

Helping People Conserve
Land That Matters ...

forever

LEGACY LAND TRUST SOCIETY
2024 ANNUAL REPORT



LEGACY
LAND TRUST
SOCIETY



TABLE of CONTENTS

1 Our Vision and Mission

4 Board Chair

6 Executive Director

8 Treasurer

10 Highlights

Committee Reports

11 Conservation

12 Communications

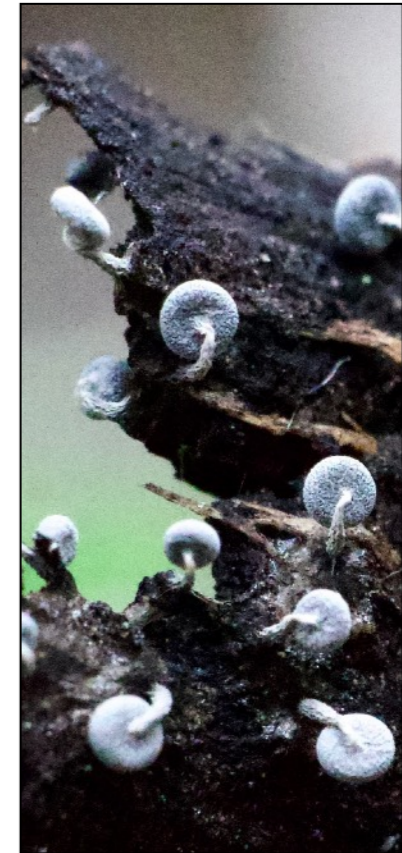
13 Governance

13 Fundraising

14 Government & External Relations

15 Calendar

16 Board of Directors and Staff



*Slime Mold
Sally Banks*

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

Don Greenfield



*Birch Lake
Andre Cormeau*

Since I became Chair of the Board at Legacy's Annual General Meeting in April I've become much more aware of the significant role volunteers play in our success as a land trust—they're the glue that holds Legacy together.

This large and varied group—landowners, members, Friends of Legacy, donors, funders and sponsors—bring talent, time and dedication in pursuit of our conservation goals. My thanks to you all.

I also owe deep thanks to our Board of Directors. In particular, I thank my predecessor Mike Dougherty who served as Vice-Chair this past year, and Jerry Roberts, Chair of our Fundraising Committee. Both have stepped down because of other commitments.

Special thanks and gratitude also to Executive Director Rebecca Nielsen and our staff who manage the day-to-day operations.

~

This year was filled with several memorable events.

We signed a conservation easement on land adjacent to Slack Slough in Red Deer County. You'll find more about this in our Executive Director's Report.

Chair continued ...

We are always interested in speaking with people who want to know more about conservation easements and who may have an interest in donating an easement to Legacy. You can [read more](#) about that on our website.

At our AGM Kevin Van Tighem, the former Superintendent of Banff National Park and well-known author, spoke about the importance of conserving water. For me, it demonstrated how I take for granted the water flowing out of my taps whenever I demand it and how precious and precarious that is.

In October we celebrated our 11th anniversary at the Bergen Community Hall. Our guest speaker was Lorne Fitch. Drawing on decades as a biologist in Alberta, he captivated us with his stories and we left with a renewed passion for conservation.

I invite you to learn more about our work on the following pages where staff and board members share highlights of this past year.



*Yellow Lady Slipper
Colin Huggons*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rebecca Nielsen

Water Quality and You 2.0: Little Red Deer River

In 2024, Legacy focused on awareness and outreach through the Water Quality and You 2.0 (WQY2.0) program, funded by the Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program.

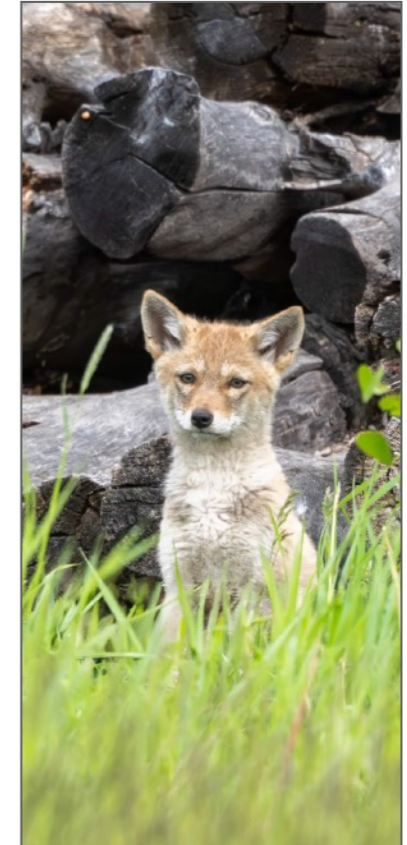
This initiative, launched in 2022, promotes land stewardship practices along the Little Red Deer River and its tributaries, emphasizing the benefits of land conservation and conservation easements. A healthy sub-watershed creates drought resistance and flood mitigation while supporting wildlife habitats, water filtration, and soil stability.

