

Birds of prey nature's way to control pests



Rodents in the County are detrimental to crops, soil stability and general land management. The most common animal pests include Richardson ground squirrels (gophers), pocket gophers (moles), and voles (field mice).

Birds of prey such as the red-tailed hawk, goshawk, Coopers or marsh hawk, merlin, and the small sparrow hawk or kestrel help to eliminate some of the pests on Strathcona's landscape. These avian predators are primarily daytime feeders and during their breeding season have a big appetite for rodents. A pair of kestrels may consume 500 voles during a three-month breeding season. Seventy-five percent of the red-tailed hawk diet is comprised of small mammals including rabbits, mice, voles and ground squirrels. Besides small mammals, goshawks have been known to prey on young magpies and crows.

While the world is asleep, some of the resident owl species are going to work preying on mice, voles, and pocket gophers. The great horned owl is feared by crows and is mobbed by flocks if spotted in daylight. It is Alberta's provincial bird and like other avian predators it is unlawful, under the *Wildlife Act*, to harass, kill, or injure this bird of prey. The snowy owl migrates for the winter to farmland in Strathcona County. During their stay they may consume 300 rodents a month.

Nest box plans for kestrels and owls are available to build or purchase on various internet websites. They provide a continual multi-seasonal nest site, as many of the bird nests built in mature aspen snags blow down when destroyed by caterpillars, drought and age.

Residents of Strathcona County may contribute to the presence of hawks by providing five-metre tall perching posts and nesting poles in field areas that no longer contain taller trees. Placing perching posts approximately 50 metres apart on fence lines near the crop provides a visual advantage for the raptors to capture rodents. Multiple poles provide resting perches during the many prey capture flights. Again, the internet is an excellent source for providing ideas on various types of perches.

Rodenticides, trapping, and crop rotation are some of the practices used by County residents to assist in controlling pests. Producers (tree farms, berry operations, grain and hay producers) that suffer rodent damage should consider using birds of prey as part of their pest management repertoire. Using a variety of pest control options is the best way to manage rodent populations.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Bronze Leaf Disease

Trees affected:

Swedish Columnar Aspen, Tower Poplar, Poplar Hybrid Clones

What is Bronze Leaf Disease and why is it significant?

Bronze leaf disease (BLD) is a fungal disease that infects various poplar species and hybrids, in particular - trembling aspens, Swedish columnar aspens and tower poplars. BLD is relatively new to Strathcona County and can kill an infected tree within three to five years of the initial infection.

How does this disease spread?

- spores are released from mature perithecia (spore-producing structures that develop on overwintered leaves)
- rain and moderate to warm temperatures (18 degrees celsius) lead to spore dispersal
- spores are spread during spring to infect leaves on the same tree and other adjacent trees
- disease development will occur over the course of the summer
- infections will spread internally (systemically) to other parts of the tree, in addition to spread by spores
- the disease may also be spread during propagation of infected plant material.

What are the symptoms?

Leaves usually turn orange-brown in the late summer and early fall. Infected leaves will often remain attached to the tree over the course of the winter. Leaves that over-winter may have a bumpy surface texture where the spores are developing.

What can I do?

As there are no chemicals registered for the management of this disease it is best not to plant



susceptible species. For the trees you have, make sure you remove and destroy fallen leaves (burn or County compost) and prune infected branches back to healthy wood. In most cases this may mean pruning branches back to the trunk. If you are going to plant a susceptible species, make sure you plant them far enough apart to ensure good airflow

between trees and reduce leaf debris accumulation. Finally, make sure you give your trees sufficient light, moisture and nutrients so that they are healthy as possible and able to ward off an infection.

Further information

Transportation and
Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Fire ban vs. burning suspended

A fire permit is required to have an open, uncontained fire or to use a burn barrel on your rural property. A condition of the fire permit is that you call 780-464-8464, prior to igniting a fire.

Burning is suspended if current or projected weather conditions are conducive to start a quick moving fire, or if Emergency Services resources are depleted due to other emergencies. This is a temporary status and you should call back as the status may change when conditions change.

