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Municipal Government

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BRWA Committee - Chairs

- **Education/Communications**
– Tim Belec
- **Executive** – Jeremy Enarson
- **Policy** – Wayne Ungstad
- **Finance/Fundraising** – Barb Bosh
- **Watershed Planning** – Leonard Standing On The Road

Battle River Watershed Alliance Board Update

The BRWA Board of Directors met in May to discuss the Government of Alberta's draft *Land Use Framework*. Board members are currently reviewing the Framework and will be requesting a presentation from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development to assist with its review. The Board approved a preliminary cost estimate for an aerial videography capture & riparian health & integrity assessment in the Battle River watershed; the assessment will take place from mid-July to mid-August.



At its May meeting, BRWA Board members had the opportunity to meet in Kelsey with Melanie Daniels, Senior Advisor, Aboriginal Relations with Alberta Environment, (left) who extended an invitation to BRWA to undergo cultural awareness training with Four Nations.

The BRWA Board meets monthly to discuss BRWA business and watershed issues. Current initiatives include: establishment of a Watershed Committee for the BRWA *State of the Watershed* report; continuing efforts on the *Signs Of Life* watershed entry signs project; and support for the *Caring For Our Watershed* project (a proposal writing contest for students to show how they would protect the Battle River watershed). Two board positions, under the categories of First Nations and Municipal Government, were recently filled, bringing the Board to its full complement of 15 board positions.

BRWA staff and Board representatives will continue to meet this fall with local municipalities, counties, cities, and towns to introduce the BRWA and discuss watershed issues at the municipal level. BRWA staff has also met with local representatives looking to form a Watershed Stewardship Group at Lacombe Lake. The BRWA Board meets again on June 27th in Lacombe.

For more information, contact: David Samm, BRWA Manager, Box 1926, Camrose, AB T4V 1X8
Tel: 780/781-2972. Email: david.samm@battleriverwatershed.ca

We are all stewards of the Battle River Watershed



Battle River Watershed Producers Support Wildlife Habitat in Ducks Unlimited Pilot Project

A recently completed Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) pilot project indicates growing interest by producers in protecting and enhancing on-farm wildlife habitat.

The *Natural Advantage: On-Farm Wildlife and Biodiversity Planning Service* pilot project helped producers protect and manage wildlife habitat on 62 farms throughout Alberta, of which 12 participants occurred in the Battle River watershed, representing a broad range of farm sizes, farm types, and geographical challenges.

Designed to help producers develop a solid technical foundation to build progress, the *Natural Advantage* project linked producers to resources that could help them make positive changes. The project had three key goals: develop an on-farm habitat and biodiversity planning process along with supporting communications and products; test the service on at least 60 farming operations; and issue a final report summarizing the experience.



Ducks Unlimited Canada

The pilot was open to producers who had completed an Environmental Farm Plan; it included a property analysis and habitat classification by DUC biologists. A consultation with the landowner, along with a written report including resource materials and contact information, helped to identify producer opportunities to protect and enhance on-farm wildlife habitat. The free on-farm visits included an opportunity to recover identified project costs through the Canada-Alberta Farm Stewardship Program. Lessons learned will serve as an anchor for the next generation of on-farm habitat sustainability in the province. DUC is now initiating the next phase of its project. Interested producers are encouraged to participate.

Project information is available in a series of newsletters available in a Special Web Report on the Meristem *Land & Science* Web site at www.meristem.com. For more information, contact Project Director Kim Schmitt at: tel: (403) 342-1314 or e-mail: K_schmitt@ducks.ca

Battle River Watershed Stewards Nominated for ASN Grassroots Stewardship Awards

Three nominations submitted by BRWA are among seventeen nominations being considered for the Alberta Stewardship Network (ASN) 2008 *Grassroots Environmental Stewardship Awards*. Celebrating the achievements of Alberta stewards, the awards recognize the outstanding stewardship of three categories.

City of Camrose engineer, **Ted Gillespie**, was nominated in the Individual Commitment category for his accomplished stewardship actions, which have positively impacted the Battle River watershed, including formation of a unique partnership with the County of Camrose in 1998 to work together on watershed issues.

"The first rule in protecting your water system is to protect your watershed. We recognize that the City and the County are both part of the environment. We each have our own programs but where programs overlap, it makes sense to work together."

