

**Alberta Conservation Association  
2010/11 Project Summary Report**

**Project Name:** *Southern Riparian Conservation*

**Fisheries Program Manager:** Peter Aku

**Project Leader:** Mike Uchikura

**Primary ACA staff on project:**

Mike Uchikura

**Partnerships**

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society – Cows and Fish  
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development  
Beaver Creek Watershed Group  
Drywood/Yarrow Conservation Partnership  
Indianfarm Creek Watershed Group  
LaFarge Canada  
Lyndon Creek Watershed Group  
MULTISAR  
Oldman Watershed Council  
Penn West Energy  
Pincher Creek Watershed Group  
Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration  
Royal Bank of Canada  
Southwestern Alberta Conservation Partnership  
Todd Creek Watershed Group  
Trout Unlimited Canada  
Waterton Watershed Group

**Key Findings**

- Initiated restoration projects including two riparian fencing, one bank stabilization, one shrub planting (over 1,000 willow cuttings), one off-site watering, and 10 cattle watering spring developments protecting over 5 km and 37 ha of riparian habitat.
- Established partnerships with four new watershed groups.
- Over 100 volunteers and 200 high school students participated in outreach activities.
- Attended one watershed group field day.

## **Introduction**

In previous years, Alberta Conservation Association's (ACA) riparian conservation projects in southern Alberta involved partnerships with watershed groups in two small sub-watersheds of the Oldman River, the Beaver and Todd creeks. New watershed groups have been formed within the Oldman River watershed creating more partnership opportunities for ACA. These include the Drywood/Yarrow Conservation Partnership (DYCP), Pincher Creek Watershed Group (PCWG), Indianfarm Creek Watershed Group (ICWG) and Waterton Watershed Group (WWG). These groups have excellent, pre-existing relationships with many government and non-governmental agencies (e.g., other conservation organizations), which work together to organize funding, planning, communications and associated events for conservation projects, including riparian restoration. Our primary objectives in 2010/11 were to continue communications with watershed groups within the Oldman River watershed and collaborate with these watershed groups and landowners to implement riparian conservation projects.

## **Methods**

We attended meetings with watershed groups and conservation partners, participated in field days and workshops, and continued to implement and plan riparian projects. Partner watershed groups included: Lyndon Creek Watershed Group (LCWG), DYCP, PCWG, ICWG, WWG, Todd Creek Watershed Group (TCWG), and Beaver Creek Watershed Group (BCWG).

We collaborated with Southwestern Alberta Conservation Partnership (SACP) and LCWG to provide funding for an off-site watering unit to support an existing riparian fencing project on Lyndon Creek. Working with the BCWG, we provided seed mix to re-establish permanent cover as part of a riparian fencing project; additional material will be provided during the 2010/11 fiscal year to expand fencing. We also planted approximately 1,000 willow cuttings (in partnership with SACP, Cows and Fish and MULTISAR). On Indianfarm Creek, we funded a bioengineering project through the ICWG and attended a tour of the site and other projects. Funding is pending for two landowners with the TCWG—one for a riparian pasture project and the other to develop 10 springs which will alleviate riparian grazing pressure. With DYCP, we participated and supplied prizes for a school field day on Drywood Creek, held in collaboration with Cows and Fish, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development), Parks Canada and Trout Unlimited Canada (TUC). Over 100 Pincher Creek and Glenwood high school students participated. Similarly, we participated and supplied prizes for the PCWG annual 'Blueweed Blitz'; over 100 volunteers participated. Along with controlling the spread of blueweed along Pincher Creek, this event brings public attention to all the various watershed activities and efforts this group has been pursuing. We also participated in the Yellow Fish Road event put on by PCWG and TUC where approximately 80 Pincher Creek school students painted fish signs by street drains to bring awareness to water quality and pollution. Other extension activities included a field day with the Helen Schuler Coulee Centre involving 20 students where we discussed the importance of riparian habitat. We assisted the Oldman Watershed Council in distributing funds to watershed groups and landowners interested in riparian-related projects.

## **Results**

When completed, the projects initiated in 2010/11 with four watershed groups will include two riparian fencing projects protecting 2 km and 16 ha (40 acres) of stream, one bank stabilization project protecting 150 m and 0.8 ha (2 acres), one shrub planting project (approximately 1,000 willow cuttings along 2 km stream) encompassing 0.8 ha (2 acres), one off-site watering unit enhancing 1 km and 4 ha (10 acres), and 10 cattle watering spring developments enhancing approximately 2 km and 6 ha (40 acres). The tours, meetings, weed pull and educational events hosted by watershed groups have all proven beneficial in bringing awareness to potential projects in the south. In total, over 100 volunteers and 200 high school students participated in outreach activities.

## **Conclusions**

Relationships with watershed groups and associated partners have progressed in a positive manner. Awareness of ACA's financial and technical contributions has become better understood; active discussions regarding future riparian projects are underway with the Todd Creek and Beaver Creek watershed groups. Two partner organizations—the Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish) and the Southwestern Alberta Conservation Partnership—have been instrumental in making progress with all involved watershed groups.

## **Communications**

- No direct communication activities were initiated by ACA; each individual watershed group managed communications by advertising upcoming events using local media.

Photos:

Photo 1.

Five Mile Creek willow planting day. (Photo: Mike Uchikura)

Photo 2.

Drywood/Yarrow Conservation Partnership school field day. (Photo: Mike Uchikura)

Photo 3.

Waterton Watershed Group riparian and range field day. (Photo: Mike Uchikura)