

**The Ministry and the Alberta Conservation Association was requested to provide a written response to the following questions:**

- Does the department have any estimates on what Alberta's emissions would have been without climate leadership action that had been implemented in the past four years? (PA-83)
- On page 42 of the Annual Report, a chart shows that \$105 million came from grazing leases. A summary report showed that \$3.8 million in rent came from grazing leases. Where did the rest of the money come from? (PA-87)
- How much economic activity is generated by grazing leases? (PA-87)
- Can the Committee receive a list of all the projects that were funded in 2018-19 through a combination of the carbon tax and climate change emissions management fund? (PA-88)
- Can the Committee receive a detailed breakdown of where money is spent on air monitoring and who does that work on behalf of the people of Alberta? (PA-88)
- Can the Committee receive a detailed breakdown of the funding given to oil sands monitoring programs? (PA-89)
- Can the Committee receive a detailed breakdown of the funding given to watershed stewardship groups? (PA-89)
- Was there any job, financial, or industry impact analysis that was completed before going ahead with the Methane Emission Reduction Regulation? (PA-89)
- Is there any overlap, grant duplication between the Alberta Conservation Association grants and the department? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) is not aware of any direct overlap or duplication between ACA grants and department grants.

- Would bringing the Alberta Conservation Association in-house result in any cost savings? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** While bringing Alberta Conservation Association in-house would likely save on some administration costs, these cost savings would be offset by a loss of \$3-6 million per year which is currently generated by ACA in partnership funding that is not available to the Government of Alberta. As identified in the DAO Review conducted by Solved "ACA enjoys a number of partnerships across the province. It is able to take advantage of its arm's length government entity status to leverage those partnerships for funding, donations (land assets, in kind resources, and dollars), information sharing, sponsorship, and project delivery. In particular, ACA has demonstrated an ability to collaborate with several big players in Alberta's energy sector"(Pg 4). In addition, the DAO review states: "Through its

partners across the province, ACA is able to leverage funds and multiply investment into bigger and a higher number of projects and programs” (Pg 6).

Bringing ACA in-house would result in a net loss of revenue to conservation activities in Alberta.

- Can you tell the Committee what the circulation of *Conservation* magazine is, what the cost to produce it is, and whether or not it is revenue neutral? Can you share any ad-buy guidelines with the Committee? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Alberta Conservation Association produces two issues of *Conservation Magazine* per year (spring and fall). Each issue has a circulation of approximately 15,000. Yearly production costs (includes both issues) is \$60,000 and advertising sales generate revenue between \$10,000 and \$15,000 per year, depending on the issue. *Conservation Magazine* is not cost neutral; however, we have in recent years moved to a more digital friendly layout to encourage our stakeholders to read the magazine on-line or on their mobile device. Eliminating the hard-copy version would significantly reduce production costs; however, to date, we still have a large number of stakeholders that prefer a hard copy of the magazine.

ACA has no specific ad-buy guidelines, as our advertising buys will vary depending upon the particular information we wish to advertise, the readership we wish to reach, the time of year the information must be released, and available budget.

- How long has Kingston Ross Pasnak been the auditor of the Alberta Conservation Association? How are your auditors selected? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Through several successful proposal processes, Kingston Ross Pasnak have been the auditors for ACA since 2004.

Alberta Conservation Association tenders a proposal for audit services every three years. The proposals are reviewed based on the following criteria:

- a. Cost, including an estimate of the reimbursable expenses anticipated to be required for this service, as well as professional fees.
- b. Experience in non-profit charitable organization auditing.
- c. Profile of the firm, including breadth of other audit assignments and clients; resource/support services available (e.g. Income Tax Consulting, GST); particular strengths relevant to this audit.
- d. Information as to the location of the office that would be responsible for the audit, the names and resumes of the partner, manager, and senior staff who will be assigned to the audit if the firm is successful.
- e. An estimate of the hours that would be required for the annual audit, broken down between the various responsibilities that may be required, and showing the category of staff assigned to each of the responsibilities.
- f. Three client references.
- g. An affirmative statement that the firm is independent of ACA, and staff as defined by generally accepted auditing standards and professional ethics.