-- Ted Gillespie, City of Camrose Engineer

Montana First Nation (and in particular Tribal Councillor Leonard Standing On The Road) was nominated in the Community Stewardship Group category for their riparian health management, awareness of the importance of water and community involvement in environmental issues.

Camrose Composite High School's **Project Sustain** (and Rob Grant) was nominated in the Community Stewardship Project for its success in installing solar panels at the school which produce an alternative source of power that supplements power drawn from the electricity grid.

Awards will be presented at the ASN Annual General Meeting on June 11. For more information, call ASN at 1-877-727-5276 or visit: www.ab.stewardshipcanada.ca

Alberta Environment Launches East Central Alberta Cumulative Effects Project in Camrose

Alberta Environment hosted a community kick-off meeting on May 29 in Camrose to introduce its East Central Alberta Cumulative Effects Project. The community-led project is designed to bring people together to address the overall impact of activities on the environment and local communities.

The two-year prototype project will have a broad, long-range focus in comparison to the Environmental Impact Assessment process for the proposed Dodds-Roundhill Coal Gasification Project; the project area currently centres on Flagstaff, Beaver and Camrose Counties. Pilot projects are also being held in the Industrial Heartland and in southern Alberta.

Municipalities and community-based organizations are being contacted to identify community leaders willing to participate as members of the project community outcomes team, which will share information with their respective organizations and the community-at-large as the project develops.

The first project phase will identify desired social, economic and environmental outcomes for east

central Alberta. In future phases, the Government of Alberta will work with community to develop a policy integration framework that identifies how government policies can be applied to accomplish stated outcomes. Three workshops are planned: June 26 & 27 (Forces & Drivers); Aug 14 & 15 (Scenario Logics); Oct 30 & 31 (Scenario Review). *For more information, contact Project Manager Rhonda King at: 403/340-7195.*

Battle River Caring for our Watersheds Contest

More than 150 people attended the combined judging and awards presentations to students within the Battle River watershed who submitted a variety of proposals in answer to the question "What can I do, create, invent or improve to better care for the Battle River watershed?"



The 2nd Annual Caring for our Watersheds – Battle River Contest offered \$12,000 in incentives and cash prizes to students and schools with the most creative, thought provoking and innovative proposals. Open to students in Grades 8 – 12 and university students, the contest featured entries from Charlie Killam School, Camrose Composite High School, Strome School and Augustana College.

"Students were well prepared and knowledgeable," said Project Coordinator, Maurice Samm. "Students from Strome made the top three presentations, which included a river monitoring project, a photo calendar contest and a watershed board game" (pictured above).

For more information, contact Project Coordinator Maurice Samm at: msamm@telus.net or call: 780/672-7621.

Camrose Water Festival Day A Success

The City of Camrose held its 3rd Annual Water Festival on June 5th. More than 250 Grade 5 students learned about water issues at a local, provincial and global level while having the opportunity for hands on fun at a variety of watershed stations.

Featuring a BBQ and silent auction, the full day event included an evening Open House with displays and variety of guest speakers including: Montana Band Tribal Councillor, Leonard Standing On The Road; City of Camrose Engineer, Ted

Gillespie, and Battle River Watershed Alliance Chair, Jeremy Enarson.

The Camrose Water Festival provided a unique opportunity for water professionals and the community to come together to recognize the vital role that water plays in our daily lives; it was organized around the Alberta Environment Week theme of *Water: Conserve, Connect, People* and addressed such issues as water conservation, groundwater, shoreline and riparian protection, pond study of Mirror Lake, watershed awareness and Alberta Water Quality testing. The event also celebrated Alberta Water Quality Awareness Day and World Environment Day.

Alberta Water Council Update

By Shaun Peters, Alberta Water Council

The Alberta Water Council (AWC) met in March and meets again in June; it is working on a number of projects. Additional staff has been hired and the Council looks forward to advancing AWC planning and implementation agendas:

- Gord Edwards, Executive Director
- Terry Sly, Senior Project Manager
Lorie Wagner, Project Manager
- Shaun Peters, Communications Manager
Michele Weldon, Office Manager
- Jennifer Iglesias, Administrative Assistant

The Intra-Basin Water Movement Project Team is drafting final recommendations, based on direction from Environment Minister Rob Renner and discussions at workshops held earlier this year. Recommendations will address the validity and effectiveness of current approaches to moving water from one sub-basin to another and what, if any, changes should be made to the policy.

