



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

Diverse, Responsible, Connected

2018 - 2019 Annual Report

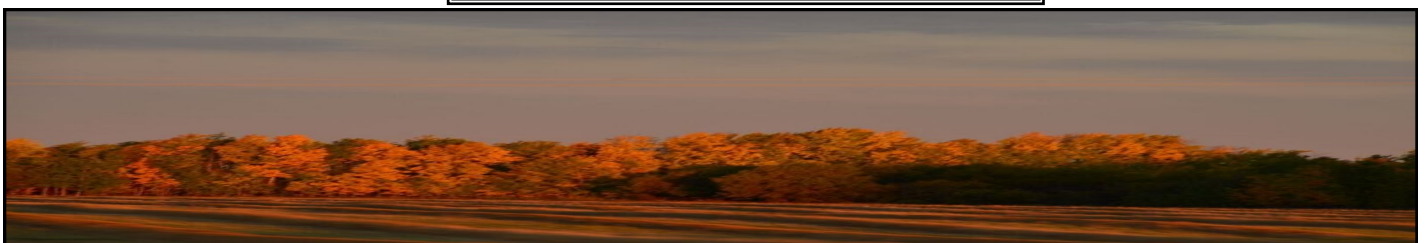
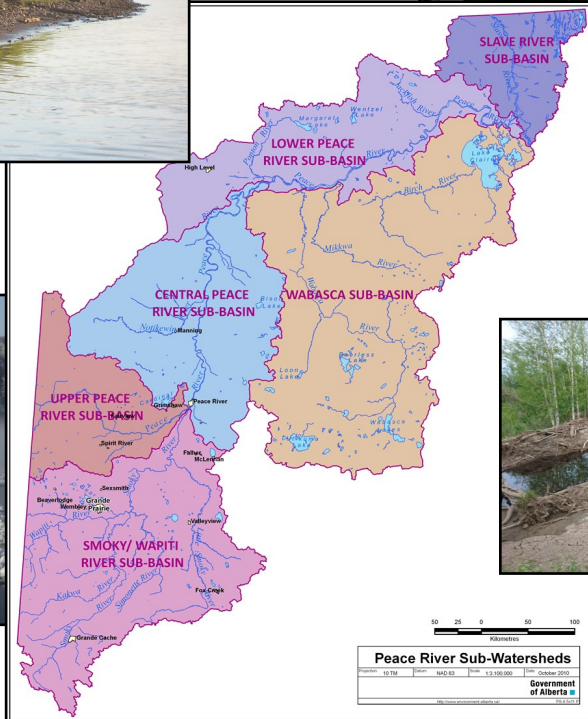
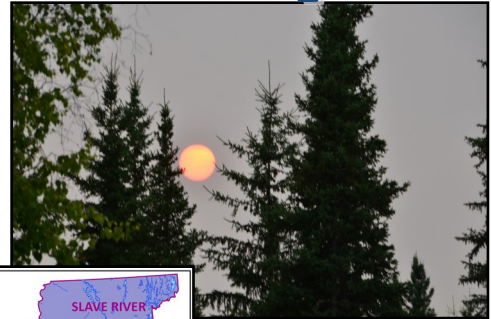


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Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA):

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance has been designated, since its formation in 2011, 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.

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance is a group of active stakeholders and communities that use consensus decision-making, adaptive management, and innovation to understand and promote living within the watershed. The Board will report on the state of the watershed, lead watershed planning activities, promote best management practices and develop educational programs.



VISION

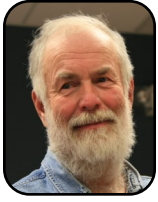
The Peace is a healthy, sustainable watershed that supports our social, environmental and economic objectives.

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.

