

Helping Communities Conserve  
Land That Matters ...

*forever*

LEGACY LAND TRUST SOCIETY  
2023 ANNUAL REPORT



LEGACY  
LAND TRUST  
SOCIETY



**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.**



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



*We engage with people and communities to conserve land with significant ecological, agricultural and heritage values.*

# BOARD CHAIR

## Michael Dougherty

In 2023 we successfully initiated two new conservation easements supported by the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program. Legacy's Executive Director, Rebecca Nielsen, outlines more of our conservation work in her report.

Our Annual General Meeting in June featured an enlightening presentation by Guy Greenaway titled [The Future of Private Land Conservation in Alberta](#). It touched on the current direction of private land conservation, some upcoming forks in the road and how we can, and indeed must, direct the future.

In October we officially celebrated Legacy's 10th anniversary in Water Valley. Chair of the 10th Committee, Bob Griebel, expands on that later in this report.

Our operations were bolstered by the dedication of our Executive Director & Staff, and Legacy's tireless volunteers. Their passionate contributions have been paramount to Legacy's success.

Additionally, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to our donors, ranging from those who have signed up for our recurring [Make-It-Monthly](#) program to the patrons of our annual calendar, as well as every individual who has contributed financially to our work.

You empower Legacy. We're deeply grateful for this support. Legacy's Treasurer, Doug Collister, provides detail about our financial situation in his report.

Looking ahead, we are inspired by what we have achieved together, and are excited about our future. Your continued support is vital as we embark on new conservation ventures and deepen our impact.

On behalf of the board and myself, thank you for participating in this journey.

Together, we are not just conserving land; we are cultivating an environment of conservation—a *Legacy* for future generations.

*Legacy Land Trust Society celebrated 10 years of land conservation in 2023.  
Looking back, we can see the remarkable progress in protecting our natural heritage.*

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Rebecca Nielsen**

## **Land Conservation Update**

In 2023 Legacy proudly partnered with landowners on Amisk Lake in Athabasca County to sign the 38-acre Amiscape Conservation Easement, to conserve natural boreal forest. The owners were particularly grateful as they had been looking for an organization to work with for 15 years.

This signing brings our total number of completed conservation easements (CEs) to 15, totalling 3277 acres.

In 2023 we also had 6 CE projects-in-progress amounting to about 1170 ac.

## **Conservation Easement Stewardship**

Legacy hired two summer Conservation Coordinators to carry out our visits to CE properties in 2023.

Rose Chong-Wu and April Krahn joined Legacy at the beginning of May and visited 14 Legacy CEs before the end of August. The 15<sup>th</sup> easement, Amiscape, had a monitoring visit completed by a local volunteer using Legacy's documentation template.

The visits include a review of past information collected about the CE property, a conversation with

the landowner to learn about changes over the last year, a site visit that includes taking photos at set photo points, writing a report to document the visit, and a follow-up discussion with the landowner to share findings and notes.

In addition to monitoring visits, Rose and April updated Legacy's Health and Safety program materials, planned the Buttercup Blitz weed-pull event, assisted with the Bergen Pasture Management Field Day and attended learning sessions to grow their skills in the field.

## **Water Quality and You 2.0**

The Water Quality and You 2.0 (WQY2.0) outreach program along the Little Red Deer River continued in 2023. Outreach efforts included mailouts to landowners along the Little Red and a field day in late June held in partnership with Cows & Fish, Mountain View County, ALUS and the Grey Wooded Forage Association.

A new staff member was hired to focus on delivery of WQY2.0 beginning in January 2024—welcome back to Legacy, Rose Chong-Wu!

## **Legacy Celebrates 10 years!**

Thank you to everyone who, through their time, talents and donations, has supported Legacy Land Trust Society over the last 10 years.

## **TREASURER**

### **Doug Collister**

**The value of Legacy Land Trust Society's Conservation Easements increased in 2023** to \$7,999,300 from \$7,453,300 at the end of 2022. Legacy's total net assets at the end of 2023 increased to \$9,484,764 from \$8,862,612 at the end of 2022. *(Note: Conservation Easements comprising the bulk of these net assets reflect their book value and cannot be sold or borrowed against.)*

**Endowment fund investment** at year-end 2023 totalled \$512,620. It consisted of \$320,000 invested in the Mawer Balanced Fund through a direct investment account with ATB Securities Inc., and \$192,620 invested with the Red Deer & District Community Foundation.

