



L.W.S.S.

Newsletter

Fall
2010

Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society

www.laclanonnewatershed.com

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Message from a Volunteer & Stakeholder: *Camp Nakamun*

It has been an interesting and significant learning experience as a new member of the board of LWSS. Getting to know the people involved and becoming aware of the various organizations that are concerned with and involved in discussions, assessments and actions related to lake watershed issues has provided for me a new perspective and appreciation of the need for a broad community involvement.

Camp Nakamun is a significant presence on Lake Nakamun, and it is our purpose to become more fully aware of the concerns that need to be addressed and to proceed in cooperation with other stakeholders in actions to mitigate damage and enhance the quality of the lake and its shoreline. ~Don Swanson, Camp Nakamun



Photo Credit: Cows and Fish

PROJECTS AND OUTREACH

Watershed Youth Education: June 2nd began clear with a forecast of no rain and warm temperatures; the perfect day to host 45 Grade 5 students at Camp Nakamun on Nakamun Lake which is within the Lac la Nonne watershed. This is an annual event sponsored by Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society (LWSS) and assisted by West Central Conservation Group (WCCG), Lac Ste. Anne and Barrhead counties. The students from Rich Valley and Dunstable schools learned about groundwater, riparian areas and vegetation, aquatic life, and how to sample and assess water quality. The stations were taught by various industry professionals who were happy to share their expertise in an outdoor venue with "real-life" examples to emphasize the material being taught. For many students this was a first time opportunity to learn about the value of the watershed that they live in and how they can directly impact it through their actions. The students responded very positively and were extremely enthusiastic to be able to see, touch, and experience many issues surrounding lake management. This event ties in well with the Grade 5 curriculum and was very well received by both students and staff. The schools were treated to a hotdog lunch and snacks throughout the day and left with a bagful of goodies and smiles on their faces.

By Penny Stephani, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Lake Day Co-coordinator)



"Bugs" Photo Credit: Penny Stephani

Watershed Calendar Fundraiser: The 2011 calendar is underway! Thank you to those dedicated volunteers and sponsors who helped make it happen. The photos selected this year came from the 2010 photo contest submissions. Calendars will be on sale soon from LWSS members, the County offices and local businesses around the watershed for a price of \$8/calendar.

Riparian (Lakeshore) Health Project: Summer 2009 completes the inventory of health and condition of the riparian areas around our three main lakes. All of the final reports are available on our website www.laclanonnewatershed.com. Cows and Fish wishes to thank all of the property owners who worked with their staff over the past two years.

Lac La Nonne shorelines rate "Healthy but with Problems". See pages 3 & 4 for more information on this project & some fun stuff.

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."

Lac La Nonne Watershed

Feature Focus – Weeds In Our Watershed

WEEDS, WEEDS, WEEDS !!

By Dwayne Willmer

Often mistaken for wildflowers, invasive plants are being identified in the riparian and upland areas in the Watershed. In efforts to bring awareness of the potential problems and solutions to the presence and spread of invasive weeds, the LWSS is introducing a "Weed of the Month" initiative which will serve to educate folks on how to identify such weeds, and provide detailed information on appropriate measures for managing, controlling, removing, and/or disposing of them in the best possible manner. *The first edition will be launched on our website in the New Year with a new weed added every month!*

The LWSS is working with the Summer Villages of Nakamun and Birch Cove, Counties of Lac Ste. Anne and Barrhead, Cows and Fish, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Sustainable Resources Development and others in this partnership that will help us better understand these invasive plants and what to do about them.

We also want to host a "Weed Education Day" in the summer of 2011 at a location in the watershed yet to be determined. This session will include weed experts to provide hands-on identification of the noxious and prohibited noxious weeds in the riparian and upland areas, and provide advice on appropriate treatment, removal, disposal, etc. This day will also have a "contest" to encourage some of our younger residents to get engaged in the significant stewardship effort of dealing with noxious weeds. We envision prizes for the most plants removed (or some other relevant accomplishment) and wiener roast to make this a complete community event. *We encourage anyone who may want to get involved in organizing this event to call or email to your Councillor or a LWSS member and volunteer to help.*

For your reference, valuable information about weed management in your area is available from your County Agriculture Service Board:

- Lac Ste. Anne County www.gov.lacsteanne.ab.ca (785-3411)
- County of Barrhead (780-674-3331). www.countybarrhead.ab.ca/services_agricultural.shtml

Other relevant information can be found at:

- Alberta Invasive Plant Council <http://www.invasiveplants.ab.ca>. Here you can find out more about the Alberta Weed Control Act and Alberta Weed Control Regulation.

