



Strategic Business Plan 2019 — 2029

2009 – 2019 Snapshot

In the last ten years, we have:

- Increased the number of corporate partners to 51.
- Established a stand-alone office in Peace River.
- Seen an increase in the acceptance of hunting, fishing, and trapping.
- Been able to foster a work environment where employees have a high level of satisfaction with ACA.

In the last four years, we have:

- Completed 17 habitat acquisitions involving partners.
- Launched a hunting campaign to improve the recognition of the positive role hunting plays in conservation.
- Grown our social media presence.
- Attracted approximately 3,000 participants annually to recruitment events.
- Scored consistently in the high 90s in COR audits.
- Maintained extremely high employee satisfaction.
- Presented 18 papers at professional conferences.
- Been published in 10 peer-reviewed journals.

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Cover Photo: Norm Farn

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Chairman of the Board's Message

It is with great optimism that I enthusiastically support our strategic plan to guide our vision for the next decade. As a trapper, hunter, and fisherman, I count myself extremely fortunate to live in Alberta. Our diversity of habitat, wildlife, and fish holds the potential of abundant opportunity and also carries great responsibility. To ensure a sustainable future for our natural resources, we must be resolute in our commitment to work collectively to that end.

Over the past ten years, ACA has fulfilled its objectives to strengthen and diversify our partnerships, engage our stakeholders, and move the bar of conservation stewardship ever higher. As you review through the scorecard, the achievements of our organization are well documented. Looking to the future, ACA will increase resources through diversification and grow the conservation movement through research, habitat securement, and most of all, by initiating and supporting new partnerships throughout the province.

Reaching out to all Albertans with the message that conservation efforts made by the outdoor community truly benefit all Albertans is critical to the viability of hunting, fishing, and trapping for future generations. ACA has an international reputation for successfully working with like-minded organizations and institutions. We will continue our efforts to create more opportunities to engage with our member groups and support the means by which those organizations can find common ground to work with and support each other.

Sincerely yours in conservation,

Bill Abercrombie



President & CEO's Message

Over the past ten years, Alberta Conservation Association has accomplished a great deal. A quick review of our 2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan Scorecard report shows that we were successful in achieving the vast majority of our strategic goals; however, there are still a few areas where more work is needed. Moving forward, we plan to take a similar approach with our 2019 – 2029 Strategic Business Plan.

As you read further in this Strategic Business Plan, you will see that we have developed our over-arching Strategic Goals for the next ten years and also provided our shorter-term, three-year objectives that we hope will provide the detail guidance required to achieve success over the long term.

Although this is Alberta Conservation Association's Strategic Business Plan, it is clear that we cannot achieve many of our long-term goals without direct participation and support from our member groups, our partners, and our stakeholders. I would like to say a sincere thank you to all of you who have supported our efforts over the past ten years. I look forward to our continued collaboration as we work toward achieving goals that benefit all Albertans for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Zimmerling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd Zimmerling, M.Sc., PhD., P. Biol.

President and CEO,
Alberta Conservation Association



Taber Pheasant Festival
photo: ACA, Dean Ostafichuk



Introduction

Strategic business planning is an important process that provides employees, stakeholders, and partners with a clear understanding of the future direction of Alberta Conservation Association. A key part of an effective Strategic Business Plan is ensuring the results are tracked over time, analysed appropriately, and learnings are incorporated into future plans.

April 2019 represents the end of our 2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan and the beginning of our new 2019 – 2029 Strategic Business Plan. This document provides both the scorecard used to track the 2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan successes and challenges, and the new 2019 – 2029 Strategic Business Plan that has been developed with the previous results in mind.

The 2019 – 2029 Strategic Business Plan lays the foundation for our long- and short-term direction. The three-year objectives are enhanced by the *Annual Operating Plan*, which is produced yearly, based on the objectives outlined in this plan.

All strategic goals and objectives are aimed at meeting our Mission and Vision statements and all activities are undertaken with our Core Values in mind.

Alberta Conservation Association

Formed in 1997, Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) is a not-for-profit, registered charity largely funded by Alberta's hunters and anglers through licence levies, and a growing number of corporate partners. We are governed by a multi-stakeholder Board of Directors represented by hunting, fishing, trapping, and naturalist groups; government; First Nations; Public at Large; industry; and academic representatives.

