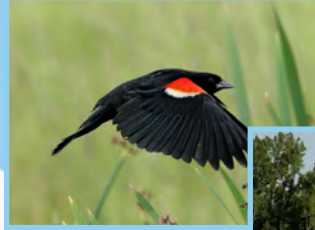


OWC

**OLDMAN
WATERSHED
COUNCIL**

watershed management – watershed health



2010 - 2011
Annual Report

www.oldmanbasin.org

Table of Contents



Rachelle Coffey

About the Oldman Watershed	1
About the Oldman Watershed Council	2
Communication and Outreach Activities	3
Financial Highlights	4
Board of Directors and Staff	5
Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team	5
Watershed Science Team	6
Rural Team	7
Urban Team	8
Partnerships and Projects	9

About the Oldman Watershed

- Home to about 210 000 people.
- 80% prairie grasslands but also mountain peaks and rolling foothills along the western border.
- Approximately 25 000km²..
- The watershed's climate is semi-arid and drought is common.
- The name Oldman comes from the Blackfoot Legend of creation by Napi, the Old Man.
- 60% of land in the watershed is cultivated for agriculture and 20% of this agricultural land is irrigated.
- Water from the watershed flows into Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba.
- The Belly, Waterton and St. Mary rivers begin in Montana.
- Ranked as *fair* overall in the 2010 State of the Watershed Report.



Oldman watershed or basin - the area of land that catches precipitation and drains it into the Oldman River.

About the Oldman Watershed Council

The Oldman Watershed Council (OWC) is a charitable not-for-profit organization working throughout southern Alberta to help communities and organizations understand the benefits of a healthy watershed and work towards making it a reality.

The OWC works with volunteers and stakeholders throughout the community whose knowledge, expertise and energy are vital to the organization's success. Eighteen board members, over fifty regular volunteers and three staff members are responsible for decision making, completing projects and overseeing the day to day operations of the OWC.

The Board of Directors completed the OWC's 2011-2013 Strategic Plan outlining its vision, mission and goals.



Vision

Our vision is a healthy, resilient watershed where people, wildlife and habitat thrive.

Mission

The Oldman Watershed Council is a not-for-profit organization of southern Albertans that maintains and improves the Oldman watershed by:

- Improving and sharing knowledge
- Building and strengthening stakeholder partnerships
- Promoting community action and stewardship
- Developing and implementing integrated land and water plans

Contact Information

Phone: 403.382.4239

Fax: 403.381.5765

Email: info@oldmanbasin.org

Website: www.oldmanbasin.org

Oldman Watershed Council
100, 5401 - 1st Avenue South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4V6



Long Term Goals

1. We understand our watershed.
2. Residents are well informed and actively engaged.
3. Basin stakeholders have defined the desired outcomes for the Oldman watershed that will form the basis for the Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP).
4. The OWC and stakeholders put into action the capacity and commitment to achieve defined outcomes.
5. Practices that are beneficial to the health and function of the watershed are adopted.



<http://www.oldmanbasin.org/Vision-Mission-Goals.html>

Communication and Outreach Activities

- Website, www.oldmanbasin.org, was redesigned.
- Started a Facebook page - www.facebook.com/oldmanbasin.
- Revamped e-newsletter sent to subscribers every 2 weeks.
- Media releases distributed for all events and major accomplishments.
- Presentations were given to several groups.
- Set up a display at many events.
- Promotional items were given away at events.
- Annual Report was completed.



Annual General Meeting

- 7th Annual General Meeting held on April 22, 2010 at the Coast Hotel.
- 100 people attended.
- Financial report was given, board election was held and bylaw amendments were passed.
- Welcomed 3 new Board Members: Robert Rippin (health), Richard Burke (environmental non-government organization).
- Thanked departing Board Members for dedication and hard work: Sean Robison (health), Glen French (member at large) and Don Watson (environmental non-government organization).
- Each Team presented their accomplishments from the past year.
- Teams were thanked for their commitment and time - they are the core of the OWC.
- Celebrated a major milestone - the completion of the State of the Watershed Report.
- AMEC, contracted to write the State of the Watershed Report, presented the results and recommendations.
- Event ended with a wine and cheese networking session and celebration.





