

Good News in the Watershed

Two Emerald Award finalists are from the watershed.
Congratulations to both finalists!

Camrose Wildlife and Stewardship Society

Started in 2002, this group raises public awareness of local issues and serve as greenspace stewards. Through weekly summer interpretive events and the Purple Martin Festival the CWSS has provided extensive environmental benefits to the community, including:



i) protection and enhanced management of physical elements (e.g. increased public preference for natural lands and water), ii) provision of biodiversity elements (e.g. 20-fold increase in Purple Martin breeding pairs) and numerous ecological services (e.g. water quality enhancement), and iii) support of related social elements (e.g. increased opportunities for human enjoyment and recreation).

Also an Emerald Finalist in 2007, we hope to see the CWSS take home the Community Group award this year!

Don Davidson

Don Davidson is an individual who has contributed selflessly to important social and environmental issues. He is deeply committed to the health of Pigeon Lake, demonstrated by the wide variety of projects he has undertaken: tree planting; Pigeon Lake Provincial Park restoration project; Love the Lake Project; Himalayan Balsam eradication project; championing improved municipal practices; and championing regulatory practices related to private sewage. He has also participating in the shoreline cleanup for the past six years, a Pigeon Lake Watershed Association submission to the County of Leduc regarding a substantial development, and the development of a concept plan for the County of Wetaskiwin. Don is committed to sharing his ideas and knowledge with others and to resolving issues that will protect lakes.



Caring for our Watersheds

2012 Contest

Record Breaking Year

101 proposals submitted for Central Alberta Contest!

“What would YOU do to help improve your Watershed?”

216 Students from 18 schools across Central Alberta have at least 101 ways to help improve our watersheds.

In their 1000-word proposals, students tried to convince our panel of judges why their idea should be a finalist to win the \$1000 grand prize for themselves and a matching prize for their school. The proposals were judged on innovation, environmental impact, scope, research, realistic solution, budget and visuals. These students worked hard and are all considered winners. Each student will be receiving a prize as well as constructive feedback on their proposals.

We can all rest assured that our respective watersheds are in good hands with the quality of thoughtful proposals sent in. We hope to be assisting some of these future leaders implement their ideas during the 2012-2013 school year.

1st Place CFW Winners!

*Earn \$1000 for
themselves and
school*



Hannah Hahn and Laci Schmidt from St. Augustine School in Ponoka took home the grand prize with their Adopt a Riverbank Campaign idea. See our website for a full list of finalists.

When Water is Scarce:

Drought and Watershed Management Workshop

“How do we keep our communities and economy strong in times of drought? How do we create a Battle River that you would actually want to swim in? How do we protect the beauty and health of the place we live ?”



Battle River and Sounding Creek watershed residents gathered to talk about all of these questions at the BRWA's February 29th workshop at the Forestburg Community Centre.

To start the day, the BRWA reported back on what we heard during our “Your Land, Your Water, Your Voice” community workshops, which took place in November 2011. A detailed “What We Heard” report is available on the BRWA website. Second, we heard from watershed residents about what they consider to be the top land and water issues facing our watersheds.

The top two priorities identified were:

- 1) Water quality: ground, surface and source water protection.
- 2) Land use practices: including recreational, residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land use.

These priority issue areas will guide our work over the coming months and years. Third, we shared information about the work we've been doing over the past year related to drought research and management in our watersheds. Lastly, we had the opportunity to hear from Dave Sauchyn, an expert in climate change research, on the topic of “Water, Drought and Climate Change”.

With about 60 people in attendance, the workshop was a great opportunity to engage watershed residents in discussions around land and water management in our part of the province. Visit the BRWA website to view all the presentations from the workshop: <http://battleriverwatershed.ca/drought-workshop>.



Environmental Stewardship Award

Nominate a Cattle Producer Today

The Environmental Stewardship Award is presented annually to the beef producer who best exemplifies environmentally sustainable cattle production.

Alberta cattle producers nominate the best of their peers for this award, which has become one of the most prestigious in the industry.

A panel of representatives from conservation and agriculture assess the candidates, examining the stewardship goals and activities of the nominees including land management, water quality, wildlife, animal welfare and leadership activities in the community related to stewardship.

Nominations Close July 1st of every year.

Nomination forms can be found on the AB Beef website at: albertabeef.org/producers/environment/environment-stewardship-award/ or by contacting AB Beef by phone (403) 275-4400.

Experience Your H²OShed

Invite the BRWA to help your group Experience Your Watershed! We are offering this FREE outdoor, interactive, experiential learning program to groups across the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds.

We will explore important watershed components (water quality, water quantity, land use, wetlands/riparian areas, biodiversity, ground water) and how they relate to our lives.

From one hour to one day, from real estate agents to campers, this program is scalable and suitable for everyone. Contact Nathalie at 1-888-672-0276 for information.

