



**[oldmanwatershed.ca](http://oldmanwatershed.ca)**

**THE WATERSHED FUND**  
*Because Water Is Life!*

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# A SUSTAINABLE WATERSHED MEANS SUSTAINABLE FUNDING



*One of the greatest legacies  
we can leave for future  
generations is clean, safe  
drinking water.*

*To do this we need to protect  
the water at its source.*

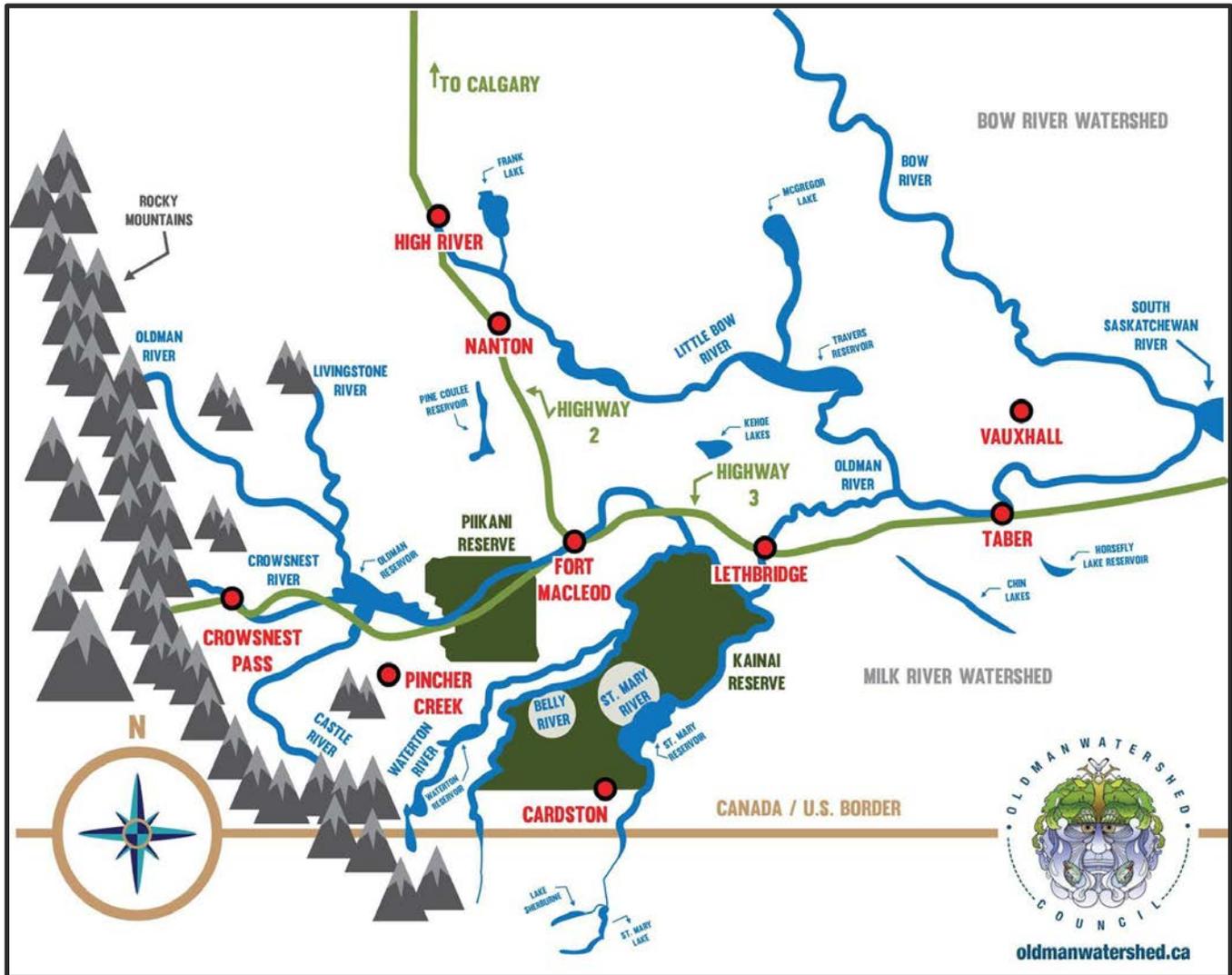
## This is why we created the Watershed Fund.

