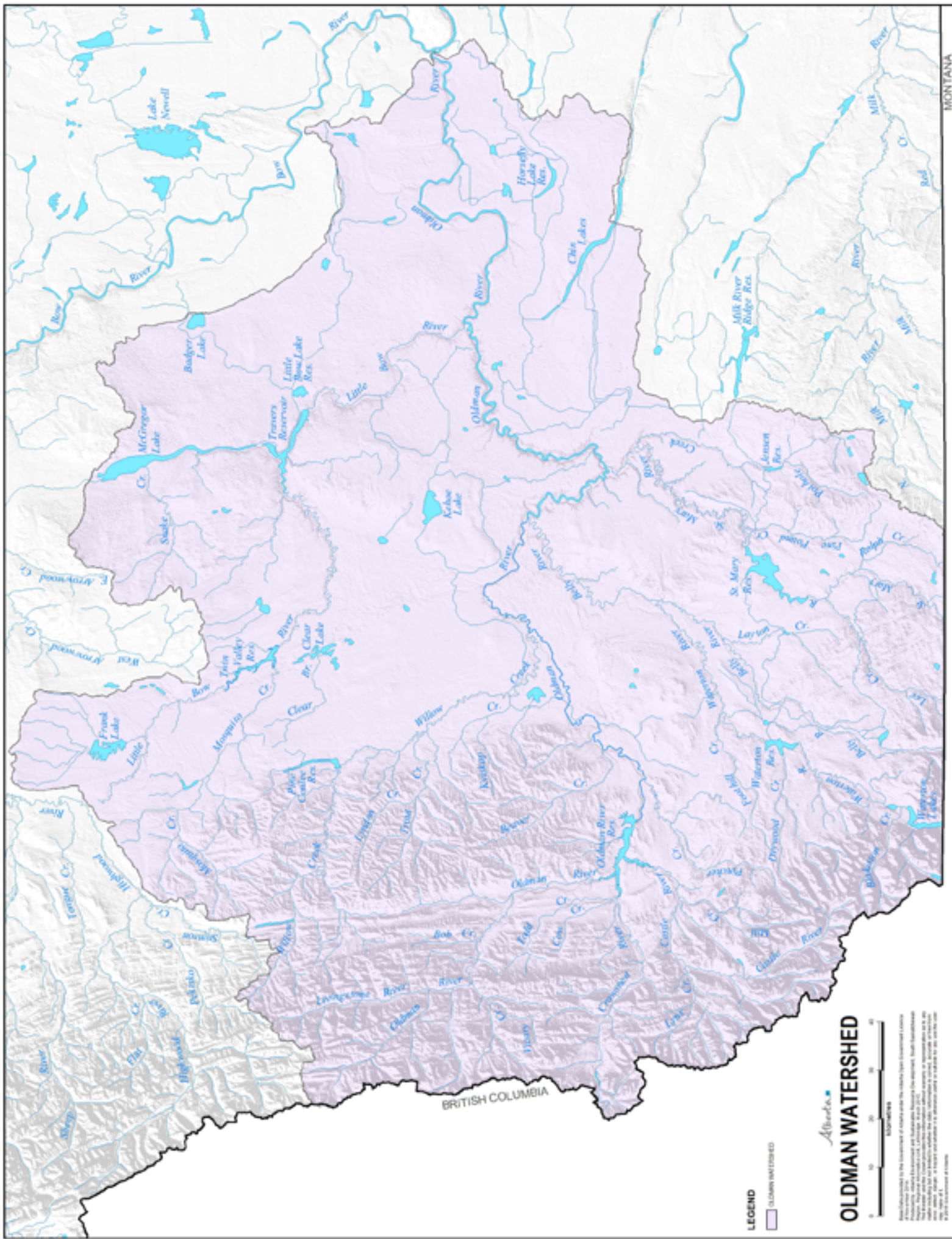




ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18





THIS IS OUR OLDMAN WATERSHED

A watershed is an area of land that drains into a water body, like a creek, river or lake. So the Oldman watershed is all the land that eventually drains into the Oldman River through its tributaries.

The Oldman watershed is a large, diverse land and water system in southern Alberta, covering 23,000 km in southwestern Alberta and 2,100 km in Montana.

It extends eastward from the forested slopes of the Rocky Mountains, through rangelands in the foothills, dryland and irrigated agricultural plains, to the prairie grasslands.

The Rocky Mountains feed the headwaters of the Oldman mainstream and its tributaries (Crowsnest and Castle rivers, Willow and Pincher creeks), while the headwaters of the Belly, Waterton and St. Mary rivers rise in Montana. The watershed varies greatly, both in terms of the status of the land and water resources and impacts from human activities. In headwater sub-basins, water quantity is adequate, quality is fair to good, and riparian ecosystems are generally healthy. However, as the Oldman River flows east, water quality deteriorates and available water supplies diminish creating challenges.

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2017-18 was another busy year with many successful projects, events, and partnerships. I invite you to read through these pages to see for yourself how OWC is making a difference for Southwest Alberta.

We couldn't have done it without our donors and volunteers - thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of your encouragement, the time, and energy you put in and of course the dollars that allow us to succeed! All of your contributions, both big and small, are making a difference and building a community of togetherness where we all collaborate for watershed health.

This year OWC developed a new April 2018 - March 2021 Strategic Plan as well as a new mission:

The Oldman Watershed Council (OWC) is a collaborative forum for all voices, working for watershed health through education, action, and stewardship.

We hope it speaks to you and gets you excited for another year full of community engagement and stakeholder collaboration! Our strategic plan continues on the path we started in 2014 - to focus on people and trusting relationships. We will continue our popular and successful programs like Engaging Recreationists, Watershed Legacy Program, Film Project, and restoration events, but will be adding something new too - source water protection planning - once funding allows.

One of my favourite activities of the year was the willow harvesting and replanting in the headwaters. It is so rewarding to get out on the land and truly improve the watershed, one willow at a time. I hope you will join us in October 2018 for our next restoration event so you can experience the same sense of accomplishment! The Southern Alberta Water Charter was another highlight for me. Seeing so many people getting involved and taking action is inspiring, and we all needed that this year.

I often say that watching the news is scary and figuring out how we can tackle all of these big, overwhelming problems is exhausting, difficult work for all of us, and of course it never ends. What keeps me going is talking to you. Hearing people say that they care about water, wildlife, land, the future. When I hear you say these things, I know there is hope and a good chance at finding practical solutions. So thanks again for your support and dedication, and cheers to another great year of community collaboration!

Shannon Frank, Executive Director



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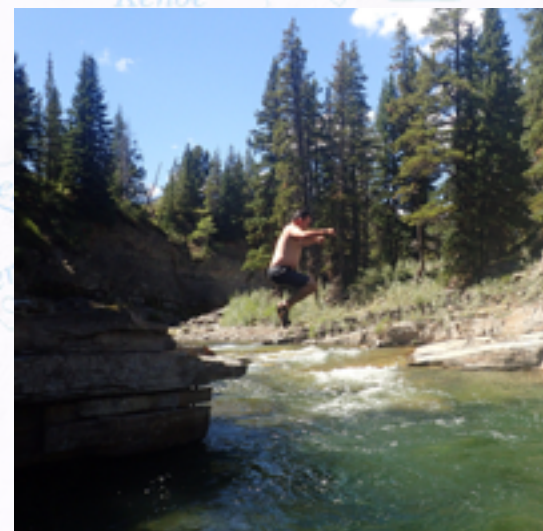
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STAFF 2017-2018

CURRENT



Shannon Frank
Executive Director
August 2010 - present



Sofie Forsstrom
Education Program Manager
November 2015 - present



Taren Hager
Office Manager/WLP Manager
March 2016 - present

A big thanks to past and present staff for making OWC what it is today!

ALUMNI



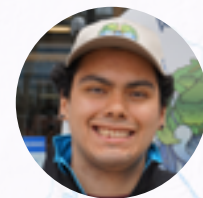
Larin Guenther
Planning Manager
November 2015 - March 2018

Jayme Cabrera Lopez
Communications Assistant
April 2017 - September 2017



Anna Garleff
Communications Specialist
February 2014 - March 2018

Francisco Samayoa
Seasonal Outreach Assistant
May 2017 - August 2017



Robinson Taylor
Program Assistant
April 2016 - February 2018

Nata de Leeuw
Seasonal Outreach Assistant
May 2017 - August 2017



Yvonne Barker
Fund Development Specialist
March 2017 - March 2018

Reuben Middel
Seasonal Outreach Assistant
May 2017 - August 2017



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018



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City of Lethbridge
Chair



Brian Brewin
Municipal Districts
and Counties



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Provincial Government



Janna Casson
Provincial
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Linda Cerney
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Federal Government
Treasurer



Antoine Gendron
Member at Large



Dwayne Rogness
Agriculture Producers



Mark Wolfe
Academia



Henk De Vlieger
Member at Large



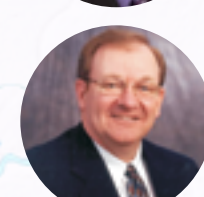
Terence Hochstein
Agriculture Producers
(Alternate)



Andrew Hurly
Academia
(Alternate)



Blair Painter
Towns/Villages/
Hamlets



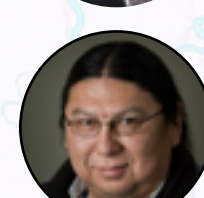
Alan Harrold
Irrigation



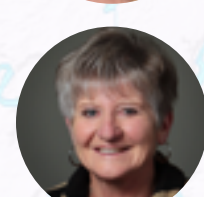
Lori Goater
Wildlife and Habitat
Conservation



John De Groot
Member at Large



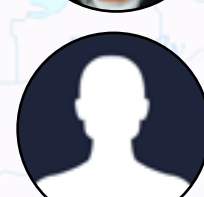
Randall Wolf Tail
Indigenous



Anne Stevick
Wildlife and Habitat
Conservation
(Alternate)



John Younger
Health



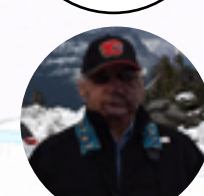
Noreen Plain Eagle
Indigenous
(Alternate)



Terry Kerkhoff
Member at Large



Wade Aebli
Industry



Mike Bruised Head
Indigenous

A very special thank you to our Directors for all of the time and commitment they put in this year to make the OWC successful!

