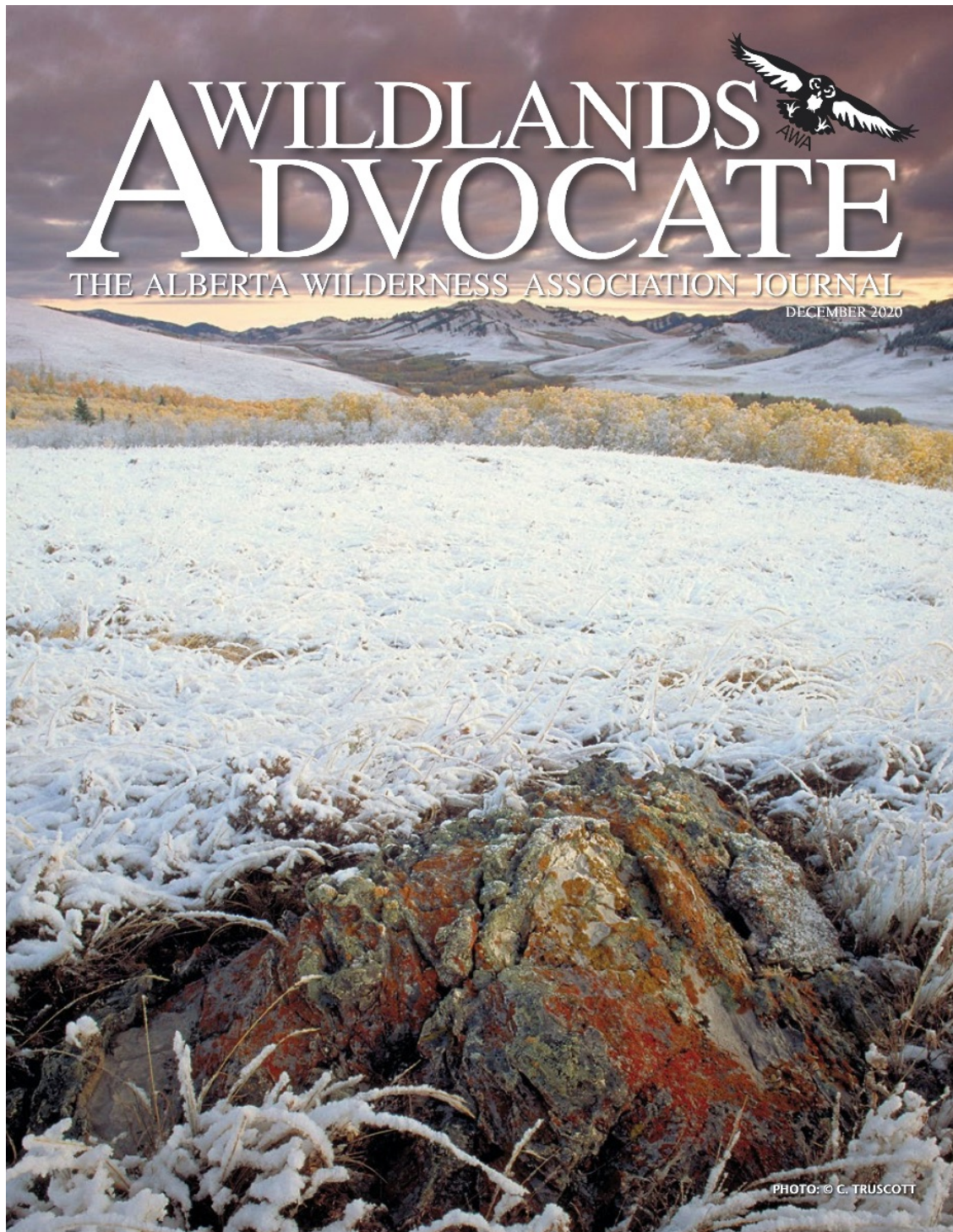


Ring in the New Year with the Wild Lands Advocate

December 28, 2020



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

The articles in our year-end issue make it very clear that 2021 is going to be a very busy year for your wilderness association.

In late November the provincial government released the *Alberta Crown Land Vision*. As we've come to expect from the current government, this significant document appeared without any prior consultation with Albertans about what you think should be included in that vision. Similarly, the government trumpets its "modern" and "common sense" approach to shaping the future of your public lands.

Lorne Fitch begins the Features section with a warning about the wisdom of common sense solutions to complicated circumstances. I follow Lorne with a look at the somewhat welcome consultation the government has implemented about outdoor recreation and trails. I say "somewhat welcome" because it's clear to me the survey is designed to steer and shape our responses to questions central to the government's preferred approach. A broader, more wide-ranging, survey instrument would be a more democratic method to gauging Albertans' opinions.

One of the worrisome aspects of Minister Nixon's thoughts about public lands in Alberta is his reluctance to see the wisdom in managing our public lands through separate pieces of legislation. AWA fears that 2021 may see the government introduce legislation that muddies or blurs the important distinctions that need to be made between public lands generally and protected areas, a subset of our public lands. Grace Wark invites you to recognize the value of those distinctions in her article.

For decades now, the Bow Valley has felt development pressures. Heather MacFadyen reports on the latest chapter in the struggle to ensure that establishing functional wildlife corridors is a precondition for expanding the development footprint in the valley. She details there why the 2020 Alberta Environment and Parks decision of the Smith Creek Corridor section is seriously deficient.

AWA's Carolyn Campbell joins Alistair Des Moulins in directing our attention to woodland caribou. Carolyn renews her tenacious efforts to push Parks Canada to come to the aid of Jasper National Park's caribou population – while there are still some caribou there to aid. Alistair recounts the occasions when he has had the privilege of encountering caribou in our mountain national parks.

Nissa Petterson, in her work on Alberta's grizzly bears, has noted a troubling interest in reviving a grizzly bear hunt in Alberta. Nissa examines that controversy in her contribution to the Features section.

Next I look at the court-ordered efforts to restore Apetowun Creek – a creek crippled by the Obed Mine disaster in 2013. AWA is optimistic that these

restoration efforts will establish secure habitat for pure-strain Athabasca Rainbow trout – an endangered species.

The Association News section has three pillars. It opens by featuring the winners of this year's Adventures in Wilderness Photography contest. Gerald Osborn, the overall winner, leads this parade. His photo of larches and mountains in Banff National Park is stunning. David Smith, Theo Wagner, and Daniel Camilleri were this year's other winners and we hope you appreciate the opportunity and creativity shown in their compositions. Next, we pay tribute to Linda Duncan, an outstanding environmental champion. Linda's Martha Kostuch lecture is detailed there. Finally, Christyann Olson offers her review of the 2019-20 year and lists the many generous AWA supporters who have supported our work through bequests, memorial tributes, and recognizing outstanding individuals.

The Updates section looks at recent developments regarding the reintroduction of bison to Banff National Park, forest and water management, caribou, and sentencing in the case of an outrageous grizzly bear killing.

The issue concludes with what I hope will be a strong influence on our environmental future. It comes in the person of Sadie Vipond and her participation in an important Charter of Rights and Freedoms/climate change case.

Until 2021 then...

*- Ian Urquhart
Editor*



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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