The Watershed Fund is a tool that allows investors to put their financial support behind our vision: a healthy, resilient watershed where people, wildlife, and habitat, thrive and prosper. At the Oldman Watershed Council, watershed work is people work: we support, advise, and assist farmers and ranchers; entrepreneurs and businesses; governments and decision-makers; scientists and teachers. For a growing population and a hungry world - for the beauty we call home - please help us mobilize hearts, minds, and hands. We are all downstream.

A watershed is an area of land where all the water in, and on it, flows to a common destination. In Southern Alberta, the headwaters begin in the Rocky Mountains as snowpack in winter. Many little tributaries create life and prosperity in our semi-arid climate. Flowing from the west through the foothills, water has turned the dry prairie into a thriving oasis. To the east, the Oldman River joins the Bow to form the South Saskatchewan, and the river continues its long journey through Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and finally up to the Hudson Bay.



# FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIE



The Oldman watershed is transboundary.

In Alberta, it nurtures 23,000 km of diverse and precious ecosystems, and a further 2,100 km in Montana. Much of our source water comes from the southwest Castle/ Waterton/ Glacier areas.

You are one of the fortunate people to call Southern Alberta home! Our beautiful watershed also attracts people from all over the globe for trade, tourism, and recreation. Whatever you do, throughout your day, it requires access to clean, safe water.

Most people do not realize how precarious this access is in Southern Alberta, and how much our water supply depends on infrastructure.

# BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE



*Our Oldman watershed is over-allocated: more water can be withdrawn by license holders than there actually is water in the river.*

*This has implications for supply.*

Our river no longer has glaciers to feed it as it did 8,000 years ago at the end of the last ice age – we now depend solely on snowpack and groundwater for a continuous flow throughout the year. Rainfall doesn't do the same work, and this has implications for supply: Climate change means it rains harder, faster, and more frequently, rushing through waterways, and often leading to disastrous flooding. We experience hotter, drier spells where dryland farmers face bankruptcy, and irrigation farmers fall back on infrastructure to keep crops growing.

The forests become like tinder, and we are plagued year after year by the increasing intensity and number of fires that start earlier every year. Forests are critical to keeping the watershed healthy – and we mustn't forget that it takes an incredible amount of water to fight fires.

Parts of our Oldman watershed are stressed by nitrogen and phosphorous loads, by pesticides and herbicides, by low oxygen levels, sedimentation, a dense network of roads, railways and lines, and by increased stream temperatures. This means that we are in a vicious cycle of poor watershed management: we are polluting the very thing that makes prosperity in the watershed possible. Critical habitat is at risk, crippling our ability to monitor these indicator species – the very ones who can tell us the health of our watershed. Much of our precious wildlife is down to less than 5% of their original habitat.

More than ever before, strong, active hands, hearts, and voices are required. Your unique background, your passion for OWC, and your willingness to become a hands-on advocate for the watershed, are what we are counting on to tackle these issues. We are committed to leaving a lasting, positive, hopeful legacy for our children and grandchildren.

**Canada is known the world over for its natural, wild spaces -  
yet piece by piece, drop by drop, we are losing what we value most.  
With your help, this will change.**

# A POWERFUL MANDATE

The Oldman Watershed Council is a not-for-profit, registered charity. Our Board consists of a large group sector representatives - 23 voices united together behind policies, research, education, and projects for the betterment of watershed management and health. We are not government, or industry – but we advise both.



*Since 1987, we have been the voice of the watershed.*

In fact, we have the ear of government. As one of 11 Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils throughout Alberta, we are mandated by the Province to share unique insight into complex environmental and social challenges. We provide a forum for all voices to be heard and ensure science underscores decision-making.

For everyone who lives, works and recreates here, we provide trusted information, independent research, and bottom-line parameters that guide critical decision-making across Canada. In the face of many competing interests and agendas, we are counted on to bring people together, seek common ground and find workable, long-lasting solutions.