A fire ban is different from a temporary burning suspension. During a fire ban, wildfire conditions are considered critical. No one is allowed to burn in Strathcona County, which includes using backyard fire pits and charcoal barbecues. A fire ban will be communicated to residents through the newspaper, radio, road signs and Strathcona County's website.

Further information

Strathcona County Emergency Services
780-467-5216
www.strathcona.ca/sces



FSC logo here

Strathcona
County

TRANSPORTATION &
AGRICULTURE SERVICES

2012 Rural Roadside Vegetation Control Program

The Rural Roadside Vegetation Control program will begin on June 1.

This program will help Strathcona County keep road sides clear of weeds and brush, while reducing the use of herbicides.

Keeping rural roadsides free of noxious weeds and brush:

- improves visibility at intersections
- improves visibility along the roadside making it easier to see any wildlife
- improves drainage
- controls noxious weeds
- makes it easier to clear the roads of snow.

All roads south of Highway 16 will receive a spot spray application of herbicide. All roads north of Highway 16 will receive a spot spray application of herbicide **as required**.

In all country residential subdivisions, herbicide will be applied by the spot spray method on noxious weeds and brush under two metres, **as required**.

Landowner option program

If rural residents do not want to have herbicide used in front of their property they have the option

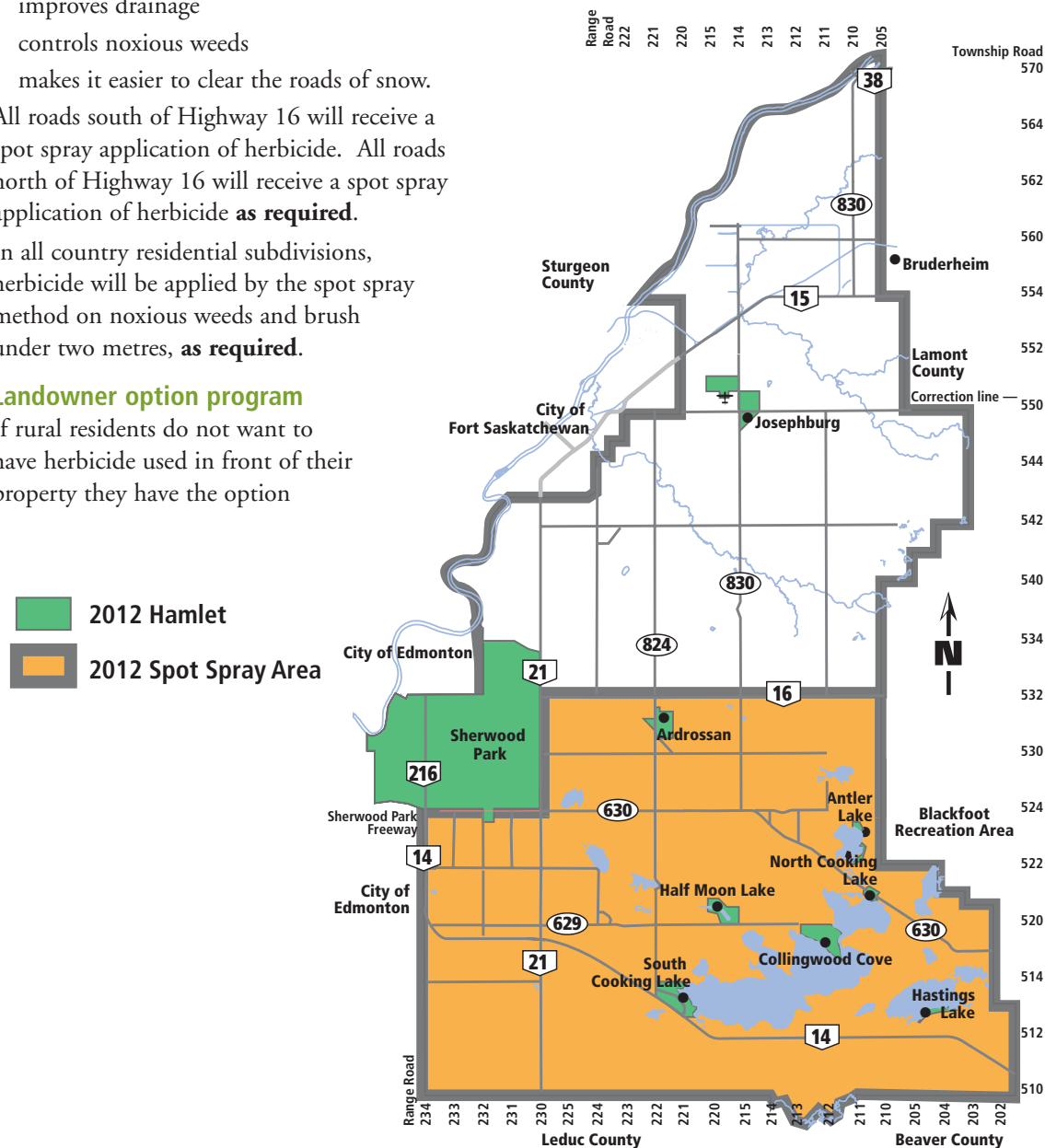
to control vegetation adjacent to their property themselves, rather than having it done by County staff.

