

# AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

OCTOBER 8, 2024 PREPARED BY: CATHIE ERICHSEN ARYCHUK

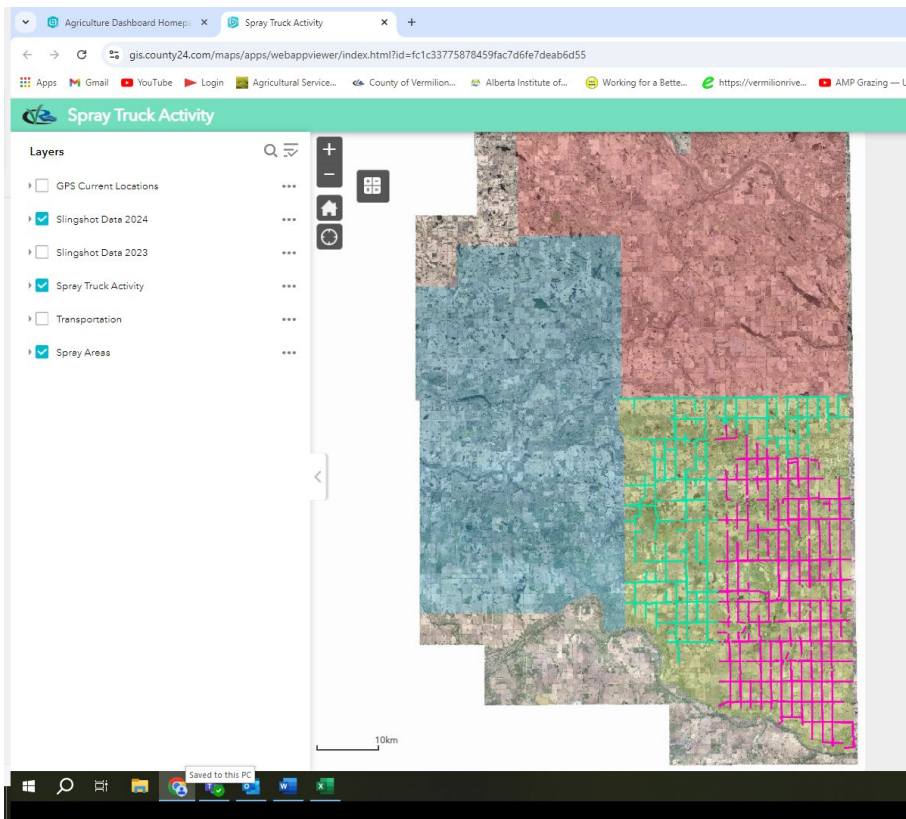
## 2024 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS:

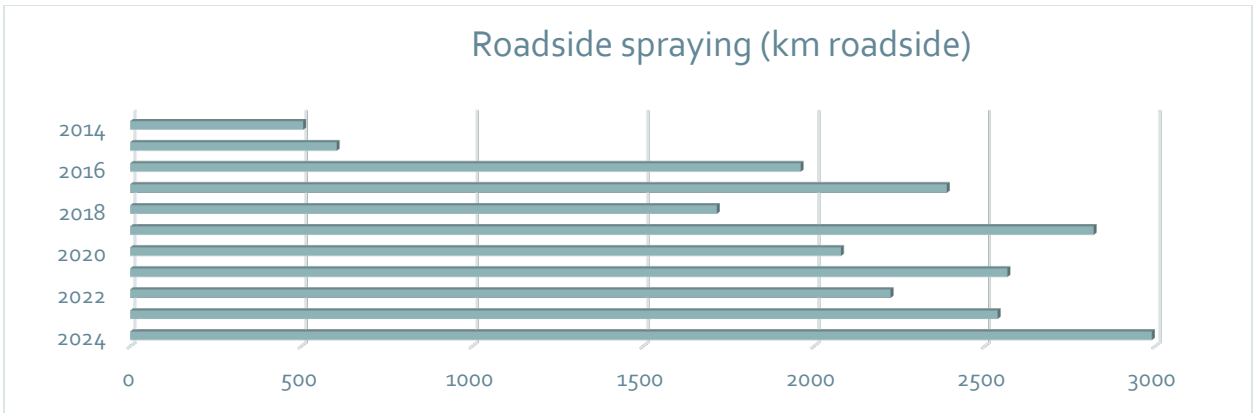
### AGRICULTURE SERVICE BOARD (ASB) ACT

- Staff hosted an interactive Ag/Enviro booth at the Vermilion Ag Society Fair.
- Staff hosted an interactive Ag/Enviro booth at the Clandonald Ag Society Fair.
- Held an ASB/ALUS field day in Paradise Valley

