and outdoor enthusiast community. Take the time to become a member and consider volunteering your time and expertise. The common denominator is that our outdoor pursuits rely on the vital habitat that our fish and wildlife require being managed as an integral component, not as an afterthought, through an ecosystem-based land use, planning process. 



Hunting Chair Report

By Brian Rudyk

Hunting Chair



What is the value of wildlife? What seems like a fairly basic question quickly becomes extremely complex when you begin to investigate the multitude and diversity of the responses to the question. For the most part, the majority of responses fall into two larger categories being non-consumptive and consumptive uses of wildlife. Beyond the intrinsic value gained from wildlife, wildlife related activities generate vast amounts of money for our businesses and province creating important economic returns. This benefit is created through a broad arrangement of goods and services. Many jobs are created directly in areas such as tourism, the guide/outfitter industry, government through resource management and others, as well as indirectly through various support and spin off services.

Non-consumptive users of wildlife participate in activities like hiking, wildlife viewing, photography, sketching, painting and personal appreciation of nature and the outdoors. Their activities do not involve the harvesting of wildlife. They partake in these events for recreation, education, research and personal enjoyment. They may or may not support consumptive use of wildlife. Some people earn their livelihood through non-consumptive use of wildlife.

Consumptive use of wildlife primarily involves activities such as hunting, trapping and the guiding/outfitting industry. This involves the harvesting of wildlife for personal use or profit. Hunters participate for one or more reasons from putting high quality food on the table, for trophy, recreation, as a social outing, or to be out in nature, and

they fall anywhere on a spectrum from laidback to hardcore. Indigenous hunters and trappers also utilize wildlife for other traditional uses such as spiritual, medicinal and ceremonial. Again, some people earn their livelihood from consumptive use of wildlife.

Landowners, farmers and ranchers also have an opinion on the value of wildlife. They are the stewards of much of the land that our wildlife inhabits, and their decisions can have a major effect on wildlife populations and habitat. They too fall on a wide spectrum from those very supportive of wildlife and their habitat, to those who find some, or all wildlife to be a nuisance. Wildlife can definitely have a detrimental effect on their livelihood. Landowners, farmers and ranchers may be non-consumptive or consumptive users of wildlife and may or may not be supportive of the activities of the opposing group.

Then there are a variety of other groups who interact with wildlife and their habitat including forestry, and oil and gas workers to name a few. Surprisingly, there are even some who place no value on wildlife although I believe that to be a very small fraction. All of these stakeholders have thoughts and opinions on how our wildlife resources should be valued, managed and utilized.

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is charged with the daunting task of developing management plans while trying to take all the desires and opinions of the diverse stakeholder groups into account. There are also many variables affecting wildlife populations that AEP has limited or no control over. The end goal of the plan should always be the health and conservation of the spe-

cies, while maintaining traditional and sustainable use of this valuable public resource. AEP utilizes a variety of tools and resources to manage species but one of the main management tools is the regulation of licensed consumptive users of wildlife, to control population numbers. Through monitoring, research and feedback they determine the state of various species within a WMU and if viable, calculate the licenses available for a regulated harvest. Licenses are made available, some through a draw, using a system and standards developed over time with input from the various stakeholder groups. Not everyone is always happy with decisions made but the good of the resource must be the top priority in the decisions.

Recently a concern was brought to my attention during the 2021 draw application period. Residents applying for WMU 349 moose draws discovered a drastic drop from last year in available tags according to the quotas shown on AlbertaRelm. The matter was brought to the attention of AEP staff and a few days later the quotas on AlbertaRelm were brought back to near the 2020 levels. A follow-up communication indicated that there had been an error in the numbers, and it had been corrected. Mistakes happen and it was good that it was caught and corrected.

In looking for information regarding the concerns with the moose allocation draws, I utilized the 2020 draw summaries information on AlbertaRelm and the moose allocations for the 2021 hunting season report, available by searching for it in the Resources section on open.alberta.ca. I combined these reports to see the changes that had taken place in resident allocations in the various WMUs

but also noted the increase in outfitter allocations in many WMUs due to the deferrals allowed due to COVID relief. What was shocking to find, was that with the COVID relief, but also in many WMUs in the year prior to relief, outfitter allocations were significantly above the maximum of the 10% of resident tags standard that is to be used in determining outfitter allocations. In many WMUs the outfitter allocations actually outnumbered the resident allocations in both 2020 and again now in 2021. This information prompted the Alberta Fish and Game Association (AFGA) to send a letter of concern to Minister Nixon, which is available on the AFGA website in the correspondence section.