# STRONG PARTNERS, SOUND SOLUTIONS

Far from a “behind-the-desk” organization, OWC is in touch with the land itself – and those who live, work and recreate here. We provide restoration, practical support, and education between backcountry, rural and urban contexts. **Our boots are on the ground.**



**55**

**FUNDED PROJECTS:**



## IMPACTS



**35 km**

Riparian Fencing



**23**

Off-Stream Watering Systems



**6795 Cows**

Removed From Water Bodies & Riparian Areas!



**300 Sheep**



**23**

Weed Pulls



**3**

Garbage Clean-ups



**900**

Volunteers



**2930**

Bags of Invasive Weeds Removed & 650lbs of Garbage

**4**

Bio-Control Releases

**304**

Plans/Assessments/Surveys

**6**

Bio-engineering Projects

**180**

People engaged in educational events

**1300**

Willows Planted

**2**

Cattle Crossings

2017

# COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA

With the move to our downtown Lethbridge location, OWC has firmly established itself as a community hub for Southern Alberta. Communications - whether in person or virtual - have grown by leaps and bounds, and we are reaching more people than ever before. And the quality of those conversations is deepening.

Wherever you are in the watershed, OWC is there - providing information and support as trusted partners in both local and provincial conversations on watershed management and health. Watershed work is people work: it is humans who impact the landscape.

## By the numbers (April 1st, 2016 to March 31st, 2017)



**Twitter Followers:**  
This year: 3,034  
Last year: 1,899  
Our tweets make about 4,000 impressions within a 24 hour cycle.



**Facebook Likes:**  
This year: 1,685  
Last year: 1,020  
Our most popular post reached nearly 10,000 people in just one day.



**Website:**  
This year: 613,536  
Last year: 383,316  
Our blog continues to be the most popular feature on our website and stories are picked up by the press.



# WE DON'T TAKE SIDES

**We don't lobby or advocate.**

We are a forum for all voices to be heard – thus our advice includes all facets of an issue.



*OWC is a respected partner that can be counted on to share unique insight into complicated environmental and social challenges.*

The watershed challenges facing us today are more urgent than ever, and are seriously threatening our very ability to thrive in the most water-limited region in Canada.

The water supply flowing downstream from the headwaters supports irrigation agriculture - the backbone of our economy. Our natural resources have allowed Southern Alberta to flourish - but the warning signs are clear. It is time to step up our commitment to protecting these resources so they can continue to provide for us at a cost we can afford.



# ACCESS FOR RECREATIONISTS

## OWC Engaging Recreationists by Numbers 2016

Weekly reach through social media channels

**25000**

**2412**

Images added to digital archives on Flickr

People engaged at outreach events throughout the watershed

**1000**

**303**

Recreationists engaged in watershed conversations through surveys

Watershed observation & outreach events recorded using Epicollect app

**245**

**94%**

of recreationists observed using the bridge when a sign was present

In-person surveys completed with recreationists in the backcountry

**83**

**13**

OHV retailers and organizations involved in the Recreation Advisory Committee

Seasonal Outreach Assistants hired in 2016

**4**

**1** Little girl inspired to become an entomologist!



**Oldman Watershed Council**  
oldmanwatershed.ca

# HERE'S WHAT SCIENCE TELLS US

**OWC is a source of independent (non-government and non-industry) science.**

We create and curate timely, accurate research on topical watershed questions, and provide bottom-line parameters to guide critical decision-making.



- **A Thousand Cuts**

Everything we do has an impact on the health of the watershed - like a slow death from a thousand cuts. One seemingly insignificant change - one new road, one new subdivision - is not noticeable. But together, all the little changes add up to a huge impact. The latest technology has allowed us to re-create the many small changes that have occurred over the last 100 years, using state of the art science and computer models.

Watershed health has declined by ~1% / year for the last century. If we keep doing all the things we are doing now - watershed health will continue to decline at the same rate. We have now reduced water quality by ~50% and biodiversity by ~40%.