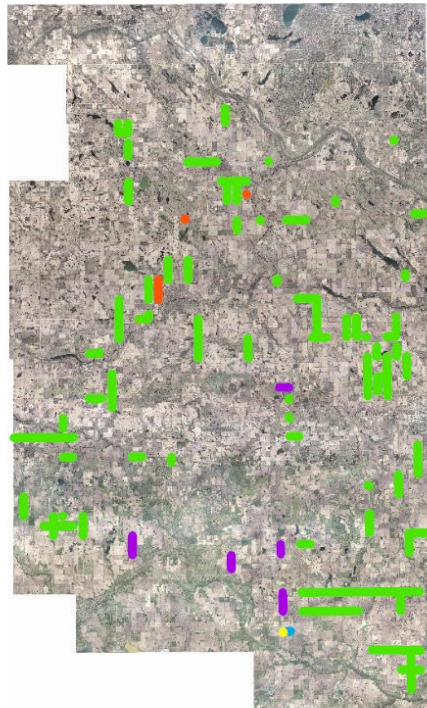
### WEED CONTROL ACT

- Staff finished roadside spraying on August 21, 2024, covering 1496 km of road and completing Spray Area 3.





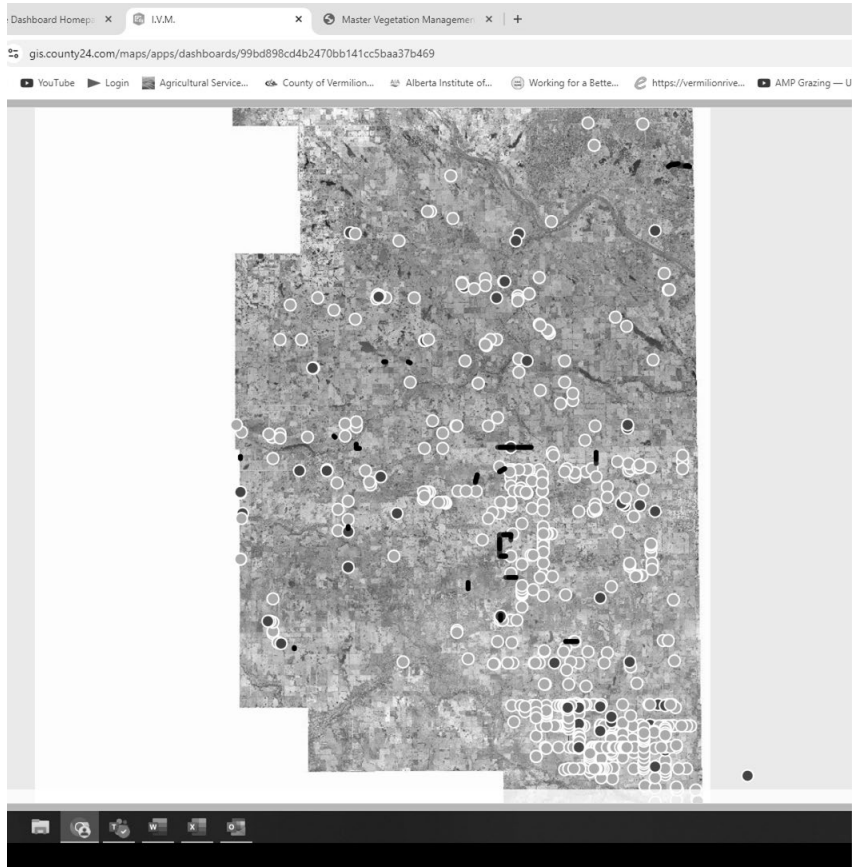
- Roadside mowing for 2024 was completed by the contractor in July and August, with 550 miles of road mowed (all Class A County roads).
- Thirty-eight (38) hectares of brush mulch were sprayed to control regrowth. Brush mulch areas in Spray Area 3 able to be managed as part of ongoing roadside weed/brush spraying operations this summer. All 2018 and later brush mulch areas not within 30m of water have been sprayed at least once after mulching before going into the roadside rotation.



