

# FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER



**SHERWOOD PARK**  
FISH & GAME ASSOCIATION



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# President's Report

Good day to everyone.

I hope all of you had a great summer and fall so far. With all the high winds we have had it did not take very long for the leaves to disappear. For those that hunt, the loss of the leaves definitely increased the ability to see game. The colder weather has closed the migratory bird hunting for another year. For those that do hunt migratory birds, I hope you had a successful season and are enjoying the tasty morsels they provide. The season on most upland birds is open to January 15 so there is still lots of time to get out and enjoy the sights and smells the countryside has to offer. Oh, and the opportunity to get a bird or two. For the rifle hunters, the deer season is just starting. Hope you got out to the range to make sure old Bess is still hitting where she is aimed. There are a lot of missed shots or wounded animals because one did not take the time to make sure the rifle was hitting where it is aimed. It is well worth it to check especially when that monster steps out in front of you. Wiring and cameras for the new security system are being installed. We are hoping the new system will be completed by the end of November.

Beaver County has informed us that they will be replacing the two culverts on the road just south of our main entrance (Range Road 203) and will need to close the road to our property for a day to do so. Presently, they are looking at later in November but please keep an eye on the SPFGA News of the Week emails in planning your range visit. As always, it is a good idea to check the **Events Calendar** on the website before you come out to the property to make sure you'll be able to access the venue(s) you plan on using.

Please remember that this year, Fish and Wildlife have mandatory head submission for some areas of the province because of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) so check the regulations for the area you hunt in. From the CWD presentation by **Dr. Mark Ball** at our October 24 general meeting, we learned that Fish and Wildlife is implementing measures to try to shorten the response time for test results for your head submission. Fish and Wildlife do not take



a position of recommending eating the meat from a deer which has tested positive for CWD however; they are not in a position to say you should not eat the meat, as this is a food safety issue. It appears the choice to consume it is still yours. In the United States, there are hunters that have elected to eat the meat from CWD positive deer and they are being monitored on an annual basis by wildlife officials. If you would like more information on CWD, I suggest visiting <https://www.alberta.ca/chronic-wasting-disease.aspx>.

Our gun range has been quite active this year with the Mapleseed events, Outlaw Precision Rimfire Series (ORPS) shoots, weekly Monday night Rimfire Silhouette shoots and trap shooting on Wednesdays and Sundays. For the coming year, we are planning on continuing these events and plan to add a few more so as to get more members involved. It is a

great time to meet others. Hope you are able to participate. Check the website for upcoming dates on these events.

The Big Bore range 100 m berm restoration work has been completed and I would like to say thanks to all those involved. This should eliminate further sloughing of the side of the berm into lanes for the 200 m backstop. We have been talking to the CFO about additional reactive targets for the Rimfire range other than the gongs and it sounds positive that we should be able to add some spinners at various distances. These will, of course, only be for firearms approved for use on the Rimfire range (refer to the Facility Rules for details: <https://www.spfga.ca/facility-rules/>). They should add some fun for those just starting out, especially the young members.

Our archery range is still open to the hardy ones. However, the 3D targets have been taken in for the season.

We have had a number of new members join since the membership cap was removed, so please make them welcome. There has also been a number of the members make use of the new **Supervised Guest Range Use Policy**. Hopefully the guests will see the great facility we have and become members.

AltaLink is updating the power line passing through the property. This will progress with brushing on the right of way starting in the near future. Work on replacement of the poles and the line itself is scheduled to start in January and could carry into February. Members may notice this work underway, but it is not expected to have any effect on range usage.

The fish pond is closed for the year and snow fence put across the pathways. Please do not go in this area as the pond aeration system works all year round which causes the ice to be very dangerous to walk on.

The clubhouse has been winterized so there is no running water, the washrooms are closed and the kitchen sink drains into a bucket under the sink which the user must empty. There will be some youth

groups using the clubhouse during the winter so check the events calendar to avoid any conflicts.

In 2020, the Sherwood Park Fish and Game will be hosting the 91st Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA) conference being held February 20 to 22 at the Clarion Hotel in Sherwood Park. **Steve Witiuk** has taken on the task of organizing the conference and could definitely use your help with the organizing. February is not that far away so please so please look at your schedule to see if can attend or help put this great event on. Steve can be contacted via email at [ramwitiu@telus.net](mailto:ramwitiu@telus.net).

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Thursday December 5th, where we will elect the executive for the coming year. The recent updates to **our bylaws** have it so that only half of our Board positions come up for election each year, allowing us to maintain continuity. Please watch the SPFGA News for the Week emails, the website, and our social media for specific details of the positions coming up for election and what they entail. If you are interested in taking on a Board position, please contact Nomination Committee chair, **Doug Burton** at [past-president@spfga.ca](mailto:past-president@spfga.ca). Hope to see you at this important meeting.

We have compiled the results of the Member Engagement Survey that was sent out in September. Over the coming year will be looking at how best to implement some of the suggestions. Keeping the membership informed was a big suggestion and we have already made big improvements in this area with our SPFGA News for the Week emails, quarterly newsletter, website, and social media. More general meetings have been scheduled so some of the interesting topics suggested can be presented. These are just a start and when the 2020 Board is in place, there will be more to come.

Hope you are having a great fall and be safe.

