

**Alberta Conservation Association
2009/10 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: *Use Respect – Ask First*

Land Management Program Manager: Darren Dorge

Project Leader: Randy Lee

Primary ACA staff on project:

Marco Fontana (East Slopes), Ed Kolodychuk (Northwest), Ken Kranrod (Northeast), Randy Lee (South Prairie), Lisa Monsees (Northeast), Andy Murphy (South Parkland), Diana Rung (South Parkland), Roy Schmelzeisen (Northeast) and Brad Taylor (South Prairie)

Partnerships

Alberta Beef Producers
Alberta Fish and Game Association
Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association
Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Alberta Trappers' Association
Bow River Irrigation District
County of Warner
Cypress County
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Federation for North American Wild Sheep
Federation of Alberta Naturalists
Hunting For Tomorrow
Municipal District of Taber
Pheasants Forever
Report A Poacher
Trout Unlimited Canada
Western Stock Growers Association

Key Findings

- Determined that the original Use Respect program needed to be revitalized, including the development of a new logo and signage.
- Printed 2,000 new signs to be distributed to partners and landowners.
- Developed Use Respect banners to promote and support partners with delivery of the program.

Introduction

The original Use Respect initiative was developed in 1983/84. At that time, considerable controversy focused on access trespass on Crown grazing leases and private lands primarily in southern Alberta. Local efforts by keynote landholders and Fish and Game clubs, with close support by Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division, were reducing access problems. With an endorsement by the Minister and the opportunity to include this initiative in a major public relations communication plan, the Use Respect project formally began in 1986 (Bateman 1987). Numerous presentations were given to outdoors clubs, Western Stock Growers Association, Alberta Cattle Commission, local services clubs (in known problem areas) and others. This work took on a high profile that was aided by outdoor writers and some local government representatives. The concept resulted in improved relations between landholders and various recreational users of private and public lands. The program was a success over twenty years, but eventually began to suffer from reduced awareness (name only), dated signage, limited availability of signs, and a loss of public relations communications. Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) identified a need for a revitalization of the program.

Methods

We took the lead on this initiative and invited stakeholders and groups to discuss the current level of delivery of the original Use Respect program. The group agreed that a revitalization of the program was required. Our Communications department developed a new logo and signage incorporating the original name: Use Respect – Ask First. New signs (2,000) were printed and distributed to partners for delivery.

Results

Signs were made available, free-of-charge, to private landowners through all participating groups, agencies, counties, municipalities and irrigation districts.

Conclusions

The Use Respect – Ask First program is being promoted to improve recreational access on privately-owned lands for hunters, anglers and other recreationalists. The program also focuses on improving landowner-hunter relationships including hunter ethics. Access to private lands is a privilege that is respected by most visitors, but when abused, the privilege of accessing these properties is often denied to all. This program promotes respectful and responsible use of the land to improve landowner-user relationships.

Communications

- Use Respect – Ask First logo was displayed in ACA’s official publication, *Conservation Magazine*.
- Signage distributed and displayed on private lands by interested landowners and landowners participating in ACA’s Landowner Habitat Program.

Literature Cited

Bateman, T. J. 1987. The 1986 Use Respect program. Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division, Edmonton, Alberta.

Pictures





A Use Respect – Ask First sign displayed by a participating landowner. (Photo: Randy Lee)