Please contact our office for more detailed information if you would like to participate in the program.

Residents' comments and questions are welcome.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100



Spring means agricultural equipment on rural roads

Farmers use a variety of machinery for various agricultural operations. Farm trucks, tractors, bailers, tillers, combines, choppers, seeders and a multitude of other farm vehicles are used on various parts of the farm. Today's farmer may have several locations that are being farmed, some of them kilometres apart, resulting in the farmer having to cross public roads with large and dangerous machinery.

In the past when equipment was considerably smaller and there were far fewer vehicles on our rural roads, the risk of incident and or injury was much lower. Today, many rural motorists are not directly involved in farming and may not be knowledgeable about farm equipment. They may not know what to expect when they encounter a farm implement travelling the road. The onus of responsibility falls to the equipment operator to follow the laws regarding the Highway Traffic Act and the pertinent bylaws of the County.

Being safety minded is the best insurance against risk. According to Canadian Agriculture Injury Surveillance, 13 per cent of farm-related fatalities are traffic related.

Typical circumstances of a collision involving farm equipment are left turn collisions, rear-end collisions and passing collisions.

Defensive driving tips for motorists:

- Be alert – always watch for farm vehicles on rural roads, especially at seeding and harvest.
- Keep your distance – stay a safe distance, at least 15 metres or five car lengths behind farm vehicles.
- Slow down immediately – as soon as you see a slow-moving vehicle, start to brake the way you would when approaching a stoplight.
- Don't assume a farm vehicle is pulling right to let you pass – check the left side of the road for gates, driveways or any place a farm vehicle might turn. Do not pass until you are positive it is okay to do so and the road is clear.
- Be patient – don't assume the farmer can move aside to let you pass.
- Make sure you're clear – when passing, make sure you can see the farm vehicle in your rear view mirror before you change lanes.



Enjoy the drive! Following a farm vehicle usually takes just a few minutes. Don't let frustration lead you to make a decision that may cause you and others harm.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

You can contribute to Strathcona's survey of historic sites

Strathcona County's legacy of historic buildings and cultural landscapes provides in our modern-day world a "sense of place" that reflects Strathcona's rich past. In 2012, the County is conducting a survey of such historic sites and we are looking for input from the community.

The purpose of the survey is to identify historic sites — historic buildings and cultural landscapes that are significant and important to Strathcona County. These places may be buildings in Sherwood Park, rural hamlets, farming areas or even older acreages. They may be a farm site, a country church, a farmhouse or a modest cabin. They may have significant architectural features or simply reflect traditional building practices. A cultural landscape would include a section of a long forgotten trail that was once an important transportation route in bygone days.

To carry out the survey work, Strathcona has contracted Heritage Collaborative Inc., a professional heritage planning consulting firm that provides planning, training, leadership and organizational resources for cultural and heritage projects. Over the next several months, contract staff will locate historic sites across the County. Conducting the survey will involve:

- photographing historic structures and cultural landscapes
- researching the history of those structures and landscapes

Contract staff conducting the survey will not access private property unless granted permission by the landowner.