Al Keeler



# SPFGA Board

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## Executive

### President

president@spfga.ca  
Al Keeler

### Past President

past-president  
@spfga.ca  
Doug Burton

### Treasurer

treasurer@spfga.ca  
Charlie Hutchings

### 1st Vice President

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@spfga.ca  
Matthew Meier

### 2nd Vice President

2ndvicepresident  
@spfga  
Davan Russell

### Secretary

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Tom Ogenorth

## Directors

### Conservation

(780-467-5087)  
Frank Lee

### Archery

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Pat Emerson

### Handgun

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Mark Lowry

### Shotgun

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Keith Lacey

### Black Powder

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Paul Christensen

### Rifle

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*vacant*

### Environment/ Political Action

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Sebastian Dietrich

### Hunting

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Dale Fournier

### Fish

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Jan Sorensen

### Communications

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Roland Coppens

### Song Birds

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Troy Lymburner

### Special Projects

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Gaetan Richard

### Range Operations & Maintenance

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Chris Russell

### Youth

youth@spfga.ca  
Ashleigh Emerson

# 2019 Calendar of Events

<b>Board Meetings</b> <b>2nd Tuesday of the month,</b> <b>@7:00 pm</b> Chamber of Commerce Building		<b>General Meetings</b> <b>4th Thursday of the month</b> <b>@7:30 pm,</b> Old Log Cabin, 50 Spruce Avenue	<b>Special Events</b>
<b>November</b>	November 12		
<b>December</b>		December 5	December 5 Annual General Meeting

# 2020 Calendar of Events

<b>Board Meetings</b> <b>2nd Tuesday of the month,</b> <b>@7:00 pm</b> Chamber of Commerce Building		<b>General Meetings</b> <b>4th Thursday of the month</b> <b>@7:30 pm,</b> Old Log Cabin, 50 Spruce Avenue	<b>Special Events</b>
<b>January</b>	January 12	January 30 (AGFA Resolutions)	January 26 Trophy Scoring 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Old Log Cabin
<b>February</b>	February 11		February 20 – 22 AGFA Convention Sherwood Park
<b>March</b>	March 10	March 26	March 28 Awards Night
<b>April</b>	April 14	April 30	TBD Archery Work Party
<b>May</b>	May 12	May 28	May 16 Les Berry Shoot TBD May Black Powder Shoot





# Becoming an Outdoor Woman



**Debra Russell**

Someone cooked 3 amazing meals a day for 5 days for me. I feel like I could stop here and nothing more would need to be said. But there is so much more to say.

This is me. Your average everyday Monday through Friday 8 to 4 sitting in front of my computer working kind of girl. Not some crazy Amazon, not some Mad Max hunting Guru. Just a mom, a sister, a wife, a computer jockey. But for 5 amazing days I got to be a little more of something I have always been deep inside I got to be a badass. I wish I could speak to each and every one of you directly because the passion I feel about this program cannot possibly be conveyed with just paper and pen. It wasn't about becoming a hunter or fisherwoman or archer or trap shooter it was about something so much more. It was about being more.

It was about camaraderie, friendships, and stepping outside of your safe Zone. It was about becoming something that was always there, but I could never quite put my fingers on.

If you are an experienced pro at any of these you might think that I must be a sheltered, quiet little mouse in the house and what could you really learn from a program like this. That is anything but the truth. I am a Hunter, I am a shooter, I am mighty. But these 5 days made me mightier. This course pushed my comfort zone and still taught me things that I didn't even know I didn't know.

There was so many things that we did in 5 days, but I would not even know where to start to tell them all to you. I will tell you about the one thing that pushed me beyond what I thought I was capable of doing. As I previously mentioned I am already a hunter comfortable around guns I'm comfortable around bows. They are exciting to me but they're not new.

But water was my kryptonite. I was not a boater or Fisherman. I wasn't the Casual weekend kayaker. I was terrified of Deep Dark Water. Not your little Creeks or your pools or hanging out on the beach with my kids. I was afraid of the dark ominous, I can't see the bottom and I don't know what's in the water, deep water. This faithful week I went out in the canoe with three other people and not only did I tip that boat over on purpose but the three of us did a deep-water rescue got back in that boat and paddled back to shore. All of which I was only capable of doing because of the support of the instructors at the becoming an outdoors-woman program. I always tell my kids that being brave does not mean you are not afraid; it means you are afraid, and you do it anyways. I was terrified. But the support of my teammates and instructors made me brave. Conquering something that you never knew you could do is a truly powerful feeling and one that every woman should have a chance to experience.







So, step out of your comfort zone and into the B.O.W. zone. Come out and be a part of something that is bigger than yourself. Then the next time your

husband, boyfriend, brother, father, sister or mother go out shooting, hunting, fishing, or to the archery range...go with them. Better yet, bring one of them along if they've never gone before and make it a thing. Make it your thing. Or just sit back and know that you have come out of something amazing with more than you went in and know that you got this. Maybe we can meet at the shooting line and swap a few stories and a share a few rounds.

We are all members of this society so let's take it by storm and make ourselves a part of something amazing. In past years the SPFGA sponsored 2 women to go to this program. This is an important thing to support so let's make sure they know it and let's help this continue. Make yourself a voice for your sport, for your passion. Come out and discover a new one. Bring a friend and let's hear you roar. I was the only applicant for this program last year from SPFGA. This year I would like to see so many requests flood in that they cannot decide how to fill the spots. I would like to see so much interest that they have to sponsor and create more spots. I have never sat quietly on the side lines, or quietly at all for that matter, so why start now?

Peace and happy hunting. There are a couple bucks out there calling my name. Catch you after hunting season.





