



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

Diverse, Responsible & Connected

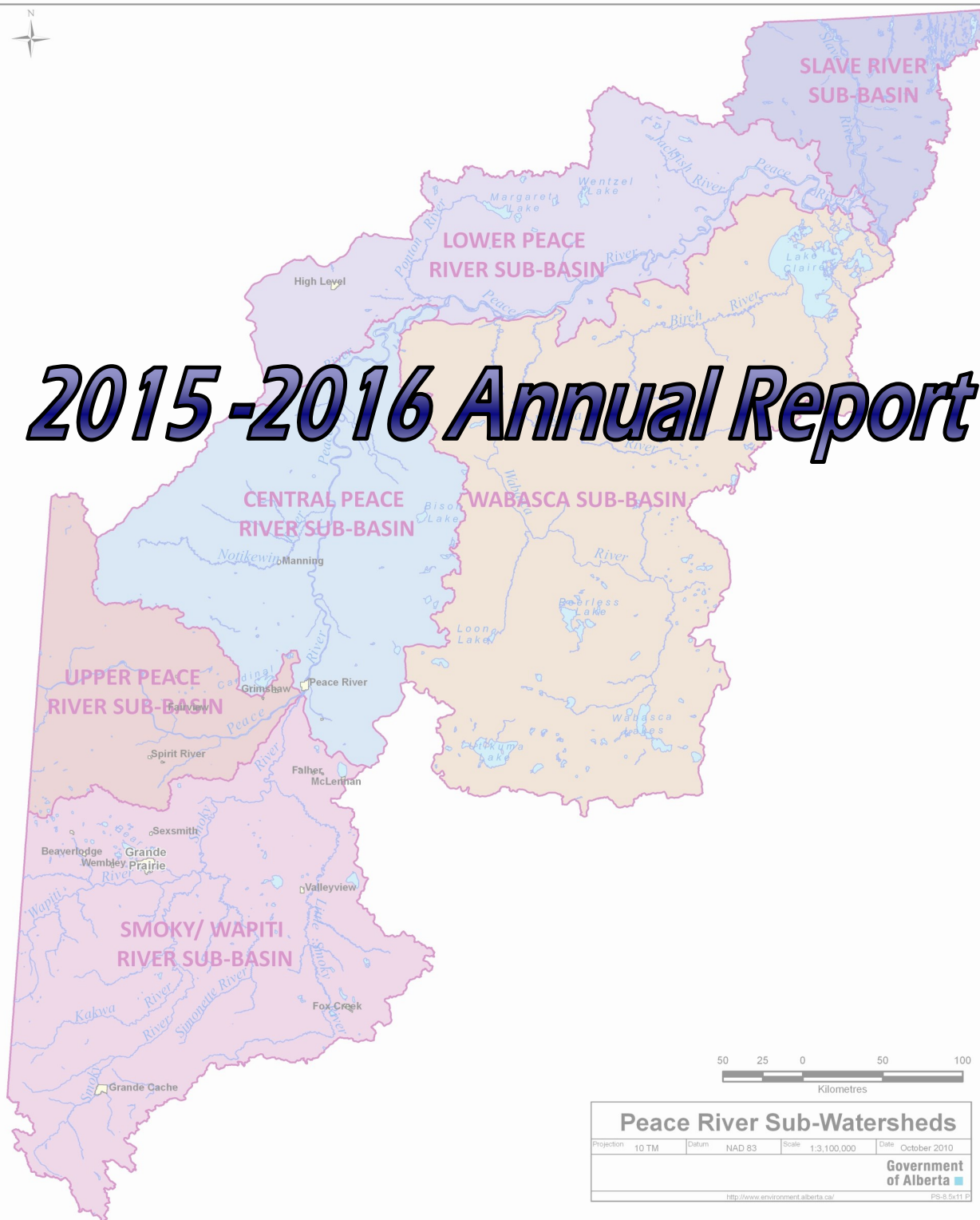


Table of Contents:	Page
What is a Watershed ?	2
Introduction to MPWA	2
About MPWA—Vision, Mission, & Shared Values	3
Message from the Chairman	4
Message from the Executive Director	5
Financial Highlights	6
2015-2016 Board of Directors	7
Technical Committee Report	8
Communication Committee Report	9
Education & Outreach Report	10
Goals & Achieved Highlights 2015-2016	11
Financial and In-kind Supporters	12



