



2015 Watershed Festival
Miquelon Lake Provincial Park

BATTLE RIVER

WATERSHED ALLIANCE

2015 - 2016
ANNUAL
REPORT

Happy 10th Birthday



BATTLE RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

THE BRWA IS 10!
 Check out this special 10th anniversary edition of our annual report to see highlights of this year and acknowledge the people and actions that got us here.

We are the people who live, work and play in the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds. We are landowners, community members, business people, researchers, and decision makers. We are the people that will ensure a stable economy, healthy natural areas and resilient communities in this place that we love.

OUR VISION

By using sound knowledge, wisdom and wise actions, we ensure that the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds sustain abundant life, now and for future generations.

OUR MISSION

The BRWA provides relevant science, social science, policies and education for a diverse community of people to create solutions to our watershed's challenges.

OUR WORK

We accomplish our goals of connecting people to place for action in these four strategic areas:

Alliance Management	pages 1-4, 13
Watershed Management Planning	pages 5-6
Education and Outreach	pages 9-10
Stewardship	pages 11-12

WATER FOR LIFE STRATEGY

The work of the BRWA supports the Government of Alberta's *Water for Life* Strategy. Under this strategy, the BRWA is the designated Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds in Alberta. WPACs play a role in reporting on the state of the watershed, leading watershed planning, developing best management practices, supporting stewardship activities, and providing educational opportunities for watershed residents. Through this work, we support the achievement of *Water for Life's* three key goals:

1. Safe secure drinking water supply
2. Healthy aquatic ecosystems
3. Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy

OUR STAFF

The staff at the Battle River Watershed Alliance are a dedicated team, all bringing their talents and passions to the table to make our work come alive.

We have been lucky to have the same core team over the last five years, with the addition of a summer student.

Here is our BRWA 'yearbook', complete with a photo of the staff when they were 10 years old!

A special thanks to past staff (most recent to earliest):
 Erin Specht • Bettina Alder • Erin Murphy-Thompson
 Noemie Jenni • Maureen Lynch • Maurice Samm



Name:
David Maurice Samm

Position: *General Manager*

Date Started: *April 2007*

Which watershed did you live in when you were 10? *Assiniboine River/Red River*

Most likely to: *dream big*



Name:
Sheila Marie Logelin

Position: *Office Manager*

Date Started: *April 2009*



Which watershed did you live in when you were 10?
Chin Lakes/Oldman River

Most likely to: *be found at the hockey rink*



Name:
Susanna Èlène Bruneau

Position: *Research and Stewardship Coordinator*

Date Started: *October 2011*



Which watershed did you live in when you were 10?
Stoney Creek/Battle River

Most likely to: *guffaw*



Name:
Sarah Joan Skinner

Position: *Watershed Planning Coordinator*

Date Started: *February 2010*



Which watershed did you live in when you were 10?
Turtle River/North Saskatchewan River

Most likely to: *be playing music in her office*



Name:
Nathalie Kristin Olson

Position: *Education and Outreach Coordinator*

Date Started: *March 2011*



Which watershed did you live in when you were 10?
Island Lake/Credit River

Most likely to: *wear rubber boots to work*



BRWA BOARD MEMBERS

ACADEMIA

John Pattison
University of Alberta
Les Parsons
University of Alberta

AGRICULTURE

John Pearson
Landowner
Wayne Richardson
Landowner

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

Barb Bosh
ATCO Power

ENVIRONMENTAL NGO

Lorne Ferguson (Board Treasurer)
Friends of Little Beaver Lake Society
Diane Hanson
Alberta Rural Sustainable Alternatives Network

EX OFFICIO

Jamie Bruha
Alberta Environment and Parks
Jeremy Enarson
City of Camrose
Roy Louis
Samson Cree Nation

INDIVIDUAL

Hugh Sanders (Board Chair)
Midge Lambert (Board Vice-Chair)
Al Corbett

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Bruce Cummins
MD of Wainwright
Jordon Christianson
Special Areas 2

PROVINCIAL/FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Melissa Orr-Langner
Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

Shane Mascarin
Department of National Defense

PAST BOARD MEMBERS

We couldn't be where we are today without the help of our board members, past and present.

