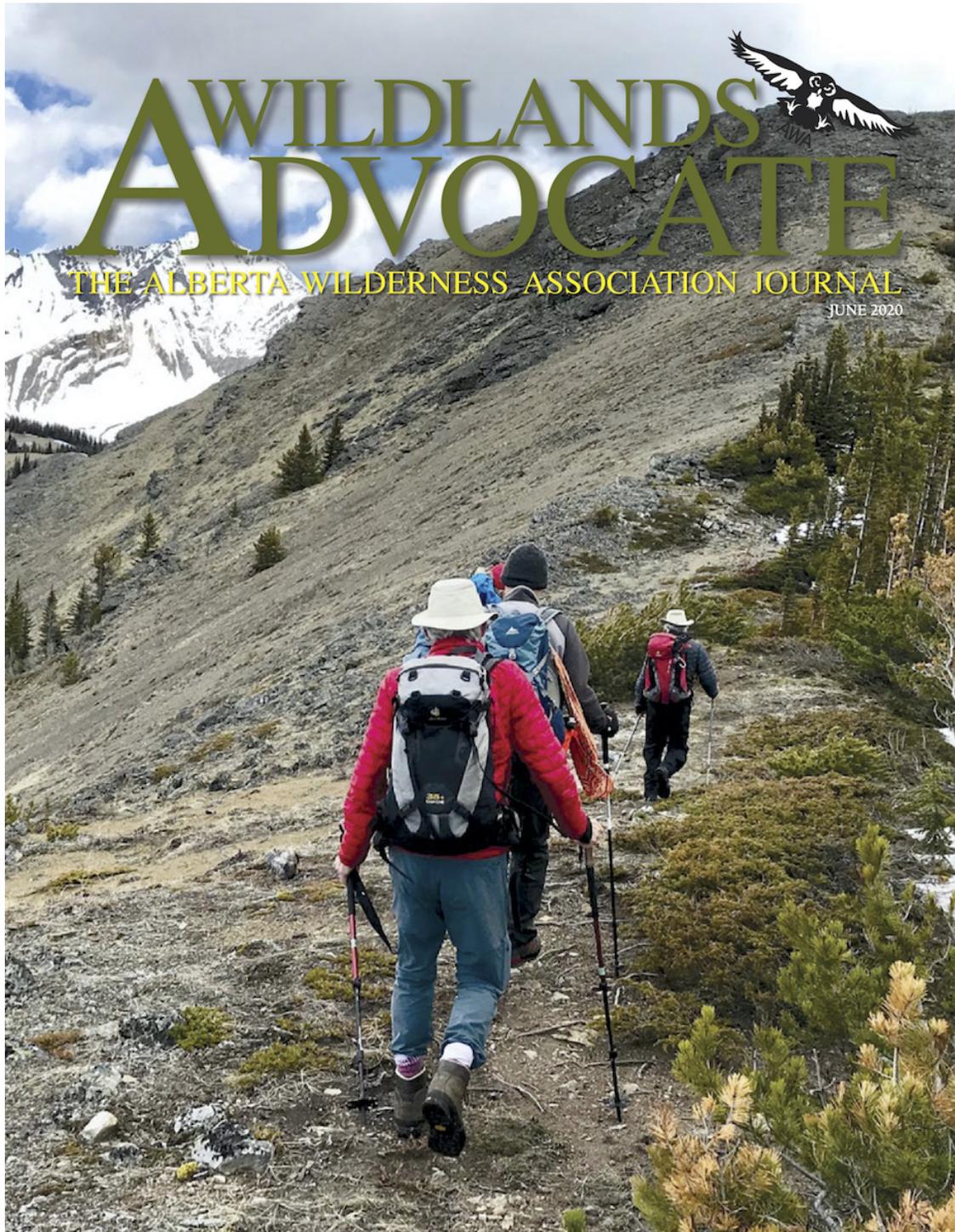


June Wild Lands Advocate Now Online

July 12, 2020



The June issue of *Wild Lands Advocate* is now [online](#).

I have worn the Wild Lands Advocate editor's hat for more than 11 years now. For me, the June 2020 issue stands head and shoulders above all of the previous ones I have had a hand in putting together. None of those previous issues gave me the satisfaction and optimism I take from this one.

At first glance, you might think this observation is perverse. The world, after all, is in pretty sad shape. We remain firmly in the grip of a pandemic that has shattered lives and shuttered economies.

In our own small corner of the world, we so far have been spared the worst case public health scenarios. Alberta has registered more than 8,600 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and "only" 160 deaths are attributed officially to the virus. But, due to the pandemic, Alberta's economy has crashed spectacularly. From May/June 2019 to today, one economic indicator after another illustrates the sharp, steep collapse of the Alberta economy: petroleum production, oil prices, drilling activity, employment, housing starts, merchandise exports, cattle prices, grain deliveries, wholesale trade, and manufacturing sales all are down significantly. Alberta, Edmonton, and Calgary still lead the country, but now we lead with the highest unemployment rates.

Against this background, your stories in this issue about the importance of parks and protected areas largely generate my sense of satisfaction and optimism. Your stories are moving. They are endearing. They speak to the importance of parks to healthy, happy livelihoods. They speak to how important parks are to building community. As long as this province has people such as yourselves, who care deeply about the health of our landscapes and are willing to act on those beliefs, there is hope for better days.

Satisfaction and optimism also are buoyed by reading about some of the Adventures for Wilderness that AWA members, staff, and board have carried out over the past several months (follow this [link](#) for more Adventures for Wilderness stories). Albertans have had to endure healthy helpings of tripe recently over the supposed prominence and success of foreign money in turning the world against Alberta's tar sands. If you know any pedlars of this rubbish, please invite them to read about AWA's Adventures for Wilderness program. It's a program about the future of nature in Alberta funded... by Albertans. It's a marvelous example of the type of direct action I think AWA stands for – Albertans organizing and sponsoring adventures as a way to enrich Alberta's lands and each other.

I hope that, in reading this issue of the Advocate, your optimism also will be buoyed. I hope you will be inspired to fight on behalf of the flora and fauna that are voiceless in our politics and to be an active participant in AWA's community of wilderness defenders.

- Ian Urquhart
Editor

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Dedicated to the conservation of wilderness and completion of a protected areas network, AWA inspires communities to care for Alberta's wild spaces through awareness and action.

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