

VOLUME #9, ISSUE #1

SPRING 2026

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY LIVING



Saddle Hills
COUNTY

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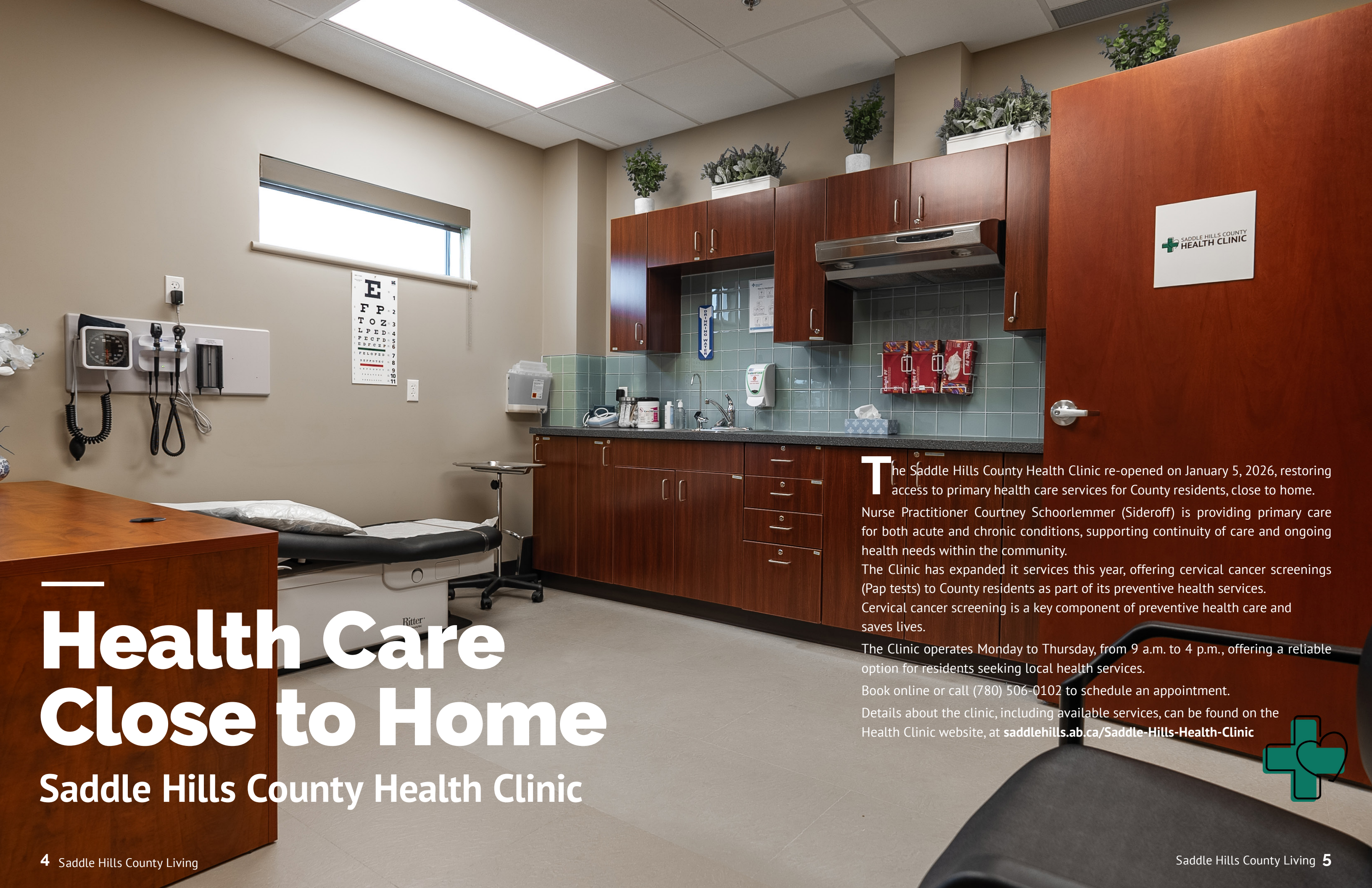
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Download the Saddle Hills County Mobile App.



