



Wizard Lake Watershed & Lake Stewardship Association

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Newsletter #11

Summer 2009



Message from the Chair

Summer has officially started for the Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association board, not only because the weather has finally warmed up, but also because the Awareness Day is successfully behind us. Having this event earlier in the summer, to avoid conflicts with the

many other summer events, along with other changes in games and the concession, really seemed to pay off as this was the most successful Awareness Day yet. Thank you to everyone who joined us—pass the word—we look forward to seeing you and your friends and families again next year.

The next event we're looking forward to is planned for September 26. There will be 2 presentations: you can learn more about Homesite consultations and there will be a presentation about wastewater management. Mark the day on your calendars and watch for more details coming up.

Meanwhile, have a safe summer, boat within the speed limits, and avoid all those rocks cropping up in the lake due to the low water level.

Laverne Faulkner, Chair
780-389-3336

Boat Survey... are there TOO MANY Boats?

The Stewardship Association receives many comments and concerns over the number of boats that are using the lake. The general consensus is that Wizard Lake is unsafe, so we decided to get the facts.

BOAT SURVEY

- Summer 2008
- Counted 4 times
- Breakdown into 3 lake zones
- Boat type and activity
- Boats on shore, on lifts, boat houses
- Boat launches

In the summer of 2008 WLWLSA hired 2 gentlemen (Darin Maxwell & Thomas Rebic) to conduct boat counts on the lake at 4 different times.

The following are slide excerpts from a presentation that WLWLSA chairperson, Laverne Faulkner, and Safety & Enjoyment Working group leader, Carole Ellsworth, made on November 25, 2008 to: Cst. Jodi Heidinger, Leduc RCMP (for S/Sgt Tom Witzke), Larry McKeever, Wetaskiwin County Councillor, Nicholas Moffat, Parks Planning Supervisor, Leduc County, Dean Ohnesty, Director, Parks & Rec, Leduc County, Ian Salisbury, Boating Safety Officer, Transport Canada, and Jeff Unrau, Boating Safety Officer, Transport Canada), and on Feb 24/09 to Leduc County Council.

FACTS ABOUT WIZARD LAKE*

• Area	610 acres
• Maximum depth	36.1 feet
• Average depth	20.3 feet
• Maximum width	.34 miles
• Length	7.2 miles

* Atlas of Alberta Lakes; Abraham (1998)

- very narrow at 'narrows' – roughly calculate about 600 feet (minus 100 feet speed restriction on each shore leaves 400 feet (133 yards) of lake for boats to pass through
- widest part less than ½ mile wide

SURVEY TIMES

- **1 – Saturday, June 28, 11:15 am**
 - Sunny, windy, rough water, 22° C
- **2 – Saturday, June 28, 4:30 pm**
 - Sunny, windy, rough water 22° C
- **3 – Sunday, June 29, 3:00 pm**
 - Sunny, blue sky, calm water, 30° C
- **4 – Sunday, August 17, 3:00 pm**
 - Sunny, windy, very rough water, white caps, 31° C

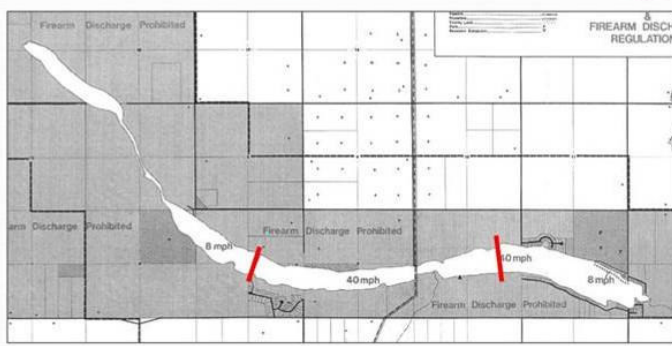
BOAT SURVEY RESULTS



	1 Sat, June 28 11:15 am	2 Sat, June 28 4:30 pm	3 Sun, June 29 3:00 pm	4 Sun, Aug 17 3:00 pm
TOTAL BOATS	38	72	123	102

- and we missed the busiest day of the long weekend (June 28/29)—Parks staff told us that Monday was the busiest day!

