

March Updates: Coal Economics, Wildlife & Recreation in SW Alberta

March 25, 2021



Dear AWA Supporter,

Spring has sprung, and a pleasant mix of lamb and lion days are bringing welcome bits of green leaves and flowers poking through the still frozen soil. Yesterday's Crocus Hunt on Nose Hill in Calgary as part of AWA's *Adventures for Wilderness Program* heard shouts for joy when we found crocus buds. The ten crocus buds we found on our Adventure aren't quite at the stage of blooming these ones are - *but it won't be long*. This newsletter is just a quick update on some of the areas we are working on.

Our sincere wishes for your good health and enjoyable spring days.

– *Christyann Olson, Executive Director*



More than 350 people registered for our March 23rd Town Hall on the economics of exploiting coal. The audience heard four presentations from Cornelis Kolijn, Willem Langenberg, Chris Severson-Baker, and Ian Urquhart. Presentations covered a range of topics: the geology of coal in the Crowsnest Pass, coal quality and pricing, coal royalties, and, given the challenges of selling coal in a carbon-constrained world, the importance of prioritizing intact watersheds. Thanks to the panelists and to the Coal Policy Working Group - a tremendous collaborative effort of ENGOs, landowners and individuals wanting good decisions to be made for Alberta's Eastern Slopes. Thanks too to Lethbridge's McKillop United Church Council and Justice Peace Group for advertising the Town Hall in the Lethbridge Herald. The presentations and a recording of the event may be accessed here: <https://albertawilderness.ca/coal-and-economics-townhall/>

- Ian Urquhart, Conservation Director



AWA is part of a number of collaborative processes working to see a better future for woodland caribou, bison, oil sands monitoring, grasslands and more. You may have seen me in the news talking about the plight of woodland caribou, especially with the quietly announced extirpation of the Maligne herd in Jasper National Park. AWA's Board member, Cliff Wallis has joined me on Alberta's multidisciplinary sub-regional Caribou Range Task Forces since November 2019. AWA is the ENGO representative on the Ronald Lake Bison Herd Cooperative Management Board. As Alberta Environmental Network's delegate for the 'wetlands' and 'terrestrial biological' technical advisory committees for the Canada-Alberta Oil Sands Monitoring program, I have been part of a number of important opportunities to engage with researchers and colleagues.

– *Carolyn Campbell, Conservation Specialist*



A year-long, multi-stakeholder recreation planning process in SW Alberta, the Castle-Livingstone-Porcupine Hills Recreation Advisory Group (CLPH RAG), has now come to a close.

AWA and our colleagues in the conservation sector, local landowners, and low-impact recreation groups have worked to speak up for the values that make this region so important – habitat for grizzly bear and native trout, wildlife connectivity, and headwaters protection, to name a few. We have requested that the 2018 Management Plans for the Livingstone-Porcupine Hills and Castle remain in place and unchanged, including the phase-out of summer OHV use from the Castle Parks. We expect a decision from Minister Jason Nixon in the coming months and will soon provide an update on how you can get involved.

– *Grace Wark, Conservation Specialist*

As many of you know, I've been organizing AWA's [Adventures for Wilderness](#) outreach, education and engagement program. 2021 marks the second year of the program, and we are thrilled with how it's taking shape. After a successful 2020 season where we ran 28 adventures across the province, this year looks to be even better! We currently have 14 adventures, that have either already taken place, or that are coming up on the [schedule](#).

If you're not already familiar with the *Adventures* program (or if you are but haven't looked in a little while), be sure to visit one of the links above to see what we're cooking up, and also consider [signing up to our A4W newsletter](#) to receive adventure-specific news and updates!

- Sean Nichols, Program Specialist



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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