Health Care Close to Home

Saddle Hills County Health Clinic

The Saddle Hills County Health Clinic re-opened on January 5, 2026, restoring access to primary health care services for County residents, close to home.

Nurse Practitioner Courtney Schoorlemmer (Sideroff) is providing primary care for both acute and chronic conditions, supporting continuity of care and ongoing health needs within the community.

The Clinic has expanded its services this year, offering cervical cancer screenings (Pap tests) to County residents as part of its preventive health services.

Cervical cancer screening is a key component of preventive health care and saves lives.

The Clinic operates Monday to Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., offering a reliable option for residents seeking local health services.

Book online or call (780) 506-0102 to schedule an appointment.

Details about the clinic, including available services, can be found on the Health Clinic website, at saddlehills.ab.ca/Saddle-Hills-Health-Clinic



2026 Budget

Focusing on Stability, Services, and the Future.



Saddle Hills County Council has approved the 2026 Final Operating Budget, a \$61.5 million plan that supports long-term stability, smart growth, and strong rural communities.

The budget reflects an increase of \$4,200,000 from 2025, and maintains focus on core services. Public Works, Road Maintenance and Protective Services remain key priorities, supporting roads, fleet operations, enforcement, and fire protection to ensure safe, reliable services across the County.

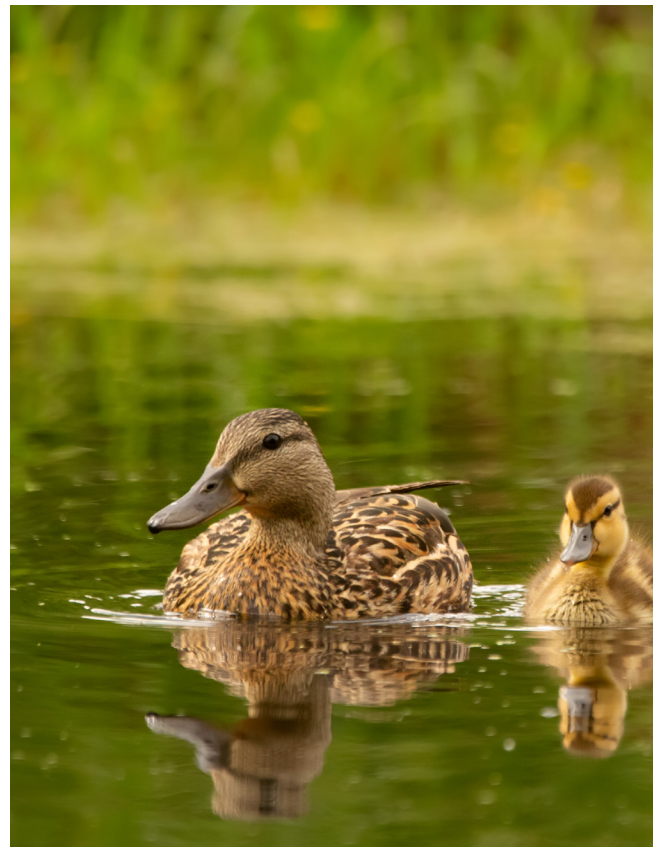
Agriculture continues to be a priority through ongoing support for the ALUS program and sustainable land-use initiatives. Investment in water, wastewater, and solid waste services remains significant, with reduced net costs resulting from the new recycling program.

Community services—including childcare supports, Nurse Practitioner services, FCSS programming, and recreation—remain stable, with targeted increases to support families and maintain parks and campgrounds. More than \$4.7 million will be directed to community organizations, regional services, and local programs.

Council also approved increases to rural water cistern grants, school staffing supports, library services, and childcare subsidies. Key regional partnerships continue, including Project Aurora and the Central Peace Fire Rescue Commission. Nearly \$ 8.6 million will be drawn from reserves to support major commitments.

