



Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance



Diverse, Responsible & Connected

April 2025

From the Executive Director's Desk By Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier

Welcome to Spring in Northern Alberta! The MPWA has been busy providing learning opportunities (Water Management in AB Boreal Conference, workshops, presentations) and gearing up for a full on-the-ground summer project season. As mentioned before, MPWA is working towards updating and evaluating our State of the Watershed report (SOW).

I would encourage everyone to mark June 19th on your calendars and plan to attend our AGM. This event will include a much broader presentation of our work of the past year and discussions regarding information that is being (and should be) collected for the SOW. There will be the typical election for new Directors to the Board (list of seats up for election are on page 4). Nominations will be accepted up to a week before the

Education and Outreach

Has it ever been a busy time for Education and Outreach. On February 15th, we hosted 'Hook, Fish and Learn' with ACA's Kids Can Catch program and invited the public to join us at Young's Point on Sturgeon Lake. We had a good turnout despite the cold weather forecast and had a pleasant sunny and windless afternoon on the lake. While only a single pike fell victim to our lures, attendees were not discouraged and were keen anglers.

Our E&O Coordinator Adanna Hustler has also been seen around the watershed at various tradeshow and events including: PCBFA's Northern Women in Agriculture conference on February 19th, the Mighty Peace Teacher's Convention on March 6-7, the SARDA tradeshow on March 27-29, and Clear Hills Tradeshow April 12. Thank you to the various board members and staff who helped out at the booths.

Alberta WPACs teamed up to host the World Water Day; Glacier Preservation webinar on March 21st with guest speakers Daryl Kootenay, Stoney Nakoda Knowledge Keeper, Dr. Masaki Hayashi from the University of Calgary and Mitch Wincentaylo, Headwaters Program Coordinator with Athabasca Watershed Council. In case you missed it, a recording of the webinar has been published on our [YouTube channel](#) @mightypeacewatershedalliance.

School presentations are also going in full swing as Adanna made connections at the Mighty Peace Teachers Convention and it is looking to be a busy spring as teachers book presentations and field trips, even including some in french for the french immersion and francophone schools! If you are interested in having a presentation or field trip with MPWA reach out to our Education and Outreach Coordinator Adanna at outreach@mpwa.ca. We will begin offering the X-Stream science water monitoring program for grades 7 through 12 starting in May, don't miss out on a hands on learning opportunity for your classroom.



Conference - Water Management In Alberta's Boreal

February 25-26, 2025, Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance, Lesser Slave Watershed Council and Athabasca Watershed Council joined forces to present 'Water Management in Alberta's Boreal 2025' conference held in Grande Prairie at the Pomeroy Hotel and Conference Centre. The conference was very successful with 121 registrants attending the two-day event.

We began the first day with some sessions on water quality and data management. We heard from **Mary Kruk** on the use of DataStream for open water quality data, **Bradley Peter** from ALMS on how to use citizen science to improve water monitoring in the boreal, **Lynn Smith and Wynter Flett** from Peavine Metis Settlement about their water program, and **Johanne Little** from the Office of the Chief Scientist on the condition of environment reporting in Alberta. After a fantastic lunch, we moved onto the second session – water quantity and water use. **Craig Melin** from Alberta Energy Regulator spoke about water allocations and drought, while **Chiadih Chang** from AEPA gave an enthusiastic speech about the new AFETUW tool for estimating flows in Alberta. **Petra Rowell** from the Athabasca Watershed Council spoke about water supply in the Athabasca and **Bob Christian** from Forcorp discussed forestry management in relation to watersheds. We ended the session with a chat from **Darryl Smith** from the Alberta Wildlife Federation about the state of arctic grayling and walleye and **Landon Driedger** from Mackenzie County on farmer conversations. As attendees enjoyed dinner, our keynote speaker **John Pattison-Williams** gave a thought-provoking talk about the myth of hyperabundance of water in Northern Alberta.