2006-2014 Board Members:

Darcy Allen	Ken Lewis
Malorie Aube	Tracy Scott
Wanda Baptiste	Doug Thrussell
Phil Boehme	Leonard Standing
Jeremy Enarson	on the Road
Carol Wilson	Abigail Witherspoon
Carol Wildcat	Jim Stevens
Norine Saddleback	Brenda Shantz
Wayne Ungstad	Tim Belec
George Poruchnek	Harley Louis
Doug Fletcher	Wayne Nixon
Blake Mills	Verna Phippen
Greg Nelson	Dug Major

SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

Business & Industry

2nd Floor Computers
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation
Agrium Inc.
Andrukow Group Solutions
ATCO Power
Battle River Implements
Bouma Meats
Bunge Canada
Cargill Canada
ConocoPhillips
Country Accent
Dalton Seed Farm: Pioneer Seed
EastAlta Co-op
Enbridge
Encana
Enerplus
Everest Trucking
Farm Credit Canada
Ireland Farm Equipment
Muldoon Trucking
Penn West Exploration
Populus Community Planning Inc.
Real Canadian Superstore
Stafford Plumbing
UFA

Government

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Alberta Environment and Parks
Beaver County
Camrose County
City of Camrose
City of Edmonton
City of Lacombe
County of Paintearth
County of Stettler
County of Vermilion River
County of Wetaskiwin
Department of National Defense

Government (continued)

Environment Canada
Flagstaff County
Lacombe County
MD of Provost
MD of Wainwright
Montana Tribal Administration
Ponoka County
Special Areas Board
Samson Cree Nation
Summer Village of Argentia Beach
Summer Village of Crystal Springs
Summer Village of Golden Days
Summer Village of Grandview
Summer Village of Poplar Bay
Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach
Summer Village of Norris Beach
Town of Hardisty
Town of Killam
Town of Ponoka
Town of Sedgewick
Town of Viking
Village of Alliance
Village of Bawlf
Village of Bittern Lake
Village of Botha
Village of Consort
Village of Donald
Village of Edberg
Village of Edgerton
Village of Ferintosh
Village of Forestburg
Village of Gadsby
Village of Halkirk
Village of Hay Lakes
Village of Loughheed
Village of Strome
Village of Paradise Valley

Individuals

Don & Marie Ruzicka

Individuals (continued)

Gaylene Halter
George Poruchnek
Hugh & Marg Sanders

Organizations

Alberta Beef Producers
Alberta Conservation Association
Alberta Council for Environment Education
Alberta Real Estate Foundation
Alberta Ecotrust
Alberta Lake Management Society
Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish)
Alberta Trappers' Association
Association for Life-Wide Living of Alberta
Augustana Campus, University of Alberta
Battle Lake Watershed Synergy Group
Camrose Arts Society
Camrose & District Horticultural Society
Camrose & District Support Services
Camrose Rotary Club
Camrose Open Door Association
Cargill Cares
Centre for Race and Culture
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Friends of Little Beaver Lake
Girl Guides Of Canada Wolf Willow District
Inside Education
Iron Creek Watershed Improvement Society
Land Stewardship Centre
Owl Link Media Corporation
Paintearth Economic Partnership Society
Prairie Mines & Royalty ULC.
Parkland Airshed Management Zone
Pigeon Lake Watershed Association
Ponoka Fish and Game Association
Red Deer River Watershed Alliance
North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance

WHAT OUR BOARD MEMBERS ARE SAYING

"I wish to thank our staff, board members and volunteers who have shared their knowledge and expertise. I am confident that as we move forward we can serve our communities well. I am thankful to be able to contribute to this stage in the long and ongoing life of the Battle River watershed in the name of my great grandparents and their offspring who have all benefited from these flowing waters and the land that surrounds them."

~ Hugh Sanders, Board Chair

"As a 'founding father' I am pleased and proud to have been a part of BRWA's start and most of its first decade of work. I have always loved the BRWA's inclusive and collaborative approach and miss my role a great deal. The BRWA has done a great job of translating science and theory to something that is relevant to the people who live in and manage our wonderful watershed. Why has it done such a great job? Because it knows the importance of connecting with and relating to people. Well done!"

