



# RED DEER RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

## ANNUAL REPORT 2007 / 2008

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## Message from the Chair

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance has had another very productive year, and we look forward to continuing our work together with our members and stakeholders to promote the importance of watershed management.

I would like to thank the Executive Director, Beverly for her past year's work and the projects that have come to fruition because of her dedication and knowledge. She has attended many events on behalf of the Alliance and has coordinated many of our committees and projects. We also welcome our new staff, Donna and Andrea and truly appreciate their work and commitment.

The RDRWA would like to thank those organizations for allowing their staff to participate on our Board of Directors. The RDRWA gratefully acknowledges the value of our Board members' time. The success of our organization is directly related to the time these individuals commit to the RDRWA mission and the expertise and dedication they bring to the RDRWA. Even though they have other jobs, they volunteer their time to the Alliance, which is very much appreciated.

Thanks also goes to our supporters, the participating municipalities and the Government of Alberta for the funding that has generously been given. We look forward to their continued support and we are working towards having industry more involved in the Alliance and on the Board. Our key project for the upcoming year is completing our State of the Watershed Report. We encourage those in the watershed to actively participate.



**Earl Graham, Chair**

## Message from the Executive Director

This year we have made huge steps in raising the profile of the RDRWA and have greatly increased the programs and projects required to meet our mandate. Over the last 2 years we have increased our membership by 94%. We have initiated our State of the Watershed report and are actively involving stakeholders within the Red Deer River watershed community. The landowners and residents of the watershed are extremely important to the success of this project. We have worked hard to ensure that municipalities, as our key partner in the Alliance, are well informed and involved with the activities taking place within the watershed. We are also making a focused effort to get industry as partners on our projects.

We recognize and appreciate the efforts of the Watershed Stewardship Groups within the watershed, and the importance that they play as partners in implementing the Water For Life Strategy. To meet the expectations of our membership in undertaking the many programs and projects, we have hired a Program Coordinator, Donna Trottier and an Office Administrator, Andrea Simpson. Their skills and knowledge will be put to good use for the Alliance.

Special thanks goes to our Board of Directors, who donate their time and expertise to the activities of the Alliance. Their help and support is greatly appreciated!



**Beverly Anderson, BES, MBA-PM**

## Red Deer River Watershed Alliance

In response to the Province's *Water for Life Strategy* and a grassroots recognition of a need for a partnership of interests to promote, achieve and maintain a healthier Red Deer River watershed far into the future, the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance (RDRWA) was formed on June 15, 2005 and incorporated as a Not-for-Profit organization on August 25, 2005. On September 9, 2005, Alberta Environment designated the Alliance as being the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the Red Deer River.

The Alliance gratefully acknowledges the support of the local municipalities within the watershed, the Alberta Government as part of the Water For Life strategy, and the many organizations and industries that provide financial support. Their partnership is critical to the delivery our programs and projects.

Interest in the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance is growing. Membership has increased by 40% over the last year. More and more stakeholders are learning about the Alliance and seeking to become involved and take action to promote a healthy, sustainable watershed.



## RDRWA Board of Directors 2006/2007

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Chair	Earl Graham	Clearwater County
Vice	Dug Major	Special Areas
Treasurer	Paul Goranson	City of Red Deer
*****		
Director	Dr. Abimbola Abiola	Olds College
Director	Richard Bennett	Member-at-Large
Director	Dale Christian	Butte Action Committee
Director	Tom Daniels	Sundre Forest Products
Director	Jim Martin	Dickson Fish & Game Club
Director	Doug Sawyer	Alberta Beef Producers
Director	Tracy Scott	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Director	Bill Shaw	Member-at-Large
Director	Philip Simpson	Samson Cree Nation
Director	Jack Swainson	Alberta Conservation Tillage Society
Director	Douglas Thrussell	Alberta Environment
Director	James Wuite	Alberta Agriculture & Food

## Board of Directors

All RDRWA declared members are welcome to run for a position on the Board of Directors at the RDRWA's Annual General Meeting normally held in June of each year. The RDRWA Board held 9 meetings during the 2007/08.