Annually, ACA directs more than \$10 million towards conservation efforts, delivering a wide variety of projects, programs, and services across the province. Key conservation programs that we deliver include Wildlife, Fisheries, Land Management, and Communications.

Our Mission

Alberta Conservation Association conserves, protects and enhances fish, wildlife and habitat for all Albertans to enjoy, value and use.

Our Vision

An Alberta with an abundance and diversity of fish, wildlife and their habitat; where future generations continue to use, enjoy and value our rich outdoor heritage.



photo: ACA, Hillary Keyes

Our Core Values

Collaboration – We look for every opportunity to work closely with each other as well as with our partners to positively impact Alberta's wildlife, fish, and habitat.

Integrity – We maintain high ethical standards in everything we do. We are truthful, keep our promises and deliver on our commitments. We always remember we are working for the resource.

Excellence – We work to achieve the highest standards in everything we do.

Innovation – We overcome challenges and continually find new ways to improve. Innovation includes problem solving, taking advantage of opportunities, and embracing change to achieve goals.

Accountability – We are all responsible for our actions and we are willing to accept the consequences of our actions. We recognize that accountability includes being accountable to each other, our stakeholders and the resource we are working for.

Respect – We value the differences and similarities of our employees, partners, and stakeholders. We treat both our people and the resource with a high level of dignity.

Our Culture

Alberta Conservation Association is committed to managing its operations in a business-like manner. Employees are responsible for completing tasks safely, on time, on budget, and to the highest quality. While our employees are empowered to make decisions, they are also responsible for those decisions.

Effective and open communication is a cornerstone of a healthy work environment. We value direct communication among employees and between employees and senior management at ACA. This includes the President and CEO, whose door is always open.

Our goal is to maintain a corporate culture where employees:

- have ownership of the organization and its direction.
- see opportunities for career growth.
- remain proud of the work they do and the projects we take on.
- possess the tools to talk to any of our stakeholders and provide examples of how we operate in an effective and efficient manner.

We uphold this culture while carrying out valuable work to conserve and enhance Alberta's wildlife, fisheries, and land resources.

Our Stakeholders and Partners

Our member groups are our primary stakeholders, followed by all WIN cardholders (hunters and anglers), and then Alberta’s general public. We believe that this approach effectively serves public interests.

ACA works with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) staff at all levels throughout the year to determine priority projects and delivery of those projects, clarify protocols, and promote conservation activities in the province. As a result, we consider AEP our largest conservation partner, and it is always a priority to ensure an honest and open relationship with AEP to allow for smooth operation of projects and effective use of resources.

Wherever possible, we strive to have our member groups as key partners in conservation. New initiatives have grown from our commitment, and it has resulted in an enhanced working relationship with our member groups.

New partnerships are constantly being explored. The Corporate Partners in Conservation (CPIC) Program is our way of recognizing companies that play a vital role in supporting our work. Committed partners help us to stretch our collective resources and make a real difference in conservation across the province.

Because we depend on our stakeholders for support, we know that we must strive to meet stakeholder expectations. This is not always easy and sometimes we fall short; however, we believe that stakeholders have come to respect the fact that ACA is an honest and transparent organization. If we have made a mistake, we will admit it; if we have not met expectations, we will strive to do better next time; above all we will treat our stakeholders with the respect that they deserve and we will ensure that stakeholder questions are answered in a timely and honest manner. We believe that transparent communication is what has built the strong relationship we have with our stakeholders and it is transparent communication that will continue to strengthen those relationships in the future.



photo: ACA, Todd Zimmerling



Peace River Office
photo: ACA, Garret McKen

2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan Scorecard

ACA set strategic goals in 2009 for the 2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan. The plan was broken down into long-term goals for ten years and objectives updated every three years ending with the latest objectives (2015 – 2019). Each of the short-term objectives relates directly to the corresponding numbered long-term goal.

This scorecard has been used to help determine what has worked well and where improvement is needed within the organization. In addition, the scorecard has formed part of the information used in developing ACA's next Ten-Year Strategic Business Plan.

Summary of long-term goals

We identified 12 long-term goals in the 2009 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan. We achieved seven (1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12). We partially achieved three objectives (6, 7, and 9) and failed to achieve two objectives (3, 5).

