



# Wizard Lake Watershed & Lake Stewardship Association

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**Newsletter #13**

**Winter 2009**



## **Message from the Chair**

This is a copy of the letter the WLWLSA send to Leduc County regarding the draft Wizard Lake area structure plan. It is important that the county hears from everyone. Feel free to take ideas from this letter to compose your own letter as well to the county.

Oct 26, 2009

## **RE: DRAFT WIZARD LAKE AREA STRUCTURE PLAN**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft Wizard Lake Area Structure Plan as presented at the October 6, 2009 public meeting. The Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association (WLWLSA) is an organization comprised of residents and users of Wizard Lake. Our mandate is to work toward enhancing and protecting the long

term sustainability and enjoyment of Wizard Lake for the benefit of all users and watershed inhabitants. We represent a membership of 81 families.

The authors of this document have obviously put a considerable amount of work into this plan. It is commendable that Leduc County has the foresight and concern for the environment to embark upon a plan to protect Wizard Lake for future generations, and not repeat the many mistakes made at other lakes and adjacent land.

## **BACKGROUND**

As the board of directors of the WLWLSA read the draft plan, we kept 3 criteria in mind, which we considered the original mandate of the area structure plan:

- will this guide Leduc County in making environmentally sustainable decisions regarding subdivision and development of the watershed of Wizard Lake?
- will this protect and enhance the quality of Wizard Lake?
- will this ensure the safe recreational use of the lake both on and off the water?

## **“CHARACTER” OR LAND USE DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

We support the concept of protecting the lake through establishing buffer zones in the watershed that will not be developed. Restoring and conserving the areas of peatland conservation, lakefront riparian, hydrological sensitive, and ecological buffer is critical to maintaining the quality of the water in Wizard Lake.

The key to sustainable development of the central and edge conservation areas will be in preserving the drainage areas (as outlined) and applying all the appropriate environmental safeguards to any development. These environmental safeguards are outlined in the zoning applied to these areas in order to allow for development. The existing zoning that is being used is Country Residential, which has minimal environmental guidelines. **The appropriate zoning, with the best possible environmental safeguards, to be applied to all areas requesting rezoning for development, must be included in this plan.**

In order for this area structure plan to be successful and stand the test of time the safeguards will require vigilant follow up and enforcement by the county, to ensure they are incorporated into all development.

**The question of developing campgrounds and other commercial pursuits must be addressed.** It is not clear if additional campsites will be allowed, how many, how big, or the density of population that is appropriate. Nor is it clear what commercial development is appropriate for a sensitive watershed area.

## **DENSITY OF PEOPLE AROUND WIZARD LAKE**

The question never addressed, but vital for future Council decisions, is how many people can Wizard Lake sustain in a 1 mile radius around it? Wizard Lake is a very narrow lake with very few acres of water per mile of shoreline. What studies have been completed in this area to support increased density?

Development causes ‘nutrient dumping.’ Roadway and driveways act as canals and can be harmful to wildlife. With an increased population base, there is an increase in fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, suspended solids, organic chemicals, dissolved salts (winter), heavy metals, oil and trash. ‘Livestock’ comes with people, i.e. dogs, horses, therefore more phosphates to wash into the lake. Currently the lake water level is at a record low, thereby not replenishing itself in a timely manner, which exacerbates this ‘nutrient dumping.’

Wizard Lake’s watershed, with relatively few acres of water, cannot maintain the same density of people as a lake that is, for example, 2 miles wide, with the same length of shoreline.

If many applications are made for campgrounds, for example, in the central conservation area, when will Council no longer allow them? **A guideline for the density overall of population in the development areas is required for future Council decisions.**

## JUBILEE PARK EXPANSION

The idea of conserving a large parcel of land adjacent to Jubilee Park is a good one. However, it is not clear how many more camping spaces will be created in a park expansion. Creating a further concentrated density of people around the shores of the lake does not further protect and enhance the water quality of Wizard Lake. **There should be no further campsites created with this expansion.**

## HAMLET

The WLWLSA is not aware of the rationale behind the creation of a hamlet thereby increasing the density of population near Wizard Lake. Calmar's close proximity to Wizard Lake currently provides the amenities required by the lake population. The only need identified by the community was for a small community gathering place. Allowing for building a Hamlet has taken this concept to an extreme. **We can see no point in bringing in this concentrated density of people, either now or in the future, to this location.**

The draft plan is vague in terms of sewer and other services. There are many 'shoulds' that don't have much teeth for sustainable practices, and must be reworded into 'wills', and also address the lack of planning for waste disposal for existing residents and campgrounds.

Again, the question of how many people can the lake sustain? If Wetaskiwin County undertakes to mirror Leduc County's plan and allow the same hamlet development on the south side, the population density becomes unimaginable.

## TRAILS

Development of trails does not further the objective of protecting and enhancing the quality of Wizard Lake, and they will be destructive of the adjacent habitat. The usage of any possible trails must be defined: walking, horses, bicycles, snow mobiles, all terrain vehicles? They bring up issues of private ownership, vandalism and safety. Who will control the garbage, cigarette butts, dog poop and provide washrooms?

