



# Wizard Lake Watershed & Lake Stewardship Association

RR 2, Site 10, Box 8, Thorsby, AB, T0C 2P0 ~ 780-389-3336  
wizlake@telus.net ~ www.stewardsweb.com/wizardlake

## Newsletter #4

Summer 2007



### Message from the Chair:

As your Stewardship Association works hard to prepare for our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual general meeting (AGM), I'm reflecting on all that your board of directors and volunteers have accomplished

over the past year. These are the highlights:

- a profile of our association's successes was published in the Alberta Stewardship Network's (ASN) publication "Awareness to Action"
- received a grant of \$4200.00 from the ASN
- erected 8 community bulletin boards around Wizard Lake
- planning a "Wizard Lake Awareness Day" to further conservation consciousness, build ownership and pride in the watershed, enhance the stewardship profile, and raise funds
- most of our accomplishments were achieved through our working groups, which were introduced to our members at our last AGM:
  - **Water Quality** – sampled the runoff flowing into the lake last spring at 6 inlet streams, and at 1 outlet (the weir)
  - **Shoreline and Watershed** – met with both county's planning and development people to obtain information and establish relationships
  - **Safety and Enjoyment** – placed rock hazard markers, worked with the RCMP on speed limit enforcement, worked with Leduc County on the buoys to mark the 12 kph zone at the west end, wrote an article on the benefits of the speed zone
  - **Communication and Education** – put out the quarterly newsletters, purchased Living on the Edge books for watershed residents, scheduled information sessions for Wednesday evenings at Jubilee park
  - **Fundraising and Celebrations** – held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Wiz 'Spiel (what a lot of fun!), produced a column and "Wiz Tip" in the Lake Schooner

At the upcoming AGM you will elect new board members, who will have a chance to look ahead and plan what our exciting new year will accomplish. I'm looking forward to meeting and talking to you (and kicking butt at bocce and horseshoes!) on August 25 at our Wizard Lake Awareness Day and AGM—see you then.

Laverne Faulkner

### THE BULLETIN BOARDS ARE HERE!

The bulletin boards are constructed and have been set up in your area. The areas fortunate to receive these boards are Wizard Lake Estates, Butterfly Cove, Enchantment Valley, Curilane A, Curilane B, Wizard Ridge, Wizard Heights E. and Wizard Heights W. The boards will help build a strong sense of community around Wizard Lake, and help us communicate more easily with one another--the mailboxes will no longer be defaced with notices! We envision these boards to be used for community news, events and announcements. We would expect a donation for any commercial use.



**A Big Thank You** to: LeVerne Ellsworth for working so hard to see the construction of the Bulletin Boards come to completion. A special thank you goes to Richard Stein and Walter Kolodychuk for constructing the template and pre-cutting all of the lumber. Thanks to Albert Faulkner on the construction crew and for donating the use of his skid steer.

### T-Shirts

A big fundraiser is the WLWLSA t-shirt sale. More have been ordered and if you are interested, call Ruth at 985-2140 or buy them on Aug 25.

## WLWLSA MEMBERSHIPS

Memberships expire at the end of May.

New memberships and renewals (\$10 per vote) are available by calling Ruth Kolodychuk at 985-2140. Members will need a new card in order to vote at the AGM on Aug 25.

## What are Riparian Areas?

“Riparian areas are those strips of green vegetation alongside streams, creeks, rivers, lakes, sloughs, and any other small or large bodies of water.”

“Although riparian areas make up a small percentage of the landscape, their importance and impact is far reaching. Healthy riparian areas provide a nearby source of clean water ... (and) act as filters to keep sediment and pollutants from entering the water. Healthy riparian areas also act as a sponge to collect and slowly release needed moisture over the landscape. Vegetation in riparian areas help prevent soil erosion on banks and also provide habitat for insects, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and other animals which ensure healthy, functioning ecosystems.” “*Riparian Areas – Important Natural Assets*” by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

## I Want to Protect My Shoreline Property and I Want Clean Water! (“*Living by Water*” by Alberta Water Council)

There are some actions we can take to protect the Wizard Lake shoreline and, as shoreline visitors we can help keep our water safe for drinking, swimming, fishing and for wildlife. Join the challenge to help protect and restore 3000 kms of shorelines across Canada (and especially at Wizard Lake):