**Legacy's primary source of funding** continues to be the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program (ALTGP). This Alberta government program is critical in allowing Legacy to partner with landowners to conserve land with significant ecological, agricultural and heritage values.

**The ALTGP was established under the Public Lands Act** which places a portion of the proceeds from public land sales into a Land Stewardship Fund.

**ALTGP grants received by Legacy to date have been for projects primarily with ecological value.** Funding for two projects (\$264,700) was received in 2023 based on applications submitted in September 2022. ALTGP funds are typically spent over a 2-3 year period. Unspent grant funding is restricted, and these deferred contributions remain liabilities until spent.

**Revenues and Expenses were both significantly lower** in 2023 compared to 2022 (\$196,113 vs \$303,209 and \$196,475 vs 276,361 respectively).

Including unrealized gain on marketable securities, excess of revenue for 2023 was \$12,738 vs \$26,848 in 2022.

# 2023 Highlights



- ❖ Conservation Director Rebecca Nielsen was promoted to Executive Director.
- ❖ The board finalized a Strategic Plan for 2023-2027.
- ❖ Water Quality and You 2.0 was launched to encourage landowners along the Little Red Deer River to conserve their land.



- ❖ Legacy has now signed 15 conservation easements (CEs) with private landowners, conserving 3277 acres. Six more CEs (1170 ac) are in progress.
- ❖ The Stew Crew, launched this year, are donors who make monthly contributions to support our conservation work.



- ❖ Staff attended workshops on Bear Safety and Farm Succession Planning, and the Soil Builder's Field School.
- ❖ Conservation Coordinators Rose Chong-Wu and April Krahn monitored Legacy's CEs

- ❖ The first nest box on the Mountain Bluebird Tribute Trail was dedicated in memory of former board member Brad Misener.
- ❖ To control invasive buttercups, volunteers and staff conducted the annual Buttercup Blitz on Owl Ridge CE followed by a tour of the property.
- ❖ Legacy co-sponsored a field day on pasture management.
- ❖ Using our trail cam images, Legacy's Stories Coordinator Sarah Leach produced a video highlighting Legacy's first decade.
- ❖ Volunteers and staff held information booths at the Bergen Farmers Market and Neighbours' Day in Sundre.
- ❖ Legacy held a special anniversary event at Water Valley to celebrate 10 years of conservation.
- ❖ An anonymous donor gifted \$10,000 to Legacy for conservation.



## CELEBRATING A DECADE 2013 -2023

It has been a decade since Legacy Land Trust Society became an official organization dedicated to the conservation of land with significant ecological, agricultural and heritage values in Mountain View County and beyond.

To celebrate 10 years of conservation successes we gathered on October 21<sup>st</sup> in the historic Water Valley School, now known as the Water Valley Arts and Wellness Centre.

Legacy staff members, board members past and present, conservation easement (CE) donors and Friends of Legacy spent an afternoon highlighted by performer Ethan Collister (whose family owns a CE in the area) and the recognition of individual property easement donors.

Executive Director Rebecca Nielsen pointed out the unique ecological features of each property that made it worthy of conservation efforts. Refreshments, door prizes and conversation rounded out the afternoon.

Bob Griebel  
Chair, 10th Anniversary Committee



# 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 beautiful layout and design.



## **BOARD of DIRECTORS**

**2023-2024**

**Michael Dougherty, Chair**

**Tony Martens, Vice-Chair**

**Doug Collister, Treasurer**

**Don Greenfield, Secretary**

**Bruce Beattie**

**Lori-Jo Graham**

**Bob Griebel**

**Jerry Roberts**

**Larry Wright**

## **STAFF**

**Rebecca Nielsen, Executive Director**

**Patti Gardner, Administrative Coordinator**

## **SEASONAL CONSERVATION COORDINATORS**

**Rose Chong-Wu**

**April Krahn**

## **PHOTOGRAPHERS**

**Barry Trakalo / Angela Smith / Lyle Eberle  
Sandy Easterbrook / Rose Chong-Wu / Sally Banks**