Day 2 started all about boreal ecosystems.

Micheal Merchant from Alberta Biomonitoring Institute showed off their wetland habitat mapping, **Bin Xu** from NAIT Centre for Boreal Research gave an update on the progress of peatland restoration, **Lelia Tuffner**, Athabasca University gave an interesting chat about the impacts of seismic lines on water. After a networking break, the morning continued with **Scott Ketcheson** from Athabasca University on roads and wetlands in the boreal, **Bruce Nielsen** on the new Alberta Watercourse Crossing Guidebook, and then **Sarah Shortt (AWC)** and **Jess Lario (LSWC)** spoke on benthic invertebrates in Northern Alberta. After lunch we heard from **Rick Murray** from Ducks Unlimited on moving wetland science into practice, **Ken Monk** from the Northern Fly Fishers on arctic grayling in the Pembina river and finally from our very own **Adam Norris** on surface water management.



All-in-all, the conference offered a great time to meet new faces and see some familiar ones, exchange ideas and learn from others in the room. We would like to thank our sponsors ARC Resources LTD, Canfor, Pomeroy Hotel and Conference Centre, TOLKO, Aquatera, Millar Western and Weyerhaeuser for their support and funding.

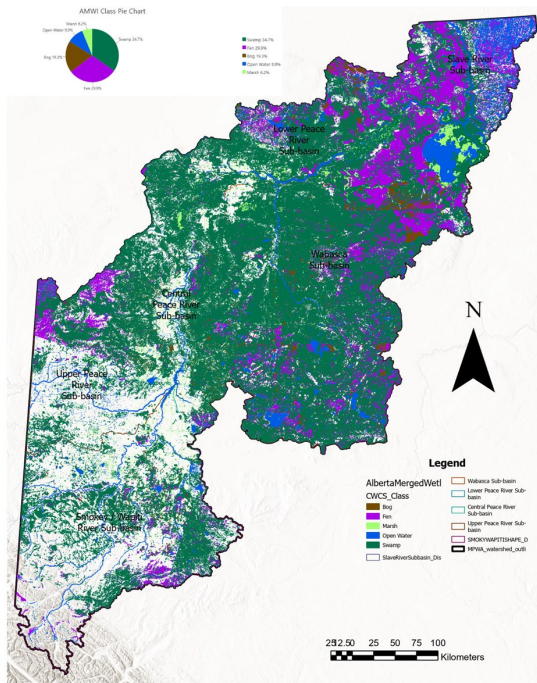
MPWA VISION

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

MPWA 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.

State of the Watershed Renewal



A State of the Watershed renewal is underway at the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance, with the Integrated Watershed Management Plan Steering Committee leading this process. The first piece of this work was commissioning The Peace and Slave Watershed: Current and Future Water Use. This report looks at water allocation and use across the watershed as well projections for future use based upon economic factors. New initiatives in the region, such as lithium extraction and nuclear power, require us to be proactive in understanding the needs and effects of these initiatives so that good decision making on how we manage our water and watershed is supported.

Indicators have been selected to inform us about how our watershed is functioning and the indicators have been grouped into 6 categories: Landscape, Biological Community, Surface Water Quality, Surface Water Quantity, Groundwater Quality and Groundwater Quantity. One indicator is Wetland extent and so we have accessed the most recent data for this and are examining the state of wetland extent and what that tells us about our watershed and how it functions.

Preparations and site visits are underway to get ready for the field season and the work to be done with our projects. Two new projects, Peace River Small Tributaries project and Resiliency in the Wapiti

Watershed project are collaborations with some great partners -AgroForestry Woodlot Extension Society, Alberta Conservation Association, Northern Sunrise County, County of Grande Prairie, Cows and Fish, Mackenzie County and landowners to implement management practices that support watershed function. We would like to thank AEPA Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program and Canada Water Agency for funding these projects.