The sites identified in the survey will be used to create a Places of Interest List. Inclusion in the survey will have no legal impact on a property and will not limit its future use. The survey will be used in a more detailed inventory in the future. We hope the project will encourage public interest in local history, and further conservation and protection of local historic resources.

Are you interested in old buildings or natural places? Are you aware of old structures, trails and special landscapes that reflect important aspects of our history? Further information on this project is available at www.strathcona.ca/history, or contact Yolande Shaw at yolande.shaw@strathcona.ca or 780-410-8556.



One example of a historic site is St. Marguerite (also known as St. Margaret) Church; it was built in 1912 on the shore of Hastings Lake in the Deville district. The community will celebrate the church's 100th anniversary on June 2. The public is welcome to attend the day's events.

Helping to reduce fire risks

Spring and fall are high risk seasons for wildfire. By mitigating risks, there is less chance a wildfire will affect your property. We suggest that rural residents take the time to assess their property and reduce as many fire hazards and fuel sources as possible.

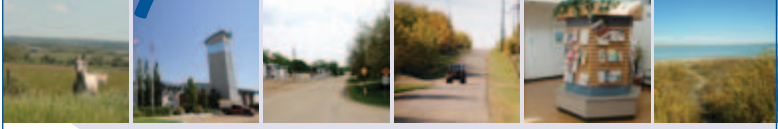
For example:

- Does your property have trees or branches that are close or are touching power lines? If so, contact your utility company to have them removed.
- Is your roof and eavestrough free of needles and leaves? If not, clean the debris off your roof.
- Ensure there are no overhanging trees, branches or shrubs next to your house that can catch fire.
- Ensure your fireplace chimney is clean and a spark arresting screen is installed.
- All long grass, shrubs, logs, branches, twigs and needles should be removed from within 10 metres of your home.
- Firewood should be stored a minimum of 10 metres away from any structure.
- It is your responsibility to keep a watchful eye on fire pits, open fires and burn barrels when they are in use. If a wildfire initiates from your property, you may be responsible for the cost of fighting the fire.
- Ensure that your address or lot number is clearly visible from the road for quick identification in an emergency.

Further information

For more suggestions on ways to FireSmart your property, visit www.strathcona.ca/sces.

At your service...



in rural Strathcona County

Service south

Residents living in the south areas of rural Strathcona County can look forward to enhanced access to municipal services through a pilot project that will see a new County Contact Office open in South Cooking Lake in early fall.

The Strathcona County contact office serves as a satellite of County Hall. The South Cooking Lake office will complement the Heartland Hall Contact Office, located in north Strathcona County (south of Highway 15, east side of Secondary Highway 830).

The office will be open three days a week, and have a staff person dedicated to help residents in south rural Strathcona County with services such as:

- information on County programs for rural residents
- connecting residents with the right person for their inquiry
- Commissioner for Oaths services (free of charge)
- computer/Internet access

Rural liaison coordinator Dinah Canart and her team welcome ideas and questions about this new office and other County services.

Heartland Hall Contact Office: 780-992-6782
Email: dinah.canart@strathcona.ca

Watch for more information about the opening of the South Cooking Lake Contact Office.

Time to SCRAP it?



The Strathcona County Reduction of Abandoned Products (SCRAP) encourages the removal of abandoned products from private properties for disposal or recycling. If you have items on your property that you would like to 'abandon' but aren't sure how to, call 780-449-5514 for suggestions.



count with a click! it's quick...

Census 2012

Using your PIN number mailed to households the week of April 23...

Complete the census online May 1 - 18

Online is quick, convenient and private for you... and cost-effective and environmentally-friendly for us.

If the web isn't your preferred way to participate...

You can provide your census information over the phone. With your PIN letter in hand, contact the Census Call Centre, 780-400-2012.

(If we haven't heard from you by May 18, a census worker will be visiting to collect the information in person.)

