

# Newsletter

Spring  
2007



L.W.S.S.

## Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society

[www.laclanonnewatershed.com](http://www.laclanonnewatershed.com)

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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."*

### **LWSS Receives National Recognition**

On March 2, 2007, Wildlife Habitat Canada presented the national "Countryside Canada" stewardship award to 11 of Canada's exemplary stewards. The Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society was one of 7 Alberta individuals and stewardship groups to receive the award.

For information about Wildlife Habitat Canada and the Countryside Canada award visit [www.whc.org](http://www.whc.org) and follow the national stewardship awards links.

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Lorna McFadzen & Jerry Wispinski receiving the award on behalf of the Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society.

Spring has arrived – time for snow to go, ice to melt, baby calves to be born, geese, robins, and crows to return and time for mother nature to renew and start to replenish the earth.

Much activity by the LWSS has been completed and more yet to look forward to since the last newsletter was sent out in October 2006. Remember that one?

1. **The State of the Watershed Report** - now available for anyone who wishes to have a copy at no cost. Hard copies or a CD Rom are available, or you can visit our website.
2. **The Homesite Consultation Program** – a service for lake front dwellers that were interested in receiving valuable information and suggestions for their yard site and shoreline from technical staff of the Living By Water Project.
3. **Multi-agency restoration workshop** - held by LEPA to garner the scientific community's comment on the State of the Watershed report, and discuss options for Lac La Nonne and the watershed. Follow up activities are being planned.
4. **Calendar Sales/Photo Contest** – our 2nd local fund raising endeavour was a success. 400 calendars were sold! Thank you!  
(See more info, flip side.)
5. **Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) workshops** LWSS in partnership with local Facilitators offered 2 and both were unsuccessful. This is an opportunity for Ag Producers to have access to up to \$50,000.00 financial assistance through the Canada Alberta Farm Stewardship Program. Not difficult, not very time consuming, the opportunity is there.....take advantage!
6. **Farm Water Watch (FWW) Program** – we hoped for 10 participants but only have three thus far! This is an excellent confidential chance to assess the quality of the surface water on your own property with technical aid from Alberta Fish and Game staff. It's FREE!
7. **Beneficial Management Practices (BMP)** – with a huge contribution both financially and in volunteer time LEPA completed two BMP projects. A third BMP in partnership with LEPA demonstrating a system of a shallow well and a windmill powered pump for summer livestock water will be finished with weather allows. These projects demonstrate livestock management options to minimize impact on the local environment.
8. **Ag Capture Land Use Inventory Pilot Project.** An initiative spearheaded by Agriculture Canada – PFRA to inventory land use in the Lac La Nonne watershed for future planning purposes. A short summary/overview will be available on the website.

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The summer of 2007 proves to be another great year of activities, events and progress in the Lac La Nonne watershed.

1. **The Homesite Consultation Program** for lake front dwellers will continue for the summer of 2007. Contact *Barbara Kleespies* at 418-0452.
2. **Stream water sampling** - Volunteers from the LWSS and LEPA are once again taking water samples for laboratory analysis from the tributary streams to Lac La Nonne, Majeau and Nakamun lakes. Six teams of trained volunteers, each consisting of an agricultural resident and a recreational resident are collecting samples of the spring runoff at eight designated sites in the watershed. See map on LWSS web site or at [www.lepa-ab.com](http://www.lepa-ab.com)
3. **Paleolimnology study of Lac La Nonne** - ALMS (Alberta Lake Management Society) will be taking samples of the sediment from the bottom of the lake. With these samples, data collected can provide a picture of how the lake has changed over time, particularly with respect to the addition of phosphorus. This information will continue to add to our knowledge of the state of our watershed.
4. **Lakeshore 101 Sessions (a.k.a. Beach Walks)** – small groups of cottagers will be getting together to walk their lake fronts to learn more about what makes a healthy lakeshore for the environment and recreation. Technical riparian information will be provided by Cows and Fish.
5. **Youth Education** – children play an important role in our watershed too. We are planning activities to get the younger generation interested in our environment and raising awareness of the importance of a healthy, vital watershed.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Are you hearing, listening, doing?**

As the Society ponders the contents of this, the seventh edition of the newsletter, the thought comes up – **how many people stop to take the time to read and digest the information given out.** Stakeholders within the watershed have received material from numerous agencies, heard experts talk on water quality and have had opportunities to attend workshops. Now we have the State of the Watershed Report available to use as a guide for the initiatives that can be taken to help improve the water quality within the watershed, yet it seems the word is not getting out because one can still see evidence of unhealthy practises. So, we as a volunteer group wonder if the time and effort spent in trying to get the message across is really worth it. Are you as a lake user or land steward, truly interested and concerned about the condition of your watershed and the resources in it? If you are, then this is an opportunity and an invitation for you to get involved. It is going to take a concerted effort on everyone's part to work together as a cohesive unit to accomplish what has never been done before. Now is the time, and the Society is waiting for volunteers to step forward to assist with on-going initiatives and solutions whose implementation are imperative if we wish to see the quality of the water in the watershed improve for livestock, human and wildlife consumption.