- **No Room For Wildlife**

Linear features density (roads, trails, pipelines, etc.) is well over ecological thresholds for the survival of trout, grizzlies, marten and many other species. Streams run brown after every rainfall. Overall health has declined, and the risk from linear features is moderate to high in 77% of the headwaters. If we don't protect our headwaters, we will pay for it downstream with higher water treatment costs, less resilience to floods and droughts, and disappearing rare plants and animals. Our wildlife and natural spaces are what the rest of the world can only dream of.

OWC's research cemented the need to reduce linear features density with the Government of Alberta, and is the flagship of Alberta's South Saskatchewan Regional Plan implementation, where OWC continues to advise and monitor progress. Our education and outreach to backcountry recreationists is second to none, and is a template the Government of Alberta is looking to expand across the province to ensure people stick to designated trails and use bridges - and work together to find common solutions.

- **Lack of Understanding and Commitment**

8 out of 10 people do not know what a watershed is. How can people help maintain a safe, secure water supply if they don't understand the issues and how they contribute? OWC projects like the Southern Alberta Water Charter and Film Project inspire kids, urbanites, farmers, businesses and governments to take action now.

Our challenges - from droughts and floods to water advisories - are urgent and threaten our economy and way of life. OWC is at the forefront of effective education and awareness programs that are having a measurable impact and building a community of leaders committed to protecting our water supply.



- **Limited Monitoring and Reporting**

We can't manage what we don't measure. Limited monitoring and even less reporting means we are managing our land and water based on outdated information, sometimes decades old. This is a high risk, especially in a water-limited region like Southern Alberta. While computer models are valuable for seeing the big picture, we also require detailed, local data. For example, what is the quality of water in our rivers? The amount of water flow?

OWC is urging the Government of Alberta to increase monitoring and reporting of the data it does collect. Knowledge is power; and right now, much of the knowledge is trapped within government databases. OWC has been picking up some of the slack through our own independent research, but the Province has a legislated responsibility to protect Albertans by protecting the resources we depend on for life itself.

- **Water Quality Advisories**

We are starting to see boil water orders, swimming cautions, and blue-green algae advisories. Global warming is making these problems worse - more storms means more polluted runoff, while drought means less dilution. Water treatment costs are also increasing as the source water in our rivers continues to decline.

Some cities are already choosing to protect their source waters instead of upgrading water treatment infrastructure because it is more cost-effective over the long term, and offers other benefits, like low-impact recreation. This is a good example of how we can work with nature to reduce costs and save lives, and OWC is at the forefront of opening eyes and hearts to these better alternatives.



- **Drought**

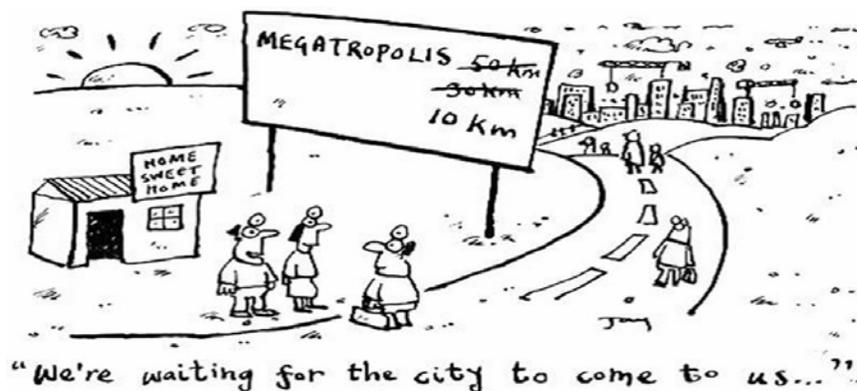
The water available in the rivers of the Oldman watershed is over-allocated. Our reservoirs will get most of us through 1-2 years of drought, but when we get hit with a multi-year drought, the reservoirs will be empty. They will not fill without the large amounts of snow and rain feeding them from the mountains.

Tree rings show us the last 440 years of climate in our watershed - and it is a wake-up call. There have been regular 10 - 40 year periods of drought. There are no long-term drought preparedness plans. A 3+ year drought would devastate the whole economy of Southern Alberta. OWC is raising awareness of these risks and encouraging cities, towns, irrigation districts and farmers to prepare and adapt.