~ Tracy Scott, Ducks Unlimited Canada

WHAT OUR PARTNERS ARE SAYING

"Camrose County totally supports the work of the BRWA. BRWA provides exceptional and common sense leadership in making all of us aware of our responsibility and the actions we can take to be stewards of our waterways."

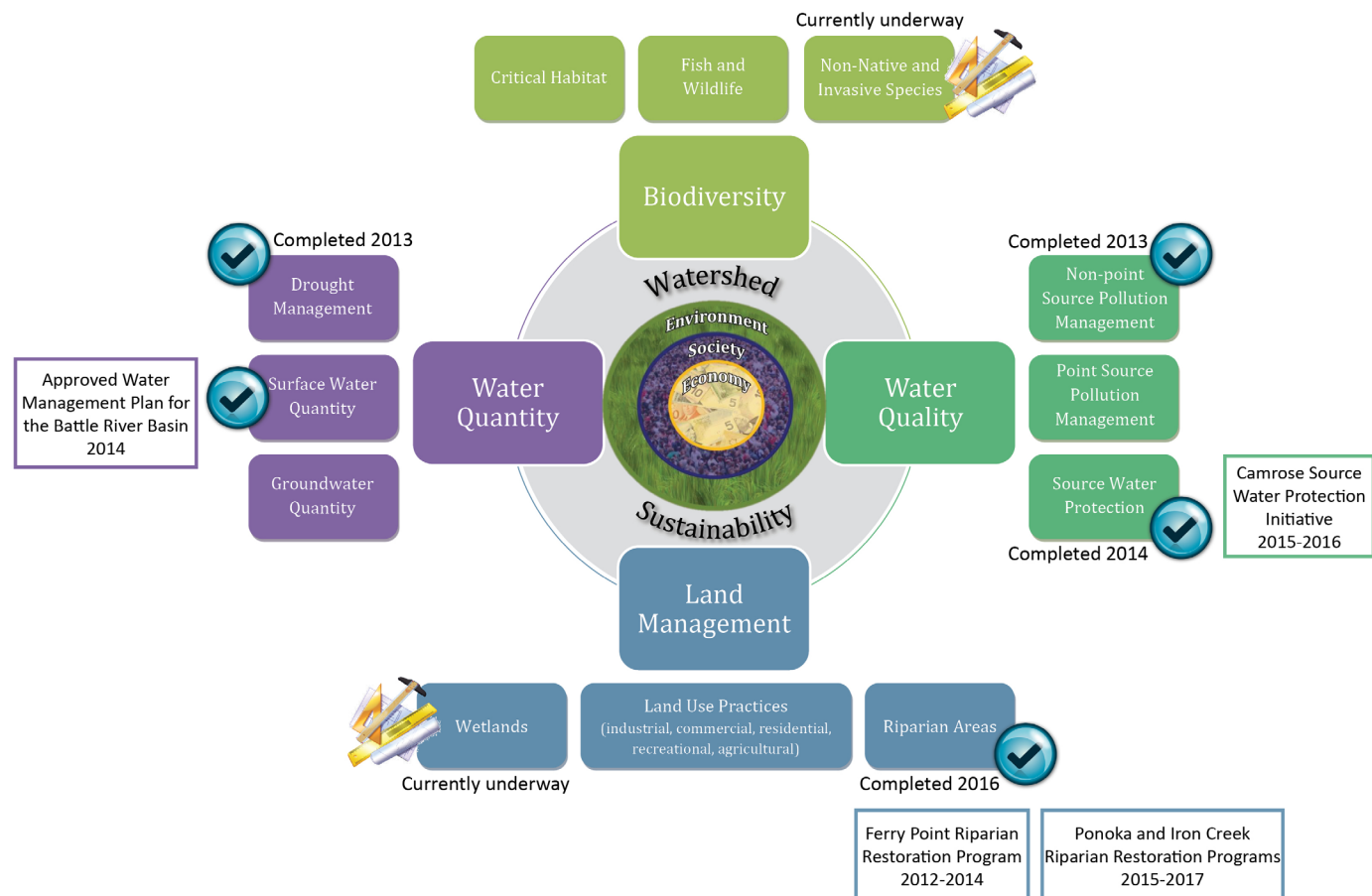
~ Don Gregorwich, Reeve Camrose County

"Our natural water sources are integral to support and sustain all communities, and they are facing increased pressure. Enbridge recognizes that the way we care for our water matters to everyone, and we take our responsibility to the environment seriously. We proudly partnered with the BRWA, to bring the X-Stream Science program to life. Together we're teaching science students in grades 7- 12 to be cognizant of how their decisions will impact the surrounding watershed. This is an experience they'll remember for years to come, and thanks to the BRWA's expertise our future generations will understand the significance of watersheds and how to conserve this resource." ~Lisa Seeley, Enbridge



