



RURAL ROUTES

WELCOME TO THE 2026 SPRING EDITION OF RURAL ROUTES

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- Bee Box Workshop in partnership with LSWC and the Alberta Native Bee Council - August 5, 2026 at the Widewater Complex

»»» ASB MEMBERS

- Damond Stadnyk, Chairperson
- Sandra Melzer, Division 1 Councillor
- Thomas Snowden, Division 2 Councillor
- Cache Schiller, Member-At-Large
- Jessica Mittelstadt, Member-At-Large

Visit our webpage



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ASB REMINDERS

➤➤➤ A Glimpse at Weed Inspections for 2026

Looking into the 2026 season, two seasonal weed inspectors will be hired to conduct weed and pest inspections throughout the municipality. These inspectors will focus on identifying invasive species and ensuring compliance with the *Weed Control Act* and *Agricultural Pests Act*. Once the inspections are complete, landowners will be contacted, and the inspectors will work collaboratively with them to develop a tailored weed or pest management plan.

The management plan may include recommendations for mechanical, biological, or chemical control methods, depending on the severity of the infestation and the species involved. Inspectors will also provide guidance on integrated pest management strategies to minimize the long-term impact on the land while promoting environmental sustainability. Ongoing monitoring and follow-up inspections will be conducted to assess progress and adjust management efforts as needed.

Landowners will be encouraged to take proactive measures and seek support from the municipality and local agricultural organizations. Resources such as workshops and educational materials will be made available to help landowners better understand their responsibilities and the benefits of managing invasive species effectively. This initiative aims to protect both agricultural productivity and natural ecosystems throughout the municipality.

➤➤➤ Road Allowance Vegetation Management Program Exemption

From June to October, Agricultural Services crews apply herbicides along MD-owned road allowances to eradicate prohibited noxious weeds, noxious weeds and woody species. In 2026, chemical applications will focus on the Smith/Hondo & East Fawcett area.

All grassy areas along municipal roads will receive a shoulder pass first, meaning one width of the mower. Hamlets will be mowed once. Secondary cuts will be subject to weather during the season. Individuals wishing to cut and bale the ditch is also asked to opt out of vegetation control.

To opt out of the Roadside Herbicide Application Program, please fill out Road Allowance Vegetation Management Program Exemption Form and notify the Agricultural Fieldman annually **prior to May 30**. In doing so, you assume responsibility for control of noxious & prohibited noxious weeds and woody species on your road allowances.



➤➤➤ WEED CONTROL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Weed Control Partnership Program within the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River stands as a well-established initiative designed to provide financial support for the management of noxious and prohibited noxious weeds. This program plays a crucial role in subsidizing the costs associated with herbicides used in the control of legislated weeds across various non-crop areas such as rangelands, pastures, hay lands, fence lines, and more.

Landowners who have procured, applied, and undergone inspections for herbicides used in weed control activities are eligible to participate in this program. The rebate program witnesses substantial engagement each year, resulting in funds being returned to qualifying landowners.

The deadline for applications in the current year is October 15th, 2026, with fund disbursements scheduled to occur after this date. The program's ongoing success underscores its significance in supporting effective weed control measures in the community.

Upcoming deadlines for AFSC services

Annual Crop Insurance- Last day to file Land Reports and report acres that remain unseeded due to excessive moisture: **June 20th, 2026**

Hail Insurance- Premiums received by AFSC the later of June 25 or within 15 days of billing date receive an early payment discount: **June 25th, 2026**

Perennial Crop Insurance - Premiums received by AFSC the later of June 25 or within 15 days of billing day receive an early payment discount: **June 25th, 2026**

Livestock Price Insurance: Calf last day to purchase calf insurance for 2026: **June 11th, 2026**

For more information visit www.afsc.ca.



**TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF**

**IF YOU ARE
STRUGGLING, YOU
ARE NOT ALONE;
HELP IS AVAILABLE**



Mental Health Help Line
1.877.303.2642

Crisis Services Help Line
1.883.303.2642

Family Violence Info Line
1.780.310.1818

Addiction Help Line
1.866.332.2322

Kids Help Phone
1.800.668.6868

Counselling Alberta
1.833.827.4230

Emergency
911

Alberta Health Link
811

Talk Suicide Canada
988

▶▶▶ ALBERTA ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLANS

The Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is a voluntary, confidential program that helps farmers and ranchers assess their environmental practices and identify improvements. An EFP is a self-assessment tool that allows farmers and ranchers to identify environmental risks and implement best management practices. By completing an EFP, producers gain a clear understanding of how their day-to-day activities impact soil, water, air, and biodiversity.

Why complete an EFP?

