



Excellent hunting opportunities in Strathcona County

Healthy big game populations in Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 248 means hunters don't have to go far to find excellent hunting opportunities this fall.

An aerial survey conducted by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (AESRD) in December of 2012 confirmed healthy big game population data in WMU 248.

This information is used to determine population goals. Population goals are based on a variety of factors such as sex ratio, recruitment, natural mortality, hunter success, winter severity, as well as public and officer input. Combining this information with an aerial survey, population goals are confirmed and hunting season opportunities are established.

AESRD concluded that the White-tailed deer population is estimated to be 4,020, which is above their population goal for the area. Delaney Anderson, Wildlife Biologist with Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development coordinated the survey and shared the results at a Strathcona County Agricultural Service Board meeting.

"Above certain species population goals, we will likely see an increase in vehicle collisions, crop damage, and competition with other species for available food and space," Anderson said. "Numbers have fluctuated since 2000 due to winter severity, but considering available habitat is decreasing, the percentage over our population goals has shown an increase over time. Hunting opportunities are then adjusted as required to maintain a balance."

Moose populations are above population goals and have shown an increase for the past 10 years. Mule deer numbers have remained stable for the past eight years with mule deer congregating in small pockets.

An important change for WMU 248 is Saturday and Sunday hunting will be permitted during the October 25 – December 7 Antlerless Moose Special License season. This supplements last year's regulations when weekend hunting was introduced during the Strathcona White-tailed deer season. The plan is to continue these initiatives to allow people more time afield. More hunters are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to hunt on weekends.

For specific hunting licenses available for WMU 248 or information about Alberta's hunting regulations, visit www.albertaregulations.ca.

In order to help AESRD to set reasonable population goals, hunters are encouraged to report the successful harvest of any animal at www.mywildalberta.com. This information is used to change hunting regulations and adjust population goals for the effective management of the province's wildlife resources.

Rights of landowners

- It is the decision of the landowner or occupant whether to allow hunting on their property. A hunter needs permission from the landowner or occupant to hunt on a given property.
- The landowner is responsible to ensure that the hunter understands any conditions. For example, hunting may be allowed for one day, several days or longer.
- The landowner may specify the number of hunters allowed, or particular areas hunters should avoid.

REMEMBER!
Firearms may not be used for hunting in Sherwood Park, rural hamlets and on County property.

For maps and specific hunting licenses available for WMU 248 or information about Alberta's hunting regulations, visit www.albertaregulations.ca.



Raccoon

Quick Facts

- Grizzled grey color with a tail marked by alternating black and brown rings.
- Size of a large house cat.
- Easily identified by the black "bandit" facemask.
- Short, rounded ears and pointed snout give a mischievous appearance.

Behavior

Raccoons are very adaptable. They exist on a wide variety of foods and quickly take advantage of human activities to help with their survival. They tend to be nocturnal and may be seen near water bodies eating waterfowl eggs, frogs and insects. In farmyards, they take shelter under buildings eating spilled grain, garden produce, insects and farmyard scraps. They co-exist with humans in an urban environment inhabiting backyards, greenspaces and dumpsters. Raccoons mate in late winter and often den close to where food scraps are readily available to feed the young born in the spring. They are noted for "washing" their food with water if available, but it is speculated it assists with dismembering food by their sensitive paws.

Disease

Raccoons may carry canine distemper, leptosporosis and raccoon roundworm. Care should be taken when cleaning up feces by wearing gloves and a mask. Keep your pet's rabies vaccinations updated. Even though rabies has not been found in Alberta raccoons, it is in eastern Canada populations.

Raccoon Control

Raccoons have expanded their range and have become more common in Strathcona County. They find their way into Alberta as unwanted passengers on moving vans, farm machinery, farm produce vehicles and railcars.

Raccoons may be a real nuisance in rural areas but may be hunted throughout the year. Electric fences 20 cm above the ground along a garden patch will deter the invaders.

How you can help

- Keep a clean yardsite.
- Block off access to hiding places around buildings.
- Remove food sources.
- Discourage from gardens and garbage cans by using ammonia soaked rags or leaving a radio playing in the problem area at night.

Further Information

If you have any questions on pest control, contact

**Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100**



Oil and Gas

Although Strathcona County does not have direct authority in energy development we ask industry to meet the County's expectations detailed in the Strathcona County Protocol when:

- Drilling wells
- Developing facilities
- Installing large pipeline projects

The Protocol was developed by County landowners to ensure oil and gas exploration and production occurs in the County with the least possible impact on the environment, health, safety and quality of life. Strathcona County engages in a process with industry, landowners, residents and regulators that is communicative and cooperative.