While I am empathetic with outfitters and all small businesses in Alberta and across Canada that have been affected by the pandemic, I believe the numbers represented in these government documents are not acceptable. The number of WMUs drastically out of line with the maximum of the 10% standard are too numerous to list here. I enthusiastically encourage you to access these reports and check the numbers for yourself. Reports for elk, whitetail, wild turkey, and bighorn sheep are also available. Here are a few examples of some moose allocation numbers of concern. Barring



any other possible errors, WMU 338 had only 15 resident draws available in each of the 2020 and 2021 seasons. That same WMU had a total of 24 outfitter allocations in 2020, 16 in late season and 8 in archery season, and 31 total available in 2021 with COVID relief. Many of the 400 level WMUs and others with a low number of resident draws, indicating low, uncertain or unstable populations, have similar data. The 2020 allocations would have been planned prior to the pandemic.

Some species in Alberta and some WMUs will never have abundant numbers that would allow for liberal harvest opportunities like those present for whitetail deer, black bear and elk in most areas. Antelope, wild turkey, cougar, big horn sheep, moose and sometimes mule deer often require extremely high priority for a draw or have very limited, controlled hunts. Unless something changes significantly to increase opportunity, I will likely never partake in a wild turkey hunt in Alberta in my lifetime, as I started building priority too late. My next trophy and ar-

chery antelope and 410 bighorn sheep draws will likely be my last as the demand for these hunts continues to rise for a limited resource. With the pandemic it seems that more people have taken up hunting and angling which is great to see but wait-times for hunts and required priority will continue to increase. Some are calling for resident-only hunts once priority requirements rise above a certain level.

If we do truly value wildlife it is important that decisions are made with sound wildlife management practices and fair consideration for all. This will ensure healthy, sustainable populations for generations to come. With the pandemic, many of the regular committee meetings with AEP and stakeholders haven't taken place and the five-year review of outfitter's allocations is well overdue. These important discussions need to resume but it is also important that individuals and clubs make their concerns heard on the way allocations are currently managed. You can bet that other stakeholder groups are. 🐦



Environment Chair Report

By Glenn Heather

Environment Chair

Greetings! This is my first report as your new AFGA Environment Chair. It is my honour to represent you, the AFGA members in this new role. I have my work cut out for me to match the excellence of our past chair, Victor Benz, who now is our new AFGA President.

I am just learning and trying to get a knowledgeable foundation of the role and responsibilities of your Environment Chair, and AFGA's involvement in numerous committees, representing the voice of AFGA, and without a doubt, shaping our Alberta outdoors.

What is Habitat? What is Environment? If I were to ask each of you what you thought these words meant, each of you would say something slightly different, and you would all be accurate in your descriptions. These words are huge, they encompass so many factors. AFGA has policy statements which govern our approach to various topics within Alberta. On each issue, I plan to discuss policy statements as they stand currently within AFGA, related to environment and habitat.

I'll start with one of the current topics, the "Mining" policy. Our current policy statement reads "AFGA believes that Alberta's large coal reserves are a valuable nonrenewable resource, and supports the orderly and timely use of this resource for public benefit following effective environmental assessment and definition of end use and proper reclamation."

You'll see the most important aspects of this policy statement "following effective environmental assessment and definition of end use and proper reclamation" These are critical.



I have participated in the Coal Policy Engagement Committee and have given feedback to this Alberta government committee, stating our concerns related to coal mining.

In our last Outdoor Canada West issue, Darryl Smith, our AFGA Provincial Fish Chair, had an excellent article related to coal. "Coal Mining or No Coal Mining". Our position on the Coal Policy Committee is responsible environmental policies for companies who want to mine our coal. The Alberta government cannot allow or open Alberta's resources unless there are policies and securities for reclamation. Albertans cannot flip the bill if companies default or claim they have reclaimed the area, sign off, then years later, when environmental/habitat concerns are noticed, the company that created these are off the hook. We as AFGA, and Albertans are now responsible to pay. This is not acceptable; additionally, environmental policies which strictly define responsibilities of any resource-based company, to protect Alberta's habitat, are essential. There are countless studies and papers out there that have defined

the issues related to coal mining. These cannot be ignored. How you could not prevent these, when they are known, is not acceptable. Meaningful consultation and feedback, that is what we expect from our governments, and yes, we elect them, however that does not mean they do not work for us.

Trust but show data, is a term often used in the business world. That is what we are asking for. I'll keep you posted, as more information is shared from this Coal Advisory Committee.

In each upcoming magazine issues, I hope to highlight some committees that we are involved with, to show you the readers, how we are representing our AFGA members.

On the Bighorn Backcountry Standing Committee, Ian Stuart is AFGA's representative. Ian has numerous years of experience and knowledge of AFGA's values and positions. He has represented our interests extremely well throughout the years and has always voiced conservation and responsible access to the Bighorn areas. You can go to the website Bighorn Backcountry to get an idea of what is going on.

