

Helping Communities Conserve
Land That Matters ...

forever



LEGACY LAND TRUST SOCIETY
2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Legacy Land Trust Society is a registered non-profit charity dedicated to conservation and stewardship of significant lands – ecological, agricultural and heritage – in Central Alberta.

Based in Olds we work with landowners, interested individuals, communities, organizations and governments to conserve and nurture these lands for future generations.



OUR MISSION

We work with individuals and communities to conserve land's ecological, agricultural and heritage values. We do this through conservation planning, education and awareness, and stewardship.



OUR VISION

Communities that share a commitment to conservation and stewardship of locally valued landscapes.

BOARD CHAIR

Michael Dougherty

This was a year of successes and challenges for Legacy.

First and foremost, we're proud to report that we successfully signed four new conservation projects, all located in Mountain View County. This brings our total conservation easements to 14, encompassing 3240 acres—a great accomplishment in just nine years. Rebecca Nielsen, Legacy's Conservation Director, expands further on our conservation achievements in her report.

Legacy's assets grew substantially in 2022, as did our total revenue. Substantial new revenue sources included a casino and several large donations. Our year-end fundraising event was a success, primarily due to our generous Circle of Friends. We're deeply grateful for this support which is dedicated directly to Legacy's ongoing conservation efforts. Legacy's Treasurer, Terry Antoniuk, provides more detail about our financial situation in his report.

These successes came amid staff turnover and changes to the board. Fortunately, Legacy is built on a strong foundation. The support and wise guidance of the board and key volunteers saw Legacy through this time, resulting in a renewed vision of our initiatives.

We also made substantial progress towards other key objectives this year. Led by the Governance Committee, we redrafted our bylaws and worked on new policies. We continued to expand our reach and volunteer base, and recruited new board members. We also completed our Strategic Plan, which will guide our work for the next 5 years—this ambitious plan sets our course to future growth via community outreach, fund development, organizational growth and continued conservation efforts.

In conclusion it was an eventful and gratifying year. On behalf of the board of directors, I thank all those who have shared their passion and supported us this past year. Together, we make a difference!

CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

Rebecca Nielsen

Land conservation is Legacy's main focus and 2022 was a banner year: we signed four conservation easement agreements that protect 890 acres! Habitats conserved include riparian areas along the Red Deer River, working pasture landscapes and native dry mixed-wood forest.

Since signing our first conservation easement (CE) in 2015 Legacy has partnered with private landowners and Mountain View County to complete 14 agreements conserving 3240 acres.

As part of Legacy's CE agreement with landowners we periodically visit the easements to monitor the property. Monitoring is done by Legacy's summer staff. This year, with the help of the Canada Summer Jobs Program, we hired three staff to monitor 12 CEs.

Monitoring consists of reviewing the property owner's vision for the land as well as the CE agreement and Baseline Documentation Report. Staff talk to the property owners, walk the property and take photos to ensure the intent of the conservation easement is being upheld and to document changes over time.

Two of the four CEs signed in 2022 were included in the monitoring program. The remaining two were signed later in the season and will be monitored for the first time in 2023.

Land conservation is essential to the health of rivers. In 2017 we launched *Water Quality and You* to promote conservation and stewardship practices along the upper reaches of the Red Deer River and its tributaries.

This year, with funding from the Alberta Government's Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program, we launched *Water Quality and You 2.0*. It is designed to improve watershed resiliency, maintain or improve water quality, and protect biodiversity along the Little Red Deer River. We plan to engage with about 100 landowners along the Little Red. The program runs to 2026

In the fall I was hired as Conservation Director when Mary Jane Block became Director of Rural Development and Conservation with Western Sky Land Trust. I spent my first months with Legacy becoming oriented to my new position, working with the board to understand organizational priorities, meeting Legacy volunteers and members of the regional land trust community as well as planning for 2023.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Terry Antoniuk

Legacy Land Trust Society's assets grew substantially in 2022 as the value of conservation easements held by Legacy on behalf of private and municipal landowners increased from \$5,339,800 to \$7,453,300. This increased Legacy's net assets from just over \$6,400,000 in 2021 to approximately \$8,860,000 in 2022, continuing the encouraging growth of this 9-year-old regional land trust. (Note that most of these net assets reflect the book value of conservation easements held by Legacy; they have no financial value to Legacy because they cannot be spent or borrowed against.)

Legacy's most consistent source of conservation funding has been the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program (ALTGP). It has allowed Legacy and landowners to increase the acreage held under conservation easements in Central Alberta.

ALTGP was established under the *Public Lands Act* which places a portion of the proceeds from public land sales into a Land Stewardship Fund. This fund can be used by ALTGP for conservation and enhancement of environmental, scenic and agricultural values on private lands although, to date, funding has only been received for projects with predominantly environmental values. Funding for three conservation easements (\$544,068) was received in 2022 from ALTGP based on applications submitted in 2021.

Total revenues in 2022 increased by 30% from 2021 when decreased revenue was attributed to pandemic restrictions. Substantial new revenue sources included a casino held in August 2022 and some large donations. As a result, although expenses increased by 8% from 2021, net revenue in 2022 after expenses was \$26,848.

Staff changes were made in 2022 and Legacy's staff complement was reduced to one full-time staff and a half-time administrative contract staff person. This will reduce future administrative wage expenses.

ALTGP funds provided for an approved conservation easement project **are typically spent over a 2-3 year period**. Unspent grant funding is restricted, and these deferred contributions remain liabilities until spent. In 2022 Legacy staff and the Finance Committee implemented a process to better expense reimbursable staff time and expenses for each project in the year they occur. This has resulted in more effective tracking and allocation of expenses needed to administer existing and proposed conservation easements.

Applications for two new projects were submitted to ALTGP in 2022. Decisions on these applications were received in first quarter 2023. These grant requests totalled \$244,700, so 2023 conservation grant revenues are projected to increase slightly from 2022.

Some Highlights of 2022

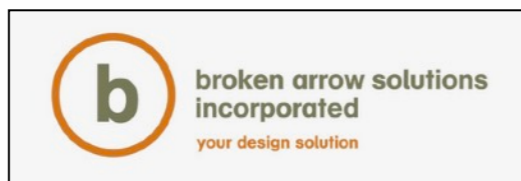


- Conservation easements were finalized for Kettle Crossing Farm (154 acres) and Sullivan Lake (108 acres).
- Legacy's Stories Coordinator Sarah Leach placed game cameras on conservation easements to capture wildlife.
- Summer staff monitored Legacy's conservation easements.
- Cows & Fish held a riparian workshop on Campbell Pit conservation easement for staff and volunteers.
- Volunteer Shannon Weseen became trail monitor for Legacy's Tribute Trail with 25 Mountain Bluebird boxes.
- We held information booths at farmers' markets and summer staff had a display at Aggie Days in Cremona.
- Volunteer Don James invited Circle of Friends members to participate in Migratory Bird Day.
- Legacy produced *Woodland Wildflowers*, a downloadable e-book for members.
- Volunteer Sally Banks led guided walks in the boreal forest on land approved for a conservation easement.
- New signs were distributed to landowners to identify their conservation easements.
- Rebecca Nielsen became Legacy's Conservation Director.

CALENDAR

Our annual *Worth Conserving* calendar is one of our most important outreach tools.

Many thanks to the photographers who donate their work, to the sponsors who cover production costs and to broken arrow solutions for the layout and design.



Mountain View
C O U N T Y



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