

LOCAL NEWS

Protecting our ditches can help farmers

Written by Karin Wallace, Technology, Apr 02 2022, 3:31 AM



A roadside ditch near Frank Lake

[Pheasants Forever Canada](#) has launched a new awareness campaign called Save the Edges.

It's creating awareness about leaving our public roadside ditches and undeveloped right-of-ways alone.

President Perry McCormick says not only do ditches allow an area for bees to live but other helpful insects.

"They also harbour insects that prey on crop eating insects. So, there's studies out there that actually show that inside roadside ditches actually reduce inputs for producers."

McCormick also explains how in the event of spring flooding it can help preserve the infrastructure.

"If we've got healthy ditches and right-of-ways you can protect your infrastructure in your municipality. Culverts, bridges - these things often get blown out in flood events and if those ditches have the vegetation intact of course, the water's held up and slows down and doesn't harm that municipal infrastructure."

It also helps with reducing our carbon footprint.

"Another big value is carbon sequestration, a big buzzword these days, and of course, with those nutrients and fertilizers held up in the ditches you're going to get excess vegetation which is going to absorb that carbon. So, all kinds of benefits for society with intact ditches and right-of-ways."

Roadside ditches also help protect native species of grassland-dependent birds such as pheasants.

The campaign is funded in part by a grant from Alberta Environment and Parks.



Roadside ditch with culvert near Frank Lake