

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

## AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD

Annually, there are deliverables that the Board must meet as part of the legislated duties and responsibilities to Council. A report on the activities of the Board and the department is due to Council by March 31<sup>st</sup> annually.

The Greenview Agricultural Service Board met 8 times in 2024. These meetings generated 2 provincial resolutions, requesting changes to the management of roadkill carcasses as well as changes to how drought is determined in Canada. Multiple delegations were able to speak directly to the Board regarding their concerns, including local producers. Significantly, this resulted in the highlighting of the impacts of fire on livestock producers impacted by wildfires in privately held lands within Greenview. This resulted in the creation of the Farm/Ranch Wildfire Book to assist producers in proactively preparing for emergency situations, as well as facilitating conversations among provincial representatives as to how to better respond to producers' concerns related to the impacts of wildfires. In total, three policies were reviewed over the year and three new board members at large were welcomed. Orientation was provided to all three members at the Agricultural Services office.

## MANAGED INFESTATIONS – THE WEED INSPECTION PROGRAM

STATUS	WZ	GZ	TOTAL	Weed inspections continued to the end of September
TOTAL MANAGED	2357	1639	3996	with the mild weather we experienced. Prior to the
CONTROLLED	904	363	1267	auditing of case files, Inspectors were managing 1,139
MONITOR	145	228	373	infestations within the green zone with a confirmed
MODERATE	144	316	460	control rate of 49%. In the privately held lands within
SEVERE	13	24	37	Greenview, inspectors managed 1,767 infestations
EXTREME - NOTICE	2	19	21	with a confirmed control rate of 83%. Within these
REMOVE	559	189	748	numbers are cases proposed for removal. While 748
TOTAL UPDATED	1767	1139	2906	cases were proposed, only 158 were approved. This

was in part due to having no recorded reporting on the location for the number of seasons, with only one report of “no weeds”. An additional reason was requiring other weeds to have five seasons of recorded “no weeds” inspections prior to removal. These cases will be reassessed in the fall of 2025. The current managed case file total is 3838, with a potential 538 under consideration for removal

460 new infestations were found within the green zone and 193 new infestations were added within the privately held lands within Greenview.

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

## WEED NOTICES AND ENFORCEMENT

Three weed notices were issued in 2024 with all parties complying with the order to control the plants using herbicide. Post inspections were completed, and it is hoped the landowners will continue their efforts to control the infestations.

## WEED INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND HERBICIDE SALES

The program saw a combined 887 acres controlled with 12 different participants. Greenview provides annual funding up to a maximum of 1000 acres, with a limit of 160 ac per year, per landowner. Only 113 acres worth of incentive remained in the operational budget marking the highest enrollment to date. This program, coupled with the ability of the department to sell range and pasture products to agricultural producers has been well received by Greenview landowners. Range and Pasture herbicides are sold to interested producers at cost. \$29,691 worth of herbicide was sold to Greenview producers in 2024.

## HERBICIDE DEMONSTRATION SITE

After two years of success, the residual at the herbicide demonstration site began to fail. The landowner has agreed to a reapplication at the same site, and this will be installed in 2025.

A toadflax biocontrol site, in partnership with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Beaverlodge Research Farm, was established. The project is meant to determine the environmental limits of the agent. With the elevation and the lack of snow, propagation of the weevils was not seen in 2023. Communication with AAFC has indicated that establishment may take up to five years, so the department will continue monitoring.

## PEST INSPECTIONS

Type	2024
Total Canola Inspections (verticillium stripe, blackleg, sclerotinia, clubroot)	517
New Clubroot Positive	3
Active Clubroot Notices for 2025	6
Non-Compliance in 2024	2
Grasshopper Survey	25
Bertha Army Worm	2
Diamondback Moth	1
Wheat Midge	1
Wheat Midge Egg Survey	8

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, Agricultural Services found 2 fields under active pest notice planted to canola. The department worked with the landowner for the crop to be destroyed. The producer elected to destroy the crop through cultivation, planting the fields to barley ahead of the crop insurance deadline. The Manager asked the producer if the field would be sprayed to control any canola that re-rooted or was not effectively killed through cultivation and was assured this would happen. Unfortunately, this was not completed. As a result, Administration, on the recommendation of the ASB, has altered Policy 6308: Clubroot of Canola to include inspection requirements on the day of the destruction, 7 days after destruction and 14 days after destruction.