Why is it important that AFGA has input on every possible committee? Without our input, other organizations, who have different agendas, could steal the ear of the government. We are the largest, Alberta based outdoor association (to paraphrase our Mission Statement) promoting the conservation and utilization of fish and wildlife and protecting and enhancing the habitat they depend upon.

Enjoy our great province; we are privileged to be in Canada and in Alberta. However, we cannot let our guard down and become complacent. 🐦

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ZONE REPORTS

ZONE 1 REPORT

Greg Bird, Zone 1 Director

WELCOME EVERYONE AND thank you for taking the time to read the AFGA reports, always a source of current information about the AFGA and affiliated clubs. I would firstly like to thank Glenn Heather for his unwavering dedication and work not only for Zone 1, but for his home club and the AFGA generally. Glenn has been a solid force in forwarding the mandate of the AFGA. He has now moved on to the Environment Chair for the AFGA provincially, so no doubt we will continue to benefit from his wisdom and dedication to our organization.

Zone 1 consists of a true diversity of clubs and geography, like many of the zones within our organization. The last issue of Outdoor Canada listed the various clubs within our

Zone, and I encourage each of the clubs to reach out and contact me regarding events and accolades that are planned for this summer. We have heard that communication has been an issue with the membership, rest assured we are working on this and hoping to establish a lot more “grass roots” discussions as we adapt and change within our organization. That said, I would really like to stress that this cannot be successful with a one-way communication line. We really value and need to hear from the various clubs and be able to report on each of your successes, so please keep me in the loop for future editions. I would really like to highlight a club or two in each issue, so let’s chat and see what we can report on together!

Many of us are tired of hearing the “COVID” excuse for everything changing, but I am sincerely hoping that we are entering a “post-COVID”



world that will start to get back to something much more comfortable than masks and hand sanitizer at every turn. To this end, please let me know what your club is organizing and planning, as I would like to attend what I can, but definitely share the hard work and dedication of our volunteers within each club. Memberships have remained strong and are focused to grow as we open back up, so let’s truly celebrate the great organization that we are, and the re-opening of our country.

In reading this edition of Outdoor Canada West, you no doubt have your sights set on the fall hunting season. Hopefully, each of you will be able to fill the freezer and, in the process, make some lifelong memories with fellow conservationists like yourself. Good luck to you all, it will be a rewarding fall by all accounts. I look forward to attending your various club functions when we are back on track, but in the meantime, please reach out and say hi! 🐦



ZONE 2 REPORT

Joe Baranyay, Zone 2 Director

WITH THE DOG days of summer behind us and COVID restrictions easing, I am sure most of our members have had some time to enjoy summer camping and are now getting ready for our fall hunting outings. Those of us that were successful in the draws are planning trips to harvest some fine table fare and processing wild meat to feed our families.

It was nice to see that some of the clubs have had virtual meetings and they were able to have functions with social distancing and COVID prevention in mind. Thank you to the clubs that sent in information on their activities. Hussar Fish and Game opened up both their outdoor ranges and invited members and guests for their summer shot gun trap shooting from noon until 4 p.m. on Sundays. Everyone was welcome to enjoy their club in the Village of Hussar.

The Drumheller club held their horn measure event in March, and in June they held a socially distanced outdoor awards ceremony for the winners. They had four first-time hunters, six big game winners, two fish winners including their Junior Angler of the Year and their all-around Volunteer of the Year; congratulations to Kerra Daem.

Sarcee Fish and Game was very active. They continue to hold virtual meetings and donated \$5,000 to the Parade of Donations at the virtual AFGA conference and also donated \$1 500 to the Calgary Search & Rescue

Association. They also had virtual presentations on:

- invasive species
- a wildlife biologist presentation, how to film a hunt properly
- virtual cooking demonstration
- presentation on bats in Alberta

Sarcee also took part in the virtual Calgary Boat & Outdoor Show that was held in February.

Sarcee club member and Fortis Alberta employee, Kelly Weatherall, designed the Mosquito Terminator which is a barn swallow nesting platform designed to provide a nesting site for those natural mosquito predators. Weatherall says that the nesting platforms for the barn swallows will not only help the birds live but also provide around the clock extermination of the local mosquito population. “Bats eat thousands of mosquitos at night. Barn swallows do that in the day. We’ll have them feed and working twenty-four hours a day.” Below is an image of the mosquito terminator structure. With the help of Fortis Alberta and the Sarcee Fish and Game Association, the Alberta Birds of Prey Centre can now care for these barn swallows in a way like most habitats cannot. The Sarcee Fish and Game Association conserves habitats for game and non-game animals to ensure hunting and fishing will be available



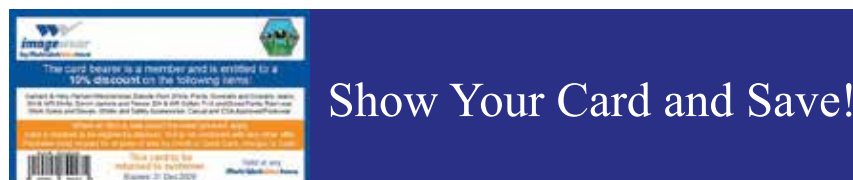
now and for the future. Congratulations Kelly for your volunteerism.