Summary of short-term objectives

We identified 22 objectives in the 2015 – 2019 Strategic Business Plan. We achieved 17 (1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 4a, 4b, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b, 9a, 10a, 10b, 10c, 11a, 11c, 12b). We partially achieved two objectives (11b, 12a) and failed to achieve three objectives (3a, 5a, 6a).

	2009 – 2019 Goals	Results		2015 – 2019 Objectives	Results
1	Continue to improve as an organization that our member groups can be proud of. We will strive to become an “umbrella organization” that coordinates programs with member groups, facilitates partnerships between member groups, and aids member groups wherever and whenever possible.	Over the past ten years Alberta Conservation Association has worked very hard to work with and support our member groups wherever possible. The short-term objectives associated with this goal have been achieved, and we can point to multiple examples of ACA acting as the “umbrella organization” we are striving to be. Although we have achieved this goal, it is something ACA will strive to maintain into the future.	1a	Engage member groups in the yearly planning cycle. Using the formalized process we have developed, we are aware of the priority conservation concerns of our stakeholders. Member groups are using the process to bring forward their priorities. We do not guarantee to take on these priorities; however, we will assess them during the yearly planning cycle along with priority items brought forward from other stakeholders. This process determines our <i>Annual Operating Plan</i> .	Our Fish, Wildlife, Land Management, and Communications programs established a formalized internal process to consult with our member groups on priority areas. Through this process we have been engaging member groups and AEP staff to ensure we have a clear understanding of priority conservation concerns and stakeholders have an understanding of our proposed activities for the year. In 2018/19, we entered into discussion with AEP to further improve the priority setting process.
			1b	Complete at least two habitat conservation purchases per year that include partnerships with member groups. ACA will identify at least eight purchases in partnership with a member group by March 31, 2019.	From April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2019 ACA has completed 17 habitat acquisitions involving either Alberta Fish & Game Association, Pheasants Forever, or both.
			1c	Provide services for member groups. ACA has significant expertise in areas that many of our member groups do not and as such should strive to aid them. We will identify at least three member groups to which we have provided support or advice in promotion/ advertising, design, website development, bookkeeping, biological expertise, and/or other areas of expertise by March 2019. This does not imply that we will provide these services for free; however, because the services are provided to a member group, we will offer them at a lower cost (lower than a member group could find elsewhere).	Over the past four years, ACA has provided expertise in information technology, accounting or advertising/ promotion (including materials such as photographs and film footage) to Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Trout Unlimited Canada, Alberta Trappers' Association, and Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta.

	2009 – 2019 Goals	Results		2015 – 2019 Objectives	Results
2	Increase the number of corporate partners that ACA has as donors to a wide range of conservation-related projects	As of March 2019, we have achieved our goal, despite the poor economic climate Alberta has been dealing with over the last couple years.	2a	Increase the number of Corporate Partners in Conservation, annually. ACA should have 50 corporate partners (including current partners) by March 31, 2019.	As of March 31, 2019, ACA has an ongoing working relationship with 51 corporate partners, all of whom can be viewed on our website (www.ab-conservation.com/our-partners/corporate-partners-in-conservation).
3	Increase the level of non-levy revenue to the point that levy funds make up 25% or less of total revenue for ACA.	The original target of reducing levy funds to 25% of total revenue was based on the assumption that ACA would be able to develop a new funding source through the advancement of terrestrial conservation offsets. Unfortunately, the development of a terrestrial offset system in Alberta has taken longer than anticipated and as such the anticipated large new funding source has not materialized.	3a	Levy revenue should comprise 25% or less of total revenue by March 31, 2019. There are five key areas in which to achieve this objective: 1) increasing partner funding 2) increasing donations 3) providing services to member groups and others 4) advertising revenue 5) land donations (we will continue to work with corporate partners and AEP to develop a conservation offset system for Alberta).	Over the past four years levy revenues have continued to rise while non-levy revenues have remained relatively consistent. As a result, as of March 31, 2019, levy revenue comprised approximately 75% of total revenue.
4	Work towards a clearer distinction between ACA and the Alberta Government.	While our work on this goal must continue into the future, we have been able to establish a separate office in Peace River and maintain consistent branding for ACA.	4a	Complete the establishment of a separate Peace River office in the existing Government building March 31, 2016	As of June 2017, staff moved into a separate office space outside of Government building in Peace River.
			4b	Ensure all internal and external communications prepared by ACA continue to be branded appropriately to increase public recognition of ACA as a non-profit registered charity, distinct from AEP.	All communications produced by our communications department has had consistent branding for the past four years.
5	Increase the general public's recognition of ACA and its member groups.	Unprompted public recognition of ACA has increased over the past ten years; however, we have not hit our target of 5%.	5a	Increase the general public's unprompted recognition of ACA to at least 5%. The public survey conducted the fall of 2014, indicated a 2.55% unprompted recognition rate. We will conduct a survey in the fall of 2018 to determine if recognition rates or attitudes have changed in four years.	A public survey was conducted in fall 2017. When asked to name an active conservation organization group operating in Alberta, 3.8% of respondents identified ACA, while 61% of Albertans could name no group. When respondents were asked if they had heard of ACA, 50% indicated yes.