- a. start a buffer strip by leaving uncut grass on the bank.
- b. re-plant native shrubs and trees along the shoreline.
- c. remove invasive plants (weeds) regularly.
- d. build a “low impact” dock if required.
- e. avoid importing a beach.
- f. keep pets and livestock away from the shoreline.
- g. clear as little as possible when building.
- h. prune trees instead of removing them for a better view.
- i. reduce or eliminate the use of fertilizers & pesticides.
- j. handle fuels, oil, & chemicals with great care.
- k. redirect contaminated runoff into a settling area.
- l. use phosphate free soaps & cleaners.
- m. avoid toxic cleaners by using baking soda or vinegar.
- n. pump the septic tank regularly.
- o. conserve water using low-flow showerheads and toilets.
- p. use oil absorbing bilge cloths instead of bilge cleaners.
- q. practice safe refueling.
- r. reduce my wake by slowing down within 500 ft of shore.
- s. use 2 or 4 stroke engine meeting EPA 2006 guidelines.
- t. maintain the boat motor through regular inspections.
- u. clean up and take away all man-made garbage.
- v. work with local groups (like WSWSLA).
- w. share with others the importance of healthy shorelines.

## Some things to think about “*Help Solve a Mystery*” Cows and Fish

1. The quality of water is generally most dependent on:

- the stability of the shoreline or bank.
- runoff from fields, forests, lawns, roads & parking areas.

- sewage and treated discharges.
- changes in water levels due to climatic changes.
- the condition of the surrounding watershed.

2. True or False (circle the correct answer)

- T / F fish migrate to warmer water in fall/winter.
- T / F fish lay eggs anywhere at anytime through the years.
- T / F sand or silt on the bottom protects eggs for hatching.
- T / F fish breathe by surfacing for oxygen.
- T / F fallen trees, rocks and vegetation conserve fish energy.
- T / F all fish need the same amount of oxygen.
- T / F fish never stop swimming.
- T / F fish eat more in winter months to protect from the cold.
- T / F Alberta’s lakes & streams rely mostly on stocked fish.
- T / F a variety of living & dead vegetation on shore is good.
- T / F riparian = vegetation along lakes, rivers, & wetlands.
- T / F declining fish populations can indicate poor watershed.
- T / F draining wetlands is good for lakes.
- T / F fixing fish habitat re-establishes fish populations.
- T / F many larger fish indicate good population numbers.
- T / F fish adapt quickly to changes in their habitat.
- T / F non-sport fish are important to the survival of sport fish.
- T / F enough food = fish populations are maintained.
- T / F “clean and tidy” lawns make dirty lakes and streams.
- T / F A natural shoreline makes for more mosquitoes.
- T / F you can be fined for removing aquatic vegetation.
- T / F invasive plants & animals are destructive of habitats.
- T / F several treatments of boiling water destroys weeds.
- T / F 10% of Alberta’s wildlife depend on dead trees.
- T / F breakwaters & retaining walls cause erosion next door.

## Did You Know? “*On the Living Edge*” by Federation of Alberta Naturalists

- Of 29 OECD countries, Canada is 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in water use.
- drops of food coloring in your toilet tank shows a leak.
- about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of household waste can be composted.
- pesticides also kill helpful insects (beetles, spiders, etc.)
- plants grown in compost are more disease resistant.
- the biggest problem facing wildlife today is homelessness.
- installing a ‘bat house’ can reduce # of yard insects.
- domestic and abandoned cats kill 1 billion birds per year.
- older 70 hp 2-stroke engines pollute = 8000km car ride.
- the Coast Guard regulates all navigable lakes and rivers.
- land below the ‘high water mark’ belongs to the crown.
- home pesticide use, per acre, is more than most farms.

## Weeds:

“Many of Alberta’s worst weeds are ‘escaped’ ornamental garden plants whose origins can be traced back to Europe and Asia. Unfortunately, they flourish here in North America without the natural insects, animals, fungi, and diseases that keep them under control in their homeland.

Weeds can hitch-a-ride onto your property, traveling via equipment, vehicles, hay, birds, and other wildlife – even on your clothing. If soil is disturbed or cultivated, woodlands and shrubs removed, or grasses overgrazed and in poor health, conditions are perfect for weeds to thrive and take over.” “*Caring for Alberta’s Landscape – Tips & References for Owners of Small Farms & Acreages*” by Alberta Agriculture