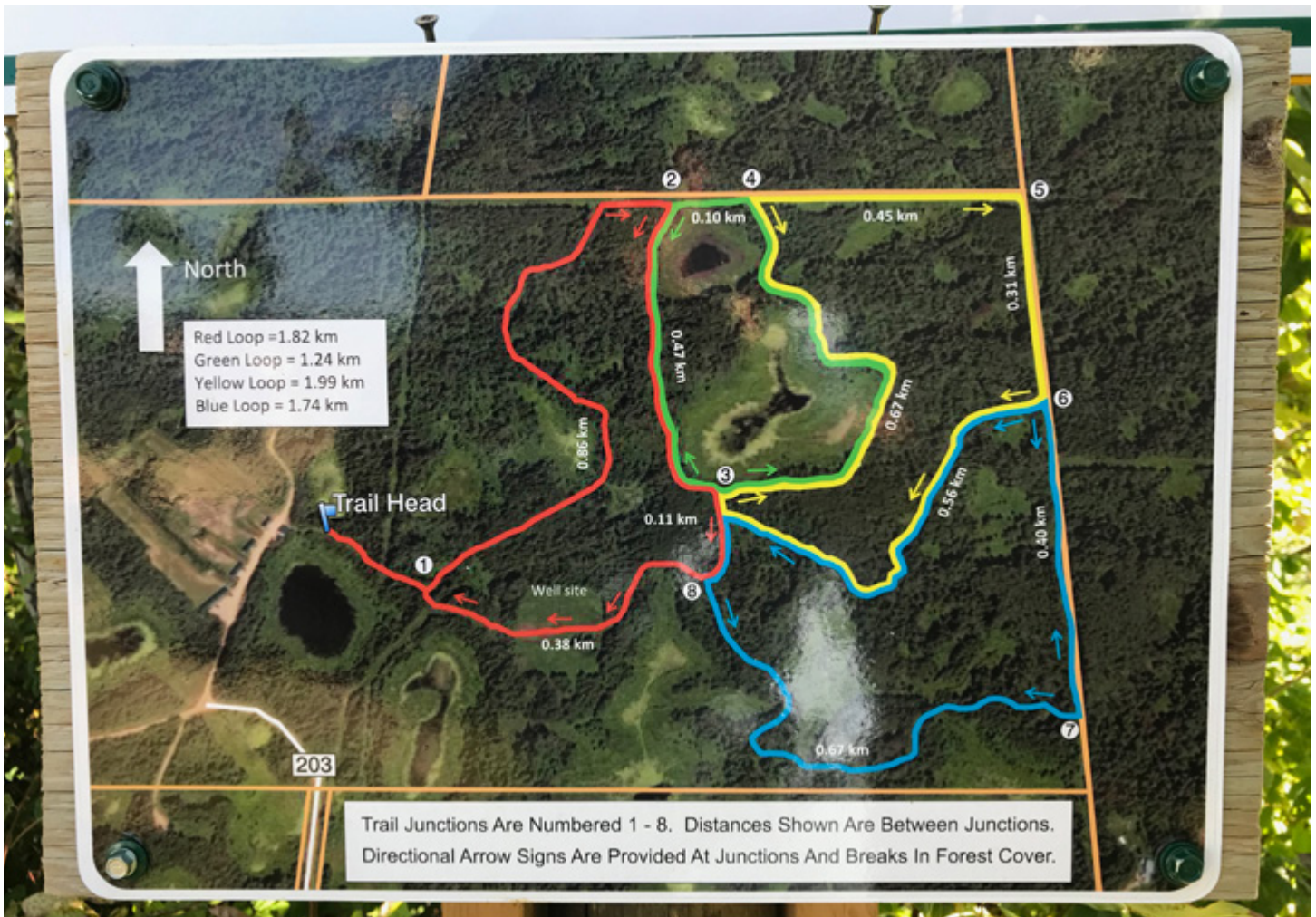
# Ketchamoot Hiking Trails

## ***Roland Coppens, Communications Director***

One of the 'best kept secrets' on the Ketchamoot Creek Property is our hiking trails. Over 7 km in total, these are great for a hike, bike ride, trail run, or in winter, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.

Through a grant from Alberta's Buck for Wildlife program to develop nature trails, these trails were cleared in 1988 for use in biathlon. They were used in the Alberta Cup biathlon competition in 1991, and again in 1992 for the Western Canadian Biathlon Championships.

These trails wind through forest cover and along wetland areas, consisting of four loops – red, green, yellow and blue – ranging from 1.24 to 1.99 km in length. The trailhead can be found on the north of the garage, just opposite handgun range. Signposts are located at various points through the trails, showing you clearly on the map where you are.





If you are walk quietly, you may see a moose or deer and waterfowl on the sloughs.

In the recent **Member Engagement Survey**, 74.4% of respondents indicated they were aware of the existence of our trail system, with 11.5% indicating they use the trails an average of 2.4 times a year. Below are some of the member comments submitted regarding the trails:

- *I teach my kids how to look for rabbit paths on the trails.*
- *Hoping to use for the first time this coming weekend and plan to use this winter to snowshoe*
- *I use the trails. Build more, especially for bikes.*
- *I knew they were there, but just used them for the first time this year. Holy cow they are awesome. You NEED to get the word out to other members how great these things are! Thank you so much for putting these things in!*
- *Just a comment: I appreciate how the walking trails are marked and maintained, it's about as good as any other backcountry area.*
- *There are so many possibilities for endurance sports/ shooting sports combinations here - I would suggest events that do both.*

Some of the suggestions you submitted in the survey regarding improvements to the trail system included the addition of benches and lookout spots at specific spots along the trails so members can sit & watch birds and wildlife at the ponds along the trails. The Board is considering these suggestions alongside the others received in the survey about other amenities on the property.

But, while improvements can be pointed out for pretty much anything, the current state of our trails is pretty darned good and something we can all be proud of. I've been out on them a few times now & encourage you to give them a look for yourself – they're a great way to spend some time!