The Board of Directors consists of sixteen (16) Directors and the Past Chairman, as follows:

- (a) a maximum of three (3) members from the Environmental category;
- (b) a maximum of three (3) members from the Agriculture and Business/ Industry category;
- (c) a maximum of three (3) members from the Municipal Government category;
- (d) a maximum three (3) members from the Provincial, Federal and Academia category;
- (e) a maximum of two (2) members from the First Nation category (Treaty 6 and Treaty 7);
- (f) a maximum of two (2) members from the Individual (Member-at-large) category; and the Past Chairman, who shall be an ex-officio member.

## RDRWA Membership

The future successes of the Alliance will multiply significantly as participation in the Alliance grows. More involved people will promote a better understanding of the watershed, including the variety of needs for land and water use. Cooperative efforts will lead to consensus building and more meaningful watershed management, resulting in greater care for the watershed. Greater care will result in enhanced environmental quality and sustainable economic opportunities, thus serving to enhance the quality of life within the watershed.

This year the RDRWA has increased its membership by 40%. We now have 218 members. These members represent municipalities, industry, First Nations, provincial government, the environmental sector, tourism sector, stewardship groups, interested individuals, and other stakeholders.

### WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED

Everyone, including:

- Residents / general public
- Agricultural groups and producers
- First Nations
- Local Stewardship Groups
- Tourism Operators & Tourists
- Forestry companies
- Oil, gas & petrochemical companies
- Other industries & businesses
- Utility companies
- Educational institutions
- Municipalities—rural & urban
- Provincial & Federal government
- Anyone who works, resides or plays in the watershed

## Vision Statement

The Red Deer River watershed will be healthy, dynamic and sustainable through the efforts of the *entire community*.

## Mission Statement

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance is an inclusive, collaborative partnership that promotes a healthy watershed to ensure a legacy of ecological integrity and economic sustainability.

## Organization Goals

RDRWA goals are:

1. To provide an inclusive forum for the exchange of information and collaborative dialogue for watershed protection, conservation and improvement
2. To raise awareness on issues impacting the watershed
3. To promote the use of beneficial management practices and the integrated management of land and water resources
4. To foster the preservation and enhancement of the quality of water supplies and water systems in the watershed
5. To champion the wise management of the quantity of water supplies in the watershed.



## **What is the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance**

An alliance of interested stakeholders, working together, is seen as an effective way to promote the long-term health of the Red Deer River watershed. A healthy watershed leads to healthy residents.

The environmental health of the watershed, the health of the residents and the sustained health of the economy are intricately linked. Our quality of life - now and in the future - is affected by how we use our land and water. With the ongoing prosperity of Alberta, forecasts indicate that development within the Red Deer River watershed will continue, perhaps at an accelerated pace. Therefore, growth and development will continue to impact our water and landscapes.

A partnership of people working together will greatly assist a better understanding our watershed and our impacts on it. This same partnership of stakeholders - by striving to achieve common objectives - will promote the overall health of the Red Deer River watershed through this better understanding (e.g. of issues, needs and priorities) and a more integrated approach to resource management and community planning. This will help residents, communities and businesses to make more informed decisions on how to pursue goals and needs while minimizing impacts on the watershed.

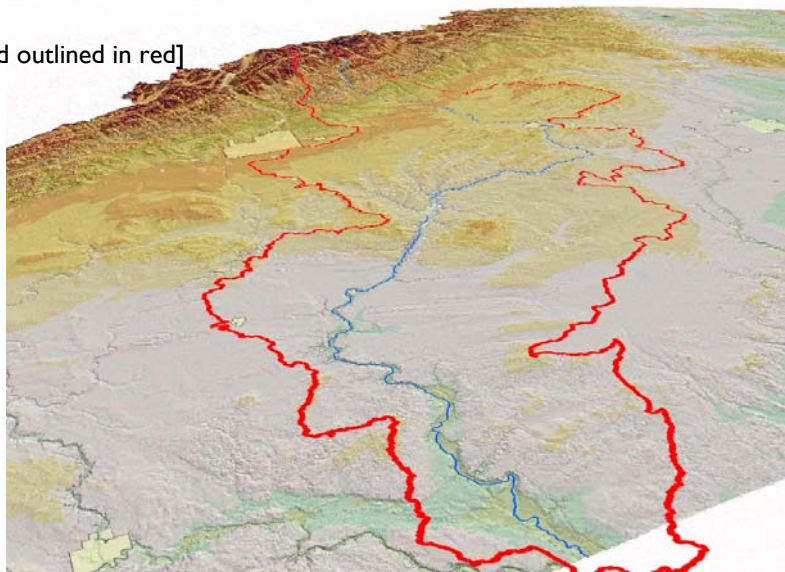
The deliberations and actions of an inclusive and collaborative alliance of interested people working together will serve to ensure the Red Deer River watershed is known for its legacy of ecological integrity and economic sustainability.

