

# FOOTHILLS STREAM CROSSING PARTNERSHIP

A SUCCESS STORY













### Intro to the FSCP



## Advisory Support and Collaborative Partners



Alberta Environment and Parks



Alberta Energy Regulator



Fisheries and Oceans Canada



Alberta Conservation Association



Trout Unlimited



Aseniwuche Development Corp



Alberta Backcountry Hunters and Anglers Association

- 1. Arc Reources
- 2. Athabasca Oil Corp
- 3. Baytex Energy
- 4. Canfor
- 5. Cardinal Energy
- 6. Canlin
- 7. Chevron
- 8. Cenovus
- 9. Hammerhead Resources
- 10. Keyera
- 11. NuVista Energy
- 12. Outlier Resources
- 13. Paramount
- 14. Petrus
- 15. Peyto
- 16. Pieridae Energy

- 17. Repsol
- 18. Shell Canada
- 19. Spartan Delta 2022
- 20. Strathcona
- 21. HWN Energy (Tangle Creek)
- 22. Taqa
- 23. Tidewater Midstream
- 24. West Fraser
  - 1. Slave Lake Pulp
  - 2. Blue Ridge
  - 3. Hinton Wood Products
- 25. Weyerhaeuser

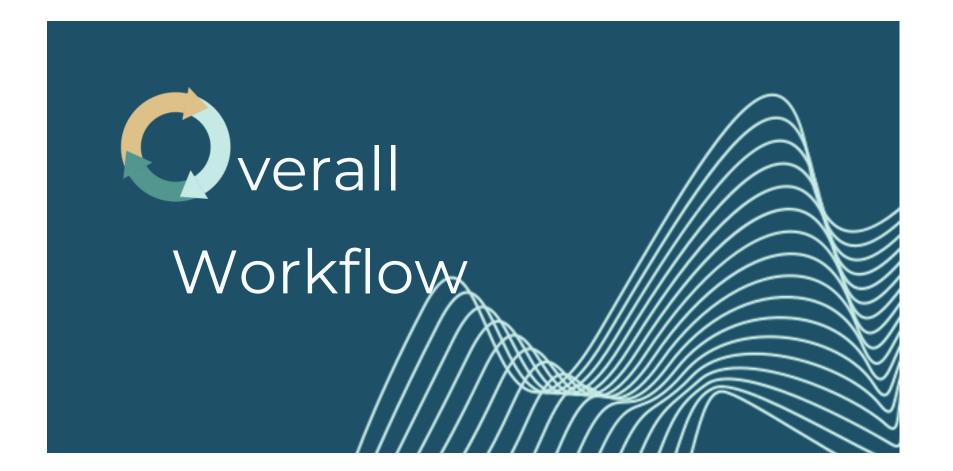


Foothills Stream Crossing Partnership



## Mission

To improve the condition and performance of stream crossings on the landscape.



FSCP identifies inspections that are outstanding and provides maps and details per region

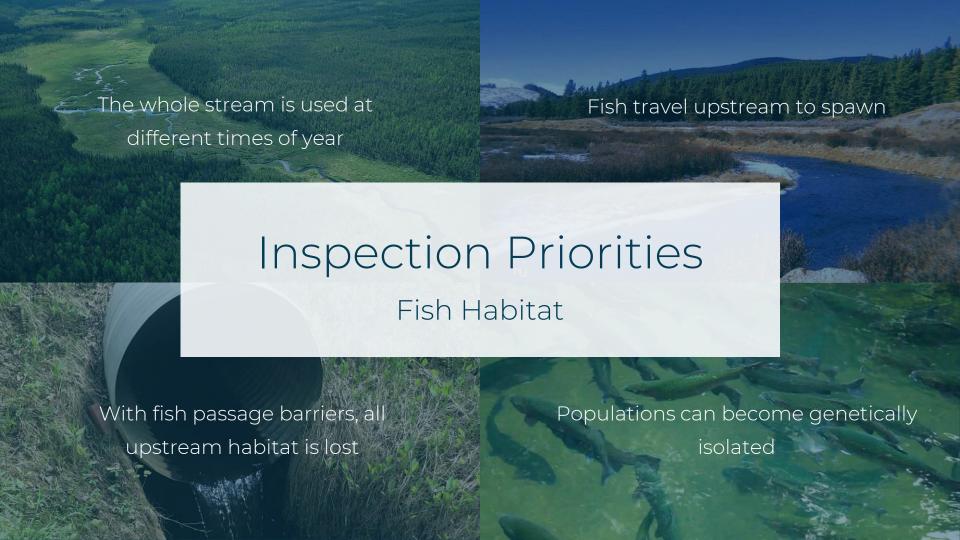
Training sessions for inspectors and are held across the province on inspection protocols and general crossing mitigation strategies

Stream crossing data collected during snow free periods and compile the inventory within the FSCP database

Crossing data is summarized, prioritized and compiled into watershed scale plans that span multiple industries

Crossing owners prioritize repairs and schedule crossing repair. Completed plans are submitted to the regulators