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The diagram below displays the 12 components of the BRWA's Watershed Management Planning Process and the work completed to date. Each component includes a background research report, policy advice and implementation guidelines.



CAMROSE SOURCE WATER PROTECTION INITIATIVE

In Spring 2015, the Camrose Source Water Protection Initiative was launched as a joint effort between the City of Camrose and Camrose County. The goal of the initiative was to develop a Source Water Protection Plan for the Camrose region, which would outline actions to protect and improve water quality in the Battle River, its tributary streams, and Driedmeat Lake. A Stakeholder Advisory Committee consisting of City and County staff and residents was formed to support the development of the plan, and the BRWA provided coordination support throughout the planning process. The work of the committee involved undertaking a Source Water Risk Assessment to identify potential risks to surface water quality in the planning area. They then developed recommendations for management actions aimed at addressing those risks and improving local water quality. A draft plan has now been developed and will be presented to City and County councils for final approval in 2016.

PONOKA RIPARIAN RESTORATION PROGRAM

The goal of the Ponoka Riparian Restoration Program is to work with local landowners and provide financial support for projects that help improve the health of the Battle River and its tributary streams. The program was initiated in April 2015, and the launch event drew about 40 people from the Town of Ponoka, Ponoka County, and beyond. Valuable information was presented on the topics of riparian areas, riparian health assessments, and various techniques for off-stream livestock watering and riparian fencing solutions. A follow-up event was held on World Water Day in March 2016 to celebrate the successes of the program's first year and connect with more local landowners who were interested in taking concrete actions on their land to support the health of the Battle River. A number of projects were completed in 2015, including seven riparian health assessments and the installation of riparian fencing and off-stream livestock watering systems. More projects are lined up for 2016, including riparian health assessments and landowner projects.

WORK IN PROGRESS

WETLANDS

Management of wetlands is a complex issue. In light of the ongoing implementation of the Alberta Wetland Policy, the work being completed at the regional and municipal level is ever-changing. It is an issue that many watershed stakeholders and residents are paying attention to and incorporating into their work and life. At the March public meeting hosted by BRWA in Forestburg, we heard comments on our proposed wetland and riparian areas management guideline documents from many of our municipal partners, as well as from industry, ENGOS, non-profit groups, and residents.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Aquatic invasive species such as zebra and quagga mussels are a major concern in Alberta. The Government of Alberta has estimated costs of about \$75 million in annual losses if these mussels were to become established. Thankfully, they have not yet been found in lakes or rivers in the province. Education, monitoring and other preventative measures are key to ensuring our watershed remains free of invasive mussels. The BRWA is currently undertaking research and developing recommendations to guide us in taking action to manage aquatic and land-based invasive species in our watershed.

The BRWA's Riparian Areas Management background research report, policy advice and implementation guidelines are complete!



10 YEARS OF CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACE FOR ACTION

A TIMELINE OF THE BRWA

2006

The Battle River Watershed Alliance (BRWA) was incorporated as a non-profit society.



2008 Ready for take off: the Aerial Videography project of the Battle River began.

2010

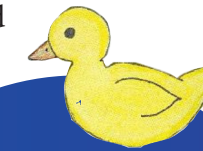
Education and Outreach programs expanded with the first:

- Annual Battle River Watershed Festival
- Alberta Saskatoon Pie Baking Competition
- Spirit of the Watershed Art Workshop
- Photovoice: Stewardship at Shutter Speed



2012

The inaugural OTIS Award recognized local citizens for their outstanding stewardship.



2012

Ferry Point Riparian Restoration Program was launched. Staff and community members traveled by bicycle 550km across the watershed in the Rolling down the River Bike Tour.