Further information on the Strathcona County Protocol can be found on Strathcona County's website www.strathcona.ca/oilandgas

How do I get information about oil and gas exploration in my area?

If a company approaches a landowner with a proposal for energy development or the landowner lives near oil and gas development, the following information and resources can be obtained from the Energy Exploration Liaison.

- Information, resources and contact for anyone affected by or interested in oil and gas exploration in the County.
- Current updates on proposed, new and existing wells and pipelines.
- Setbacks on future land development as a result of oil and gas projects.
- Landowner rights.
- Communication with the right individuals within the oil and gas regulator, the Energy Resource Conservation Board (ERCB) as well as energy companies and their agents.
- Problem solving with particular energy issues that arise.
- Contact and connections with other local or provincial groups or individuals related to oil and gas development for support or information.

Landowners can call the Liaison for assistance or information on a particular issue. Potential landowners can access land title documents for a complete listing of oil and gas (and other) encumbrances held against the surface title before final purchase. The Liaison works on the behalf of landowners on oil and gas-related issues.

What if there are pipelines on or near my land?

Industry has pipeline right-of-way agreements with landowners. While pipelines are monitored regularly landowners should report any unusual activity, leaks, and smells on or near a right-of-way by calling 911.

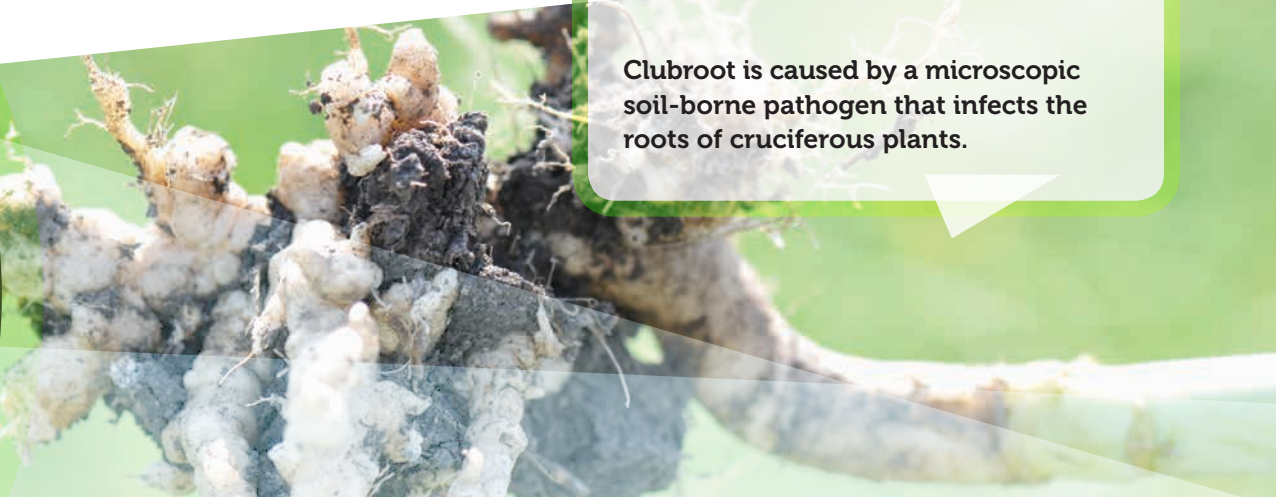
Information on new or existing pipelines can be obtained from:

**Energy Exploration Liaison
780-416-6739**

How to prevent the spread of clubroot?

Clubroot is a serious soil-borne disease listed as a pest under Alberta's Agricultural Pest Act. Infected fields experience economic losses through the reduction of crop yields and seed quality. The disease is spread by infected soil which can be carried by field equipment or by wind and erosion. Landowners can prevent the spread of clubroot by ensuring that oil and gas companies and contractors are taking measures to minimize soil transfer in areas where clubroot is known or suspected. Measures may include developing protocols for field staff and contractors cleaning equipment and avoiding traffic during wet conditions.

Clubroot is caused by a microscopic soil-borne pathogen that infects the roots of cruciferous plants.



