



Message from the President

Dear Members,

Since our annual meeting in January, Action for Agriculture has been very busy fighting to protect agricultural land and to protect the agricultural operators, who also must fight economic pressure, watch increases daily and drought in order to survive. The option of course is to sell out to developers. For most of us that isn't an option because of our dedication to the land and this industry.

Action for Agriculture has made submissions regarding:

- The Town of Cochrane Inter-Municipal Development Plan to Cochrane Town Council and the M.D. of Rocky View Council. It is interesting to note that several ranchers adjacent to Cochrane asked to be left out of the notification area.
- The City of Airdrie Inter-Municipal Development Plan. M.D. Councillor, John Gough has pledged to fight the industrialization of farmland (rated #2 soil) northeast of Airdrie.
- The Springbank Area Structure Plan. This is primarily a scrap between those acreage owners who want higher densities against those who want the large acreage's (10 -20 acres) to remain intact.

- The Klapstein Commission on Intensive Livestock Operations. We certainly support the recent provincial government recommendations on this issue.

LUCAT

Bob Anderson and Harvey Buckley attend the monthly meetings of the Land Use Core Action Team, which was formed out of the Ag Summit process. The primary function of this committee is to explore alternatives and make recommendations on all aspects of land use planning in the Province of Alberta with the primary focus of preserving our agricultural land base.

LAND-USE CONFERENCE:

The Land Supports Us All

Harvey Buckley is Chairman of the Conference Committee, which is a sub-committee of LUCAT. Bob Anderson has taken on the position of full-time manager of this conference.

This proposed conference, which is tentatively scheduled for January 2002 is an exciting event, but an immense workload. We have received very positive response from all industry representatives we have met with and continue to work toward our target date for the event. We expect to have formal announcements on the conference in September.

We were pleased to participate in the CBC radio series on sprawl that

aired nationally the week of July 16th. The reports centered on Atlanta, Georgia; Portland, Oregon; Denver, Colorado; Foothills of Alberta - West of Calgary; and Toronto, Ontario. You can access the entire series on their website, www.cbc.ca. We have also secured a copy of *Sprawling America*, which was broadcast on June 6th on PBS Detroit. This two-hour video (which can be purchased off the internet at www.GLTV.org) is an excellent documentary on sprawl in the State of Michigan and all the mistakes that have been made in the last 30 years. CAN WE LEARN FROM THEIR MISTAKES?

For those of you with access to the internet you will also find the American Farmland Trust website very informative. It may be found at www.farmland.org.

In closing, we note that the State of Maryland has just appointed the first ever Secretary of Smart Growth for the state. This is a government department and duties will involve coordinating and advocating smart growth policies. This is a very positive step, unfortunately here in Alberta, growth is just happening. Action for Agriculture will continue to work for positive initiatives in growth and development.

- *Harvey Buckley*

Alberta's Ecological Footprint: Large & Growing

An ecological footprint is the amount of land and resources required to meet our lifestyles. The GPI Ecological footprint analysis found that Albertans consume more resources to feed their lifestyles than most of the Earth's citizens. At 10.7 hectares (25.7 acres) per person, the ecological footprint of Alberta is fourth largest in the world, after the United Arab Emirates, Singapore and the United States. The ecological footprint per Albertan has increased 66 percent since 1961, due primarily to the consumption of oil, gas and coal for energy, travel, transportation, importation of food and consumption of goods and services. A large and growing footprint means that Albertans are living beyond the Earth's carrying capacity. If the entire world had an ecological footprint as large as the average Albertan, another five planets would be needed to meet our global consumption demands.

Municipal Election

On October 15, 2001 Albertans will go to the polls to elect their municipal representatives. Let's be sure to keep smart growth and land-use planning issues in the forefront. For those in the M.D. of Rocky View, watch for an announcement regarding *Action for Agriculture's - All Candidates Forum*. These forums have been very well attended in the past and offer the electorate an opportunity to size up the candidates. This year should be particularly interesting with the boundary changes that will go into effect. The referendum question on an elected Mayor will also be on the ballot.

Shocking Loss of Land

The U.S. today is losing in excess of 3.5 million acres per year to urban

sprawl. Since 1978, Colorado farmland has disappeared at a rate of 90,000 acres per year. Today, Colorado is losing land at a rate of 10 acres per hour to development.

Hillspring Rally

Action for Agriculture has been asked to attend a rally at Hillspring on the issue of subdivisions being developed in the foothills of Alberta. This rally has been instigated by the recent approval of subdivision just outside Waterton Lakes National Park. This rally is set to take place August 2, 2001. You can contact AFA for more information or if you are interested in attending.

What We're Reading

An excellent reference book we've found is *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* by Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck. North Point Press, New York ISBN 0-86547-557-1.

In Memoriam

Action for Agriculture would like to extend our sympathy to the families of two of our long-time members. Keith McKinnon of Carseland passed away March 8, 2001 and James Kerfoot formerly of Cochrane, passed away on April 17, 2001.

National Geographic Spotlights Sprawl

The July edition of National Geographic featured an article *Urban Sprawl - The American Dream?*

Also, 'visit a virtual suburb designed to combat the spreading syndrome of clogged highways and cookie cutter subdivisions'. Judge for yourself at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/earthpulse/sprawl>

AFA Members on the Move

Congratulations and best wishes to Glenn Pauley who has accepted the position of Executive Director of the Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust. Pauley was instrumental in developing the Southern Alberta Land Trust Society (SALTS) and has been their Executive Director for the past several years.

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