Minister of Environment Rob Renner designated BRWA as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the Battle River and Sounding Creek Watersheds.

2007

Battle River Index of Biological Integrity study found that the river had a score of 42%, meaning the river has levels of poor fishing/species of concern and levels of no fishing/species at risk.



2009

Work on "Our Battle" State of the Watershed Report was initiated.



2011

"Our Battle" State of the Watershed Report was completed!

The BRWA started its watershed management planning work.



2013

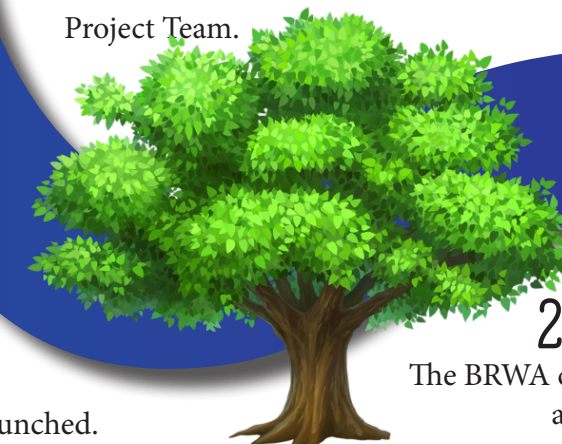
The second of four Battle River First Nations Water Ceremonies was held along the Battle River near Maskwacis.



2014

The Government of Alberta approved the Water Management Plan for the Battle River Basin.

BRWA staff worked with the Alberta Water Council Water Literacy Project Team.



2016

The BRWA celebrated its 10 year anniversary!



2009 **CARING FOR OUR Watersheds™**

BRWA became regional coordinator for Agrium's Caring for our Watersheds Contest



2015

Ponoka Riparian Restoration Program was launched.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

COMMUNITY EVENTS

BATTLE RIVER WATER CEREMONY

On the banks of the Battle River near Maskwacis, the fourth of four traditional Cree ceremonies took place on June 6, 2015. A ceremonial blessing of the water, potluck lunch, speakers, Cree dancers, blanket ceremony and give-away were shared and enjoyed amongst neighbours and the community. We would like to recognize Roy and Judy Louis, who envisioned the four-year ceremony and led its organization. The event could not have happened without the support of many sponsors and organizations such as the Alberta Association for Life-Wide Living. For our neighbours, and the water, we offer our thanks.



THE ALBERTA SASKATOON PIE BAKING COMPETITION

Nothing speaks of the joys of summer better than a homemade Saskatoon pie! Our annual pie baking competition saw 17 pie bakers bring their flakey creations to the Camrose & District Farmers Market on July 25, 2015. While each pie was delicious, the judges selected Elaine Hook to be the 2015 Pie Baking Champion. The public also got to taste the pies and vote for the People's Choice award, which was awarded to Anna Harder. We hope that the taste of these pies encouraged more watershed residents to grab a basket, find a saskatoon patch and enjoy the fruits of our watershed!



BATTLE RIVER WATERSHED FESTIVAL

Miquelon Lake Provincial Park, on the very northern tip of our watershed, was the perfect place to host our sixth annual festival. The warm August day meant there were many park visitors who celebrated our watershed with us. With so much to do including kids crafts and games, outdoor yoga, geocaching, bug dipping and tours of the new Augustana Miquelon Lake Research Station, no festival-goer left without a smile! Especially if they were there for our wiener roast and Saskatoon pie lunch!