WATERSHED FUND DONORS 2017-2018

\$1-\$100

Jessica Swanson
Shane Dorchak
Sheri Monk
Anonymous
Curtis Matwychuk-Goodman
Global Citizenship for Oldman Watershed
Anita Dolman
Antoine Gendron
Kristen Hironaka
Cheryl Meheden
Douglas Mitchell
Graeme Greenlee
Surtees Trading
Wendy Ellen Inc.
Yvonne Barker
Robert Tarleck
Daniel Tefler
Glen and Kelly Hall
James Fujikawa
Janna Casson
Trout Unlimited Canada Oldman River Chapter
Wade Aebli

\$101-\$250

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Village Of Glenwood
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Carl Wirzba
Elspeth Nickle
Heather Sinton

Solar Optix Energy Services
Town of Vauxhall
Village of Cowley
Virginia Grinevitch
Town of Stavely
Rosemary Jones

\$251-\$500

Raymond Irrigation District
Annual General Meeting 2017 Participants
Village of Barnwell
Alberta Irrigation Projects Association
Flexahopper Plastics Ltd.
John Usher
Shannon Frank
Terry Kerkhoff
Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66

\$501-\$1,000

Magrath Irrigation District
Douglas Kaupp
Town of Picture Butte
Bruce Falconer
Town of Nanton
Town of Magrath
Town of Coalhurst
Gord Laurie Foundation

\$1,001-\$3,000

The Calgary Foundation (The Perlette Fund)
Town of Cardston
Town of Coaldale
Town of Pincher Creek
Taber Irrigation District
Municipal District of Taber

BRONZE - \$3,000

Alberta Sugar Beet Growers
Growers Supply Limited
Lethbridge County

SILVER - \$5,000

Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District
St. Mary River Irrigation District

PLATINUM - \$10,000

Edmonton Community Foundation



OVER \$10,000



OVER \$300,000



PROJECT FUNDERS 2017-2018

\$501-\$1,000

Fish Tails Fly Shop

\$1,001-\$2,999

ATCO

\$3,000 - \$10,000

Hays Stock Grazing Co-Op Ltd.
TD Friends of the Environment
Government of Canada (Canada Summer Jobs)
S.M. Blair Family Foundation

OVER \$10,000

Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
Alberta Ecotrust Foundation
Alberta Conservation Association
Samuel Hanen Society For Resource
Conservation
Alberta Real Estate Foundation
Government of Canada (Habitat Stewardship
Program)
Alberta Environment and Parks (Watershed
Resiliency and Restoration Program)

**Thank you to all our donors who make our work possible!
Together we are protecting our most precious resource - water.**

IN-KIND DONATIONS 2017-2018

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada - \$4,450	Mayors and Reeves of Southwest Alberta \$1,700
Agriculture and Forestry - \$8,000	Member at Large - \$6,400
Alberta Environment and Parks - \$5,000	Mic Heggaton, Southland Trailer - \$201
Alberta Forest Products Association, Brock Mulligan - \$100	Municipal District of Taber - \$100
Alberta Health Services - \$3,500	Municipal District of Willow Creek No.26 - \$100
Alberta Irrigation Projects Association - \$2,000	Nature Conservancy of Canada - \$500
Alberta Parks - \$700	North Blood Drummers - \$100
Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows & Fish) - \$8,700	Owl Acoustic Lounge - \$50
Alberta Real Estate Foundation - \$100	Oxbow Native Plants - \$40
Backcountry Restoration Event - \$6,300	Piikani Nation - \$1,600
Backyard Wilderness - \$100	Pogo Bros Inc - \$250
Casino Fundraiser Event - \$8,000	Potato Growers of Alberta - \$500
Janna Casson, Claudia Sheedy, Knud Peterson, Dwayne Rogness, Chris Rowley, Linda Cerney, Barb Phillips, Douglas Kaupp, Brian Delinte, Mike McCague, Jennifer Takahashi, Alan Harrold, Jim Fujikawa, Anne Stevick, Cheryl and Jim Fujikawa - \$3,000	Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC) - \$650
Chinook Food Connect - \$100	Ryan Carriere, Parks Planning Manager, City of Lethbridge - \$100
City of Lethbridge - \$10,000	Serendipity Childcare Ltd. - \$200
Coulee Clay Pottery - \$40	Shane Dorchak - \$6,976
Dr. Erasmus Okine - \$200	Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE) - \$1,600
Environment Lethbridge - \$100	Southern Alberta Land Trusts Society - \$100
Fund Development Committee - \$12,000	SSRB WMP Committee - \$15,000
Mike Wind, Darren Van Raay, Dwayne Rogness, Wade Abeli, Antoine Gendron, John De Groot, Knud Petersen, Roy Pogorzelski.	Spray Lake Sawmills - \$1,800
Fleetwood Bawden Grade 3/4 Montessori Class \$1,050	St. Mary River Irrigation District - \$100
Friends of the Helen Schuler Nature Centre Society - \$100	Stoketown Cafe + Cure - \$50
Glen and Kelly Hall - \$100	Sweetgrass Bison - \$100
Global Citizenship for the Oldman Watershed \$300	Taber Irrigation District - \$800
Gouw Quality Onions - \$100	Theoretically Brewing Company - \$40
Headwaters Action Team (HAT) - \$6,000	Tony Machacek - \$40
Jordan Pinkster - \$100	Trout Unlimited Oldman Chapter - \$700
Jordan Row - \$1,450	Trout Unlimited Canada - \$100
Kainai Nation - \$1,600	University of Lethbridge - \$700
Ken Orich - \$1,000	Upāya Consulting - \$1,800
Larkspur Development Corporation - \$100	Urban Grocer - \$50
Lethbridge County - \$1,600	Watershed Legacy Program Team - \$10,000
Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District - \$1,600	William Singer III & Lori Brave Rock - \$200
Mark Brave Rock - \$50	Wolfe and Associates - \$1,000

TOTAL \$141,187

Thank you to everyone who donated their time to OWC this year! It takes many active hands to protect a watershed and we appreciate everyone's contributions!

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES 2017-2018

Youth Programs	\$10,000
Community Partnerships	\$19,000
Organizational Development	\$39,300
Film Project (includes Historical Timeline, Maps and Videos)	\$52,000
Watershed Legacy Program	\$58,217
Southern Alberta Water Charter	\$60,800
Communications and Outreach	\$77,500
Fund Development	\$98,700
Administration and Office Space	\$147,025
Headwaters Action Plan Implementation (includes Engaging Recreationists Project)	\$256,500
For detailed financial information see Audited Financial Statement	Total \$819,042

FUND DEVELOPMENT

This year OWC launched *The Watershed Fund...Because Water is Life* campaign, because a sustainable watershed means sustainable funding. The Watershed Fund is a tool that puts financial support where it's needed most - as unrestricted funds.

Over the years OWC has received tremendous support from the Government of Alberta, City of Lethbridge and municipalities, irrigation districts, and the Alberta Ecotrust Foundation, and we thank our strong base of donors for their long term support! Our focus now is to continue to show our donors the valuable services that OWC provides, as well as to diversify our revenues to reduce risk.

This year we were fortunate to host a casino where we raised nearly \$30,000. Thank you very much to everyone who volunteered their time! OWC also assisted with National Philanthropy Week and the Southern Alberta Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, with the goal of maintaining a strong culture of philanthropy in Southern Alberta.

A huge thank you to Shane Dorchak for volunteering his time to set up OWC's new database and software for tracking and communicating with our donors and volunteers! This was a mammoth effort, and Shane completed it with the utmost patience and understanding.

A special tribute to OWC's new Fund Development Committee that really stepped up and put in the effort to make things happen. Thank you so much for introducing us to new donors, coming with us to meet prospects, and for all the time and energy you put in to make sure OWC succeeds for the long term! We can't thank you enough:

Mike Wind, Darren Van Raay, Dwayne Rogness, Wade Aebli, Antoine Gendron, John De Groot, Knud Petersen, Roy Pogorzelski.



THE HEADWATERS ACTION PLAN

OWC continues to implement the 2013-14 Headwaters Action Plan that brought diverse stakeholders together to set specific targets, make recommendations to government, and identify actions for the broader community to work on together. OWC has been primarily working with Alberta Environment and Parks, because the headwaters are mostly publicly owned Crown land and the Government of Alberta is responsible for management of the area.

A Big Year For Land Use Planning

2017-18 was a big year for land use planning for the headwaters of the Oldman, with the development of the draft Castle Management Plan and Livingstone - Porcupine Hills Land Footprint and Recreation Management Plans. Once implemented, these 3 new draft plans will substantially improve the watershed health of the Eastern Slopes within the Oldman watershed.

OWC was a member of the government-appointed stakeholder advisory groups that provided input to Alberta Environment and Parks throughout the development of these draft plans in 2017-18. OWC's input was based on the targets, recommendations, and actions in the Headwaters Action Plan, and OWC is very pleased that most of our input was included in the government's plans. This is a significant achievement for the OWC and all the stakeholders who worked towards this goal!

The draft plans developed by Alberta Environment and Parks will essentially implement the majority of OWC's 2013-14 Headwaters Action Plan and will improve watershed health once reclamation activities get underway. This alignment makes sense because we took the same approach the Government of Alberta took, by using credible, well-established scientific thresholds and by involving a wide range of perspectives. In our case, stakeholders actually crafted the targets, actions, and recommendations themselves - they made the decisions. It also makes sense because the changes are what many recreationists, ranchers, municipalities, community organizations, and environmental groups have been asking for since the 1980s.

The primary issue in the headwaters that needs to be addressed is linear features density because trails, roads, pipelines, etc. are the root cause of many other issues such as sedimentation of creeks and loss of fish and wildlife habitat. OWC has been raising awareness about this issue since our 2013 mapping project showed the current density of trails is well over safe limits for the survival of many fish and wildlife species. The draft Livingstone - Porcupine Hills Land Footprint Management Plan directly addresses this critical issue of linear features density and sets science-based targets to reduce the density to safe amounts through reclamation activities. This is a historic achievement for Alberta and demonstrates leadership on source water protection.