Council has also approved a \$104 million 2026 Capital Budget (including carry forwards), funded through grants and reserves, focused on infrastructure, emergency services, agriculture, water, recreation, and community care.

For full budget details, visit the County's **Budgets and Finances** webpage.



ALUS Program

Supporting Working Lands & Healthy Landscapes

The ALUS Saddle Hills program is helping landowners improve environmental stewardship while keeping their land productive.

ALUS provides cost-sharing support to establish beneficial management projects—such as wetlands, shelterbelts, and pollinator habitats—and offers annual payments for their ongoing maintenance.

Learn more about the ALUS program, requirements, and get involved at saddlehills.ab.ca/ALUS





Ag News

The latest agricultural news for Peace Region producers.

Agriculture is at the heart of our community. Keep informed of all the latest Agriculture News in Saddle Hills County, or get more information on any of these stories, by visiting the dedicated Agriculture News stream on our website, at saddlehills.ab.ca/AgNews.

You can also follow the hashtag **#SaddleHillsAg** on Instagram for all the latest agriculture updates.



Open Farm Days: Share Your Story

Alberta Open Farm Days is a province-wide open house that invites farmers and ranchers to welcome both urban and rural neighbours onto their farms to learn where their food comes from. This year's theme focuses on rangelands and pastoralists. The Open Farm Days team is inviting producers to share how they care for the land, work with livestock, and practice responsible stewardship.



Veterinary Student Recruitment & Retention Grant Program

The Government of Alberta Veterinary Student Recruitment and Retention Pilot Program supports the attraction and retention of veterinary students and ultimately veterinary graduates to rural Alberta veterinary clinics to address labour shortages, the overall sustainability of the animal agriculture industry and to ensure animal health and welfare. The program focuses on practices that provide livestock veterinary services and have a current or anticipated veterinarian vacancy.



Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Community Fund

The FCC Community Funding program provides financial support for projects that enhance and strengthen rural communities. Eligible applicants can apply for up to \$10,000 annually. Projects must align with one of FCC's key focus areas, which include food security, well-being, education and food literacy, and community enhancement. Applications are accepted year round.



Alberta Updates Wild Boar Regulations

The Government of Alberta has updated regulations related to wild boar to better protect the province's agriculture industry. As of December 1, 2025, wild boar are now classified as a regulated agricultural pest in all circumstances, not only when they are at large. Under the new rules, it is illegal to keep, import, purchase, sell, transport, or otherwise obtain live wild boar or wild boar hybrids without a permit.



Wellness Program: Local Support When it Matters Most

The Wellness Program focuses on early intervention, outreach, and reducing barriers to mental health care for Saddle Hills County residents.

Funding for the Wellness Program is a partnership between Saddle Hills County and Peace Wapiti Public School Division (PWPSD), reflecting a shared commitment to community well-being and early support.

The program's Outreach Worker, Kristy Jackson, has lived in the Peace Country for 22 years. Married with two children, she understands the realities of rural life and the importance of accessible, trusted support close to home.

Kristy's role in the Wellness Program is to work with individuals and families across Saddle Hills County, ensuring that people receive the right support at the right time—whether that's a listening ear, short-term intervention, or connection to specialized services. Providing confidential support services to children, youth, families, adults, seniors, and farmers across Saddle Hills County, the program focuses on wrap-around supports, coordinating services around individuals and families.

Kristy is also the mental health therapist in the County's schools. For school-based mental health concerns, reach out to the principal of your school to connect with her.

On average, 20% of people will experience a mental health disorder, and 70% of mental health disorders can be diagnosed between the ages of 12 and 17. Early intervention is one of the strongest predictors of positive long-term outcomes.

Services are available by appointment and can take place at a location chosen by the client, helping reduce access and transportation barriers.

Kristy Jackson is available Monday to Friday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., aligning with the school year schedule.

For more information or to make an appointment with Kristy, phone (780) 296-2632 or email kristyjackson@pwpsd.ca.