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CARING FOR OUR WATERSHEDS

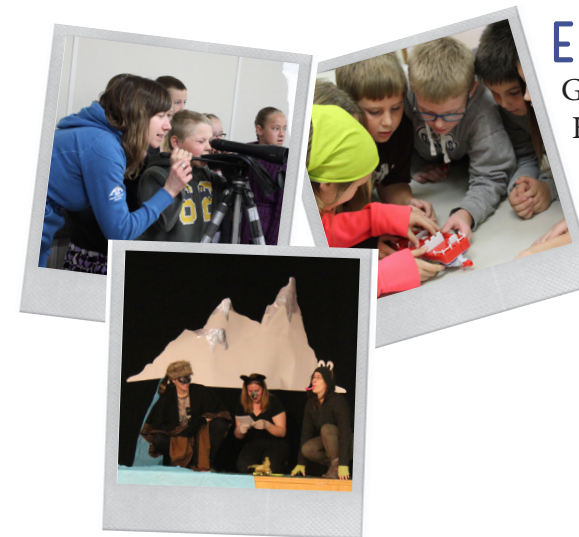
The 2015 Central Alberta Caring for our Watersheds program was a record breaking year with over 150 proposals submitted by almost 300 students. These 1000-word proposals shared ideas on what the students, in grades 7-12, could do to help improve their watershed. Ten groups (who were all female!) were selected to attend the final competition where they presented their ideas in a five-minute presentation. The ideas ranged from erosion prevention along the Battle River, to reducing paper waste in a Fort McMurray school, to supporting native pollinators by sending native flower seeds to grade 7 students across the watershed. Learn more about some of the projects that have been implemented on page 11.



EXPLORE MORE

Grade 4-6 students had twice as many chances to Explore More in 2015! Hosted in Killam in April and in Ponoka in November, almost 400 watershed students participated in this very popular environmental education event. Throughout the day, students cycled through stations hosted by guest experts from:

- Agroforestry & Woodlot Extension Society
- Cows and Fish
- Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
- Alberta Conservation Association
- Alberta Lake Management Society
- Red Deer River Watershed Alliance
- Nature Alberta - Nature Kids
- Inside Education



Thank you to the sponsors: Town of Ponoka, Ponoka County, Flagstaff County, and the Killam and Sedgewick Agricultural Societies.

DISCOVER YOUR WETLAND

BRWA staff visit wetlands across the watershed with grade 5 students every spring. With direct ties to the grade 5 Wetland Ecosystems unit, teachers and students love the field trip and our attention to teaching about the life cycles of wetland plants and animals and the benefits of wetlands. It is also fun to be able to get to know a wetland, hands-on!



All of our school programs are offered at no cost to schools, thanks to our sponsors (see page 4).

STEWARDSHIP

X-STREAM SCIENCE

Inquiry-based learning opportunity to connect students and stewards to their watershed through real world science.

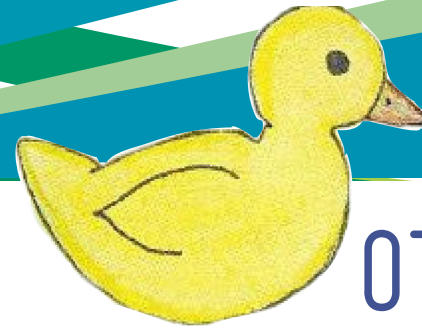
It's Experiential

Students and stewards get outside to participate in hands-on, scientific inquiry by collecting biological, chemical and physical data on the water and surrounding land. Content is curriculum-connected and place-based.

Designed for watershed stewardship groups and students in grades 7-12, X-Stream Science aims to have groups commit to sampling the same location every year to allow quality long-term data to be collected.

It's Stewardship

Water quality, quantity and land use data is collected, analyzed and stored to be monitored and compared over time. This data will help students, stewards and decision makers make informed choices to help maintain a healthy watershed.



OTIS AWARD

For people who are **OutsTanding In Stewardship!**

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY: ROY AND JUDY LOUIS



Roy and Judy Louis are members of the Samson Cree Nation. Roy and Judy's dream was to host the Battle River Water Ceremony for four years. Their dream was realized in 2015 when, after four years, the Bend in the River water ceremony was completed. It represents an act of incredible cultural stewardship demonstrating how water, earth, and sky are connected.

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION CATEGORY: BLUE DOT CAMROSE



Blue Dot Camrose is made up of citizens who believe in our inherent right to a healthy environment – clean water, fresh air, healthy food and a say in decisions that affect us. The group worked with Camrose City Council to see a declaration of environmental rights adopted. City Council accepted the declaration on October 5, 2015. The group and council will build on local initiatives to foster our connection to place and ensure a healthy environment in Camrose and Canada for this generation and those to come.