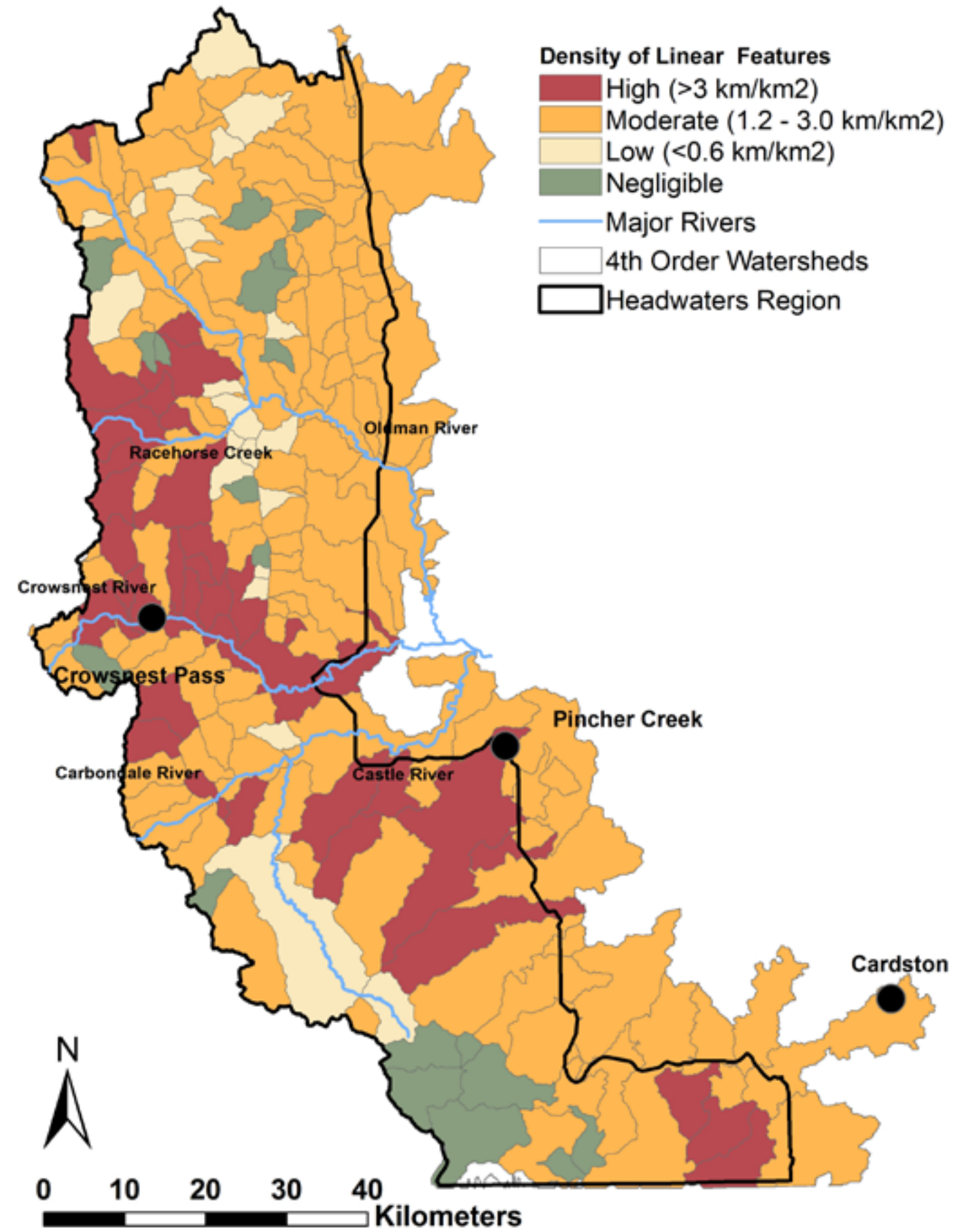
And We've Only Just Begun

OWC will continue to implement the Headwaters Action Plan in 2018-19, primarily through the Engaging Recreationists Project, which includes education and awareness as well as restoration activities.

The Kenow fire that burned through the Waterton Lakes National Park area in September 2017, the confirmation of whirling disease in fish in June 2017, and the ongoing threat of aquatic invasive species clearly illustrate that management of our headwaters is more critical than ever.

Your support is needed and we are counting on you to donate, volunteer, and make a change.

*"I consider organizations like the OWC really important because they bind the general public with science — they try to educate the public and make them aware of what's going on."
- 2017 Feedback from a Member*





2017 Outreach Assistants Reuben Middel, Rob Taylor, Francisco Samayoa, and Nata de Leeuw

ENGAGING RECREATIONISTS PROJECT

The Engaging Recreationists project is a collaborative, on-the-ground, multi-year project designed to improve the watershed's health and natural resilience to flooding and drought. The ultimate goal of this project is to engage motorized backcountry users in restoring places where they recreate, changing behaviour to reduce their impacts, and becoming environmental stewards.

Headwaters Outreach and Communications

From May to August, Outreach Assistants Nata de Leeuw, Francisco Samayoa, Reuben Middel, and Team Lead Rob Taylor spent 13 weekends in the headwaters, talking to backcountry users about recreation and watershed health, and contributing to stewardship and restoration activities.

The Outreach Assistants talked to over 1450 people at outreach events, such as the Waterton Wildflower Festival, Parks Day, and Canada Day. They reached thousands more through their blogs, social media posts, and educational video clips that they recorded while out and about on topics such as using bridges, fire bans, wildlife-friendly riparian fencing, and willow stakes.

This project includes engaging people both off- and online. Our communications efforts have been an ongoing success, especially through social media channels. More than 900 images were added to OWC's digital library from our work in the headwaters, which are available for other organizations to use to improve awareness and understanding of watershed issues. We also published 19 blogs related to headwaters, impact mitigation, outreach, and/or westslope cutthroat trout.



"This year many of the people we chatted with really seemed to have a grasp on the concept of watershed and how water drains to a common point. The way the survey was structured we ended up having intellectual conversations about water quality and user groups in the area. It was satisfying to see how passionate people were about recreation in the backcountry from all the questions and inquiries they had about OWC."
~ 2017 Outreach Assistants





#loveyourwatershed

This year, we launched a social media campaign called “For the Love Of...” using the hashtag #loveyourwatershed. People could express the value of the watershed and backcountry in their own terms and write down an action they would commit to in response. Staff then took a picture of them holding the whiteboard, and it was shared on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr). This campaign was very popular; we shared nearly 40 “For the Love Of” selfies, and will continue to use this tool in our other programs as well.

“To my knowledge, the Engaging Recreationists project is unique – I don’t know of a similar program like this anywhere. In an increasingly polarized world, these kinds of examples – where you’re literally building bridges together – are critical to show how important it is to actually work within the community and to solve problems together. OWC has shown a lot of leadership and innovation in a complex situation.”

- Amber Bennett, Upāya Consulting



Boots on the Ground

In 2017, OWC partnered with the Southern Alberta Land Trust Society (SALTS) to pull invasive weeds, and installed approximately 5 km of wildlife-friendly riparian fencing, on conservation easements throughout the headwaters. We also participated in local stewardship events, including a garbage cleanup on Ed Gregor Memorial Stewardship Day in the Crowsnest Pass, Blueweed Blitz in Pincher Creek, and installing signage on Gold and Green Creeks in partnership with Alberta Environment and Parks, Cows and Fish, and the Junior Forest Rangers.

Getting the Word Out

The main success of our project has come from meeting people where they are at – physically, by going out to the backcountry where they are camping and quadding, and emotionally, by engaging them in face-to-face conversations where they will be listened to and acknowledged.

As this pilot program progresses, a major focus has been on sharing our successes and lessons learned with our partners and other organizations, with the intention that these approaches might be adopted more broadly. To this end, we gave presentations to the following:

- Westslope Cutthroat Trout Stakeholder Workshop, organized by Cows and Fish;
- approximately 80 attendees at the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) Wetland Education Network in Leduc, together with Amber Bennett from Upāya Consulting;
- Cornell University’s ‘Environmental Education Outcomes’ online course, which was available to 650 students/practitioners worldwide;
- the Government of Alberta’s Recreation Literacy Team;
- Interpretation Canada’s national conference in Drumheller;
- Beauvais Lake Provincial Park Speaker Series.

Surveys

Over the summer, the Outreach Assistants engaged more than 450 recreationists in completing 200 in-person surveys, which were formatted as informal conversations. They asked some baseline questions about OWC and the watershed; what recreationists value about the backcountry and what actions they take to protect it; as well as barriers, benefits, and solutions to keeping wheels out of water.

In 2016, 12% of respondents had heard of OWC and could explain who OWC is (out of 83 surveys). In 2017, 39% (of 200 surveys) had heard of OWC and/or were involved in some capacity. Their level of engagement increased following 70% of in-person surveys this year. We were also pleased to see the word “watershed” appearing in more and more dialogues both online and offline, as well as in print media.

Just over half of survey respondents could explain what a watershed is, but there is still work to be done to improve understanding about watersheds, headwaters, and the relationships between human behaviour, land, water quality, and cumulative effects.

Most people surveyed valued the backcountry because they felt it allowed them to connect to nature / view wildlife, as well as for its recreational opportunities.

In both our “For the Love Of” campaign and our backcountry surveys, we found that people were very familiar with Leave No Trace principles related to litter – that is, their idea of being a good steward was that they picked up garbage. We found that people were less aware of the impacts or actions related to steering clear of water – so this is a topic that needs more work, perhaps because cumulative impacts of driving through tiny mountain streams are less obvious on a person-by-person level.