Kristy Jackson
Outreach Worker, Wellness Program
(780) 296-2632
kristyjackson@pwpsd.ca



Sponsorships & Grants

- Council approved sponsorship requests, supporting local organizations and events:
- \$1,000 in Saddle Hills County merchandise to the Dawson Creek Minor Hockey Assoc.
 - \$2,000 for Bonanza School's student banquet and class trip.
 - \$1,000 each to support community initiatives like the Spirit River Library Safe Halloween event and the Chinook Valley Ladies Golf League tournament.
 - \$2,000 silent auction item donation for the Spring Break-Up Dine & Dance in support of the Full Steam Ahead Academy Daycare Centre.
 - \$2,000 gold sponsorship to the Peace Regional 4-H Rally
 - \$1,000 to the Spirit River Minor Hockey U11 playoffs.

Council also approved the following funding requests:

- \$35,000 in operating and \$32,500 in capital funding for the Spring Lake Ski Hill.
- \$30,000 for repairs at the West Smoky Recreation Centre.
- \$227,384.16 Savanna Agricultural Society grant reallocation to support arena upgrades.
- \$250,000 per year for STARS.

Council also approved a \$300,000 contribution to the Dawson Creek and District Hospital Foundation MRI campaign, improving access to diagnostic services, reducing travel, and supporting better health outcomes for residents.



Council Commitments

Council continues to focus on practical investments, community support, and partnerships that strengthen the region.

Council has been meeting with physicians from the Central Peace Health Centre to support physician attraction efforts—an important step toward improving access to healthcare in the region.

Infrastructure and service improvements remained a priority. Council approved upgrades to a portion of Range Road 71 to improve local access, and included the project in the capital budget.

The gravel sales policy is now in place, allowing residents to purchase materials locally at set rates.

An update from the RCMP highlighted ongoing priorities in the region, including theft, repeat offenders, and traffic-related concerns.

Overall, decisions continue to reflect a balance of infrastructure investment, community support, and regional collaboration.



Council Highlights

Recent decisions made by Saddle Hills County Council.

County News

The latest updates and stories from Saddle Hills County.



Community Comes Together for the 2025 Christmas Hamper Program

Saddle Hills County is proud to recognize the incredible generosity of residents, organizations, and local businesses who came together to support the 2025 Christmas Hamper Program. Thanks to this strong show of community spirit, 33 Christmas hampers were delivered to local families and individuals during the holiday season.

The program was made possible through \$13,800 in monetary donations, along with a generous collection of food items and gifts. These contributions allowed each hamper to be thoughtfully filled with essential groceries and special items, helping to bring comfort, warmth, and holiday cheer to those in need.

The Christmas Hamper Program is a meaningful example of neighbours supporting neighbours. Saddle Hills County extends sincere thanks to everyone who contributed their time, resources, and kindness. This program continues to thrive because of the compassion and generosity that define our community, especially during the holiday season.



Strategic Plan 2026-2029

The Strategic Plan sets out the guiding principles and long-term goals of Council, allowing the public to keep track of how their government works and what changes are planned for the community. Have a look at the Strategic Plan to understand how it functions as more than just a corporate document. It is a high-level vision into a concrete roadmap for the County's future.

View the current plan and all previous iterations at, saddlehills.ab.ca/Strategic-Plans



Saddle Hills County on the Green!

Don Hoffart, retired Councillor, has his Saddle Hills County golf gloves and balls at a golf course in Yuma Arizona, earlier this year.



2026 Program & Activity Grants Distribution

The first round of Program and Activity Grants for 2026 were distributed as follows:

Blueberry Mountain Goodwill Society	\$5,000
Bonanza School	\$4,000
East West Woking 4-H Club	\$2,500
River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club	\$2,000
Rycroft Community Library	\$2,250
Savanna 4-H Multi Club	\$4,000
Savanna Agricultural Society	\$2,500
Savanna School	\$8,000
South Peace Rural Community Learning	\$1,500
Spirit Arts Dance Society	\$2,000
Spirit River Minor Hockey Association	\$1,000
Woking Willing Workers	\$1,500
Total:	\$36,250



Savanna Creations: Stitching Comfort, One Quilt at a Time

Since 2019, Savanna Creations has been quietly making a difference—one quilt, one stitch, one act of care at a time. What began as a shared love of sewing has grown into a powerful community-led effort grounded in compassion.