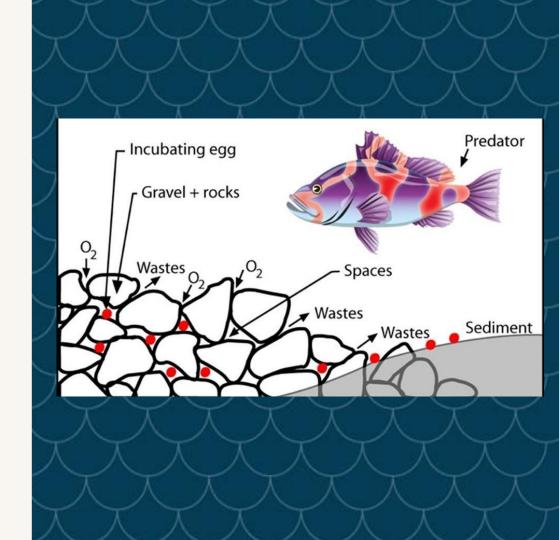
# Watershed Remediation Process



## Inspection Priorities:

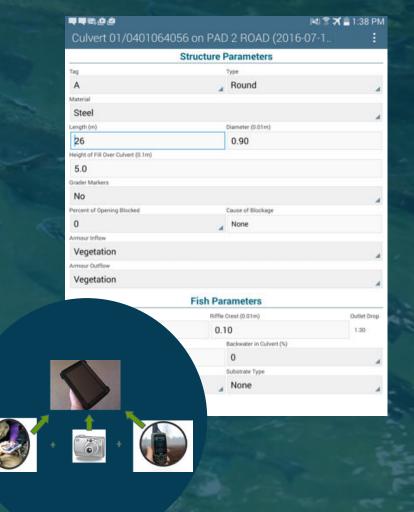
Sediment and Fish

- ♦ Sediment reduces the abundance of insect larvae and smothers those that live on the bottom
- ♦ The suspended sediment can damage gills
- ♦ Effects of several crossings can add up
- ♦ Dirt in the water will change fish feeding behavior, since prey is less visible
- ♦ Fish avoid areas of high sediment leaving them with less space to live in



## Data Management

- ◆ Application is designed according to most recent data requirements
- ♦ Extensive data validation
- ♦ Camera, GPS and datalogger all in one
- ◆ Easy transfer to outside groups conducting inspections



♦ Immediate upload of data to online tool

## Data Interaction: Operational





Companies can access data at anytime

Search data by attributes of the crossings

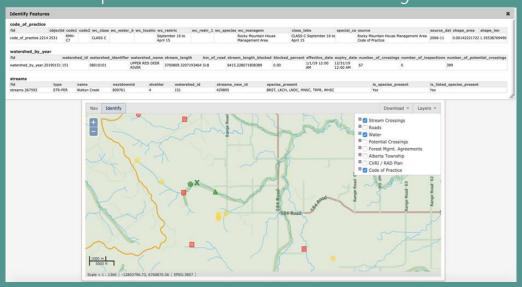
Can download spatial data and PDF reports and photos

Watershed views of connectivity and sedimentation (over time)

Multi level passwords available per company

## Company Driven Prioritization Report

Prioritize watersheds and crossings within watersheds based on position and connectivity





- Aseniwuche Development Corporation
- Training for Indigenous communities located in remote locations
- Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
- Citizen Science projects of ATV trail crossings
- ATV trail inventory Habitat Offset Banking Project

## Watershed Scale

### Remediation

The solution is prioritizing in two ways:





There are over 50,000 road and stream crossings in the province and many of these crossings were installed before the impacts of barriers on fish movement and sedimentation were identified. Many different industries, government agencies and private citizens own these crossings.

## WATERSHED SCALE REMEDIATION CHALLENGES

FSCP MEMBERS

ATTEMPTED TO

PRIORITIZE CROSSING

REPAIR

However, one-off
compliance letters from
regulators made
budgeting very difficult.
Funds were being pulled
from priority projects to
low benefit crossing

EXISTING LEGISLATION

Did not allow regulators to ignore non-compliant crossings or assign priority based on environmental risk.

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

FSCP believes strongly in the environmental and operational benefits of Watershed Scale Remediation. They requested support for their methodologies from the regulators.

THE SOLUTION

Was a new multiregulator policy
Roadway Watercourse
Crossings Remediation
Directive

## ROADWAY WATERCOURSE CROSSINGS REMEDIATION **DIRECTIVE -PURPOSE**

- To uphold regulatorymandate of AEP and AER
- Optimize compliance
   performance and enhance
   environmental stewardship
   through prioritizing
- A cooperative approach to planning remediation priorities between crossing owners and regulators.

### **About the Directive**



EFFECTIVE MARCH 4, 2015



Recognition that many crossings impede fish passage



Fragmentation of watercourses and decline in fish populations limits our ability to meet overall fish management



This is an alternative regulatory strategy for crossings authorized by AEP and AER

# DIRECTIVE BENEFITS TO FSCP

- Managed approach to stream crossing remediation over a longer period of time
- Access to a developed inspection protocol and data management system
- Remediation based on agreed to priorities by watersheds and by crossings within watersheds
- Cooperative approach between crossing owners and with the regulators
- More stable, predictive funding over time for remediation
- A positive, proactive approach
- Improved environmental performance



#### **Fish and Habitat**

- Increased habitat connectivity
- Channel size
- Listed species

Prioritization Methodology - Simplicity

#### Operational and Safety

- Cost and benefit of repair
- Life cycle of road
- Human safety



# Prioritization Methods and Success

Inventory

Prioritization

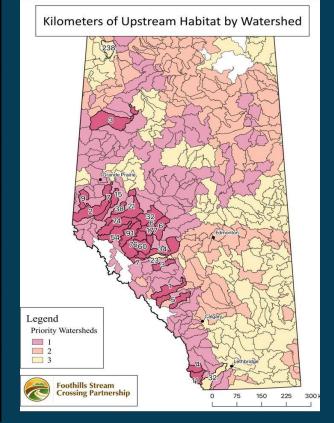
Strategic

Repairs



## Fish Passage Mitigation - Through Time

Years	Barriers Removed	KMs
2008 - 2018	268	886
2019	21	30
2020	32	86
2021	250	561
2022	175	284
All Years	746	1847