# Nature's Cleanup Crew

**Jerika Bradford, Canadian Wildlife Federation,**  
**cwf-fcf.org**

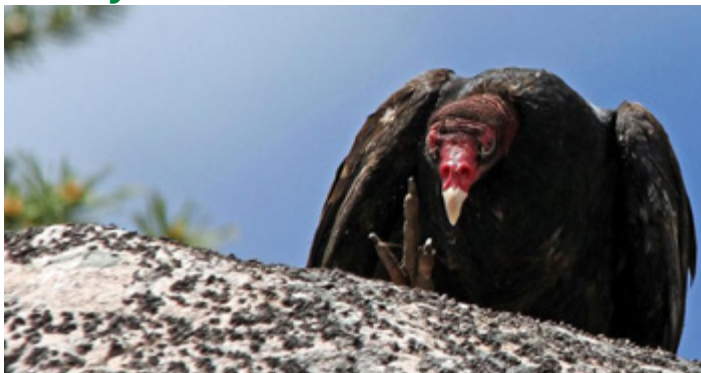
Reproduced with permission from: <http://blog.cwf-fcf.org/index.php/en/natures-clean-up-crew/?src=sm>

Some species don't get enough credit for the work they do to help keep the environment neat and tidy. Species that feast on dead and decaying plant and animal matter are called scavengers, a.k.a. nature's clean up crew.

Scavengers play a crucial role in the environment; they help break down organic matter and recycle it back into the ecosystem as nutrients. They also keep potentially dangerous diseases and bacteria at bay by consuming the animal carcasses along the roadside, your favourite outdoor trail, and many other locations we might not even be aware of.

Take a look below at some of Canada's most popular scavengers and some that just may surprise you.

## Turkey Vultures



Turkey Vultures are scavengers in the truest form and feed almost exclusively on carrion (dead animals). Their keen sense of smell helps them detect gases from carrion along the roadside and beneath closed tree canopies. Their stomachs have strong acids that help kill off dangerous toxins and microorganisms, which helps minimize the spread of diseases and bacteria associated with carrion.

## Butterflies



Butterflies are scavengers too! Several species of butterflies have been found huddled on mud, urine and dung, and on the corpses of dead animals and fish as they lick for vital salt and minerals.

## Red Fox



Red Foxes have a stomach of steel and can eat almost anything from voles, mice, squirrels and rabbits to reptiles, wild fruits and garbage. But they will also readily eat carrion any chance they get.

## Pine Martens

Pine Martens have a cute appearance with a little round face and pointy nose. They are also very effective predators with sharp, curved and semi-retractable claws that help them climb trees. Just like many species, Pine Martens are also opportunistic predators that won't pass up on free leftovers.



## Coyotes



You can count on Coyotes for scavenging on the leftovers from wolf kills. Coyotes are opportunists and will eat just about anything from small prey animals, deer, wild fruit to dead animals.

## Common Raven



This bird has adapted to living in many different habitats across the country and with that comes being able to adapt on what food is available. Ravens are mostly opportunistic omnivores and are known to prey on sick and dying animals and scavenge their carcasses.

## Wolverine

Wolverines are more of a scavenger than a hunter and usually depends on other animals, like wolves, to make the kill for them. But when push comes to shove, Wolverines will hunt their own prey.



## North American Lobster

North American Lobsters do their part to keep the sea floor clean. These bottom-dwellers feed on crabs, shellfish, starfish, marine worms, sea urchins, slugs and snails – either alive or dead! They certainly do their part to help recycle the nutrients within their habitat.



## Black Bear



Black Bears take advantage of whatever grub is available. They need to forage up to 20 hours a day to increase their body weight for winter and will eat both plants and animals, including carrion.

## Snapping Turtles



Snapping Turtles play an important role in the ecosystems as scavengers. These turtles help keep our lakes and rivers clean by eating a heavy diet of carrion and recycling the nutrients back into the bodies of water.



# Environmental Signage

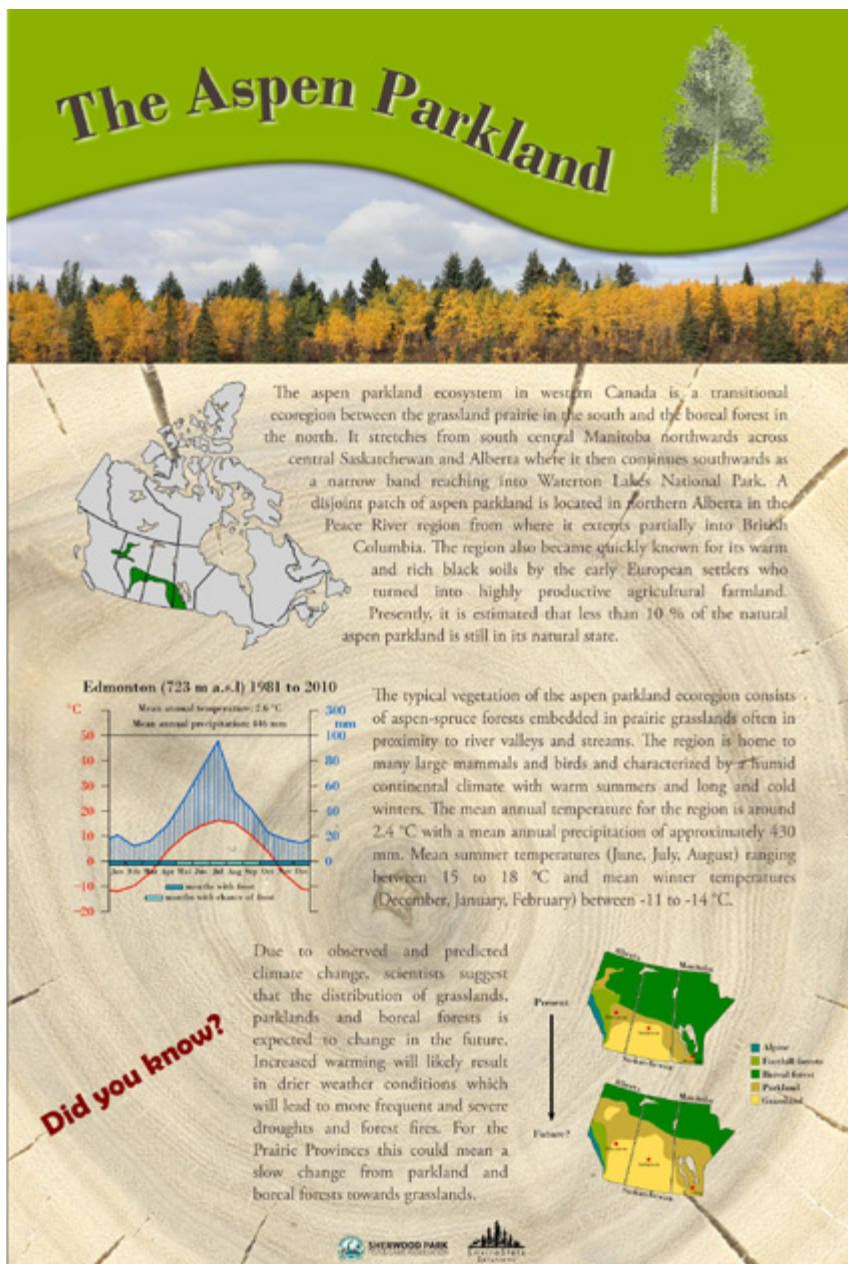
## **Sebastian Dietrich, Environmental & Political Action Director**