YOUTH CATEGORY: MINA SHIN AND BROOKLYN GREEN



Avid golfers, Mina and Brooklyn from Ponoka were worried about what effects pesticides sprayed on the golf course could have on their watershed. As part of their Caring for our Watersheds project proposal, they researched the effects of pesticides and solutions to reduce them. They found that birds are natural insecticides, eating many of the pesky insects that golfers dislike. With help from local businesses and family, Mina and Brooklyn built 75 bird houses to put up at two local golf courses to encourage the natural reduction of unwanted insects. The golf courses were happy to be involved and support

these young stewards. Mina and Brooklyn are excited to see their ideas in action and look forward to enjoying a round of golf with more beautiful birds on the course, and less pesticides in their watershed.

CARING FOR OUR Watersheds™ IDEAS IN ACTION

Students from around the world are making positive ripples in their environment through the Caring for our Watersheds program. Offered in 12 contest areas, including five Canadian provinces, American states, Argentina and Australia, our local students are part of something much bigger. Every year, students in grades 7-12 from our Central Alberta region (which includes everything north of Calgary) answer the question "What can I do to help improve my watershed?" And every year, many students do. Two 2015 CFW projects that have been put into action are:

Pollinators for the Watershed

Leah Marshall from Bawlf wanted to give grade 7 students across the watershed a chance to help local pollinators. With a lot of initiative and a little help, she sent out 500 native seed packages! Pockets of pollinator gardens are now popping up around the watershed!

Get a Tweet on This Read about it on the OTIS Award page.



LOOKING DOWN RIVER

*“Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress.
Working hard for something we love is called passion.” ~Simon Sinek*

In the next year we look forward to working hard with our great partners to create more passion for this place where we work, live, and play. We also look forward to gaining new partners who want to act collaboratively with us to promote watershed health and resiliency.

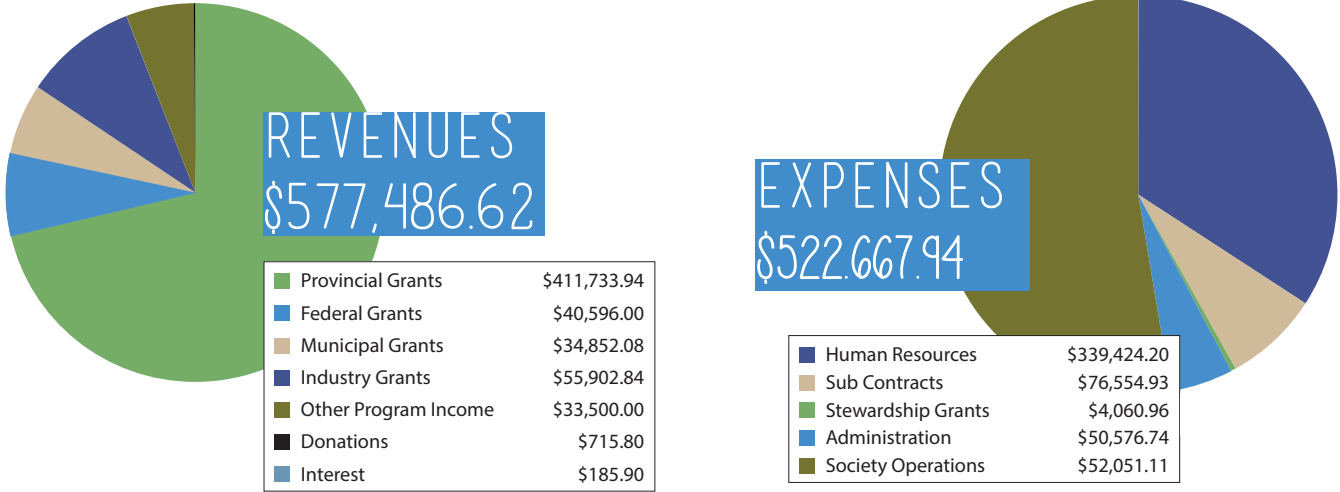
We will continue to build our shared community vision of what we want this watershed to be and we will provide evidence-based watershed research documents to partners who can implement changes to improve the watershed for future generations.

We promise to keep you informed and to provide our members with balanced and objective information. We will consult with you, involve you, and collaborate with you in order to empower our members to make the final decisions important to the watershed. Then we will help implement what our members decide.