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

517 canola fields were inspected for blackleg, sclerotinia, verticillium stripe, and clubroot. 3 new cases were found. 2024 clubroot pathotyping results were received in February of 2024 with two samples returning as 3H and one returning 8N. These pathotypes are the most common in Alberta and canola cultivars have good resistance to both pathotypes.

The department had two sites for Bertha Armyworm monitoring, one diamondback moth site, one wheat midge insect site, and 8 fields volunteered by area producers were surveyed by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation for wheat midge eggs with none being reported. The numbers reported from these sites are forwarded used by the Alberta Pest Monitoring Network for forecasting of the Prairie Pest Report. Greenview took part in provincial monitoring related to fusarium, root rot, karnal bunt, and other diseases. The results of these 5 samples sent to provincial pathologists will not be known until March. Additionally, 5 canola fields were sampled as part of the Provincial Canola Survey.

## SPRAY DATA

Type	2023
Private Land Spray Complete	48
Fenceline Spray Complete	47
Annual Roadside Rotation	3738 Km
Fall Thistle Pass/Fenceline	229 Km

Numbers for the fence line spray program, which aims to control infestations adjacent to fence lines with landowner permission, were lower in 2024 compared to 2023. This was impacted by the water access issues in the spring, leaving 32 requested fence line spray jobs uncompleted in the Little Smoky area for tall buttercup. It is hoped this can be addressed in 2025. The fall thistle pass in the DeBolt/Puskwaska area included 47 fence line spray requests that were completed. An additional deliverable in the right of way spray program was a should pass of the entire Forestry Trunk Road. This pass aimed to control and sweet clover or noxious weeds within the first 12 feet of the shoulder.

## PROBLEM WILDLIFE

PWO Cases		
		Predation
2021	86	15
2022	177	26
2023	162	42
2024	126	21

In total, 286 problem beavers were removed and eighteen dams blasted, complimented by an additional eleven dams removed by heavy equipment in partnership with Operations. In 2024, 34 problem coyotes and nine problem wolves were removed from ratepayer lands. Seventy wolves were submitted for the wolf bounty throughout the year. In addition to predation and beaver, the team removed over twenty-five skunks, twenty-two muskrats damaging lagoon banks, three ground hogs damaging lagoon banks, and one problem fox after chickens. Three learning opportunities were put together by the problem wildlife team. One featured bear safety in Grovedale, a resident trapping course through Alberta Trappers association and a presentation to the Northern Grazing Association related to predation and reducing attractants.

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

## EXTENSION AND OUTREACH

In 2024, the Extension and Outreach program hosted 17 events coordinated solely by Greenview and an additional 12 events in partnership with other organizations. Environmental Farm Plans (EFP) were completed and signed off for five Greenview producers for a total of 36,034 acre increase to agricultural lands operating with a current EFP. Assistance in applying for grants brought \$190,000 in grant funding to 3 Greenview producers and 5 new GRASS projects were installed for a total of \$21,843.45 in small project dollars supporting the agricultural producers of Greenview.

**LAND RENTAL AND LEASE AGREEMENT WEBINAR-** This was presented on February 21st by Janet Patriquin from the Farmers Advocate Office. Delivery was in a webinar format since people had been unable to attend the in-person session. There was about 10 people in attendance.

**REDUCING PREDATOR CONFLICTS-** This presentation was on April 30th from 5:00pm-6:00pm at the Grovedale Community Hall. It was presented by a local Fish and Wildlife Officer, Dylan Mackenzie. I was supposed to set this presentation up, but I got stuck in Grande Cache due to a fire, so Lisa Lenentine and Josh Dickson had everything set up and running smoothly. 8 people attended this event.

**TREE PLANTING AND CARE PRESENTATION-** On May 2nd this was presented by Toso Bozic at the Valleyview Agricultural Society Hall from 5:30pm-9:00pm. We discussed how to plant seedlings with the best results, managing pests and disease, water conservation techniques, pruning, etc. There was an outdoors portion planting some trees, and an indoors classroom style portion as well. Supper was provided. Participants were sent the presentation materials afterwards.

**WATER CONSERVATION IN GARDENING-** This was presented by Karen Stroebel of Mountain Blooms, the local greenhouse and flower shop in Grande Cache. There were 4 participants. Weather may have played a factor as it was very rainy. This presentation was on June 27th from 5:30-7:30pm at the Eagle/s Nest Hall.