## Watershed Scale



SPECIES AT RISK

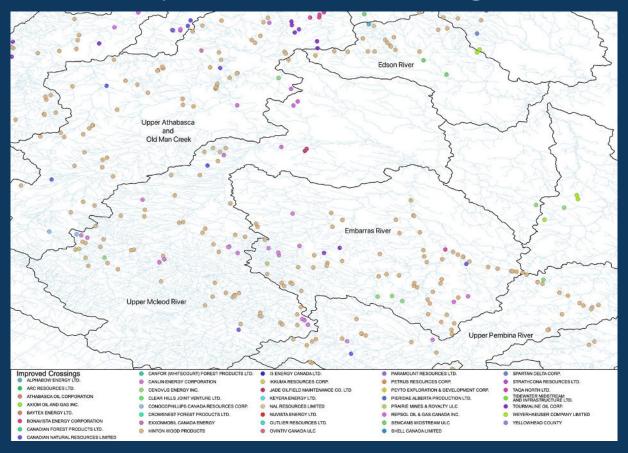


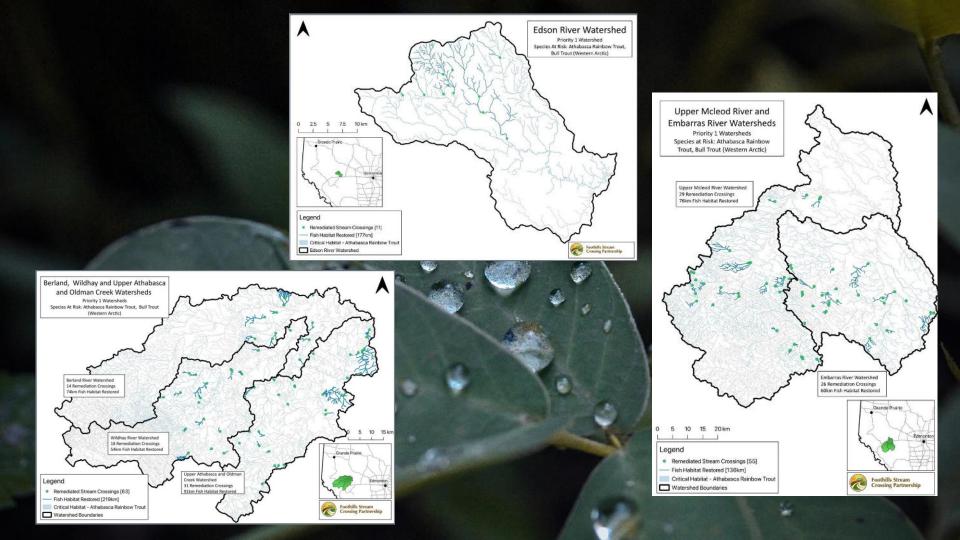




Infographics from CPAWS Southern Alberta - albertanativetrout.com

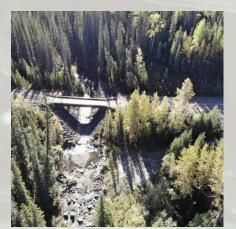
## Improved Crossings





# Remediation Snapshot EMERSON CREEK

♦ 85 km's of upstream habitat ♦ Critical habitat for Athabasca Rainbow trout and Bull trout ♦ 0.5km from the Athabasca River







## Stream Scale

Quigley Creek Learning Centre ♦ Upper McLeod ♦
Athabasca Rainbow Trout Habitat Collaboration with

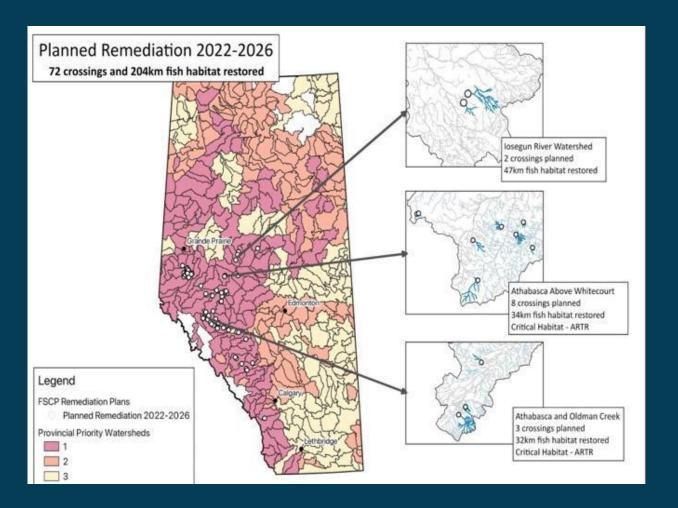
Trout Unlimited







## LOOKING FORWARD





## Looking forward

#### **BC INSPECTIONS**

- Partnering our members
   with BC Operations
  - Minor tweaks to inspection app and different governing regulations
  - Communicating to potential partners and existing members w/ BC infrastructure

#### **BOREAL INSPECTIONS**

- Winter access roads and a shift in environmental priorities
- Training local inspectors
- Partnering with indigenous communities

