



**Board of Directors**

**Agriculture**

George Poruchnek  
Doug Fletcher

**Business/Industry**

Carol Wilson  
Barb Bosh – BRWA Treasurer

**Environment**

Shane Mascarin  
Tracy Scott – BRWA Vice Chair

**First Nations**

Leonard Standing on the Road

**Individual**

Wayne Ungstad  
Midge Lambert

**Municipal Government**

Jeremy Enarson – BRWA Chair  
Wayne Richardson

**Provincial/Federal Government**

**Academia**

Doug Thrussell  
Phil Boehme

**BRWA Committees**

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

**For more information, contact:**

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

**BRWA Participates in Canadian Bull Congress**

The Battle River Watershed Alliance (BRWA) joined Cows & Fish at *Canadian Bull Congress Education Day* in Camrose in January to educate 240 local Grade 3 and 4 students on riparian health issues in the Battle River watershed. Playing the *Cows, Fish, Cattedogs & Kids game*, students from Chester Ronning, Bawlf, Daysland, Sifton, Sparling, Hay Lakes and Forestburg learned about the riparian health of the Battle River watershed in a fun and interactive format. The Canadian Bull Congress Education Day focused on a variety of cattle topics, including cattle judging, cow milking, and auctioneering.



**BRWA Manager, David Samm, and his puppet Pal, help a local student answer a riparian health question being asked by Cows, Fish, Cattedogs & Kids Game Show Host Kelsey Spicer-Rawe.**

**BRWA Board Update**

The BRWA Board meets monthly to discuss BRWA business and watershed issues. Current initiatives include: establishment of a Formation Committee for the *State of the Watershed* project; continuing efforts on the *Signs Of Life* watershed entry signs project; and support for the *Caring For Our Watershed* project. There are currently two open board positions, under the categories of First Nations and Municipal Government. The next BRWA Board Meeting is scheduled for March 28.

The BRWA Board is planning to hold a Board Retreat in April to discuss future directions and initiation of the *State of the Watershed Report*.

In February, BRWA staff met with local representatives looking to form a Watershed Stewardship Group at Lacombe Lake.

BRWA staff and Board representatives are currently meeting with local municipalities, counties, cities and towns to introduce the BRWA and discuss watershed issues.

We are all stewards of the Battle River Watershed

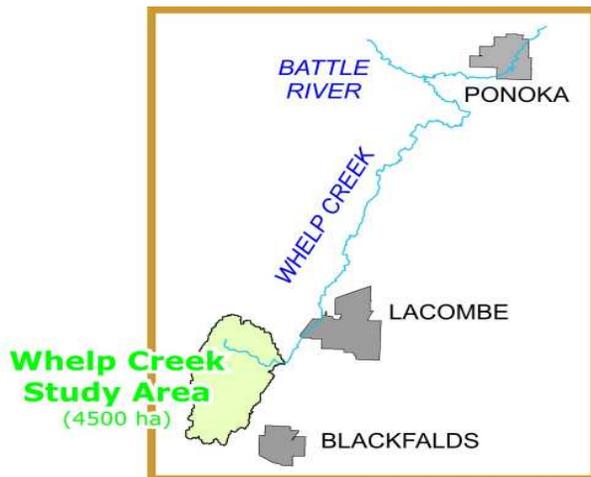


## Nutrient BMP Project Underway In Battle River Watershed

*\*Submitted by Alberta Agriculture & Food*

Alberta Agriculture and Food and partners are implementing a five-year scientific evaluation of Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) in the Battle River watershed, on Whelp Creek near Lacombe. The results from the project could help Alberta producers decide which particular practices will provide the greatest 'bang for the buck' both economically and environmentally on their own farm.

"Many producers want to be proactive and move toward more environmentally friendly production systems, but they have limited resources. The results from our project could be used to give some guidance on that," explains Barry Olson, a Research Scientist with Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF).



Olson is lead scientist of the research team conducting the project, which runs from 2007 to 2011. Team members will be evaluating the economic and environmental effects of implementing various BMPs under Alberta conditions. They are monitoring surface water quality and quantity, soil nutrient status, riparian health, and rangeland health at a field scale and a watershed scale. And they're collecting information on land cover, land use and economics. They plan to use the collected data to develop a decision-making tool to help producers determine which BMPs would be best for their own situation.

The project is being conducted in two watersheds selected for their diversity of landscape, climate and agricultural characteristics. In the 14,600-ha Indianfarm Creek Watershed near Pincher Creek, the agricultural systems include annual crop production, pasture, cow-calf operations, and intensive livestock operations. The Whelp Creek Watershed is a 4500-ha area near Lacombe. The main agricultural land uses in this watershed

include dairy operations as well as some hog, cow-calf and feedlot operations, and annual crop production. In comparison to the Indianfarm Watershed, the Whelp Creek drainage system has much shallower streams and tributaries, and snowmelt tends to be more important.

The main strategy is to use before-and-after comparisons at about a dozen sites where BMPs will be implemented. Depending on site characteristics, the research team will also conduct other types of monitoring, such as comparisons of conditions upstream and downstream of a BMP, comparisons with check sites, and monitoring of conditions at the field edges. As well, the team is monitoring various characteristics on watershed-wide basis.