Multi-Use Agricultural Facility

The County is in the process of completing a feasibility study for a multi-use agricultural facility. While residents currently have a wide variety of recreational opportunities available, a facility for rural recreation and economic development opportunities does not exist.

Identified as a potential need in several Strathcona County planning processes (including the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy, the 2009 Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan and the 2012 Josephburg Community Recreation Plan) a multi-purpose agricultural facility was identified by Council as an initiative that requires further investigation. Expected to be completed in early 2014, the County's Multi-purpose Agriculture Facility Feasibility Study will outline justification for a facility concept, including both indoor and outdoor amenities, as well as associated capital and operating costs. Potential partnerships and sites will also be identified. The intent of the study is to provide County decision makers enough information to determine whether or not a Multipurpose Agriculture Facility is feasible in the County and if so, what role should the County play in development and operations.

Conversations with the public, potential user groups and potential partners were initiated in spring 2013. The final study will present the findings as well as pertinent information about comparable facilities elsewhere in Alberta and beyond and projected facility usage statistics.

A multipurpose agriculture facility in the County has the potential to enhance quality of life for both rural and urban residents if it is, in fact, feasible.

For more information about the study please contact Jocelyn Thrasher-Haug at 780-464-8093 or visit www.strathcona.ca/AGFacility

Snowmobiling in Strathcona County

What residents need to know!

Where riding is permitted

Snowmobile riding is permitted on your property, or other private property with the owner's permission. Snowmobiling is also permitted on publicly-owned lakes.

In Alberta, snowmobiles cannot be operated on any portion of a highway, including ditches. In this case, highways refer to all types of roadways.

Snowmobile drivers are permitted to cross a highway. They must stop and yield to all traffic, have all passengers get off, and cross by the most direct, shortest and safest route.

Designated trails:

- Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area, 780-922-3293
- Ministik Lake Game and Bird Sanctuary, 780-464-7955

Registering and licensing

Snowmobile drivers require registration and insurance for the machines they are operating and must be able to produce them when requested by a peace officer. The license plate for a snowmobile must be affixed and clearly displayed and visible on the machine. Registration for snowmobiles may be obtained from outlets throughout the province.

The Insurance Act requires that snowmobiles have minimum coverage of \$200,000 in public liability and property damage. Coverage of \$1,000,000 in public liability and property damage is commonly carried.



Riders must be at least 14 years of age to operate a snowmobile on their own. A person under 14 years of age may be accompanied by an adult, or supervised closely while receiving instruction.

Alcohol and snowmobiling don't mix

In Alberta, a snowmobile driver can be charged with the same impaired driving charges as a driver of a motor vehicle. The majority of snowmobile collisions involve drinking and riding.

Further information on snowmobiling in Alberta www.altasnowmobile.ca

Play it safe – avoid alcohol and drugs before and during the ride.

South Contact Office pilot... increasing rural connections

This September, the rural South Contact Office pilot will mark its one year anniversary. An event will be held at the office September 17 from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. to mark the occasion. Everyone is welcome to drop in for cake and refreshments, and a Strathcona County "Marketplace of Services".

Located in South Cooking Lake, the South Contact Office opened in response to public requests to better serve rural residents living in the southern areas of Strathcona County. It is based on the success of the Heartland Hall Contact Office in north rural Strathcona County.

Services

In addition to assisting rural residents with issues and inquiries, the South Contact Office, is a "satellite of County Hall," and offers many direct services including:

- information on County programs for rural residents
- fire permits, dog licences, maps, County bill payment by cheque
- Commissioner for Oaths services, free of charge
- computer and Internet access
- meeting room space
- community grants and events assistance

Successes

Within the first nine months, the South Contact Office reported over 150 visits, and connected through more than 30 one-on-one meetings, either at the office or off-site. The rural liaison team has also been actively supporting various community programs and events.

Moving Forward

An important part of the pilot is to identify the types of services desired by communities in south rural Strathcona County, and to tailor the operation of the South Contact Office to meet those needs wherever possible.

The South Contact Office pilot will be assessed at the end of 2013.

Rural residents are welcome to drop into the office, or call to arrange a meeting at a location and time convenient to them.

South Contact Office

Office hours: Wednesday to Friday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: 22142 South Cooking Lake Road. Office located in Fire Station #2, in South Cooking Lake

Phone: 780-922-1318

Cell: 780-893-1177

Fax: 780-998-7447

Email: Dinah.Canart@strathcona.ca





Time to get rid of that old couch?