ACA management reviews and ranks the proposals and provides a recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors reviews management’s recommendation and then provides a recommendation to the Member Groups of ACA at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The vote of the Member Groups at the AGM determines the auditor on a year-to-year basis.

Although ACA's normal practice is to tender audit services every three years, in 2019, ACA made an exception and extended our current contract with Kingston Ross Pasnak for a fourth year (with approval at the AGM). In the summer of 2019, ACA became aware that our Chief Financial and Information Officer (CFIO) would be leaving ACA and moving to Prince Edward Island. As a result, ACA began the search to fill this senior position immediately. However, because a new CFIO was not in place for the fall, ACA and our Member Groups felt it was prudent to maintain our current auditors for one more year to ensure the new CFIO could have a role in evaluating the proposals for audit services for the next three years.

- What is the purpose of the Alberta Conservation Association's Corporate Partners in Conservation program? What accountability mechanisms exist to ensure that your corporate partnership programs align with your statutory responsibilities? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** The purpose of the Corporate Partners in Conservation Program is to engage Alberta's corporate and municipal communities in conservation activities and to recognition those organizations that make a longer-term commitment to partner with ACA through in-kind and/or cash donations. ACA believes that forging strong partnerships with Alberta's corporate and municipal communities not only allows ACA the opportunity to increase the profile of conservation issues within these organizations, but also allows ACA to leverage our funding.

All Corporate Partners in Conservation agreements are reviewed by ACA's management team to ensure they fit with our current programs. In addition, new Corporate Partners in Conservation are discussed with the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. If any issues or concerns are raised, then they are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- Can you provide to the Committee a detailed breakdown of any grants that Environment and Parks provides to organizations that are engaged in citizen science? (PA-90)
- Has there been any advancement on the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan with the accommodation of Eden Valley's request to make a change in terms of the boundaries as well as the request of the Conklin Metis community to prevent the establishment of a waste management site close to their community? What plans have been made or what responses have been made to those communities? (PA-90)
- Can you provide the Committee with information about the success of the Report a Poacher program and which regions of the province are most affected? Which species are most at risk? Is funding for enforcement adequate? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Alberta Conservation Association's role with respect to the Report A Poacher program is limited to two key elements: 1) promoting the program, through social media, print, and trade show advertising; and 2) providing funding for the cash rewards paid to informants that aid investigators in bringing charges forward.

Questions with respect to where enforcement actions occur, what species are most impacted, and if funding is adequate, are likely better answered by Alberta Justice and Solicitor General.

- What is the Ministry's oversight role in light of recent findings of the Auditor General which showed that the Alberta Energy Regulator had not only strayed outside its

mandate, but spent millions of dollars doing so? What can you share with the Committee that might explain such revelations and clear lack of organizational and fiscal accountability? Were there any red flags that might have hinted at such blatant abuse of authority? (PA-90)

- Can you please provide to the Committee the written analysis from your provincial flood damage assessment tool which enables the comparison of proposed mitigation measures to determine which measure or combination of measures provides the best benefit for the cost? (PA-90)
- What is the Ministry's approach to leasing public assets, particularly in provincial Parks, in leveraging against not-for-profit or private sector activity or investment? Can you provide us with a list, or at least several examples? (PA-90)
- With respect to recommendations from the Auditor General regarding grazing leases on Crown Land, has your department acted on any of these recommendations and if not, why? (PA-90)
- Could the Alberta Conservation Association please share with the Committee the nature of your relationship with the Ministry and Minister over the past four years, while sharing the regularity of your meetings directly with the Minister? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Over the past four years, Alberta Conservation Association's relationship with the Ministry and the Minister was not as strong as we had hoped. Unfortunately, ACA was unable to secure a face-to-face meeting with the Minister, which may have led to some misunderstanding as to the role ACA can play as an arm's length organization.

We believe the situation has now been rectified, as ACA has had several face-to-face conversations with Minister Nixon, and we have a clear understanding of the role ACA can play in helping to achieve his priorities for the Ministry.

- Can the Alberta Conservation Association please identify what not-for-profit organizations undertake conservation work on behalf of, or in collaboration with, your Association? How would you characterize your relationship with these groups? (PA-90)

**PA-90 ACA Response:** Alberta Conservation Association works with a wide range of not-for-profit organizations on a regular basis. ACA believes that developing strong working relationships is key to our success. Whether as a direct project participant, a supplier of in-kind services, or as a funding source, ACA works with approximately 120 not-for-profits, municipalities and irrigation districts located across the province.