LakeKeepers lake monitoring

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA) once again partnered with the Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS) to conduct winter sampling as part of the 2025 LakeKeepers Program. This winter presented some early challenges, with unseasonably warm temperatures in January making it difficult to access the deepest parts of the lakes. Fluctuating freeze-thaw cycles led to ice heaves and pooling water on the surface, complicating field conditions. Fortunately, February and March brought more stable conditions, with thicker, clearer ice that allowed for more reliable sampling—though it remained an unusual season overall.

With the support of dedicated volunteers, MPWA sampled three lakes within the watershed this winter: Sturgeon, Snipe, and Swan Lakes. All data collected through the LakeKeepers Program is publicly available via the open-access platform [DataStream](#). In addition, ALMS produces an annual summary report of lakes sampled across both winter and summer seasons, offering a valuable visual comparison of lake health across Alberta.

Looking ahead, MPWA is eager to take part in the 2025 Summer LakeKeepers Program—and we're inviting you to get involved! We're seeking volunteers interested in learning how to monitor and sample local lakes. Access to a boat, kayak, canoe, or other watercraft is essential to reach the deepest points of each lake.

Join us in protecting and understanding our watershed—one sample at a time!

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LakeKeepers

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Are you interested in learning more about your lake?
Do you have access to a boat, kayak, canoe or other vessel?

We are looking for volunteers this summer season to complete lake monitoring in the Mighty Peace watershed!

Contact Ashley for more information
projectcoordinator@mpwa.ca

Thank you to our Volunteers!

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance would like to extend our thanks to our fantastic volunteers from the winter! Hook, Fish and Learn on Feb 15th could not have been so successful without the help of our volunteers Darryl Smith from the Alberta Wildlife Federation, MPWA board member Dave Walty, Alberta Parks staff Nancy Mayo and Travis Gloeckler and Ryland Petrick. Also, contribution from MD of Greenview. Thank you to Lori Kinnee from the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Advisory Association for her help at MPWA's booth at the PCBFA's Northern Women in Agriculture conference helping connect MPWA with local women in agriculture. Thank you to board chair Chris Thiessen for the hours sat at the MPWA booth at the Mighty Peace Teacher's Convention encouraging the education of youth about the Peace watershed. We would also like to thank Ernie Last, Karlen Lowes and previous board member Sarah Cairns for their help and support with the winter LakeKeepers program. We appreciate their time and help with monitoring our lakes and helping close the data gap in Northern Alberta.

MPWA Staff



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Save the Date!

Our annual general meeting is
June 19, 2025 in the Peace River.

MPWA Board Members for 2024-2025

SECTOR	REPRESENTATIVE
Public Member at Large*	Richard Keillor
Public Member at Large*	Audrey DeWit
Conservation/Environment Director	Dave Walty
Research Education	Bin Xu
Watershed Stewardship*	Cathy Newhook
Recreation/Tourism/Fisheries*	Brian Lieverse
Agriculture**	Vacant
Forestry*	Wayne Thorp
Utilities	Ashley Rowney
Oil & Gas	Sandra Miller
Mining*	Vacant
Métis Nation of Alberta**	Vacant
Metis Settlements General Council*	Alden Armstrong
Upper Watershed First Nation*	Vacant
Lower Watershed First Nation**	Vacant
Middle Watershed First Nation*	Vacant
Rural Municipalities	Corinna Williams
Small Urban Municipalities	Elaine Manzer
Federal Transboundary Relations*	Abdi Siad-Omar
Large Urban Municipality*	Chris Thiessen
Provincial Government	Bonnie Segal

NOTE: Elections to be held June 19, 2025

1. The positions in **red and denoted with an ***, are up for election for a 2-year term (2025-2027)
2. The positions in **blue and denoted with a ****, are up for election to fulfill the second year of a 2 year term (2024-2026)

Board of Director Nominees are asked to submit their nomination forms one week prior of the AGM to the MPWA office. (Nomination must include; letter of support, nomination form and membership forms are in order (forms available on website)