



Alberta Wilderness Association

*Membership has its rewards - for Wild Alberta!*



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Did you know that an AWA lifetime membership is only \$25? Or a family one is just \$30? A robust membership base means that AWA's voice is stronger, because we have all of your voices behind us! If you aren't already an AWA

*Alberta's wildlife and wild lands don't have a voice. Won't you lend them yours?*

**Purchase a membership**

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## Current Issues



*Photo: McLean Creek, Kananaskis, Nathaniel Schmidt*

### **Alberta Government to give \$8 million to OHV groups**

On Friday, Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, the Alberta government announced that \$8 million in public funds will go to two off-highway vehicle (OHV) groups towards expanding and maintaining their trail networks. The government of Alberta designated the Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association and the Alberta Snowmobile

When the *Trails Act* was passed in 2021, [AWA raised concerns](#) that it could be used to privatize public lands and to add trails beyond sustainable limits. Prior to designation of new trails, regional and subregional planning that considers the cumulative impacts of industry and recreation on the landscape needs to be completed. Trail networks must stay below science-based thresholds to protect biodiversity and maintain water quality. This is especially true for motorized trails, because motorized recreation has a much higher environmental impact than non-motorized recreation.

A [recent study](#) by Y2Y and UNBC shows that at least 24% of trails in Alberta's southwest public lands are not documented by governments – indicating that the problem might be even worse than we think.

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## **Alberta Fish and Wildlife staff shuffled to different ministries**

AWA is extremely concerned to learn that [Alberta's Fish and Wildlife capacity and staff have recently been split](#) between three separate ministries, without public consultation or notice. Fishing and hunting allocations have gone to the Ministry of Forestry, Parks and Tourism; fish hatcheries management has gone to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation; and fish and wildlife species at risk decisions are left behind in the Ministry of Environment and Protected Areas. The probable lack of coordination between ministries and the lack of focus on conservation is likely to have negative effects on the conservation of fish and wildlife.

All aspects of fish and wildlife management need to prioritize conservation, and a robust and well-integrated approach is needed. We are concerned that these changes further dilute protection for the wild species of Alberta.

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## **Volunteer Spotlight**

*co-ordinate Adventures for Wilderness and other fundraisers. Sit on our board. Author articles and share their photos. Spread the word of our work far and wide in their communities. And we are so grateful to each and every one.*



## **Kristina Moore**

My connection with the AWA started a few years ago and I have followed along in the background since! I was lucky enough to have Lindsey Wallis of the AWA literally 'show me the ropes' rock climbing in the Rockies as part of an Adventure for Wilderness last spring. To my surprise, this fall I discovered that my grandma, [Mary Kettenbach](#), was receiving an AWA Wilderness Defender's Award!

I have very fond memories of growing up exploring the wilderness with my grandma in the Rockyford, Rosebud and Drumheller areas. Grandma Mary is the reason that my kids and I always pack our nuts and dried apricots when we

far!).

In December 2022, I developed a calendar that I use as an inspiration to move my body daily - whether that be a walk, a hike, a workout, or a stretch. Nature and exercise are two of the key things that keep my body and mind at their best, so combining the movement calendar with a donation to the AWA was a perfect match! In exchange for a donation, I sent out copies of the calendar to over 60 people. The donation total amounted to over \$1100! I am so grateful for the continued activism, as well as the community inspiration that the AWA provides for Albertans.

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## Upcoming Events

### [Family Nature Skate at Bowness Lagoon](#)

February 26, 2023, 2 p.m.

FREE

*with Lindsey Wallis*

Join AWA staff and volunteers at the Bowness Lagoon for an afternoon of skating, stories and warm drinks. Skates are available to rent on site. Learn more about Alberta's Wild Spaces and the creatures that call them home on this family-friendly adventure in Calgary.

[Join this adventure!](#)

[Sponsor this adventure](#) so we can continue to offer free events to build our AWA community!



## [March Ice Walk Adventure on Waiparous Creek](#)

March 4, 2023

*with Heinz and Kris Unger*

This adventure sold out in January so Heinz and Kris are offering one more chance to enjoy this special corner of Alberta!

[Join this adventure!](#)



# COMMUNITY BREW



IN SUPPORT OF:

## ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION WAS ESTABLISHED AS A NON-PROFIT CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION IN 1965 WITH A MISSION TO DEFEND WILD ALBERTA THROUGH AWARENESS AND ACTION. WE SEEK THE COMPLETION OF A PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK AND GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF ALBERTA'S PUBLIC LANDS, WATERS, AND BIODIVERSITY TO ENSURE FUTURE GENERATIONS ENJOY THE ABUNDANT BENEFITS THEY PROVIDE.

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Alberta Wilderness Association

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Enjoy a cold beer and support the Alberta Wilderness Association. Visit any [CRAFT Beer Market](#) location in Alberta to enjoy a refreshing pint of Stay Wild Mango Hibiscus Wheat Ale. \$1 from every purchase will be donated to the AWA.

# In Case You Missed It



## [Presentation and Q & A with Calgary City Planners](#)

**January 31, 2023**

AWA members and concerned citizens gathered at our office to hear from City of Calgary planners about the city's approach to balancing population growth, new development and the environment. Thanks to our guest speakers Josh White, Director of City and Regional Planning and Matthew Sheldrake, Acting Manager of Growth and Change Strategy.

Growing populations mean that more and more of us live in cities, and the way that we build them has an impact on how we begin to tackle issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss. One example of development that can affect biodiversity is the Ricardo Ranch area. It sits on the southeastern edge of



development underway, we know people want to better understand how planning decisions are made at city hall and ways that citizens can influence that process.

[Watch a recording of the presentation and Q & A](#)

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## AWA in the News



### **'Cloaked in so much secrecy': Staffing split will hurt Alberta fish and wildlife management, critics say**

*by Lisa Johnson*

Critics warn that splitting Alberta's environmental management work between separate ministries could mean conservation efforts around the province will be incapacitated.

...

Devon Earl, a conservation specialist at the AWA, said the moves were made without public consultation or notice.

"I think this shows that conservation is not necessarily the main priority, because it's not a cohesive unit that's responsible for this," she told Postmedia,

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[Read the full Edmonton Journal article](#)

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## **Changes to Alberta Fish and Wildlife could weaken environmental management, critics say**

*by Bob Weber*

Critics say crucial expertise within Alberta Environment and Protected Areas is being broken up and dispersed, weakening fish and wildlife programs that should be working together and putting responsibility for conservation within ministries where that concern may not be central.

"This is problematic," said Lorne Fitch, a much-awarded fisheries biologist.

"The functions of fish and wildlife management are split between four separate departments, each with different mandates."

Enforcement officers devolved to the Solicitor General's department some years ago.

Devon Earl at the Alberta Wilderness Association said what's left of Alberta Fish and Wildlife is to be split another three ways.

[Read the full Canadian Press article](#)

**Donate**

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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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Treaties 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10. We express gratitude and respect for these lands and commit to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples to ensure justice, equality, and sustainability for all people and the natural world we rely on.

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