- Demonstrates environmental stewardship
- Improves productivity and reduces costs
- Required for many funding programs

Steps to Get Started:

1. Visit the Alberta EFP website to register your farm. [EFP Program | Alberta Environmental Farm Plan](#)
2. Fill in basic information and you'll receive a confirmation email to activate your account.
3. Access your account to start your EFP WebBook.
4. Once you activate your account you will be signed an EFP Technician in your area.
5. You can complete the EFP on your own or reach out with your technician if you have any questions or would like to sit down to have a one-on-one meeting to start.



Feel free to contact the MD of Lesser Slave River's Flatbush office for more information at 780.681.3929.

▶▶▶ FARMING IN A DROUGHT

During a drought, farmers face significant challenges in maintaining the health and productivity of their crops and livestock. To mitigate the impact, farmers can implement various strategies tailored to conserving water, optimizing resource usage, and ensuring the resilience of their agricultural systems.

Water management becomes paramount during drought conditions. Farmers can prioritize water allocation, ensuring essential needs like drinking water for livestock and irrigation for crucial crops are met. Implementing water-saving techniques such as drip irrigation and utilizing water storage facilities can maximize water efficiency. Crop selection plays a crucial role in drought management. Opting for drought-resistant crop varieties with shorter growing seasons or higher tolerance to dry conditions can improve overall resilience. Additionally, practices like soil conservation, mulching, and cover cropping help retain soil moisture and enhance its water-holding capacity. Livestock management requires close attention during drought. Providing adequate shelter, ventilation, and access to clean water is essential for maintaining livestock health and productivity. Adjusting feeding practices and exploring alternative feed sources can help compensate for reduced forage availability.

Financial planning is vital for farmers to weather the economic impact of drought. Developing financial reserves, accessing drought insurance, and seeking government assistance programs can provide crucial support during challenging times. Lastly, community support and collaboration among farmers and agricultural organizations foster resilience and resource sharing, enabling collective efforts to combat the effects of drought and ensure the sustainability of agricultural livelihoods.

Check out [Farming in Dry Conditions](#) for more information.



WILD BOAR IN ALBERTA

On December 1, 2025, the Government of Alberta announced significant amendments to the Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation concerning wild boar. Under these changes, it is now illegal to keep, import, purchase, obtain, export, sell, dispose of, or transport live wild boar or wild boar hybrids without a permit. Previously, only "wild boar-at-large" were classified as pests. The new regulations designate all wild boar as pests under the Agricultural Pests Act, reflecting the serious threat they pose to Alberta's livestock industry and environment.

This update includes a moratorium on new wild boar farms. Existing operators must either apply for a grandfathered permit or participate in a one-time exit buyout program. Farms that continue operating must meet strict containment standards, report escapes, submit annual inventory reports, undergo inspections, and comply with traceability and marketing requirements.

Hunting and trapping wild boar now require permits; however, landowners may still eliminate pests on their property under existing rules. Anyone who kills a wild boar must report the date, location, and number of animals to the Minister as soon as practicable. This reporting supports coordinated pest control, reduces disease risks, and strengthens wildlife management efforts across the province. While hunting has proven effective for other species, it is not an ideal solution for wild boar due to their rapid reproduction and strong behavioral response to hunting pressure, which makes them more elusive and often nocturnal.

Hunting and trapping wild boar in Alberta is illegal, except in the following cases:

- Owners or occupants of land, and those assisting them, may hunt or trap wild boar on land they own or occupy to prevent establishment or to control or destroy wild boar.
- Commercial operators with a valid permit.

For more information about these changes, email wildboar@gov.ab.ca or visit alberta.ca/wildboar.



Report a sighting or kill by calling 780.310.3276 (FARM) or calling your municipal Agricultural Fieldman at 780.681.3929.

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Before a wildfire download the Alberta Wildfire and Emergency Alert apps or visit wildfire.alberta.ca for live updates on wildfire status, fire bans, restrictions, and offers tips on wildfire prevention. Prepare an emergency kit with a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, fuel, an extra phone charger, and enough food and water for 72 hours. It is recommended that if you own livestock plan for enough supplies to last 5 days. Store important documents like passports, birth certificates, banking information, and insurance papers in a secure, above-ground location. Keep your vehicle ready by maintaining a full gas tank in case power outages close fuel stations. Ensure you have a vehicle emergency kit, including an extra phone charger and adapters. FireSmart your property by gradually establishing fuel-free zones around buildings such as homes, barns, and storage areas. Reducing combustible materials around your property helps minimize fire risk.

Farm and Acreage
Wildfire Guide



Animal Emergency
Plan



For more information and factsheets visit Alberta.ca/wildfirepreparedness.



WEEDS TO WATCH



BIOLOGY

Although often perceived as an attractive wildflower, Oxeye Daisy is a non-native invasive species with significant ecological and economic impacts. Its greatest effect is on forage production in pastures and meadows, as livestock typically avoid grazing on this plant. This avoidance reduces available grazing areas and hay yields. When left unmanaged, Oxeye Daisy can dominate landscapes, displacing diverse plant communities and increasing bare soil exposure, which may lead to further degradation.