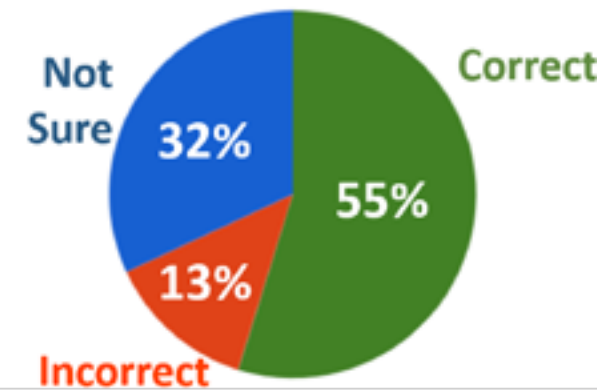
Maintaining continued access to the backcountry for (motorized) recreation was the main motivation for taking action like keeping wheels out of water. The perception was that people who weren’t keeping wheels out of water either didn’t care, or they just didn’t know better. The main solutions, people felt, were more enforcement and education, as well as more infrastructure such as bridges.

Signs and Stream Crossings

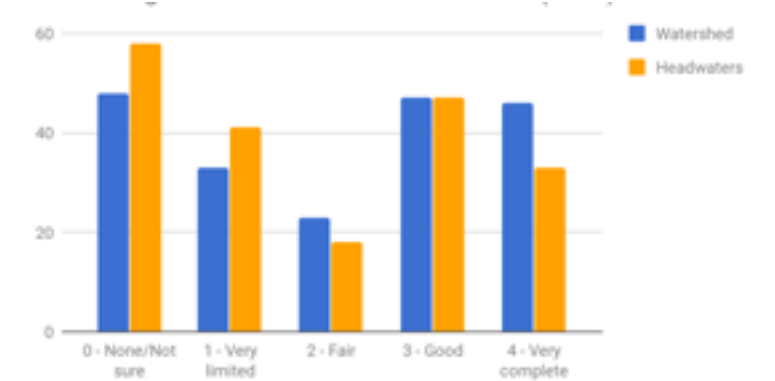
This summer, Outreach Assistants continued testing whether a “Thank you for using the bridge” sign, placed at either side of a stream with a bridge and a ford, might influence how OHV riders chose to cross the stream.

Of 312 stream crossings observed during 23 two-hour periods in 2016 & 2017, 89% of recreationists used the bridge when there was a “Thank you for using the bridge” sign present; without a sign, 63% (103 of 164) used the bridge while 37% (61/164) forded the stream. It would appear that signage, in conjunction with properly designed trails, bridges, education, and enforcement, can be a useful tool to increase compliance and keep wheels out of water.

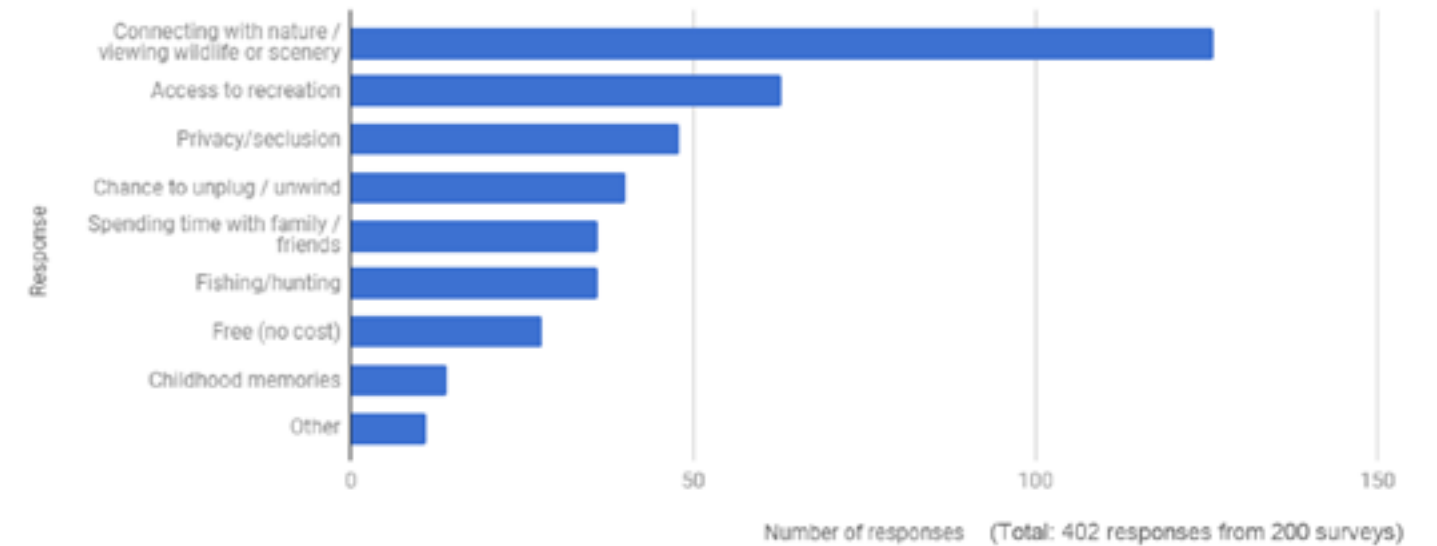
“How would you explain to someone what a watershed is?”



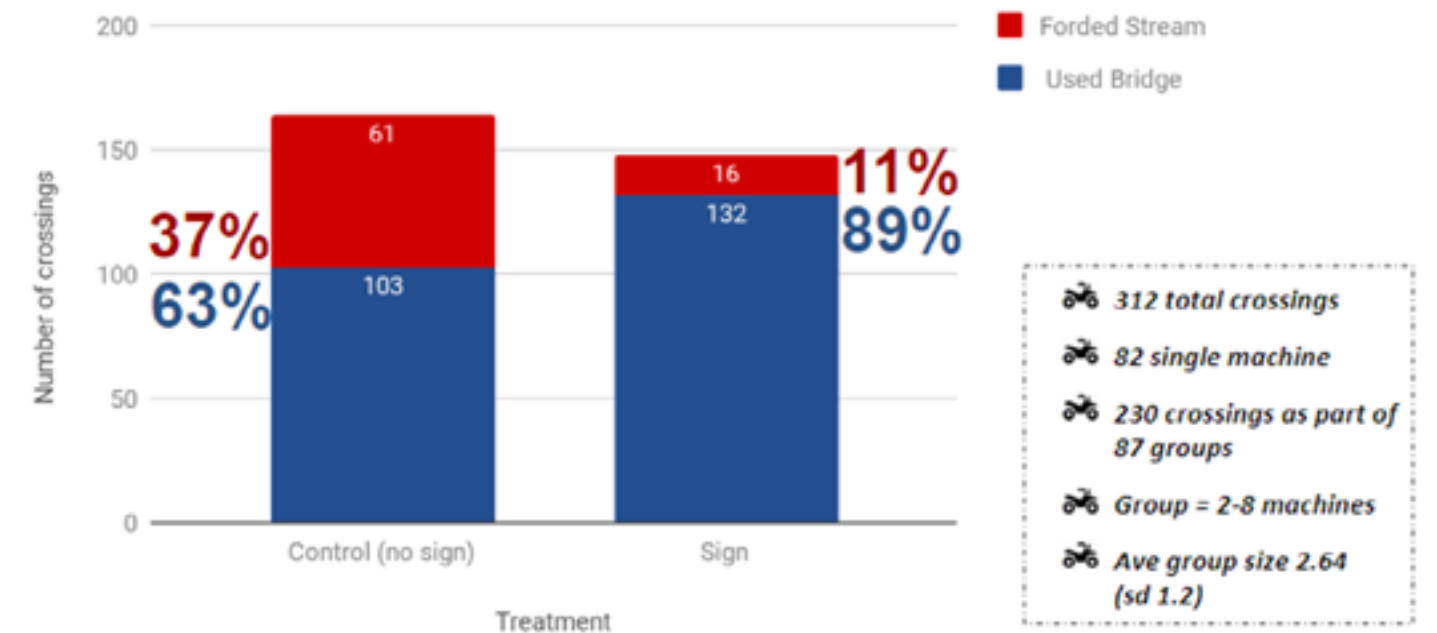
Understanding of Watershed and Headwaters (2017)



“What do you love the most about this place?”



Total Stream Crossings



Restoration = Building Community

In collaboration with Cows and Fish and Spray Lake Sawmills, we organized another backcountry restoration event in October. Together with 9 volunteers - including post-secondary students and local residents - we planted 180 willows along Racehorse Creek.

While seemingly simple, programs like our restoration events are actually sophisticated strategies grounded in social science. Not only do they enhance critical habitat for threatened fish species, but they also provide meaningful experiences that build community capacity for collective action, reinforce values and identities, foster social norms, and provide a demonstration site to show it is possible for grassroots efforts to transform the systems (both natural and social) that exist in the backcountry.

Restoration Narration by Sofie Forsstrom, OWC Education Program Manager

Every good field day begins
With coffee, tasty pastries, and grins.
Volunteers dressed warmly in anticipation
Of a day doing backcountry restoration.

Our site this year was Racehorse Creek,
Part of our headwaters that is unique
Due to the presence of Westslope Cutthroat Trout
Whose populations are at risk of dying out.

The willows were harvested two days before,
While dormant, when carbohydrates are stored.
They were trimmed, tied in bundles of twenty-five,
Then kept in water so they'd survive.

On site, they're unloaded, along with the tools.
Gathering for introductions, instructions, and rules.
Spray Lake Sawmills, Cows and Fish, and OWC
Explain the importance of this work bee.

Shouldering tools, we all begin.
Soon the valley echoes with the din
Of striking sledge hammers that pound
Holes to plant willows into the ground.

Once the hole is dug, the angle quite steep,
The willow's inserted, a couple feet deep.
Then soil is tightly packed all around
So the roots can spread deep underground.

The tops are trimmed short so they don't dry out
From transpiration, or in times of drought.
In the spring new twigs will start to grow
And leaves will shelter the creek below.

Roots stabilize streambanks, provide erosion control,
Filter runoff, and mitigate flooding's toll.
Leaves shade the water, keeping it cold and clean
For cutthroat trout and those downstream.

None of this critical work would be achieved
Without partners and volunteers, who perceived
That everyone has a role to play,
And our funders, who the costs, defray.

We're building skills and community capacity
With students from the College and University,
Helping to train the next generation
In how to do hands-on riparian restoration.

It takes many hands, working hard
To help restore this land that's been scarred.
So if a restoration site you one day discover,
Please give it some space and time to recover.

If you, too, believe that watershed health
Contributes to our wellbeing and wealth,
Contact OWC and you can arrange
To Volunteer. Donate. Make a change.



