

#### PHEASANTS FOREVER CANADA

Perry McCormick, President perry@pfcalgary.ca



#### WHO ARE WE?

- Chapter-based, grassroots, non-profit, registered Canadian charity.
- Formed in 1992 in response to the decline of ring-necked pheasants and other upland gamebird populations.





savetheedges.ca pfcalgary.ca pheasantsforever.ca

#### WHAT WE DO:



- Protect upland gamebird habitat through securement.
- Enhance and restore upland habitat for pheasants and other upland gamebirds.
- Engage, educate and build relationships with stakeholders.
- Support education programs that instill conservation ethics, responsible sportsmanship and an appreciation for wildlife.





### BENEFITS OF OUR WORK

Healthy gamebird populations and upland habitats contribute to biodiversity on the landscape.

Biodiverse ecosystems perform a multitude of functions including oxygen production, carbon sequestration, soil conservation, flood control, crop pollination and water purification.





# UPLAND GAMEBIRD HISTORY SOUTHERN ALBERTA

1908 - 1967





#### TODAY

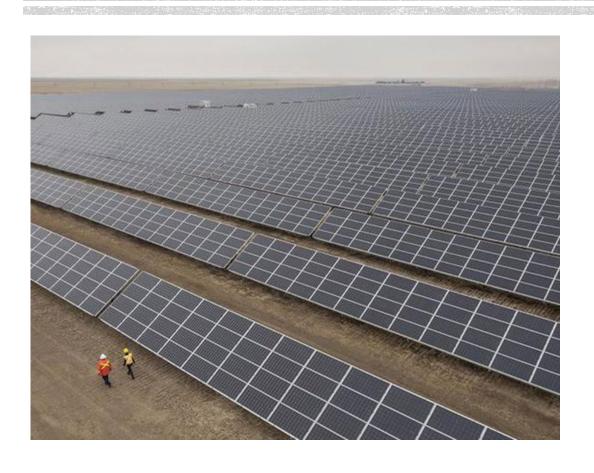


- Competition inside the fences
- Green energy infrastructure
- Irrigation infrastructure upgrades
- Commodity prices

All factors impacting biodiversity and ecosystem services.



#### TODAY

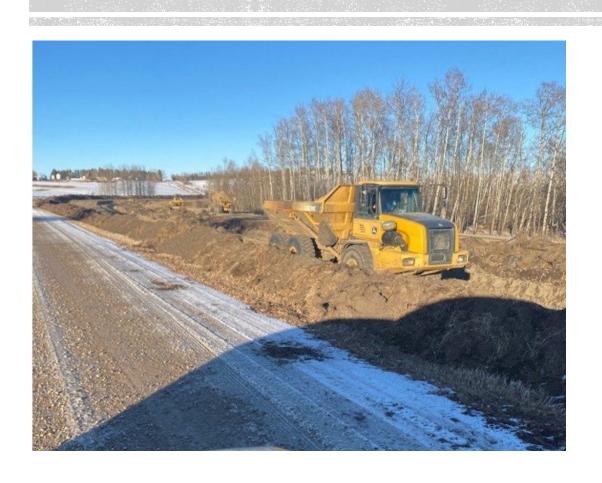


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# SOLUTION: STOP THE LOSS OF PUBLIC LANDS

- Healthy ditches and right-of-ways benefit everyone and provide key habitat areas that must be protected.
- Eliminate continued loss of these important edge habitats starting through SAVE THE EDGES.

















### savetheedges.ca

### HOW IT CAME TO BE:

- UCP Strategy Meeting
- UCP 13 Point Conservation Plan For Environmental Stewardship