IDENTIFICATION

Oxeye Daisy stems can reach up to 1 meter in height and are smooth, occasionally branching near the top. The leaves are spoon-shaped with jagged, tooth-like edges, forming dense clusters at the base and becoming sparse toward the upper stem. Each stem bears a single flower, typically 5 cm in diameter, featuring a yellow center surrounded by 20 to 30 white petals that are slightly notched at the tips.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

While cattle generally avoid grazing on Oxeye Daisy, other livestock such as horses and sheep may consume it. Seed set will limit regrowth during the summer. For chemical control, herbicides containing Aminopyralid, either alone or in combination with Metsulfuron-methyl or 2,4-D, are registered for use against Oxeye Daisy.



BIOLOGY

Himalayan Balsam can be mistaken for native species such as Spotted Jewelweed and Touch-Me-Not Balsam, which feature yellow-orange flowers and less sharply toothed leaves. This invasive plant prefers moist, nutrient-rich soils and commonly establishes in disturbed areas, such as sites affected by uprooted trees or flooding. It thrives in riparian zones and wet woodlands where soil disruption provides ideal conditions for growth.

IDENTIFICATION Himalayan Balsam has smooth, hollow, reddish-purple stems that can reach up to 3 meters in height and break easily. Its lance-shaped leaves have sharply serrated edges, arranged in pairs or whorls of three, and decrease in size toward the top of the stem. The flowers are large, pink to purple (occasionally white), with five petals and bilateral symmetry. The upper petal forms a distinctive hood.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Manual removal is the most effective method for Himalayan Balsam due to its shallow root system. Repeated hand-pulling and proper disposal—either in a landfill or by incineration—are essential to prevent regrowth. While livestock grazing has occurred without reported harm, the plant should not be used as forage. Cultivation and mowing can help but are often impractical in wet, riparian environments.



BIOLOGY Common Tansy is a perennial species that spreads through both seeds and underground rhizomes, often forming dense patches. It contains toxic compounds that can harm humans and livestock if consumed in large quantities. This plant thrives in sunny locations with fertile, well-drained soil and is frequently found in disturbed environments. Its aggressive growth poses a significant threat to both natural ecosystems and agricultural landscapes.

IDENTIFICATION Stems can reach up to 1.5 meters in height. The leaves are fern-like, alternate along the stem, and deeply divided into narrow, toothed leaflets. At the top of the stems, the plant produces clusters of small, yellow, button-shaped flowers. Seeds are yellow-brown with toothed crowns, and a single plant can produce up to 50,000 seeds.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Common Tansy is generally avoided by cattle and horses, though sheep and goats may graze on it. Due to its rhizomatous growth, cultivation is ineffective for long-term control. Mechanical methods such as mowing or cutting can reduce seed production but must be repeated to prevent regrowth. Aminopyralid (often combined with 2,4-D), Chlorsulfuron (used alone or with Metsulfuron-methyl), Metsulfuron-methyl (alone or with Aminopyralid), and Tribenuron-methyl are registered for use on common tansy.



Always check product labels to ensure the herbicide is registered for use on the target plant in Canada.



CALVING RESOURCES

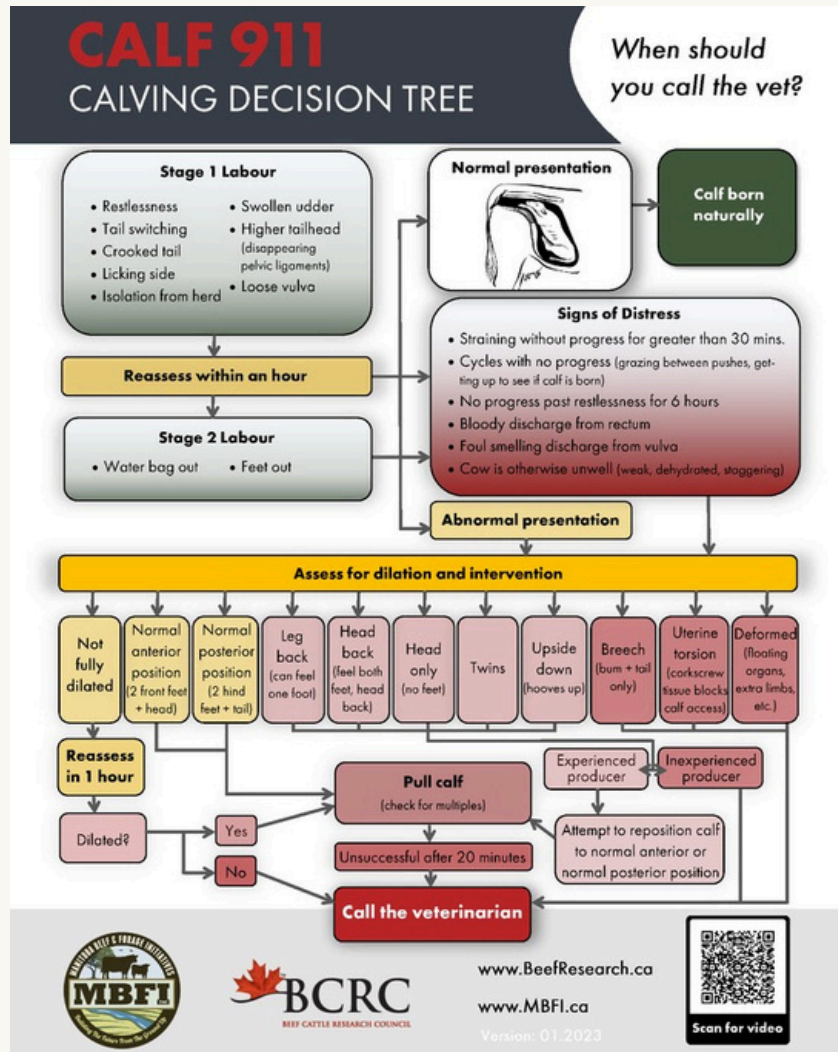
As calving season approaches, preparation is key to a smooth and successful experience. Start by reviewing herd health records and ensuring your facilities are clean, dry, and safe. Stock up on essentials like gloves, calving chains, towels, and a flashlight. Monitor cows closely for signs of labor and know when to assist or call a vet.