	2009 – 2019 Goals	Results		2015 – 2019 Objectives	Results
6	Increase the acceptance of hunting, fishing, and trapping within the general public.	Although over the past ten years we have seen an increase in the acceptance of hunting, fishing, and trapping, over the past four years we have seen no change.	6a	By fall of 2018, increase the percentage of people who say they support or strongly support hunting, angling, and/or trapping by 10% as compared to the 2014 survey results.	Of the 1,200 respondents in the survey 82% supported catch-and-release fishing (82.5% in 2014), 76% supported catch-and-keep fishing (76% in 2014), 52% supported trapping (50% in 2014), 59% supported gamebird hunting (59% in 2014), and 59% supported big game hunting (59% in 2014).
7	Increase the recognition of the positive role hunters, anglers, and trappers play in the conservation of wildlife, fish, and habitat in Alberta.	Although the general public survey did not show a significant change in the attitudes of Albertans towards hunters, anglers, and trappers over the past four years, we have increased our outreach to the general public and have initiated campaigns that attempt to be more targeted in our approach (such as Harvest Your Own).	7a	Initiate targeted media campaigns based on the results of our 2014 survey. These campaigns will concentrate on improving the recognition of the positive role hunting, angling, and trapping plays in conservation and in society. The effectiveness of this objective will be measured with the general public survey in the fall of 2018.	After the results of the 2017 public survey indicated that 41% of Albertans had eaten hunter-harvested game meat in the past 12 months, ACA launched a new advertising campaign concentrating more on the food aspects of hunting. The Harvest Your Own campaign includes a website (www.harvestyourown.ca), TV, billboard, magazine and social media ads, along with live cooking segments on CTV.
			7b	Produce and increase the distribution of communications materials in a manner that maximizes the general public's awareness of the work hunters, anglers, and trappers do for conservation.	Over the past twelve months, ACA has averaged 9,737 unique visitors and 54,937 page views per month to our website. As of March 2019, we have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6,619 Facebook followers - 5,548 Twitter followers - 55,279 app downloads - 71,789 e-newsletters subscribers. In addition, we continue to distribute yearly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 45,000 hardcopies of Alberta Discover Guide - 30,000 hardcopies of Conservation Magazine We also had: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25,000 unique visitors to our Harvest Your Own site in 2018 - 5,100 page views per month.
8	Work closely with member groups to increase hunter, angler, and trapper retention and recruitment.	We have been highly successful at working with member groups on a range of retention and recruitment initiatives. The Kids Can Catch events are a great example of involving a large number of partners in the recruitment of new anglers across the province. In addition, we have successfully targeted projects that relate directly to increasing hunter and angler opportunities.	8a	Continue to work with member groups to increase the number of retention and recruitment events such as Kids Can Catch and Taber Pheasant Festival that occur across the province. We will measure this objective over the next four years by tracking how many partnerships arise between member groups and how many students these activities reach.	As of 2018/19 there are 18 Kids Can Catch events involving 70+ partners across the province. In addition, the Taber Pheasant Festival continues to grow with significant help from the local community and our member groups. These various recruitment activities attract approximately 3,000 participants annually.