Additional resources include:

- Alberta Invasive Weeds <http://www.wheatlandcounty.ca/files/ID%20Book%202010%20-%20Final%20-%20Copy.pdf>
- Cows and Fish www.cowsandfish.org

This is an exciting new initiative and we look forward to sharing it with you!

BAD



Common tansy – invasive

Tansy photo courtesy of Cows and Fish

OK



Marsh ragwort – native

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ LWSS Monthly Meetings – 3rd Monday
 - ❖ LWSS Annual General Meeting – June 2011
 - ❖ Grade 5 Lake Day – June 2011
 - ❖ Weed Education Day – July 2011
 - ❖ 3rd Annual Golf Tournament – August 2011
- Watch website, mail and email for updates and more info*

People Power!!

We welcome anyone to join us at our monthly meetings or call us any time. We do have some specific volunteer openings:

Position – Secretary / Record Keeper

Project Champions: Newsletter

Photo Contest and Calendar

Golf Tournament & BBQ

Have other ideas? Let us know!

Call Dwayne at 780-940-0942 or email djwillmer@shaw.ca.

Who's Who in the LWSS

Chairperson – Jeff McCammon (Lac La Nonne)

Vice Chairperson – Dwayne Willmer (Nakamun Lake)

Some of our Stakeholders: County of Barrhead, Lac Ste. Anne County, Lac La Nonne Enhancement and Protection Association, Camp Nakamun, Summer Village of Nakamun Park, farmers, lake residents & visitors. *Thanks to the Lakeside Recreation Club for hosting our monthly meetings.*

Technical Advisory Committee: Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada – Agri-Environment Services Branch (formerly PFRA), Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society - Cows and Fish, West Central Conservation Group

Research Partner: University of Alberta

October 2010

Printing thanks to



Alberta Lottery Fund

Community Initiatives Program

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

Lac La Nonne shorelines rate "Healthy but with Problems"

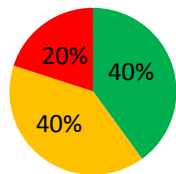
Cows and Fish October 2010

The overall health of a lake can be influenced by the shoreline vegetation and soils. A healthy riparian area (green zone of vegetation around our waterbodies) can assist us in achieving goals of good water quality, stored water quantity, better fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities. Riparian areas have a unique array of water-loving plants that play a critical role in filtering water. This primarily native vegetation has deep binding roots that hold soil in place and trap nutrients, sediments and debris. A diverse plant community of cattails, bulrushes, trees, shrubs, and native grasses also creates a habitat mosaic for songbirds, fish and other wildlife. The soils in the riparian zone act like a sponge to absorb water to recharge the lake from underground.






Understanding where we're at" is key to figuring out "where we want go". One of the questions the LWSS has been asking is: what is the health or condition of the riparian areas in our watershed? If this zone is less than healthy, it can be contributing to the poor water quality and loss of fish habitat in our lakes. In the summer of 2009, Cows and Fish (Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society) was invited to complete an inventory of the riparian areas around Lac La Nonne. The study involved 14 landowners and 15 inventory sites around the lake on approximately 4.5 km of shore to represent about 28.5 km of shore (the total perimeter of the lake). The results of the data collected on these 15 sites shows that overall the riparian areas average rating is *healthy but with problems*. The project involved participation from both agricultural, acreage and cottage landowners and assessed public, municipal and privately owned lands as well as lands in developed and undeveloped areas.

Riparian Health Results for 15 Sites on Lac La Nonne



Average Rating = *Healthy but with problems*

Healthy 	little to no impairment to any riparian functions
Healthy but with problems 	some impairment to riparian functions due to management or natural causes
Unhealthy 	some impairment to riparian functions due to management or natural causes

There are some common objectives for riparian management around Lac La Nonne including:

- * Establish new and maintaining existing healthy native tree and shrub communities, along with cattail and bulrush communities where they are able to grow.
- * Reduce shoreline alterations by stopping or minimising vegetation removal, not using riprap (rock walls) and taking equipment and ATVs off-shore to avoid soil compaction and bare ground in this sensitive area.
- * Control invasive weeds by learning what is prohibited and/or noxious on the shorelines, in uplands and in our yards, and the proper techniques to get rid of them. This objective would benefit from a coordinated approach in the watershed.

