

President's Report to Okotoks and District Fish and Game Association
Annual General Meeting January 24 2024

2023 was a very good year for the Okotoks and District Fish and Game Association. We undertook a number of activities of interest to our members. We were able to support conservation activities, provide educational opportunities and grow our membership.

Our January Annual General Meeting was well attended. We set a calendar of events for the year to allow people to plan their participation well in advance.

In February we held our horn scoring event at Hub Town Brewing. We measured 16 heads, with one of them taking a provincial award. We also held our first ever Kids Can Catch ice fishing day at Chain Lakes. Members worked hard to give over 100 first-time anglers the chance to try ice fishing. Supported by the Alberta Conservation Association and numerous sponsors, we provided rods, bait, drilled holes and provided instruction. It was a great day. We also sent 3 delegates to the Alberta Fish and Game Association Conference and AGM, where we were proud to receive a provincial award for the club with the most growth in membership.

Our March club meeting had an Alberta government Senior Biologist do a presentation on big game numbers in the Calgary-area and south Wildlife Management Units. He spoke for well over an hour, and answered lots of questions about game populations and hunting statistics.

Our April club meeting had a Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officer from the area come to our meeting. He talked about local enforcement issues, the Report A Poacher Program, officer recruitment, told some great stories and answered a lot of questions.

Our May club meeting focused on Hunting Draw strategies. We talked about the different resources available online to help determine draw wait times, priority levels needed to get drawn, and hunter success rates for various special licence draws. The presentation was placed on our website.

June saw our 2nd annual Wild Game Banquet and Fundraiser. It was a huge success. We had sold out the 120 tickets within a week. Everyone there enjoyed great dishes including whitefish, antelope, venison, cougar, moose and elk. The club received a lot of donations from local businesses and individuals, resulting in a very profitable evening. Funds raised will go along way to helping us deliver our programs.

In July we sponsored one of our youth members to attend the Narrow Lake Conservation Camp. He had the opportunity to participate in many activities including shooting, boating, outdoor skills and team building. Summer camp is always a great experience, and we are happy to provide this opportunity.

We held a family barbecue at Crystal Shores in August. We supplied hot dogs and smokies, and members had a chance to visit while their kids played in the sand, on the playground equipment and played the various games set up.

Our October club meeting centered on updates on the AFGA. We also had a good presentation and follow-up discussion about recreational access to grazing leases. We talked about hunter responsibilities, leaseholder responsibilities, and how to report conflicts with leaseholders. The reference material used has been posted on our website. We also had the draw for our fundraising raffle. The club gained over \$2200 to be used for club projects.

Our November club meeting had 2 guest speakers. The youth member we sponsored to Narrow Lake Youth Camp did a presentation, and one of our members did a presentation on alternative uses of your big game harvest, such as use of different meat cuts you might not use, hide tanning, soap making and art projects.

I want to thank the members of the Executive for all the hard work they did in 2023 to help make our club successful. I also want to thank all those people who volunteered in so many ways, such as on the Banquet Committee, those who helped with the Kids Fishing Day, those who sold raffle tickets, and those who attended our meetings and events as organizers, presenters or just to show support. I urge everyone to stay involved, bring your outdoors friends to our club, and do what you can to share the load when we have activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to have been your president.

Matt Zazula