Municipal census is important

Up-to-date census information helps Strathcona County to:

- effectively plan for programs and services
- secure maximum grant funding based on population

Further information

780-400-2012
www.strathcona.ca/census

Strathcona
County

Extending the life of our rural roadways

The newest version of the Sustainable Rural Roads Maintenance plan was approved by Council in 2010. This plan is used by Transportation and Agriculture Services (TAS) as a way to prioritize and maintain rural roadways throughout the municipality. The principles outlined within this document include: overlay roads only when required (based on condition ratings), ensure no further narrowing of roadways with maintenance activities, and implement new treatment options to extend the life of the roadways.

In an effort to extend the life of our roadways, TAS has implemented three new preventative maintenance programs that will occur in the rural area throughout this spring and summer; micro-surfacing, graded aggregate seal, and chip seal.

Micro-surface is a thin, fine combination of bitumen and sand that is applied to the asphalt road surface and is black in colour. This treatment is used to rejuvenate oxidized surfaces in the Country Residential areas (CR's) and provides a smooth finish on the slower traffic roads. Because of the quick set characteristics, this surface is generally ready for traffic within a few hours.

Strathcona County uses two kinds of seal coat treatments - graded aggregate and chip seal,

to rejuvenate the surface condition and restore the skid resistance of asphalt roadways. These treatments consist of a bitumen and rock chip application to the driving surface. Once complete, the surface appears light coloured with a rocky texture. The application of this type of surface provides a low cost, durable driving surface, and can be open to traffic shortly after the treatment.

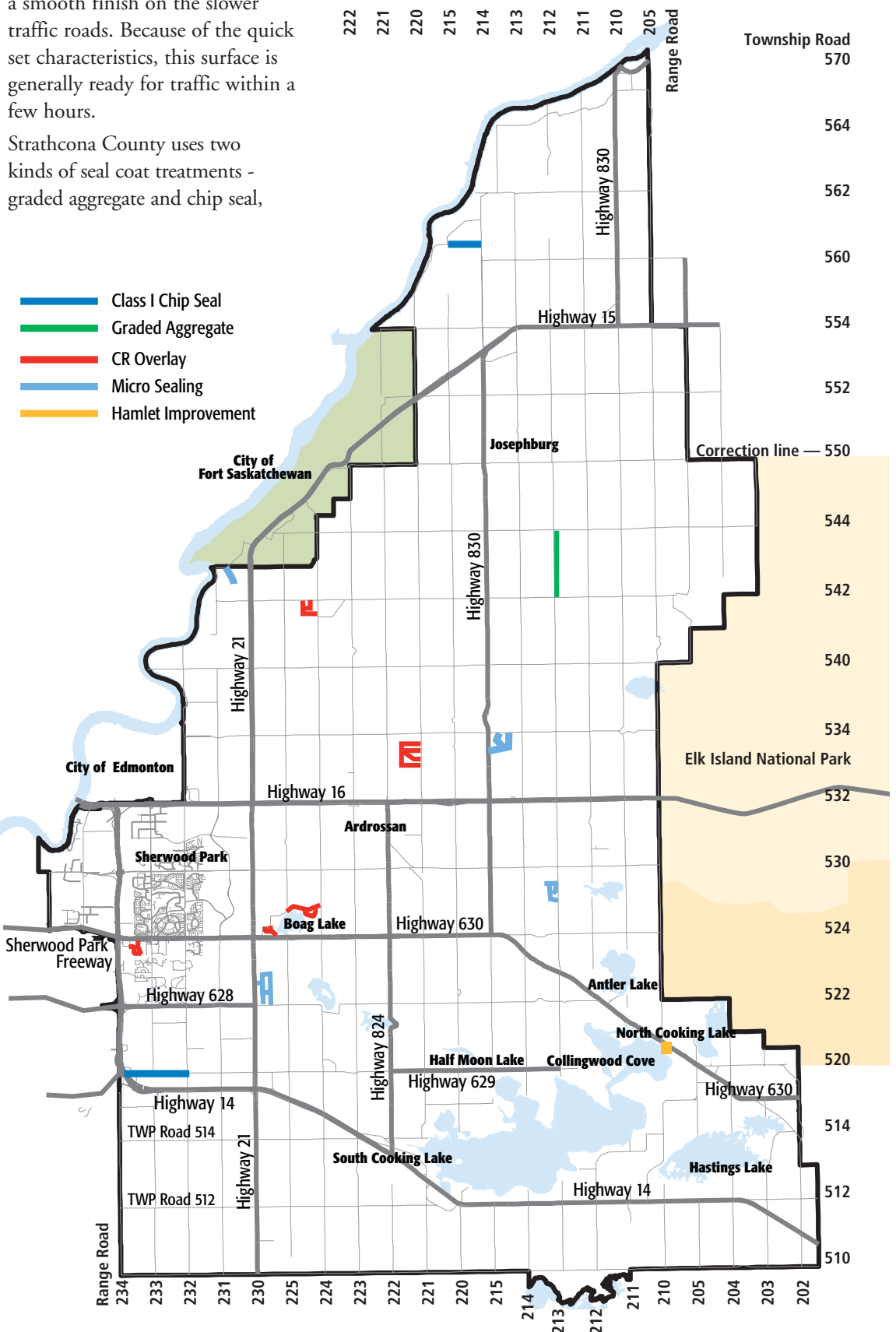
Please remember to watch for road improvement construction zones and obey all posted speed limits.