More than 1,530 handmade quilts have been donated to hospitals, seniors' homes, shelters, pregnancy and palliative care programs, veterans' organizations, schools, and families affected by fire, flood, and crisis across northern B.C. and Alberta.

Each quilt is made by volunteers using donated fabric or materials purchased through cash donations. From sorting and cutting to sewing, quilting, binding, and delivery, a single quilt often passes through five or more sets of caring hands before reaching someone in need. Among the group's most tender work is the creation of small quilts for families grieving the loss of a baby.

Care extends beyond people. In 2025, members also donated 120 handmade dog beds to animal shelters, fosters, and pet stores, using fabric scraps and discarded materials.

In 2025 alone, Savanna Creations donated 300+ quilts to community groups, including 15 quilts to the Saddle Hills County Christmas Hamper Program. With 100 dedicated members, Savanna Creations continues to prove that small acts, repeated with care, can make a lasting difference—one quilt at a time.

Rural Water

Updates on Council's commitment to provide residents with a reliable source of potable water.

Remote Potable Water Hauling Subsidy

The Remote Potable Water Hauling Subsidy Subscription area has expanded.

The Remote Potable Water Hauling Subsidy provides a subsidy to Saddle Hills County residences that are not able to connect to the Rural Potable Waterline.

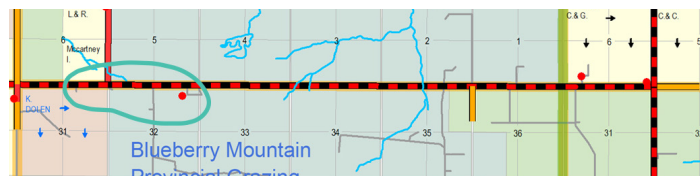
The area has been expanded to include:



- Four properties in the Woking Service Area.



- One property in the County Complex (Ksituan) Service Area.



- One property in the Savanna Service Area.

Eligible areas can also be seen in the attached map, indicated in orange.

