

The Municipal Connection



Upcoming Extension Events

Mark your calendars so you don't miss out on the upcoming workshops organized by the M.D. of Wainwright Ag Service Department! Full event details can be found on the M.D. Facebook page, website (mdwainwright.ca), or by emailing Kaitlin at khirse Korn@mdwainwright.ca

Farm Transition Planning Workshop

February 4th Edgerton Ag Hall 4:45pm–9:00pm

Featuring:

- Annessa Good-Hassard (Peak Heritage Consulting) Strategizing Success for your Family Farm's Succession Planning

This event is offered at \$20/participant. This includes refreshments and a catered meal.

Passive Solar Greenhouses

February 24th Prairie Rose Wainwright 6:30pm–8:25pm
Passive Solar Greenhouses are designed to harness the energy of the sun to create a stable environment for growing plants year-round without additional heating sources!

Featuring:

- Kim Ross (Rossdale Farms) Passive Solar Greenhouses

This event is offered at no cost to M.D. of Wainwright ratepayers, and open publicly to all at a cost of \$10/participant.



Register by emailing Kaitlin at khirse Korn@mdwainwright.ca or by calling the M.D. of Wainwright office at 780-842-4454. Please note registration is required to attend these events.

Precision Ranching

March 1st Edgerton Ag Hall 9:30am–3:00pm

Featuring:

- Dr. John Church (Thompson Rivers University) Emerging Precision Ranching Technology
- Dr. Susan Markus (Lakeland College) Beef Heifer Selection: Promising Technology for Data Based Decision Making
- Brenda Ralston (Lakeland College) Cow Calf Welfare and Wellness
- Neil Thorlekson (Range Ward) Portable Solar Electric Fencing Units and Funding Opportunities

This event is offered at \$10/participant for M.D. of Wainwright ratepayers, and open publicly to all at a cost of \$20/participant. This includes refreshments and a catered meal.

Equine Education 3.0

March 8th Prairie Rose Wainwright 9:15am–3:00pm

Featuring:

- Kris Molle (Equine Dentist) Equine Dentistry
- Amanda Kroeker (ARK Nutrition) Nutritional Solutions for Horses with "Recurring" Laminitis and Back to Basics Horse Nutrition
- Darci Ecker-Popiel (EPOPS) Unlock Your Mental Edge: Build Confidence and Resilience in the Saddle

This event is offered at \$25/participant. This includes refreshments and a catered meal.

Perennial Gardens

March 26th Prairie Rose Wainwright 6:30pm–8:25pm

Featuring:

- Barbara Teeter (Master Gardener) Establishing a Successful Perennial Bed

This event is offered at no cost to M.D. of Wainwright ratepayers, and open publicly to all at a cost of \$10/participant.

Rat on Rats

Did you know rats are one of the most destructive invasive species in North America? Alberta remains the largest RAT-FREE jurisdiction in the world. Rats are believed to have been introduced to Canada around 1775 through early settlers docking their ships on the eastern coast. Since then, rats have spread all over North America, causing damage to crops, property, the environment and threatening public health through disease transfer. Rats are highly adaptable and reproduce quickly, making infestations difficult to control.

Alberta's Rat Control Zone was established in the 1950s to prevent rat infestations from spreading into the province. This 600km long, 29km wide buffer zone along the eastern border with Saskatchewan runs from Cold Lake to the Montana border. Natural barriers like the Rocky Mountains, boreal forest, and short-grass prairie protect other parts of Alberta, but the eastern border remains vulnerable. The seven municipalities within the Rat Control Zone have appointed pest control inspectors who work diligently to monitor and manage potential rat activity. Their efforts, combined with public awareness, are essential to preventing establishment of rat populations.

Common signs of rats include droppings, gnaw or chew marks, burrows or nests, rub marks on walls, and strange noises. Rats can reproduce multiple times a year beginning at 8 weeks old, with up to 12 litters per year of 12-18 pups. Rats can host more than 35 different diseases that can be transmitted to humans.

Here's how you can help prevent the spread of rats:

- Rat! If you see rats or signs of their activity take a photo and report it to the Municipality, rats@gov.ab.ca, 310-FARM, or use the free EDDMaps app
- Know the law! In Alberta, all rats are listed as an agricultural pest under the Agricultural Pests Act.
- Recognize a rat! Norway rats and roof rats are larger in size than the mouse, vole, pocket gopher, bushy-tailed wood rats, Richardson ground squirrel, however, smaller than a muskrat.



Hydromulch Project

Hydromulching is a vegetation process that involves spraying a slurry of water, fertilizer, cellulosic mulch, tracking dye, and binder/tackifier on damaged and depleted soils to provide fast, economical and efficient revegetation. The mixture is sprayed from a hydroseeding truck where it is kept agitated during the application, ensuring even coverage. Mulch is sprayed from the truck with a canon, or by a hose run from the truck for areas of greater distance. There are many benefits to hydromulching such as promoting quicker growth, covering large and difficult areas, and providing protection from wind erosion and water runoff.

