

The Wild Lands Advocate Is Online... Begging to be Downloaded and Shared

December 19, 2021

The last issue of *Wild Lands Advocate* for you to consider in 2021 is now online at <https://albertawilderness.ca/publications/wild-lands-advocate/>.

It's been a wonderful, but hectic, year at AWA and as the Advocate's editor I've only been able to generate three issues of your magazine in 2021. But, I'm promising to deliver you five in 2022. The first of those five will feature in part a wrap-up of 2021 and I'm aiming to have that to you by the end of January/beginning of February.

There's much food for thought in the current 44-page edition of the Advocate. Our coverage of conservation issues takes you from end to end to end to end of Alberta. And, we throw in a trip to Glasgow as well to offer you some thoughts about the latest climate change developments.

Lorne Fitch starts your journey off in the Eastern Slopes. There's an ironic character to Lorne's article. Our love of that landscape, a love that features so powerfully in our "No Coal" campaign, may itself be an existential threat to those lands. We are loving them to death. What should we do about this?

Ruiping Luo next takes you to the grasslands of southeast Alberta and underlines how important Alberta's provincial grazing reserves network is to one of North America's greatest conservation challenges – the protection and expansion of this continent's temperate grasslands.

In this issue Phillip Meintzer goes here, there, everywhere. In a piece on what polite conversations identify as the oil sands, Phillip discusses the state of environmental research into the world's third largest source of petroleum. It's troubling to read there that while industry now spends much more on production than it did 10 years ago, its financial contribution to oil sands monitoring research hasn't been increased by a penny since 2012. Important research isn't being funded. He then travels with Dave Mayhood through Alberta's southwest to get his first, up-close look at the status of native trout critical habitat there. Endangered trout feature as well in his account of the efforts underway to establish pure strain Athabasca rainbow trout in Apetowun Creek east of Hinton.

Devon Earl tackles an issue that is important throughout Alberta's forested landscapes – the use of the herbicide glyphosate. For Devon, the serious potential damage this herbicide can do to a wide range of species demands that management follow the precautionary principle. This isn't being done in Alberta.

Carolyn Campbell, unquestionably one of Alberta's leading, most informed voices on caribou conservation, reminds us... and the Alberta

government...that a major policy deadline is imminent. By the end of this year, less than two weeks away, the provincial government had promised it would finalize two caribou land use plans. One of those plans is for the Bistcho caribou range in the northwest; the other is for the Cold Lake-Christina caribou ranges in the northeast.

For my part, perhaps I indulged the Scottish half of my heritage by taking you on a climate change journey that ends in the latest UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. Like the stereotypical Scottish personality, my message is dour. Our climate change coverage also includes a very troubling story from *The Guardian* about the immediate measures needed to avoid “climate breakdown.”

There’s much more to this issue. Sean Nichols literally takes you to every corner of Alberta through his summary of AWA’s outreach activities; Vivian Pharis interviews Wayne Howse who just received an AWA Wilderness Defenders Award; our updates section looks at caribou, a nearly \$1 billion irrigation project, and includes a look at a very distasteful concoction – cervid harvesting preserves; and we are sad...but pleased to offer you two wonderful tributes to the late Dr. Valerius Geist.

Wherever you find yourself in this holiday season I hope you serve yourself, and the people, species, and landscapes you care about, healthy portions of peace and promise.

- *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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