- **Urban Sprawl and Storm Water**

Our urban footprint will grow massively over the next 30 years, paving productive agriculture land, and generating much more storm water runoff, which is already polluted with bacteria, fertilizers and pesticides. We must change to avoid boil water advisories, swimming advisories and more expensive water treatment costs for those downstream. OWC, with our partners, monitors storm water quality in Lethbridge, and encourages residents to lower their impact through education programs.



# OUR CURRENT PROJECTS

Here are our special projects for 2016 - 2017, in addition to our ongoing communication and outreach, education, research, and committee work. As the needs of the watershed change, so do our projects.



**Historical Timelines**



**Southern Alberta Water Charter**



**Engaging Recreationists**



**Watershed Legacy Project**



**The Film Project**



**Dutch Creek Pilot Project**



**Prairie Urban Garden**



**Collaboration and Committees**



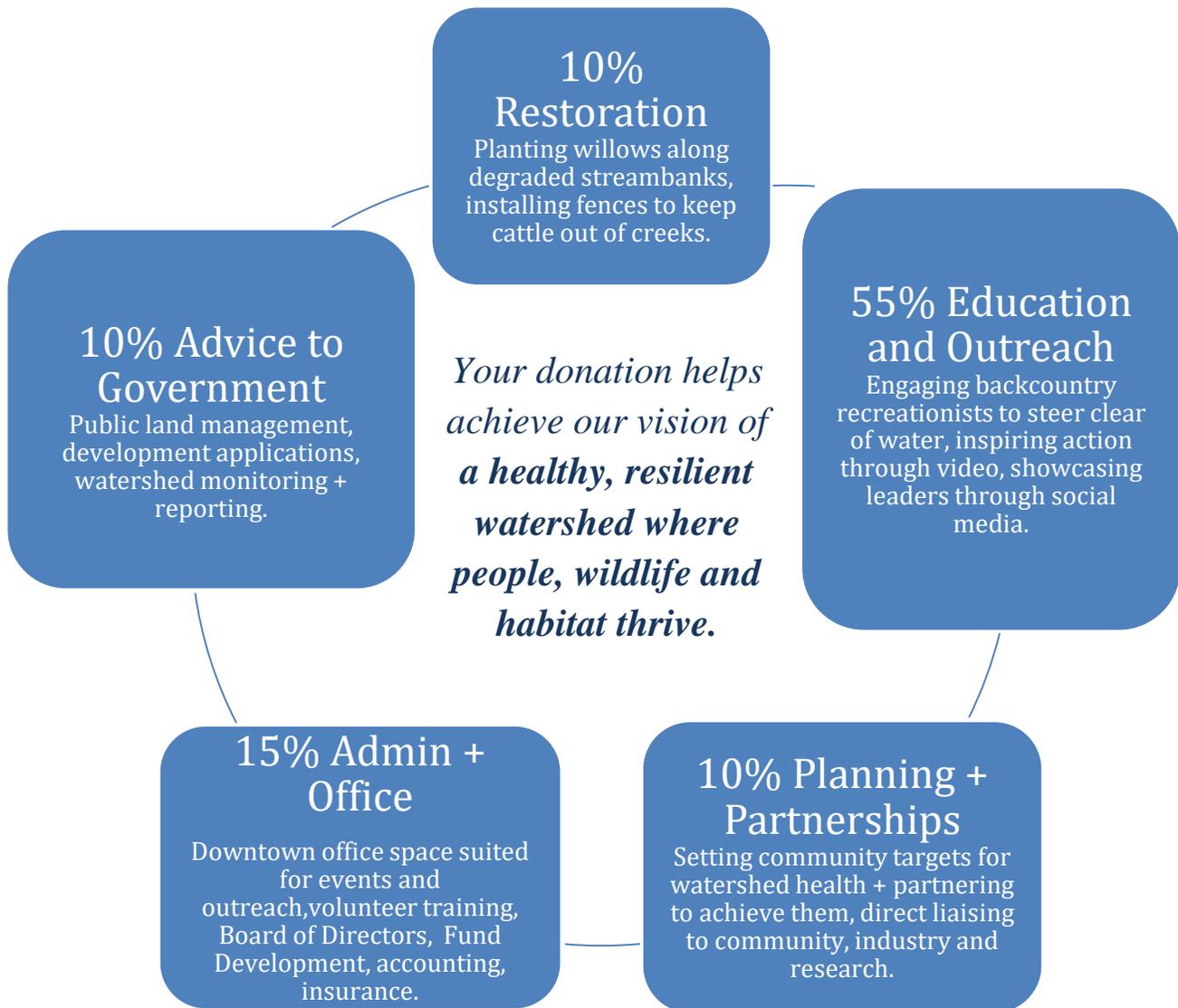
**Watershed Science**

*For more information about our projects, visit [oldmanwatershed.ca/projects/](http://oldmanwatershed.ca/projects/)*

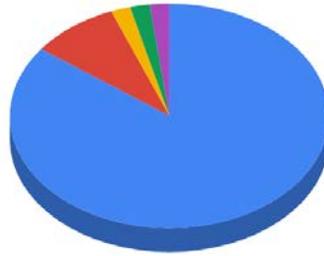
# A WATERSHED MOMENT

Your contribution will provide critical funding to continue our efforts to protect our environment, our economy and way of life in Southern Alberta. It has never been more critical. OWC works hard to stretch every dollar. Our team of just 6 permanent staff is committed to maximizing efficiency and impact. When we develop programs, we do so in partnership with everyone operating in the arena, to cut overlap and leverage resources. Our annual budget ranges from \$875,000 - \$975,000, depending on the resources required for effective programs.

Investments by donors like you support 7 main projects and 12 community partnerships, in addition to our exceptional communications and outreach on social media and through presentations and events. The Government of Alberta's annual investment accounts for 40-50% of our annual budget with municipalities, irrigation districts, foundations, businesses and individuals investing the other 50-60% because they understand the value of a healthy watershed to support our economy and quality of life.



# CURRENT FUNDING SOURCES



● Grants ● Municipalities ● Individuals & Sponsorships ● Irrigation Districts  
● Organizations, Companies, Businesses

## DONOR RECOGNITION LEVELS

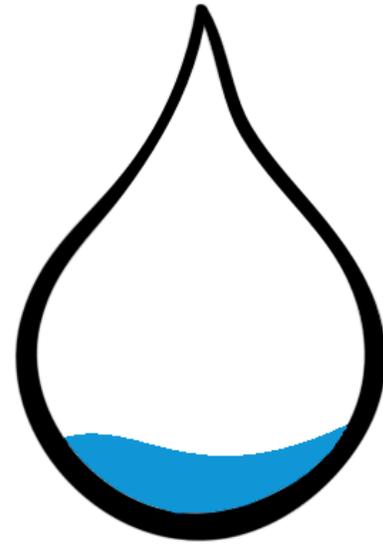