Taking care of both your cows and calves during calving season helps ensure a healthy herd and reduces stress for everyone involved. Don't forget to take care of yourself too —rest, nutrition, and mental readiness are part of a successful season.

Calf Health Tips:

- Ensure breathing: Clear the calf's airway immediately after birth and confirm it's breathing well.
- Encourage nursing: Calves should nurse within the first 2 hours to receive colostrum, which is vital for immunity.
- Navel care: Dip the navel in iodine to prevent infection.
- Warmth matters: In cold conditions, dry the calf thoroughly and provide shelter or supplemental heat if needed. Watch for scours:
- Monitor calves for signs of diarrhea and dehydration, and act quickly if symptoms appear.

Visit [BCRC Calving & Calf Management](http://www.BCRC.ca) website for more information and videos.



AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

Keepup todated withthe mostrecentinformationby checking out the below links!

Report

- [Alberta Crop Reports](#)
- [Alberta Moisture Situation Updates](#)

Resources

- [Alberta Beef Producers](#)
- [Alberta Cattlemen's Penning & Sorting Association](#)
- [Alberta Canola Producers Commission](#)
- [Alberta Chicken Producers](#)
- [Alberta Elk Commission](#)
- [Alberta Food Processor Association](#)
- [Alberta Lamb Producers](#)
- [Alberta Pork Producers](#)
- [Canada Water Portal](#)
- [Bison Producers of Alberta](#)
- [Canadian Cattlemen's Association](#)
- [Prairie Pest Monitoring Network](#)
- [Beef Cattle Research Council](#)

Markets

- [Weekly livestock market review](#)
- [Weekly crop market review](#)

VETERINARY SERVICES INC.

How the Program Works

Veterinary Services Incorporated (VSI) works to ensure rural communities have access to essential veterinary care by supporting the recruitment and retention of veterinary professionals. Through subsidized programs, this program helps offset the cost of specific veterinary procedures for livestock producers, promoting animal health and best management practices.

Any producer of livestock within MD boundaries can participate in the V.S.I. program must enter into a VSI by entering into an agreement with the MD.

See [Policy AG-63-04 "Veterinary Services INC Partnership Program"](#), and [Schedule "A" 60/40-Effective Jan 1, 2025](#) for specific details. Or call the MD of Lesser Slave River's Flatbush office for more information at 780.681.3929.



Proof of Ownership Required

Please remember to include proof of ownership of all land and livestock cited in your application.



LSWC Rain Barrel Sale



Got Spring gardening projects on the mind? Us too

The LSWC has partnered with RainBarrel.ca to offer rain barrels and accessories for sale.

Capture and use rainwater in your garden to keep your plants healthy and thriving, conserve water, reduce your water bill, reduce plastic waste (rain barrels are made from repurposed drums), AND support the LSWC! \$10 from each sale will support local LSWC projects and initiatives.

Order now to secure your rain barrels for either:

- June 5th pick up in Slave Lake
- June 6th pick up in High Prairie.

Click here to order: <https://rainbarrel.ca/lswc/>

Watershed Resiliency Program Project Funding Available Now

The LSWC is pleased to offer funding and support for landowners through our Watershed Resiliency Program. This initiative supports landowners in planning and implementing projects that not only improve their operation and property value but also strengthen the health and resiliency of our watershed.

Lakeshore, acreage, and agricultural landowners are eligible to partner on projects that benefit the watershed by improving resiliency to floods and droughts, protect or improve water quality, and enhance habitat to support biodiversity.