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA): Formed in 2011, the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance has been designated by the Government of Alberta (GOA) as the official Watershed

Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) for the Peace and Slave River Basins under Alberta's Water for Life Strategy. The MPWA was created to address the key outcomes of the Strategy:

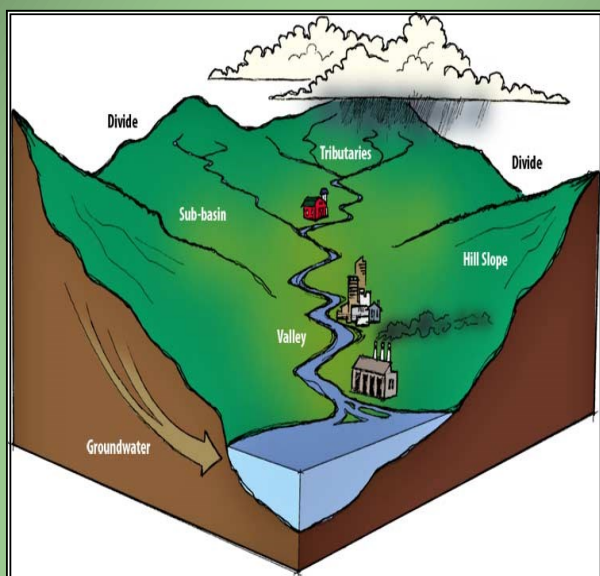
- Safe, secure drinking water
- Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems
- Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy

This multi-sector, not-for-profit society is committed to planning for an ecologically healthy watershed while ensuring environmental, economic and social sustainability.

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

The term watershed refers to the geographic boundaries of a particular water body, its ecosystem and the land that drains to it. A watershed includes groundwater aquifers that discharge to and receive discharge from streams, wetlands, ponds, and lakes.

Everyone lives in a watershed. You influence what happens in your watershed, good or bad, by how you treat the natural resources, the soil, water, air, plants, and animals. What happens in your small watershed also affects the larger watershed downstream.



About the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

The MPWA is guided by its vision, mission, goals and shared values:

VISION

The Peace is a healthy, sustainable watershed that supports our social, environmental and economic objectives.

MISSION

To promote watershed excellence, the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance will monitor cumulative effects from land use practices, industry and other activities in the watershed and work to address issues through science, education, communication, policy and by supporting watershed stewardship.

Diverse, Responsible & Connected!

***Diverse** group of people representing diverse interests.

***Responsible** for bringing those interests together.

***Connected** to all stakeholders across the watershed area.



SHARED VALUES

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance will:

Respect a diversity of peoples and values:

By demonstrating individual and collective respect for the air, land and water and by appreciating the diversity of values and opinions found in the Peace watershed.

Be an ambassador for the Peace watershed:

By promoting our vision and mission, demonstrating integrity, accountability and practicality, and practicing effective communication, knowledge-building and consensus decision-making.

Be a trustworthy and credible source of information:

By being well-informed and providing sound advice through an adaptive watershed approach that integrates traditional, local and scientific knowledge in information-gathering and problem-solving.

Be fair and transparent to all:

By seeking balanced representation and listening to all stakeholders in an open, transparent manner.

Be inclusive and collaborative:

By facilitating inclusive and collaborative processes and partnerships, promoting membership and interaction, and providing opportunities for all stakeholders to be involved.

Be innovative and action-oriented:

By being motivated, resourceful and action-oriented in finding new, innovative ideas and win-win solutions.

Foster Stewardship:

By encouraging and enabling individuals and organizations to be good stewards of the watershed.

Why MPWA is important to my sector.....

MPWA is an important venue for discussions about the need for reconciliation of First Nation & non-Aboriginal perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and approaches to water management within the Lower Peace, Wabasca & Slave subbasins.

-Jim Webb, Lower Watershed First Nation

Message from the Chairman

As Chairman of this organization, I continue to be heartened by the passion and commitment of my fellow board members and three staff.

Board table discussions are important and they flesh out our collective understanding of water issues in our 30% of Alberta's geography.

We've moved from putting words on paper to engaging a wider audience with successful workshops addressing Source Water Protection Planning and another on Wetland Policy.