BOAT SURVEY – ZONES



- used 3 zones for reporting—see below
- note:** the 40 mph speed limit was only a proposal by the Wizard Lake Management Plan 1998
- 8 mph (12 km/hr) speed zones are law

BOAT SURVEY – ZONES



	1	2	3	4
East end to ski club	17	39	49	41
Ski club to buoys	12	21	45	43
Buoys to west end	9	12	29	18
TOTAL	38	72	123	102

- where the boats were when they were counted

BOAT SURVEY – ACTIVITY



	1	2	3	4
Power Boats Cruising	11	14	22	21
Pulling Skiers or Tubes	4	13	23	20
Pontoon Boats	1	5	15	6
Wake Boats	16	19	15	9
Personal Watercraft	0	7	13	17
Small Motor Boats	0	1	2	0
Canoes, Kayaks, Sailboats	1	3	0	1
Boats with fishermen	5	3	10	1
Anchored For Swimming	0	7	23	27
TOTAL	38	72	123	102

POTENTIAL FOR MORE BOATS



	1	2	3	4
Boats Tied on Shore	56	77	86	74
Boats on Lifts	103	105	94	120
TOTAL	159	182	180	194
Boat Houses		46		

- the count was one point in time
- many more boats on shore, potential for more to be launched

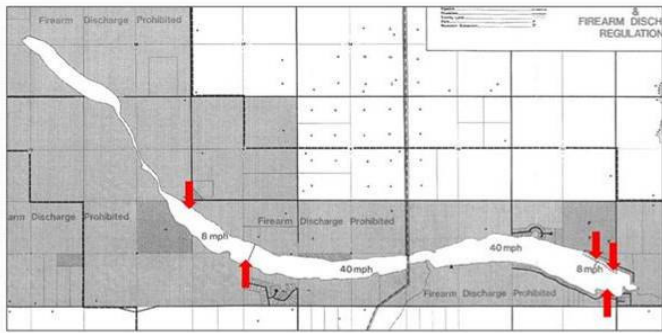
BOAT LAUNCHES



	June 28	June 29	Aug 17
Day Use launch	43	47	
RR 275, Twp 481	21	26	23
Wizard Heights	10	5	4
Trailers + Boats (<i>Jubilee Park</i>)			<20>
Trailers (<i>Day Use + Overflow</i>)			53
TOTAL	74	78	80

- the question of access and where boats are launched is interesting—wanted to collect this data

BOAT LAUNCHES



SKI CLUB DATA*

Table 12
Peak hour boating on Wizard Lake

Type of boat	Number	
	Highest number counted	average of busiest times
Personal watercraft	10	5.6
Other power boat	49	37.2
Unpowered boat	4	1.1
Fishing boat	5	2.5

Notes: Fishing boat includes power boats anchored or trolling
Columns cannot be totalled because peaks occurred at different times

Source: Wizard Lake Water Ski Club, 1998

*Wizard Lake Management Plan 1998 draft

- 1998 draft management plan looked at safety
- results from water ski club – 68 boats was highest number counted
- drastic increase now 10 years later (68 to 123)

SAFE BOATING DENSITIES

www.cwrc.info/boatcarryingcapacity.pdf

Table 1
Summary of Optimum Boating Densities

Source	Suggested Density	Boating Uses
Ashton (1971)	5 to 9 acres/boat	All uses combined in Cass Lake
	4 to 9 acres/boat	All uses combined in Orchard Lake
	6 to 11 acres/boat	All uses combined in Union Lake
Kusler (1972)	40 acres/boat	Waterskiing - All uses combined
	20 acres/boat	Waterskiing
	15 acres/boat	Coordinated waterskiing
Jaakson et al. (1989)	20 acres/boat	Waterskiing and motorboat cruising
	10 acres/boat	Fishing
	8 acres/boat	Canoing, kayaking, sailing
	10 acres/boat	All uses combined
Wagner (1991)	25 acres/boat	All recreational activities
Warbach et al. (1994)	30 acres/boat	All motorized (> 5 HP) uses

Note. From "Four Township Recreational Carrying Capacity Study: Pine Lake, Upper Crooked Lake, Gull Lake, Sherman Lake," by, PAE, 2001, p. 13.

- what do these numbers mean? Need some perspective to gauge our results against
- 1998 draft plan had a technical committee

- cited Jaakson results as the benchmark in that plan
- generally the more high speed boats, the more acres per boat are required
- 10 acres per boat for all uses combined

BOATING DENSITY

- Jaakson: **10 acres per boat**
- Wizard Lake: **518 useable acres**
 - $518 \div 10 = 51.8$ boats capacity
- Reality = **72 – 123 boats!**

CONCLUSION

- Wizard Lake is often not a safe recreational lake

FUTURE

- Effect of development and dense zoning
 - brings more boats onto the lake
- Area Structure Plan?