To meet the goal of overall improved health for our lakes each of us needs to take control of the reins for our own property and the lands adjacent to be a part of the solution. Any in-lake restoration efforts may be futile if we don't address external inputs of nutrients. To do this together we can take advantage of opportunities for much needed education and awareness to all landowners. We can highlight positive actions taking place to showcase what works in managing riparian areas for the benefit of agriculture, recreation and the lakes. We can invite Cows and Fish to repeat the inventory in 5 years to see how the riparian area has changed. Future plans include an inventory of the tributary streams in the watershed as well.

The reports for Nakamun Lake & Majeau Lake (2008) and La La Nonne (2009) are up on the LWSS website www.laclanonndwatershed.com.

Funding for this phase (2009) of the Riparian Health Initiative was provided by Alberta Lottery Fund Community Initiatives Program, Cows and Fish, and Lac La Nonne Enhancement and Protection Association (LEPA). Additional support was provided by Sustainable Resource Development - Public Lands, County of Barrhead, and Lac Ste. Anne County.



Look for symptoms of non-functional riparian areas

shoreline alteration

frequent algae bloom

non-native species and bare ground



Some Fun Stuff

Source: Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society

Test Your Riparian Knowledge with a Quick Quiz – Healthy vs. Unhealthy

Which of these indicators represents a *Healthy* riparian area, and which represents an *Unhealthy* riparian area.

1	85% or greater of the riparian area is covered with vegetation of any kind	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
2	More than 50% of the plants are taller than your knees	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
3	Cattails and bulrushes are growing in the riparian area	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
4	Willows and/or other shrubs and trees are growing in the riparian area, with young plants present to replace the older ones over time.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
5	Plants such as Kentucky bluegrass (lawn grass), clover, creeping red fescue and dandelion represent less than 15% of all the plants growing in the riparian area. Native plants dominate the riparian area.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
6	Noxious weeds make up more than 15% of all the plants in the riparian area (examples include Canada thistle, purple loosestrife, scentless chamomile and perennial sow thistle).	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
7	Riparian area (bank and shore) has been disced, had rocks or soil moved or removed or been physically reshaped by recreational activities or livestock.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
8	The riparian area has been repeatedly mowed or heavily grazed or had fertilizer and/or herbicides applied.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
9	Sand, gravel or rocks have been imported into the riparian area.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy
10	A variety of wildlife are often seen in the riparian area.	<input type="radio"/>	Healthy	<input type="radio"/>	Unhealthy

LAC LA NONNE WATERSHED WORD SEARCH

C	E	S	Y	B	F	U	T	U	R	E	A	BULRUSH BOAT BUGS CABIN FARM FUTURE GROUNDWATER IRON LAC LA NONNE LAKE MAJEAU NAKAMUM NUTRIENTS PLANT PELICAN RIPARIAN SHORE WATERSHED WILDLIFE
R	R	B	D	U	P	A	E	L	E	H	S	
I	O	D	B	L	T	E	K	I	O	O	T	
P	H	J	A	R	G	J	A	T	U	T	N	
A	S	N	A	U	E	A	L	D	A	A	E	
R	T	L	Y	S	N	M	V	D	A	O	I	
I	P	T	H	H	O	I	R	L	N	B	R	
A	D	E	H	S	R	E	T	A	W	B	T	
N	I	G	X	B	T	I	M	C	F	U	U	
L	A	C	L	A	N	O	N	N	E	G	N	
E	F	I	L	D	L	I	W	B	M	S	N	
N	U	M	A	K	A	N	B	A	N	C	O	
S	G	R	O	U	N	D	W	A	T	E	R	
W	O	N	A	C	I	L	E	P	C	N	I	

Answers

Healthy vs. Unhealthy -> 1. Healthy 2. Healthy 3. Healthy 4. Healthy 5. Healthy 6. Unhealthy 7. Unhealthy 8. Unhealthy 9. Unhealthy 10. Healthy