

**Alberta Conservation Association
2020/21 Project Summary Report**

Project name: Fisheries Access Site Management

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Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks
Alberta Fish & Game Association
Alberta Transportation
Camrose County
Clearwater County
County of Greenview
County of Newell
County Northern Lights
Devon Canada Corporation
Lacombe County
Lethbridge County

Municipal District of Rocky View
North Raven River Working Group
Northern Sunrise County
Saddle Hills County
Shell Canada Energy
Stettler County
Trout Unlimited Canada – Central Chapter
Trout Unlimited Canada – Yellowhead
Chapter
Wetaskiwin County

Key Findings

- Inspected and maintained 23 fisheries access sites across Alberta.
- Commissioned 10 maintenance contracts for services at 19 sites provincially.
- Completed site upgrades and enhancements at five fisheries access sites provincially, including access road and footpath improvements, a gate repair, and the installation of wildlife proof garbage bins.
- Provided access to angling opportunities at two rivers and 21 lakes, ponds, or reservoirs (17 stocked and four stocked and aerated) throughout the province.
- We worked with partners to pursue next steps in developing a new fisheries access site at the recently donated Boulder Lake site, as well as two waterbodies located on Crown land near Calgary.
- Recognized 20 in-kind and financial partnerships in 2020/21 to support management of our fisheries access sites.

Abstract

ACA's Land Management Program encompasses activities intended to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and to increase sustainable recreational opportunities including angling and hunting. One of the activities of the program is the delivery of the Fisheries Access Site Management Program, which provides angling access to key streams, rivers, and lakes throughout the province. We inspected and maintained 23 fisheries access sites and commissioned 10 contracts to maintain 19 sites in 2020/21. We upgraded five sites with improvements to access roads, footpath, gate repairs, and the installation of wildlife proof garbage bins. We worked with partners on the next steps to develop a new fisheries access site at the recently donated Boulder Lake site and at two additional waterbodies on Crown land in the Central Region. We recognized 20 partners in 2020/21 who generously contributed financially or with in-kind assistance. We continued to strive to ensure anglers have high-quality experiences at ACA fisheries access sites across the province.

Introduction

The focus of Alberta Conservation Association's (ACA's) Land Management Program (LMP) is to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat as well as increase sustainable recreational opportunities, including angling and hunting. One facet of the LMP is the management of ACA Fisheries Access Sites (FAS).

The Fisheries Access Site Management Program is delivered throughout the province and provides sites where anglers can access key streams, stocked ponds, and lakes, thereby increasing recreational opportunities for public use. Specific objectives in 2020/21 were to deliver the project in an efficient and timely manner; to complete inspections and necessary maintenance on all fisheries access sites; to deliver infrastructure improvement projects at priority sites; to identify new FAS development opportunities; and to establish and maintain collaborative partnerships with industry, government, municipalities, and other organizations to discuss management issues and sustainable recreational access opportunities.

Methods

The Fisheries Access Site Management Program is a provincial program that is delivered regionally to maximize partnership opportunities. The LMP manager and FAS project lead are responsible for the provincial organization and direction of this project, while the FAS project coordinators and project staff are responsible for the delivery of each region's annual management and maintenance component.

We completed field inspections on access sites throughout the province, which involved a visual survey of a site to assess any damage to infrastructure, identify concerns (e.g., weeds), ensure contractor compliance, and identify a course of action if required, in addition to identifying enhancement opportunities. We generally completed two to three field inspections of each site per year or monthly if required.

We hired private individuals and companies as contractors or engaged volunteer stewards whenever possible to complete routine maintenance, such as grass cutting, fence repairs, garbage removal, septic services, and weed control. Infrastructure upgrades and replacements are

necessary due to the age of structures. We also installed ACA conservation site signage for FAS as needed, generally at the main access points of each site.

Results

We inspected and maintained 23 FAS with a variety of site infrastructure in three regions throughout Alberta (Table 1). We commissioned 10 maintenance contracts to provide services at 19 sites provincially in 2020/21. We completed enhancements and installed new facilities at five sites to improve our FAS and enhance anglers' experiences at these sites (Table 2).