The 2018-2019 Board of Directors

Non-Government Organizations



Conservation-Environment:
Bob Cameron, Peace River
Environmental Society



Research-Education:
Catherine Brown, NAIT
Centre for Boreal Research



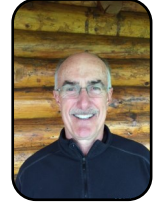
Watershed Stewardship:
Tony Saunders, Heart
River Watershed



**Recreation-
Tourism-
Fisheries:**
Dave Hay



**Public Member at
Large:**
Richard Keillor



**Public Member at
Large:**
Dave Walty

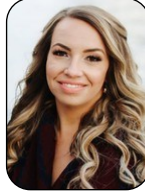
Industry



Utilities:
Ashley Rowney,
AQUATERA® Utilities Inc.



Forestry:
Ian Daisley, Alberta
Forest Products
Association



Oil & Gas:
Sarah Belak,
Tourmaline Oil
Corporation



Agriculture:
Shelleen Gerbig,
SARDA Ag Research



Mining:
Vacant

Aboriginal Communities



**Metis Settlement General
Council:**
Darren Calliou



**Middle Watershed First
Nation:**
Troy Stuart, Bigstone
Cree Nation



**Lower Watershed First
Nation:**
Jim Webb, Little Red
River Cree Nation

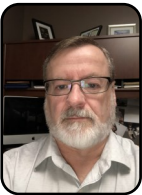


**Upper Watershed First
Nation:**
Vacant



Métis Nation of Alberta:
Vacant

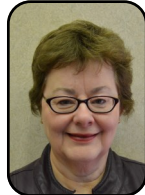
Government



**Federal-Transboundary
Relations:**
Dave Coish, Alberta
Environment & Parks



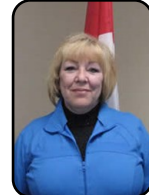
**Large Urban
Municipality:**
Chris Thiessen, City of
Grande Prairie



**Small Urban
Municipalities:**
Elaine Manzer, Town of
Peace River



Provincial Government:
Dan Benson,
Alberta Agriculture &
Forestry



Rural Municipalities:
Elaine Garrow, Rural
Municipalities Association, North
Zone

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

We also acknowledge the contributions of named alternates: Eric Jorgenson, Jaimie Meneen, Kayedon Wilcox, Michelle Gairdner, Ray Skrepnek, Roxie Rutt, Sandra Miller, Vern Lymburner.

Diverse, Responsible & Connected!

**Diverse* group of people representing diverse interests.

**Responsible* for bringing those interests together.

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

Message from the Chairman

Last year, I prefaced my report that a “lot of water has flowed under the bridge”. This year, with an apparent “watershed shift” in Alberta Politics, the water still flows. Here in the WPAC world (“the real world”), while we are affected by the political world, especially regarding funding, we need to keep our “eye on the prize”, which is the three fundamental goals of the Alberta Water Policy: 1. Safe and secure drinking water, 2. Healthy aquatic ecosystems, 3. Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy

This is our mandate. This is what we ask our membership, our partners, and Peace Country residents to help us move forward on.

In the past year we have striven to advance these goals through a variety of reports, collaborations, and projects “on the ground”.

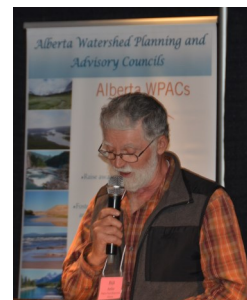
I would like to thank our Board members, and their sponsoring organizations, for their efforts and

dedication. On behalf of MPWA Board, I would also like to recognise, and thank, our many partners for their assistance, co-operation, and support.

And lastly, I would thank the many, many members of the public, who, though often not really aware of MPWA and its work, invariably say: “We have to look after our water, it’s the most important resource we have”. I believe this recognition of the importance of water, is what keeps the MPWA, and its Board members fully engaged, and constantly trying to move the “water ball” forwards.

I invite and welcome all of you who read this to join us in that effort.

**Rick Keillor,
Chairman of the Board**



2018 Alberta Watershed Planning & Advisory Council Summit

Source Water to Drinking Water

MPWA hosted a fantastic Alberta Watershed Planning and Advisory Council Summit in Peace River in June 2018. This event brought in those engaged in Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils from across the province for learning, sharing and reinvigoration.