To address the multitude of concerns and coordinate stewardship and restoration efforts within the watershed, the local community must embark on a watershed planning process. A *Watershed Management Plan* is a necessary step in line with the Alberta Government's "Water for Life Strategy" document. However, success will ultimately depend on all stakeholders (lake users, watershed residents, municipalities and the provincial government) becoming actively involved. Do you have any ideas or suggestions for water/land management? Anything you have in mind let us know.

Please, let us hear from you!

**2008 CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST**

**Deadline: June 30, 2007. Send to: Photo Contest Site 17, Box 22, RR 1 Gunn, AB T0E 1A0**

**A maximum of five pictures per entry please. Landscape orientation is preferable to portrait as the latter distorts when changing to landscape and please send digitally if possible to [macshac@xplornet.net](mailto:macshac@xplornet.net)**

**We had an excellent response for the 2007 calendar and 400 calendars were sold. We had 79 entries from 18 participants. Over 30 people judged the pictures. Let's hope the interest is as great for the 2008 calendar.**

**First place winner – Susan McFadzen  
Second and third place winner – Ron Hlady**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Annual General Meeting – June 9th at 10:00 a.m. at the Rich Valley Community Hall. A catered lunch will follow.

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Visit the much improved and user friendly website. Things are constantly added or changed, so visit it often to stay informed.

[www.laclannewatershed.com](http://www.laclannewatershed.com)

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Pick up a copy of the State of the Watershed – great information.

### **Benefits of a Healthy Watershed**

It is easy to underestimate how much watersheds do for us. When watersheds are healthy, their contribution is often taken for granted. It is only once they have been compromised that we notice how effectively they once worked. Healthy watersheds provide us with many benefits and services that improve our quality of life. These benefits can be categorized into three main points.

**Human Health** – A healthy watershed provides us with a good source of water for our treatment of plants and wells. Well-managed groundwater aquifers provide abundant well water. Rivers and streams are clean enough to swim in, and the fish are safe to eat.

**Ecological Health** – A healthy watershed has the ability to recover from human or natural disasters. It provides habitat for diverse species and naturally filters contaminants and sediments from our water supply. Water bodies moderate extreme weather, reducing the severity of floods and droughts. Intact watersheds decrease erosion, preserve our natural resources, and keep the hydrologic cycle functioning properly.

**Economic Health** – A healthy watershed helps us to maintain renewable economic resources. Clean water enhances irrigation, agriculture, and industrial activity and saves us money on water treatment. Natural areas provide opportunities for recreation, ecotourism, fishing, hunting, trapping, bird watching, photography, hiking, and the economic spin-offs that accompany them. They also provide medicinal plants for harvest and increase property value.

If we take care of our watersheds, the health of our land and our community will follow closely behind. Responsible watershed stewardship creates jobs while respecting our connection to the Earth. ***And, it provides one final benefit – watershed protection is cheaper and more efficient than clean-up measures.***

*Have a great and happy summer!*

### **Just What is the Lac La Nonne Watershed?**

The Lac La Nonne Watershed is a small area in the south-western portion of the greater Athabasca River Basin in the Counties of Barrhead and Lac Ste. Anne and lies approximately 100 km northwest of Edmonton, Alberta. The watershed encompasses all waters draining into and out of Tamarack Lake, Kakina Lake, Lake Majeau, Nakamun Lake, ultimately into Lac La Nonne and to the Pembina River via MacDonald Creek. It has a drainage basin area of approximately 299 square kilometres.

The three major sized lakes are Lake Majeau, Lac La Nonne and Nakamun Lake, the latter two being also popular recreational bodies of water.

Highway access is via # 43 and # 33 from the south (Edmonton, Stony Plain area); # 33 from the north (Barrhead, Swan Hills area); #651 from the east (Legal, Westlock area); and # 777 from the south and east, (Morinville, Sandy Lake area.)

The region is predominately recreational by population and agricultural by land. It contains one hamlet of Rich Valley, but no towns or villages. It has one elementary school located at Rich Valley and one library also at Rich Valley. There are two recreational facilities – the Rich Valley Agriplex and the Rich Valley Community Hall. The only sporting facility is found at the Agriplex, that being an ice arena for winter and corrals for horse and cattle events as well as slow-pitch or fastball diamonds.

The geographical boundaries extend from Range 1 to and including all of Range 4 east to west and extend from Township 56 on the south to Township 58 on the north.

Anyone who has an interest in the environmental health of the Lac La Nonne Watershed is eligible to become a member of the Lac La Nonne Watershed Stewardship Society. The Board of Directors consists of approximately 12 volunteers, two council representatives and three technical advisors.

(Please see map on the flip side.)

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