	2009 – 2019 Goals	Results		2015 – 2019 Objectives	Results
				8b Increase hunter, angler, and trapper opportunities by selecting projects that directly influence stakeholder opportunities to participate in hunting, angling, and trapping.	Over the past four years, we have looked at new stocked lakes, new aerated lakes, increased access for hunting on private lands, and improvements in our <i>Alberta Discover Guide</i> app to allow for easier access to conservation site information.
9	Enhance our working relationship with AEP through effective delivery of our Program Agreements, fostering collaboration and open communication.	We continue to meet regularly with AEP and we are currently in the process of developing a new MOU and Program Agreements that will further enhance our working relationship.		9a Continue to meet on a regular basis with AEP to discuss issues, identify opportunities to work in collaboration, and ensure a healthy and respectful working relationship between our organizations.	Over the past four years, we have continued to work closely with AEP. In 2018, we entered into discussion to update our existing MOU and Program Agreements to further improve our working relationship.
10	Maintain “on-time, on-budget, high quality, and done safely” as the cornerstones of all ACA projects.	We continue to achieve this goal on a yearly basis through the hard work and dedication of our staff and their commitment to these cornerstones.		10a Maintain a minimum score of 93% on ACA’s external audit of our Health and Safety program’s Certificate of Recognition through 2018.	We scored 96% on our 2017 external audit of our Health and Safety program Certificate of Recognition (COR). However, as of 2018 we have decided to opt out of the COR program and instead continue with our own Health and Safety program that meets or exceeds the COR program, while also being more tailored to the kind of work ACA does.
				10b Track our projects to ensure a minimum of 90% are on-time and on-budget every year.	Over 90% of our projects have been on-time and on-budget in each of the last four years. Any budget overruns have been relatively minor and always identified well in advance of year end. Projects that did not meet the “on-time” requirement were generally delayed because of weather issues that were outside the control of ACA staff.
				10c Upload a progress report for every project undertaken in a fiscal year to ACA’s external website by April 30 each year (30 days after our year-end of March 31).	All projects have had a progress report uploaded to our external website by April 30 of each year.
11	Foster a working environment where employees feel pride in where they work; where employees feel engaged; where employees know the direction the organization is moving, and where employees have an overall high level of satisfaction with ACA as a place to work.	All measured indicators show that we have been able to achieve this goal on a consistent basis.		11a Continue to monitor our environmental performance through our environmental policy and ensure employees adhere to it through an Environmental Monitoring System.	Our Environmental Monitoring System has been in place since 2013. Our new policies have addressed electricity use, gasoline use, water use, recycling, and re-use of materials.

	2009 – 2019 Goals	Results		2015 – 2019 Objectives	Results
			11b	Minimize our employee turnover rate to 5% or less for full-time permanent employees (excluding maternity/paternity leaves and retirement). We will achieve this objective through a wide range of initiatives including appropriate compensation and benefit packages, ensuring opportunities for employee growth and professional development, etc.	For each of the last four years, we have had a turnover rate of 6.4%, 5.0%, 5.0%, and 4.7% (four employees each of the last three years).
			11c	Maintain 85% or more employees indicating they agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with ACA as a place to work. We will measure this objective with yearly employee surveys. We will ensure that clear and open lines of communication exist between staff and management; the work environment is friendly, fun, and professional; and employees feel pride in what they do and how they do it.	Over the past four years the percentage of employees indicating they agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with ACA as a place to work have been 97.5%, 98.7%, 97.6%, and 98.6% (February 2019).
12	Continue to grow the reputation of ACA as a world-class conservation organization known for integrating high-quality research and on-the-ground conservation projects.	Over the past ten years, ACA has made significant contributions to conservation in Alberta as well as to the wider scientific community. Our professional staff continue to be recognized for their expertise both within Alberta and elsewhere.	12a	Ensure employees attend professional conferences and present papers on the conservation work ACA does. Four papers per year should be presented at professional conferences.	*Over the past four years, ACA staff have presented 18 papers at professional conferences. Meeting or exceeding the four per year target in three out of four years, but following short of our overall objective of four papers per year.
			12b	Publish project results in peer-reviewed journals to ensure the larger scientific community knows about ACA's work. ACA should have at least two papers published by March 31, 2019.	**Over the past four years, ACA staff have been listed as authors on ten papers published in peer reviewed journals.

***Papers presented at professional conferences 2015 – 2019**

2015/16

Wolverine in a snow-free spring—habitat occupancy in Alberta's boreal forest. Anderson, R., B. Abercrombie, B. Bildson, and D. Manzer. Northern Furbearer Conference. Juneau, Alaska. April 2015.

