

Save the Edges!

What is *Save the Edges*?

Save the Edges is an awareness campaign highlighting the impact of trespass farming on public roadside ditches and undeveloped right-of-ways. The campaign promotes enhanced protection of these important public lands in southern Alberta.

When is this happening?

This is an ongoing project that began in March of 2022.

Where will *Save the Edges* be focused?

The focus is on southern Alberta municipalities that have had the greatest loss of public roadside ditch and right-of-way habitat including the MD of Acadia, Cypress County, County of Forty Mile, County of Warner, MD of Taber, Foothills, Lethbridge County, Cardston County, Vulcan County, County of Newell, Rockyview, Wheatland County, MD of Willow Creek, Kneehill County, Starland County and Special Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Why is it important to *Save the Edges*?

- **Wildlife Habitat** – Many songbirds, small mammals, reptiles and upland birds, including pheasants and grey partridges, live on the edges. These species are heavily dependent on the abundance and availability of food resources and breeding habitat provided by natural roadside ditches and right-of-ways. In some areas, these edges provide the only available habitat.
- **Pollinator Habitat and Pest Control** – These linear strips of habitat serve as important reservoirs for pollinators, including bees and butterflies. They are also home to many species that play an important role in suppressing populations of agricultural pests.
- **Flood Protection** – Naturally-vegetated roadside ditches play a critical role in slowing, storing and absorbing excess water moving across the landscape. Minimizing the speed and amount of overland flooding protects municipal roads and culverts, and reduces the erosion of agricultural soils.
- **Filtering Excess Nutrients** – Naturally-vegetated roadside ditches and right-of-ways are important buffers that filter excess nutrients, including phosphorous, nitrogen and other chemical products. Without these buffers, these nutrients would run unabated into our lakes and rivers, leading to deteriorated water quality.
- **Storing Carbon** -The vegetation and soils in natural roadside ditches and right-of-ways store carbon, providing a much-needed public service in the fight against climate change.

What will *Save the Edges* accomplish?

It is the goal of this project to provide information that influences landowners and municipalities to reverse the trend of trespass farming, resulting in increased retention of roadside ditches and right-of-ways in their natural state, and the restoration of those previously impacted.



**Keep public roadside ditches
and right-of-ways natural.**

For more information:
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