COMMUNICATION WITH POTENTIAL AND CURRENT PARTNERS, REGULATORS, PUBLIC & COLLABORATORS

## Concluding thoughts

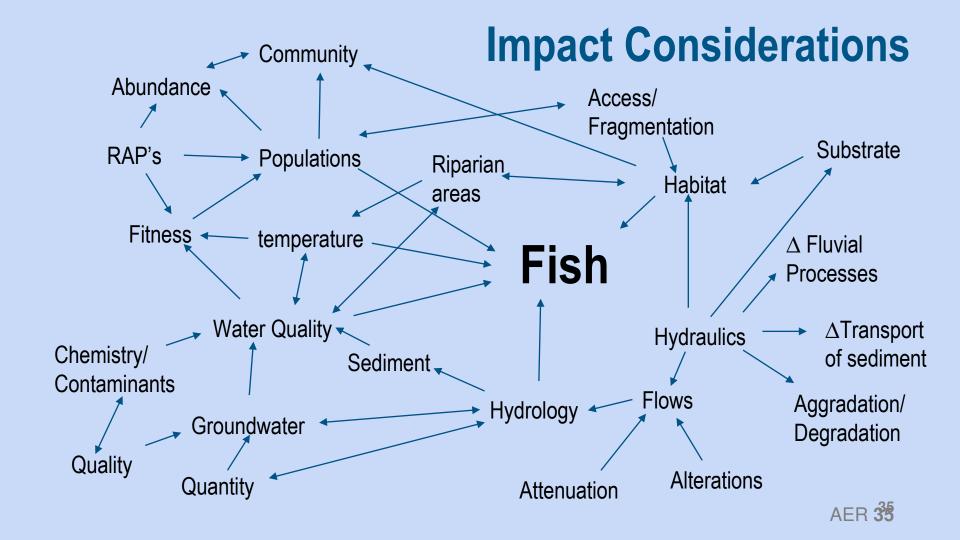
- For the past 17 years, The Foothills Stream Crossing Partnership has been improving Alberta's watersheds one inspection at a time.
- Many of Alberta's fish species are listed as threatened or endangered provincially and federally and populations continue to decline
- The FSCP's prioritized approach addresses concerns at crossings located at streams known to be high quality habitat for these species making measurable improvements to habitat.

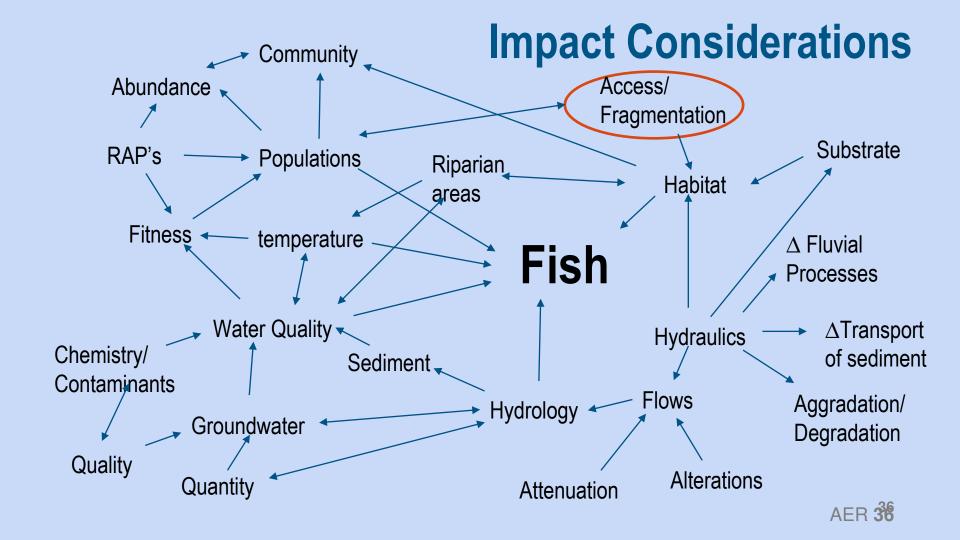




### **Outline**

- Impact Considerations
- Current State of Alberta's Fisheries
- Causes of Declines
- Roadway Watercourse Crossing Inspection Manual
- Roadway Watercourse Crossings Remediation Directive
- Watercourse Crossings Management Directive





- The Fish Sustainability Index (FSI) is Alberta
   Fish and Wildlife's method of assessing fish
   stocks on a provincial scale.
- The FSI was developed to bring consistency to individual fish stock assessments and provide a province-wide evaluation of the status and sustainability of Alberta fish species.

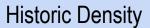


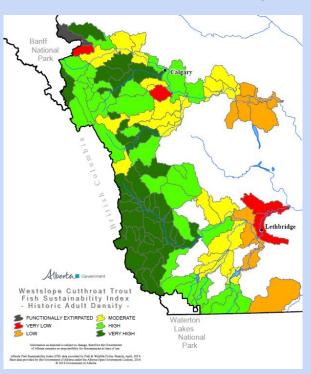
- Alberta currently has 3 fish species listed under the federal Species at Risk Act
  - Westslope Cutthroat Trout
    - Threatened
  - Athabasca Rainbow Trout
    - Endangered
  - Bull Trout\*
    - Threatened (Sask-Nelson)
- Arctic Grayling\*