2012 Rural Maintenance Projects:

- coldmix overlay
- country residential overlay
- hamlet street improvement
- rural road re-gravelling

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100



Josephburg Community Recreation Master Plan

The County has embarked on a planning process to identify the future recreation needs of the hamlet of Josephburg.

The Josephburg Community Recreation Master Plan is another initiative stemming from the County's Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy. The plan will guide the long-term planning, design and development

of all public spaces and recreational facilities within the Josephburg community.

Community input has been gathered and the County, along with a consulting team, is developing draft options for community review. There will be an opportunity for residents to review and comment on the draft Josephburg Recreation Master

Plan at this year's Chicken Supper in June as well as through other means.

To learn more about the strategy and view the upgrades of the Josephburg Community Recreation Master Plan, visit www.strathcona.ca/revitalize or call Rob Parks, RC Strategies, 780-441-4266 or Leslee Laing, Strathcona County, 780-410-8512.



Rural Intersection Safety

Rural intersection safety remains a priority in Strathcona County. In 2011, there were seven fatal collisions in Strathcona County – all of them taking place in rural areas. Four of these fatal collisions occurred at an intersection.

There is an immense personal cost to friends and family when someone is killed or severely injured in a collision. A recent report from the Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership shows these collisions also have a high economic cost. Taking into account only such direct costs as property damage, emergency response and health services, the report estimates the direct collision cost per fatality at \$178,499.

Transportation and Agriculture Services is continually working to make rural intersections safer with regular vegetation control at intersections and maintenance of signs and road markings. High collision intersections are reviewed and improved, where possible. RCMP and Enforcement Services have also made enforcement at rural intersections a top priority.

In addition, Strathcona County continues to explore new ways to improve safety at rural intersections. The Flashing Red Beacon Pilot Project at the intersection

of Township Road 514 and Range Road 232 has been completed. The data is being reviewed, and a report will go to Council this spring.

However, engineering and enforcement alone cannot make rural intersections safer. Data collected through engineering and enforcement at rural intersections shows a low level of compliance with stop signs, with a high proportion of rolling stops. A stop sign indicates that your vehicle must come to a complete stop, and then proceed when it is safe to do so. This is particularly important in rural areas, where vehicles are traveling at higher speeds, and consequences for driver error are greater.

Driver error was listed as the contributing factor in approximately 90 per cent of all traffic collisions in Alberta. Spring is a great time to consider your driving habits. Historically, the number of fatal collisions in Alberta rises in the summer months. Can you help put a STOP to collisions?

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Dogs love Deermound



Deermound was the name given for a post office established in the Hillsdale area in 1911 and is now the name of the County's only dog off-leash park. Dogs definitely enjoy this popular spot as they run freely through curvy, forest-styled paths. Their owners like the addition of educational interpretive signage, a new gravel trail, and benches to take a break and enjoy the scenery.

Revitalizing this beautiful natural area in 2010-2011 also included the clean-up and removal of the dirt in the pond on the west

side of the park and the addition of mulch to the internal trails. The park has two enormous open fields for throwing balls and running free.