Increased public awareness for climate change and environmental issues requires a knowledge foundation in environmental science to be able to understand and discuss these topics. For this reason, the club has commissioned the creation of interpretive signage to allow members and visitors to inform and educate themselves about fish & wildlife, vegetation, soils, ecosystems, and biogeochemical cycles focusing on the aspen parkland. The aspen parkland is the transitional biome that stretches between the prairies and the boreal forest. The production of signs falls within the clubs' mandate to provide conservation education to members and the public.

This project will encompass several signs. One will cover the Aspen Parkland (the concept sign here is offered as an example of the direction we are pursuing with this), there will be two signs each on animal and plant species, one sign on biogeochemical cycles, and one sign on geology and soil formation of the Aspen Parkland. When completed, these signs will be installed along the walking trails. A final sign, focusing on the aquatic flora and fauna of the Aspen Parkland, will be located at the fish pond.

Because each topic is more complex than can be captured in a single sign, we will be including additional information on each sign's topic on our website, with a QR code on each sign giving you access to that information directly.

**Dr. Stefan Schreiber**, a club member, is working with his company EnviroStats on creating these signs. We will keep you updated and let you know when the signs are ready & have been installed.





# Black Powder Shooting (in a word or two)



## ***Paul Christiansen, Black Powder Director***

The Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association accommodates two Black Powder Shooting events during the spring and fall seasons. With the luck of the draw, and some excellent backing from the people of the SPFGA executive, and the volunteers from the Edmonton House Brigade black powder demonstration organization, the Black Powder trail walk came into being many years ago.

A trail walk is a combination of metal targets, which are situated in the forested area, to which become your enemy, or food source, (in your imagination, of course) and must be your target using some of the most primitive firearms available. As well, at times, there may be added to the mix, a knife and tomahawk target to which you have to show your expertise.

The trail is located off of the shotgun range, and runs approximately 1.5 km through some of the most pristine areas of the club, of which one can, at times, see moose, all types of waterfowl, beaver, and the odd times a black powder shooter wearing any and all kinds of Mountain Man-era trappings.

The main shooting competitions (of which most of us are not totally competitive but like to win sometimes)

are held in the early spring and later summer. The competitions are for the young and not-so-young, the experienced and the green shooter or tenderfoot. All persons with any interest at all are welcomed, as we have some of the best knowledgeable people in the country.

There is, for the newcomer, one-on-one instruction on shooting many of the greatest firearms history ever produced. The firearms can be either flintlock or caplock, caplock being fired with a percussion cap placed on a nipple. The flintlock, on the other hand, is very well known by anyone who has ever seen Davy Crockett. The flintlock is documented as being in service for over 200 years, and beyond, due to clubs such as the Edmonton House Brigade, who use and promote, flintlock and caplock black powder shooting at request.

Our aim is to promote the shooting sports with a twist, which go back through history about 200 years, and spend a day with us, and you will carry the knowledge you have gained about shooting with some of the finest firearms ever produced, and hopefully you will come back again to enter the past.

# 2020 Membership Renewal FAQs

Keeping with the theme of delays with this project, some unexpected challenges held back our originally-planned opening date. Our new newly updated website did however open on November 13, and the Member Portal opened on November 20.

## What is the 'Member Portal'?

The Member Portal is the part of the website that you use to update your contact information and to renew for the next year.

## Why were there delays in starting renewals this year?

For those who aren't already aware, this project was originally precipitated by changes in the AFGA's membership database. The structure of the AFGA's current membership database is not compatible with the way we have historically recorded member information in our own database.

The resulting mismatch required substantial time in processing our submissions to the AFGA, but more importantly created errors and has been substantially costly to do. As a result, thanks to the hard work of **Matthew Meier**, SPFGA 1st Vice President, we restructured our member database to match the AFGA's to make all of this simpler, faster and more accurate.

While this was underway, we made some changes to the Member Portal.

Because of the recent decision to allow range guests, we wanted to make it so you could purchase guest passes through the Member Portal directly. That way, should you decide that day that you'd like to host a guest, you can simply buy a pass for them online and head out.

Being able to purchase tickets to organized events like the Family Fun Day we held this past August was something else we wanted to give you the ability to do.

And, with the removal of the membership cap, we also wanted to add the ability of new members to sign up directly on the Member Portal and not have everyone dealing with paper forms and all the challenges those create.