- as well as the environmental impacts of future development and zoning decisions, the question of safety must be considered
- believe the Area Structure plan will address this safety issue and present solutions

In Conclusion:

Wizard Lake has an area large enough to handle 52 boats safely at any one time.

- if you were one of the boats on the water on Saturday PM, June 28, Sunday, June 29 or Sunday, August 17, 2008 were you in a safe boating environment?
- will the number of boats continue to increase?

Hazard Markers

Carole Ellsworth

Wizard Lake is at its lowest level since 1968. This is when the Dept. of Environment began to record lake levels. Not only is it difficult to get a boat on and off a hoist, or manoeuvre a boat close to shore, but boating activities can be dangerous, with rocks exposed or just below the surface.



Watch out for the rocks....particularly at the east end of the lake.

The Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association has ordered hazard marker signs and constructed flotation devices to hold these signs. *If you know of a rock that may cause a problem, you are welcome to borrow one of our signs and place it in the water at the site. Please phone Albert Faulkner at 780-389-3336.*

We want everyone to enjoy their boating on Wizard Lake, and not have a water skier or someone on a tube injure themselves because of a rock or go home with a costly boat repair bill.



Books presented to Area Libraries

Laura Reichert

I was pleased to accompany Laverne on June 2nd to two community and five school libraries in the Millet, Calmar and Wizard Lake area to distribute two books from the WLWLSA: *One Well, the Story of Water on Earth* and *On the Living Edge, Your Guide for Waterfront Living*. In

fulfilling part of the educational mandate of the organization, the delivery of the books to the libraries coincided with Environment Week. We enjoyed our day trip, meeting teachers, librarians and a few students, who were all pleased to receive the donations of the books. The librarians and school teachers we met welcomed the addition of these books as new resource material for their libraries. Donna Mantai, a teacher at Pipestone School, said that "in this day and age when there is so much emphasis on our environment, children are more conscious of the world around them, and these books will assist in our studies in being environmentally conscious." Calmar Elementary School Librarian Charmaine Weldon said "This is great because our grade five students study wetlands in their curriculum."

"Ownership of our lakes and their future belong to the communities," said Laverne. "Resources like these books will help the younger generation become more conscious of their upcoming responsibilities to the environment. It is our youth who tomorrow will carry on the work that we are doing today. As they are educated they can apply the theory they learn in school to the lakes and rivers they use, and make that link. Our Association is pleased to assist our youth in learning that connection."

Anyone can come *Well Aware* by making choices that help conserve and protect water; even the simplest actions can make a huge difference.



AWQA Day

Laura Reichert

John Reichert and Albert Faulkner recently tested the water of Wizard Lake as part of Alberta Water Quality Awareness Day (AWQA), an annual event held during the first week of June. The water tested was from different areas of the lake and the testing included measuring pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and turbidity of the water, which are all important components of healthy aquatic ecosystems.

Any water body in Alberta is eligible for testing by individuals or groups who have registered for a water quality test kit. The findings provide a snapshot of Alberta's water quality. AWQA is a program of the Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS), in partnership with other provincial and federal agencies, including the Alberta Stewardship Network (ASN). The goal of AWQA is to increase awareness and understanding of our water resources, while also promoting stewardship and personal involvement in the protection of our waterways. The program provides a

unique opportunity and educational experience for people of all ages. The true value of AWQA Day comes from the educational opportunities that arise during sampling and by bringing people together across Alberta's watersheds to demonstrate the impact that collective action can have.

Check the AWQA website for results at www.awqa.ca. For further program information check the website; email info@awqa.ca; or phone 780-702-ALMS.

White Pelicans



In 1987, the White Pelican was removed from Alberta's Endangered Species list. Though at one time it had a broad territory across North

America, now it is only found in the area of the Slave River in Canada's Northwest Territories, south to Colorado and from the Rocky Mountains to Lake Superior. The population is sparse in the province of Alberta. At one time there were over twenty nesting sites here. Today, that number has been more than cut in half. It is illegal to enter or approach within 800 m (1/2 mi.) of these critical nesting sites between April 15 and September 15.

The White Pelican inhabits areas around freshwater lakes. It is one of the largest birds in the world. It weighs between 12 and 15 pounds and has a wingspan of up to 10 feet.

Adult pelicans are primarily white with black-tipped wings, though they may have yellow-tinged feathers on their backs and breast. Under the long flat bill is a yellow-orange pouch that is used when feeding. A pale yellow crest appears on the back of the head when the pelican is breeding. Young pelicans look much like the adults but have a gray patch on the neck and the back of the head. Their eyes are usually brown while the eyes of adult pelicans are orange-yellow.