Estimating occupancy and detection probability of juvenile bull trout using backpack electrofishing gear in a west-central Alberta watershed. M. Rodtka. 145th American Fisheries Society Annual Conference. Portland, Oregon, USA. August 16-20, 2015.

Fisheries restoration projects on Isle and Hasse lakes. B. Ganton. 22nd Annual Alberta Lake Management Society Workshop. Stony Plain, Alberta. September 23-25, 2015.

Taber Pheasant Festival: Linking Habitat Conservation With Local Economic Benefits. Zimmerling, T.N. Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society, March 20-22, 2015, Edmonton Alberta.

Can Conservation Biologists Survive in the Rapidly Changing Social Media Ecosystem. Zimmerling, T.N. Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society, March, 2016, Drumheller Alberta.

2016/17

Distribution of female wolverines relative to snow cover, Alberta, Canada. Anderson, R.B., S.M. Webb, D.L. Manzer, B. Abercrombie, B. Bildson, M.A. Scrafford, and M. Boyce. The Wildlife Society 23rd Annual Conference. Raleigh, North Carolina. October 2016.

2017/18

Value of put-and-take fishery as a tool to satisfying high angling demand in Alberta. Fitzsimmons, K. and D. Rung. 8th World Recreational Fishing Conference. Victoria, B.C., Canada. July 16-20, 2017.

Promoting fishing in a dry province: balancing fisheries conservation with opportunity in Alberta, Canada. Rodtka, M., P. Aku, K. Fitzsimmons, and P. Hvenegaard. 8th World Recreational Fishing Conference. Victoria, B.C., Canada. July 16-20, 2017.

ACA : A Case Study of an Alternative Model for Fisheries Conservation and Management Activities. Aku, P.K.M. and T. N. Zimmerling. Canadian Conference For Fisheries Research. Edmonton, Alberta. July, 2017.

Life on the Fringe: Grey partridge thrive on a modern farm. Manzer, D., D. Butler, R. Draycott, and L. Seward. 14th Perdix Congress, August 2017.

Taber Pheasant Festival: Linking Habitat Conservation with Local Economic Benefits. Zimmerling, T.N. Rural Alberta Innovation and Learning Commons, Olds AB. October 2017.

Filling the wolverine data gap: What biologists and trappers have learned by working together. Anderson, R., S. Webb, M. Jokinen, B. Abercrombie, B. Bildson, N. Kimmy, and D. Manzer. Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society Conference. March 2018.

2018/19

Lessons Learned from Working with Trappers to Conserve Wolverines. Abercrombie, B. and R. Anderson. Advancing Citizen Science in Alberta: Changing Perspectives, Breaking Barriers. Edmonton, AB. September 2018.

Using eDNA to document the distribution of Prussian carp in Alberta. Schmidt, B. 67th Great Plains Fisheries Workers Association Conference. Lethbridge, Alberta. January 28-30, 2019.

Wading in: Evaluation of a Put-And-Take Stocking Program in Alberta. Perspectives from a Province with High Angling Demand. Fitzsimmons, K. 67th Great Plains Fisheries Workers Association Conference, Lethbridge. Alberta. January 28-30, 2019.

Lessons Learned from Working with Trappers to Conserve Wolverines. Abercrombie, B. and R. Anderson. CitSci2019. Biennial conference of the Citizen Science Association. March 2019.

It's Like Pulling Teeth – Visual skull assessment provides accurate age class estimates for harvested marten. Rasmussen, C., B. Abercrombie, and R. Anderson. Joint Conference of the Alberta Chapter and the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society. Canmore, Alberta. March 2019.

Characteristics of Wolverine Dens in the Lowland Boreal Forest of north-central Alberta. Jokinen, M., S. Webb, D. Manzer, and R. Anderson. Joint Conference of the Alberta Chapter and the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society. Canmore, Alberta. March 2019.

**Papers published in peer review journals 2015 – 2019

Rodtka, M.C., C.S. Judd, P.K.M. Aku, and K.M. Fitzsimmons. 2015. Estimating occupancy and detection probability of juvenile bull trout using backpack electrofishing gear in a west-central Alberta watershed. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences* 72: 1–9.

Jones, P. F., M. Grue, M. Sutor, D. Bender, C. Gates, D. Eslinger, and J. Landry-Deboer. 2015. Variability in the selection patterns of pronghorn: are they really native prairie obligates? *The Prairie Naturalist* 47:94-109.