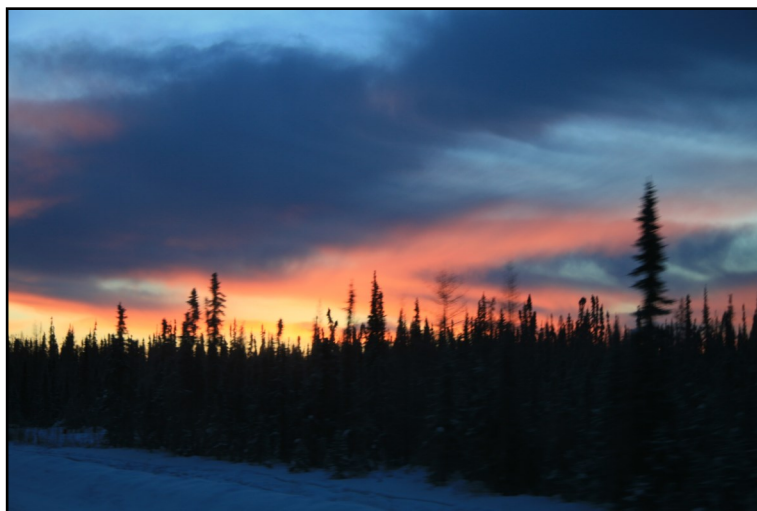
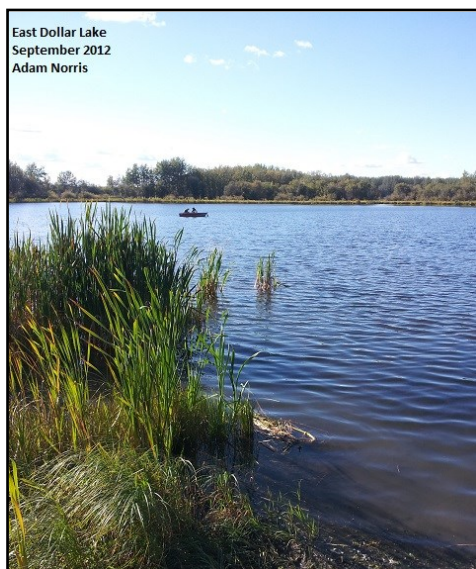
While representing our organization during tradeshow, one had the opportunity to ask and answer questions about water and the watershed. About 30% of the watershed residents rely on groundwater or surface water. In the last 5 years I have talked with 100's of rural residents and I've learned almost all know how deep their well is, a couple dozen know the last time it was tested for quality or output and barely a handful have a binder of all the test results. Seventy percent of our residents have

regularly tested water coming into their homes.

In this past year, MPWA has lead discussions and 2 working groups to gather information, identify needs, consider policies, and beneficial management practises for 2 issues of concern (Water Quality and Quantity away from the Mainstem and Wetlands & Wetlands Loss). This coming year we begin examining the range of solutions to another 2 issues for our Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP).

We are exploring new and creative ways of communicating and engaging the 170,000 residents of the Peace And Slave River basin.

Robert A. Cameron
Chairman of the Board



Why MPWA is important to me...

MPWA provides an opportunity for people representing a wide range of interest groups and a variety of backgrounds to engage each other to understand alternate perspectives and find solutions to ensure that the Peace Region's watershed(s) continue to envy other jurisdictions . **-Ian Daisley , Forestry**

Message from the Executive Director

The **Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance celebrates 5 years this spring**. This organization continues to grow and develop as the board has worked through their first 'State of the Watershed' report (completed March 2015) and now moving forward with the Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP).

The dedicated MPWA Board has spent countless hours researching, discussing, vetting, learning, educating, reviewing policy, and planning for a variety of items that are related to water within this watershed. An IWMP can look at absolutely everything that happens on the landscape that affects water quality and quantity. The MPWA tasks are to work through the processes to identify common areas and then engage stakeholders to find workable actions, beneficial management practices, and provide advice for policies and guidelines. The Board continues to be dedicated to the work and are committed to the **goals of the 'Water For Life Strategy' – Safe, secure drinking water; Healthy aquatic ecosystems; Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.**

Whether you are associated with a city, town, hamlet, village, aboriginal community or rural municipality – we have something in common, the need for good quality and adequate quantity of water. The work of the MPWA is to engage multiple sectors to plan for future water uses and needs, while protecting water quality and quantity. We would encourage all people of the watershed to think about how they live, work, and play, and see if there are improvements that can be made that will benefit our watershed.