Many times White Pelicans are mistaken for whooping cranes or snow geese. These birds fly with outstretched necks while the pelicans double their neck into their body when in flight. The pelican's bright orange feet and yellow bill distinguishes it from other birds.

Pelicans fly in a V formation. They are clumsy on land but graceful in flight. They often soar on warm wind currents where they rise to great heights.

White Pelicans feed at the mouths of rivers and creeks in spring where the water is shallow. When the ice melts, more feeding areas open. They feed mainly on fish: northern pike, whitefish, perch, salamanders and frogs, along with a wide variety of aquatic invertebrates. These are the mainstays of their diet. An adult pelican eats up to 5 pounds of food per day.

White Pelicans scoop fish out of the shallow water, strain excess water from their pouches, tip their head back and

swallow. When food is scarce, they form a circle and herd their prey to shore where they scoop it up. Young pelicans eat regurgitated food. When they are hungry, they make loud croaks and flap their wings. As they grow, they will often reach into a parent's pouch for food. The White Pelican arrives in Alberta in late April. They are social birds and build their nests in colonies. They return to the same nesting site for years. Their favorite nesting place is a small island in a lake that is undisturbed by humans and other wildlife, though they will nest with gulls.

The oldest colony of White Pelicans in Alberta was documented in 1789. It is on an island in Mountain Rapids in the Slave Lake. It is the most northerly pelican colony in the world and the only colony in Alberta that is found on a river.

Colonies range from a few birds to several hundred. It often contains juveniles and adults that do not breed. Some Alberta pelicans gather in groups and fly as far as fifty miles to a preferred feeding ground.

White Pelicans leave Alberta in late September and migrate to the Florida and the Gulf of Mexico for the winter.

White Pelican colonies are found in the boreal forests, aspen parklands and prairie lakes of Alberta. If one area becomes unsuitable, they will abandon it for a more favorable site. Over the years, nesting grounds become barren. Continued trampling and excrement kill all vegetation.

White Pelicans live between 12 and 14 years in the wild. They do not reach maturity until age three, when they begin to breed. **Alberta Government, Sustainable Resource Development**

Wizard Lake Awareness Day & AGM

Laura Reichert

Games a Big Hit

On June 6th, 2009, Wizard Lake area residents and cottagers gripped the thick rope tight and stood firm in the first ever north/east vs. south/west "Tug-of-War on Erosion" challenge at the third annual Wizard Lake Awareness Day held on June 6th at Jubilee Park. The educational and fundraising event attracted area residents, cottagers and campers to an afternoon of games, fun, food and information, with an estimated 90 people attending throughout the day.



A number of member volunteers were involved in organizing the event, which provided an opportunity for the lake community to learn more about Wizard Lake and the Stewardship Association; as well as to show their support of the Association while partaking in some fun social activities at the lake. The event included a number



of competitive games, such as Watershed Washoes and **Frisbee Toss/Phosphate Loss**; a silent auction and the ever popular chicken bingo. The variety of games played were a big hit with all ages of competitors.

The beer tent and concession were busy throughout the day,

serving up beverages, barbequed hot dogs and beef on a bun. Participants sought out answers to a Trivia Challenge



and then entered for a chance to win door prizes. The Silent Auction was very busy as participants kept close watch on items they wanted.

The same chicken from last year was there to mark his spot several times to the delight or disappointment of observers. This 'Bingo' was a great fundraiser as well as making the winners happy. A great asset this year was the addition of an



Astro Jump, the use of which was donated by Jack Payne, owner of Classic Landscapes in Edmonton. It was full of kids of all ages all day long (even some of the adults tried it and found it was very hard work!) There were also informative displays showing the work that has

been done by volunteers of the WLWLSA. The day ended with the tug-of-war, presentations to game winners, drawing for door prizes and then closing off the silent auction. The winner of the tug-of-war was declared to be the lake's south side group. This



first challenge may have been won by the south, but the north side has threatened to come back next year bigger and stronger!

Annual General Meeting

The Association's Annual General Meeting was held mid-afternoon, where Chairman Laverne Faulkner thanked everyone for coming out to support this event and the organization. She highlighted the Association's progress to date, and expressed appreciation for the continued support from the Alberta Stewardship Network; Leduc and Wetaskiwin Counties; many businesses from the area and neighboring communities; and to all Association members, in particular those who volunteered with this year's Awareness Day. The financial statement was presented by Treasurer LeVerne Ellsworth; with WLWLSA members Linda White and Gloria Booth



appointed to review the financial records next year. Elections were held for the Board of Directors, with Randy Booth and Shirley Elder welcomed on as the newest directors. A thank you gift of flowers was presented to the WLWLSA Chair, Laverne Faulkner for all of the time and work she puts into leading us all.