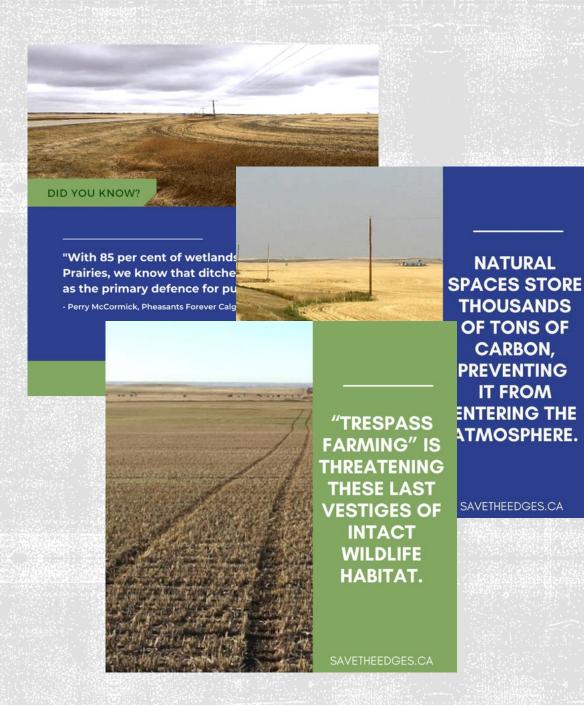


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#### Enforce actions against "trespass farming"

For example: Protect 66-foot-wide public right of ways against conversion to crops or damage of ditches next to rural roads.





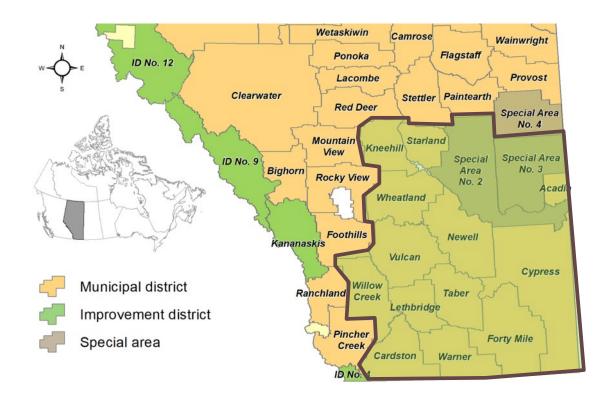
#### WHAT IS IT?

- Awareness campaign highlighting the impact of trespass farming of public roadside ditches and undeveloped right-of-ways.
- Made possible through a grant from Alberta Environment and Parks.



#### GOAL

Provide information to reverse the trend of trespass farming resulting in increased retention of roadside ditches and right-of-ways in their natural state.

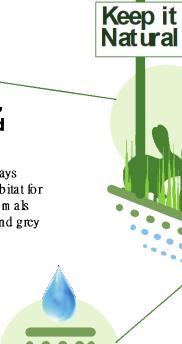


#### **FOCUS AREA**



#### habitat for songbirds, reptiles, mammals and upland birds

Roadside ditches and right-of-ways provide thousands of acres of habitat for many grassland-dependent mam mak and birds, including pheasants and grey partridge.





Road side ditches and right-of-ways f lter excess nu trients including phosphorous and nitrogen, preventing them from entering our rivers, lakes and groundwater systems.

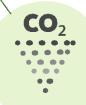
#### flood protection

Roadside ditches and right-of-ways m in in ize overland fooding by storing, slowing and absorbing excess water, helping to protect roads, culverts and agricultural felds.

#### habitat for bees, butterflies and other insects

Roadside ditches and right-of-ways sustain pollinators like bees, butterfies, moths, fies and beetles.

T ey also sustain species that prey on agricultural pests.



#### carbon storage

Roadside ditches and right-of-ways store thousands of tons of carbon, preventing it from entering the atm osphere.



Keep public roadside dit ches and right-of-ways natural.



Radio, Print, Stories

Social Media

Website Materials

Meetings with Counties & Municipalities









ALBERTAFARWEXPREDICA + OCTOBER IS, SOZI

#### New campaign will stand up for lowly ditches and hidden rights-of-way

These little-noticed strips of land provide wildlife habitat along with several environmental benefits

**BY ALEXIS KIENLEN** 

ditch may not look like much - but for many game birds it's a little strip of paradise in an otherwise hostile world.

However, producers often decide to farm ditches and rights-of-way - a practice known as 'trespass farming.'

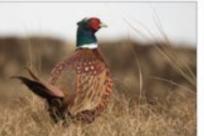
But a conservation group called Pheasants Forever Calgary is hoping to change attitrades about this practice, and let these narrow strips of land serve wildlife, society and farmers.

