

Winter 2015

"News You Can Use"

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Meetings

3rd Wednesday of each
month, 6:30 p.m.
Contact WWMC for
venue.

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Lakescape

newsletter of the



WABAMUN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Council Update

by Stan Franklin, WWMC Chair

The following is a brief summary of just some of the activities happening on and off the lake this last fall and winter:

Sundance 7 Natural-Gas-Fired Power Plant

TransAlta Utilities (TAU), through a partnership referred to as "TAMA Power" has applied to the Alberta Utilities Commission for approval of the development of Sundance 7. As proposed, this natural-gas-fired plant will be constructed on land south and east of the existing Sundance Plant. Detailed information about the project can be obtained from <http://bit.ly/1wPZ4Su>. Our Board has received various briefings from TAU regarding the project. We do not believe the Sundance 7 plant will present a risk to the health of the lake. We understand the plant represents a movement away from coal-fired generation and that Sundance 7 will replace some of generating capacity at the existing Sundance plant as units are decommissioned at the end of their useful life.

The Alberta Utilities Commission will be holding a public hearing on the project commencing at 9:00am on Monday, April 13, 2015 at:

Best Western Sunrise Inn and Suites
3101 43 Avenue
Stony Plain, Alberta

Riparian Assessment Project

This project was initiated in 2014 by the WWMC, funded by a grant from the Land Stewardship Centre and undertaken by staff of the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA). The purpose of the project was to fill an information gap identified in the Aquality State of the Watershed Report. The project entailed the video recording of the entire shoreline/riparian area of Lake Wabamun by a camera mounted on a remote controlled "drone". That filming took place last summer and provided a high-resolution baseline record of the then current condition and development of the riparian area of the lake. The photographic record was interpreted by NSWA staff and mapped to provide a comprehensive image of the condition of the riparian area of the lake. The mapping and the accompanying report will be released in late March. The data has already been provided to Parkland County and its consultant, Stantec, to be incorporated into the Phase One report of the County's Sub-watershed Land Use Plan for Lake Wabamun.

Parkland County Sub-watershed Land Use Plan for Lake Wabamun

Information about this project can be obtained by going to <http://bit.ly/1zal9ap>. The project Steering Committee consists of representatives of Parkland County, ESRD, NSWA and the WWMC. The Phase One report can be viewed on the project website. The next Steering Committee meeting is on March 31, 2015.

Next WWMC Board meeting

April 15, 2015 6:30 pm
ESRD Stony Plain

Board of Directors**Chair:** Stan Franklin,
Sundance Meadows**Vice Chair:** Dan Saunders,
Boating Community**Secretary:** Jack Latham,
Whitewood Sands**Treasurer:** Neil Fleming,
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Resource DevelopmentWally Nicholaichuk,
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Brian Novak, TransAlta Utilities

Ken Petruk, Member at Large

Nicole Richardson, Pineridge
Golf Resort

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Editor: Don Meredith
(wmmc@donmeredith.ca)**Submissions**

Lakescape welcomes contributions from WWMC members and others who wish to inform members about issues or events in the Wabamun area. Please keep submissions brief and to the point. All submissions are subject to editing for length and clarity. For more information, contact the editor: Don Meredith
wmmc@donmeredith.ca

Deadline for the spring edition is April 15, 2015.

"Kids Can Catch" Huge Success

The Alberta Conservation Association posted the following on its website, reposted here with permission:

"The Village of Wabamun doubled in population on Valentine's Day when 647 people came out to ice fish at Wabamun Lake Kids Can Catch. For many it was not just their first time ice fishing, but also their first time on a frozen lake. 'My kids have been asking me to take them ice fishing,' an Edmonton mom told us. 'This was the perfect opportunity.'

"The day was a success thanks to our partners and volunteers. Cabela's shared 150 fishing rods and drilled over 80 holes. Walleye Master handed out bait to everyone. Wabamun Chamber cooked 600 hot dogs. The Village of Wabamun moved literally tons of snow. Wabamun Citizens on Patrol directed parking for over 200 vehicles. TransAlta helped hundreds of families learn about fishing and ice safety with information tote bags. It was a memorable day on the ice!"



John Binder

A Memoir by Neil Fleming

This past November, Wabamun Lake lost a true friend with the passing of John Binder, the result of a tragic accident. John had been a fixture at Seba Beach for more than 60 years and was truly loved as evidenced by the large turn out for his funeral during the worst snowstorm of the year. John was known for his antics around the lake and particularly his involvement with Regatta Weekend. In fact his saying "Seba is an Attitude" was used as the slogan during the parade weekends.



The memory of John that will stand out for me was his understanding of the need to maintain a harmonious relationship with nature when living at the lake. John was way ahead of the curve in appreciating the importance of maintaining a natural shoreline. He coined the phrase "Environmental Buffer Zone" to describe what is commonly referred to as the riparian area. He intuitively understood that a natural shoreline served as a filter to reduce the amount of nutrients entering the lake. This natural area also served as habitat for muskrats, many forms of aquatic species and a host of varieties of birds that can be found nesting in the reeds and willows in front of the family property.

In August of 2012 after periods of much rain, the lake level was exceptionally high resulting in the "calving off" of pieces of shore line at the west end of the lake. This resulted in large chunks of reed beds breaking off and drifting down the lake. It was quite a sight to see these "islands" of bull rushes floating in the middle of the lake. One particularly large clump of reeds caught my eye so I decided to have a closer look. We launched our boat and motored out to the floating mass. As we came around the other side we found John and his dog, Hanna, in his aluminum fishing boat gently pushing the brush toward his beachfront. John recognized us and with the usual big grin on his face, declared, "You can't buy this stuff!"



Coincidentally, on the day John died, we happened to be walking on the frozen lake and stopped in front of his place and wondered which clump of bull rushes were the ones we had seen him salvaging. John never preached about what he was trying to do, he just tried to lead by example.



Whether or not you had the good fortune to know John, you have the opportunity to do something for the good of the lake in his memory. I would encourage you to reduce or eliminate your use of fertilizers and pesticides and let at least some part of your lake front return to a more natural state. After all, it is what the lake wants. The fish, wildlife, John and future generations of lake users will thank you for it.

Neil Fleming

Corporate Members

The WWMC thanks the following businesses and organizations for partnering with the WWMC as corporate members and helping the council to achieve its goals.



Camp Oselia Society, Falher Drugs, Kokanee Springs RV Park, Seba Beach Ice Cream Stop, Summer Village of Betula Beach, Summer Village of Point Allison, Wabamun & District Lions Club

If you own or represent a business or organization that is concerned about Wabamun Lake and would be willing to help maintain its health, become a corporate member of the WWMC for just \$100 a year. Corporate members will be acknowledged at WWMC functions, in each newsletter and elsewhere. For more information contact Neil Fleming by e-mail, nfleming@shaw.ca or telephone, (780) 437-3204.

If you are already a corporate member and would like to see your logo here, please send a digital copy to Don Meredith at wwmc@donmeredith.ca