In addition, the project team will supplement findings with data from two field sites, in the Lethbridge region that have characteristics not found in the Whelp and Indianfarm watersheds. They will provide data on BMPs for semi-arid and irrigated conditions, and for soils with high phosphorus levels.

Each of the two project watersheds has about 50 producers. The project team is working with producers through information meetings, open houses and one-on-one discussions.

The team has already conducted an initial survey of local producers to collect land use and economic information. The project communication lead Phil Boehme says, "We've had a really good response to the survey -- over 50% participation." Boehme is also a BRWA Board of Director.

The BMP implementation aspect of the project involves working closely with about half a dozen producers in each watershed. "For the producers participating on the field-specific BMP implementation, we'll be consulting with them on what's going to work out best, and will also be providing financial support for those practices that they implement, and nutrient management planning advice and support," Boehme notes.

Local producers have shown a strong interest in the project. Boehme says, "Hat's off to the participating producers for being proactive and showing leadership and innovation by getting involved in this project."

Albert Agriculture and Food is the lead agency on the project. Partners include local producers, Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund, Alberta Environment, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada-PFRA, Lacombe County and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek. *For more information on the project, contact Phil Boehme (toll-free: 310-0000, then dial 403-782-8035; email: phil.boehme@gov.ab.ca).*

**Alberta Water Council Update**  
**By Terry Sly, Alberta Environment**

The Alberta Water Council, which recently appointed Gordon Edwards as its new Executive Director, met in November and again in March to continue its active work on a number of projects.

**Transition**

For over a year, the Council has been planning to transition from a Ministerial Advisory Committee to a not-for-profit society, at arm's length from government. In November, the Council became that independent body. The secretariat is currently accepting resumes for a number of staff positions and has received its first operating grant. The Council plans to establish an office in Edmonton during late winter or early spring 2008.

**Water Policy Issues and Gaps Project Team**

This team was asked to examine the water management system in Alberta, identify and prioritize policy and legislative issues and recommend approaches for addressing them. Their final report was accepted at the November Council meeting and is informing Council's priorities. The team has completed its work and has been dissolved.

**Water Strategy Renewal Project Team**

This team was asked to undertake a strategic review of the first three years of *Water for Life's* implementation and recommend areas of focus that will advance its three goals. The team presented its final recommendations to the Minister of Environment in January. Copies of the *Renewal Recommendation Report* are available on the Council's website. The team has completed its work and has been dissolved.

**Intra-Basin Water Movement Project Team**

In January, Environment Minister Rob Renner asked Council to determine whether the current approach to moving water from one sub-basin for use in another sub-basin is still valid and what, if any, changes should be made. The Intra-Basin Water Movement Project Team is drafting its final recommendations for the June Council meeting.

**Wetland Policy Project Team**

This team is tasked with recommending a new provincial wetland policy and implementation plan for Alberta. After completing a province-wide consultation, the team is drafting the recommended policy and implementation plan based on consultation results and input from the Council. A draft plan is expected in June.

**Shared Governance and Watershed Planning Framework Project Team**

This team is developing:

1. A clear description of a shared governance model describing roles, responsibilities, relationships, & accountabilities for water

partnerships (AWC, WPACs, and WSGs)

2. A manual that guides the process & content for creating watershed management plans.

The team held stakeholder workshops in December and January and has prepared a *What We Heard* summary report. The team's final documents are expected to be presented in June.

**Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity SECTOR PLAN Project Team**

This team has been tasked with developing tools to assist sectors in crafting and implementing sector-specific water conservation, efficiency, and productivity plans to address their water use. Two pilot projects have been approved to test the development and implementation of sector plans based on the team's draft *Sector Plan Table of Contents*. The pilots are underway and are expected to report back to Council in late 2008. The team continues to work on the issue of accountability as it relates to sector plans. *For more information, visit: [www.albertawatercouncil.ca](http://www.albertawatercouncil.ca), or call: 780/644-3771.*

**Updates from Other Watershed Planning & Advisory Councils Around The Province**

**Bow River Basin Council**

The Bow River Basin Council (BRBC) has moved its offices to the new Calgary Water Centre. The move puts BRBC staff in the centre of a variety of water management professionals and projects. BRBC's new address is: Calgary Water Centre, Mail Code #333, PO Box 2100 Station M, 625 – 25 Ave SE, Calgary, AB T2G 4K8. Tel: 403/268-4597. Website: [www.brbc.ab.ca](http://www.brbc.ab.ca)

**Beaver River Watershed Alliance**

In March 2007, the Beaver River Watershed Alliance (BRWA) was designated as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the Beaver River Basin. Since that time, the group has formed a Steering Committee, hired a Program Manager and prioritized its list of projects. BRWA is currently working on completion of a groundwater database inventory and web portal, continuing a lake water quality sampling program in partnership with the Alberta Lake Management Society, and enhancing its education and outreach program. BRWA also plans to embark on an Aquatic Health Ecosystem Monitoring Program, a wetland restoration project, and completion of a drained wetland inventory for a sub basin in the watershed. BRWA is working towards increasing its membership as it evolves beyond its original study/planning area and into the upper reaches of the watershed. *For more information, contact BRWA Program Manager, Eleanor Kneffel at: 1-877-737-2182 Ext 226 or [ek.brwa@lica.ca](mailto:ek.brwa@lica.ca)*