Homesite Consultation Program

Representing the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, Brianne Lovstrom and Gina Curtis, Shoreline Outreach coordinators, made a brief presentation on the Homesite Consultation Program, a Living by Water Project. They outlined the focus of the program, to teach residents about positive actions to make on your lake property which will help in maintaining the health of the lake, its shoreline and water quality. Anyone who has invested in property at the lake knows the importance of having a clean and clear lake for maintaining or increasing property values.

The homesite consultation is a free evaluation; it's confidential and voluntary to any property owner at the lake. Those wanting to book a homesite consultation can contact WLWLSA member April Larkin at 780-789-2554 or e-mail wizlake@telus.net.



Home Site Consultation 2

Arja Patrick

So I signed up for the FAN (Federation of Alberta Naturalists) people to come out to our acreage to help us see our property in an environmentally friendly way. Since I was the first one on Wizard Lake (they serve many Alberta Lakes) four young adults came (University and students), but normally only two would come. We walked around our property and talked about our water well, sewer system, grass, trees, plants animals, bugs, bats, dogs, cat, house, buildings, flowers, weeds; well,

just about everything! I sure learned a lot! I really got excited as they explained some things to me that I didn't even know about our home. They gave suggestions and offered to do some research when I had questions. They were great kids (yes, adults, but I am old so they seemed like kids to me) and we had a super visit. You will not only enjoy their visit, but find it an excellent resource for your home. I am really looking forward to getting the final written report (which, by the way, is confidential).

Wizard Lake Weir

LeVerne Ellsworth



These are the facts taken out of a report by Stanley Associates Engineering Ltd. regarding the design and installation of the weir

on Wizard Lake in 1991/92.

A weir is commonly perceived to be the most practical means of **lake outlet control**. This weir was designed with a fixed crest of 784.00 meters which was based on a 1 to 100 year flood level. The weir length and crest elevation was carefully selected in order to optimize the lake level rise and peak **outflow rates during a flood**, and in addition provide acceptable lake levels during longer term hydrologic conditions. **In order to prevent tampering with the weir elevation the county selected a FIXED WEIR installation. There is no apparatus that makes this weir adjustable to alter the lake level from year to year or day to day.**

Fluctuations to the lake level above and below the 784.00 meters are due to flooding or evaporation. I hope that this information clarifies any misconceptions that someone operates the weir and can raise or lower the lake level. If you have any questions regarding the weir, I would be more than willing to review the report or visit the weir with you.



LeVerne Ellsworth Phone 780-985-3248

The Great Canadian Clean-up

Arja Patrick

WLWLSA will be organizing a Lake clean-up this coming September. Already we have volunteers to organize almost every lake development area so if someone calls you to come out and help, bring your

friends and family. It will make for a fun day. We will be having a BBQ or wiener roast for all volunteers after the cleanup. We also plan to use some boats to access areas not reachable from the shore. If you wish to use your boat, or have a truck that can handle some of the larger objects, please call Carole Ellsworth at 780-985-3248.

Boat Parade on Wizard Lake

Laura Reichert

What a "wave-y" way to celebrate Canada Day – from a boat on the water waving on the waves, or watching and waving your flags from shore!

A boat parade was held on Wizard Lake on Sunday, June 28th in celebration of Canada Day, with about 16 boats participating, not bad for such a blustery day! As the long line up of boats slowly cruised its way past the cottages and Jubilee Park Campground, enthusiastic boaters waved Canadian Flags and sang "O Canada," while spectators cheered and waved from shore. Most boats were decked out in Canada Day colors of red and white, with several boaters wearing red and white Canada Day gear.

Last year 33 boats of all shapes and sizes participated in the boat parade surpassing all expectations from seven the previous year. This event is organized by Chris and Kate Daniel and other residents of Curilane Beach, with promotion of the event supported by the WLWLSA.



What a fun afternoon everyone had at Wizard Lake in pre-celebrating Canada Day!

For Sale (all with the Wizard Lake logo):

T-shirts– only L and XL..... \$18

Caps- black or beige \$20

Toques- black \$10

Contact Laura at johlau@telus.net

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 17	Board meeting
Sept 19	Shoreline Cleanup
Sept 26	Workshops-Homesite Consultation, Wastewater mgmt
Fall	Bowling social event
Oct/Nov	Horseshoe social event