We've got a great website—one of the most advanced Fish & Game club websites in Alberta we feel—and we're proud to provide it to you. While all this work with the Member Portal and the database was going on, we did a refresh on the website itself as well.

So, we had the member database, the Member Portal and the website up on the hoist through the majority of the Fall so we could build these things into them & make these changes. Like all renovations though, this has naturally taken longer than we'd originally expected. But, we finally completed them. And, as always, we appreciate your patience and understanding while that was happening.

## Why do we have re-enter our information?

Because of the new required structure for our member database, spouses & dependents in Family memberships need to each have their own separate sub-accounts connected to the primary member's.

To ensure that each member's information is the most current and accurate, we decided to take this one step further, have a fresh start, and have everyone re-set up their membership in the club's new database themselves. This was necessary in order to ensure everyone is entered and connected properly. We looked at various ways of converting what was already there ourselves. However, the approaches we considered to import and verify our entire existing member information from the old format to the new one promised to be expensive, cumbersome, and fraught with error.

We recognize that asking each member to re-enter their information would be more work than usual this year, but only just a little. Doing it this way has a number of benefits: in addition to ensuring each member's information is accurate, there are substantial savings in verification time and cost by having it entered from scratch.

## Will members have help with all of this?

There's a lot of new stuff going on. We wanted to make sure you didn't go through it alone, so we



made sure you'd have a YouTube video with detailed instructions to guide you through the process.

We know that a few members might not be comfortable with entering their information in this way. For this small segment, we've made paper forms available on request for manual processing. In an effort to keep membership costs at their current level though, we recognized the need to be restrained in offering this however, as we know from past experience that manual processing time and costs add up quickly.

### How long do we have to renew?

Existing members' memberships are active until Dec 31 (memberships follow the calendar year). If you have not renewed before then, your membership deactivates Jan 1, as does your scan card for the gate and all of the other benefits of membership like third party liability insurance and being part of the AFGA.

As soon as you renew though, that will all resume. So, to prevent interruptions it's best to renew before the end of the year.

There isn't the same kind of 'if you don't renew, you're out and you have to go to the back of the line' hard deadline like existed before the range cap, however.

### Will we need to do this again?

We don't think so. It's always difficult to predict the future of course but barring the AFGA making future changes to their database system, we believe this should be a once-only thing.

### Is there anything else we should know?

There is one item: email communications and unsubscribing from them. **Per our Bylaws**, supplying a valid email address along with maintaining permission for us to contact you with essential club communication (e.g. membership renewals, facility closures, safety notices) is a mandatory requirement of membership. We will have two levels of emails going forward: general club communications and essential club communication. You will be able to unsubscribe from these and we will ensure there is clear messaging about what you're unsubscribing from and what that means.

### Who can I talk to with questions?

If you have questions, please contact **Matthew** at [membership@spfga.ca](mailto:membership@spfga.ca). If you need to request a paper application form, please contact **Candace** at [memberservices@spfga.ca](mailto:memberservices@spfga.ca) or 780-467-0085.





# 2020 Board Elections

Elections for the SPFGA Board are just around the corner—**Thursday, December 5!** As always, the Annual General Meeting will be at the Old Log Cabin, 50 Spruce Avenue in Sherwood Park.

Some recent changes are switching things up this year. Updates to **our bylaws** have only half of the Board coming up for elections each year so that there is continuity year-to-year.

As a result, coming up this year are the following positions. Click on each below to see the job description for that position.

## Officers

**1st Vice President**

**Secretary**

## Directors

**Fishing**

**Hunting**

**Youth**

**Rifle**

**Song Birds**

**Communications**


**Programs**

**Environment/  
Political Action**

We need help ... your help. If you've ever considered taking on a Board position, or even if you haven't but you see something here that intrigues you, take a look at the job descriptions for the positions above. If you're interested in running for a position, please email **Doug Burton** by email at **[past-president@spfga.ca](mailto:past-president@spfga.ca)** or **Roland Coppens** at **[communications@spfga.ca](mailto:communications@spfga.ca)** and let them know. Alternatively, if you'd rather play it by ear, just show up on election night and announce your interest from the floor.

You don't have to be an expert in that area to run for the position, you can learn what you need as you go. The most important ingredient is the desire to make a difference.

But whether you decide to run or not though, **we need you to show up on election night to vote.** If you like what's been happening this year and look forward to more of that, we need to you come out and pick the candidates you feel are most likely to create the change you'd like to see in the club.



The world is run by  
those who show up.

Robert Johnson

quoteagency

# Member Engagement Survey Results

## ***Roland Coppens, Member Engagement Survey Committee Chair***

In September, we sent out a survey to the membership, polling your thoughts and perspectives. We wanted to get a sense of who you are, how you view the organization & your membership, and understand what your vision of what the future directions should be. We wanted, in other words, to get a sense of your engagement.

The survey was in the field for just over a month, closing in early October. We received 740 responses,

a ~25% response rate, which is great for an internal survey like this. We'd set things up so a single membership could respond only one time, so we can say each response is unique to an individual household.

The Survey Committee collated the results, and on October 20, a working group met to review them in order to identify the trends and come away with action items.

Here's what we found.

## **Who You Are**

- Over two-thirds of primary members are between the ages of 30 and 60.
- Just over 95% of primary members are male (more on this in a bit).
- Roughly half of members have an Individual membership.
- About half of Family memberships (so, a quarter of all memberships) are the primary member and their spouse. The other half of Family memberships (again, a quarter of all memberships) are families with three or more members.
- 51% of members live in Strathcona County & nearby counties, 47% live in Edmonton, and 2% live outside of these areas.