Examples eligible project activities include (but are not limited to):

- Fencing wetlands and streams and implementing off stream watering systems for livestock.
- Naturalizing your lakefront with native species that provide erosion protection and habitat.
- Revegetating bare soil areas where run off is causing erosion and sediment transport.
- Enhancing water storage capacity by expanding wetlands.
- Planting native species like willows and shrubs along water bodies to reduce and prevent erosion, protect water quality, and create habitat.

If you have a project idea, reach out to the LSWC team at info@lswc.ca

Our staff can help you:

- Develop your project plan, budget, and maps.
- Identify suppliers, materials & resources.
- Navigate Water Act requirements.
- Provide info on the EFP program & provincial grant opportunities.
- Complete your landowner project agreement.

Once approved, you can begin implementing your project — funds are released once the work is completed. Funding is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The LSWC typically cost-shares 50–75% of eligible costs.

Wetlands of the Lesser Slave Region Workshop



Want to learn more about the wetlands of the Lesser Slave Region? Join us for a two-day workshop in Kinuso facilitated by Ducks Unlimited Canada in partnership with Swan River First Nation and the Lesser Slave Watershed Council.

Learn about:

- Wetland classification and identification
- Braiding traditional ecological and western ways of knowing
- Wetland ecosystem services and values

May 28th & 29th, 9:00am – 5:00pm at the Kinuso Agricultural Hall with visits to field sites around the Kinuso Region.

The last day to register is May 22nd, 2026 but spots are limited so make sure to register before it's too late!

Click here to register:

https://ducks.donordrive.com/boreal_workshop_series3






Lesser Slave Watershed Council AGM

**Lesser Slave Watershed Council
Annual General Meeting**

When:
June 25th, 2026
10:00am - 3:00pm

Where:
Slave Lake, venue TBD



Save the date! The Lesser Slave Watershed Councils AGM will be on June 25th, 2026, from 10am-3pm in Slave Lake, venue to be determined. Snacks and a free lunch will be provided for those who register.

Learn more about the LSWC and its operations. We have many board positions open for election!

- Oil and Gas Sector (1 year term)
- Agriculture Sector (2 year term)
- Tourism and Economic Development (2 year term)
- Angling and Recreation (1 year term)
- Cottager & Acreage Owners (2 year term)
- Non-Government Organizations (2 year term)

For more information about being a board member contact us at info@lswc.ca or give us a call at 780-523-9800!

Stay tuned for the venue location as we get closer to June 5th. Make sure to follow the Lesser Slave Watershed Council on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) (abLSWC), or [X](#) to keep up to date!

Bumble Bee Box Workshops

Want to help promote native bumble bees in your back yard? The Lesser Slave Watershed Council is partnering with the Alberta Native Bee Council, Big Lakes County, and the M.D. of Lesser Slave River to host two workshops that are free to attend!

The workshops will include a presentation on Alberta's native bumble bees, their habitat needs, and the importance of their conservation, followed by a short break and bee box construction!

Come out to the Lesser Slave River Workshop on August 5th or the High Prairie Workshop on August 6th to have an unBEElievable time!

Locations and times are still to be decided so make sure to follow the Lesser Slave Watershed Council on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) (abLSWC), or [X](#) to keep up to date!

Ready to Make a Difference?
Reach out today to discuss your project idea!
Email: info@lswc.ca
Call us 780.523.9800
Check out our webpage: www.lswc.ca



WHY CLEANING EQUIPMENT BETWEEN FIELDS MATTER

Cleaning farm equipment when moving between fields is often skipped due to time constraints, especially on large farms. Proper sanitation of equipment prior to entering the MD or another field may reduce or prevent the introduction or spread of infestations. Diseases like clubroot (*plasmodiophora brassicae*), verticillium stripe (*verticillium longisporim*), weed seeds and insect pupae can be transferred through soil residue on equipment. Even a few grams of contaminated soil can introduce pests, while machinery can move hundreds of pounds quickly.

Cleaning farm equipment between fields is critical to prevent the spread of soil-borne diseases and invasive weeds. Alberta legislation reinforces this responsibility:

- **Alberta Weed Control Act: Part 1 Sec. 4(1) and Part 6 Sec. 30(c);** Requires individuals to control or destroy designated weeds, including those spread by contaminated machinery. Failure to comply can result in enforcement actions and fines.
- **Alberta Agricultural Pests Act: Sec. 5;** Requires individuals to prevent, control, and destroy regulated pests and their movement. Inspectors can issue notices and enforce compliance.

Steps for Effective Cleaning

Step 1: Rough Cleaning

- Remove large soil clumps with a shovel, hoe, or ice scraper.
- Use hand scrapers, wire brushes, or compressed air for smaller debris.
- Goal: Remove 90% of soil (takes about an hour for average seeding tool).

Step 2: Fine Cleaning

- Pressure wash at 2,000–3,000 psi; turbo nozzles work best.
- Industrial detergent can improve soil removal.
- Steps 1 & 2 combined remove 99% of soil.