2015-2016 was a very full year for MPWA, with the board framing the goals and objectives while the staff put the pieces in progress. I appreciate the continued hard work and dedication of the staff for this not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder organization. The staff of the MPWA includes: Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier - Executive Director, Adam Norris – Watershed Coordinator and Megan Graham – Education & Outreach Coordinator. The staff compliment has continued to lead and support a number of initiatives and general organization duties. The most significant include:

- 1) Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) phase one with the establishment and support for 2 working groups.
- 2) Environment Canada's Environmental Damages funds projects (Redwillow and Heart River Restoration Plans).
- 3) The Wapiti River Water Management Plan.
- 4) Continued engagement with councils, stakeholders groups, and residents through meetings, presentations, and forums.
- 5) Increased education opportunities by offering workshops, school presentations, and attending tradeshow.
- 6) Participating in broader processes such as AEMERA, Joint Oilsands Monitoring, Land Use, Alberta WPACs, Play-based pilot projects, etc.
- 7) General Organization and board functioning.

The 2016-2017 year will see the MPWA continue to work on similar projects while engaging the public.

The experience, insights and knowledge that the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council directors bring to the table is invaluable, and a definite benefit to all the people within the geographic scope of the largest Watershed in Alberta. I appreciate all the hard work

The Watershed Alliance continues to work in areas of education, awareness, providing accurate information, and watershed planning. The board works under a Consensus decision making model to ensure that voices from many perspectives - industry, government, non-governmental agencies, aboriginal communities, and the public at large – can be heard and sectors have the opportunity for participation in the planning process for the watershed.

The supporters of the MPWA are a major asset to our organization – from financial contributions to many forms of in-kind support – we wish to say thank-you. We can only continue our work with your support and assistance.

Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier
Executive Director



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance Financial Highlights 2014/2015

Base core funding to meet the operational requirements of the MPWA is provided annually by our primary partner, Alberta Environment and Parks. Individual project funding is applied for at the same time by providing the Government with a complete package request to cover the organizations' year of work as outlined through our Strategic Planning process. Although expected to use all grant funds within the fiscal year, in reality, MPWA must budget to carry over sufficient funds to operate until the next year's funding request is granted, and received.

MPWA requested funding of \$386,000 (operational) for the 2015/16 year, as well as project funding of \$197,000 to undertake the first phase of the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP). We received a grant of 486,000, this meant a breakdown to operational of \$289,908 and IWMP \$90,500. The carryover of from the previous year was figured into the grant received.

Due to the reduced project funding, MPWA scaled back the IWMP project and will try to complete the initial phase in the upcoming year if project funding is received.

MPWA was able to retain our previous staff (Executive Director and Watershed Coordinator) and hire an Education and Outreach Coordinator. The E/O Coordinator duties include planning and implementing both education / outreach activities, and some daily operational activities.

We would like to thank AEP as our primary partner and funds contributor. We would also like to recognize and thank various municipal and industry partners for cash and in-kind contributions. As well, there has been significant ongoing in-kind support by Board members and their sponsoring organizations which helps keep travel and honorarium costs down. We will continue to reach out and engage with various levels of government, public, municipal, and industry partners as we move forward on our organizational goals. Thank you to everyone who has recognized the vital importance of water in our lives, and in our futures, and are willing to work towards our common interests.



Richard Keillor
Treasurer

Financial Snapshot April 1/14-Mar 31/15 **INCOME**

Sponsorship	3,000.00
Operating Grant (ESRD)	308,625.29
Project Funding (ESRD)	112,113.71
Environmental Damage Funds	137,222.00
HCSB Hiring Credit	511.44
Bank Interest	177.79
Total	561,650.23

EXPENSES

Subcontracts – Projects	116,423.77
Salaries, Honoraria & Benefits	194,203.02
Advertising & Promotions	23,389.55
Office & Administration	33,331.76
Travel	48,042.16
Board/Staff Development	1,466.05
GST Expense	4,396.38
Total	421,252.69

*Gifts in Kind (Incl Office space)
156,146.76**

Why MPWA is Important to my sector.....

Water is essential to our lives, our society, and our economy. Public membership on a planning and advisory board, such as MPWA, helps to ensure that the voices (interests) of all participating sectors are equally and fairly heard and considered, and ultimately, the public interest is included in the consensus decisions of the Board.