The theme of the Summit was “Source Water to Drinking Water” and presenters brought ideas, experiences and insights about the following broad topics: The Big Picture, Wetlands, Lakes and Rivers, Source Water Protection Planning & WPAC Tools. Each of the 11 WPACs also provided updates of their work.

As good as the presentations were, the networking, spitballing, hanging out and time on the river were equally as good. Some attendees showed up early for a tour of a few MPWA project sites in the vicinity before the opening evening. Between sessions many a conversation about watershed stuff was had.

A definite highlight was the BBO on the banks of the Peace River, followed by a float / canoe trip. There is nothing like a direct experience with the water to coalesce all the learning, conversations and ideas.

Thanks to our generous Gold sponsors — Aquatera, Canfor, County of Northern Lights, DMI International, International Paper, Northern Sunrise County, Town of Peace River; and to our Bronze Sponsor —Matrix Solutions Inc.

*Many thanks to
our great present-
ers!*

*Laura Gloor
Rhonda Clarke-
Gauthier
Megan Beveridge
Gord Whitmore
Troy Stuart
Lori Parker
Jeff Fetter
Bradley Peters
Amanda Halawell
Mike Murray
AnnLisa Jensen
Becky Devaleriola
Adam Norris
Kayla Boyd
Michelle Greenwood
Neil Spicer
Donald Reid
Phil Boehme
Bob Patrick
Tom Rutherford
Janice Reyda
Monique Dubé
Janine Higgins
David Samm*





Message from the Executive Director

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance has had a busy and successful year. The organization has provided educational programming, collaborated with partners for planning projects and on the ground technical projects, and hosted the AB WPAC Summit (People from across the 11 WPACs gathered for a 3 day event that introduced participants to the theme of “Source Water to Drinking Water”. Thanks to speakers and sponsors). The 8th year of operations has shown us once again that there are so many elements to Watershed Planning and people are interested in being engaged in the work needed to address the activities of the watershed and how that relates to water quality and quantity .

The Board continues to be committed to the **goals of Alberta Government’s ‘Water For Life Strategy’ – Safe, secure drinking water; Healthy aquatic ecosystems; Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.** The Directors are dedicated to the work of the organization therefore, spend a great deal of time and effort working, reviewing, learning, educating, examining policy, and planning. The work of the MPWA is to engage multiple sectors to plan for future water uses and needs, while protecting water quality and quantity. The board works diligently to do this work on behalf of all inhabitants within the geographic scope of a watershed that covers approximately 30% of the Province of Alberta.

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. MPWA strives to engage stakeholders to find workable actions, beneficial management practices, and provide advice for policies and guidelines.

The prominent areas of work include:

- 1) Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) – Focus is now on implementation of a number of the recommendations in this complex plan and working collaboratively to engage others to address a variety of concerns. The Board is working towards providing a report card of sorts that will be an annual evaluation/update of the IWMP.
- 2) Project work: in areas such as Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer, Redwillow, Wapiti River, etc.
- 3) Continued engagement with councils, stakeholder groups, and residents through meetings, presentations, and forums.
- 4) Increased education opportunities by offering workshops, seminars, school presentations, and attending tradeshow.
- 5) Participating in broader processes such as Land Use, Alberta WPACs, Water North Coalition, Forest Management Planning initiatives, Wood Buffalo National Park Environmental Flows, etc.
- 6) General Organization and board functioning.
- 7) Had the pleasure of hosting the 2018 AB WPAC Summit in Peace River.

Thank you:

To the Directors (& alternates)—who put their name forward to participate on the board of directors. and their perseverance to strive towards sound ways forward to protect our water resources.

To the staff as they work on a number of projects and initiatives, with the Board framing the goals and the staff putting the pieces together to further project progress.

To all of the supporters of the MPWA; whether it be in the form of financial contributions or various forms of in-kind support. MPWA can only continue to do work on behalf of Albertans through your support and assistance.

Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier
Executive Director



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance Financial Highlights 2018/2019

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance was granted about \$314,000, 80% of our total ask from AEP, which was about 26% of our total budget (operations and projects). The AEP Grant reflects 95% of the core operations funding. Other major sources of funds were received from WRRP Grants, AB Transportation Project funds (Peace River Bridge Construction) and sponsorship. Gifts and in-kind were valued in excess of \$245,000.

As in previous years, new AEP funds were not received until July 4, 2018. With the small amount of carryover from the 2017 grant, a reduction of staff hours, and support from other partners, the MPWA managed. The MPWA has been lucky to have understanding staff and partners committed to the organization.

We were pleased to host the WPAC Summit in June, 2018. The Summit is a conference for members, staff and boards. It combined learning opportunities, tours of projects and a chance to showcase the Peace River watershed. We were fortunate to have the Summit during the summer solstice, the longest days of the year. Many of our guests had never experienced such long days and short nights.

How are we set to move ahead in 2019? When it became apparent that a provincial election would happen in the spring of 2019, the WPACs' successfully lobbied to have a portion of the grant issued prior to the application process. We received \$100,000 minus the carryover to operate until a new application could be made. With this funding, the MPWA will be able to maintain normal workhours and move forward with projects throughout the summer months. We applied for new grant funding near the end of April and are waiting to hear word of our success.

As the youngest and largest of eleven WPACs in Alberta, and despite our unique challenges, the reputation of the MPWA for its ability to spearhead projects and multi-stakeholder planning continues to grow. Alberta Transportation looked to us to assist in the development of environmental development offset projects to support the construction of a second bridge at the town of Peace River. The MPWA has supported several community source water protection plan developments and wetland mapping in Wabasca.

The MPWA has completed momentous documents. The first State of the Watershed report was completed in 2015. The Integrated Watershed Management Plan was completed in March 2018. These important documents can be accessed on the website.

This work is imperative to address land use practices of industry, recreation, aboriginal, government and the public, through science, education, communication and policy.

This is my last treasurer's report for the MPWA as I will be retiring from the Board following the AGM. I first became involved when I was selected to participate in the Initiators Group in 2010. I was then elected the first Director representing Agriculture in 2011 and have continued in that position. I enjoyed working with the group and learned to understand and respect the many different viewpoints of the people who live, work and play in this beautiful watershed. I wish the Board and the organization continued success in aligning the vision to the development of this last frontier.

**Shelleen Gerbig
Treasurer**



Financial Snapshot April 1/18-Mar 31/19

INCOME

Sponsorship	94,001.94
AEP Grant	314,023.96
WRRP Grants	238,479.21
AB Transportation Project Funds	536,524.38
Bank Interest	148.15
Total	1,183,177.64

EXPENSES

Subcontracts – Projects	648,170.71
Salaries, Honoraria & Benefits	215,215.93
Advertising & Promotions	13,069.59
Office & Administration	31,938.52
Travel	56,335.42
Board/Staff Development	4684.04
Total	969,414.21

Note: Watershed Resilience and Restoration Plan (WRRP) Funds and Environmental Damages Funds are carried forward year to year until end of project..

***Gifts in Kind (Incl. Office space)
\$245,963.55***

Education & Outreach Report

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

MPWA had the chance to go to local schools within the Peace Watershed to educate the students on watersheds, wetlands and water conservation. The organization recently got a watershed diagram that has become a tool to use in classroom presentations; it gives the opportunity for students to be able to see how everything within the watershed is connected and how activities upstream can effect users downstream within a watershed.

We also were able to partner with other events throughout the watershed. MPWA had a station on wetland education for Grade 5 & 6 classes at Walk through the Forest Grande Prairie & Peace River. We also attended the Beaverlodge Spring Riparian Tour where we were able to educate High School students on their local watershed.

Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance participated in a number of tradeshow (Clear Hills Country, Peace Country Classic, SARDA Agriculture Tradeshow, Water Week North & Grande Prairie Teachers Convention) where we had the opportunity to hand out education resources and engage with the public so they could learn more about their local watershed and projects.