Step 3: Disinfection

- Apply disinfectant (bleach is most effective for clubroot) using a backpack sprayer.
- Keep surfaces wet for 15–20 minutes; early morning or evening reduces evaporation.
- Disinfection alone is ineffective—must follow Steps 1 & 2.

Additional Notes

- **Used Machinery:** Clean before bringing it home; pressure wash at purchase site or in a designated area.

Source & Credit:
Based on [Canola Council of Canada](#).



MDLSR Agricultural Supplies Available:

For Rent:

Trailer Sprayer

100 gallon tank, 8 foot trailer, 2-inch ball hitch required, \$100.00 deposit required at pick up.

ATV Sprayer

60 liter tank, Ball hitch, \$100 deposit required at pick up.

Manual Handheld Sprayer

1-5 gallon canisters \$50.00 deposit required at pick up.

Skunk Trap

\$50.00 deposit

Soil Probe

\$50.00 deposit

For more information or to rent any of these items please call the Flatbush Sub-office at 780.681.3929.

Understanding and Preventing Soil Erosion

Healthy soil is the backbone of agriculture, but erosion can quickly reduce its ability to support crops and livestock. Soil erosion occurs when soil particles are displaced and transported by wind or water, stripping away valuable topsoil and nutrients.

Types of Soil Erosion

Wind erosion happens when strong winds lift and move soil particles. Fields with sparse vegetation, dry and loose soil, smooth surfaces, and exposure to high winds are most at risk.

Prevention Tips: maintain at least 30% vegetation cover, use crop rotation and continuous cropping, establish shelterbelts or windbreaks, practice reduced tillage and minimize fallow periods.

Water erosion occurs when rainfall or snowmelt washes soil away, especially on bare ground, steep slopes, or long uninterrupted slopes.

Prevention Tips: choose appropriate land use and cover crops, maintain vegetation cover year-round, implement reduced tillage and direct seeding, preserve soil organic matter for better water retention

Why It Matters

Soil erosion impacts productivity, water quality, and long-term sustainability. The *Alberta Soil Conservation Act* states every landholder must take appropriate measures to prevent soil loss or deterioration, or if soil loss is occurring, stop it from continuing.

For full details, visit [Alberta Soil Conservation Act](#) or contact the MD's Agricultural Fieldman at 780.681.3929.



SPRING CLEANUP TIPS FOR YOUR YARD

To support overwintering insects while keeping your yard healthy and fire-safe, consider these practices. The Agriculture Department follows these same principles in its spring maintenance of public properties, ensuring that green spaces remain both ecologically balanced and well-maintained.

- **Wait to Rake** – Delay raking leaves and debris until temperatures consistently reach 10°C to allow beneficial insects to emerge.
- **Leave Some Leaf Litter** – Instead of removing all leaves, keep a thin layer in garden beds to provide habitat for pollinators.
- **Mow Mindfully** – Raise mower blades to leave grass a little longer, providing shelter for insects and reducing soil moisture loss.
- **Prune with Care** – Trim dead branches and plants gradually to avoid disturbing beneficial insects still sheltering in stems.
- **Remove Invasive Weeds** – Identify and pull invasive plants before they spread while leaving native plants intact for pollinators.
- **Dispose of Yard Waste Properly** – Compost organic materials when possible and follow local guidelines for safe debris disposal.
- **Recycle When Possible** – Separate recyclable materials, such as plastic plant containers and yard waste bags, to reduce landfill waste and promote sustainability.
- **Clear Potential Fire Hazards** – Trim dry grasses, remove flammable debris near structures, and keep a defensible space around your home.

By following these steps, yard owners can maintain a clean and fire-safe yard while supporting local ecosystems.



WHY EVERGREENS TURN BROWN IN SPRING

Needle discoloration or loss on healthy evergreens is often linked to winter stress rather than insects or disease. Environmental factors such as desiccation, frost, salt exposure, drought, flooding, and poor soil conditions are common causes.

How to Diagnose Winter Injury

- Look for browning or thinning foliage.
- Examine roots and trunk for compaction or chemical damage.
- Use binoculars to check the crown for physical harm from wildlife or storms.
- Damage varies by species:
 - Cedars often shift from green to tan or reddish-brown.
 - Spruce and pine typically show browning at needle tips.
 - Injury may affect isolated branches, one side of the tree, or the entire plant.

Is the Tree Still Alive?

- Flexible, green branches indicate life.
- Brittle branches that snap easily suggest death and no regrowth.

Common Winter Problems

- **Desiccation:** Needles lose moisture while roots remain frozen; worsens on sunny, windy days.
- **Sunscald:** Bark cracks from temperature swings; frequent on young trees and hardwoods like ash, oak, birch, and willow.
- **Cold Damage:** Rapid temperature changes (e.g., -40°C to +10°C) harm roots, especially in dry soils or areas with little snow cover.

