



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Council considers reinstating firearm bylaw, withdraws support for proposed hunting season. *Revised*

PARKLAND COUNTY, AB. At its Council Meeting on September 9, 2008, Parkland County Council gave first and second reading to Bylaw 52-2008, a bylaw that would restrict the discharge of guns in certain portions of Parkland County. Council could not give third reading to the bylaw as it must be sent to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development for approval.

Council also withdrew its support for the Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) Fish and Wildlife Division implementation of a shotgun and muzzle loader hunting season in Parkland County for the portions of the County that fall within Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 248.

“At the February 26th Council Meeting, Council approved a request for decision to support implementation of a shotgun and muzzle loader season in the County,” said Mark Cardinal, Manager, Agriculture Services. “Afterwards, many residents expressed concerns about implementing the season and as a result a public meeting was held on July 10th to discuss the issue. At the end of the day, it became very apparent that there was little support for the proposed hunting season.”

At the same February 26th meeting, Council also rescinded Bylaw 44-97, a bylaw that prohibited the discharge of guns or other firearms in any specified part or parts of Parkland County. Many residents have since indicated they want the bylaw reinstated. But there may be some confusion of what the bylaw actually means.

“Council considers firearm bylaw”

“When Bylaw 44-97 was rescinded in February, landowners regained the ability to shoot pests, such as coyotes, beavers, and gophers, on their own property *provided* they meet the minimum distance requirements, which is no less than 200 yards from an occupied dwelling,” said Cardinal. “Once Bylaw 52-2008 is given third reading, landowners will again be restricted to shooting only at coyotes on their property. If they have problems with other animals, such as gophers, beavers, or skunks, on their property, they cannot shoot at them. They will have to find other methods, such as traps, to deal with them. “

Bylaw 52-2008 mirrors the content of rescinded Bylaw 44-97, with minor textual changes to reflect current legislation. As in the previous version, Bylaw 52-2008 will restrict the discharge of specific guns or firearms for specific uses in any specified part or parts of Parkland County, namely “all those portions of Townships 50 and 51, Ranges 25 and 26, west of the 4th meridian and that portion of Section 36, Township 50, Range 27 west of the 4th Meridian, Sections 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26 35 and 36 in Township 51, Range 27 west of the 4th Meridian that lie within the boundaries of Parkland County excepting Section 31, Township 50, Range 26 west of the 4th Meridian,” located in the south-east portion of Parkland County. As was contained in Bylaw 44-97, there is an allowance for landowners to use rim fire rifles and shotguns to shoot coyotes to protect persons or their property. Farmers can also obtain a special permit to destroy birds in order to protect their crops.

Bylaw 52-2008 will be brought before Council for third reading once the bylaw has received approval from the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

Parkland County is a rural municipality located immediately west of Edmonton. Covering an area of 242,595 hectares (599,500 acres), it is one of the largest in size and one of the highest populated of all rural municipalities in Alberta. Parkland County has grown to a community of over 30,000 people and has seen generations of families continue to enjoy country living.

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