-Rick Keillor, Public Member at Large

The 2015-2016 Board of Directors

Member	Sector	Affiliation
Non-Government Organizations		
Bob Cameron (Chair)	Conservation- Environmental	Peace River Environmental Society
Jean-Marie Sobze	Research- Education	NAIT Boreal Research Institute- novaNAIT Center for Applied Research
Cathy Newhook	Watershed Stewardship	West County Watershed Society
Dave Hay	Recreation- Tourism- Fisheries	
Rickard Keillor (Treasurer)	Public-At-Large	
VACANT	Public-At-Large	
Industry		
Ashley Rowney (Secretary)	Utilities	AQUATERA® Utilities Inc.
Ian Daisley	Forestry	Alberta Forest Products Association
Lindsay Stephens	Oil and Gas	EnCana Corporation
Shelleen Gerbig (Vice Chair)	Agriculture	Smoky Applied Research & Demonstration Association (SARDA)
VACANT	Mining	
Aboriginal		
Alden Armstrong	Métis Settlement General Council	Métis Settlement General Council
VACANT	Upper Watershed First Nation	
VACANT	Middle Watershed First Nation	
Jim Webb	Lower Watershed First Nation	North Peace Tribal Council
Willard Roe	Métis Nations of Alberta	Métis Nation of Alberta
Government		
Abdi Siad-Omar	Federal Transboundary Relations	Alberta Environment and Parks
Chris Thiessen	Large Urban	City of Grande Prairie
Elaine Manzer	Small Urban	Town of Peace River
John Zylstra	Provincial Government	Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Elaine Garrow	Rural Municipalities	AAMDC- Northern Zone- MD of Spirit River



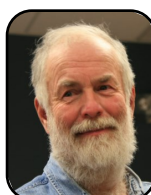
Abdi Siad-Omar



Alden Armstrong



Ashley Rowney



Bob Cameron



Chris Thiessen



Cathy Newhook



Dave Hay



Elaine Garrow



Elaine Manzer



Ian Daisley

Jean-Marie
Sobze

Jim Webb



John Zylstra



Lindsay Stephens



Rick Keillor



Shelleen Gerbig



Willard Roe

Thank you to the Board members. We are very thankful and appreciative for your contributions.

Technical Committee Report

Scope of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee (TC) was appointed by the Board of Directors of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance as a standing committee. Their role is to assist and advise the Board of Directors on technical and scientific matters of proposed projects and oversight of technical reports. The technical committee reports directly to the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

Members of the Committee for 2015/16:

Abdi Said-Omar, Ashley Parker, Bob Cameron, Elaine Garrow, Jean-Marie Sobze, John Zylstra, Ian Daisley, Lindsay Stephens, Richard Keillor, Willard Roe

The technical committee was actively supported by Adam Norris, Watershed Coordinator and Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier, Executive Director of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance.

Tasks Completed Year 2015/2016

Both the Heart River Watershed Restoration Project and the Redwillow Watershed Restoration Project continued to make progress on implementing the Restoration Plans that they had created. The TC oversaw these two projects and heard about the ongoing efforts to improve communication and engage those in the watershed. Both of these projects are funded by the Environmental Damages Fund and involve many partners. Work continues to engage landowners and decision-makers to implement the prioritized actions identified by the project teams. Effort has been concentrated on identifying and setting up for the identified restoration activities, so that they can be completed in 2016/17, the last year for these project.

The Wapiti River Water Management Plan continued to do the ground work to inform the development of different management scenarios. This will allow the Wapiti River

Water Management Plan Steering Committee to evaluate the trade-offs and benefits to different water management scenarios on the Wapiti River



Integrated Watershed Management Plan

Now that the first edition of the *State of the Watershed Report for the Peace and Slave Watersheds* has been completed, the next step is to consider how we share our water resources and put that into a formal plan. The Integrated Watershed Management Plan will be combined with other plans in the Peace and Slave Watersheds and bring together those who live, work and play in the watershed to figure out the best way forward.

The Slave's Bill Thomas of

Integrated Watershed Management Plan

An Integrated Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee was struck to guide the Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) process. Two working groups—Water Quality, Availability and Consumptive Use and Wetlands and Wetlands Loss—were struck and provided draft recommendations to the MPWA Board.

Projects for 2016/17:

The IWMP will continue to be the main project in 2016/17 starting with working through the recommendations submitted by the 2 working groups that wrapped up. A Non-Saline Groundwater working group will be struck as well as Peace River Flow Regime working group. Then work will begin on integrating all the recommendations from the working groups into a plan and going out to those in the watershed for validation. Please follow the progress of this important work at our IWMP page on the MPWA website.

