

**Alberta Conservation Association
2023/24 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: Kids Can Catch Program

Information, Education, and Communications Program Manager: Tara Holmwood

Project Leader: Ken Kranrod

Primary ACA Staff on Project: Charmaine Brunes, Rhonda Eidick, Colin Eyo, Amanda Gill, Cassandra Hewitt, Tara Holmwood, Sabrina Hotton, Ken Kranrod, and Laura Volkman

Partnerships

Alberta Conservation Association	Canoo
Alberta Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Services	Cargill
Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association	Castor & District FCSS
Alberta Parks	City of Beaumont
Alberta Wildfire	City of Fort Saskatchewan
Alder Flats Fish & Game Association	City of Lacombe
Artis Exploration	CN
Atco	CN Police
Athabasca Fish & Game Association	Coronation Elks
Backroad Mapbooks	County of Grande Prairie
Bass Pro Shops Cabela's Great Outdoor Fund	County of Wetaskiwin
Beaver River Fish & Game Association	CPAWS
Big Lakes County FCSS	deSIGNS by Tam
Cabela's	Dokcyde
Canadian Tire	Dow Chemical
Canadian Wildlife Federation: WILD Outside Program	Edmonton Old Timers Fishing Club
	EQUUS
	Fish & Game Association
	Fort Lions Club
	Fort Saskatchewan Naturalist Society

Fountain Tire	Onoway Fish & Game Association
Funky Monkey Hard Ice Cream	Parkland County
Go Alberta	Parkland County Emergency Services
Government of Alberta	Perks
High Calibre Sports	Pigeon Lake Watershed Association
Innisfail Fish & Game Association – Larry & Janis Schmidek (Pond Owner)	Pinto Ice Shack Rentals
Joussard Community Association	Rig-A-Jig Bait Shop
Lacombe Co-Op	Servus Credit Union
Lake Chaparral Residents Association	Slave Lake Rod and Gun Club
Lamont Fish & Game Association	Spruce Grove Fish & Game Association
Len Thompson Lures	Stony Tackle Shack
Lesser Slave Forest Education Society	Sunny 94
Lesser Slave Watershed Council	Taber Fish & Game Association
Magrath and District Rec Committee	Thompson Pallister Bait Co Ltd
Millet Fish and Game	Town of Gibbons
MNP	Town of Hinton
Mountain Horse Photography	Town of Taber
Nature Alberta	TransAlta
NFP	Wabamun Watershed Management Council
Northern Lights Fly Fishers	Walleye Master Tackle & Bait Ltd.
Okotoks & District Fish and Game Association	West Parkland Gas
	Wolverine Guns & Tackle
	Zebco Tackle

Key Findings

Nearly 4,200 adults and children came out to fish at over 24 Kids Can Catch events across Alberta.

- Nearly 100 organizations, partners, and sponsors made Kids Can Catch events possible through financial, in-kind, and volunteer contributions.
- Artis Exploration, Bass Pro Cabela’s Great Outdoor Fund, Northern Lights Fly Fishers, and Backroads Mapbooks partnerships helped Alberta Conservation Association continue

the program for communities across Alberta. Other organizations such as Cabela's, CN, EQUUS, and TransAlta substantially sponsored individual events.

- We had a record year with a total of 24 events—five of them were brand new.
- A private (not open to the public) 25th event, for the second year in a row, took participants from the Africa Centre in Edmonton onto boats on Wabamun Lake, which gave them a unique angling opportunity.

Details

Kids Can Catch is a province-wide program in which Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) partners with community and corporate partners to create free family fishing events at lakes and ponds. We developed Kids Can Catch to invite Albertans to fish at stocked and natural waterbodies and to hook new and young anglers on fishing, fish conservation, and responsible angling. We have seen an increased uptake in organizations wanting to host events and more people interested in them. We hope this trend continues!

ACA provides local organizers with tools and resources to help as they plan, promote, and host their events. These tools and resources include building them a web page, promoting the event on our social media pages, handling online registration for them if requested, sending them brochures and promotional items to give away, providing helpful checklists for how to plan the event and what to expect, and more. Typically, one local organization takes the lead to plan the event and engages community and corporate event partners to help with it. Partners help in a variety of ways, such as volunteering at the events, providing in-kind donations, providing sponsorship, coordinating specific event activities, or promoting the event.

Throughout all 24+ events, Kids Can Catch hosted nearly 4,200 participants from all over the province. This included multiple new events at Athabasca/Chain Lake, Manotokan Lake, Gull Lake, Magrath, and Wetaskiwin. A private event, for the second year in a row, took participants from the Africa Centre in Edmonton onto boats on Wabamun Lake, which gave them a unique angling opportunity. ACA also hosted two flagship Kids Can Catch events in Fort Saskatchewan and Wabamun Lake. Kids Can Catch Fort Saskatchewan at the Fort Lions Community Fish Pond at West River's Edge, our open water event, had over 450 participants, a hot dog lunch, fantastic exhibitors and mentors, and too many fish caught to count. Kids Can Catch Wabamun Lake, our

ice fishing event, hosted over 900 participants, a hamburger lunch, a handful of new local exhibitors, the local fire department, and many fish caught. New to this event this year was horse-drawn wagons that transported participants from the parking lot onto the ice. This was extremely helpful because the event location was moved further out onto the ice to give participants a better chance to catch fish in deeper waters. Throughout both events we received a lot of positive feedback from happy participants.

Photos



Photo 1. Participants at the Okotoks Kids Can Catch event in February 2024.
Photo: Okotoks & District Fish and Game Association



Photo 2. A collage of photos from the Kids Can Catch event at Wabamun Lake in February 2024. Photo: Charmaine Brunnes and Cassandra Hewitt



Photo 3. A young participant learning to fish at Kids Can Catch Fort Saskatchewan in June 2023. Photo: Charmaine Brunet