

**Battle River Watershed Alliance
Communications/Education Standing Committee**

**March 18, 2009
Rundle's Mission**

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Tim Belec, Battle Lake Watershed Enhancement Society

Phil Boehme, Alberta Environment

Maureen Lynch, BRWA Communications & Education Coordinator

Maurice Samm, BRWA Management

David Samm, BRWA Management

Regrets

Greg Nelson, Alberta Environment

Kelsey Spicer Rawe, Cows & Fish

Business Arising

√ **Welcome & Review of Agenda/Previous Minutes**

Tim welcomed committee members to the meeting at 10:20 am and asked if everyone had a copy of the agenda and February meeting minutes. Several additions were made to the agenda.

Tim expressed concern about committee commitment and said he wanted to ensure the committee remains relevant. The group discussed this and agreed that the work of the committee remains valuable and that the committee should continue to meet regularly.

Tim reviewed the February action items with the committee. The minutes were approved.

Action Item Review

Maurice agreed that we would circulate, to the committee, the revised State of the Watershed Communications Plan with budget and power point presentation.

David stated that the December newsletter was electronically distributed to members; 200 additional copies were printed. Tim and Phil stated that would like to regularly receive extra copies of the newsletter for distribution through their networks; David agreed this was a good idea. David stated he would email the March newsletter to the committee and board.

David said that the new BRWA Office Manager would handle future electronic distributions. He has added the approved Communications Strategy to BRWA Central Policy Binder.

Maurice stated that he would bring BRWA playing cards and tattoos to the next committee meeting. He said he would also provide a Strome update to Darcy Allen at Encana.

Maurice stated that the BRWA Watershed Committee has determined the need for a Request For Proposals for State of the Watershed Report design, so he has not sent a copy of the MRCC SoW Report to Focus Design.

Maureen stated that she has received the Macintosh computer from David and can now move forward on exploring MAC layout opportunities/programs and training with Focus Design.

Maureen had circulated Augustana student articles for review and asked the committee if they had any comments; Tim said he thought they looked fine. Phil asked for another copy for review. Kelsey has submitted her comments.

Maureen stated that the issue of media spokesperson and training was brought forward to the Board at its February meeting; the Board agreed with this recommendation and asked the committee to look into this issue further. Maureen said she would follow up.

Tim stated that he had provided ERCB information to David for inclusion in the February Board Package; Phil said the Board reviewed it and asked for additional information. Tim noted that the deadline for response had now passed.

Action Items

- **David to regularly provide hardcopies of the BRWA newsletter to Tim (20) and Phil (12) for distribution through their networks**
- **David to email March newsletter to committee and board.**
- **Maurice to distribute playing cards and tattoos at next C&E meeting.**
- **Maurice to provide a Strome update to Darcy Allen at Encana.**
- **Greg to circulate SoW Phase One Budget & Summary.**
- **Greg to ask Focus Design to draft a report cover for IBI Report.**
- **Maureen to follow up on media spokesperson & training recommendation.**

BRWA Volunteer Appreciation

Maureen brought forward the issue of volunteer appreciation for discussion. David stated that BRWA's efforts to date have been informal and suggested it may be a good idea to formalize them. Tim said that the Lakedell Agricultural Society hosts an annual volunteer dinner. Phil stated that the BRWA retreat is a nice thank you opportunity. Tim suggested that BRWA could invite volunteers to an introductory session at the next retreat. David suggested the idea of thank you gifts; Tim said these should be practical in nature. Maureen asked if the issue of volunteer appreciation is one the Communications and Education committee should be addressing; the committee agreed that, while it supported the issue of volunteer appreciation, it felt that it should be the Board who addresses it.

Action Item Follow Up

√ BRWA Atlas & Information Fact Sheet: Review

Maureen stated that Tracy and Greg are working on mapping products for the Atlas; Ducks Unlimited will supply an updated map and DUC program accomplishments in Battle River watershed as well as a companion fact sheet. Tim suggested setting a deadline for Atlas completion; the committee agreed to a deadline of June 1st.

√ **Newspaper Column Outline: Review**

Maureen stated that 10 articles have been sent to Don Ruzicka for use in his local newspaper column. Don has circulated these to the Iron Creek Executive. Maureen has received comments from Kelsey on the articles written by the Augustana student. Kelsey has offered 10 Cows & Fish fact sheets for use in the newspaper series; Don reviewed these and agreed they would be suitable. Maurice suggested that it might be helpful to also contact Ducks Unlimited for additional information.

Action

- **Maureen to follow up with Kelsey to adapt Cows & Fish fact sheets for column use and to contact Ducks Unlimited for potential information.**

√ **Communications Plan – Priorities: Communications Audit**

Maureen stated that she has started a list of BRWA communications products that could be included in the Communications Audit. She looked into audit-instruction books on the International Association of Business Communicators website but found them to be pricey; she will continue to search for a suitable audit format. Maureen suggested that it would be helpful to have external auditors review the BRWA's communications materials; suggestions included Billie Milholland (NSWA), DUC, AENV Education Branch & ACT. Tim suggested that Balance Media in Edmonton might also be able to assist.