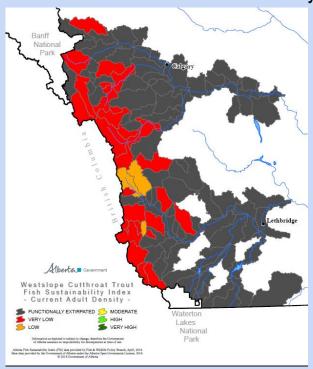






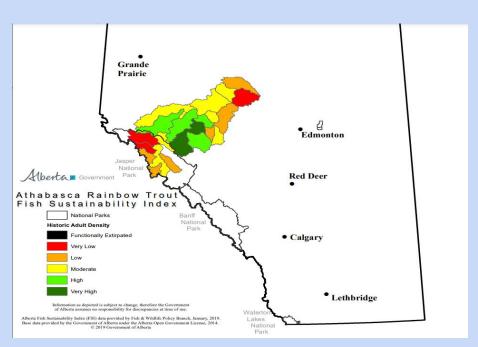


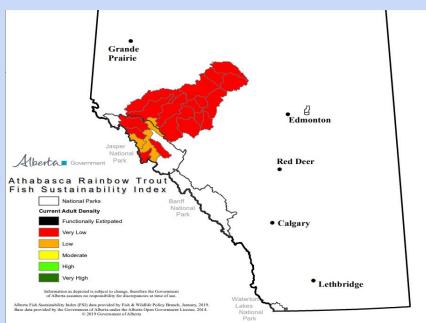
#### **Current Density**



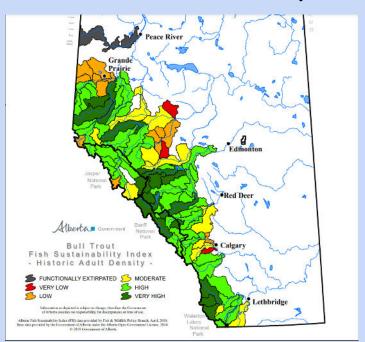
**Historic Density** 

**Current Density** 

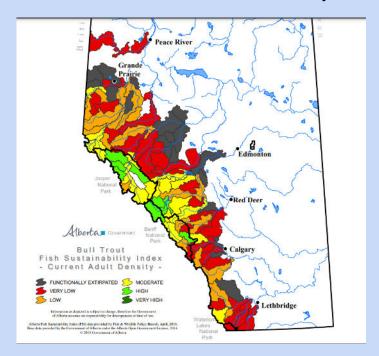


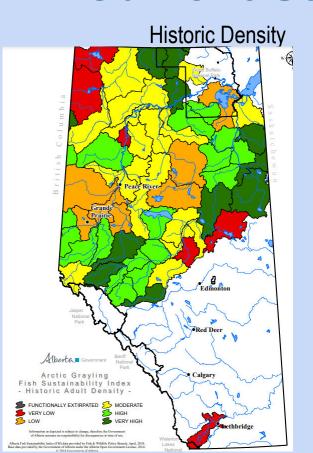


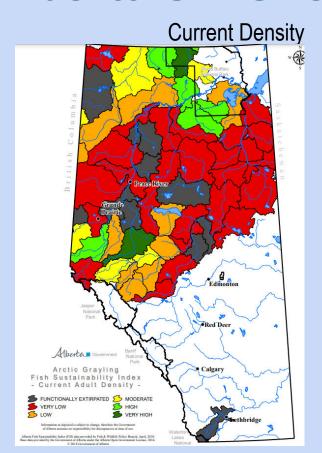
**Historic Density** 



#### **Current Density**







### **SARA Listed Critical Habitat in Alberta**

The current extent of Critical habitats in Alberta based on the presence of SARA listed Species

#### Legend

One or more aquatic species listed under the Species at Risk Act are found (or potentially found) within the coloured areas.



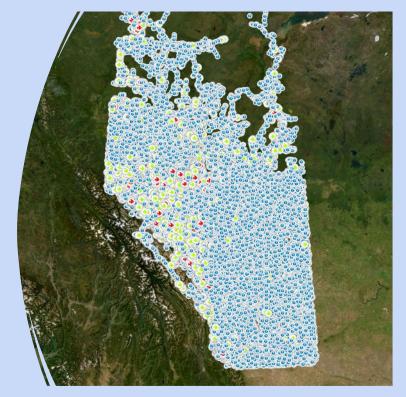


# **Causes of Fisheries Declines**

- Causes of declines of native Salmonids in Alberta can be found in Recovery Plans
  - Common causes among all salmonids include:
    - Invasive species/competition/inbreeding(stocking)
    - Habitat loss and degradation
    - Mortality/over-exploitation
    - Changes in Water Quality/pollution/Climate Change
    - Habitat Fragmentation

# **Predicted crossings**

- 110,373 predicted watercourse crossings
- Based on data from
   ESRD and ACA, failure
   rates of culverts were
   between 30-60%
   dependent on watershed



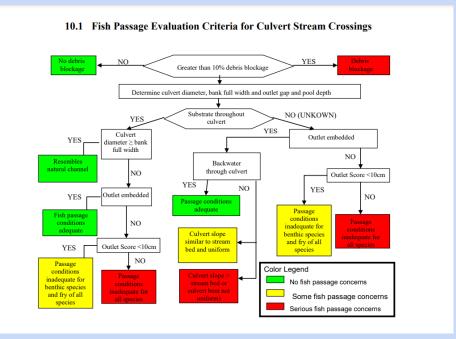
the establishment of a defined monitoring and reporting system to collect data and information around watershed health, connectivity and inform priority remediation work

