MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WAINWRIGHT NO. 61

2024 AGRICULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT

LEGISLATIVE GRANT STREAM SECTION

ADMINISTRATION

In 2024, the Agricultural Services Department received grants from Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in the following amounts: $123,907 was for the Provincial ASB Grant – Legislative Stream, $39,000 was for the Provincial ASB Grant – Resource Management Stream, and $24,000 was for the Rat Control Grant. This was the final year of the grant cycle, a new five year grant program will be launched in 2025. The municipality commenced the closure process of the four former empty chemical container collection sites, with a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) being completed for all four locations. Two sites went on to a Phase 2 ESA, with the Edgerton site being cleared from further investigation. A remediation plan is in place to finalize the closure of the Wainwright site with plans to complete the work in 2025. The M.D. of Wainwright continues to operate three municipal water tankloader facilities for agriculture, shelterbelt and other approved uses. Approximate usage for the tankloader's in 2024 was as follows: Ribstone 26,950 gallons, Giltedge 612,700 gallons and Irma 850,018.4 gallons. The fourth tankloader, located in Ascot Estates, is for the purpose of fire suppression, recreation, and other approved uses. A meter was installed in 2024, with the approximate usage of 19,1734.4 gallons.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, CROP PEST MONITORING AND VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL

2024 was the third year in the three-year rotation of our roadside spray program. This was an interesting year for weed growth, and we continued to address a variety of prohibited noxious and noxious weeds found within our boundaries. Purple loosestrife control efforts continue under the provisions of a Special Use Approval with significant progress having been made. The Approval period will end in March 2025 and an extension will be applied for to continue the work. Prohibited noxious weeds including nodding thistle, spotted knapweed, and hoary alyssum continue to be monitored vigilantly and controlled where found. The ASB continues to partner with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in their pest surveillance program. Diamondback moths, bertha armyworms, grasshoppers, canola flower midge and wheat midge were all surveyed in 2024. Soil samples were also submitted for wheat midge, and staff participated in a wheat head survey. Agricultural Services Staff also completed 82 random clubroot inspections with no new clubroot positive field being identified in 2024. In 2024, there were no confirmed rat infestations identified. Staff also removed problem beaver that were affecting municipal roads, bridges, and culvert infrastructure.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STREAM SECTION

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The focus of the grant money is to provide information and programs within three priority areas; first is to deliver, promote and manage the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP); second is to deliver, promote and manage the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (S-CAP); thirdly, to promote the sustainability of water, soil, air and biodiversity in the M.D. of Wainwright. The bi-monthly ASB newsletter, the Municipal Connection, continues to be a source of information for our rural ratepayers. The ASB hosted six extension events between February and May, ranging in topic from pest management to equine health, which saw a total of 304 participants.