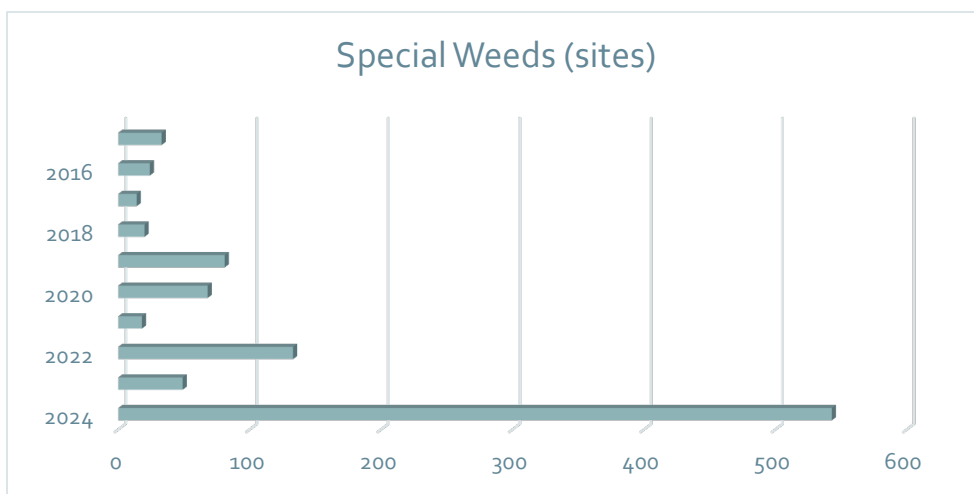
WGS Air

Green – sprayed in 2023/24, Purple – mulch areas to spray in 2025, Orange – mulched in 2024

- Noxious weeds continued to be of concern in 2024 and required significant staff time to try managing weed patches on County roads. Dedicating a team of seasonal staff to weed inspections resulted in 660 municipal sites mapped (an increase of 300%). Staff contractors together greatly increased noxious weed control on municipal roadsides, with almost 550 weed sites controlled this summer.



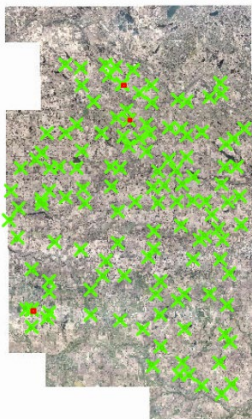
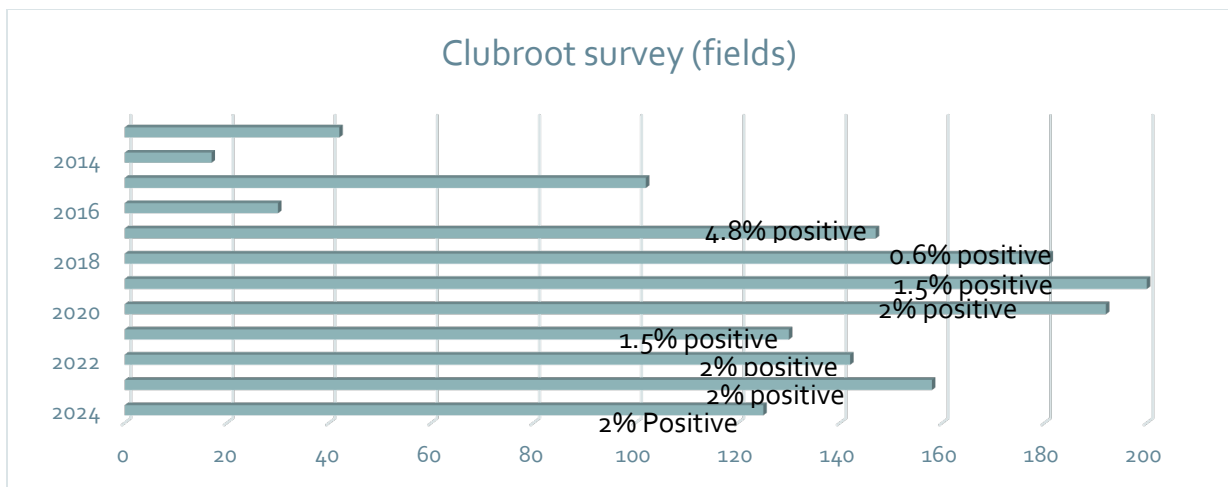
Light points were controlled in 2024.



- Four “Request for a Weed Management Plan” letters were sent out this summer. Three landowners managed the weed problem on their properties. The fourth was followed up with a Local Authority’s Notice to control noxious weeds and was enforced by Ag staff.

