

**Alberta Conservation Association
2021/22 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: Fisheries Access Site Management

Land Management Program Manager: Darren Dorge

Project Leader: Marco Fontana

Primary ACA staff on project: Kirsten Azar, Mandy Couve, Marco Fontana, John Hallett, David Jackson, Tyler Johns, Ed Kolodychuk, Diana Rung, Roy Schmelzeisen, Scott Seward, Dan Sturgess, and Jon Van Dijk

Partnerships

Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society	Lacombe County
Alberta Environment and Parks	Lacombe Fish and Game Association
Alberta Fish & Game Association	Legacy Land Trust Society
Alberta Transportation	Lethbridge County
Alternate Land Use Services Canada	Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District
Camrose County	Municipal District of Greenview
Clearwater County	North Raven River Working Group
County of Newell	Rocky View County
County Northern Lights	Saddle Hills County
Cows and Fish	Stettler County
Devon Canada Corporation	Trout Unlimited Canada – Central Chapter
Haul-All Equipment Ltd.	Waldron Grazing Co-Op Ltd.
	Wetaskiwin County

Key Findings

- Inspected and maintained 24 fisheries access sites across Alberta.
- Commissioned ten maintenance contracts for services at 19 sites provincially.
- Completed site upgrades and enhancements at four fisheries access sites in the Central Region, which included installing a floating dock, casting platforms, and a wildlife-proof

garbage bin; constructing a temporary parking area; removing hazardous trees; repairing vehicle barriers; gravelling a parking area; and painting infrastructure.

- Provided access to angling opportunities at two rivers and 22 lakes, ponds, or reservoirs (17 stocked and five stocked and aerated) throughout the province.
- Recognized 25 in-kind and financial partnerships in 2021/22 to support management of our fisheries access sites.

Abstract

ACA's Land Management Program encompasses activities intended to conserve, protect, and enhance wildlife and fish 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 24 fisheries access sites and commissioned ten contracts to maintain 19 sites in 2021/22. We upgraded four sites with improvements to day-use facilities and access areas including installing a floating dock, casting platforms, and a wildlife-proof garbage bin; constructing a temporary parking area; removing hazardous trees; repairing vehicle barriers; gravelling a parking area; and painting infrastructure. We worked to secure partners to assist with the completion of access and day-use infrastructure developments planned for the Boulder Lake site and continued to investigate two additional waterbodies on Crown land in the Central Region. We recognized 25 partners in 2021/22 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) Land Management Program (LMP) is to conserve, protect, and enhance wildlife and fish 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 FAS 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 2021/22 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 FAS 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 24 FAS with a variety of site infrastructure in three regions throughout Alberta (Table 1). We commissioned ten maintenance contracts to provide services at 19 sites provincially in 2021/22. We completed enhancements and installed new facilities at four sites to improve our FAS and enhance anglers' experiences at these sites (Table 2).

Table 1. Facilities inspected and maintained at ACA FAS in 2021/22.

Region	Site Name	Site Type	Facilities
Central	Beaver Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, boat launch, and fences
Central	Birch Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, fences, and floating dock
Central	Boulder Lake	Stocked waterbody	Floating dock, casting platforms, temporary parking area, portable outhouse, and garbage bin
Central	Coulson	River access	Parking lot, outhouse, garbage bin, and picnic table
Central	Fiesta Lake	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, and floating dock
Central	Hansens Reservoir	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fish-cleaning stand, fences, and floating docks
Central	Ironside Pond	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot and fences
Central	Kerbes Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, and fences
Central	Kramer Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, fish-cleaning stand, and fences
Central	Mirror Reservoir	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, and fences
Central	North Raven River	River access	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, and fences
Central	Nuggent Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, fences, wheelchair-friendly outhouses, trail, and floating dock
Central	Pleasure Island Fish Pond	Stocked, aerated waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, and floating dock/casting platforms
Central	Shuster Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot
Central	Windsor Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins with fish-cleaning area, boat launch, fences, and floating dock
Northwest	Dollar Lakes	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, gravel walking trail, floating docks, and picnic tables
Northwest	Shell True North Pond	Stocked waterbody	Access road, parking lot, garbage bins, picnic tables, and floating dock
Northwest	Weberville Pond	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, picnic tables, and floating docks
Southern	Brooks Aqueduct	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, garbage bins, and boat launch
Southern	Burmis Lake	Stocked waterbody and river access	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, and fences
Southern	Kenex	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot and fences
Southern	Lee Lake	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, boat launch, floating dock, and fences
Southern	McVinnie Reservoir	Stocked waterbody	Parking lot, outhouses, garbage bins, floating dock, and fences
Southern	Waldron Falls	River access	Parking lot and outhouses

Table 2. Enhancements completed at existing ACA FAS in 2021/22.

Region	Site Name	Enhancement
Central	Birch Lake	Removed several hazard trees adjacent to parking area.
Central	Boulder Lake	Installed a floating dock and casting platforms, constructed temporary parking area, installed wildlife-proof garbage bins, and rented a portable outhouse.
Central	Ironside Pond	Removed several hazardous trees adjacent to parking area.
Central	Kerbes Pond	Repaired damaged post-and-cable vehicle barrier, gravelled parking area, and painted infrastructure.

We collaborated with ACA Fisheries Program and project partners to plan the completion of access and day-use infrastructure developments for the Boulder Lake site (i.e., access road, parking area, mobility-impaired access trail development, and installation of a permanent outhouse). We continued discussions with Alberta Transportation, and Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to secure access to two potential fishponds and FAS development sites in the Calgary area: Chestermere Pond and Women’s Coulee Reservoir. We maintained 25 collaborative partnerships in 2021/22.

Conclusions

We successfully inspected and maintained 24 FAS across the province to provide enhanced angling opportunities on 22 lakes, ponds, or reservoirs; and two rivers. We commissioned ten maintenance contracts to provide services at 19 sites provincially. We completed upgrades and enhancements at four sites to improve recreational access, specifically to address infrastructure needs and access management. We maintained 25 partnerships providing generous financial and in-kind support, which assisted with site maintenance and enhancements at various sites as well as the development of the 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 FAS locations and descriptions on our website and in the *Alberta Discover Guide*.
- Continued negotiations with AEP to determine long-term roles and responsibilities at FAS provincially.

- Was interviewed by Michael Short for his *Let's Go Outdoors* YouTube channel segment on Boulder Lake.
- Partnered with Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society of Alberta, Alternate Land Use Services Canada, and Cows and Fish to host a riparian planting workshop along the Blindman River at Boulder Lake.

Literature Cited

Not Applicable

Photos



Photo 1. ACA staff, Kirsten Azar, and members of the LFGA on newly installed dock at Boulder Lake, with anglers fishing from casting platforms in the background.

Photo: John Hallett



Photo 2. Project sign at Fiesta Lake with a social-distancing sign installed and maintained during the pandemic. Photo: Kirsten Azar



Photo 3. Stocking trout into Dollar Lakes. Photo: Dave Jackson



Photo 4. The Oldman River at Waldron Falls FAS. Photo: Mike Jokinen