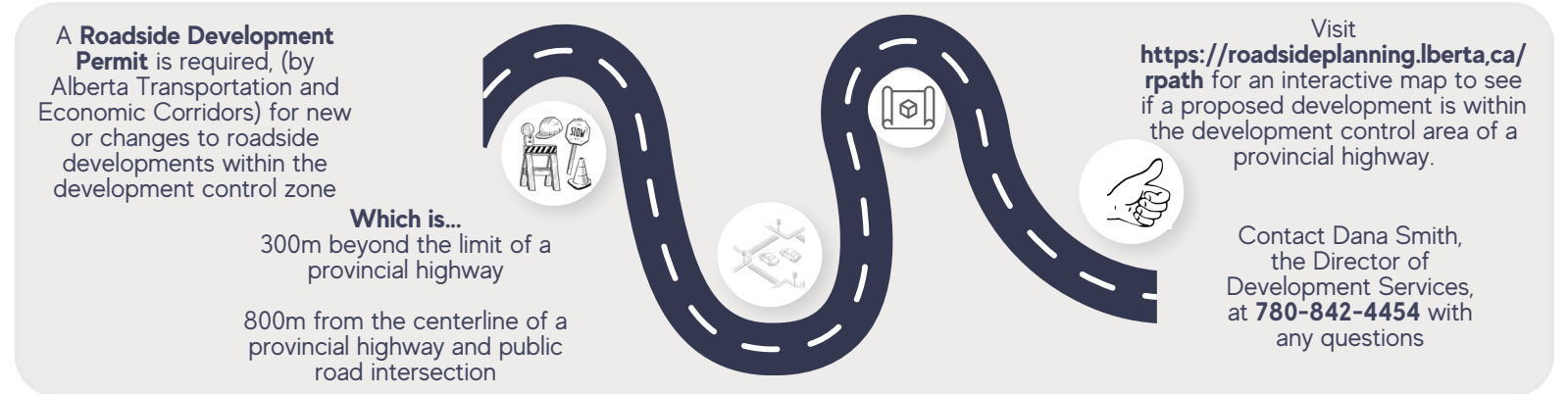
Traditionally following road construction within the M.D., ditches and borrow pits are seeded and harrowed utilizing a spin spreader and side by side. Though this method has been effective it does come with topographical limitations.

The M.D. recently reconstructed Twp Rd 42-0 between Hwy 899 and Rge Rd 2-0. This stretch posed a series of challenges for revegetation such as excessively sandy soils and steep banks. As a trial, 1.5miles of the roadside and approximately 4.33ha of associated borrow pits were seeded by the Agricultural Services Department and Hydromulched by Instalawn Hydroseeding.

In the images, the top right photo shows one of the slopes along this stretch. Many of the slopes were sluffing due to the sandy soils and lack of established vegetation. The tackifier in the hydromulch anchors itself to the soil surface, minimizing the erosion of the slopes. The other two images show the ditches that have been hydromulched. They appeared green following the application due to the tracking dye in the hydromulch.



Must Knows about Roadside Development



Passing the Gavel

The Municipal District of Wainwright's long-serving Reeve, Bob Barss, has decided to step down after an impressive twenty-seven years of service. The decision, announced at the M.D. organizational meeting on October 15th, has resonated deeply with residents and colleagues who have witnessed firsthand the dedication, vision, and leadership that defined Bob's time as Reeve.

Bob's journey into Municipal Government began with a desire to give back to the community by becoming a voice for ratepayers.

Over the course of nearly three decades, the Reeve became a central figure in the community, overseeing key policy decisions, navigating municipal growth, and fostering a sense of unity and progress. Bob was first elected as Councilor for Division 7 in

October 1995, and soon thereafter transitioned into the role of Deputy Reeve. In October 1997, the gavel was passed to Bob, who

remained Reeve for the following twenty-seven years. He saw many changes throughout the years, of the most notable has been starting at a relatively small reserve of one million and growing to a reserve of over fifty million. Under his leadership, the Municipality saw significant improvements in infrastructure over the years. All revenue was put back into upgrading and developing Municipal infrastructure. Partnering with the oil and gas industry to develop a strategic network of roadways, was key to drawing economic growth to the community.

Bob describes the most rewarding aspect of his career as the people he has met throughout the years and the Municipal staff. Being able to work alongside the same Administrator for his entire career is unheard of in Municipal Government and something Bob is very thankful for. Together their common goals for the M.D. and time served together allowed for progress within the Municipality. Being acclaimed for his entire career has been one of the most impactful, meaningful moments for Bob as it speaks to his leadership being well-regarded by the community.

Reflecting on his time as Reeve, Bob shared, "It was an honour and privilege to be the Reeve of the M.D. of Wainwright for the past twenty-seven years. A truly humbling experience."