At its March Council meeting, members focused on providing feedback to the Wetland Policy Project Team who will present a draft plan for recommended provincial wetland policy and implementation based on consultation results for Alberta at the June Council meeting.

The Shared Governance and Watershed Planning Framework Project Team is preparing a manual for creating watershed management plans with description of a shared governance model outlining roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities for water partners (AWC, Watershed Planning & Advisory Councils, Watershed Stewardship Groups).

The Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plan Project is testing the development and implementation of sector plans for water conservation, efficiency and productivity plans addressing water use. Report findings will be presented to Council in late 2008.

Feedback from a February 2008 planning

workshop resulted in the establishment of a new working group to develop terms of reference for a Water Allocation Transfer System Project Team. The team will develop recommendations to enhance Alberta's water allocation transfer system. Draft terms of reference will be presented at the next Council meeting and an operational plan will be re-examined as new work comes forward to ensure that timelines are realistic.

The Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems Working Group is developing a terms of reference for a Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems Project Team. The team will define healthy aquatic ecosystems and recommend projects to Council.

Copies of the AWC Annual Report are available by calling (780) 644-7380 or visiting the AWC website at www.awchome.ca.

Out and Around the Basin

Alberta Water Quality Awareness Day is being held June 5 throughout the province. Test your local water quality and add your information to the www.awqa.ca database until the end of September to create a picture of water quality in Alberta. For more information, visit www.awqa.ca, email: info@awqa.ca, or call: (780) 702-ALMS.

The **Pigeon Lake Watershed Association** is hosting an **Open House** on June 7 at the Mulhurst Bay Community Hall. Contact: Peggy at 780.462.1087.



Alberta Environment is hosting an **Algal Bloom Open House** on June 13 at Mulhurst Community Hall (Pigeon Lake) from 6 - 9 pm; it will feature displays as well as presentations from a limnologist and the health region on algal blooms. For more information, contact: Christina Pickles at 780/422-5513 or email: Christina.Pickles@gov.ab.ca

Cows & Fish is holding its **6th Annual Grazing School for Women** on June 16 and 17 at the Circle Square Ranch near Halkirk. This annual two-event provides rural women with an opportunity to develop and enhance ranch management skills, increase awareness of environmental issues and network with other women. For more information, contact: Kelsey Spicer-Rawe at: 403.340.7607; email: kspicer@cowandfish.org

AltaGas Energy Limited Partnership and Alberta Livestock Power Services are holding a series of **Energy Workshops for Farmers and Ranchers** to discuss how to stabilize energy input costs. Workshops are being held in the Battle River watershed in Killam on June 18th, and Ponoka June 19th. For more information, contact Nowell Berg at 1-877-472-2600.

County residents interested in finding out what they can do to protect their well are invited to a free **Water Well Management Workshop** being hosted by the Pigeon Lake Watershed Association on July 5 at the Lakedell Community Centre. This hands-on workshop is designed to help water well owners understand and manage their water wells. To attend, please pre register—so we can look up drilling reports for your well—by calling Alberta Environment at: 403/341-8679 (toll free, dial 310-0000).



The annual **Alberta Environmental Stewardship Photo Contest** is looking for photos that focus on environmental stewardship in Alberta. Winning entries will be published in the 2009 edition of the Alberta Environmental Stewardship Calendar. Entry deadline is July 18. For more information contact: Heather Landiak, Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development at 780-632-5467 or e-mail: heather.landiaak@gov.ab.ca

The **Alberta Soils Tour**, a unique educational event is being held July 22 and 23. Tour stops and topics include: Lacombe Research Station; Whelp Creek watershed - BMP Evaluation Project; oil site reclamation projects & regulations; land use, forestry issues & pasture health, environmental goods & services; peat extraction & soil remediation; U of A - Breton Plots & Woodlot. For more information, contact: Jason Cathcart at 780-427-3432.

Watershed Resources

Water Science News is an electronic newsletter from Environment Canada's Water Science and Technology Directorate that seeks to forge better links between water science and water policy. This free newsletter provides timely information on the research activities of Environment Canada's Water Science and Technology Directorate. For more information, visit: www.ec.gc.ca/scitech