

Central Edition — City of Red Deer to Drumheller

## CANOE TRIP AND RIVER TALK



beautiful and the sunny, calm conditions were ideal for the trip (other than a few splashes from a couple squirt gun bandits).

The excursion ended with a barbeque and river talk presented by Kevin Wingert, which included a discussion on the history and ecology of the Red Deer River. Kevin said the Red Deer River was traditionally used for transporting local resources and fur trading. Coal and red shale for example have been mined from the banks of the river and transported throughout the region. The red shale is a remnant of the coal that has burned naturally



underground without the presence of oxygen. Smoke can still be seen coming from burning coal seams underground along the river banks.

Everyone said they had a great time canoeing, eating, laughing and learning. Many thanks Dale Christian, Jolene Burge, Jim and Sandy Martin and the rest of the RDRWA Communication and Education committee for organizing and hosting this event. Until next time - Bon Voyage!



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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

Red Deer River Watershed Alliance— **INFORMATION MEETING**  
**November 25, 2009**

*“Looking at the big picture and planning our future!”*

Check Our Website for More Information to Come  
[www.rdrwa.ca](http://www.rdrwa.ca)

To Register Call 403-340-7379 (\$10 registration fee)



## THE RDRWA's FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, the RDRWA held its fourth Annual General Meeting, at the Harvest Centre of Westerner Park in Red Deer, AB. Board of Directors Chair Earl Graham and Executive Director Beverly Anderson greeted a crowd of approximately 50 people.

After a welcoming introduction and a discussion on a potential bylaw amendment, Beverly Anderson summarized the past year's achievements, such as the State of the Watershed (SoW) report, and highlighted some new initiatives, such as the Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP).

Paul Goranson, the Board of Directors' Treasurer, presented the financial report and the budget. The 2009 Board of Directors Nomination Committee members Doug Sawyer and Dale Christian, next headed the election process. Nominees had their biographies read; then secret ballots cast their fate. (The new Board of Directors members are listed on page 4 of the newsletter.)

Supporters and contributors were formally recognized by Graham and Anderson, who awarded partners (who ranged from industries, to individuals, to counties and municipalities) with a certificate of appreciation. Shortly after, Dale Christian, Chair of the Communication-Education committee announced the winner of the Committee's photo contest: Glenn Mainland. He went home with accolades and a RDRWA gift bag.

Additionally three RDRWA members were given special acknowledgements for their time served on the Board. Jim Martin, having been the Operating Manager of the Dickson Dam with Alberta Environment (AENV), brought a wealth of experience to the Alliance. Greg Nelson represented AENV; he sat on the Communication-Education Committee and was instrumental in helping the Alliance request funding from the provincial department. Finally RDRWA's founder, Bill Shaw — a leader that helped form the non-profit society and get designation as the region's Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC)—was recognized.

Every year the RDRWA also tries to recognize at least one Board member who goes beyond the expectations of a Director. This year, that member was Tracy Scott (of Ducks Unlimited Canada). Despite being a part of several other WPAC's across Alberta he donated numerous hours and incredible leadership as Chair for the SoW project.

All four recipients demonstrated an incredible commitment to watershed management.

The Westerner Park staff catered the lunch for the AGM guests.

Presentations followed lunch. Andy Lamb from AENV presented on the department's activities in the Central region. Jay White, of Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd., and Tracy Scott gave a presentation on the SoW. Anderson followed with a discussion on the steps to come: the creation of an IWMP. Still in its early phases, Anderson invited suggestions and insight to be considered while working on the IWMP.

Graham was back at the podium for one last time to thank everybody and officially close another successful AGM.



Above: The RDRWA fills the Harvest Centre at Westerner Park.

Bottom left: Bill Shaw accepts his appreciation award from RDRWA chair Earl Graham.

Bottom right: Jim Martin receives his award from Earl Graham.

## PINE LAKE WETLAND TOUR

On June 11 the RDRWA hosted the Pine Lake Wetland Tour, in association with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Under the crisp sun of a June afternoon, 15 tourists left the Pine Lake Agriculture Society's hub to explore a nearby DUC wetland restoration project: the Vincent project.

Darwin Chambers and Tracy Scott led the expedition. Chambers used aerial photos and a summary of the work plan to explain how the restoration would take place, its impacts (before and after) and the benefits of a healthy wetland, not only in Pine Lake, but anywhere else in the world.

After another romp through the parched grassland of our host, Mr. Vincent's rangeland, Chambers profiled yet another wetland. Here, Alberta Environment's Phil Boehme led the group through an exercise on how to assess the health of wetlands using the Cows & Fish - Riparian Health Checklist.

The tour concluded back at the Pine Lake hub, where DUC and NCC hosted a free BBQ, which attracted local landowners and partners, doubling to tripling the numbers of the tour group.

After a fulfilling meal Jolene Burge and Andy Whitman of the RDRWA presented on the Alliance and its findings for the Three Hills subwatershed in its SoW Report. Jay White of Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd ended with a presentation on the Pine Lake Restoration Society's hypolimnetic withdrawal project.



*Darwin Chambers of DUC explains the Vincent Project's wetland restoration to an interested audience.*



*Leo the Leopard Frog picks a door-prize winner at the Sylvan Lake Environmental Expo.*

## RDRWA SUMMER STUDENTS ON THE ROAD & BACK TO SCHOOL

The RDRWA's summer students, Jolene Burge of the University of Lethbridge, and Andy Whitman of Lakeland College, visited a number of farmer's markets and fairs this summer to raise awareness about watershed consciousness and the Alliance.