Leave up to two items at the curbside with your cart and recycling by 7:30 a.m. on your regular collection day and we will haul them away for you.

Large item pickup days

Collection day	Large item pickup
Monday	September 23
Tuesday	September 17
Wednesday	September 25
Thursday	September 19
Friday	September 27

There is a limit of two items per household. All items must be less than six feet by three feet and weigh less than 90 kg (200 lb). Please remove doors and lids to fridges and freezers, and make sure the coolant system is not damaged. Barbecues and lawn mowers must have fuel tanks removed. Please remove all barbecue briquettes and charcoal. Fuel and fuel tanks can be taken to an Enviroservice event.

Electronics are not included in the large item pickup. These items can be brought to an Enviroservice event; check your collection calendar or the website for a list of acceptable and unacceptable items.

www.strathcona.ca/utilities

Fall lawn care tips

Simple steps now will get you off to a great start next spring!

Aeration

If the soil under your lawn is compacted, water will pool and grass may be sparse. Fall aeration will help.

Top dressing

Once you've done the final mow of the season (cut at six centimetre or 2.5 inches), rake a thin layer of compost or topsoil (once centimetre or 0.5 inches) over the grass. The nutrients in the top dressing will green up the lawn early next spring.

Over seeding and creating a drought tolerant lawn

Change the grass in your lawn to a more drought tolerant species such as Creeping Red Fescue, Hard Fescue, Fine Fescue or Perennial Ryegrass.

Seed at a rate of five kilograms/100 square metres and lightly rake into the top dressing. The trick in seeding is to do it late enough in the season so that germination won't occur until spring. If germination occurs and is followed by a hard frost or winter, the seedlings may be killed.

Fertilizing

Fertilizing with a slow release fall or winter fertilizer will benefit your lawn in the spring. Read the fertilizer bag to make sure the nitrogen is in a slow release form.



Help a pollinator in rural Strathcona County

Bees, butterflies and moths are very important species because they pollinate flowers and crops. Encourage them to come around your property next year by providing them the ideal habitat to survive our long winters.

Provide a food source

Provide the proper food sources up until frost by growing autumn-flowering plants such as asters, coneflower, or goldenrod. It's a good idea to try native plants as they are well adapted to survive the local climate, easy to maintain and they will attract native pollinators.

Provide a constant water source for pollinators up until frost. Bird baths or a water garden supplements the natural source of water in your area. Prevent the pollinators from drowning by placing rocks or sticks in the water so they can land and drink without getting stuck in the water.

Shelter

Nesting sites throughout the growing season are important for protection from storms, predators and brooding sites. However, keeping areas of your property more natural by piling up fallen leaves and leaving some perennials un-pruned can provide shelter for butterfly egg masses or insects that hibernate over winter. You can make your own bee shelter (see photo).

Make your own bee shelter by following the instructions through the Xerces society at www.xerces.org or purchase bee condos at your local greenhouse or garden centre.

Three ways you can help pollinators:

- Reduce the use of insecticides.
- Plant a variety of plants with various bloom times so pollinators can access the pollen and nectar throughout the year.
- Provide good nesting sites.

Example of a bee shelter





Watch for agricultural equipment on roads and highways

Fall means agricultural equipment on rural roads and highways; we are all well advised to take extra precautions when we encounter them on our travels. Driving safely is in everyone's best interest.

Farmers use a variety of machinery for various agricultural operations. Today's farmer may have fields in several locations, resulting in having to cross public roads with large machinery.

Being safety minded is the best insurance against risk. According to Canadian Agriculture Injury Surveillance, 13 percent 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.

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.

Defensive driving tips for motorists

- **Be alert.** Watch for farm vehicles on rural roads, especially at harvest.
- **Keep your distance.** Stay at least 15 metres or five car lengths back.
- **Slow down.** As soon as you see a slow-moving vehicle, slow down immediately.
- **Be patient.** Don't pass until the road is clear of traffic and you are positive it is safe to pass.
- **Make sure you're clear.** When passing, make sure you can see the farm vehicle in your rear-view mirror before you change back into the right lane.



Further Information:
Transportation and
Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Weed inspectors wrap up another busy season

Thank you to everyone for working cooperatively with Strathcona County's weed inspectors this past summer. In many cases, residents took immediate action to control weeds after the weed inspector met with them to discuss their concerns.

We appreciate your assistance and look forward to your continued support in controlling weeds in Strathcona County.