We will continue to make every effort to work within the framework provided by Alberta’s Water for Life Strategy because the quality of life within the Battle River watershed is dependent, in part, upon the health and sustainability of our water resources. We will continue to need water for population growth, industrial development and ecological requirements, and all this means we place extreme demands on the watershed’s limited water supply. The continued demands on water challenge people to recognize that the watershed has a limited capacity to support the ecological integrity, social and economic needs of the community. In our work we will continue to do our best to balance these needs to better ensure the long-term health of the watershed.

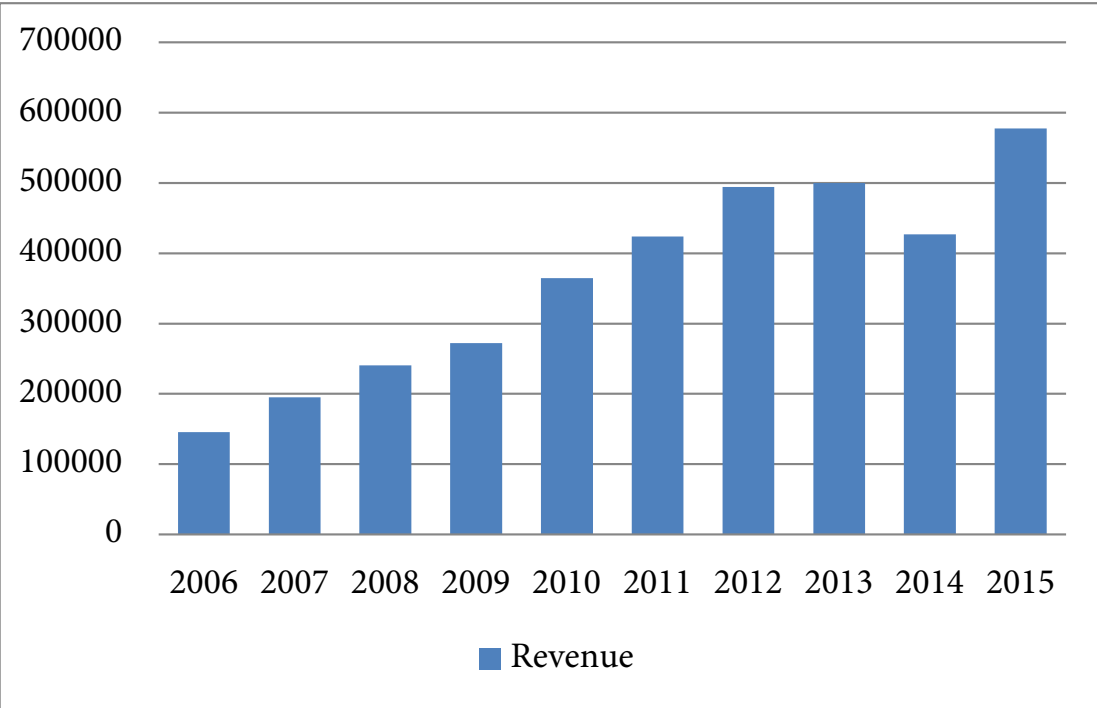
~David Samm, BRWA General Manager

2015 - 2016 FINANCIALS



Members who want a complete audited financial statement for the Battle River Watershed Alliance are asked to contact Sheila Logelin at 780-672-0276. You may also visit the BRWA website at www.battleriverwatershed.ca/publications.

10 YEAR PROGRESS, BUDGET GROWTH



BATTLE RIVER

WATERSHED ALLIANCE

KEEP IN TOUCH!

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NIYAH PIMATSIMOHWIN (I AM LIFE)

“Water is LIFE. When the elements were introducing themselves to man they all came forward to introduce themselves, and when Water (NiPi) came to introduce herself she said “Niyah Pimatsimohwin, I am Life” and indeed it is so true. Western Science and Indigenous Science are one when they talk about water as Water is Life. Without water we cannot exist or thrive. It is an integral part of being human. Whether you are brown, white, black, or red we all need water and we all need to be stewards of the land, air, and water. They are one and without each element we cannot have life. So let’s continue to work together to share our stories, our sciences, and work towards a healthy, prosperous watershed which will continue to give us LIFE.”

Carol B. Wildcat (AskiwKowpista), Ermineskin Cree Nation, former BRWA board member