WQY 2.0 Project Lead

Legacy welcomed Rose Chong-Wu back in 2024, this time as WQY2.0 Project Lead for a seven-month contract. Rose spearheaded initiatives including outreach to landowners on the Little Red Deer River and awareness-building through local events, Legacy's newsletter Conservation News and our social media channels.

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM on April 20th highlighted the theme of "water," featuring keynote speaker Kevin Van Tighem. His presentation—*Where Waters Come to Life: Headwater Landscapes of the Eastern Slopes*—emphasized the importance of private land conservation to preserve watershed health.



Coyote Pup
Colleen Kaiser-Gill

Executive Director continued ...

Paint, Pen & Pixels

Rose Chong-Wu and Legacy volunteer Nan McKernan collaborated on [*Paint, Pen & Pixels*](#). This plein air art experience took place on the [Smith conservation easement](#) situated on the Little Red Deer River. The art created at the event was featured in a show at the Mountain View Museum and Archives in Olds from August 1st to September 15th.

Conservation Highlights

Legacy worked with the Mills family to place a 145-acre conservation easement on the south edge of Slack Slough, a 96-acre wetland and refuge for waterfowl located just south of Red Deer this spring. This project creates a buffer zone for the wetland and includes the potential for future trails and education initiatives around this vital wildlife resource in the Red Deer River watershed.

Anniversary Celebration

Legacy celebrated its 11th anniversary on October 19th at the Bergen Hall. Wildlife biologist and author Lorne Fitch shared readings from his newest book *Up the Creek – A Biologist's Search for a Paddle*. Volunteer Stories Coordinator Sarah Leach showcased two WQY2.0 program videos that can be [viewed on our website](#)

Looking Ahead

Legacy remains committed to protecting vital watersheds through land conservation. With the continued support of our community, we can ensure a sustainable future for the Little Red Deer River and beyond.



*Shooting Star
Marilyn Phillips*

TREASURER

Doug Collister



Ruffed Grouse
Sandy Easterbrook

The value of Legacy Land Trust Society's Conservation Easements increased in 2024 to \$8,932,300 from \$7,999,300 at the end of 2023. Legacy's total net assets at the end of 2024 increased to \$10,551,869 from \$9,484,764 at the end of 2023. *(Note that Conservation Easements comprising the bulk of these net assets reflect their book value and cannot be sold or borrowed against).*

Endowment fund initial investment at year-end 2024 totalled \$512,620 comprised of \$480,000 (\$160,000 transferred from Legacy Dedicated Fund) invested in the Mawer Balanced Fund through a direct investment account with ATB Securities Inc. and \$237,620 (increase of \$45,000 contributed by Rotary related to the Slack Slough project) invested with the Community Foundation of Central Alberta (CFCAB).

The value of the ATB Direct Investment Endowment Account and the Smith Fund at year-end (December 31, 2024) was \$541,074 and \$16,894 respectively.

As per the terms of our Endowment Direct Investment Policy \$10,536 was withdrawn from the ATB Direct Investment Account to support monitoring and stewardship in 2024 and \$21,925 is available for 2025.

Revenues and Expenses were both higher in 2024 compared to 2023 (\$236,534 compared to \$196,113 and \$234,569 compared to \$196,475 respectively). Including unrealized gain on marketable securities, excess of revenue for 2024 was \$35,325 compared to \$12,738 in 2023.

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 collaborate 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 primarily for projects with ecological value. Funding for two projects (\$203,775) was received in 2024 based on applications submitted in September 2023. ALTGP funds are typically spent over a 2-to-3 year period. Unspent grant funding is restricted—these deferred contributions remain liabilities until spent.

Legacy had its second casino—and first in Calgary—on January 23rd and 24th, 2024. Revenue received totalled \$79,907. Legacy received approval from Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis to use casino proceeds for monitoring and stewardship wages, opening the door to hiring a part-time Conservation Coordinator.

Legacy's Dedicated Fund balance as of December 31, 2024 was \$93,266. This consists of:

- \$35,500 earmarked to be transferred to Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca to support monitoring and stewardship of the Amiscape CE,
- \$41,549 of unrestricted funds available to backstop future operating shortfalls, and
- \$16,217 waiting to be transferred to the ATB Direct Investment Endowment Account.



*Ladybird Beetle
Peter Kleinloog*

HIGHLIGHTS



🌿 *Conservation Easements for Landowners* was revised and updated.