Financial Highlights

Cash Contributions

Alberta Beef Producers	\$5,000
Alberta Environment	\$250,000
Alberta Irrigation Projects Association	\$500
Anne Stevick	\$215
Cheryl Fujikawa	\$100
City of Lethbridge	\$25,998
Claesholm Garden Club	\$50
County of Lethbridge	\$3,091
Shannon Frank	\$100
Gerhardt Hartman	\$40
Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District	\$5,000
Magrath Irrigation District	\$200
Mark and Bev Bellamy	\$100
MD Pincher Creek	\$500
MD Ranchland	\$250
MD Taber	\$2,014
Municipality of Crowsnest Past	\$1,725
Raymond Irrigation District	\$1,235

In-kind Contributions

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	\$5,250
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development	\$103,625
Alberta Conservation Association	\$1,350
Alberta Environment	\$110,350
Alberta Health Services	\$7,105
Alberta Pork Producers	\$1,000
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development	\$650
Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation	\$16,335
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers	\$550
Cardston County	\$2,700
City of Lethbridge	\$9,750
County of Lethbridge	\$4,300
Discover Green	\$4,500
Ducks Unlimited Canada	\$100
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	\$1,600
IWMP Core Team*	\$75,500
Lethbridge College	\$1,250

Richard Burke	\$40	Mayors & Reeves Association of Southwest Alberta	\$5,880
St. Mary River Irrigation District	\$4,991	Members at Large	\$22,048
Stephanie Palechek	\$100	Nature Conservancy of Canada	\$600
Taber Irrigation District	\$2,303	Piikani Public Works	\$2,602
Town of Claresholm	\$2,200	Southern Alberta Group for the Environment	\$28,990
Town of Coaldale	\$2,083	Southwestern Alberta Conservation Partnership	\$9,450
Town of Coalhurst	\$586	Taber Irrigation District	\$5,703
Town of Nanton	\$637	Town of Cardston	\$1,000
Town of Picture Butte	\$478	Trout Unlimited Canada	\$3,471
Town of Stavely	\$298	University of Lethbridge	\$7,700
Village of Barons	\$89		
Village of Carmangay	\$82	Total	\$433,359
Village of Cowley	\$66		
Vulcan County	\$1,149		
Total	\$309,696		

* A list of IWMP Core Team members is available here: <http://www.oldmanbasin.org/assets/files/IWMP/Team%20List.pdf>.



*A very special thank
you to all our donors
and volunteers!*

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors – Sectors Represented:

Academia:

Andy Hurly, Vice-Chair

Environmental Non-

Government Organizations:

Cheryl Fujikawa

Richard Burke

Federal Government:

Shane Petry

First Nations:

Randall Wolf Tail

Health:

Robert Rippin

Industry:

Adam Judd

Irrigators:

Keith Francis

Ron Renwick, *resigned*

Members at Large:

Anne Stevick

Gerhardt Hartman

Reed Davis

Rodney Cyr

Municipalities:

Terry Kerkhoff, Chair

Jeff Carlson

Producers:

Bruce Konynenbelt, *resigned*

Ryan Kasko

Provincial Government:

Andrea Kalischuk, Treasurer

Bill Dolan



Staff

Stephanie Palechek, Executive Director

Leta Pezderic, Program Coordinator

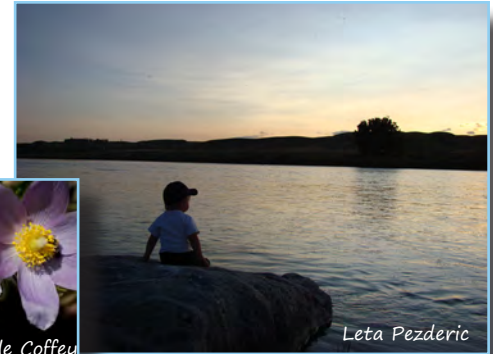
(on maternity leave since August)