Some of the challenges encountered throughout the years have been brought about by Municipal staffing turnover, and Council transitions. These changes required effective communication, and as Reeve, Bob instilled the importance of teamwork and working together for the common good.

The years spent working alongside Municipal staff, advocating for his community as a Councilor and Reeve, and serving as president of the RMA (Rural Municipalities of Alberta), were made truly special by the support of his wife Susan and family. Their encouragement and belief made the many years of service as Reeve possible.

As Bob looks ahead to the next chapter of life, he is filled with a sense of gratitude for the years spent serving the community and for all the experiences and relationships built along the way. While he is stepping down as Reeve, he is not quite ready to leave Municipal Government behind. He will continue to serve as Deputy Reeve to support the smooth transition of leadership throughout this next year. This role will provide the opportunity to stay involved and lend experience to Reeve Mike Wildeboer and Council. Beyond the official duties, he is looking forward to taking more time for things that matter the most, starting with spending more time with his children and grandchildren. He intends to spend the next few years farming alongside his family, while also enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation at their property on the golf course. Travel is also on the horizon for Bob and Susan, offering new adventure and experiences.

Pictured in the top right is Bob Barss (right) passing the gavel to Mike Wildeboer (left) at the October 15th M.D. organizational meeting. The bottom left image is J.R. Christensen (right) passing the gavel to Bob Barss (left) in 1997. The center bottom image is the M.D. of Wainwright Council in 1995. Pictured in the back row (L-R) B.Barss, P.Valleau, V.Spornitz, B.Willerton, D.Fletcher and front row (L-R): B.Heisler, J.R. Christensen, T.Timmons, R.Larouche. The image in the bottom right is Bob and wife Susan during the 2023 Wainwright Parade.



Prairie Staples Indian Paintbrush- *Castilleja coccinea*

Indian paintbrush is a biennial wildflower. The central stem is usually green or reddish brown and covered in small hairs. The leaves are alternately attached, stemless, and medium green colored. The actual flower of the plant is small, yellowish green in color, and hidden within the large, showy fan shaped colored bracts. The coloring on the bracts look as though they have been dipped in paint, giving the plant its common name. Paintbrush is a parasitic plant, the roots of this plant are unique in that they steal nutrients from surrounding plants. Indian Paintbrush grows best in moist conditions with full or partial sun exposure. It prefers well-drained soil types. This wildflower is commonly found growing in moist forests, moist fields and meadows, prairies, and along stream or lakeshores.



Podcasts



Want to learn how to safely preserve food at home? Tune into the Perfectly Preserved Podcast! You'll learn the ins and outs of food preservation including methods such as canning, dehydration, fermentation, and freeze drying.

AgriInvest Program Update

Beginning in 2025, AgriInvest requires an eligible and valid environmental risk assessment to receive matching government contributions for those with an Allowable Net Sales of \$1 million or more. An agri-environmental risk assessment identifies agri-environmental risks on farming operations and includes sustainability tools that support a producer in mitigating measures. Environmental Farm Plans are an eligible agri-environmental risk assessment. For more details visit agriculture.canada.ca/en/programs/agriinvest

Agricultural Service Board

Agricultural Service Boards (ASBs) are special committees appointed by rural Municipal Councils to address agriculture concerns in their local jurisdictions. They can be comprised of any combination of elected Municipal officials and public at large. The M.D. of Wainwright ASB consists of two M.D. Councilors and three members at large.



Thank you to Gillian Adamson for her valuable contributions and dedicated service on the Agricultural Service Board over her three-year term. As Gillian's term ends, we welcome Jason Dahlgren to the ASB.

M.D. Bursary Recipients

Congratulations to Ryan Chesterman, recipient of the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Bursary, and Kaitlyn Gross, recipient of the Education Bursary for 2024! Ryan is pursuing a Bachelor of Agriculture Technology at Lakeland College and Kaitlyn is pursuing a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Degree with a Major in Physiology and Minor in Biochemistry at the University of Alberta.



Winter Outdoor Recreation Areas

Enjoy the outdoors this winter season! Visit Riverdale Mini Park or Arm Lake for groomed cross country skiing trails. Or visit one of the Municipal outdoor skating rinks located at Ascot Heights, Greenshields, and Peterson Estates.

Squeal on Pigs

- Across
- 3. _____ and trampling by feral pigs causes extensive disturbances in native plant communities and forests
 - 5. This species has been confirmed in 28 counties within Alberta
 - 6. Wild Boar can host 39 _____ that can be transmitted to livestock, wildlife, and humans
 - 7. Wild Boar are native to Europe and Asia, in _____ they are considered a pest
 - 8. Wild Boar can reproduce multiple times a year, with litters of piglets
- Down
- 1. Hunting is _____ an effective control option
 - 2. Wild Boar are _____ that threaten our environment and economy
 - 4. A group of wild pigs that include adults sows and their young