## **Reasons For Your Membership**

Asked for the reasons that led to the decision to join the SPFGA, members responded:

Reason	% of Responses
Firearms ranges	39%
Location	20%
Recommendation from family/friends	16%
The facilities	15%
Conservation-oriented	7%
Family-oriented	7%
Affordability	4%
Well-maintained	4%
Archery	4%
Campground	4%
Safety	1%

Just over 20% of members maintain an SPFGA membership primarily to meet their obligations to maintain a restricted firearms license (RPAL).



# Member Engagement Survey Results (continued)

## Satisfaction With Membership

- 90% of members indicate a satisfaction 4 or 5 out of 5 level of satisfaction with the SPFGA as a whole.
- 94% of members indicate a satisfaction 4 or 5 out of 5 level of satisfaction with the SPFGA Ketchamoot Creek facility.
- 79% of members ranked the value they feel they get from their SPFGA is 4 or 5 out of 5.
- Factors identified in comments as being items that would increase this rating in members' minds were:
  - Improvements to outhouses; clean & restock more often
  - More organized dynamic/practical shooting events
  - Return holster use for qualified users
  - Courses & learning opportunities for shooting and hunting
  - Partnering with nearby ranges to broaden xzzrange of available activities
  - Extend the length of the rifle ranges
  - Improved new member orientation
  - More reactive targets

## Priority Items

The working group, going over the survey results, identified 19 priority items for the Board to consider in its plans for the next year or two, ranking them by priority. The Board will consider the top five of these first, deciding how best to take action on each.

### 1. Establish shooting leagues

One of the clear themes in the survey responses was the strong interest in our firearms ranges, particularly in the direction of innovation and expansion, especially in the area of organized shooting leagues (3-gun, IPSC, SASS, Steel Challenge, ORPS, etc.)

Our first step will be to establish a strategy for these innovations and expansions, making sure our growth of leagues is done sustainably with balance.

### 2. Range improvement plans/options

There was a broad range of suggestions for improvements to our ranges and their rules. These are presented below. The growth in popularity of dynamic shooting, particularly positional shooting, and reactive targets vs. paper targets was highlighted.

Improvement Suggestion	% of Mentions
More reactive targets	21.6%
Holster restriction rule needs review	19.8%
Extend range length beyond 300m	18.1%
Range shed improvements	12.9%
Better accommodation for positional shooting	3.4%
Expand # of shooting bays	3.4%
Improved signage	3.4%
Do not bring back Range Enforcement staff	2.3%
Allow pistol caliber carbines at pistol range	1.7%
Bring back Range Enforcement staff	1.1%



### 3. Establish longer term plan for facilities and maintenance

From members' comments, the working group recognized the need to establish longer term plans for the facility so that changes, improvements and expansions can be considered, prioritized and budgeted for. The need for maintenance plans to run in parallel with this was identified.

### 4. Amend the mission statement to include the shooting sports

Just under 2/3rds of members indicated being aware of our mission statement. Despite this, there was a split in opinion whether there was a need for adjustment of its wording to promote better inclusion of members' interests, with slightly more than half (51.2%) of respondents say that they did not feel this was necessary.

The working group went through the comments to this question and the fairly definitive need to broaden the wording was appreciated. A word cloud was used to create a visual weighting of the appearance of words and themes. The Board will consider various potential amendments to the mission statement wording and present them for consideration to the membership.

It is noteworthy here that the **National Fishing and Hunting Collaborative (NFHC)**, of which the AFGA is a part, itself reserved the #2 spot in its list of National Five priorities for firearms.

### 5. Expand Family Fun Day to a full day, full facility event

The Family Fun Day this past August was one of the best attended, warmly received events we have tried in some time. There is some appropriateness therefore that a member engagement survey be the tool that identifies that as member engagement event this should not only continue, but expand. (Editorializing here, I have to admit to having had no small amount of joy at this, as this was an event I myself proposed and planned. This event was, without exaggeration, the highlight of my Board involvement. So, it warmed my heart to see it responded to in this way, both by members as well as by the survey working group.)

## General Comments

Under 'Who You Are', after the figure of '95% male' I promised additional comment. When I first saw this statistic, it surprised me a bit. I knew there'd be a lean toward males but didn't expect it to be this stark. Thinking about it for a bit though, I think for the Family membership holders this is artifactual and simply points to the fact that the **primary member** in the household is male and reflects the way member information has traditionally been stored in our database. The respondents to the survey may well have been someone else in the household though, and not the primary members themselves.

The second comment I wanted to make regards generalizability. While these results are from ~25% of the membership, there's some skew worth recognizing. First, being an electronic survey sent and replied to by email, it automatically filtered out ~400 or so members who either don't have an email address, have not supplied an email address, or who have unsubscribed from club email. There's an automatic lean therefore toward club members with a potentially different level of engagement. There's also an automatic lean toward members more comfortable with technology, carrying with it a lean toward younger members. Lastly, while these results are being generalized to the entire membership, the truth is that we haven't heard from the larger bulk of you one way or the other on this (~75% in fact), so there are some assumptions being made here. All things taken equal and people being people, I don't think there's much danger in those assumptions but out of an interest in transparency it was something I wanted to be sure to point out.



# Did You Know? – Steel-Core Ammo

One of the easy-to-do suggestions coming out of the Member Engagement Survey was the inclusion of quick reminders of Facility Rules in emails, newsletters and on social media. The idea for these is to highlight a specific rule and briefly explain its reasoning. This is a great, simple idea we're happy to start right away.

This **Did You Know?** deals with steel-core ammunition. This is a good point to talk about because both comments in the survey and questions received from members point that better clarity is needed.

So, let's start there—with the reasons why this might not be clear.

First of all, the terminology used in discussions about this tends to be shaggy. The terms used to talk about this tend not to be used properly, and that contributes to the problem. Let's look at some of those:

## FMJ

'Full metal jacket' projectiles have a soft (usually lead) core encased within a thin shell of copper-zinc or copper-nickel alloy, or less commonly, a steel alloy. FMJ projectiles have been in use since the 1880's.