Tips to Minimize Winter Damage:

- Water deeply in fall and again in early spring after thaw.
- Mulch (5–12 cm) to retain soil moisture.
- Plant hardy varieties suited to Alberta zones.
- Avoid planting near reflective surfaces.
- Fertilize after harsh winters (stop nitrogen after June).
- Do NOT wrap evergreens with burlap or plastic—can cause tissue damage.

For more information check out [Browning of Evergreens](#).



WHAT IS AN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD?

Who We Are

An ASB stands for Agricultural Service Board, this is a committee that is appointed by Council. All rural municipalities are required to have a ASB which is governed through the *Alberta Agricultural Service Board Act*.

The MD of Lesser Slave River's ASB consists of five members appointed annually:

- Two members are sitting Council representatives
- Three members are local MD producers

Legislation requires that Agricultural Service Board members possess knowledge of agricultural issues and be qualified to develop policies aligned with the *ASB Act*. Members must also be able to represent council effectively, as boards are mandated to exercise, on behalf of council, all duties and powers granted under this or any other legislation related to agriculture.

By law, every ASB must employ an Agricultural Fieldman. This position is responsible for implementing MD policies and managing day-to-day operations.

Key responsibilities include:

- Acting in an advisory capacity to the ASB and Council
- Coordinating ASB meetings and preparing budgets
- Supervising staff and overseeing MD programs and workshops
- Ensuring compliance with provincial legislation
- Serving as a liaison between the ASB, municipal administration, producers, and provincial government representatives

The Agricultural Fieldman ensures smooth communication and effective delivery of agricultural programs within the MD.

For information on Agricultural Service Boards please visit agriculturalserviceboards.com or for more information on Agricultural Fieldman visit aaaf.ab.ca.

What We Do

The ASB works to:

- Advise Council on agricultural matters and policy development.
- Protect Agricultural Resources by enforcing provincial acts:
 - *Weed Control Act*
 - *Agricultural Pests Act*
 - *Soil Conservation Act*
 - *Animal Health Act*
- Support Producers through programs, workshops, and information sharing.
- Promote Environmental Stewardship by encouraging soil and water conservation practices.
- Manage Invasive Species through education, monitoring, and control programs.
- Collaborate with local and regional partners to address emerging agricultural issues.

For more information on the MD Lesser Slave River Agricultural Service board call the Flatbush Sub-Office at 780.681.3929



AQUATIC INVASIVES

Invasive fish species such as Prussian carp, goldfish, koi, and black bullhead are disrupting Alberta's aquatic ecosystems. These non-native species compete with native fish for food and habitat, degrade water quality, and can spread diseases. Once introduced, they are extremely difficult to remove and can cause long-term ecological and economic damage.

What You Can Do:

- Never release aquarium fish or live bait into lakes, rivers, or streams.
- Clean, Drain, Dry your gear and boats before moving between waterbodies.
- Report sightings of invasive species to Alberta's invasive species hotline or through the EDDMapS Alberta app.

Learn more and access maps of invasive fish locations at Invasive Fish Species Alberta.ca.

As of July 2015, there are 25 prohibited fish species under the Fisheries (Alberta) Act. It is mandatory to report any of the 52 prohibited species listed in the Fisheries (Alberta) Act within 14 days of finding them to provide the best chance of response success. There are 3 ways to report invasive species:

- Phone the Aquatic invasive species (AIS) Hotline at 1-855-336-BOAT (2628).
- Use EDDMapS Alberta Smartphone Application or online.
- Email aep.ais@gov.ab.ca

Source & Credit:

Based on Alberta Invasive Species Council

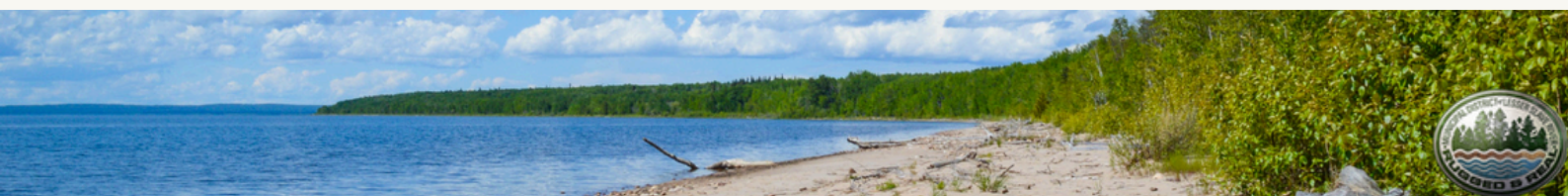


HOW TO REDUCE YOUR IMPACT IN ALBERTA PARKS

When visiting Alberta Parks, it's important to reduce your environmental footprint and help preserve natural spaces. Always stay on designated trails, even if they are muddy, to prevent erosion and trail widening, and avoid cutting across switchbacks. Walk on durable surfaces such as rock or gravel and steer clear of fragile vegetation. Camp only in approved sites. Be courteous to others by sharing trails, yielding to horses, and keeping noise levels low—use headphones for music and avoid disruptive behavior. Leave nature as you find it by not disturbing rocks, plants, and cleaning gear to prevent invasive species. Do not build structures or place bird feeders, as these can harm wildlife.