Shannon Frank, Program Coordinator

Bev Bellamy, Administrative Assistant

Integrated Watershed Management Plan Team

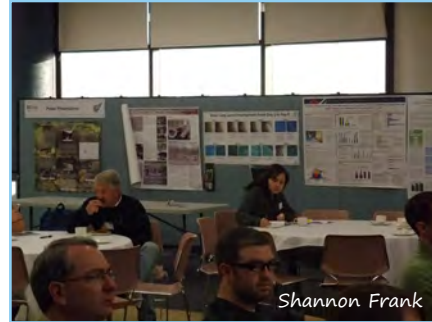
- An Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) sets goals for the watershed, plans for the future and provides recommendations to decision makers.
- An IWMP considers all aspects of a watershed including environmental, economic, cultural and social needs.
- The Council uses non-biased, credible scientific information to help guide its decision making in the IWMP process.
- In 2009 the first phase was completed - the vision for the watershed.
- With the vision (social component) and the State of the Watershed Report (science component) completed the Team could move into the next phase - Priority Setting and Risk Assessment.
- Two teams were formed: 1. IWMP Working Team to take care of day to day planning and organizing and 2. Core Team of 37 stakeholders from various sectors to work through the process.
- Process involved 4 facilitated workshops over 4 months.
- 34 potential risks to the watershed (social, economic and environmental) were discussed and prioritized.
- Of these 34 risks, 10 were chosen as priority areas of focus for the Board of Directors to consider.
- Next stage will be implementing solutions to these risks.



Watershed Science Team

2010 Science Forum

- 12 presentations and 10 posters about current research projects relevant to the Oldman watershed.
- 120 people attended.
- An opportunity to learn about the Oldman watershed and hear about current issues and ideas for management.
- Encouraged collaboration within the scientific community.
- Provided ideas for future research.
- Topics included bacteria in our water that can cause illness, managing recreation in the headwaters, new models and mapping tools that assist with watershed management.
- Next Science Forum will be autumn 2012.



Research and Monitoring Project Directory

- A showcase of current water-related research and monitoring projects taking place in the Oldman watershed.
- Raises awareness of what research is happening in the Oldman watershed.
- First directory was completed in 2011.
- An opportunity for people to learn about the Oldman watershed.
- Allows researchers to see where they could collaborate on projects.
- Assists with determining research needs and identifying gaps in knowledge.
- Will be updated annually with new projects.



Responding to the Oldman River State of the Watershed Report

- Team members reviewed the report and provided feedback to the Integrated Watershed Management Plan Core Team.
- Expanded on the main concerns highlighted in the report and the risks they pose to the watershed.
- Identified gaps in knowledge, research and stewardship.

www.oldmanbasin.org/Watershed-Science-Team.html

Rural Team



Dwayne Rogness



Mary Ann Elford

Watershed Legacy Program

- Provides funding for watershed stewardship projects in 7 categories.
- Provides administrative, technical and communication assistance.
- First year of full operation.
- Funded 12 watershed stewardship projects.
- 1200 cows kept out of rivers and creeks through fencing.
- 200 - 500 bags of weeds removed by hand.
- 1 hounds tongue infestation removed through biocontrol.
- 270 people engaged in an educational or planning event.
- 500 people involved in total.

stewardship - the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care

Holding the Reins

- An annual event held in Fort Macleod.
- An opportunity to learn about rural issues and opportunities in the watershed and how they can impact agricultural producers and the watershed.
- Watershed stewardship groups and land use groups give updates on their projects.
- Gives landowners the chance to share their expertise, experiences and stories.
- Topics in 2011 included using manure to create biofuel, composting livestock, wind energy and sustainable farming through diversity.
- Digital stories from local producers linked environmental conservation and stewardship to consumer choices.
- 89 people attended in February 2011.



www.oldmanbasin.org/Rural-Team.html

Urban Team

Prairie Urban Garden

- Demonstrates the beauty and benefits of having a low maintenance and environmentally friendly Prairie Urban Garden.
- Prairie Urban Gardens have many benefits including water conservation and using less chemical pesticides and fertilizers.
- 140 people attended the annual garden tour in June 2010.
- www.prairieurbangarden.ca was updated with many new features, including a photo gallery of local Prairie Urban Gardens.
- A partnership was set up with the Town of Claresholm to install a demonstration Prairie Urban Garden.
- Interpretive signs were designed to install at demonstration gardens.
- A 'best plants' directory was developed featuring the top 10 trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses and groundcovers for southern Alberta.