At the tradeshow we were able to provide education about the current projects such as our Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

The MPWA Wetland Committee that was formed to

implement the Integrated Watershed Management Plan for Wetland Education hosted two Municipal Wetland Workshops in Grimshaw and Sexsmith; with a total of 56 people attending. The workshop focused on educating municipal councils as well as residents within the watershed about the Water Act and wetland education in regards to the Alberta Wetland Policy.

Within this past year MPWA has been working with



2018 WPAC Summit, Peace River

the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Management Advisory Association on creating a Source Water Protection Plan. In December 2018, MPWA partnered with the Alberta Working Well Program to host a workshop within Grimshaw. The workshop provides well owners with information and tools they need to properly care for, protect and maintain their wells on their property.

MPWA also hosted a Green Acreage Guide Workshop in St. Isidore for acreage, hobby farms and recreational property owners within the watershed. The workshop provides information to help owners develop and implement stewardship practices that conserve and protect valuable natural assets within their properties. We also had the Agricultural Fieldsmen from Northern Sunrise County attend to educate landowners on relevant bylaws and regulations within their county.

For the upcoming 2019-2020 fiscal year the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance is looking forward to continued engagement with the residents of the Peace Watershed while continuing to create more education opportunities for the public and schools.

Megan Mader
Education & Outreach
Coordinator



Technical Committee Report

Scope of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee (TC) has been 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, scientific and project matters. The technical committee reports directly to the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

Members of the Committee for 2018/19:

Ashley Rowney, Bob Cameron, David Walty, Elaine Garrow, Ian Daisley (Chair) & Richard Keillor comprise the TC and were actively supported by the Watershed Coordinator and Executive Director of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance.

Tasks Completed in 2018/2019

Partnering with the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Management Advisory Association and AEP, a Source Water Protection Plan for the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer has been completed. Final approval is scheduled for June 2019, followed by implementation efforts. A new project team has been struck to undertake Source Water Protection Planning for the Wapiti Watershed.

The Technical Committee invited the Board to tour a range of restoration projects in October 2019 on a cold and snowy day. Attendees saw the results of projects involving MPWA, Agroforestry Woodlot Extension Society, Alberta Conservation Association, Cows and Fish, County of Grande Prairie and West County Watershed Society. With funding from Alberta Transportation, D-Ray Sand & Gravel, Environmental Damages Fund, Watershed Resiliency and in-kind support, physical restoration work was done in support

These restoration activities are the very tangible proof of how watershed planning can be implemented. It is done with foresight, many partners, patience and a willingness to search for resources. Much knowledge transfer, which is grant speak for people learning from these projects, happened through workshops, tours and word of mouth.



Livestock Crossing Structure

The TC has been providing input on a range of watershed issues through involvement on industry advisory groups, responding to information requests, providing advice to municipalities and engaging in conversation with various facets of the provincial government.



Erosion Control Structure

Projects for 2018/2019

In the coming year, we will begin the Wapiti Watershed Bank Stabilization Project and look forward to continued input on Environmental Flow Needs for the Peace River in a variety of forums. One task, that TC will undertake is the review of some restoration/sub-watershed plans that have been created. As always, the TC continues to search out new projects and responds to requests and issue identification.



Fish Passage at the Beaverlodge Weir

Adam Norris
Watershed Coordinator



Highlights of 2018-2019

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.

- 6 Board meetings in various locations: McLennan, Grande Prairie, Peace River, Falher, Fairview, Valleyview; plus Conference calls.
- Consistent professional Staff complement.
- Discussion with Regional AEP about priorities .
- Conversations and planning with Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC) managers and Alberta Environment & Parks - about funding & solutions, structure, purpose.
- Board Development opportunities: Peatland Restoration, Forest Management Planning and BMPs for Water, Source Water Protection Planning in the Battle River Watershed, Stewardship from a Producer's Perspective, Wapiti -Smoky Public Land Use Zone, AEP updates, Regional Integrated Approvals – Water Act Licensing, MNA Region 6 presentation, Duncan's First Nation presentation
- Further development of policies and processes.
- Discussions with various councils about MPWA work.
- Exploring funding options, eg., other grants, sponsorship, etc.