**AGRICULTURE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS-** October 6 Little Smoky Hall, October 24 Valleyview Agricultural Society Hall, November 14 Grovedale Community Hall. There were 35 participants in total from these events. They focused on the wildfire workbook with presentations from Richard Brochu and Sheila. There was also discussion and contribution from AB Forestry and Greenview Fire Services. Supper was provided at 6:00pm with presentations to follow from 6:30-8:30pm.

**AGRICULTURAL GRANT FUNDING-** November 26th Grovedale, November 28th Valleyview. Each of these had about 22 people attend. I presented these from 5:30-8:30, including supper. It covered different grants, their availability, tips and tricks for success. The Landcare Coordinator presented on the different grants available: On Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAP), Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP), Greenview Riparian and Agricultural Sustainability Support (GRASS), and some other locally available funding sources. Topics covered eligibility, deadlines, requirements as well as Environmental Farm Plans (EFP) and how to complete them.

**HOW TO READ A FEED TEST WEBINAR-** This was presented by Jamie McAllister from Country Junction Feeds on October 30th from 5:00-6:00pm. There was 17 people attending. The recording was sent to the speaker and posted online for viewing.

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

**MINERALS, TOXINS, EPIGENETICS WEBINAR-** This was held on December 3rd from 6:00-8:00pm. This event was a presentation from Steve Campbell of Tailor-Made Cattle. There were 15 participants. Some people were unable to attend so the recording was sent to them. The recording was also sent to the speaker and posted online for viewing.

## **PARTNERED EVENTS**

**GRANT OPPORTUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLANS-** Peace Country Beef and Forage Association (PCBFA) asked the Landcare Coordinator to speak at this event on February 7th which was held at the Agricultural Society Hall in Valleyview with supper provided. She presented on the different grants available: On Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF, Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP), Greenview Riparian and Agricultural Sustainability Support (GRASS), and some other locally available funding sources. Topics covered included eligibility, deadlines, requirements, etc. Topics covered eligibility, deadlines, requirements as well as Environmental Farm Plans (EFP), what they are used for, how they work, and what is required. There was about 40 people at this event.

**HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT CANADA CONFERENCE-** In 2023 the Landcare Coordinator was asked to sit on the planning committee to plan the Holistic Management Canada Annual Conference. This conference was held in Valleyview at the Greenview Regional Multiplex. This was a 2-day conference with meals provided tradeshow area, silent auction, and childcare. This event was sponsored by Greenview. This was a great event and very well attended (110 people on Saturday and 85 on Sunday). Greenview had a tradeshow booth set up that was full of different resources for people to take. This was held February 10th & 11th.

**AFTERNOON WITH AKIM-** PCBFA hosted this session on May 10th at the Greenview Regional Multiplex at 1:00pm as a casual discussion for producers to drop in and ask question. Greenview attended and supplied some lights snacks. This was a good way to take part in the discussion and hear some question from producers.

**AgricultHER SCHOOL-** This was a partnered event with PCBFA, County of Grande Prairie, and Cows and Fish, on June 18th. It was a whole day women's only event in Goodfare. The day started with a farm tour hosted by Clay and Ash Armstrong, the tour was guided by Bluesette Campbell, and she discussed holistic grazing principles. We also stopped at a creek and Kerri O'Shaughnessy discussed riparian management. We provided a light breakfast, lunch, and supper. The rest of the day was spent at the Demit Hall with presentation from Bluesette, FCC, Emerson Trail Veterinary, and AgKnow. This event had 35 participants.

**PCBFA AGRICULTURAL GRANTS-** On October 25th the Landcare Coordinator went to Eureka River to present on agricultural grant funding. It was well received, and they had about 25 people participate.

**SUCCESSION PLANNING-** This was a full day presentation from Peak Heritage Consulting held on November 16th at the Paradise Inn in Valleyview. There were 40 participants, lunch was provided. It was free for Greenview residents, \$10 for non residents. This was a partnered event with PCBFA. Average enjoyment was 9.32 out of 10.

**AGRICULTURAL FINANCE AND ECONOMIC UPDATES-** This was held on November 25th from 5:30-6:30pm at the Paradise Inn in Valleyview, supper was provided. This was presented by FCC and MNP. It covered economic updates and tax changes. 20 people registered however the weather was very cold and snowy, so we had 12 people attend.

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

**AGRICULTURAL GRANT FUNDING-** The Landcare Coordinator presented a portion of the previously presented Grant funding presentation for Clear Hills County on November 27th from 3:00-4:30pm. The information on RALP was presented by Christine Campbell from ALUS. There were 26 participants, and it seemed to be well received.

**DIG INTO HORTICULTURE WEBINAR SERIES-** This is a partnered series with the main partners being Greenview, Sturgeon County, and Leduc County.