Jones, P. F., B. Seward, J. L. Baker, and B. A. Downey. 2015. Predation attempt by a golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) on a pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) in southeastern Alberta, Canada. *Canadian Wildlife Biology and Management* 4(1):66-71.

Braid, A. C. R., D. Manzer, and S. E. Nielsen. 2016. Wildlife habitat enhancements for grizzly bears: Survival rates of planted fruiting shrubs in forest harvests. *Forest and Ecology Management* 369(1): 144-154.

Webb, S. M., R. Anderson, D. Manzer, B. Abercrombie, B. Bildson, M. Scrafford, and M. Boyce. 2016. Distribution of female wolverines relative to snow cover, Alberta, Canada. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 80(8): 1461-1470.

Jones, P. F., J. A. Hurly, C. Jensen, K. Zimmer, and A. Jakes. 2017. Diel and monthly movement rates by migratory and resident female pronghorn. *The Prairie Naturalist* 46:3-12.

Jones, P. F., A. F. Jakes, D. R. Eacker, B. C. Seward, M. Hebblewhite, and B. H. Martin. 2018. Evaluating responses by pronghorn to fence modifications across the northern Great Plains. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 42:225–236.

Jakes, A. F., P. F. Jones, C. Paige, R. Seidler, and M. Huijser. 2018. A Fence Runs Through It: A call for greater attention to the influence of fences on wildlife and ecosystems. *Biological Conservation* 227:310-318.

Burkholder, E. N., A. F. Jakes, P. F. Jones, M. Hebblewhite, and C. J. Bishop. 2018. To jump or not to jump: mule deer and white-tailed deer fence crossing decisions. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 42:420-429.

Jakes, A. F., C. C. Gates, N. J. DeCesare, P. F. Jones, J. F. Goldberg, K. Kunkel, and M. Hebblewhite. 2018. Classifying the migration behaviors of pronghorn on their northern range. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 82:1229–1242.



photo: Brad Fenson

Ten-Year Strategic Goals and Three-Year Strategic Objectives

Our long-term goals for the 2019 – 2029 Strategic Business Plan were established using the scorecard results from the previous Strategic Business Plan. To achieve long-term strategic goals, it is often beneficial to set short-term objectives; the objectives will be in progress from 2019 – 2022. All of our strategic goals are developed to support our Mission and Vision statements, with conservation of Alberta’s wildlife, fish, and habitats being our ultimate goal.

	2019 – 2029 Ten-Year Strategic Goal		2019 – 2022 Three-Year Strategic Objective
1	Strive to be an “umbrella organization” that coordinates programs with member groups, facilitates partnerships between member groups, and aids member groups wherever and whenever possible.	1a	Engage member groups in the yearly planning cycle. Using the formalized process we have developed, we are aware of the priority conservation concerns of our stakeholders. Member groups are using the process to bring forward their priorities. We do not guarantee to take on these priorities; however, we will assess them during the yearly planning cycle along with priority items brought forward from other stakeholders. This process helps determine our <i>Annual Operating Plan</i> .
		1b	Complete at least two habitat conservation purchases per year that include partnerships with member groups. ACA will identify at least six purchases in partnership with a member group by March 31, 2022.
		1c	Provide services for member groups. ACA has significant expertise in areas where many of our member groups do not and strives to aid member groups when possible. We will identify at least three member groups to which we have provided support or advice in promotion/advertising, design, website development, bookkeeping, biological expertise, and/or other areas of expertise by March 2022. This does not imply that we will provide these services for free; however, because the services are provided to a member group, we will offer them at a lower cost (lower than a member group could find elsewhere).
2	Increase the number of Partners in Conservation contributing to a wide range of conservation-related projects.	2a	Increase the number of Corporate Partners in Conservation, annually. ACA should have 55 corporate partners (including current partners) by March 31, 2022.
3	Increase the level of non-levy revenue where the levy funds make up 50% or less of total revenue for ACA.	3a	Levy revenue should comprise 60% or less of total revenue by March 31, 2022. There are five key areas in which to achieve this objective: 1) increasing partner funding 2) increasing donations 3) providing services to member groups and others 4) advertising revenue 5) land donations (we will continue to work with corporate partners and Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to develop a conservation offset system for Alberta).
4	Increase the general public’s recognition of ACA and its member groups.	4a	Ensure all internal and external communications prepared by ACA continue to be branded appropriately to increase public recognition of ACA as a non-profit registered charity, distinct from AEP.