For more information and to apply, visit saddlehills.ab.ca/Water-Hauling-Subsidy



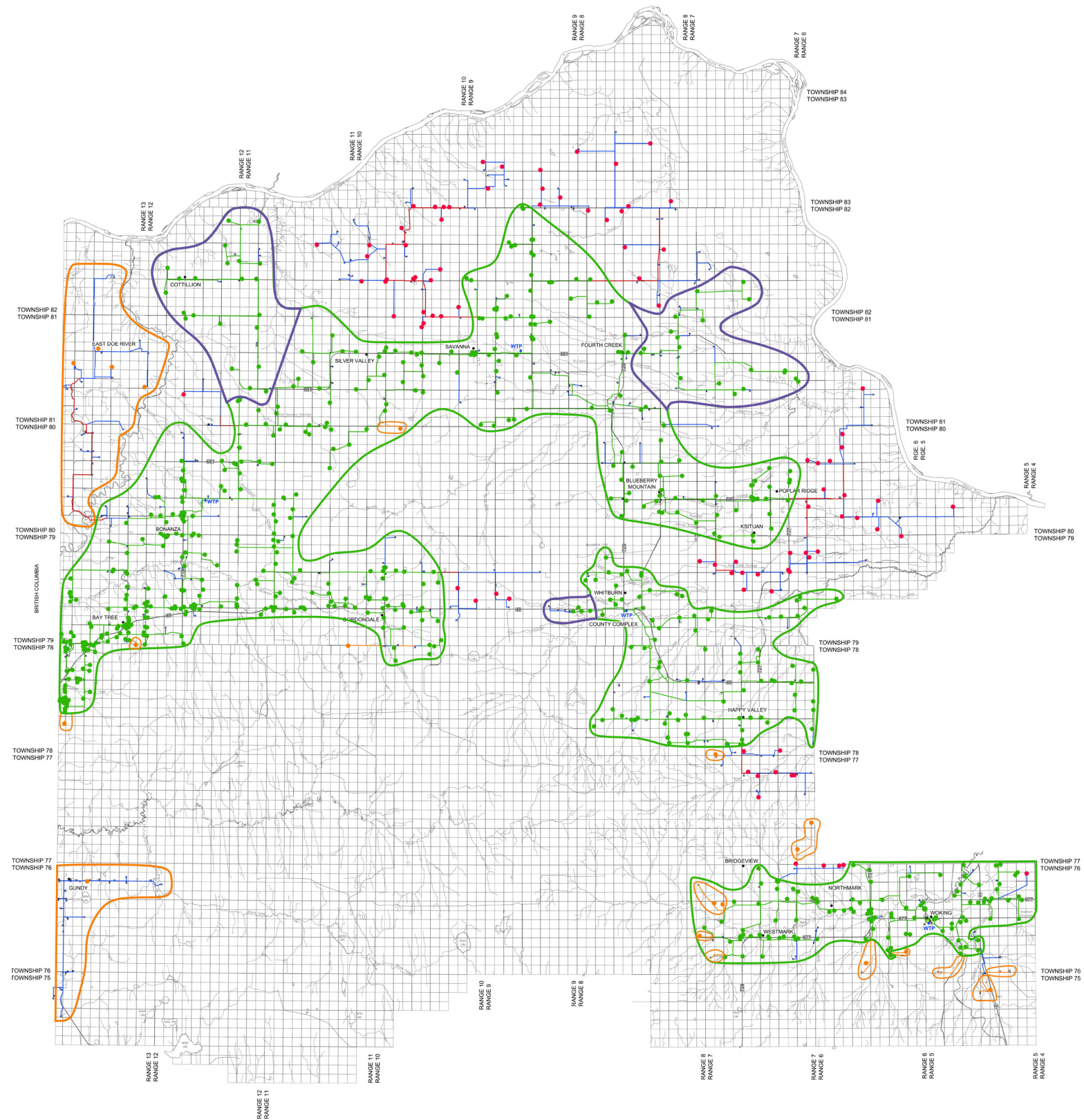
Rural Potable Water Project

As part of Council's commitment to providing residents with a reliable source of potable water, Saddle Hills County provides free, rural potable water connections to residences through the Rural Potable Water Project.

The plan outlines a four-year timeline for how the County plans to construct the remainder of the rural potable waterlines, prior to 2030. Staff continue working on the approved rural waterline servicing project, obtaining easements, managing tenders and construction.

In 2025 alone, the County installed 177 km of waterlines, to service an additional 134 customers. At the end of the year, there were a total of 376 active accounts - 173 in the Bonanza area, 117 in the Woking area, 40 in the Ksituan area, and 46 in the Savanna area.

For more information on the project and to view the four-year capital plan, visit saddlehills.ab.ca/Rural-Water



Legend

- Future Water Supply Main
- Future Distribution & Servicing Lines
- Existing & Approved Water Supply & Distribution Lines
- Potential for Economically Unfeasible Servicing
- Signed Service Agreement - Existing/Approved Service
- Residences
- Water Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Provincial Highways
- Approved Servicing Area
- Area Approved for Water Hauling Subsidy
- New Council Approved Areas in 2026

Camping season is finally upon us! Reservations opened for Hilltop Lake, Cotillion Park, and Spring Lake Campgrounds on April 6, 2026.

Bookings can be made for all three County campgrounds, through lets-camp.ca.

Cotillion Park Campground

- Sheltered Group Use Area w/ Fire Pit.
- Washrooms and Showers.
- Playground.
- Peace River Access.
- Home to 'Music in the Park'.
- WiFi (via Starlink).
- 20 Overnight Stalls.
- Powered Sites Available.
- Free Firewood for Guests.

