MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WAINWRIGHT NO. 61

2025 AGRICULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT

LEGISLATIVE GRANT STREAM SECTION

ADMINISTRATION

In 2025, the Agricultural Services Department received grants under all three funding streams of the Provincial ASB Grant from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in the following amounts: Legislative Stream $166,247, Resource Management Stream $33,150, and the Rat Control Stream $24,000. This was the first year of the grant cycle under the new five-year grant program which runs from 2025-2029. The municipality continued the closure process of the former Wainwright empty chemical container collection site. The remediation and reclamation phase of the project are anticipated to be completed in spring 2026. The M.D. of Wainwright continues to operate four municipal tankloader facilities for agriculture, recreation, and other approved uses.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, CROP PEST MONITORING AND VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL

The year 2025 was year one in the three-year rotation of our robust roadside spray program and we continued to address a variety of prohibited noxious and noxious weeds on roadsides and private land. Ongoing control efforts against purple loosestrife at two locations have yielded positive results, with very few plants being found through the season. Municipal gravel pits were monitored for regrowth after being treated with a helicopter in 2024. Breakthrough began in mid-July, and staff treated pits with ground equipment as best as possible, however aerial treatment in 2026 is being considered. Gravel pits have a significant amount of Russian thistle present, and several more developed kochia infestations in 2025. Kochia continued to spread across the municipality and is being treated as noxious on roadsides. The contracted roadside mowing program went smoothly and addressed nearly 950 miles of municipal roadside. Several reclamation projects were completed, including two H-Start Product trial locations. The 2024 hydromulch project was monitored through 2025 as well. Overall, it was a challenging year for reclamation and establishment due to environmental conditions. 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, swede midge and wheat midge were all surveyed in 2025. Soil samples were submitted for wheat midge, and staff participated in a wheat head survey. Agricultural Services staff completed 87 clubroot inspections utilizing the Canola Rotation Risk Mapping (CRRM) program with LandView Drones with no new clubroot positive field being identified in 2025. The year 2025 marked the 75th anniversary of the Rat Control Program. One confirmed rat was found early in the year, the site was monitored with no more found. Regular inspections were conducted in spring and fall with no suspicious locations identified. Staff also removed problem beaver that were affecting municipal roads, bridges, and culvert infrastructure and dog control was conducted on an as needed basis.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STREAM SECTION

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The focus of the resource management stream grant money is to provide information and programs within three priority areas: deliver, promote and manage the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP); deliver, promote and manage the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (S-CAP); and 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 nine extension events between January and May, ranging in topic from farm transition planning to kochia management to renewables and to passive solar greenhouses, and saw a total of 593 participants.