	2019 – 2029 Ten-Year Strategic Goal		2019 – 2022 Three-Year Strategic Objective
		4b	Increase the general public's unprompted recognition of ACA to at least five percent. We will conduct a survey in the fall of 2021 to determine if recognition rates or attitudes have changed in three years.
5	Increase the acceptance of hunting, fishing, and trapping within the general public.	5a	By fall of 2021, increase the percentage of people who say they support or strongly support hunting, angling, and/or trapping by 10% as compared to the 2018 survey results.
6	Increase the recognition of the positive role hunters, anglers, and trappers play in the conservation of wildlife, fish, and habitat in Alberta.	6a	Initiate targeted media campaigns. These campaigns will concentrate on improving the recognition of the positive role hunting, angling, and trapping plays in conservation and in society. The effectiveness of this objective will be measured with the general public survey in the fall of 2021.
		6b	Produce and increase the distribution of communications materials in a manner that maximizes the general public's awareness of the work hunters, anglers, and trappers do for conservation.
7	Work closely with member groups to increase hunter, angler, and trapper retention and recruitment.	7a	Continue to work with member groups to increase the number of retention and recruitment events such as Kids Can Catch and Taber Pheasant Festival that occur across the province. We will measure this objective over the next three years by tracking how many partnerships arise between member groups and how many students these activities reach.
8	Continue to work closely with AEP to ensure alignment of ACA's <i>Annual Operating Plan</i> with AEP's annual priorities.	8a	Continue meeting on a regular basis with AEP to discuss issues, identify opportunities to work in collaboration, and ensure a healthy and respectful working relationship between our organizations.
9	Enhance our working relationship with the Alberta Government, including, but not limited to Environment and Parks, Agriculture and Forestry, Culture and Tourism, Economic Development and Trade, Education, and Health.	9a	Look for opportunities to engage with government departments that ACA has not traditionally interacted with, such as Health regarding promoting wild game, Culture and Tourism regarding promotion of hunting and angling opportunities, and Economic Development and Trade regarding benefits of hunting and angling.
10	Foster a working environment where employees feel pride in where they work, where employees feel engaged, where employees know the direction the organization is moving, and where employees have an overall high level of satisfaction with ACA as a place to work.	10a	Minimize our employee turnover rate to 5% or less for full-time permanent employees (excluding maternity/paternity leaves and retirement). We will achieve this objective through a wide range of initiatives, including appropriate compensation and benefit packages, ensuring opportunities for employee growth and professional development, etc.

	2019 – 2029 Ten-Year Strategic Goal		2019 – 2022 Three-Year Strategic Objective
		10b	Maintain 85% or more employees indicating they agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with ACA as a place to work. We will measure this objective with yearly employee surveys. We will ensure that clear and open lines of communication exist between staff and management; the work environment is friendly, fun, and professional; and employees feel pride in what they do and how they do it.
11	Continue to grow the reputation of ACA as a world-class conservation organization known for supporting and undertaking high-quality research and on-the-ground conservation projects.	11a	Ensure employees attend professional conferences and present papers on the conservation work ACA does. Four papers per year should be presented at professional conferences.
		11b	Publish project results in peer-reviewed journals to ensure the larger scientific community knows about ACA's work. ACA should have at least three papers published by March 31, 2022.
12	Ensure ACA continues to provide complete transparency with respect to all activities we undertake.	12b	Upload a progress report for every project undertaken in a fiscal year to ACA's external website by April 30 each year (30 days after our year-end of March 31).
		12b	Ensure the most up-to-date financial statements, <i>Annual Operating Plan</i> , and <i>Annual Report</i> are available on ACA's external website, at all times.



Fort Saskatchewan Kids Can Catch
photo: ACA, Rhianna Wrubleski

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Member Groups

Alberta Fish & Game Association

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors’ Association

Alberta Professional Outfitters Society

Alberta Trappers’ Association

Nature Alberta

Pheasants Forever, Alberta Council

Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

Trout Unlimited Canada

Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta



NATURE ALBERTA





Alberta Conservation
Association

wildlife | fish | habitat