

**Alberta Conservation Association
2024/25 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: Riparian Conservation Project

Land Management Program Manager: Robert Anderson

Project Leader: Jeff Forsyth

Primary ACA Staff on Project: Lance Engley, Stefanie Fenson, Jeff Forsyth, Jade Janzen, Garret McKen, Clayton Temple, Mike Uchikura, and Erin VanderMarel

Partnerships

Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension

Society

Alberta Wildlife Federation

Cenovus Energy Inc.

Clearwater County

County of Grande Prairie

Cows and Fish – Alberta Riparian Habitat

Management Society

Critical Mass

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Foothills Forage and Grazing Association

Freshwater Conservation Canada

Give Back Contracting Ltd.

Government of Alberta

Grey Wooded Forage Association

HUVAN Construction

Landowners

Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

Milk River Watershed Council Canada

Mountain View County

Northern Sunrise County

Oldman Watershed Council

Ovintiv Inc.

Red Deer River Watershed Alliance

Sinopec Canada

Syncrude Canada Ltd.

TC Energy Corporation

Tree Time Services Inc.

West County Watershed Society

Wood PLC

Key Findings

- Delivered eight riparian enhancement projects: two fencing projects, three landowner agreements, and three off-site livestock watering initiatives.
- Conserved 24.2 acres (9.8 ha) of riparian habitat through new riparian habitat lease agreements and installed 3.34 km of new wildlife-friendly fencing.
- Monitored 50 existing agreements that conserve 8,648.4 acres (3,473.7 ha) of riparian and adjacent upland habitat lands throughout the province.
- Collaborated with 29 groups and organizations to enhance and facilitate the maintenance of healthy riparian habitat across the province.

Details

The ecological integrity and health of Alberta's rivers, streams, and surrounding landscapes are often negatively affected by ongoing human development. Riparian areas are complex ecosystems that provide important ecological functions and are critical to maintaining watershed health. Proper management of this sensitive habitat is essential to maintain water quality and habitat integrity. The primary goal of Alberta Conservation Association's Riparian Conservation Project is to protect and restore riparian habitat in priority watersheds through on-the-ground habitat restoration projects by engaging landowners, the public, and other stakeholders through community outreach and education activities. Our collaborative partnerships with landowners, industry, government, watershed groups, and other stakeholders are an integral component of project delivery. In 2024/25, we focused conservation efforts on the following priority watersheds: Beaverlodge, Heart, Raven, Owl, North Raven, Redwillow, and St. Mary rivers; and Beaver, Clear, Dogpound, Todd, Sharples, and Five Mile creeks (including their associated tributaries). We delivered seven enhancement projects using a variety of management tools, including implementing agreements to conserve 24.2 acres (9.8 ha) of riparian and associated upland habitat: three off-site watering systems; three landowner agreements; and installing 3.34 km of wildlife-friendly fencing to protect important riparian habitat as part of new and existing agreements. We also supported landowners with riparian enhancement activities, and communicated our Riparian Conservation Project to various communities.

Our efforts have contributed to enhanced awareness and improvements in riparian habitat health and have positively influenced the stewardship approach of many landowners and leaseholders. We will continue to monitor water quality and riparian health to help us assess the effectiveness of our conservation efforts, in addition to the outreach we participate in within the community and with partners. We recognize the importance of collaborating with landowners on riparian conservation efforts and we will continue to communicate the success of our riparian projects to local communities and our stakeholders.

Photos



Photo 1. Habitat lands and landowner sign on riparian habitat enhancement agreement (RHEA) located on Dogpound Creek. Photo: Erin VanderMarel



Photo 2. Landowner sign on RHEA located on Dogpound Creek. Photo: Erin VanderMarel



Photo 3. Wetland complex created by beaver activity on RHEA located on Sharples Creek.
Photo: Jeff Forsyth



Photo 4. Beaver pond on RHEA located on Sharples Creek. Photo: Jeff Forsyth



Photo 5. Flooded area due to recent beaver activity on RHEA located on Todd Creek.
Photo: Jeff Forsyth