## The Relevance of a Watershed Approach?

Water systems reflect the cumulative effects of human activities on the land since the health of waterways is influenced by, and illustrative of, the health of the lands through which they flow. A watershed is readily definable and forms an ecosystem unit that is generally understood. As well, since most management actions can be integrated using a watershed as a common planning unit, a watershed approach to multi-resource planning (and management) makes good sense.

### Red Deer River Watershed

[watershed outlined in red]



### What is watershed management?

As undertaken by a partnership of stakeholders, watershed management is an adaptive, comprehensive and an integrated multi-resource management planning process, which seeks a balance of healthy ecological, economic and cultural social conditions within the watershed far into the future. Therefore, watershed management serves to integrate planning for land and water.

## Benefits of a Healthy Watershed

A healthy watershed has wide ranging benefits. These include:

- Human Health - clean rivers, lakes and streams provide for healthy enjoyment, including swimming, boating and fishing (and the fish are safe to eat!). Good quality water - both surface and groundwater - is available for our communities, homes, farms and businesses.
- Ecological (Environmental) Health - a healthy, intact watershed minimizes the impacts of flooding and erosion and serves to filter sediments and contaminants so they do not reach our streams, lakes and groundwater. A healthy watershed contains diverse habitats for flora, fauna and fish. Healthy wildlife habitat is an indicator of a healthy environment for people, in addition to providing the opportunity for people to utilize and enjoy wildlife resources.
- Economic Health - Abundant water provides for our farms, homes, industries, and communities. Clean water allows municipalities, businesses, agricultural producers and industries to operate more cost effectively, saving money for taxpayers and consumers. Also, clean water together with natural spaces, including wetlands, enhances recreation and tourism.

## **FINANCIAL PARTNERS**

***The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance wishes to thank the following contributors for their generous donations:***

Government of Alberta



City of Red Deer



Clearwater County	Town of Bashaw	Town of Lacombe
County of Newell	Town of Bentley	Town of Oyen
County of Paintearth	Town of Bowden	Town of Ponoka
County of Stettler	Town of Coronation	Town of Stettler
Kneehill County	Town of Crossfield	Town of Sundre
Lacombe County	Town of Drumheller	Town of Sylvan Lake
Mountain View County	Town of Eckville	Town of Three Hills
MD of Acadia	Town of Innisfail	Town of Trochu
Ponoka County		
Red Deer County		
Special Areas Board		
Starland County		

Village of Alix	Summer Village of Sunbreaker Cove
Village of Big Valley	Summer Village of Birchcliff
Village of Carbon	Summer Village of Gull Lake
Village of Clive	Summer Village of Half Moon Bay
Village of Consort	Summer Village of Jarvis Bay
Village of Cremona	Summer Village of Norglenwold
Village of Delburne	Summer Village of Sunbreaker Cove
Village of Delia	
Village of Elnora	<b>INDIVIDUALS</b>
Village of Empress	James Edward
Village of Veteran	Brydon Waddell

## **STATE OF THE WATERSHED FINANCIAL / INKIND SUPPORTERS**

Alberta Environment	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Alberta Agriculture and Food	Olds College
Alberta Beef Producers	Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Association
Alberta Sustainable Resource Dev't	QuickSilver Resources Canada Inc.
Alberta Stewardship Network	Samson Cree Nation
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation	Special Areas
Anthony Henday Water Treatment Plant	Sundre Forest Products
City of Red Deer	Tourism Red Deer
David Thompson Health Region	University of Lethbridge
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	

## Accomplishments for 2007/08

Now in our second year of operation, the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance initiated a number of important and exciting major projects.