🌿 Legacy worked with the Mills Family to place a CE on 145 acres along the south side of Slack Slough, a wetland refuge near Red Deer.

🌿 Stories Coordinator Sarah Leach captured drone footage for a video series about the Little Red Deer River.

🌿 Rose Chong-Wu became Project Lead for Water Quality and You 2.0, encouraging landowners along the Little Red Deer River to conserve their land.

🌿 Conservationist and author of 15 books, Kevin Van Tighem gave the keynote presentation at the AGM.

🌿 Seasonal Conservation Coordinators Zoe Montgomery and Ethan Sperle monitored Legacy's CEs.

🌿 34 photographers donated images to the 2025 calendar.

🌿 Volunteers and staff conducted the annual Buttercup Blitz on Owl Ridge, a CE near Water Valley.

🌿 The second bluebird box on the Tribute Trail was dedicated to Harold Hadley.

🌿 Legacy's Bluebird Trails fledged 97 Mountain Bluebirds and 147 Tree Swallows.

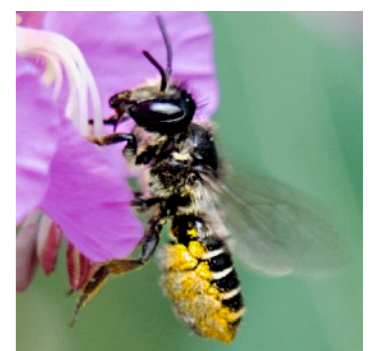
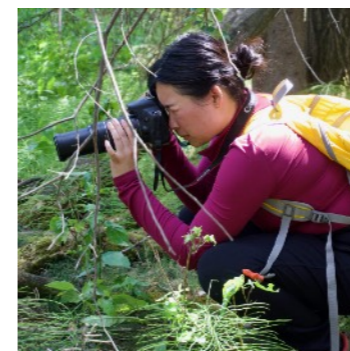
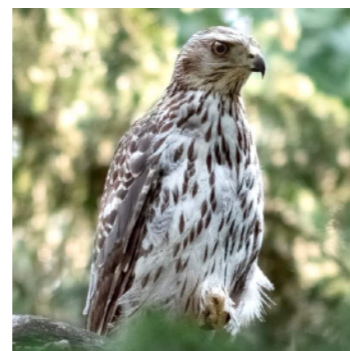
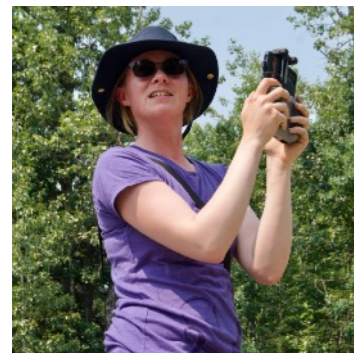
🌿 Legacy rolled out its first membership campaign

🌿 Staff and volunteers helped plant 540 shrubs and trees along an ephemeral watercourse in Bergen.

🌿 *Paint, Pen & Pixels* was held on one of Legacy's CEs. Artwork and photos from the event were showcased at the Mountain View Museum & Archives.

🌿 Volunteers and staff held an information booth at Neighbours' Day in Sundre.

🌿 Legacy celebrated its 11th anniversary at the Bergen Hall, with wildlife biologist and author Lorne Fitch.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Conservation Committee

Terry Antoniuk and Bruce Beattie, Co-Chairs

Role

The Conservation Committee advises on all matters related to conservation planning, conservation easements (CEs), and other land stewardship initiatives.

This includes responsibility for: reviewing and making recommendations on CE grant applications; and developing policy and guidance materials for securing and managing CEs.

Legacy works with private landowners and funders to select, secure, and manage conservation properties in Mountain View County and surrounding municipalities. Legacy now manages 16 Conservation Easements representing 3422 acres (547 ha).

Policy and Guidance

Over the last year the committee developed standards for property baseline reports and initiated discussions to refine annual monitoring protocols for existing CEs.

Activities

The committee's focus continues to focus on reviewing and making recommendations on proposed, pending and ongoing CEs.

During 2024 Legacy:

- Received funding from the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program (ALTGP) for 2 new CEs.
- Submitted applications to ALTGP for 1 potential CE with decision to come in early 2025.
- Finalized 1 CE with landowners.
- Identified 6 new potential CE opportunities, most by referral from Legacy volunteers, Friends, and CE holders.
- Completed monitoring on 14 Conservation Easements.
- Working to finalize 6 additional CEs.

Communications Committee

Sally Banks, Chair

Role

The committee guides, advises and supports the Board and the Executive Director on communications and outreach.

Strategic Plan

Awareness—growing community commitment to conservation easements—is a key goal under Legacy's Strategic Plan.