Our 2017 Restoration Event - and the Engaging Recreationists Project - would not have been possible without the support of our funders; the collaboration with our fantastic partners; as well as the numerous volunteers who bundled up early on Saturday morning, made the trek out to the headwaters, and laboured cheerfully to plant willows in the snow. Thank you for making a difference!



Environment and
Climate Change Canada



Employment and
Social Development Canada

UPĀYA CONSULTING

"So many environmental organizations appeal to groups with narrow environmental identities. Oldman Watershed Council provides inspiration for how people can work across their differences to conserve our natural heritage."

- Dr. Marianne Krasny, Professor and Director of the Civic Ecology Lab, Cornell University

SOUTHERN ALBERTA WATER CHARTER

#SAWC17 asked municipalities, individuals, and groups to demonstrate their commitment to watershed health by signing the Water Charter, pledging to an action, and showcasing the importance of the watershed on their website and/or social media channels, by sharing their own efforts as well as their favourite OWC video.

The Water Charter itself was written by OWC and was based on 3 momentous documents: the United Nations declaration of water as a human right in 2010, the Government of Canada's passing of the Canada Water Act in 1985 in response to waterway pollution, and the Government of Alberta's Water for Life Strategy of 2003 that recognized that there are limits to our water supply.

#SAWC17 was a resounding success - thank you to everyone who helped make it so! After its initial May long weekend kick-off, with a grand total of 42 participants, the Southern Alberta Water Charter movement wrapped up on September long weekend. It was especially inspiring to see all of the youth taking part!

OWC supported participants throughout the summer with photos, blogs, and social media to showcase their good work, which ranged from pet poop pick-ups to major wetland restoration. These actions have made the watershed a better place and inspired others to also make a change in their life.

An awards ceremony was held on November 17, 2017 to celebrate those who completed their pledged actions and to hear their success stories. OWC was pleased to have Minister of Environment and Parks Shannon Phillips hand out the awards. A full house of participants were also inspired by the youth who reminded us how important these efforts are to their future.

#SAWC17 proved that everyone can do something to improve watershed management and health and united a diverse population under one common goal. OWC is constantly inspired by our stakeholders who show up and step up every time they are called.

Thank you to the Alberta Real Estate Foundation for supporting #SAWC17!



"I am thankful to take part in the Southern Alberta Water Charter. What I like about this initiative is that we are starting to put our words into action. For me, the power of change lies in the small and everyday action of many people and not always in big, one time projects."
- Antoine Gendron, ULeth student and OWC Director



Lori Brave Rock and William Singer III receiving their #SAWC17 award from Minister Phillips and Shannon Frank for restoring a riparian buffer zone around a lake on their property.

Congratulations to all the participants who walked the talk and showed their commitment to watershed health - and thank you for your leadership!

City of Lethbridge
Town of Vauxhall
Lethbridge County
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
University of Lethbridge
Global Citizenship for Oldman Watershed
Taber Irrigation District
Town of Coalhurst
MD of Taber
St. Mary River Irrigation District
Town of Magrath
Town of Nanton
Trout Unlimited Oldman Chapter
Village of Nobleford
MD of Willow Creek
Pogo Bros
RBC
Timber Ridge Conservation Site
Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
Chinook Food Connect

Oxbow Native Plants
Johnson-McPherson Family
Town of Picture Butte
Backyard Wilderness
Environment Lethbridge
Lethbridge Naturalists' Society
Solar Optix Energy Services
Waterton Biosphere Reserve
Lethbridge East Constituency Office
Lethbridge West Constituency Office
Friends of Helen Schuler Nature Centre Society
14th McKillop Scouts
Serendipity Childcare Ltd.
Matthew Halton High School
St. Michael's School
Canyon School
North Blood Drummers
Hager Family
Guenther Family
Casson Family
William Singer III & Lori Brave Rock

#OLDMANGOESTOHOLLYWOOD

OWC spent 2017-18 using the many new Film Project tools developed the previous year, to engage the community, primarily through the Southern Alberta Water Charter, social media, and presentations. 2016-17 was OWC's blockbuster year for the Film Project, reaching a record 11 videos, completing 3 film shoots for the documentary, bringing 500 entries online to create the historical timelines on our website, and releasing the long-awaited maps that span from 15,000 BCE to 2060. With these materials in hand, we had more opportunities to raise awareness and engage people in watershed management and health.

Videos Educate and Engage

Through the Southern Alberta Water Charter project, 31 groups shared their favourite OWC video on their website and social media channels, greatly increasing our reach and helping build trusting relationships with new audiences. They also shared their own efforts to improve watershed health, helping make best practices the norm for all of us to do regularly.

Our videos have been viewed over 10,000 times on our channels alone and this number is growing daily. Educators are beginning to use them in their programs, and we can't wait to see where they go next because we're just getting started! Please help by sharing them with your networks.

"I use "Where is Your Watershed?" video in all the Water World classes I teach. These kinds of accessible, dynamic videos are vital resources for teachers and families. The OWC is doing an outstanding job of creating digital content that is both locally relevant and accurate."

- Paige Rosner, Environmental Educator, Helen Schuler Nature Centre

Historical Timelines Profile our Shared History

OWC's comprehensive historical timelines are available on our website and span pre-history (60,000 BC) to present day and beyond, all the way to 2060 using computer models to predict and map the future landscape of the Oldman watershed.

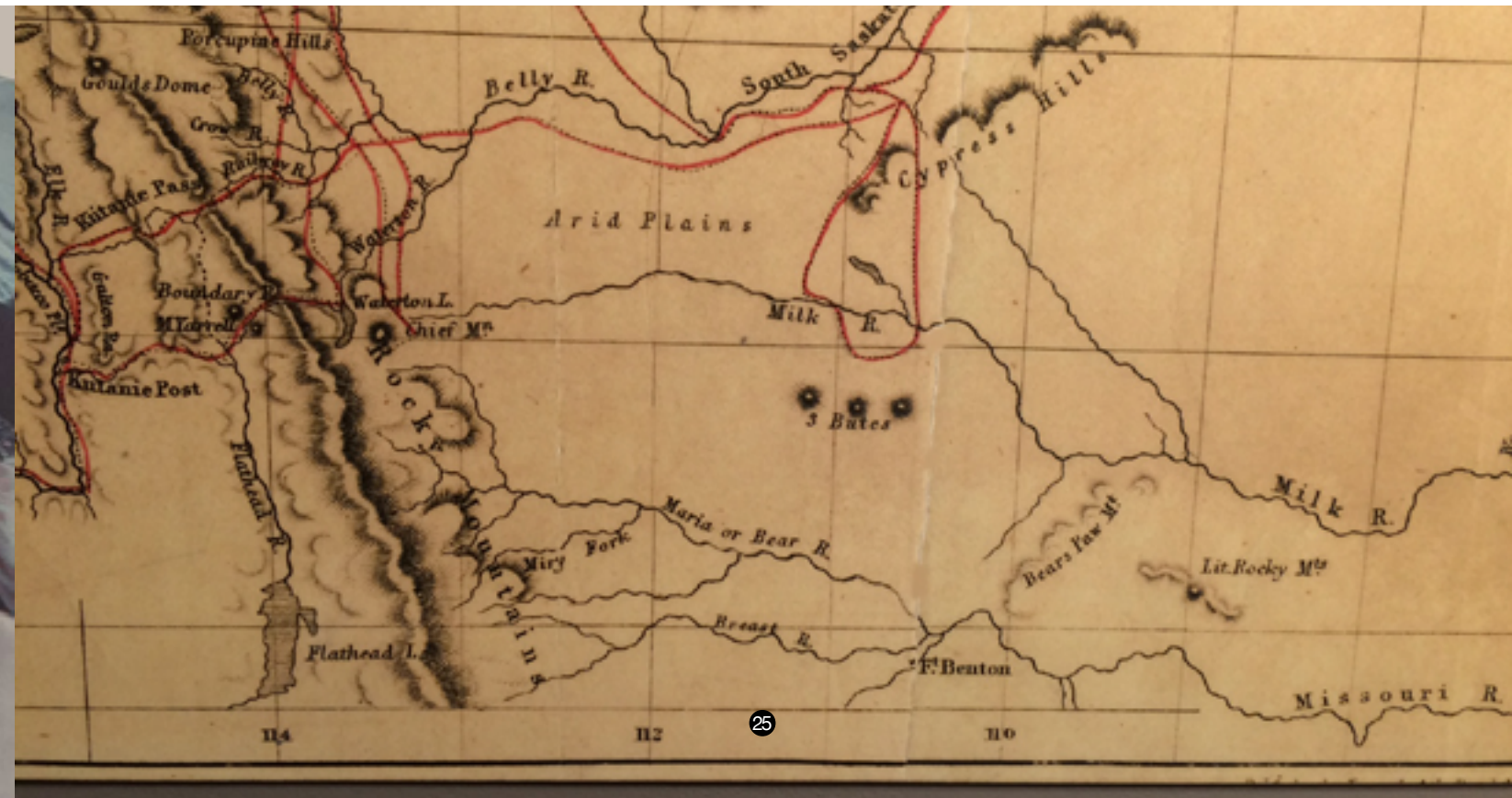
The project accomplishes what no other historical review has done before: it looks at Southern Alberta history through the concurrent lenses of socio-politico-cultural-economic and environmental developments.

What happens on the land affects the water – and there are real human stories behind why these decisions were made. Our focus is to highlight the major decisions and events of Southern Alberta and how those still resonate with us today. It is only through understanding our past that we can make more conscious, collective decisions about our future.

Scholars, professors, historians, community groups, schools, governments, industry, and recreation will benefit greatly from access to this incredible free resource. OWC was pleased to share it with the Galt Museum and Archives to help with their research for the 'Water in a Dry Land' exhibit that was open from May - September 2017. We look forward to using the timelines to continue to tell the story of the Oldman watershed and its people.

Maps of the Oldman Watershed Tell a Story

Our maps are one of the most popular features on our website, with thousands of views each year. Our latest map series showing the dramatic growth in human footprint from 11,000 BP to present day, and projected to 2060, were completed this year and shown publicly for the first time as a timelapse video. We look forward to using these maps to show how the watershed has changed dramatically over time and will continue to change into the future. Spoiler alert - it's not pretty if we continue on our current path.



