



Leckie Olsen <leckieolsen@gmail.com>

Foothills Land Trust's 2025 Summer Newsletter and Request for Support

1 message

Leckie Olsen <executivedirector@foothillslandtrust.org>
To: Leckie Olsen <executivedirector@foothillslandtrust.org>
Cc: Sandy Bruce <sandybruce80@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 9, 2025 at 3:02 PM

**Foothills Land Trust Newsletter and Request for Support****September 2025****Dear Supporters of Foothills Land Trust,**

As the Foothills are alive with the sights and sounds of summer, we are pleased to share what's new at Foothills Land Trust (FLT). From conservation projects to other exciting opportunities on the horizon, we have been busy!

Protecting the Land Update

2025 has been an remarkable year for FLT so far, as we completed some important conservation projects and launched several others including:

2024 Riparian Health Assessments Wrap and Significant Findings

Riparian Health Assessments (RHAs) were completed at seven FLT properties. This data now provides a valuable baseline for tracking changes in riparian health over time. Recommendations from these reports have been shared with our landowners and will guide future conservation strategies to improve riparian health.

In general, most of our riparian areas were assessed to be quite healthy, with some in need of a little help. Interventions were already taken at two properties where FLT volunteers conducted a Canada thistle pull in early June. Additional thistle pulls and other mitigation measures, such as willow staking, are being considered to help improve the health of a few sites that received lower riparian health scores.

This project was made possible with the generous support from the **Land Stewardship Centre's 2024 Watershed Stewardship Grant**.

2025 Fish Habitat Assessments

FLT also engaged in a new project to assess fish habitat and water quality in Fish Creek and Tongue Creek, both located on our ranch properties in Foothills County. These Fish Habitat Assessments (FHAs) measured fish habitat health, identify restoration opportunities, and guide future conservation actions such as fencing, livestock watering systems, and streambank restoration. With funding support again from the **Land Stewardship Centre's Watershed Stewardship Grant**, the field work component of these projects was successfully completed over the September long weekend.

"Potential spawning and overwintering habitat for trout was identified" — a promising sign for fish population health in the Fish Creek watershed.

Early observations indicate that both streams provide good-quality habitat for minnows and forage fish such as white and longnose suckers as well as some potential sportfish. In fact, potential spawning and overwintering habitat for trout was identified on the FLT conservation easement! A more detailed analysis of the study results, along with recommendations for enhancing fish habitat, will be included in professional reports expected to be completed in early 2026.

FLT also assisted **Freshwater Conservation Canada**, **Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society**, and the **Fish Creek Watershed Association** with fish inventories being conducted across the Fish Creek watershed, including one site that overlapped with one of our FHAs. These surveys used backpack electrofishing to assess the fish community composition and genetics within the watershed.



Photo: Rainbow trout captured during the Fish Creek Fish Inventory

Trail Camera Program Captures a Year of Wild Success

For over a year now, FLT's cellular trail cameras have been quietly monitoring two of our conservation easement properties. The results have been incredible! This ongoing project helps us document the rich biodiversity on FLT lands while also serving as a deterrent to trespassing and poaching.

The images collected not only enhances our understanding of local wildlife and habitat use, but also supports public education, promotes conservation on our website and social media, and contributes to the identification of any provincially or federally listed Species at Risk.

We're proud to share a growing collection of stunning wildlife photos and videos — a vivid reminder of what we're working to protect. [Click here to explore the trail cam gallery](#) and see who's been caught on camera!

A huge thank you to **Bass Pro Shops & Cabela's Canada** for making this project possible through their **Outdoor Fund!**

Calgary Foundation's Community Grant Support

In 2024 FLT was fortunate to receive a **Community Grant** from the **Calgary Foundation**. This funding has helped us expand our Executive Director position, allowing the board to focus more on governance, strategy, and long-term sustainability. Strengthening our capacity in this way ensures we can better protect local landscapes, support landowners, and advance conservation in Foothills County. Significant progress has been made and we are extremely grateful to the Calgary Foundation for their generous support.

Changes to funding for Private Land Conservation in Alberta

Perpetual Conservation Easements

In July, the Government of Alberta (GOA) ended funding for Perpetual Conservation Easements. Despite this, the demand for these vital conservation agreements remains strong and FLT is committed to ensuring their continued delivery as a core service of our operations. To make this possible, we need your continued support more than ever to help cover the costs of administering this proven conservation tool.

What is a Fee Simple Donation?

A fee simple donation involves transferring full ownership of a property to an eligible organization such as a land trust via a donated title or the purchase of land. The land trust becomes the land manager (solely or in partnership with another eligible organization) and is responsible for the stewardship and maintenance of the property. Eligible expenses for fee simple projects related to the administration and stewardship of the project still qualify for provincial funding under the new Private Land Conservation Program.

This can be a great option for landowners to ensure their property is protected in perpetuity. Along with creating a lasting legacy for future generations, your donation may also provide significant tax benefits, making it a meaningful choice for both conservation and your family. Please reach out if this option may be of interest to you or someone you know.

Ecosystem Services Grant Program

The Ecosystem Services Grant Program (ESGP) is a new two-year pilot supporting private land conservation launched by the Government of Alberta in July. Landowners can receive direct payments for protecting healthy ecosystems or restoring degraded habitats, including forests, wetlands, grasslands, and wildlife areas. Agreements are simple, flexible, and not registered on your land title. FLT is considering preparing an application to help landowners take part.

Stay tuned to our social media to be among the first to learn how you can participate!

Request for Support

Foothills Land Trust is dedicated to preserving the natural spaces, wildlife habitats, and scenic beauty that define our region, but we can't do it alone. Your support, whether big or small, fuels vital conservation work across Foothills County, including land stewardship, habitat protection, and community engagement.

By donating today, you'll help safeguard Alberta's critical watersheds, wildlife corridors, and rich biodiversity. Together, we can ensure a healthy, resilient landscape for future generations of both people and wildlife.

[Click here to DONATE to make a powerful impact and help protect Alberta's natural capital!](#)

You can also mail a cheque to:

Foothills Land Trust
PO Box 18066, RPO Shawnessy,
Calgary, Alberta, T2Y 0K3

Or send an e-Transfer to: foothillslandtrust@gmail.com

Please follow our [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) accounts for photos and announcements.

Enjoy these final weeks of summer weather!

Leckie Olsen (he/him)
Executive Director



Foothills
LAND TRUST

Cell Phone: (780) 991-7747

www.foothillslandtrust.org