Okotoks and District Fish and Game had a membership drive in May and June, and they are well over one hundred members now. There will be a draw for a set of binoculars that was donated by AHEIA for all new members signed up and the sellers that helped promote the drive. They are also going to hold a fun, trap shoot and barbecue at the Calgary Firearms Centre in September. It seems that the clubs in Zone 2 are all striving to keep members active and involved in these times of restrictions.

Over the past couple of months, I have been able to be part of a number of Executive meetings and the new AFGA Executive group is working hard to keep us at the table and involved with a number of issues that are in the news with Alberta Environment and Parks. Make sure to visit AFGA’s website for upcoming information on various issues.

I would like to thank Glen Dundas for stepping up to fill the vacant hunting chair position in Zone 2. Good volunteers are hard to find now a days.

If possible, take a young person hunting this fall and give them an experience that they will treasure forever. Good luck and safe travels in your fall adventures. 🐦



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ZONE 3 REPORT

Arnold Winkler
Past Director, Zone 3

WHAT A DISRUPTIVE diversion the COVID pandemic has been for all of us. We were finally able to hold an in-person, Zone 3 Annual Meeting with

elections of officers. We could have held a Zoom session but it's not the same, as some thoughts of the moment are best heard, discussed, and desired outcomes reached in unison.

At rollcall I announced my desire to step down from my position as Zone Director, so that I would be able to fulfill my duties for my local Leduc Club. The reins are now in the hands of Harold Drok of the Red Fish and Game Club... Welcome! A listing of all Clubs in Zone 3, Central Alberta Fish and Game Association are listed in the last issue of this magazine and on the AFGA website. Contact your local Club and become involved; it's not only about hunting and fishing anymore as conservation, the environment and habitat play a large part of what many AFGA Clubs are utilizing their resources on.

Also, I cannot stress enough how important it is to get our youth and their

parents involved in programs and projects that will direct what the future will entail. Us 'old timers' are the ones that put in place the foundation and built what we enjoy today. It's the younger generation now more than ever, needed to carry on our legacy and future direction.

Alberta has so much for all of us to enjoy, get out there and take it all in, it's yours.

ZONE 3 REPORT

Harold Drok, Zone 3 Director

RECENTLY, ZONE 3 representatives got together and had our first meeting in nine months. There were lots of items to catch up on including club and committee reports. The common theme was how the pandemic has caused many challenges, including reduced club activities, resulting in a decline in membership sales and operating revenues. One of the highlights was Zone 3 allocating funds from their casino account to a number of clubs for projects. Funds were awarded to:

- Innisfail Fish and Game, "Kids can Catch" program and pond restocking program
- Camrose and District Fish and Game, gravel for fishing stations, and riparian repairs on their trout pond
- Leduc Fish and Game, materials for bird and bat house projects for youth and schools
- Lacombe Fish and Game, pond reclamation and treatment program
- Red Deer Fish and Game, Alberta Youth Pheasant Program

We had AFGA 2nd Vice President Dave Doonanco, Finance Chair Andy von Busse, and Life Member/Past President Representative Dave Powell attend the meeting. We had an excellent discussion on the future of AFGA and concerns Zone 3 clubs have and how important improving

communications is going to be. Several attendees made some excellent suggestions, and we are hopeful the suggestions make it to the AFGA Executive meeting.

Zone 3 had their elections and have a number of new people on the Board of Directors:

- Director — Harold Drok
- Vice Director — Wolfgang Janssen
- Treasurer — Leonard Davis
- Secretary — Andy Hogberg
- Fishing Chairperson — Dean Baayens
- Casino Chairperson — Leonard Davis

We have several people interested in the Hunting and Resolutions Chair positions and by the time Zone 3 members are reading this, we should have everyone in place.

Thank you to the Directors who have stepped down including Zone Director Arnold Winkler, Treasurer Neil Hor-



vath, and Secretary Bob Leny. Thank you for your dedication and hard work!

The next Zone 3 meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2021 at

the Ponoka Fish and Game POFIANGA facility. We will attempt to bring in a guest speaker from Alberta Fish and Wildlife. 🐾



With 32 years of service to AFGA and the Wildlife Trust Fund, Brad Fenson will be leaving us after July 30, 2021.



We thank him for his service and wealth of knowledge and wish him the best in his future endeavours.



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