#OLDMANGOESTOHOLLYWOOD - Part 2

Lethbridge County signed on as a Collaborative Partner in July 2017, by donating \$5000 to the Film Project and working with OWC to create 3 videos to showcase the best practices that they use to improve watershed health. Illustrating how rural municipalities are taking action for the watershed is critical because it inspires all of us to keep up our efforts and raises the bar for everyone. Once complete, these new videos will be a valuable addition to OWC's outreach toolbox, for Lethbridge County, and for all our partners.



THANK YOU TO OUR MANY PROJECT FUNDERS FROM 2015-2018

Founding Partners



Collaborative Partners



Grant Funders



Friends



Connie Simmons; Shannon Frank; Cheryl Bradley, in memory of Bill Brown; Andrea Vaxvick; Anna Garleff; Andrew Hurly, in memory of Sam Zoeteman; Jim and Cheryl Fujikawa; Glen and Kelly Hall; Canadian Constitution Committee; Fish Tales Fly Shop.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

Trusting relationships are the foundation of OWC. Watershed work is people work; it is humans who impact the landscape the most. OWC prides itself on being grassroots and in touch with our stakeholders, and that means regular conversation.

Our communications are not just about getting our message out there; it's about listening to our members and providing meaningful opportunities for them to connect deeply with the watershed and its people. Only by maintaining these connections will people remain committed to watershed health.

Whether it's virtual or in person, we engage people around the very thing that makes life and prosperity in Southern Alberta possible - water.

Presentations Open Eyes and Hearts

Weaving together OWC's photos, videos, historical information, and maps makes for a riveting presentation, and we were pleased to put them to the test this year as part of our 28 presentations to about 1100 people. One of the most memorable was at the Galt Museum and Archives to a packed room of over 50 people who came to hear about the history of the Oldman watershed. Audience members told us afterwards that although they've lived in the area their whole life, they never knew the history and the stories that shape our current reality, and we were asked to repeat the presentation.

Students Taking the Torch

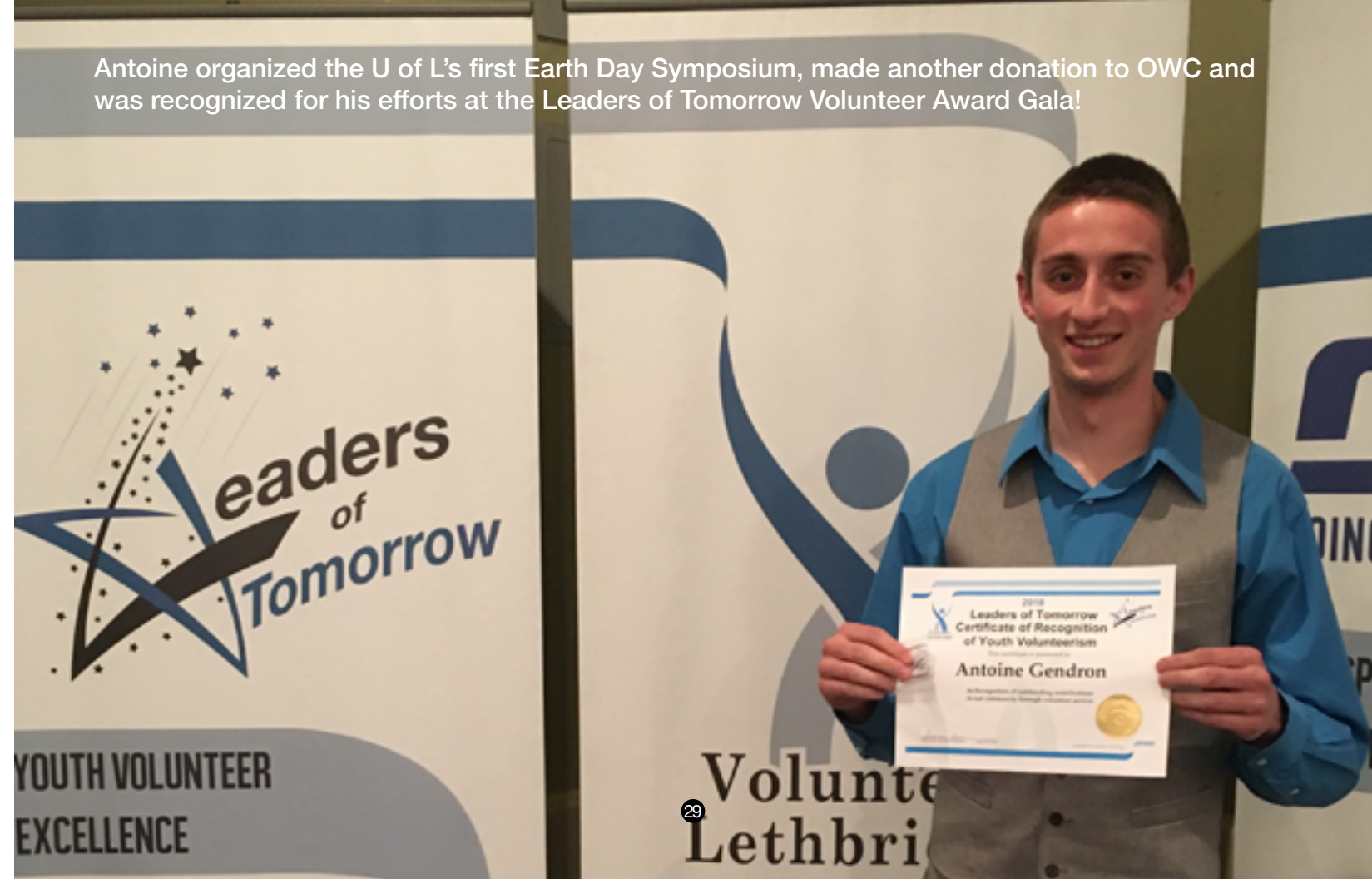
A very special professor and her students truly inspired OWC this year. Professor Shelly Wismath, now Dean of Liberal Education, was teaching a Global Citizenship class at the University of Lethbridge last year, and she invited OWC in to speak about our work and encourage the students to get involved. Six of them did and continue to amaze.

They called their group Global Citizenship for the Oldman Watershed and adopted a stretch of the Oldman River at the Municipal District of Taber Park, testing the water and soil and picking up garbage. This work was their action for the Southern Alberta Water Charter and even inspired the Lethbridge Public Interest Research Group and the Arts and Science Dean's Office to get involved. The students also made a donation to the OWC, and one even joined the Board of Directors last June!

You can read about these inspiring 6 students on OWC's blog - just search 'students'. They shared their story and talked about how much they value the watershed. OWC talked about how much we value them. Thank you to Professor Wismath for your guidance and encouragement of these young leaders, and thank you to Antoine Gendron, Sofia Castillo, Matthew Hammer, Taylor Straga, Paris Ellis, and Debo Adeneye for your leadership and inspiration!



Antoine organized the U of L's first Earth Day Symposium, made another donation to OWC and was recognized for his efforts at the Leaders of Tomorrow Volunteer Award Gala!



In the News

OWC has worked hard to become a trusted source for news media, and our work is now covered regularly by local and regional news outlets. In 2017-18 OWC was in the news about 25 times, and we thank all the media personnel for these opportunities!

Social Media Helps Keep Watersheds Front of Mind

The prevalence of social media, websites, and blogs makes it easy to find plenty of information, but it can also be overwhelming and difficult to dissect the facts from fake news. Our social media followers rely on us as a trusted source of truth and also as a place to have difficult discussions about tough issues. The longer the threads, the more lively the debate, but that is a good thing because it means people care and are paying attention.

Social media is also a great way for people to share their stories, concerns, or events with us. We rely on these channels to recruit volunteers, cultivate donations, and encourage best practices at home, at work, and on the farm. Our partners rely on our channels, too, and we are able to support each other by sharing each other's posts and growing our impact to new audiences.

Our Flickr channel documents our work through photos and is used by the media and many of our partners for their own communications. We are also lucky to have both professional and amateur photos from local photographers, and we thank everyone who has shared their photos with us and allowed us to share them with the world. With 18,804 photos there's something for everyone!

Website and Blog Engage Thousands

Nearly every week OWC releases a blog, and they continue to be our most popular feature on our website. We encourage best practices at home, at work, and on the farm; we celebrate the people conserving our watershed; we make scientific information meaningful to people; we explain hot topics; and much more. In 2017-18 we released 53 blogs, and our most popular ones were viewed about 1000 times.

OWC's website hosts all of our resources for educators, parents, students, scientists, and everyone in between. Our videos, maps, blogs, and historical timelines are all available for free under our "Discover and Learn" section, and we are always adding new and interesting content. In 2017-18 we had 40,626 page views and 16,767 unique visitors!

By the numbers (April 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018):



Facebook:

1,991 people "like" our page
About 25 people view our profile page each day, topping out at over 100 people per day on busy days
Set a new record of over 15,000 people reached in one day



Twitter:

3,560 followers
29,797 profile visits
1,609,900 impressions
610 mentions



Website

40,626 page views
16,767 unique visitors



LinkedIn

1216 connections



Flickr

18,804 photos

28 presentations to about 1100 people
In the news 25 times

"I always learn a lot about the different initiatives and importance of conservation around resources and water, and things that we could be doing better as an individual in the bigger picture. We need to ensure our elected officials know this work is important."

- 2017 Feedback from a Member

WATERSHED LEGACY PROGRAM

The Oldman watershed includes some of the most productive farm and ranchland in the world. The OWC is proud of its reputation as being a “hands-on” organization and we work on the land, directly with our rural stakeholders.