### ENACT AND EMPOWER

1. The Alliance signed an operating/funding agreement with Alberta Environment for \$255,000.00
2. Obtained core funding of \$103, 239.50 through the generosity of 35 municipalities representing approximately 206,500 residents.

### OPERATE

1. Hired Program Coordinator on September 17, 2007 and an Office Administrator on October 15, 2007
2. Expanded our contact data base (e.g. members, like organizations, partners, resource people and agencies, school contacts)
3. Established a 2007/08 work program and project priorities.
4. Establish a 2007/08 events program timetable.
5. Held meetings of the Education and Communication Committee, Stewardship Committee, Fundraising Committee and a Membership Committee.

### ENGAGE AND COMMUNICATE

1. Expanded the RDRWA membership by 40% this year through personal contacts at events and information fairs
2. Completed the Communication Strategy and started implementation of the strategy.
3. Responded to approximately 60 requests for speaking engagements/ information fairs to highlight the RDRWA

4. Designed / published 4 issues of the RDRWA newsletter called "Reach Out" .
5. Held two general meetings, one in Olds in November to discuss the inter-relation of agriculture and watershed management; and another General Meeting in Trochu to discuss oil and gas and watershed management.
6. Enhanced the design and content of our website: [www.rdrwa.ca](http://www.rdrwa.ca) including a Kid's Corner and posted the Atlas maps.



7. Held our second Annual General Meeting in Red Deer on June 5, 2006

## SHARING KNOWLEDGE

1. Commenced building an information and data base and made components available via the website.

## EDUCATE

1. Developed a new Alliance Youth brochure featuring our new mascot, Leo the Frog.
2. Initiated work on a teachers watershed kit matched to Grades 7/8 curriculum which will feature a Red Deer River watershed poster.

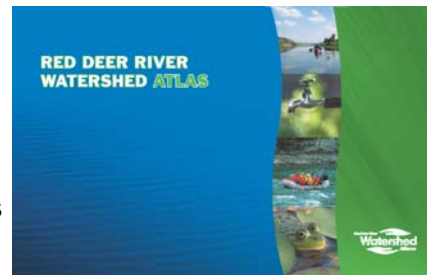
## FOSTER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS

1. Held our second annual WPAC / Watershed Stewardship Group meeting on January 29, 2008 in Red Deer
2. Distributed copies of the Stewardship Kit primarily through a summer pilot program. A student from Olds College's Stewardship Program of the Land and Water Resources Diploma was hired to work with 12 watershed stewardship groups in the watershed.



## WATERSHED PLANNING

1. Initiated our State of the Watershed project. Developed Terms of Reference for the SOW, the Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. Developed an RFP and invited 6 companies to submit proposals. Filled the positions on the SC and the TAC and hired Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd.
2. Participated in the South Saskatchewan River Basin workshops
3. Participated in the provincial WPAC October 2007 Summit.
4. Provided advise on and actively participated in provincial initiatives: Watershed Planning Framework; the Provincial Land Use Strategy; the Alberta Water Council's Governance and Watershed Planning Framework; Cummulative Effects Workshop; Intrabasin Water Coordinating Committee (water allocation between Alberta and Saskatchewan) ; and the Alberta Water Council's Wetland Policy Review.
5. Produced CDs and coiled formats of the RDRWA Watershed Atlas. Copies of the Atlas were delivered to every municipal library and every school library in the watershed.