Table 1. Facilities inspected and maintained at ACA FAS in 2020/21.

Region	Site Name	Site Type	Facilities
Central	Beaver Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, boat launch, fences
Central	Birch Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, fences, floating dock
Central	Boehlke Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fences
Central	Coulson	River access	Parking lot, outhouse, garbage bin, picnic table
Central	Fiesta Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, floating dock
Central	Hansen Reservoir	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fish cleaning stand, fences, floating docks
Central	Ironside Pond	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, fences
Central	Kerbes Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fences
Central	Kramer Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fish cleaning stand, fences
Central	Mirror Reservoir	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fences
Central	North Raven River	River access	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fences

Region	Site Name	Site Type	Facilities
Central	Nuggent Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, fences, wheelchair-friendly outhouses, trail, and floating dock
Central	Shuster Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot
Central	Windsor Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins with fish cleaning area, boat launch, fences, floating dock
Northwest	Dollar Lakes	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, gravel walking trail, floating docks, picnic tables
Northwest	Shell True North Pond	Stocked waterbody	Access road, parking lot, garbage bins, picnic tables, floating dock
Northwest	Weberville Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, picnic tables, floating docks
Southern	Brooks Aqueduct Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, boat launch
Southern	Burmis Lake	Stocked waterbody and river access	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fences
Southern	Kenex Trout Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, fences
Southern	Lees Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, boat launch, floating dock, fences
Southern	McVinnie Trout Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, floating dock, fences
Southern	Waldron Falls	River access	Parking lot, outhouses

Table 2. Enhancements completed at existing ACA FAS in 2020/21.

Region	Site Name	Enhancement
Central	Beaver Lake	Repairs to access gate.
Central	Birch Lake	Installed a wildlife proof garbage bin.
Central	Fiesta Lake	Access road improved with additional gravel and grading.
Northwest	Dollar Lake	Installed a temporary boardwalk on the flooded walking trail to allow access during higher-than-normal water event.
Southern	McVinnie Trout Pond	Access road improved with additional gravel and grading.

We collaborated with ACA Fisheries Program and project partners to plan infrastructure requirements necessary to establish a publicly accessible fishpond (e.g., outflow culvert screening, access road, casting platforms, outhouses) at the newly donated Boulder Lake site near Blackfalds. We continued to work with Alberta Transportation and Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) on securing access to a potential fishpond and FAS development site in the Calgary area and began to investigate a second site, Women’s Coulee Reservoir, located on Crown land south of Calgary. We maintained 20 collaborative partnerships in 2020/21 and secured funding from Shell Canada Foothills Legacy Fund for maintenance at six FAS in the Central region.

Conclusions

We successfully inspected and maintained 23 FAS across the province to provide enhanced angling opportunities on 21 lakes, ponds, or reservoirs and two rivers. We commissioned 10 maintenance contracts to provide services at 19 sites provincially. We completed upgrades and enhancements at five sites to improve recreational access, specifically to address infrastructure needs and access management. We maintained 20 partnerships providing generous financial and in-kind support, which assisted with site maintenance and enhancements at various sites as well as the next steps to develop a new FAS at Boulder Lake. We continue to strive to ensure anglers

have high-quality experiences at ACA FAS, and we continually pursue additional funding to enhance facilities in the future.

Communications

- Posted fisheries access site locations and descriptions on our website and in our *Alberta Discover Guide*.
- Continued negotiations with AEP to determine long-term roles and responsibilities at FAS provincially.
- Continued discussions with Wheatland County to assess ACA's role in a potential future FAS development project on Eagle Lake.

Photos



New wildlife proof garbage bin being installed at Birch Lake. Photo: Kirsten Azar



View of Boulder Lake, location of new FAS development project on recently donated land.
Photo: Marco Fontana



Happy anglers on the floating dock located at Weberville Pond. Photo: Ed Kolodychuk



Rainbow trout caught through the ice at Lee Lake. Photo: Mike Jokinen