

Get Involved!

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR WATERSHED PLANNING



The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance is working with the community to develop a plan for the watershed.

What's the plan?

The plan is actually called an integrated watershed management plan. It identifies problems and issues impacting the natural resources of the watershed and recommends management solutions that will benefit the community, the economy and the environment. The plan is developed co-operatively, so the recommendations consider the needs of everyone.

So what's a watershed?

The Red Deer River watershed is the area of land that drains rainfall and snow-melt into the Red Deer River and all its

tributaries. Within the watershed, there are many smaller watersheds. For example, a creek that flows into the Blindman River has its own watershed, but it is also part of the larger Blindman River sub-watershed, which is part of the much larger Red Deer River Watershed.

Why a management plan?

Water moves across the land in a watershed and people need to plan their land and water use to ensure maximum benefit without sacrificing water quality and quantity downstream. A management plan strikes a balance between wise use and conservation of watershed resources.

Red Deer River Watershed Alliance

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance is a multi-sector, non-profit organization that promotes the good use and proper management of water in the Red Deer River watershed. The Alliance was created in September 2005 and is one of 10 Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, which partner in the delivery of Alberta's Water for Life Strategy. The Alliance is responsible for facilitating a collaborative approach to planning the watershed, developing best management practices, fostering stewardship activities, reporting on the state of the watershed, and educating users about the water resource.

Where can I get more information?

www.rdrwa.ca
iwmp@rdrwa.ca
403-340-7379

Why an integrated plan?

A watershed is a complex place; there's a lot going on. There are natural processes like flooding, erosion, droughts and changing weather and climate patterns. There are industrial activities, farming practices, new housing developments, municipal water withdrawals, and sewage treatment outfalls. There are different governments overseeing land use, pollution, species at risk, and soil conservation. There are watershed stewardship and education groups helping people understand the value of their natural world.

If we want to understand all the issues that are impacting the watershed, our planning needs to consider all the natural processes, all the human activities, all the regulatory processes, and all the education and conservation programs and integrate them all together. The right hand needs to know what the left hand is doing. All these things are going on and there is a need to put them together into an integrated watershed management plan.

Why is the plan important for the watershed?

Healthy, functioning watersheds:

- Provide clean and abundant water resources to agricultural, municipal, industrial, and recreational users
- Help maintain healthy crops and crop yields
- Support wildlife habitat
- Regulate natural processes such as soil erosion and sedimentation.

Ultimately, the integrated watershed management plan will provide guidance in the management of water, land/water interactions, aquatic life and aquatic resources to maintain healthy ecosystems as land use changes. The plan recognizes that anything happening on land eventually affects water. It recommends how water and land should be managed



for the benefit of humans and the local economy, while maintaining a functioning environment.

Why is watershed planning important to me?

When you flush the toilet, water your lawn, walk along the river, or eat food grown in your community, you are benefiting from the value of your watershed. Industries and agriculture use water for cooling, irrigating and processing, and all those activities provide you with goods and services that are important to you and to the local economy. The watershed needs you and you need the watershed.

How can I get involved?

The Red Deer River Watershed Alliance is bringing together the community to work together to help build a plan. In the fall of 2010, industry, farming, conservation, government and other stakeholders along with members of the public attended a series of community forums to share information about the health of the watershed.

In early 2011, members of the community are rolling up their sleeves and looking more closely at the problems, issues and solutions for better managing the Red Deer River watershed.

*Get on the mailing list.
Visit the website. Become our friend on Facebook.
And come out to the workshops and get involved in the consultation process for an integrated watershed management plan for the Red Deer River.*

www.rdrwa.ca
iwmp@rdrwa.ca
403-340-7379



January 2011