Deermound is located three kilometres south of Wye Road on Highway 21. Turn west onto Township Road 522 and watch for off-leash area signs. Ample parking ensures you and your four-legged buddy can hop out of the vehicle and head straight into the field.

Further information:

Recreation, Parks and Culture
780-416-6729
recreation@strathcona.ab.ca

Utilities acquires new rural assets

On January 3, 2012 Strathcona County Utilities acquired assets within Strathcona County that were owned and operated by the Highway 14 Regional Water Services Commission (previously C.U. Water). These assets included the Ardrossan Truck Fill and water distribution network, supplying water to country residential development east of Ardrossan (including the Hamlets of Antler Lake and Collingwood Cove). This means the Utilities department has now taken over water billing, metre reading, and customer service responsibilities for all of rural Strathcona County.

Further information

Residents will not experience an interruption in service and can contact Utilities at 780-467-7785 or scutilities@strathcona.com if they have any questions.

Rural Living Days



Family-friendly open house for rural residents

Drop in and get information on:

- water wells and septic systems
- waste management
- vegetation and pest control
- pond management
- turf and lawn care
- community safety
- water conservation

Workshop presentations:

10:00 a.m.	Horse nutrition	12:15 p.m.	Fire Smart
10:45 a.m.	Septic systems	1:00 p.m.	Rodent control
11:30 a.m.	Trees & horticulture with Gail Rankin	1:45 p.m.	Rabbit production
		2:30 p.m.	Rural water drainage

Join us for a **FREE barbecue from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Petting zoo for the kids all day

Saturday, May 26

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Ardrossan Recreation Complex
80 - 1 Avenue, Ardrossan**

Further information **780-417-7100**

Hosted by the
Agricultural Service Board of Strathcona County

Strathcona County
TRANSPORTATION & AGRICULTURE SERVICES

Volunteers Needed

How do I qualify as a Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) volunteer?

CAP volunteers are dedicated to preserving and promoting agriculture. Volunteers must have an agriculture background and be comfortable speaking in front of children.

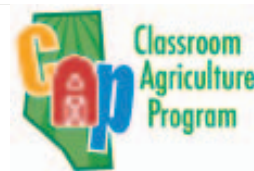
What do volunteers do in CAP?

Volunteers go into pre-registered grade four classrooms and deliver a one hour presentation explaining the importance of agriculture in our everyday lives. They use storytelling and hands-on activities to engage students. CAP provides ideas and guidance.

When does CAP occur and how much time is involved?

Presentations are delivered between February and June each year. The first presentations will take about five hours of time including training, preparation and the presentation.

For more information or to register online visit www.classroomagriculture.com or call **403-710-1959**.



Agriculture Services

The board acts as an advisory body to Council on agricultural matters, while promoting and developing agricultural policies and programs to meet the needs of our residents and the municipality.

Agriculture Services phone numbers

Manager	Joel Gould	780-417-7134
	joel.gould@strathcona.ca	
Pest control/weed inspection/vegetation control	Laura Hammer	780-417-7100
	laura.hammer@strathcona.ca	780-417-7132
	Alf Kolenosky	780-417-7133
	alf.kolenosky@strathcona.ca	
Transportation and Agriculture Services is located at	370 Streambank Avenue	
	Sherwood Park, AB T8H 1N1	
Office hours	8:30 a.m. to 12 noon, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.	
	Monday to Friday	
Phone	780-417-7100	
Web	www.strathcona.ca/tas	
Fax	780-417-7109	

Agricultural Service Board

The members are available to discuss matters of interest to you.

Councillor Jacquie Fenske (Chair)	780-464-8147
Councillor Linton Delainey	780-464-8206
Councillor Bonnie Riddell	780-464-8003
Councillor Peter Wlodarczak	780-464-8146
Paul Barlott	780-951-0631
Jackie Christie (Vice Chair)	780-422-8633
Gary Millar	780-499-9219
Howard Schneider	780-977-0023

Strathcona County
TRANSPORTATION & AGRICULTURE SERVICES