<b>\$3,000</b> <b>BRONZE</b>	<b>\$5,000</b> <b>SILVER</b>	<b>\$7,500</b> <b>GOLD</b>	<b>\$10,000</b> <b>PLATINUM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social media thank you that averages 25,000 people/week (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn)</li> <li>● Website listing that averages 2,700 visits/month</li> <li>● Annual Report listing</li> <li>● Listing in Case Statement</li> <li>● Listing in Blog</li> <li>● Invitation to OWC events</li> <li>● OWC Membership</li> <li>● Opportunity for employee engagement</li> <li>● Thank you phone call from Executive Director</li> <li>● Charitable tax receipt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social media thank you that averages 25,000 people/week (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn)</li> <li>● Messaging to key audiences</li> <li>● Website listing that averages 2,700 visits/month</li> <li>● Annual Report listing</li> <li>● Listing in Case Statement</li> <li>● Listing in Blog</li> <li>● OWC presentation</li> <li>● Invitation to OWC events</li> <li>● OWC membership</li> <li>● Opportunity for employee engagement</li> <li>● Thank you phone call from Executive Director</li> <li>● Charitable tax receipt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cheque presentation media event</li> <li>● Social media thank you that averages 25,000 people/week (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn)</li> <li>● Messaging to key audiences</li> <li>● Company logo on website that averages 2,700 visits/month</li> <li>● Website listing</li> <li>● Annual Report listing</li> <li>● Listing in Case Statement</li> <li>● Company logo in Blog</li> <li>● OWC presentation to organization</li> <li>● Invitation to OWC events</li> <li>● Opportunity to show products at OWC events</li> <li>● OWC membership</li> <li>● Opportunity for employee engagement</li> <li>● Thank you phone call from Executive Director</li> <li>● Charitable tax receipt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cheque presentation media event</li> <li>● Social media thank you that averages 25,000 people/week (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn)</li> <li>● Messaging to key audiences</li> <li>● Company logo on Website that averages 2,700 visits/month</li> <li>● Website listing</li> <li>● Company logo in Annual Report</li> <li>● Annual Report listing</li> <li>● Listing &amp; company logo in Case Statement</li> <li>● Project site tours</li> <li>● Invitation to OWC events</li> <li>● Opportunity to show products at OWC events</li> <li>● OWC membership</li> <li>● Company profile Blog</li> <li>● Vlog showcase</li> <li>● Opportunity for employee engagement</li> <li>● OWC presentation</li> <li>● Thank you phone call from Executive Director</li> <li>● Thank you phone call from Chairman of OWC Board</li> <li>● Charitable tax receipt</li> </ul>