Lethbridge Home and Garden Show

- Featured 2 topics in 2011: Prairie Urban Garden and riparian health.
- Distributed 200 Principles of Xeriscaping posters, 70 native plant lists and many other hand outs.
- Gave away 10 outdoor water conservation kits, 1 rain barrel and 1 composter as prizes.
- 89 people signed up for the June 2011 Prairie Urban Garden Tour.
- 20 people signed up to receive the OWC e-newsletter.

Yellow Fish Road

- Raises awareness that storm water drains directly into the local water body without being treated.
- Youth paint a yellow fish and the words “rainwater only” next to storm drains and hang yellow fish educational brochures on nearby door handles.
- OWC sponsored lunch and prizes for groups who painted.
- Cardston youth painted 180 fish, Pincher Creek youth painted 189 fish and Lethbridge youth painted 690 fish on storm drains.



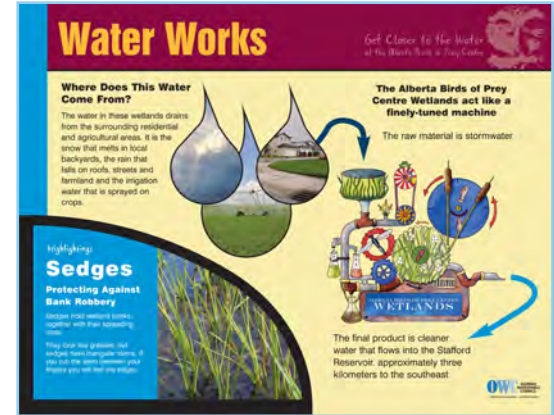
Partnerships and Projects

Caring for Our Watersheds

- A youth contest sponsored by Agrium and promoted by the OWC.
- Youth answer the question “What can you do to improve your watershed?” in a project proposal format.
- Winners receive a cash reward and funds to implement their proposal.
- In 2011 Cassandra Schinkel from the Oldman watershed tied for 4th place in the grade 7-9 category.

Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

- Organized with the Helen Schuler Nature Centre.
- A one day garbage pick up event in the Lethbridge Nature Reserve.
- 55 volunteers removed 4 large bags of garbage and many large items.



Wetland Interpretive Signs

- A partnership with the Birds of Prey Centre.
- 10 wetland interpretive signs were designed based on signs previously installed at the SunRidge constructed wetland.
- Signs will be installed in 2011-2012.

Environment Week



- OWC is a member of the Lethbridge Environment Week Committee.
- First week of June every year.
- Showcase and promote environmental events.
- Promoted Clean Air Day with a Bike and Barby.
- Green List was launched in 2010 to recognize individuals, groups and businesses taking green actions.
- A celebration and recognition event was held for all nominees and prizes and certificates were awarded.

Prairie Conservation Forum

- OWC is a member of the PCF Education Team.
- Instilling an appreciation of grasslands in Albertans, especially youth.
- In partnership with the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, a group of Junior Forest Rangers were taken on a 2 day field trip of Alberta's prairie.
- Developing an educational videoconference about grasslands.



www.oldmanbasin.org/Partnerships-and-Projects.html

The background features a stylized mountain range with white peaks and blue-grey slopes. The sky is a light blue gradient. The text is centered over the mountains.

OWC OLDMAN WATERSHED COUNCIL

watershed management – watershed health

www.oldmanbasin.org

The OWC has accomplished a great deal in the past year because of the support that was received. Please show your support by making a donation of your own. Thank you!