Hilltop Lake Campground

- Day Use Area (year-round).
- Open Shelter, Fire Pits, Picnic Tables.
- Playground.
- 10 Back-in Camping Stalls.
- Pet Friendly.
- Free Firewood for Guests.

Spring Lake Campground

- Fishing - Rainbow & Brook Trout.
- Boat Launch (non-motorized boats)
- Day Use Area (year-round).
- Semi-enclosed Gazebo w/ Cookstove
- 66 Back-in Camping Stalls.
- Outhouses.
- Powered Sites Available.
- Free Firewood for Guests.

Sites at Moonshine Lake Prov. Campground can be reserved through the Alberta Parks Reservation System.

For more information, visit saddlehills.ab.ca/Parks-Recreation.



Let's Camp!
lets-camp.ca

Recreation Site Feasibility Survey



Saddle Hills County is seeking public input on the future of an old Alberta Transportation site, located on the east side of the Pouce River crossing, north of Township Road 801.

The County is exploring the feasibility of turning the site into a recreation lease, dependent on public feedback.

Share your thoughts by completing a short survey, available at saddlehills.ab.ca/Pouce-Rec-Survey



Our Community

Upcoming Events



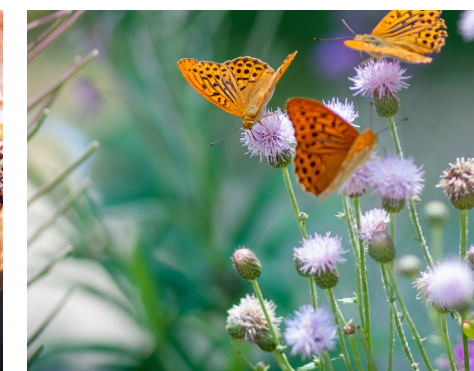
Home Routes Concert

ft. Jordan Coaker & Mallory Johnson
Cotillion Hall
April 23, 2026 | 7 p.m.
Tickets: \$25 p/p



Community Ham BBQ

Fourth Creek Hall
April 25, 2026 | 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Adults: \$25
Children (2-12): Pay Their Age
Children (under 2): Free



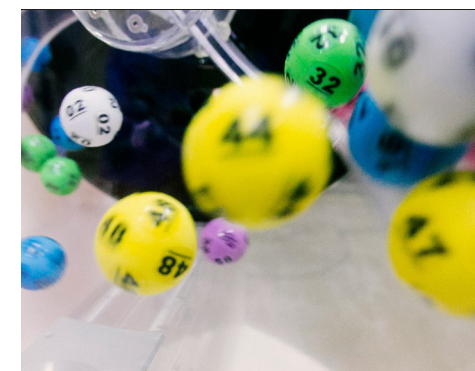
Spring Fling Dinner & Dance

Spirit River Centennial Hall
April 25, 2026 | 5:30 p.m.
Dinner: \$25 p/p
Dinner & Dance: \$30 p/p
Children (5-12): \$15



27th Annual Art Show

Spirit River Municipal Library
May 3, 2026 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Library Fundraiser



Annual Mother's Day Bingo

Blueberry Mountain Hall
May 9, 2026 | 6 p.m.
Play by Donation
Cash/E-Transfer Only



Spring Bust-Out Ride & Poker Rally

Happy Valley Ag & Rec. Club
June 13, 2026
Registration: 9 a.m.
Tickets: \$20/hand

RESIDENTS OF SADDLE HILLS COUNTY

NEVER MISS AN UPDATE

GET THE APP

The app uses state-of-the-art technology to notify residents of breaking news, documents, videos, and events, instantly delivered via push notifications.



HOW TO GET THE APP

- 1 DOWNLOAD**
Scan the QR code above or visit the App Store or Google Play Store and Search 'Saddle Hills County'
- 2 REGISTER**
Fill out your info and check your email to verify your account.
- 3 LOGIN**
Get the latest news, events, jobs, & more right at your fingertips!

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Monday - Friday 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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