

September 2006

Alliance celebrates its one year anniversary in style

Marking its first anniversary, the Alliance held an Open House on September 22. During the celebration, Roger Ramcharita, Senior Manager with Alberta Environment, presented a cheque to the Alliance for \$120,000 on behalf of Environment Minister Guy Boutilier.

“The funding from Alberta Environment will go a long way to allowing the alliance to conduct its core business,” notes manager Beverly Anderson. “The next step in our work will be a fundraising campaign to secure dollars for several upcoming projects,” notes Anderson.

Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer brought greeting on behalf of the City of Red Deer. The City of Red Deer, along with several other municipalities, has made an important financial contribution to the Alliances. The funding has already been put to good use.

“With the hiring of our new Manager on May 1st, activities have really got off the ground,” notes Douglas Thrussell, a member of the Board of Directors and Planner for Alberta Environment. “Beverly has done a tremendous job already. In addition to securing office space for the Alliance, she has already developed a website and newsletter,” says Thrussell.

The next big project on the Alliance’s work slate is the completion of a Watershed Atlas which will provide important baseline information for the State of the Watershed report, Watershed Users Guide and Stewardship Toolkit.



“funding from Alberta Environment will go a long way to allowing the alliance to conduct its core business”

Photo Credit: Bill Shaw

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Definition:

“reach” verb

1. to stretch out or put forth; extend; reached out an arm
2. to succeed in getting in contact with or communicating with people

“reach” noun

1. the stretch of water visible between bends in a river or channel
2. range of scope or influence



Supporting Alberta's Water for Life Strategy

The "Alberta Advantage" combined with a changing environment is placing large demands and pressures on the province's water and watershed resources. A major shift in government approach to managing these renewable, but finite, resources is required. In response, the Government of Alberta initiated "*Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability.*"

The Water for Life strategy embraces the philosophy of shared responsibility and an Integrated Watershed Management Process. The strategy sets out a number of environmental outcomes and actions that will be achieved through successful partnerships. Locally based *Watershed Stewardship Groups*, regionally based *Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils* and the provincially based *Alberta Water Council* are sharing responsibility for identifying solutions to place based watershed issues in Alberta.

As a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council, the mandate of the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance works to contribute to the strategies, goals and areas of focus set out in the Water for Life strategy. The Alliance accomplishes its mandate by engaging governments, stakeholders and other partnerships in activities that include state of the watershed reporting, integrated watershed management planning, watershed monitoring, education and awareness. Most recently, Water Conservation Objectives for the Red Deer River Basin were established as part of the *South Saskatchewan Basin Water Management Plan*.

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance also works collaboratively with the Alberta Water Council and local Watershed Stewardship Groups. By maintaining on-going contact with other advisory councils, including a monthly conference call and bi-annual summit, the Alliance is able to maintain strong connections to work taking place throughout the Province. These forums allow established and proposed advisory councils to identify common challenges and opportunities that will help build success.

A full listing of the RDRWA current and planned activities is described on our website at www.rdrwa.ca.

Submitted by:

*Blake Mills and Greg Nelson
Alberta Environment*



"The strategy sets out a number of environmental outcomes and actions that will be achieved through successful partnerships."

Photo credit: Glenn Gustafson



Alberta Stewardship Network Offers Support to Stewards

The Alberta Stewardship Network (ASN) supports the tremendous effort of citizens who care for our air, land, water, and biodiversity. Their mission is to *provide stewards with a network that facilitates information exchange, provides support, and recognizes contributions of individuals, communities and organizations in advancing stewardship on a watershed basis.*

Past and ongoing projects of the ASN include the Directory of Watershed Stewardship, Stewards in Motion workshops, and the new Stewardship Showcase project, which is compiling profiles of successful stewardship projects into a handy

reference guide for other groups.

The ASN also administers a grant program with funds made possible by Alberta Environment under the *Water for Life Strategy*. The next deadline for applications for funds is October 16, 2006.

The ASN's toll-free information line, 1-877-7-ASK-ASN (1 877-727-5276) is an invaluable "one-stop shop" for those with any stewardship questions. People can phone for information on such things as starting a stewardship group, funding resources, joining existing stewardship groups, and for referrals to other organizations or agencies that spe-

cialize in particular environmental issues. Our website is also a helpful resource for accessing this same information, with the additional capabilities of chatting with other stewards on the steward's forum, searching the various databases (organizations, publications, web links, funders), using the interactive mapping tools, and accessing a tool for stewardship groups to build their own web pages.

Submitted by:

*Margaret Glasford
ASN Chair*



The next deadline for funding through the ASN is October 16, 2006. Visit their website: www.ab.stewardshipcanada.ca

Calling all kids...

Does your school have a project that people living within the Red Deer River Watershed should know about?

We will be asking school groups to submit poems, stories, pictures and anything else that you think highlights the section of the Red Deer River Watershed that you call home.

Here's how it works ... give us a call, send an email, or write a letter describing your project or idea. We'll be sure to include it in the edition that focuses on your section of the watershed. Stay tuned!

Not sure you have a project that is suitable? Not to worry, we'll be canvassing schools and community

groups throughout the watershed to find out more about your project.

Stay tuned!



View from the Board ...

Welcome from the Chair

It is with great excitement that we bring to you the first newsletter of the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance. We are hoping to “reach out” to all our stakeholders and encourage your involvement in taking a strong role in watershed management. In following with our mission statement, we are “an inclusive, collaborative partnership that promotes a healthy watershed”. We do want to ensure that the watershed will be healthy, dynamic and sustainable through the efforts of the entire community, meaning participation by everyone! Please contact our office to see how you can be involved. We want and need your support.

Submitted by:

Earl Graham
Chair—RDRWA



The Board of Directors meets once a month to discuss key issues and set direction for the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance.

Photo Credit: Glenn Gustafson

Coming to a reach near you...

REACH OUT, the newsletter of the Red Deer river Watershed Alliance, will be published four times per year. Each edition will one of four different reaches of the River and watershed.

December's issue will feature the headwaters—the *icy cold* portion of the river—where it all begins in the mountains of Banff National Park, following it until Sundre, Alberta.

The March edition will feature the section of the Red Deer River that flows above Dickson Dam to the City of Red Deer.

June's edition will highlight the area south of the City of Red Deer to Drumheller.

And the September edition will wind-up the coverage with the most easterly “reach”.