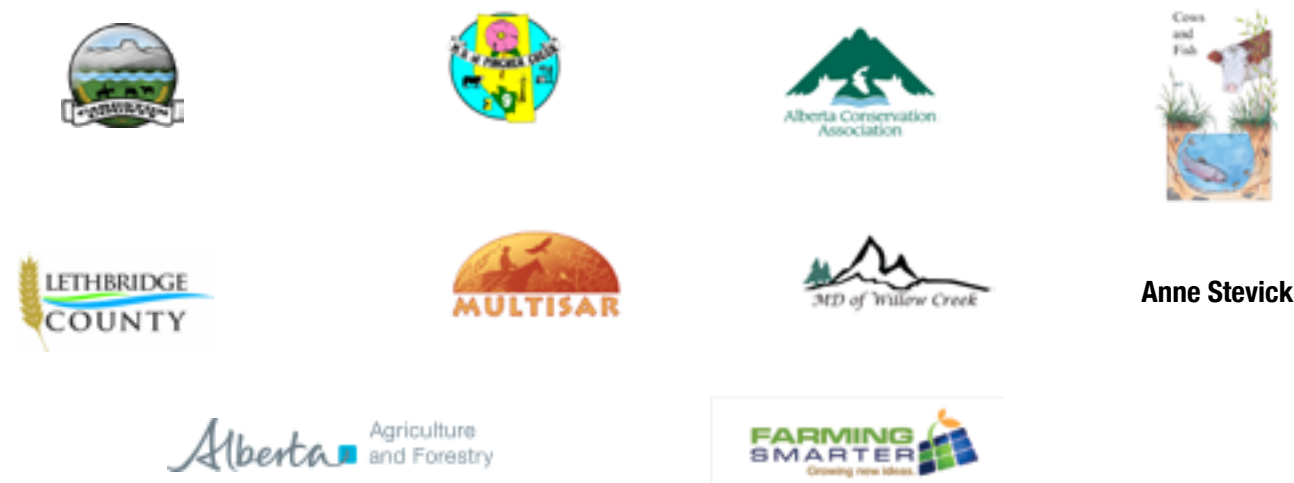
Agriculture is 80% of what we do in Southern Alberta. So, taking care of farmers and ranchers is literally everybody’s business. Landowners have been protecting the water, the wildlife and the land for generations. A legacy of conservation has been built, and Albertans want to see it continue. The Watershed Legacy Program provides the resources for landowners to continue the tradition of stewardship,

Since 2009, we have been working with agricultural groups and producers, providing support for over 60 on-the-ground stewardship projects, totalling over \$180,000. These projects include: streambank restoration, off-stream watering units, riparian fencing, educational events and tours, weed pulls, and more. The WLP has benefitted the rural communities of southern Alberta by supporting stewardship projects that improve the health of the watershed, thus the quality of life for rural land stewards and everyone downstream.

The 2017-2018 Watershed Legacy Program grant recipients:

- **Municipal District of Pincher Creek:** Transboundary Weeds, Water and Stewardship Tour that goes from Waterton to Castle Parks, into the Crowsnest Pass and the East Kootenays.
- **Municipal District of Willow Creek:** Continued support of Bio-control Agent projects to control invasive weed species along the Oldman river and various tributaries.
- **Cody Spencer, Sweetgrass Bison:** Oldman River Riparian Fencing & Restoration – Phase 1 along the lower Oldman river.
- **Pincher Creek Watershed Group:** 16th Annual Blueweed Blitz along Pincher creek and its tributaries.

Thanks to the WLP Team for their continued efforts on making the WLP program a success!



Anne Stevick

Many thanks to our funders for their continued support to the Watershed Legacy Program:



“Whenever I learn something from the OWC, I add a little bit of that learning into my grazing practices. I believe cattle should have access to the river, but try now to make that access late in the year so the grass and weeds can be better managed and the riparian area can be left in better shape.”

- 2017 Feedback from an OWC Member



VOICES OF THE OLDMAN: AGRICULTURE MATTERS

As agriculture in Southern Alberta comes under increasing pressure, discussion around how OWC can best support agricultural programming was intensifying - both online and in person. OWC held a series of facilitated roundtable discussions, *Voices Of The Oldman: Agriculture Matters* to hear directly from producers about watershed stewardship from an agricultural perspective.

The *Voices of Oldman: Agriculture Matters* report was released publicly in September 2017. The number one concern of the 100 participants was social licence and public trust. Clearly, it's more important than ever before that the agricultural industry tells its story. The OWC gained a clear sense that the agricultural community feels misunderstood by their urban counterparts and wants to show the consumer that they can feel good about agriculture in Southern Alberta.

As a result of this feedback, OWC aims to increase its capacity to build trust between rural and urban stakeholders. More resources will be put towards dispelling myths, sharing knowledge, and allowing honest discussion between producers and consumers, so that there is greater understanding and willingness to cooperate on shared issues. We will showcase those

implementing best practices at home, at work and on the farm, and develop pledge programs that demonstrate widespread community action and build on the success of the Southern Alberta Water Charter.

To make this happen we need your help - please volunteer or donate.

WLP PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

WLP Funder Tour

In May of last year, OWC headed out with our partner in crime, Cows & Fish, to tour around folks from the Samuel Hanen Society for Resource Conservation at the Timber Ridge Conservation Site. Glen and Kelly Hall own and manage the conservation site with Alberta Conservation Association and are recipients of a WLP grant. Their property sets the standards high when it comes to modelling stewardship and implementing best practices in agriculture. We showcased these projects to the Hanen Society so they could see that their contribution to the WLP program is money well spent. The Hanen Society has generously been supporting the WLP program and rural stewardship for the past 3 years. Thank you!

15th Annual Blueweed Blitz

The WLP program has been supporting the Blueweed Blitz volunteer event for the better part of 8 years. WLP Manager, Taren Hager, and two of our seasonal Outreach Assistants went out on a hot sunny day in July and helped about 100 participants (landowners and volunteers) to pull and fill over 230 bags (7000lbs!) of blueweed. This group of landowners, cooperative organizations, and volunteers has been working together for many years to eradicate the spread of this invasive weed in the Pincher Creek sub-basin. The OWC would like to thank the Pincher Creek Watershed Group for their hard efforts towards watershed stewardship!



Open Farm Days (August 19-20)

Alberta Open Farm Days is an annual event where farmers, ranchers, and agricultural organizations invite their urban and rural neighbours to stop in for a visit to share stories, see demonstrations, and learn more about where their food comes from. OWC was out at two events this year, educating consumers about agriculture from a watershed perspective at the Timber Ridge Conservation Site and at the Farming Smarter event.

Thanks to Alberta Irrigation Projects Association for letting us borrow your tractors and puzzles for the kids!



6 1

Funded Projects



IMPACTS



49km
Riparian Fencing



25
Off-stream Watering
Systems



80
Bison



300
Sheep



6795
Cows

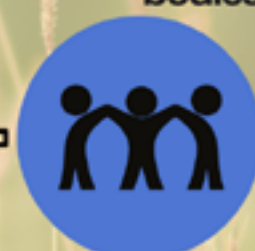
Removed from water
bodies + riparian areas!



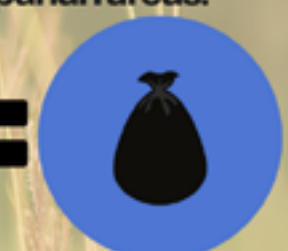
26
Weed Pulls



11
Garbage Clean Ups



1000
Volunteers



3700 Bags Weeds
1977lbs Garbage
removed

8 Bio-Control releases **304** Plans, assessments, surveys
6 Bioengineering projects **380** People engaged in educational events
1300 Willows planted **2** Cattle crossings

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Caring for Our Watersheds

Thank you to Jordan Row, a student at Lethbridge College, for volunteering to help us promote the Caring for Our Watersheds youth contest this winter!

Caring for our Watersheds is an educational program sponsored by Nutrien® that asks students to submit a proposal that answers the question: "What can you do to improve your watershed?"

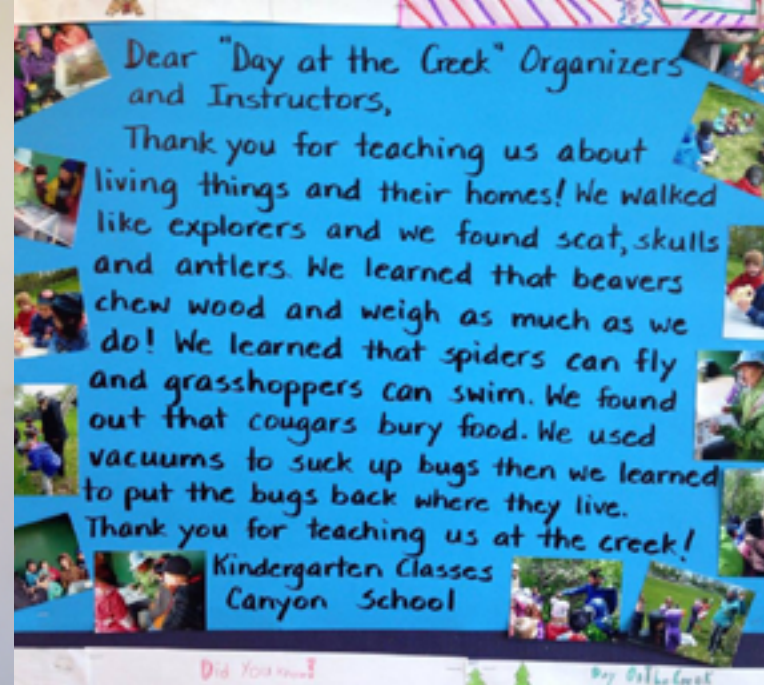
Students must research their local watershed, identify an environmental concern and come up with a realistic solution. Community judges select the top entries to compete at a final competition. Prizes and funding are available for both students and teachers.

Fish Sticks!

This year, OWC organized our first-ever drop-in family puppet-making workshop, held at the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, to celebrate aquatic and riparian fauna in the Oldman watershed. With guidance from professional puppeteer Wendy Passmore-Godfrey of Calgary's WP Puppet Theatre, 55 participants of all ages made puppets of westslope cutthroat trout, frogs, harlequin ducks, and more. They then created a cardboard-box habitat using paper, stones, and vegetation, depicting nice clear 'water' and undisturbed shorelines. Next, youth animated their toy theatre and recorded a quick conservation message for the world to hear.

These video recordings were combined into a 3-minute film, which you can watch on OWC's YouTube channel.

This event was financially supported by Alberta Conservation Association - Thank you for supporting watershed conservation education!