Adam Norris
Watershed Coordinator



Communications Committee Report

Following the year where the MPWA released the State of the Watershed Report, 2015 was relatively quiet for the Communications Committee. The group continues to tweak the website and distribute newsletters. We attended several trade shows to connect with communities and increase membership. We continue to distribute promotional items to keep the MPWA name visible and known in the area. A new item for distribution this year is a reusable shopping bag. Yo-Yo's and activity books continue to be popular with the younger audiences. All children who submit their activity page drawing of "their favorite thing to do in the watershed" receives a seedling and a water bottle. These drawings can be viewed on our website.

Thank you to supporting directors, staff and organizations for taking the time to man the

tradeshow events and participate in the working groups.

The MPWA is in the developmental phase of the Integrated Watershed Management Plan and is planning to take the draft documents out to the communities for comment, beginning in 2016. Please continue to check out our website at

www.mightypeacewatershedalliance.org for updates regarding the IWMP. Please share your comments with the directors and staff. We look forward to meeting with you.

Shelleen Gerbig
Committee Chair



Why MPWA is Important to my sector.....

MPWA helps bring the attention to our many "water" concerns from source to treatment to disposal. The plans that MPWA writes also help different sectors learn about each other's concerns and needs with respect to water. Planning for our future needs to encompass planning for our water needs and the work of MPWA is a valuable information source for our community plans.

-Elaine Manzer, Small Urban



Why MPWA is Important to me.....

Water is basic and essential to the life and welfare of all people in the region, and government has a mandate to manage this water for the health, work, and enjoyment of its citizens and communities. The MPWA can assist in providing focus, direction, and impetus for more efficient utilization of this resource, as well as for the protection of its quality and quantity. The MPWA can be proactive in indicating ways of preventing problems with water use in the future, while recognizing, promoting, and encouraging the benefits of this amazing gift for this region.

-John Zylstra, Provincial Government

Education & Outreach Report

Within the past year the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance has had amazing opportunities to go out and meet with the public within the watershed.

MPWA had the chance to go to local schools within the Peace Watershed to educate the students on water quality and conservation.

The “Rotary After 5 Club” within Grande Prairie invited MPWA to come and speak about what we have been doing as an organization and the value of water in our society.

There were also multiple tradeshows the Mighty Peace Watershed attended which allowed us to pass out education resources to the public so they could learn more about their local watershed.

At the tradeshows we were able to educate the public on the importance of rain barrels and how they can help conserve water throughout

the summer months.

MPWA also hosted two public workshops this year. One on Source Water Protection Planning with guest speaker Steph Neufeld from EPCOR. The second one was a Wetland Workshop with guest speaker Jay White from Aquality.

For the upcoming 2016-2017 fiscal year the Mighty Peace Watershed is looking forward to engaging the residents of the Peace Watershed and continuing to create more education opportunities for the public.

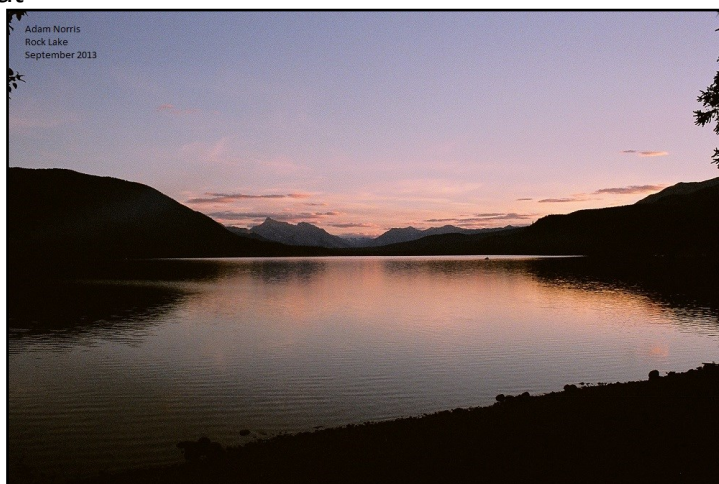
Megan Graham
Education & Outreach
Coordinator



Why MPWA is Important to me.....

Managing our impact on water, and being good stewards of this resource is our highest environmental priority.

Tony Saunders, Alternate Watershed Stewardship



Why MPWA is Important to my sector.....