# **Addressing Habitat Fragmentation**

- In the late 2000's, Regulators began looking at addressing the issue of Habitat Fragmentation
- Resulted in the creation of several initiatives:
  - Roadway Watercourse Crossing Inspection Manual (2012)
  - Roadway Watercourse Crossings Remediation Directive (2015)
  - Watercourse Crossings Management Directive (2020)

# Roadway Watercourse Crossing Inspection Manual

- Released in 2012
- Collaboration between ERSD and DFO
- Standardized assessment protocol
- Focused on fluvial habitats in the east slopes



Regulator-focused

Roadway Watercourse Crossing Inspection Manual

While standardized data collection resulted in consistency among assessors, forms were still manual and no central repository existed to assess the data holistically

Alberta	Government		Sus	Environment and stainable Resource Development					
		Waterc	ourse Cr	ossing Inspection Form					
Water Crossing Nan culvert)	ne of ID (ex. # spray pair	nted on or around							
Watercourse Name: Disposition No.									
GPS Co-ordinates (UTM): Easting: Northing:									
Stream Classificatio	n: Ephemeral	☐ Non-Fluvial (in	non-fluvial, or	mit shaded section)					
☐ Fluvial & eithe	r: Intermittent, or	☐ Permanent -	Small, or	Permanent - Large					
Bankfull width:	m ( measured	or estima	ited to nearest	metre)					
Crossing Type:	☐ Bridge – Permane	ent 🗌 Bridge	– Temporary	Culvert - Single					
	☐ Culvert - Multiple	Culvert - Open	Bottom						
	Fill - Log	Ford Su	pended	Reclaimed					
			-						
Erosion at site?	Yes Potentia	I No	☐ Inlet	t Outlet Both					
If Yes or Potential, in Ditch Gully Other	dentify source (check a	all that apply):	Road Surfa	ace Bridge Deck					
	ow High-un	satisfactory T	otal Erosion A	Area (m²)					
Culvert(s) diameter:			n	m (primary)					
	f diameter blocked by	debris? Tes	□ No (no	ote cause in comments)					
Substrate in the cul	vert? Yes	No Unknov	m						
If yes, what type?	Sand Grave	l Cobble	Boulder	Other:					
For what length of o	ulvert? 25% or le	ss 🗆 50% 🗀	75%	100%					
What proportion has	s backwater?	□ 25% □	50% 7	5% 🔲 100%					
Culvert slope:	Level and Uniform	Slope > or Vertica	Illy Bent						
Outlet Gap:	m (for lowest, if more tha	an one culvert)	Embedded	1					
+Pool Depth:	_m = Score:	Scour pool app	arent? 🗌 Y	'es 🗌 No					
Fish Passage Asses:	sment (optional)								
☐ No Concerns	Concerns	Inadequate / Uns	atisfactory						
If concerns or inade	equate, specify fish cal	tegory:  Weak Sv	rimmers	] All					

# Roadway Watercourse Crossings Remediation Directive

- Released in 2015
- To uphold Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) and the Alberta Energy Regulator's (AER) regulatory mandate
- To protect or restore fisheries habitat through effective stream crossing practices
- To promote and support a watershed-based approach to effective,
   collaborative watercourse crossing inspection, monitoring, management
   and remediation.

# Roadway Watercourse Crossings Remediation Directive

- Focus shift to Watershed scale
- Collaborative approach
- Proactive vs. Reactive
- Identification of Priorities
- Established the framework for overseeing implementation
- Voluntary

Lacked central database for Inspections

# Watercourse Crossings Management Directive

- Released in 2020
- Formalization of the Roadway Watercourse Crossings
   Remediation Directive
- Recognized Mortality, Habitat Fragmentation and Reduced Water Quality as main drivers of population declines
- Establishment of High Risk Watersheds and prioritization

# Watercourse Crossings Management Directive

- Transition Regulators to Audit Role
- Recognized need for Life-cycle approach
- Requirement of Type 1 or 2 crossing structures for new or replacement crossings
- Requirement to submit data annually
- Development of Watercourse Crossing Inspection App
- Development of centralized database

# Watercourse Crossings Management Directive



#### Inspect

Crossing owners must have an inspection program for the watercourse crossings that they own.



#### Report

Watercourse crossing inspection data must be submitted to the applicable regulator by November 30. Watercourse crossing inspections capture information such as:

- crossing location and crossing type
- o structure sizing
- o fish passage
- o water quality (erosion or sedimentation)
- o presence of barriers
- any structural issues of the crossing itself that contribute to the potential failure of the crossing



#### Remediate

By March 31 of each year, crossing owners must submit a plan to address all crossings that are not in compliance.

Priority watersheds and what you need to know if you are a crossing owner can be found in the Alberta Watercourse Crossing Owner Information Package [2].