Battle River Buddies Poster Contest

Students Grades 1-6 respond to:

*“When I’m outside in the
Battle River watershed...”*



BATTLE RIVER
WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Students in grades 1-6 (age 6-13) can win up to \$100 for themselves, and their school! Draw a poster on 11x17 paper by May 31st finishing the sentence “When I am outside in the Battle River Watershed...”.

Do you bike, geocache, feed cattle, camp, catch frogs?

Whatever you do, this poster contest is for you!

More details of the contest can be found on our website at

www.battleriverwatershed.ca/battle-river-buddies-poster-contest

or by contacting Nathalie at 1-888-672-0276 or via email Nathalie@battleriverwatershed.ca



A few winners from the 2011 contest

The Trouble with Nutrients

With the completion of the State of the Watershed Report for the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds, the BRWA is now beginning work on developing a watershed management plan for our watersheds. The finalized Terms of Reference for this planning process will be available on the BRWA website in May.

As an important first step in this watershed management process, the BRWA will be conducting research into non-point source (NPS) pollution management over the coming year. “Non-point source pollution” refers to pollution that enters our systems from a variety of diffuse sources, through events such as surface water runoff from both urban and rural landscapes. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of NPS pollution and how best to manage it in the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds.

In particular, we want to get a handle on the high nutrient levels in our water systems. Currently, nitrogen and phosphorus levels in the Battle River regularly exceed Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for aquatic life. From fertilizer use on our lawns and gardens, to nutrient sources from crop and livestock production on our farms, nutrients enter our water systems through a number of non-point sources. Nutrients and other pollutants may also enter our water systems through “point” sources, such as municipal wastewater systems, but point source pollution management will be considered in a separate research project.

Get Involved!

This year, we’ll be developing a research report on NPS pollution and potential management strategies to limit nutrients and other pollutants from entering our water systems. We’ll then host a series of community workshops to take this topic to watershed residents, stakeholders and decision-makers to hear your take on what needs to be done to manage non-point sources of nutrients and other pollutants in our watersheds. **These workshops will take place in September 2012.** Following these workshops, we’ll work to develop some draft non-point source pollution management recommendations. **These draft recommendations will then be taken back to the public in February 2012** for another round of discussions to finalize the recommendations and develop implementation guidelines to make these recommendations a reality in our watersheds.

We look forward to hearing from you on this important topic! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information on the September and February community workshops. To learn more about the BRWA’s watershed management efforts, visit our website: <http://battleriverwatershed.ca/content/watershed-management>.

Did you know?

Wetlands have an amazing capacity to improve water quality, especially when it comes to phosphorus retention. One way phosphorus is retained in wetlands is through adsorption onto organic peat and clay particles, which are then stored in wetland sediment and soil. This phosphorus is then readily available for use by wetland plants that obtain phosphorus from the soil.



Agriculture

George Poruchnek - Landowner

Melissa Orr-Langner - Agricultural Water Engineer

Business/Industry

Barb Bosch - ATCO Power

Malorie Aube - Country Accent

Environmental Groups

Tracy Scott - Ducks Unlimited Canada

Wayne Ungstad - J.J. Collett Natural Area, Board Vice Chair

First Nations

Leonard Standing on the Road - Montana First Nations

Norine Saddleback - Samson Cree Nation

Individual

Hugh Sanders - Individual, Board Chair

Midge Lambert - Individual

Municipal Government

Jeremy Enarson - City of Camrose

Wayne Nixon - County of Stettler, Treasurer

Jordon Christianson— Special Areas (Hanna) Office #2

Provincial/Federal Government/Academia

Greg Nelson - Alberta Environment and Water

Shane Mascarin - Department of National Defense

Coming Events

PhotoVoice

This project invites watershed residents to share their perspective on, and connection to the watershed via photography. This spring, the PhotoVoice program will be hosting meetings in Wainwright, Special Areas, and Brownfield. But you don't have to be in these areas to get involved! Everyone in the Battle River or Sounding Creek Watershed is invited to submit a photo with a short description explaining their picture.

Annual Watershed Festival

This year, our Watershed Festival is going to be in **Wainwright!** Join us on **August 18th**, 10am-3pm at the Riverdale campground. We will provide lunch, and you can bring a Saskatoon Pie (or just your appetite for pie!) for our annual baking competition. We will have fun games and activities for the kids and adults too.

Experience your Watershed, Hardisty!

In conjunction with the **Hardisty Rodeo on July 14th** we will be offering free, outdoor, interactive, experiential learning activities for rodeo goers of all ages. We will explore natural and human aspects of the watershed while having fun and taking action!

Annual General Meeting

This years AGM will be held on **Thursday June 14th at the County of Camrose Council Chambers.**

Rolling down the River: Bike Tour for Whole Health

June 17th– 21st you will find BRWA staff and supporters on their bikes traveling 525km from the Battle River's headwaters to its confluence with the North Saskatchewan River near Battleford, Saskatchewan. Opportunity for everyone to join!



For more information on these, and all of our events, visit our News and Events page on our website, or contact the office at 1-866-672-0276. We can also be found on Facebook and Twitter!