"What we're doing is an awareness campaign of the natural benefits that healthy ditches and rights-of-way provide to society, said Perry McCormick, the managing director of Pheusants Forever Calgary.

There are actually several. Ditches and rights-of-way provide many things," said McCormick. "The primary thing that they being is the fiftering of products and nutrients off of cultivated fields. This can be anything applied to a field. including fertilizers.

"With 85 per cent of wetlands lost on the Prairies, we know the primary defence for purifying scater."

Vegetation helps to slow down water flow, and when it's been cut down, water (and the nutrients it carries) can rosh straight into creeks or lakes with the algae blooms.



Ring-necked pheasants are one of the upland bird species that benefit from the habitat provided by rights-of-way and ditches. PROTOS PROGRAMS FOROVO CALCUST



These ruts actually follow a right-of-way between a field that was removed while the ditch to the left of this highway shows extensive encroachment.

"It's far better to keep that fertilizer in the ditch to grow some nice, healthy vegetation so we can sequester carbon," he said.

The vegetation is critical habitat for insects and pollinators. and in enhancing biodiversity by serving as a home for mammals, birds and upland game birds, he added. Many species nest in shrubs and trees, and the vegetation provides cover from sharp-eyed predators.

Pheasants Forever Calgary because often the roads were that ditches replace wetlands as was recently awarded a grant never built. of \$256,000 from the provinprovided by both ditches and McCormick. rights-of-way.

"What we're doing is an awareness campaign of the natural benefits that healthy ditches and rights-ofway provide to society."

PERRY MCCORMICK

"Most of those are simply a cial Ministry of Environment to trail between two fields that raise awareness of the benefits doesn't have a road on it," said

The latter (the 66-foot-wide buys an adjacent quarter with advantage of the lax enforce- are three chapters of Phensants right-of-way the province keeps a right-of-way between them, nutrients causing blue-green for gravel roads between sec- a single continuous field is lands tions) has an even lower profile created. But rights-of-way are Instead, the focus will be how attendowlythquadiahing.com

public lands and not meant to se farmed, he said.

The awareness campaign out trespass farming or criticiz-So often when a producer ing producers who have taken tions in Western Canada. There ment regarding these public Forever in Alberta.

these strips of land help the environment and species such as the endangered ferruginous hawk and loggerhead shrike (a species of concern) as well as the overall benefit for people, said McCormick.

"We're just trying to make people aware," he said, adding the publicity campaign will begin this winter. Producers can expect to see messaging from february to April over the next few years.

Pheasants Forever Canada was formed in 1992 in response (which will focus on southern to the decline of the Chinese Alberta) won't be about calling ring-necked pheasants and other upland game bird popula-





# RESPECT THE RIGHT OF WAYS





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#### CAMPAIGN ENDORSEMENT

"This Save the Edges campaign is a great idea. These little strips of ecosystem can do a lot of good, by feeding wildlife and supporting pollinators, but they can also provide habitat to natural enemies of crop pests."

- Professor Dan L. Johnson, PhD (UBC)
Department of Geography and Environment
University of Lethbridge





#### BENEFITS TO CANOLA

- Non-crop areas within or near to canola fields can serve as both a source and a destination for insects beneficial to canola production.
- Uncultivated areas can harbour reservoirs of insects that provide services to canola such as pest control and pollination.
- Counties where fields have the highest levels of noncropped area have slightly higher canola yields.
- Full article at <a href="https://pheasantsforever.ca/canola/">https://pheasantsforever.ca/canola/</a>





#### PRAIRIE STRIPS

- Prairie strips are a new conservation technology designed to alleviate biodiversity loss and environmental damage associated with row-crop agriculture.
- Results from a multiyear, catchment-scale experiment comparing corn and soybean fields with and without prairie vegetation indicated prairie strips raised pollinator and bird abundance, decreased water runoff, and increased soil and nutrient retention. These benefits accrued at levels disproportionately greater than the land area occupied by prairie strips.

- <u>Lisa A. Schulte</u>, Jarad Niemi, Matthew J. Helmers, and Chris Witte of Iowa State University





Talk to us.

How can we tailor our messaging to be more effective?

What are your ideas?

What are your questions?



#### THANK YOU!

For more information:

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