#### Watershed-based collaboration for priority remediation

Contact us to become involved with the:

- Crossing Owner Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Native Trout Coordination Committee

Collaborative Watershed-based approach to crossing management in priority order for non-compliant crossings can be found in the Watercourse Crossings Management Directive

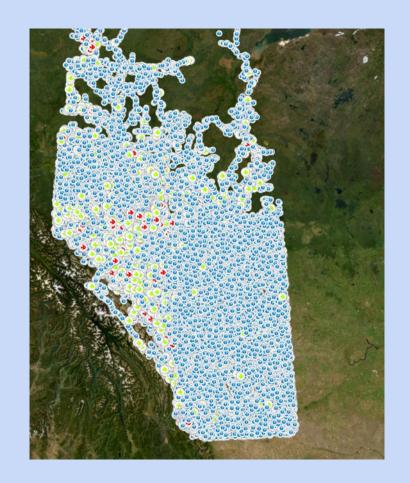
# **ABWCI App**

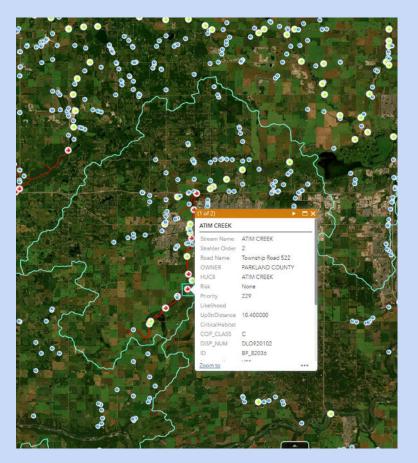
- Standardized watercourse crossing assessment
- Available to anyone
- Allows collection of inspection data and photos digitally
- Automatically updates Watercourse
   Crossing Database

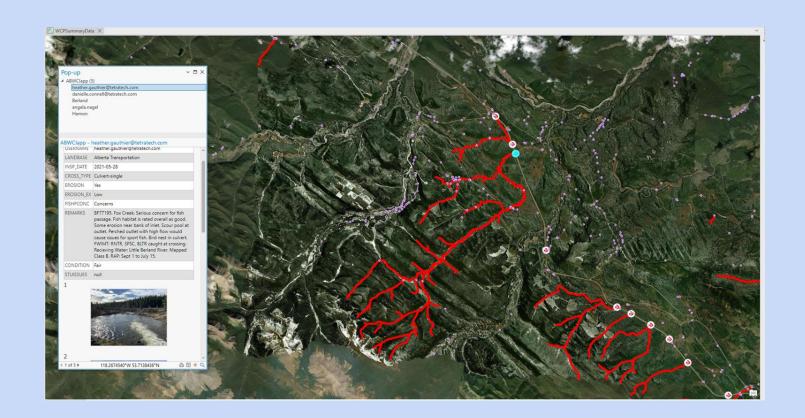


# Watercourse Crossing Program Dashboard

- Established
- Centralized database with all Inspection and Remediation data
- Supports watershed remediation planning
- Supports prioritization of remediation works
- Tracks timelines to achieve connectivity across the watersheds
- Crossing owner summaries







### Crossing Owner Summaries

PRIORITY	HUC8	PERCENT_INS PECTED	CROSSINGS	INSPECTION_ RECEIVED	CONCERNS	CULVERTS	BRIDGES	RECLAIMED	OTHER	UNKNOWN_ STRUCTURE	KM_TOTAL	KM_UNKNO WN	KM_CONCER N	KM_2015	KM_2020	KM_2025	KM_2030	PERCENT_PL ANNED
5	CASTLE_RIVER	83	12	10	4	8	2	0	(	) 2	0	11.1	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	0
7	UPPER_OLDMAN_RIVER	75	16	12	4	10	1	0		1 4	0	6.8	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	0
38	CROWSNEST_RIVER	100	5	5	2	5	0	0	(	0	0	15.7	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	0

HUC8	Risk	Priority	STR_ORDER	UpStrDistance	COP_CLASS	CriticalHabitat	CrossingType
CASTLE RIVER	HIGH	5	2	0.9 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
CASTLE RIVER	HIGH	5	2	1.2 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
CASTLE RIVER	HIGH	5	2	1.7 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
CASTLE RIVER	HIGH	5	3	2.6 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
UPPER OLDMAN RIVER	HIGH	7	2	0.2 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
UPPER OLDMAN RIVER	HIGH	7	2	0.7 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
UPPER OLDMAN RIVER	HIGH	7	3	4.9 B	BL	TR	Culvert-single
UPPER OLDMAN RIVER	HIGH	7	4	10.5 B	BL	TR	Culvert-multiple
CROWSNEST RIVER	HIGH	38	2	0.5 D			Culvert-single
CROWSNEST RIVER	HIGH	38	3	6.2 C			Culvert-single

the establishment of a defined monitoring and reporting system to collect data and information around watershed health, connectivity and inform priority remediation work

# QUESTIONS...



# WATERCOURSE CROSSING PROGRAM

Andy Taylor April 14, 2023



### **DISCUSSION OUTLINE**

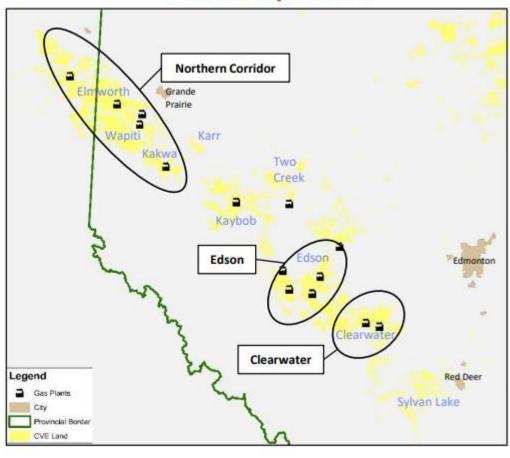
- 1. Cenovus Watercourse Crossing Context
- 2. Cenovus Purpose & Values
- 3. Protect What Matters
- 4. Do it Right
- 5. Field Execution
- 6. Do it Together
- 7. Make it Better
- 8. Discussion and Questions



### 1. CENOVUS WATERCOURSE CROSSING CONTEXT

- Canadian-based integrated energy company headquartered in Calgary
- Focus for discussion is on Conventional assets
- Total watercourse crossings number in the thousands

#### Conventional focus areas



### 2. CENOVUS PURPOSE & VALUES



We **energize** the world to make people's lives better.