## PRESENTATIONS / DISPLAYS

### April

- Olds College - Land & Resource Management
- Cows and Creeks information fair in Caroline
- Lindsay Thurber - key speaker— Green Gala event
- CWRA Conference - speaker on RDRWA



### May

- Holy Family School award presentation to poster winners



**June**

- Presenter at the RDRWA AGM in Red Deer
- ASN AGM - display
- Chaired RDR Riparian Assessment group
- Presented at the RDRMUG Drumheller
- RDR Riparian Assessment Group presentation to Red Deer County

**August**

- RDR Riparian Assessment Group presentation to City of RD
- Media Launch with Partners FOR Saskatchewan River Basin (Moopher's Game)

**September**

- Display at SPOG Fair
- Presentation at Prairie Conservation Forum meeting
- Red Deer County Country Fair display
- Wetland Policy review participation

**October**

- WPAC Summit
- Synergy Trade Fair
- Meeting with AENV Regional Director on behalf of RDRWA
- Bioengineering at Bearberry Creek with ACA
- Synergy Alberta Trade show and conference

**November**

- Partners FOR Saskatchewan River Basin Winnipeg
- National Workshop on Watershed Conservation
- RDRWA General Meeting in Olds, Managing Agriculture in the Watershed
- Presentation on RDRWA at Shell Canada in Caroline
- Municipal Presentation to County of Paintearth
- Rocky Riparian Group meeting and water tour
- Environmental Farm Plan workshop
- Presentation to Red Deer Junior Forest Wardens

**December**

- Municipal Presentation to Special Areas Board
- Municipal Presentation to County of Newell
- Municipal Presentation to Stettler County
- Municipal Presentation to Lacombe County

**January**

- Municipal Presentation to Clearwater County
- Municipal Presentation to Mountain View County
- Meeting with AENV Deputy Minister Peter Watson on behalf of WPACs
- Municipal Presentation to City of Red Deer
- Municipal Presentation to Ponoka County
- Municipal Presentation to Red Deer County
- Meeting with David Hill re funding under Water Institute
- Presentation to Watershed Stewardship Group/RDRWA Annual Meeting
- Chaired Provincial WPAC Executive Meeting in Red Deer
- Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum board meeting in Okotoks
- Medicine River Watershed Society tradeshow Gilby Hall

**February**

- News Interview with CHCA - Special Feature on Water
- Friends of the Little Red Deer River AGM – Cottonwood Hall
- Red Deer Sportsman Show – Westerner, Red Deer

**March**

- Display at Sportsman Show in Red Deer
- Municipal Presentation to Wheatland County
- Presentation to Central Alberta Mayors & Reeves – SOW
- RDRWA General Meeting Managing Oil and Gas in the Watershed - Trochu
- WPAC Mgr/Exec Dir Meeting in Calgary
- Presentation on SOW to RDRMUG
- Municipal Presentation to Starland County
- Municipal Presentation to MD of Bighorn
- Presentation at Rosebud River Watershed Partners AGM
- Organized water well management workshop with Kneehill Watershed Advisory Council & Kneehill County – Three Hills
- Presentation to Alberta Stewardship Network on the RDRWA Stewardship Kit

## Key Projects for the Upcoming Year 2008/09

A number of key projects are slated for 2008/09. The focus will be on our State of the Watershed (SOW) Report. This initiative is requirement of all Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils along with the subsequent Integrated Watershed Management Plan. The SOW will be a comprehensive review of the Red Deer River's watershed health. To do this we will need to engage experts and stakeholders interested in the Red Deer River watershed. Aquality Environmental Engineering Ltd. has been contracted to undertake the project which will be completed by June 2009. The Natural Flow Study being undertaken by University of Lethbridge will assist us with evaluating and monitoring our instream flow needs and will contribute to our database as part of our State of the Watershed report.

We will also be completing a Water Conservation Guide in partnership with the Red Deer River Municipal User Group, and continuing our efforts to raise the awareness of the Alliance, best management practices, and watershed management through information and educational programs. A teacher's package on watershed management will be provided to teachers within the watershed. We will continue our efforts to work directly with the Watershed Stewardship Groups within our watershed. To enhance this effort, a summer student will be hired for the summer to work directly with WSG and their programs.

Stakeholder Involvement Workshops—State of the Watershed will be held:

- July - Municipal Meetings in Sundre, Red Deer, Drumheller
- July - September - Travelling Information Posters
- Sept - November - Public involvement sessions in Sundre, Red Deer, Three Hills, Drumheller, Brooks, Empress
- December - Final Report to Municipalities - Sundre, RD, Drumheller
- May - June 2008 - Open Houses for distribution