## Steel-core

Projectiles with a thin shell of metal around a steel core. Typically, this ammunition is manufactured with annealed (softened) steel in place of lead for reasons of cost.

## Steel-jacketed

While it is true some types of FMJ may have thin jackets of steel alloy, this term in use is typically a conflation of 'steel core' and 'full metal jacket' and the projectile being referred to is actually one of the previous two types.

## Steel-case

Often for reasons of cost, some ammunition is manufactured with steel casings rather than brass.



The second contributor to reduced clarity is that our Facility Rules about steel-core ammo have flip-flopped. In November 2018, steel-core ammo became banned at the SPFGA as a result of a majority Board vote. A short while later however, this ban was reversed, and steel-core ammo use was once again approved via a majority member vote at the January 2019 General Meeting.

So, as it currently stands, **ammunition with steel-core projectiles *is* permitted on SPFGA ranges according to the following rules:**

**Must only be used on the Big Bore, Overflow, and 50 m ranges.**

**Must only be used on targets affixed to backstops.**

**Must not be used at distances less than 50 m.**

**Must not be used on gongs.**

Ammunition with FMJ projectiles which do not have a steel-core are permitted on SPFGA ranges according to the standard Facility Rules.

A common question is how to tell the difference between steel-core ammunition and regular ammunition. The only way to be 100% sure is to pull the projectile from a cartridge, cut it in half, and inspect the two pieces. You should be able to see a piece of steel. A simpler technique (but which is also less reliable) is the “magnet test” employed by many ranges: hold a magnet to the projectile and if it sticks, then the ammunition is steel-core.

As steel-case ammunition can potentially have various types of projectiles, there are no restrictions in the Facility Rules based on the material the casing is manufactured from. However, one safety concern which has been raised is the possibility of a slip hazard with steel cases which have not been picked up. These may not crush like brass cases when stepped on and, on the hard concrete floor of our range sheds, could potentially cause a slip and fall. To this point however, already included within the Facility Rules is the requirement that “spent casings must be picked up from the range shed area using the brooms, dustpans, rakes and/or pick-up magnets provided and either placed in the casing waste pails or removed from the property.” So, for safety as much as etiquette, please ensure you clean up your spent casings, regardless of their type.

We encourage you to ensure that you review the **General Rules and Rifle & Handgun Ranges** sections of the Facility Rules to complete your understanding on this matter: <https://www.spfga.ca/facility-rules/>





## Range Hours

Shooting hours begin at 9:00 a.m. daily and end according to the following:

2nd Sunday in March – April 14	6:30 p.m.
April 15 – September 21	8:00 p.m.
September 22 – 1st Saturday in November	6:30 p.m.
1st Sunday in November – 2nd Saturday in March	4:30 p.m.

All firing must cease at the posted hours. These times are posted at the gate, on the website and in the newsletter.

## Wildlife Issues—Who to Call?

Fairly regularly, we receive questions in the office regarding who to contact regarding issues with wildlife. To the right is a contact list based on animal type:



- **For issues with migratory birds** (e.g. – ducks, geese), contact **Canadian Wildlife Services** at **1-800-668-6767**
- **For issues with large wildlife** (e.g. – bears, cougars, moose, etc.) contact **Report a Poacher** at **1-800-642-3800**
- For issues with smaller animals such as squirrels or skunks—these are dealt with on your own, or a third party animal removal company can be help with the issue.

## Before You Leave Home

We have many amenities at our facility that our members use. It's fairly common for us to have received bookings for them, so to avoid frustration or surprises, make sure you've checked the calendar on the website before leaving to come out: <https://www.spfga.ca/events>.



# You're Always Invited!

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You're not just invited to General Meetings, but to Board meetings too!

Members are always free to attend & observe Board meetings on the **second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm** at the **Chamber of Commerce offices in Sherwood Park, 100 Ordze Rd. (The door to get in is the side entrance along the south side of the building.)**

If you have a topic you'd like to speak about at a board meeting, all you need to do is provide advance notice by sending an email to the President at [president@spfga.ca](mailto:president@spfga.ca) and the Secretary at [secretary@spfga.ca](mailto:secretary@spfga.ca) to have it included in the agenda.

We'd love to see you, so please come on out!

## We'd Love to Hear From You!

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Share your wildlife, conservation, hunting, fishing, scenic, and shooting sports photos, stories, and videos with us. We'd love to feature them here in our newsletter, on the website and on our social media. Wild game recipes are especially welcome!

Send your shareable items to [communications@spfga.ca](mailto:communications@spfga.ca)









## Autumn

*Emily Dickinson*

The morns are meeker than they were,  
The nuts are getting brown;  
The berry's cheek is plumper,  
The rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf,  
The field a scarlet gown.  
Lest I should be old-fashioned,  
I'll put a trinket on.



## Join Us On Social Media!

SPFGA is active on **Facebook**, **Twitter** & **Instagram** and would we'd love to see you come and join in with us. Go to the **spfga.ca homepage** & click on the social media buttons or click the links below to connect to us.

**Please like & follow** us to receive news, updates & information about upcoming events. Invite family, friends and other association members to do the same!

If you have social media-related questions, or questions about the website, please contact the **Communications Chair** by email or by direct message



@spfga



@shpkfga



@spfga

**Editor:** Roland Coppens  
**Design:** Vance Yung

## Feel Proud: You Make This Possible!

As SPFGA members, each of us also has membership in the AFGA. Take a moment to look at some of the conservation projects we all make possible through our involvement:

**<https://www.facebook.com/letsgooutdoorsca/videos/723164378084733/>**



# SHERWOOD PARK

FISH & GAME ASSOCIATION