## AGRICULTURAL PESTS ACT

- Staff participated in the provincial crop disease survey for Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, sampling 16 canola fields, 3 barley fields and 19 wheat fields for submission to the provincial lab.
- Staff monitored two Bertha armyworm traps, two wheat midge traps and sampled 51 sites for grasshoppers in the County as part of Alberta’s crop pest monitoring program.
- Staff surveyed 125 canola fields for clubroot (2 per township block) in August and September. Three (3) new positive fields were identified for 2024 (one in Division 3 and two in Division 7).



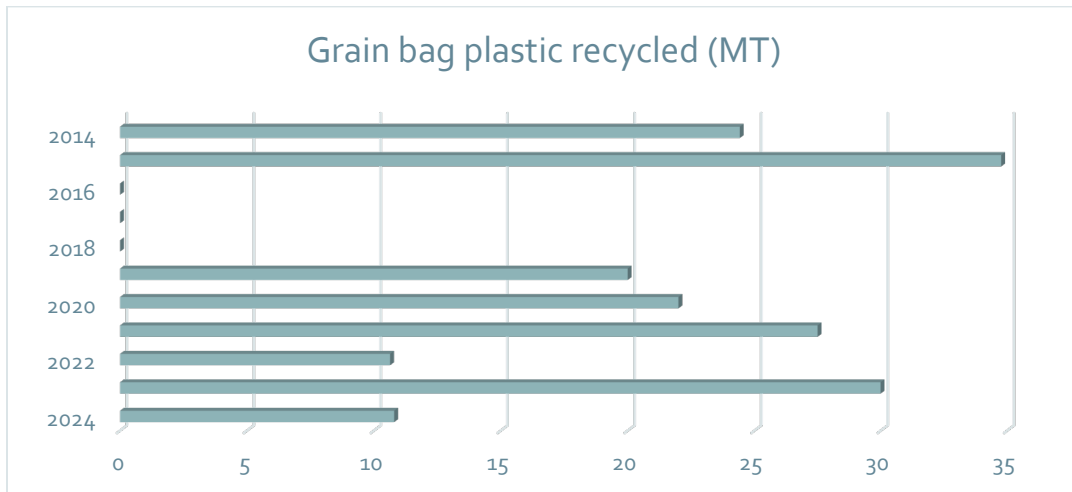
- County Rat Inspector worked with Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation staff to record a video about Rat Control in Alberta on September 18, 2024.

### ALUS-VERMILION RIVER/GREEN ACREAGES

- Seven (7) new ALUS projects were approved for 2024. Participants are taking a cautious approach to new project spending this year due to weather and economic concerns.
- The ALUS Vermilion River Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) met on July 16.
- ALUS Vermilion River co-hosted an ALUS /ASB Field Day at Paradise Valley on July 17, 2024.
- ALUS Vermilion River hosted two Wetland Explorer Days, August 13 at Hazeldine and August 14 at Lindsay Evans Park with 42 people attending these events this year.
- ALUS Vermilion River hosted an ALUS Project Tour and Pasture Pipeline Demo on August 23, 2024.
- Staff attended the ALUS Western Hub Meeting on September 24-25 in hosted by ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc.

### ASB – ENVIRONMENTAL STREAM

- Staff partnered with Battle River Research Group to present a webinar on Pasture Weed Management on August 19, 2024.
- Staff continue to work with CleanFarms and the Regional Waste Commission on pesticide jug recycling program changes and grain bag and twine recycling.



## ENVIRONMENT

- Groundwater test well sampling at the County yard was done on August 8 and 9, 2024. The final report is due on December 1, 2024.
- Staff attended the September 20, 2024 Battle River Watershed Alliance Land and Water Management Committee meeting virtually.

## **COMING UP IN 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER OF 2024:**

- Fall rat inspections for Range 1
- Seed cleaning plant inspections and licensing
- 2025 Service Levels and Budget
- Year-end inventory
- Cows, Crops & Carbon, Mannville with Rural Routes for Climate Solutions, October 16/24
- Northeast Regional ASB Meeting, Czar, October 25/24
- Environmental Farm Plan Technician Training, Leduc, October 22-23/24
- Emerge – Women in Ag Conference, Lloydminster November 21/24 – with support from Agriculture and Environment Department
- AAAF Inservice Training, Edmonton, December 3-5/24
- Provincial ASB Conference, Delta South Edmonton, January 20-22/25