**Increasing Organic Reach on Social Media-** This was presented on March 26th by Kim Free from 7:00pm-8:30pm. It focused on creating social media for your business and how to expand your customer base. 24 participants.

**Recognizing and Supporting Beneficial Insects-** This session was on April 9th from 7:00pm-8:30pm. It was presented by Ken Fry. It focused on the insects used in horticultural production. Our other partners for this event were Camrose County and Lac St Anne County. 30 participants.

**Prairie Fruit Comparisons-** This session was presented by Rob Spencer, where he compared different prairie fruit and berry bushes, yields, establishments, maturity, harvesting, etc. This was held on October 15th from 7:00-8:00pm. Other partners at this event were Parkland County and Woodlands County. 90 participants.

**Fruit Growers' Perspectives-** This event featured Peace Cherry Ranch and Broken Tine Orchard, both producers are in the Peace region. It covered various aspects of day-to-day commercial orchard operations such as production techniques, market and customer types, helpful tools, equipment, labour and more. 33 participants. This was held on November 12th from 7:00-8:00pm.

## EVENTS ATTENDED

**St. Stephen's Science Fair-** In February the Landcare Coordinator went to the St. Stephens School to judge their science fair. It was a good opportunity to connect with youth in the community and build a relationship between Greenview and the local schools. There was a lot of great exhibits, and it was a great way to talk to local youth about science related topics.

**PCBFA Holistic Management Tour-** On August 15th the Landcare Coordinator attended this tour and was able to connect with a lot of local producers. It was also nice to have a representative from the Agricultural Services Department to help answer question, especially around grant funding. We supplied pop and juice, and PCBFA supplied a supper for everyone. It was a nice community event and seemed to be well enjoyed. There was a tour component and a classroom style presentation as well.

**Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) -** This was the first year that Grade 5 was included in CAP, so the Landcare Coordinator created a new presentation for the grade 5 classes. In the grade 4 presentation we use pizza as an example food and go through all the processes in how pizza is made from agriculture. Then we delve into the Landcare Coordinators life experience as a beef producer and look at different processes there. For the grade 5 presentation we do a deep dive into cattle, the ecosystem services they provide, their feed, their digestion, and what it's like to work with them.

On April 30th the Landcare Coordinator presented the Classroom Agriculture Program in Grande Cache at the Summitview School to 3 classes. One grade 4 class and 2 grade 5 classes (65 students).

# 2024 Agricultural Service Board Report

On May 9th the Landcare Coordinator presented to 2 grade 4 classes at the St. Stephen's school, which was about 55 students.

Each student received a goodie bag filled with a CAP booklet, farm animal stickers, farm animal silly straws, and farm animal keychains.

**Pond Days-** This year we tried a pilot project of Pond Days with the grade 5 class from Harry Gray Elementary. This was about 25 students. We hosted this at Johnson Park. Stations were plant ID, aquatic invertebrates, Wildlife, and Survival. It seemed to go well though due to weather we did wrap up a bit early.

**Junior Forest Rangers-** The JFR teams asked if they could job shadow for a day. We started with a presentation about all the services we provide, covering problem wildlife, pests, weeds, and environmental issues. We took a tour over to one of the bee traps and talked about how we study and survey for different things. Then we did a tour of a GRASS project and how to conduct a Riparian Health Assessment. We went to another location to look at different watering systems for cattle. We finished it off with a tour of the rental equipment here, as many of them are not from farm backgrounds. We supplied them lunch. They expressed interest in coming back again next year.

## **Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance**

The Landcare Coordinator was nominated to the board of directors for MPWA and now sits as a representative from agriculture in the region.

## **Facebook Following**

In January of 2024 the Greenview Agricultural Services Facebook had 618 followers. By December 31 we had 736 followers. This is an increase of 118 followers. In 2023 we increased by 111 followers, so the numbers are showing consistent growth.

## **GREENVIEW RENTAL PROGRAM**

Equipment rentals from ratepayers remained busy in 2024, with multiple producers choosing to book equipment up to two months in advance. In total, 814 rental days were realized. While this is not an increase on rental days from 2023, revenues from the program reached \$81,355, while expenses to maintain and repair the equipment dropped from \$76,568 to \$54,400. Expenses also featured establishment of a parts-on-hand inventory that will allow for more expedited repairs and improved preventative maintenance during the busy season. This impacted expenses, but maintenance of the on-hand parts inventory is not anticipated to be as high as establishment.