**Red Deer River Watershed Alliance**

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance (RDRWA) has begun work on its State of the Watershed

Report and following its Request For Proposals process, has hired Aquality Environmental Consulting as project consultant. RDRWA is hosting a General Informational Meeting on March 14 in Trochu; the theme will be *Managing Oil and Gas in the Watershed*. RDRWA held its annual Watershed Stewardship Group meeting in January and had good turnout despite cold temperatures. RDRWA has also published a new youth brochure and is hosting a poster contest for Grade K-8 students and poetry contest for Grade 9-12 students in the watershed. *For more information, visit: [www.rdrwa.ca](http://www.rdrwa.ca) or call: 403/340-7379.*

### Out and Around the Basin

Students within the Battle River watershed are invited to submit proposals that answer the question "What can I do, create, invent or improve to better care for the Battle River watershed?" The **Caring for our Watersheds – Battle River contest** provides \$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 has a deadline of April 1<sup>st</sup>. *For more information, contact Project Coordinator Maurice Samm at: [msamm@telus.net](mailto:msamm@telus.net) or call: 780/672-7621.*

**Alberta Environment Conference 2008** is April 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> in Edmonton. Hosted by Government of Alberta & Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, the conference will focus on environmental, natural resource management and stewardship. *For more information, visit [www.environmentconference.alberta.ca](http://www.environmentconference.alberta.ca)*

Registrations are now being accepted for the **2008 David Thompson Brigade**. This unique event leaves Rocky Mountain House in May and will journey to Thunder Bay by mid-July in 25' voyageur canoes. Commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Howse Pass trade route over the Rockies. Paddle all or just a few days. *For more information, visit: [www.2008thompsonbrigade.com](http://www.2008thompsonbrigade.com) or email: [info@2008thompsonbrigade.com](mailto:info@2008thompsonbrigade.com)*

The Alberta Stewardship Network (ASN) is seeking nominations for its **2008 Grassroots Environmental Stewardship Awards**. The awards celebrate the achievements of Alberta stewards and recognize the outstanding stewardship of Community Stewardship Groups, Individual Commitment and Stewardship Projects. **Nominations close May 15<sup>th</sup>**. Awards will be presented at the ASN Annual General Meeting in June. *For more information, call ASN at 1-877-727-5276 or visit: [www.ab.stewardshipcanada.ca](http://www.ab.stewardshipcanada.ca)*

The International Association for Public Participation is holding **Moving Participation to New Heights: A Showcase of Trail Blazing**

**Public Engagement Practices** on May 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> in Canmore *For more information, visit: [www.iap2wildrosechapter.org](http://www.iap2wildrosechapter.org)*

**Alberta Water Quality Awareness (AWQA) Day** is being held June 5 throughout the province. Order your free water quality test kit, and test up to 50 sites for water temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and pH – four basic measures that have important implications for fish and wildlife habitat. Anytime in June, test your local water quality and add your information to the [www.awqa.ca](http://www.awqa.ca) database to create a picture of water quality in Alberta. *For more information, visit [www.awqa.ca](http://www.awqa.ca), email: [info@awqa.ca](mailto:info@awqa.ca), or call: (780) 702-ALMS.*

Cows & Fish is holding its **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Grazing School for Women** on June 16 and 17 at the Circle Square Ranch near Halkirk. This annual two-event, held in northeast Alberta, has brought together more than 160 rural women from Alberta and Saskatchewan in the last five years to develop and enhance ranch management skills, increase awareness of environmental issues and network with other women. The School is a partnership event, hosted by Cows and Fish, Flagstaff County, Paintearth County, Beaver County, MD of Wainwright, Lamont County, Battle River Research Group, Smoky Lake County, St. Paul County, Two Hills County and Parkland Conservation Farm. *For more information, contact: Kelsey Spicer-Rawe at: 403.340.7607 or email: [kspicer@cowssandfish.org](mailto:kspicer@cowssandfish.org)*

### New Watershed Resources Available

#### Water Connections Info-Site

The Centre for Sustainable Watersheds launched a new Water Connections Info-Site in January. The site includes a capacity survey for water resource managers and practitioners across Canada. Compiled results will help the Water Connections Team identify capabilities and limitations of organizations involved in water protection. Water Connections seeks to develop and implement a web-based water information portal that will facilitate access and sharing of water data, resources and contacts nationwide. The portal is set to launch in mid June. To participate in the 10-15 minute survey, visit at [www.waterconnect.ca](http://www.waterconnect.ca)

#### Pembina Foundation Develops Youth Leadership Program in Sustainability

A new Pembina Foundation youth leadership program is now up and running.

In collaboration with the Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership, the program is unique in Canada, offering youth aged 18 to 24 accredited experiential leadership training in sustainability. The first semester will be piloted in early 2009. *For more information visit: [www.pembina.org](http://www.pembina.org)*