Green Winter Routine



We all know that the weather in Alberta can change drastically – sometimes overnight! Here are some tips to keep in mind when the temperatures drop and the snow falls.

Layer it up

Layering your organics cart is very important. Place a layer of wet organics, such as food, grass and leaves, with dry organics, such as newspaper, cardboard or a thin layer of shredded paper. Then continue alternating. Layering can reduce odour and organics becoming stuck.

Give your organics cart a winter lining

Line the bottom and sides of your green organics cart with newspaper or cardboard. Then layer your organics with newspaper when filling your cart. This will reduce the possibility of organics freezing to the bottom or sides of your cart when the temperatures drop.

Hold the wetness

Wrap organic items with a lot of moisture with newspaper or put them into a cracker box. The paper will help absorb the moisture and prevent it from freezing to the cart.

It's stuck!

If organics have become stuck in your cart use a broom or shovel to try and loosen the frozen clump. If it is frozen solid, bring it into your garage and let it warm up a little then try to stir it up. If you store your carts in your garage, layering becomes even more important. If your cart isn't dumped until later in the day, the organics may freeze. The key is to layer, layer, layer!

Pull don't push

In the winter time pull, your organics or waste cart – don't push it. The bottom of the cart will cause snow to build up making it difficult to move. Pulling the cart won't cause snow to build up.

Changes to cart placement in winter

Once the snow has fallen and is here to stay, please place your waste or organic roll-out cart at the end of your driveway. Carts cannot be on the road because snow removal vehicles cannot manoeuvre around them.

For information, visit www.strathcona.ca/utilities or call 780-449-5514.

STRATHCONA COUNTY

Election 2013



Bring your ID.

Election Office: 780-400-2013

Vote for Mayor, Councillor, and Public School Board or Catholic School Board Trustee.



choice
democracy
freedom
right
VOTE
October 21
strathcona.ca/election



Rural residents take initial steps in reducing fire risk

Congratulations rural Strathcona County property owners!

During the past five months, over 400 residents have contacted Strathcona County Emergency Services for a free FireSmart assessment on their property. This is their first step to proactively manage the potential effects of wildfire to homes and outbuildings by reducing as many fire hazards and fuel sources as possible.

To book a free FireSmart assessment, contact Community Safety Education at 780-464-8468 or email safety.educators@strathcona.ca. For more FireSmart suggestions, visit www.strathcona.ca/sces.

The risk of wildfire is high in the fall. Follow these easy steps to reduce fuel load on your property.

- o Does your property have trees or branches that are close or are touching power lines? If so, contact your utility company to cut back the branches.
- o Ensure there are no overhanging trees, branches or shrubs next to your house that can catch fire.
- o All long grass, shrubs, logs, branches, twigs and needles should be removed within 10 metres of your home.
- o Firewood should be stored a minimum of 10 metres away from any structure.
- o 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.
- o Ensure that your address or lot number is clearly visible from the road for quick identification.

Poster Contest



Local students were presented with a cheque for their winning posters at the June 11 Council meeting as part of Strathcona County's Agricultural Service Board's annual poster contest.

All regulatory things that are fire – fire permit, fire ban & burning suspended

A fire permit is required to have an open, uncontained fire or to use a burn barrel on your rural property. Property owners can obtain one online at www.strathcona.ca/sces or by phoning 780-449-9651. A condition of the fire permit is to call the burning information line at 780-464-8464 prior to igniting a fire.

Burning is suspended if current or projected weather conditions are prone to start a quick-moving fire or if Emergency Services resources are depleted due to other emergencies. This is a temporary status; please phone 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, Strathcona County's website and social media.

For more information on fire permits and fire bans, visit www.strathcona.ca/sces or call 780-449-9651.



Get your mailbox ready for winter

To prevent plows or other heavy roadway equipment from damaging mailboxes, ensure your mailbox is positioned with the:

- supporting post at least one metre back from the edge of the roadway.
- bottom of the mailbox at 1.1 metres up from the ground.

CountryTalk

News for rural residents provided by Strathcona County's Agricultural Service Board



The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) acts as an advisory body to Council on agriculture matters, while promoting and developing agriculture policies and programs to meet the needs of residents and the municipality.

Further Information:

Agricultural Service Board
Councillor Bonnie Riddell, Chair
780-464-8003

Transportation and Agriculture Services
Joel Gould, Manager, Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

