



Newsletter

Fall
2005

Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society

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Mandate: "The Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society exists for the purpose of improving, enhancing and protecting the watershed health for all watershed inhabitants, present and future."

Progress to Date:

State of the Watershed Initiative

The LWSS continues with its efforts to enhance the overall health of the Lac La Nonne watershed, and increase local awareness of the issues and opportunities within this watershed. Protecting and improving conditions within the watershed however requires knowledge of the current conditions of the watershed, an understanding of the various factors and land-use activities that may be impacting the watershed, and the ability to measure the benefits and improvements resulting from stewardship activities. As such, the LWSS is currently pursuing the implementation of a State of the Watershed Initiative for the Lac La Nonne Watershed. Fundamental to this initiative is the drafting of a State of the Watershed Report for this watershed.

It is envisioned that when completed, this report will be a comprehensive and living public document that will serve as a valuable tool for guiding local watershed planning/policy decisions and the implementation of future Beneficial Management Practices (BMP).

At present, work continues on trying to secure the partnerships and funding needed to succeed. The LWSS is currently meeting with the Lac La Nonne Enhancement and Protection Association (LEPA) and other organizations discussing funding, partnering in gathering information for the Watershed Report and the idea of holding a workshop in the spring of 2006 re: restoration opportunities for Lac La Nonne.

Grateful acknowledgement to the following in assisting financially with this newsletter:

1. AFGA Parkland Stewardship Program
2. Rich Valley Golden Circle Friendship Club.
3. MLA George VanderBurg

Farm Water Watch Program

The LWSS has been working with the Alberta Fish & Game Association's (AFGA) Parkland Stewardship Program in an effort to deliver the Farm Water Watch (FWW) service to the agricultural community within the Lac La Nonne Watershed. The FWW service is designed to allow area farmers the opportunity to gather information on how their agricultural activities may be affecting surface water quality. The on-farm service provides a confidential and practical way for producers to collect and analyze surface water runoff from individual fields/pastures, or monitor the changes in water quality within a creek on their lands, and to learn about water issues specific to their operations and to take a proactive role in the stewardship of the streams and wetlands in the community.

Through Farm Water Watch, water quality testing kits would be made available to land owners to test and analyze the water quality on their own property. On farm consultations is also provided to assist the producer in identifying potential risks to surface water quality, and planning any Beneficial Management Practice (BMP) which would improve riparian habitat or mitigate impacts on water quality.

The Farm Water Watch will be registering participants from the Lac La Nonne watershed throughout the fall and winter of 2005, as well as coordinating a local information seminar in February 2006. For more information or to participate in FWW contact David Johnson with the AFGA at 780-437-2343 or Stan at 674-4040; Ed at 967-5639.

The LWSS became a registered Society in March of 2005. This enables a better opportunity for funding possibilities.

****Photo Contest Winner****

Wendy Neddrie - Watch for the 2006 Calendar available for distribution in November. It will contain the winning pictures of the contest. A special thank you to all participants.

Lac La Nonne Watershed

Home Site Consultation Program

The Home Site Consultation Program, a key component of the “Living By Water” Project sponsored by the Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN), is designed to assist waterfront residents employ environmentally friendly practices on the property to help maintain shoreline and water health. The “site specific” consultation provided by a trained FAN technician working with the landowner will identify actions currently assisting or which may be added to improve environmental friendliness of the property. The program takes into consideration the yard from front to shoreline; the buffer zone; the house/cabin exterior, re: eaves troughs/rain barrels; outbuildings re: location and usage, i.e. fuel storage; and the water activities such as boating, etc.

Through discussion and joint evaluation of the property, residents are made aware of possible changes they may make, specific to their property, which may enhance their enjoyment of waterfront living and which would provide the least impact, or in fact improve, the shoreline water quality. The program is completely voluntary, confidential and without cost to the participants. Residents will be left with a written evaluation and applicable literature that they may wish to consult when they make changes on their property.

The LWSS, in partnership with FAN brought this program to 27 waterfront residents in 2005. The program has been very well received by participants and its popularity is expected to increase as word of mouth spreads. As such, LWSS expects to deliver the program again in 2006 and is currently working with FAN to not only allow for more consultations in 2006 but to also expand the program to make it simpler for participants to access material (information and products) they may require to implement some of the proposed changes.

If you are a waterfront resident or near any of the lakes or streams in the Lac La Nonne Watershed and wish to participate in this program in 2006, please submit your name, address and contact information to the coordinator at 967-2200.

Environmental Plans Protect Water, Land and Air

Protecting ground and surface water quality is one of the key objectives covered by Alberta Farmers and ranchers as they develop Environmental Farm Plans for their operations.

Along with recognizing ongoing good management practices, the planning process that has already been completed by more than 3,000 Alberta producers, identifies where environmental changes can be made. Among the most common improvements identified by producers include:

- Relocation of livestock wintering and feeding sites;
- Development of fencing to restrict livestock access to sensitive riparian areas;
- Development of off-site watering systems;
- Relocation of farm fuel, pesticide and fertilizer storage facilities to an appropriate distance from ground and surface water sources;
- Development of proper nutrient management plans which cover safe storage, handling and application of manure and fertilizer;
- Adoption of crop production practices which reduce the risk of soil and water erosion.

“It’s a comprehensive and yet confidential planning process that helps producers make a thorough environmental risk assessment,” says Bill Lee, a beef producer from Camp Creek and one of four regional team leaders with the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (AEFP) Company. Once plans are completed and reviewed producers can apply for assistance through the Canada Alberta Farm Stewardship Program to receive up to \$30,000.00 in cost-shared financial assistance to implement many of the recommended improvements.

For more information on the EFP process contact the AEFP office in Edmonton at 1-866-844-2337 or visit the website at: www.albertaEFP.com. The local EFP contact in the Lac La Nonne area is Cindy Galliford of Onoway (780) 967-0094

Environmental Farm Plan Workshops

Sponsored by LWSS

Rich Valley Hall

Workshop I – Oct. 19, 10:00 a.m.

Workshop II – Nov. 2, - 10:00 a.m.

Lunch Provided

To Register: Ph. Cindy at 967-0094

What Else Can Be Done?

Governments and Water Management

1. Support Ecosystem and watershed research.
2. Support efforts to minimize soil erosion
3. Encourage energy conservation
4. Support research and education programs

Developers and Contractors

1. Take corrective actions immediately, if erosion problems occur.
2. Minimize tree and vegetation disturbances
3. Maintain the natural drainage of the site to the fullest extent possible.
4. Post signs educating the public as to where run-off goes when it leaves the immediate area.

Industries

1. Develop and use safer chemicals.
2. Support and develop ways to recycle.
3. Abide by water pollution laws.
4. Employ and train certified operators.

Farmers, Foresters, Land Owners

1. Adopt and carry out pesticide and soil best management practices.
2. Manage nutrient inputs, including fertilizers, manure and nitrogen from legumes.
3. Use a wide variety of soil and water conservation practices.
4. Keep livestock out of streams so their wastes cannot pollute the water and their activities cannot cause bank erosion.
5. Leave buffer strips of trees and shrubs or grass along the edges of streams or drainage channels.
6. Manage the land with the interest of long-term profits and with future generations in mind.

Civic Groups and Schools

1. Become educated about stream ecology.
2. Become educated about best management practices.
3. Organize, promote, and participate in “stream sweep days” and “adopt-a-stream” programs.

Water is our natural heritage – Let’s strive to preserve it