The MPWA not only has a vision that the Peace be a healthy, sustainable watershed that supports social, economic and environmental objectives but it also has goals such as ensuring that the residents of the Peace watershed have access to safe, secure drinking water. These goals directly align with the goals of a utility provider such as Aquatera, where we provide safe drinking water for community health, provide utility services that foster regional prosperity and are stewards of air, land and water. To date, even though the MPWA is young in age, it has done a tremendous amount of work and continues to do so. The work of the MPWA is not only important to a utility provider who operates within the Peace, but it is also important to all of those who live and function within the Peace and especially to those who call it home. **-Ashley Rowney, Utilities**

Highlights of 2015-2016

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance worked on the 6 Goals that have been established for the organization:

Goal #1 - The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance is a strong, vibrant, and sustainable organization.

- Met with the Minister of Energy & MLA for Dunvegan Peace Notley
- Held 7 Board meetings in various location; McLennan, Spirit River, Grande Prairie, Falher, Peace River, Fairview and Conference calls
- Discussion with Regional AEP re: Priorities for region
- Continued conversations and planning with Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) managers and Alberta Environment & Parks & Ernie Hui re: funding & solutions, structure, plans
- Board Development opportunities
- Further development of policies and processes
- Met with a number of councils to discuss MPWA work (Country of Grande Prairie, Town of Wembley, Town of Beaverlodge, Municipal District of Smoky River, Northern Lights County, Northern Sunrise County, Municipal District of Peace, and Village of Berwyn)
- Hired Education & Outreach Coordinator

Goal #2 - The Board and Members of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance are well educated about air, water and land issues in the basin and are open to innovative ideas and practices.

- Presentation by AEP Water Policy Branch about Fox Creek & regulatory Pilot
- Participated in AEP/WPAC Forums and Peace Athabasca Delta Ecological Monitoring Program Forum
- Struck 2 working group—Water Quality and Availability including Consumptive Use & Wetlands and Wetland Loss—as part of IWMP process. Draft recommendations were received
- Staff participated in Water Policy Branch Water Reuse & Stormwater Policy Session
- Board Members & Public participated in MPWA Wetland & Source Water workshops
- Attended Mackenzie Municipal Services (MMSA) Wetland & Landscape Course

Goal #3 - The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance is well-known and accessible to residents in the basin.

- Gave a talk about “Water in the Boreal” at Peace River Museum
- Worked with group at Wabasca to consider Stewardship Group
- Participated in 2 AAMDC (Alberta Association Municipal Districts & Councils) Northern Zone Meeting

- Produced 1 newsletter, articles for SARDA’s Back 40, maintained website and Facebook page, attended tradeshow (Peace County Classic Agri-Show, Grande Prairie Home & Garden & Smoky River Tradeshow)
- Presentation at the Grande Prairie Rotary After 5 meeting
- Staff development & training opportunities (facilitation workshop & Proofreading Course)
- Continued Awareness and Education Campaign for Heart River (HWRP) and Redwillow Watershed Restoration project (RWRP)
- Presented to Woodland Cree First Nation

Goal #4 - Residents of the Peace watershed have access to safe, secure drinking water.

- Hosted a Source Water Protection Planning Workshop in Grande Prairie with guest speaker Steph Neufeld from EPCOR
- Presented at Water North Coalition about our Source Water Protection Planning Workshop
- Continue to work with the Wapiti River Watershed Management Project (WRWMP)
- Presentation from & discussion with Smoky Water Users Group
- Continue work with the partners in the RWRP and HWRP, both plans are in the implementation phase

Goal #5 - Water quality, quantity and seasonal rate of flow in the Peace watershed is understood and advice on its uses are made to the appropriate bodies.

- Ongoing WRWMP work
- Hosted a Wetland Workshop in Grande Prairie with guest speaker Jay White from AQUALITY
- Ongoing conversation with AMISK, Parks Canada, Municipalities, and Murphy Oil
- Reviewed AB Community Resilience Program with various municipalities
- Discussion with AER re Fox Creek play-based pilot project

Goal #6 - Watershed Stewardship is widely supported by residents throughout the basin.

- Presented at West County Watershed Society’s AGM
- Engaged in conversations at Tradeshow
- Rain Barrel Awareness Program
- Presented at Ole’s Lake Water Quality Day and school groups regarding water quality and conservation practices

Financial and In-Kind Supporters



If we have forgotten anyone, we offer our sincere apologies and request you please contact us so that we can remedy it.



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