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.

- Participated in AEP/WPAC Forum, ALMS Annual Workshop, WPAC Summit, CWRA Alberta Resources in a Changing Environment, Remediation and Restoration in the Watershed, Soil Erosion Workshop Series, Improved Livestock Crossing Tour
- Hosted 2 Municipal Wetland Education Workshops
- Presentations for and discussions with various groups: Boreal Nature Series, Water Week North, Rural Municipalities Association—Northern Zone, Various Municipalities, Grimshaw Gravel Aquifer Partners, Partners of the Restoration work in the West County.

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

- Participated in 2 RMA(Rural Municipalities Association) Northern Zone Meeting
- Produced 3 MPWA newsletters and articles for SARDA's Back 40, maintained website , Twitter account and Facebook page, attended tradeshow (Clear Hills Country Tradeshow,

SARDA Tradeshow, Peace Country Classic Agri-Show, Grande Prairie Teachers Convention, Water Week North, GP Sports Expo)

- Multiple Classroom Presentations for schools within the Watershed.
- Hosted a Working Well and Green Acreages Workshops for residents in the watershed.
- Member of Weyerhaeuser's and Mercer's Public Advisory Groups

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

- Continued to work with the Wapiti River Water Management Plan (WRWMP).
- Participating in Water North Coalition.
- Source Water Protection Plan for the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer
- Initiated a Wapiti Watershed Source Water Protection Plan
- Met with communities which have an identified water security issue
- Partner with organizations and landowners to improve water quality through restoration work.

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
- Ongoing conversation with Parks Canada, WaterSMART and Municipalities.
- Involved with WBNP Environmental Flow Needs Group
- Provided input to Wood Buffalo National Park's Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Extension work in Improved Livestock Crossing, Redwillow Watershed Restoration and Streambank Stabilization and Extension Projects

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

- Engaged in conversations at Tradeshow
- Presented at multiple Schools regarding MPWA, Water Quality & Wetlands
- Participated with the High School Riparian Spring Tour
- Participated in Walk through the Forest Grande Prairie & Peace River
- Project lead for Improved Livestock Crossing and Streambank Stabilization and Extension projects, which engage watershed residents through forums, workshops and one-on-one.

Financial and In-Kind Supporters 2018-2019

Agroforestry Woodlot Extension Society

Alberta Agriculture & Forestry

Alberta Conservation Association

Alberta Environment and Parks

Alberta Geological Survey

Alberta Infrastructure

Alberta Institute of Agrologists

Alberta Newsprint Company

Cows and Fish

Alberta Transportation

AQUATERA Utilities Inc.

Associated Environmental

Bigstone Cree Nation

CANFOR

City of Grande Prairie

County of Grande Prairie

County of Northern Lights

DMI International

D-RAY Sand and Gravel

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Farlinger & Associates Ltd.

**Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Management Advisory
Association**

International Paper

Little Red River Cree Nation

Mackenzie County

Matrix Solutions Ltd.

Metis Settlements General Council

Municipal District of Fairview

Municipal District of Greenview

Municipal District of Peace

Municipal District of Smoky River

Municipal District of Spirit River

NAIT Centre for Boreal Research

Northern Sunrise County

North Peace Tribal Council

Parks Canada

Peace Country Beef and Forage Association

RMA—Rural Municipalities Association

SARDA Ag Research

Seven Generations Energy Ltd.

Town of Beaverlodge

Town of Grimshaw

Town of Peace River

Town of Valleyview

Velocity Group

Victory GIS

Village of Berwyn

West County Watershed Society

**All the landowners who worked with us on a
range of projects.**

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



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

P.O. Box 217, McLennan, Alberta T0H 2L0

Phone: 780-324-3355 Fax: 780-324-3377

E-mail: info@mightypeacewatershedalliance.org

www.mightypeacewatershedalliance.org

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Alberta Government