Pack out everything you bring in, including garbage, food scraps, and hygiene items, and never burn trash. Use bins when available or carry waste out. For human waste, use outhouses when possible; if not, bury waste in a hole 15–20 cm deep and at least 50 m from water, and pack out toilet paper. Wash dishes and bathe away from water sources, and dispose of grey water in designated areas. For fish remains, puncture the air bladder and throw them far into the lake. Respect wildlife by keeping your distance, never feeding animals, and leashing pets. Follow trail closures for wildlife safety and practice bear awareness, avoiding berry-rich areas during feeding season. Finally, practice fire safety by using portable stoves when possible, building fires only in designated pits, keeping fires small, burning wood completely, and ensuring ashes are cold before leaving.

For more details, visit Alberta Parks – [Minimize Your Impact](#).



KIDS KORNER

SPRING WORD SEARCH

FIND AND CIRCLE EACH WORD!



S	H	O	W	E	R	S	A	E
O	A	S	P	R	I	N	G	A
S	H	O	W	E	R	S	S	S
C	N	B	U	N	N	Y	T	T
T	H	G	R	A	S	S	B	E
U	R	I	A	P	R	I	L	R
L	H	O	C	H	F	O	O	L
I	P	I	N	K	T	D	O	E
P	E	G	G	S	T	S	M	R

Eggs	Easter	Bunny	Bloom
Chick	Fool	April	Showers
Spring	Grass	Pink	Tulip

HOMEMADEHEATHER.COM

Worms & Dirt Dessert



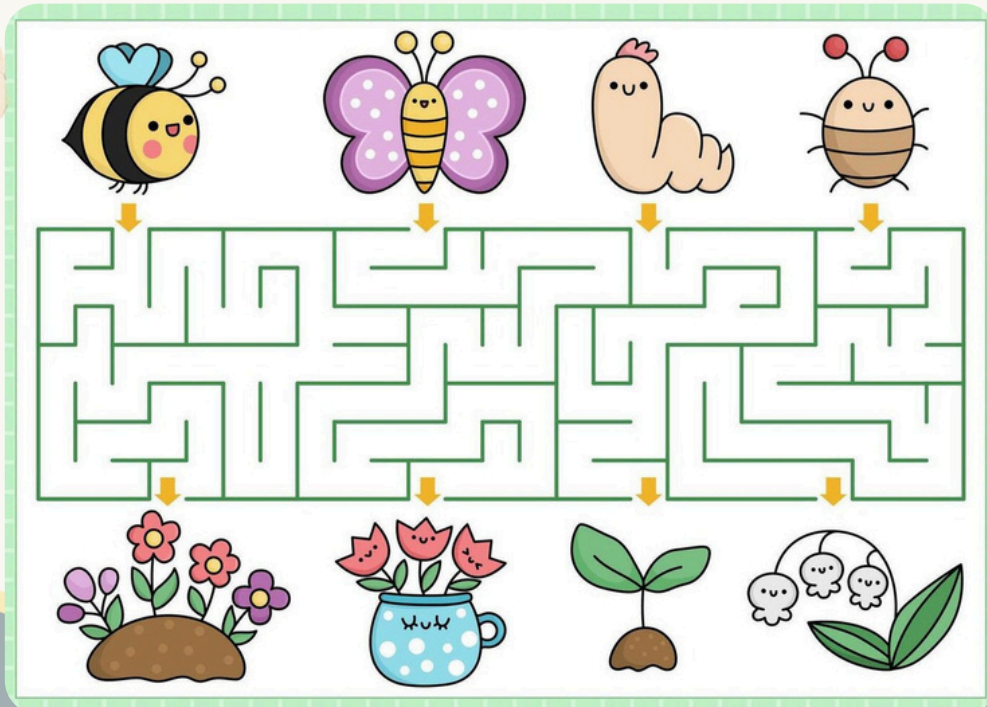
A creepy-crawly treat that's as fun to make as it is to eat!

Ingredients:

- 1 package (3.9 oz) chocolate instant pudding mix, 2 cups cold milk, 1 package (16 oz) chocolate sandwich cookies (like Oreos), Gummy worms

Instructions:

1. Make the pudding
2. Place cookies in a Ziploc bag
3. Crush cookies using a rolling pin until they resemble dirt.
4. In clear cups or a large serving bowl, layer the pudding mixture and crushed cookies. Start with pudding, then cookies, and repeat until full.
5. Top with gummy worms.
6. Chill and serve



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