Day on the Creek

OWC has been meeting throughout the year with the Pincher Outdoor Education Movement (POEM) to support getting students learning in and about the outdoors. Together, local teachers, Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association, Alberta Parks, the Town of Pincher Creek, and several other organizations hosted the first annual Day on the Creek to connect students and community members with their local environment.

May 24 was a very blustery day, but the sun was shining, and busloads of students showed up to learn about wildlife, riparian health, aquatic invertebrates, water treatment, Blackfoot culture, archaeology, outdoor play, and more.

OWC delivered programming to about 100 junior- and senior-high school students, which included learning what a watershed is, standing on a hillside to simulate the flow of water through headwaters to the Hudson Bay, and identifying benthic macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects), followed by a discussion about what they can tell us about water quality and how it relates to surrounding land use.

Thank you to Alberta Conservation Association for supporting OWC's involvement and supplies for this well-received event!

Watershed Wonders at the Galt

The Galt Museum invited OWC to run a drop-in family program on July 25. About 100 participants made a moving fish craft (with googly eyes!), put together a puzzle of the Oldman logo (which also tells the story of the watershed), explored a map of the watershed, and heard a story about water (with a guest appearance by Winnie the Westslope fish puppet!). There was also an opportunity to write down what you love about the Oldman watershed, and how you help take care of it. Thank you to everyone who participated - and well done on your fabulous fish! Thank you to ATCO for sponsoring this event!



Videos, Games and Popcorn at the Galt

On August 8, OWC hosted a movie and games event that explored how kids and families can have fun while helping to protect the environment. About 100 attendees had the opportunity to watch 3 different educational videos made by OWC and partners. This was a chance to learn more about how you can be watershed heroes and help protect the environment - with a salty popcorn snack to enjoy on the side!

First we found out more about our watershed, in the video “Where is your Watershed?” made in partnership with Agrium. Next, we shared some great science tips - how kids and their families can be good watershed stewards by changing practices at home and in their neighborhoods through the “Kids and Water Management” - City of Lethbridge, collaborative video! The last video showed us how the food we eat every day is connected to the land and water through agriculture and what happens along the way through the “Kids Know Potatoes Come From Snow” - Potato Growers of Alberta, collaborative video!

After the videos, everyone enjoyed some coloring, table games, puzzles and some farm toys to play with (many thanks to Alberta Irrigation Projects Association for letting us borrow their puzzles and farm toys for this event)! Thanks to all who attended for coming and learning about watersheds with us!

Special thanks to ATCO for joining us in the fun that day and for sponsoring this event!



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

WATERSHED PLANNING AND ADVISORY COUNCILS OF ALBERTA

OWC is one of 11 WPACs in Alberta; there is one for each major river. WPACs work in 4 main areas:

1. Convenor and collaborator
2. Education and literacy
3. Planning and policy
4. Monitoring and reporting



WPACs meet regularly to learn from each other and to maintain a strong provincial voice with the Government of Alberta. Together we shape the role and future of WPACs as leaders in watershed management, stakeholder engagement, and environmental education. In 2017-18 WPACs provided input to Alberta Education's curriculum review as well as Alberta Environment and Parks' review of WPAC roles. In 2018 we look forward to the WPAC Summit in Peace River.

Thank you to our 10 sister WPACs across Alberta for all that you do to improve watershed health!

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (SSRB WMP) REVIEW

In partnership with all 4 Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) in the South Saskatchewan watershed, a review of the SSRB WMP began in October 2017, with each WPAC focusing on their own watershed. The review was held to get a sense of how well the plan has been achieving its stated goals, to provide updated information to stakeholders, and to identify gaps and future work. A diversity of stakeholders participated in the review, including the OWC Board of Directors and those involved in the original development of the plan in 2006. OWC's summary document and the overall final report are still underway and will be available in 2018. The review was a tremendous learning experience, and OWC looks forward to sharing the results!

A big thank you to the Bow River Basin Council for kickstarting and coordinating the project across WPACs, to Janna Casson for chairing OWC's Review Committee and summarizing all the feedback into one coherent document, and to all the volunteers who participated in OWC's portion of the project:

Janna Casson, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (Chair)
Alan Harrold, Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District
Lori Goater and Cheryl Bradley, Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Doug Kaupp, City of Lethbridge
John Younger, Alberta Health Services
Shirley Pickering, Highwood - Little Bow Public Advisory Committee
Henk De Vlieger, Member at Large
Dwayne Rogness, Lethbridge County
Terence Hochstein, Potato Growers of Alberta
Mark Bennett, Bow River Basin Council
Mike Murray, Bow River Basin Council

Your involvement makes our work possible, and we sincerely appreciate all the time and energy you put into this project!

ALBERTA WATER COUNCIL

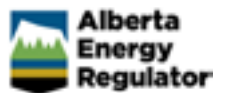
The AWC is a provincial non-profit that provides policy recommendations to the Government of Alberta, tracks progress on the Water for Life Strategy, and undertakes projects of provincial importance. The Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs) of Alberta have a seat on the AWC's Board of Directors, and the OWC is now serving as the WPAC Director on this Board. Thank you very much to Cheryl Fujikawa for serving as our representative!



Currently the AWC is focused on 2 valuable projects: *Protecting Sources of Drinking Water in Alberta* and *Building Resiliency to Multi-Year Drought*. Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils are involved in both projects, and OWC looks forward to using the toolkits that are being developed.

ALBERTA ENERGY REGULATOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This committee provides input to AER as they work towards 3 new major approaches to resource management: cumulative effects management system, area based regulation, and integrated decision approach. This committee is important because it keeps stakeholders informed as these changes progress, and offers opportunities for discussion about how each sector will be impacted. Thank you to Jim Fujikawa for serving as our WPAC representative on this committee!



CITY OF LETHBRIDGE ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORIC RESOURCES STRATEGY COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP



The OWC has been participating in this group since late 2015 with the goal of ensuring Lethbridge's next Integrated Community Sustainability Plan / Municipal Development Plan sets much-needed environmental targets. Led by the City's Planning and Development Services Department, an Environment and Historic Resources Strategy has been developed and will inform the planning process, which is expected to begin in 2018. OWC will continue to encourage the City to set clear environmental targets and support their achievement with adequate resources.

Thank you to Perry Stein, City of Lethbridge, for leading this important project and giving OWC the opportunity to be involved!

CHINOOK FOOD CONNECT

CFC is a grassroots network dedicated to increasing awareness around food security in southern Alberta, and OWC is a member. In 2017 CFC developed a local food map for Southern Alberta; this map was the action they pledged to complete as part of OWC's Southern Alberta Water Charter.

Thank you to Ronda Reach and everyone who contributes to CFC for your efforts this year!

ENVIRONMENT LETHBRIDGE

EL delivers critical urban environmental programs that contribute to watershed health and strong communities. OWC has been instrumental in the building of EL since 2011 and continued to actively participate on the Executive Committee in 2017-18.



Highlights from 2017-18 include sharing the results of the State of the Environment Report; engagement events like Seedy Saturday, Reuse Rendezvous, and the Green Challenge to spur environmental action; information and awareness activities like the new Dear Mabel column to answer environmental questions; and celebrating Green Superheros through an awards ceremony. The valuable work EL does makes a big difference for our community and for environmental health, and OWC is proud to contribute to these important projects.

Thank you to Kathleen Sheppard, Courtnay Sopko, and everyone who helps make Environment Lethbridge so successful!

ROUNDTABLE ON THE CROWN OF THE CONTINENT

The Roundtable is a network of networks, bringing over 100 groups together from all sectors to share information, resources, and best practices. The forum helps protect the headwaters of North America that provide water to millions of people and flow through a large portion of the continent all the way to the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Hudson Bay.



The OWC participates on the Leadership Team of the Roundtable to guide and support its work. The primary event for the Roundtable is its annual 3-day conference, where participants learn from their neighbours across the Crown and strengthen their transboundary relationships.

Thank you to Peter Gurche, Ian Dyson, and everyone who supports the Roundtable for your valuable contributions!

LETHBRIDGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

OWC has been a long-time member and has participated on various committees over the years, to give input into Chamber policies and direction and to raise awareness about watershed health among business leaders.



In 2017-18 the Chamber demonstrated its commitment to the watershed by participating in the OWC's Southern Alberta Water Charter. Their pledged action was adding a "Sustainable YQL" page to their website, highlighting the benefits of a healthy watershed and how businesses and residents in Lethbridge can help. The Chamber also committed to drinking tap water at the Chamber office, an act that will reduce the amount of plastic water bottles used. Also in 2017, OWC was honoured to be nominated for the Chamber's Business of the Year Award - Environment Category.

Thank you to Karla Pynch and the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce for your leadership this year!

KAINAI ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

KEPA's Annual Summit is a highlight of OWC's year, where captivating presentations and tours showcase the important work being done by members of the Kainai Nation. OWC continues to offer support as this fairly new organization takes shape and looks forward to assisting with projects. Thank you to Mike Bruised Head, Kansie Fox, William Singer III, Lori Brave Rock, and everyone who is involved in KEPA for your leadership and dedication to KEPA and the watershed!

PORCUPINE HILLS COALITION

The OWC has participated in this multi-stakeholder group since 2015, primarily to listen to the concerns of local residents and assist with finding practical solutions for land management of the Porcupine Hills. The group is made up of those who have an interest in protecting the Porcupine Hills from environmental degradation. As OWC is a multi-stakeholder based organization, we bring to the table the views of many sectors. We listen to voices around the table and also share points of view from other stakeholders as well as watershed information. In 2017-18 the group focused on understanding the Government of Alberta's plans for the area and providing input to those plans that would improve watershed health. Thank you to Cheryl Bradley for coordinating the group and to all the Coalition members for their valuable contributions!

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER BASIN INTRA-BASIN COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The OWC participates on this committee to provide advice to the Government of Alberta on managing water during periods of water shortage and how to best meet the Master Agreement on Apportionment, which shares water between the prairie provinces. Though it was very hot and dry last summer, full reservoirs provided much-needed supply to users, and apportionment was met. Thank you to Brian Brewin, MD of Taber, for serving as our representative and Doug Kaupp, City of Lethbridge, for serving as the Alternate!



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