To help achieve that outcome, the committee began developing a Communications Plan in 2024. Work will continue in 2025. Terms of Reference will also be updated.



Swallowtail
Gwen Tomlin

Highlights

- Worked on revisions to the *Conservation Easements for Landowners* booklet
- Produced the monthly *Conservation News* for the Friends of Legacy
- Developed and implemented the *Make-It-Monthly* campaign to increase the number of monthly donors
- Delivered a workshop on communications to the Seasonal Conservation Coordinators
- Developed and launched the membership campaign
- Promoted the Annual General Meeting and the 11th Anniversary event
- Helped promote *Paint, Pen & Pixels*
- Participated at Neighbours' Day in Sundre
- Developed the annual calendar and organized the calendar launch.
- Delivered the year-end fundraising campaign

Governance Committee

Doug Collister, Chair

Legacy's original Bylaws (circa 2013) were replaced by Special Resolution at the 2023 AGM. The Objects were replaced by Special Resolution at the 2024 AGM.

The following new polices were approved by the Board during 2024:

- Membership
- Stewardship
- Volunteer Intake

The committee also updated the Endowment Direct Investment Policy and amended the Finance Committee's Terms of Reference, both of which were approved by the Board.

Going forward the committee will continue work on policies in progress and will develop and implement periodic review of approved polices and Terms of Reference.

Fundraising Committee

Jerry Roberts, Chair

In 2024 Legacy had two main revenue streams—the Alberta Government (Alberta Land Trust Grant Program and Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program)—and *you*.

Thank you for your contributions. You invested in conservation when you

- joined our Stew Crew and became a monthly donor
- bought a copy of our annual *Worth Conserving* calendar
- became a Member
- made a one-time gift
- participated in our year-end campaign.

This year Legacy took part in the Dragon's Den hosted by the Rotary Club of Olds and was the recipient of \$1100! Total fundraising for 2024 was \$16,775 compared to \$29,889 for 2023.

Special thanks to all for your support of our various conservation programs.

Government and External Relations

Lori-Jo Graham, Chair

The Government and External Relations Committee (GERC) provided Legacy's Board of Directors with guidance and advice regarding changes made to the Alberta Land Trust Grant Program (ALTGP) by the Government of Alberta.

ALTGP has traditionally opened grant applications each spring. That did not happen this year. (ALTGP is Legacy's only source of consistent funding for conservation easements.)

The Regional Land Trust of Alberta (RLTA)—of which Legacy is a member—engaged a government relations consultancy firm, Prairie Sky Strategy. The firm met with representatives of the ALTGP and the Alberta Government, to advocate for continued support of land trusts and perpetual conservation easements.

The committee provided support to RLTA's advocacy. In late September, ALTGP reopened for grant submissions. Several changes were made to the program including restricting eligible applicants to Alberta-based organizations.

The committee initiated two outreach activities. After a Mountain View County by-election, we reached out to newly elected Councillor Tiffany Nixon for an introductory meeting to be held early in 2025.

A request for a meeting was also sent to Nathan Cooper, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills Member of the Legislative Assembly and Speaker of the Alberta Legislature.



*Birdwatchers
Veronica Reist*

CALENDAR

Our annual *Worth Conserving* calendar features more than 50 full-colour photos taken in and around Mountain View County.

Many thanks to the 34 photographers who generously donated their work, to the sponsors who covered production costs, and to broken arrow solutions for the beautiful layout and design.



Mountain View County
~
Athanasiou Law
Professional Corporation
~
connectFirst
credit union
~
Latitude Electrical Ltd.
Serving Mountain View County & Area
~
Perry Appraisal Associates Ltd.
Real Estate Appraisers

 **broken arrow solutions**
incorporated
your design solution

BOARD of DIRECTORS

2024-2025

Don Greenfield, Chair

Michael Dougherty, Vice-Chair

Doug Collister, Treasurer

Lori-Jo Graham, Secretary

Alisha Athanasiou

Sally Banks

Bruce Beattie

Kevin Frankowski

Bob Griebel

Tony Martens

Jerry Roberts

Larry Wright

STAFF

Rebecca Nielsen, Executive Director

Patti Gardner, Administrative Coordinator

**WATER QUALITY & YOU 2.0
PROJECT LEAD**

Rose Chong-Wu

**SEASONAL
CONSERVATION COORDINATORS**

Zoe Montgomery

Ethan Sperle

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Barry Trakalo / Gwen Tomlin / Mary Anne Sharpe /
Dianne Seamans / Veronica Reist / Marilyn Phillips /
Erik Neumeyer / Legacy / Christine Lo / Peter Kleinloog /
Colleen Kaiser-Gill / Colin Huggons / Sandy Easterbrook /
Andre Cormeau / Sally Banks