



## Background

**The Drywood Creek watershed** is located in the southwest corner of Alberta. The system includes three main tributaries: Yarrow Creek, Spionkop Creek, and South Drywood Creek, which drain an area of 280 km<sup>2</sup> before flowing into the Waterton Reservoir.

## The Challenge

**A dam is located on Drywood Creek** approximately 6.5 km from the mouth, and another dam is located higher up on Drywood Creek, above from the mouth of South Drywood Creek. Land use within the watershed includes oil and gas exploration and development, grazing, and some cultivation. The Drywood Creek Watershed Renewal Program aims to increase connectivity within the watershed, allowing native bull trout to migrate upstream to spawning grounds. We already know bull trout are spawning in the headwaters. Allowing bull trout to travel upstream past the dam on Drywood Creek would help to improve the genetic fitness of the population. Building a fishway (a structure allowing fish to bypass a barrier by swimming up a series of low steps) is one option. Prior to constructing a fishway, TUC aims to collect fisheries data and engage the community, and work with landowners to protect and improve the health and functionality of riparian areas (the vegetated zones along the edge of the creek).

## Goals and Objectives

**The Drywood Creek Watershed Renewal Program** involves four key components:

- conservation and restoration
- youth and local chapter engagement
- science development and project management
- communications and fundraising

# The Drywood Creek Watershed Renewal Program

**A Trout Unlimited Canada  
flagship conservation project**

**Summary by Lesley Peterson**

**Photos by Brian Meagher**

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In 2008, TUC was invited to work with the Drywood/Yarrow Conservation Partnership (DYCP) on biological and educational programs throughout the watershed. Since 2008, TUC has held three electro-fishing workdays in the Drywood Creek Watershed, involving local school groups and landowners and their families. Additional electro-fishing workdays are planned for 2010. Electro-fishing provides an opportunity to collect valuable data on fish populations while also involving and educating the local community, both youth and adults.

In 2009, thanks to a grant from the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA), and with help from the Southwestern Alberta Conservation Partnership (SACP), at least three miles of riparian fencing and one off-stream watering system will be installed for two landowners within the watershed. These actions will help producers control the timing and intensity of grazing, allowing sensitive riparian areas to rest and recover at critical times.

TUC was fortunate to receive a grant from the ACA's Grant Eligible Fund to hire a project biologist for a portion of the year to plan and implement projects in the Drywood Creek basin.

## Partners and Sponsors

**The DYCP** is one of the critical partners in the Drywood Creek Project Watershed Renewal Program. Without landowner support, it would be impossible for TUC to continue its work in the watershed. Funding was received from the ACA. We have also had in-kind support from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development – Fish and Wildlife Division, Cows and Fish, ACA, SACP, Waterton Lakes National Park, the University of Lethbridge, and the Oldman Chapter of TUC.

### Our Project Partners



Southwestern Alberta  
Conservation Partnership

**If you wish to contribute to this project or for more information, please contact:**

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