Do it right.



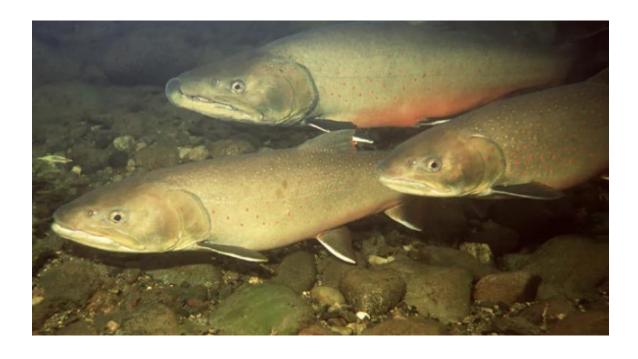
Make it **better.** 

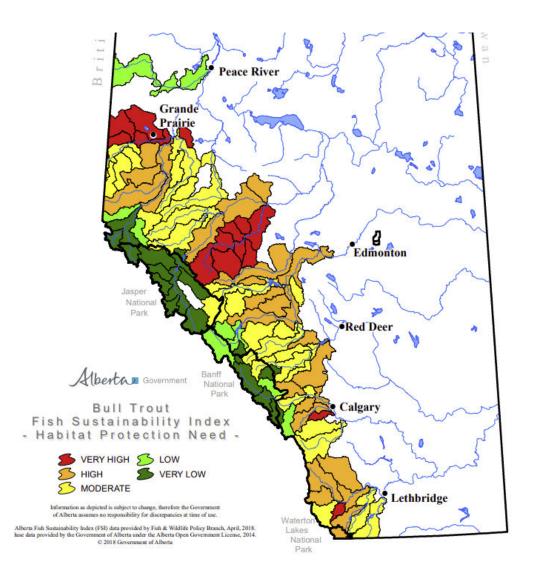


Do it together.

### 3. PROTECT WHAT MATTERS

 Species at risk (Bull Trout, Athabasca Rainbow Trout, Arctic Greyling, Westslope Cutthroat Trout)





### 4. DO IT RIGHT

- Voluntary member of AER Roadway Watercourse Crossing Remediation Directive
  - Enables crossing owner collaboration with stakeholders on inspection and remediation focus and schedule
- Foothills Stream Crossing Partnership
  - Non-profit multi-industry partnership
  - Share best practices
  - Data QA/QC
- Alberta Watercourse Crossing Collaborative
  - Best practices and guidance



### 5. FIELD PROGRAM

- Inspect high priority crossings annually on a 5-year rotating basis
- Catalogue deficient crossings and develop remediation plans
  - Inspect in year N and remediate in year N+1
- Remediate crossings (KPI's)
  - Fragmented fish habitat improvement in km's (58kms in 2022)
  - Number of crossings repaired/replaced (19 culverts and 16 bridges in 2022)
  - Inventory of deficient crossings (year over year reduction)



### 6. DO IT TOGETHER













Fisheries and Oceans Canada

#### Internal Collaboration

- Teams Operations, Earthworks, Land, ARO, E&R,
   Communications, Community and Indigenous Affairs
   Departments
- Tasks Inspection, Remediation, Reporting, Advocacy,
   Compliance, Communication and Innovation

#### External Collaboration

- AER, AEP, DFO, FSCP, AWC3, Energy Owners, Forestry Owners, Non-profit groups, Stakeholders
- Frequent collaborative meetings between GoA and crossing owners for alignment and advancement



### 7. MAKE IT BETTER

Electronic data collection and management

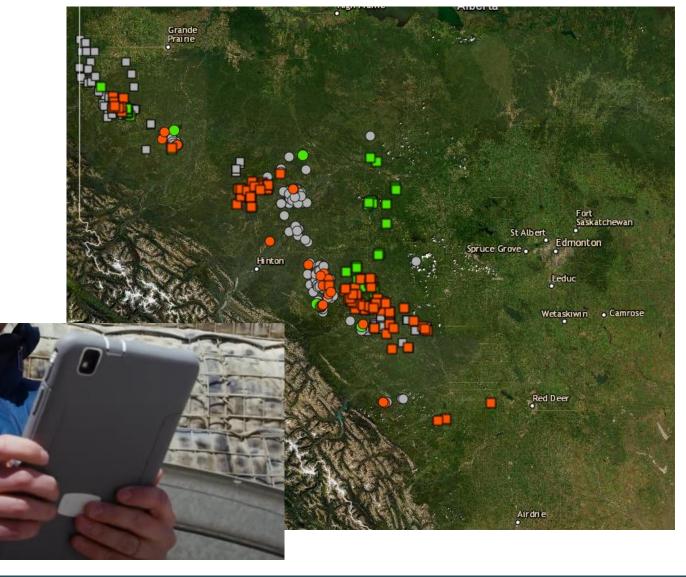
GIS Database for inspection and remediation tracking

Piloting BC electronic data collection

Supporting AWC3 group on best practice guidance information

Scalable approach across Cenovus to

right size for asset base



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

# PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS ARE WELCOMED.