The first event this summer was the Sylvan Lake Environmental Expo, the town's first expo of its kind. It was a rainy day (rainy enough to see an appearance from Leo the Leopard Frog), but inside the tent environmental organizations from across Alberta brought hope to Sylvanites. Next to the RDRWA booth, the One Simple Act team (from Alberta Environment) echoed the stewardship ethic of the RDRWA with its call to Albertans to take up one seemingly small thing that would benefit the environment. No one was exempt from their mandate—AENV workers and even the RDRWA crew signed up for at least one environmentally-friendly action. This event

was a microcosm of the environment: all the different facets, which seem separate, intricately connected and dependent on one another.

The day after, the RDRWA was set up in a train station in downtown Didsbury. The space was small, but the visitors were exposed to a high volume of affirmative environmental actions. There was a used goods exchange, a free plant exchange and fair trade goods.

A week later the RDRWA was at Kiwanis Park in Red Deer, at the first annual Eco-Wellness Fair. Here, earth and health-conscious citizens could mingle with herbiologists and yoga instructors, join a drumming circle, buy organic pet food and eat organic free-range meat. The RDRWA setup was right beside new-ageists who read peoples' "vibes" with an esoteric instrument. The divide between obscurity (such as quantum holograms and inter-dimensional voy-

ages) and clarity (such as scientifically-backed facts about watershed health) had never been clearer, but the two coincided in the harmony of understanding and openness—the sign of success to the organizers of the fair.

On Canada Day the RDRWA team found themselves under the tail of the world's biggest dinosaur in Drumheller, spreading the word.

Apart from these events, the RDRWA also had the opportunity to visit Ponoka, Lacombe, Sylvan Lake, Red Deer, Blackfalds and Sundre's farmer's markets.

The RDRWA would like to thank Jolene and Andy for their excellent work this summer and wishes them best of luck in their studies! Hopefully they will be able to come back to share their new knowledge and skills with the Alliance again in the future.



## YOUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your new Board of Directors, as of June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009, are as follows:

### Environment and Stewardship

**Dale Christian**, Butte Action Committee (VICE CHAIR)

**Kevin Wingert**, Alberta Fish & Game Association

**Tracy Scott**, Ducks Unlimited Canada

### Municipal Government

**Earl Graham**, Clearwater County

**Paul Goranson**, City of Red Deer

**Dug Major**, Special Areas Board

### First Nations

**Bryce Starlight**, Treaty No. 7

**Norine Saddleback**, First Nations

### Agriculture / Business / Industry

**Tom Daniels**, Sundre Forest Products (CHAIR)

**Doug Sawyer**, Alberta Beef Producers

**Craig DeCoursey**, Apache Canada Ltd. (TREASURER)

### Provincial / Federal / Academia

**David Johnson**, Olds College

**Andrea Pagee**, Alberta Environment

**Jamie Wuite**, Alberta Agric and Rural Dev't

### Members at Large

**Ken Van Dewark**, Individual

**Vic Walls**, Individual

## Red Deer River Natural Area to be Protected July 3, 2009

<http://www.reddeerregion.com/news0907b.tm#Protected>

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is working towards conserving 1.2 million acres of land east of Red Deer, known as the Red Deer River Natural Area, stretching from north of Bashaw around Buffalo Lake to west of Delburne to south of the Rumsey Ecological Reserve and Natural Area located south of Big Valley and east of Trochu. It is considered important because of its productive wetlands, which is the habitat of several species of migratory birds including the Piping Plover a species at risk, its unique ecosystem and its source of biodiversity. The area is considered one of the most productive wetlands in North America and the best native parkland in Western Canada. The environmental stewardship project is made possible by a \$2.4 million donation by the TransCanada Corp., partnering with the conservancy and governments to leverage grants totaling \$11.4 million for Alberta and Saskatchewan of which \$5 million is expected to be invested in the Red Deer River Natural Area project.

## Upcoming Events

**September 9, RDRWA Red Deer Waste Water Treatment Plant Tour** (1:30pm) - Located at the east end of Riverside Drive in Red Deer. Please register with the RDRWA at 403-340-7379 or email: [info@rdrwa.ca](mailto:info@rdrwa.ca) before Sept. 4.

**September 10-13, WaterEDWest Conference , The Banff Centre** - This first-ever conference dedicated to water education in western Canada will be an exciting venue for networking and sharing successes and challenges in both public and formal (K-12 and post-secondary) water education. For more information go online to [www.waterEDwest.ca](http://www.waterEDwest.ca)

**September 20, Red Deer River and the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup.** For more details contact Suzanne Jubb with the City of Red Deer, Recreation, Parks and Culture, 403-309-8409, [suzanne.jubb@redder.ca](mailto:suzanne.jubb@redder.ca)

**September 29 – October 1, River Rally 2009 , Devon, AB** - River Rally 2009 is a capacity building workshop for citizens working to protect watersheds in Alberta. There will be a variety of sessions to help groups communicate effectively, raise money, leverage more resources, and engage citizens. For details go online to [www.albertaecotruster.com/capacity/events](http://www.albertaecotruster.com/capacity/events)

**November 25—RDRWA General Meeting—Information meeting on Looking at the Big Picture and Planning for the Future.**