The Oldman Watershed Council is a registered charity: CRA 840029078RR0001

# THANK YOU!

## HELP US FILL THE WATER DROP!

*Together we can achieve a healthy, resilient watershed where people, wildlife and habitat thrive.*



OWC Staff & Board of Directors	\$3,000 BRONZE	\$5,000 SILVER	\$7,500 GOLD	\$10,000 PLATINUM	OVER \$10,000
Doug Kaupp Shannon Frank Terry Kerkoff Antoine Gendron Yvonne Barker Wade Aebli Anna Garleff Heather Sinton Andrew Hurly	>Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District >Hays Stock Grazing Co-op Ltd.			 Anonymous	 CITY OF Lethbridge

### Other Friends of the Oldman Watershed Council

Bruce Falconer	Village of Cowley	Alberta Irrigation Projects Association	MD of Ranchlands No.66
Shane Dorchak	MD of Willow Creek	Raymond Irrigation District	Village of Cowley
Elspeth Nickle	Town of Cardston	Taber Irrigation District	Village of Barnwell
Robert Tarleck	Town of Coalhurst	Trout Unlimited Oldman Chapter	Magrath Irrigation District
Anita Dolman	Town of Pincher Creek	Solar Optix Energy	Wendy Ellen Inc.
Carl Wirzba	Village of Glenwood	Flexahopper Plastics	Curtis Goodman
John User	Town of Picture Butte	Gord Laurie Foundation	Glen and Kelly Hall
Sheri Monk	Town of Magrath	Town of Stavely	Graeme Greenlee
Perlette Fund at the Calgary Foundation			

# THE WATERSHED FUND PLEDGE FORM



*You are helping create a lasting legacy for a healthy, thriving watershed!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Extension: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount:  \$3,000  \$5,000  \$7,500  \$10,000  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Schedule:  Annually  Semi-annually  Quarterly

One-time payment  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Method:  Cheque enclosed  Cheque to follow

*Please make cheques payable to Oldman Watershed Council*

Visa  Mastercard

Card holder name: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation:  I wish to donate to the following: \_\_\_\_\_

Recognition:  Include my gift in all donor lists  
Name(s) for recognition purposes: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer's Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

*Up to 10% of donations received will be used to recover associated fundraising costs and donor recognition activities*

*Please make my donation in honour of:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Name to appear on charitable tax receipt:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Twitter:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Facebook:* \_\_\_\_\_ *LinkedIn:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Personal information is collected under the authority of section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection Act of Alberta and will be used by OWC to process and recognize your donation. If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of your personal information please contact OWC at 403-330-1346.*

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