√ **Communications Plan – Priorities: Education Plan**

Maureen stated that she is working on the BRWA Education Plan and will circulate a draft for review by the committee shortly. Phil offered to work with her on the plan.

Action

- **Maureen to circulate draft Education Plan to committee for review and comment**

√ **Municipal Forum**

Maurice suggested that, based on his State of the Watershed presentations made so far to municipalities, it would be useful for BRWA to host a Municipal Forum at the end of April, focusing on Battle River watershed messaging and providing an opportunity for a state of the watershed conversation with municipal decision makers. He said that each council he has met with has been positive about the State of the Watershed update. Outcomes of the forum would link to relationship building and information sharing. The committee supported the idea, and suggested the Watershed Committee take the lead.

√ **Caring For Our Watersheds**

Maurice gave an update on the *Caring For Our Watershed* contest; the deadline for entries is April 8th, with judging taking place on May 2nd. Tim and Maureen agreed to assist with judging, if needed. He asked if this project is something that the committee would consider adopting; the committee discussed this and agreed that Maurice should make this request to the Board.

√ **BRWA Wetlands Project**

Maureen stated that the new BRWA Wetlands Project has a communications and engagement component that would require the support of the committee; she will circulate the project outline to the committee for review and discussion at its next meeting. Tim stated that the Battle Lake Watershed Enhancement Society has some funding that it could put towards a wetland inventory for Battle Lake.

Action

- **Maureen to circulate BRWA Wetlands Project outline to committee for review**

Updates

√ **Board Update**

David and Phil stated that the BRWA Board met in February in Lacombe; the meeting included a presentation on the First Nations program at Foothills Model Forest. They stated that the Board had supported the committee's recommendation to pursue media spokesperson training; Phil indicated that Alberta Environment Communications staff might be able to provide some support.

√ **State of the Watershed Update**

Maurice stated that the Watershed Committee met in Killam on March 9th; it is working on the Table of Contents for the State of the Watershed Report. He said the Phase One contract ends March 31st and the committee is recommending a three-month contract extension. A Phase One Report will be distributed to the Watershed Committee in April; Maurice agreed to circulate the report to the Communications & Education Committee as well. Maurice is working on the literature review; Phil and Tim provided suggestions to Maurice on possible information to be included. He stated that municipal and community presentations are going well. Maurice is also working on development of a photo archives and historical watershed information.

Action

- **Maurice to circulate Phase One SoW Report to committee.**

√ **BRWA Communications & Education Committee Update**

The committee discussed the two committee vacancies; suggested names included Candice Tremblay (Augustana Green Initiatives Coordinator); the new AESA Tech in Flagstaff; Rosemarie Ferjnek (DUC); Alberta Agriculture; EPCOR Watershed Specialist; PLWA.

Maureen stated that she has submitted draft #2 of the Signs of Life Fact Sheet to Sarah Hipkin at Land Stewardship Centre of Canada, for review and discussion.

√ **Library Resource List**

Maureen circulated the library resource list that Shane Mascarin had assembled. Phil stated that the Red Deer Library has a 'Rediscover Green' program that might be helpful. Maureen will investigate next steps.

Action

- **Maureen to continue to work on Library Resource List.**

√ **Strome School Update**

Maureen stated that the Strome School is organizing a photo contest, with hopes to have things wrapped up before the end of the school year; Mike Allaway said he would be in touch as they confirm dates.

Roundtable/Watershed Event Update

Phil stated that the Water and the Willows event in Red Deer was a great evening with 60 people in attendance; great digital stories were presented and the meal and entertainment were also good. Kelsey provided a written update and thanked BRWA for its sponsorship; a dozen stories were shared, most from central alberta storytellers, and a few from the south - including a "live feed" introduction from Brad Bustard who was "heli skiing in France" courtesy of Michael Gerrand and Brad. BRWA was recognized verbally by MC, Gary Lewis, as well as in the poster. Feedback from storytellers and other agency folks (NSWA, ACA etc) has been positive.

Maureen stated that the WATSUP Conference in Calgary was well attended (approximately 240 participants) and provided a good forum for discussion on issues relating to water allocation.

Maureen and Phil stated they were unable to attend the recent ACEE Curriculum Review meeting in Edmonton.

Maureen said that Sustainability Network is planning an Alberta Water Learning Network for spring and fall 2009; a steering committee is currently looking for suitable locations with a retreat-style setting in the Edmonton-Calgary corridor. Two suggested venues include Battle Lake 4H Centre and Rundle's Mission.

Phil mentioned that the WaterEdWest Conference is being held in Banff in September; the committee discussed the March 31st call for presentation deadline and agreed it would be good if BRWA could prepare a submission. Maureen agreed to prepare one.

Action

- **Maureen to prepare presentation submission for WaterEdWest Conference**

Adjournment

Tim thanked committee members for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 2:45 pm.

Future Meeting Date

- **April 29th from 10 am – 2 pm: location/format TBD**