As an example of our collaborations, we often partner with Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Alberta Fish and Game Association and Pheasants Forever to undertake habitat purchase and/or enhancement of conservation lands.

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association is a major partner on a number of youth hunter and angler initiatives, as is 4-H Alberta with the pheasant raise and release program. Alberta Trappers Association has been a partner on several citizen science projects related to furbearer harvest, some of which have garnered international interest, and Nature Alberta has partnered on the development educational materials for landowners.

The following is a full list of not-for-profit organizations, municipalities and irrigation districts that ACA has worked with in 2018/19. This list does not include those not-for-profit organizations that have been supported through the ACA grant program: Alberta Trappers Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Alberta Fish and Game Association, Pheasants Forever, Nature Alberta, Phillip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum, 4-H Alberta, County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, Brooks Fire Department, Coronation Elks, Coronation Family & Community Support Services, Edmonton Old Timers Fishing Club, Edmonton Trout Fishing Club, Fort Saskatchewan Lions Club, Hinton Fish and Game, Hinton Growing Great Kids Coalition, Lacombe Fish and Game Association, Lamont Fish and Game Association, Lesser Slave Lake Forest Education Society, Lesser Slave Lake Watershed Council, Lesser Slave Regional Fire Services, Northern Lights Fly Fishers, Provost & District Fish and Game Association, River Valley Alliance, Safari Club International – Red Deer Chapter, Slave Lake Rod & Gun Club, Slave Lake Volunteer Firefighters, Stony Plain Fish & Game Association, Wabamun Gun Club, Taber Fish and Game Association, Delta Waterfowl, Hunting for Tomorrow, Calgary Fish and Game Association, Innisfree & District Fish and Game Association, Lethbridge Fish and Game Association, Wheatland Conservation & Wildlife Association, Fort Saskatchewan Naturalist Society, Paintearth Economic Partners Society, Milk River Watershed Council Canada, Prairie Conservation Forum, Alberta Beef Producers, Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Cows and Fish, Cardston Fish and Game Association, Fort Macleod Fish and Game Association, Medicine Hat Fish and Game Association, Peace Wapiti Fish and Game Association, Picture Butte Fish and Game Association, Safari Club International – Northern Alberta Chapter, Magrath Rod and Gun Club, New Dayton Rod and Gun Club, Southern Alberta Bowhunters Association, Alberta Culinary Tourism Alliance, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, Radway Lions, Trout Unlimited – Oldman River Chapter, Alberta Streamwatch Conservation Coalition, Alberta Trail Riding Association, Myrnam River Ridge Snowmobile Club, Strathcona County, Westlock Whitetails Junior Forest Warden, Trout Unlimited Canada – Central Chapter, Trout Unlimited Canada – Yellowhead Chapter, Red Deer River Naturalists, Wild Elk Foundation, Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance, Oldman Watershed Council, St. Mary River Irrigation District, Taber Irrigation District, Raymond Irrigation District, Bow River Irrigation District, Eastern Irrigation District, M.D. of Taber, Town of Taber, City of Lacombe, County of Grande Prairie, County of Newell, County of Paintearth, Parkland County, Town of Beaumont, Town of Cochrane, Town of Coronation, Town of Gibbons, Town of Hinton, Town of Provost, Town of Stettler, Village of Wabamun, County of Warner, Athabasca County, Big Lakes County, Camrose County, Clear Hills County, Lac La Biche County, Lacombe County, Mackenzie County, County of Minburn, County of Northern Lights, County of St. Paul, County of Two Hills, County of Vermillion River, Flagstaff County, M.D. of Bonnyville, M.D. of Fairview, M.D. of Greenview, M.D. of Peace, M.D. of Provost, M.D. of Smoky River, M.D. of Spirit River, Northern Sunrise County, Smoky Lake County, Settler County, County of Saddle Hills,

City of Fort Saskatchewan, Mountain View County, Thorhild County, Village of Spring Lake, Clearwater County, and Rocky View County.

Overall our relationship with these groups is very good, with many of our relationships being multi-year and multi-faceted.