**Any additional trails contemplated should be built in the Jubilee Park expansion area,** where there is staff and control of the system.

## SAFE BOATING

The WLWLSA acknowledges the inclusion of addressing the question of how to maintain Wizard Lake as a safe boating environment. As the writers of this plan acknowledged, this was a major concern expressed in all the public forums, and cannot be ignored. We support the recommendations contained in the report to take steps to protect all recreational users of the lake. Again, we would like to see the 'shoulds' reworded to 'wills' to ensure the appropriate steps are taken.

Once the area structure plan is in place and approved development takes place, the inevitable consequence is an increase in the number of boats on the lake. One of the primary reasons people move to a lake environment is to access the water and immediate surrounding areas. Wizard Lake is traditionally a water skiing lake and should remain as such, while putting measures in place to safely allow water skiing including other types of boating and water activities. **It is imperative that along with increased development, appropriate measures are taken regarding boating traditions and boat safety.**

## SUMMARY

- protect and enhance the quality of Wizard Lake
- support buffer zones and areas of hydrological sensitivity with no development
- use the most environmentally sustainable zoning for land to be developed and specify this zoning in the area structure plan
- apply all ecological safeguards available to any allowed development, with good monitoring and enforcement
- develop guidelines for development of campgrounds and other commercial pursuits
- formulate a guideline for the overall density of population that is sustainable in the watershed area
- preserve and enhance the environment adjacent to Jubilee Park
- do not allow additional campsites in this expanded Jubilee Park
- do not develop a hamlet
- confine development of a trail system to the expanded Jubilee Park
- develop boating criteria as part of the area structure plan
- first consider municipal residents and act in their best interests

Each municipality has a moral and legal obligation to protect and enhance the environment within their jurisdiction. In achieving this they must first consider the existing residents and act in their best interest. Once that has been addressed it is natural and proper to accommodate other residents within the municipality. Using the desires of neighbouring municipalities for economic gain is not "protecting and enhancing the environment within their jurisdiction."

The Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association, as a committed partner in the future of Wizard Lake, is available to discuss and clarify our input on this sensitive project. I can be reached at 780-389-3336.

Sincerely,

Laverne Faulkner, Chair [wizlake@telus.net](mailto:wizlake@telus.net), 780-389-3336  
Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association  
cc: WLWLSA Board of Directors

## Wizard Lake Shoreline Cleanup an Astonishing Success

By Carole Ellsworth



On September 26, 2009, Wizard Lake held its first major cleanup. This was completed as part of the Toronto Dominion Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup program.







**The Wizard Lake community rallied together with an overwhelming 61 volunteers to collect 3815 kilograms or 4.2 tons of trash!**

Albert Faulkner was in charge of the 6 boats which cruised the shoreline to gather garbage. This trash, from in the water and along the shoreline, consisted of steel cable, discarded toys, box of fireworks, burnt up recliner chair, 50 gallon drums, rafts, tires, car parts, boat ramp and building material. Other items collected were 154 food wrappers, 281 cigarette filters, ten lengths of fishing line, 24 bleach bottles, 371 beverage cans, 15 diapers, 4 crates, 36 pieces of clothing and 37 chunks of glass.

Very important big people and very important little people participated: Dan Sekora, Calmar Councillor was part of a crew, as well as Larry McKeever, Wetaskiwin County Councillor.

Gordon Bentley, of Bentley Campground, organized a group as did Louis Wanat, of the Wizard Lake Ski Club.

The very important 'little' people were Jace and Michael MacPherson, Dallas and Austin Cummings (Bartlett), Kasandra and Joshua Patrick and Bradley, Turner and Jaxon Brooks (Ellsworth). These are our 'Stewards in Training'.

Special mention must be made of Al Frickey, who signed up 19 volunteers from Wizard Heights, alone. Way to go Al!

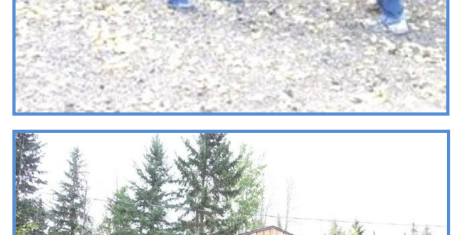
Wayne Dyck went above and beyond, using his front end loader and flatbed trailer. Albert Faulkner organized a crew to undertake the huge task of removing a barge from the south shore. Wayne was there with his equipment and was assisted by Tim Purnell, Mike Purnell and John Hermans.

After the cleanup, the day was celebrated with a BBQ at Jubilee Park, sponsored by Wizard Lake Watershed and Lake Stewardship Association. Thank you to the staff at Jubilee Park for opening the day use area for us and for making the recreation building available.

Special thanks to Blake Bartlett for borrowing a large scale to weigh this trash. Thanks to Counties of Leduc and Wetaskiwin Public Works for supplying the garbage bins.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you to all of the volunteers for contributing towards making Wizard Lake and Watershed a healthier community.

**We can only hope that one day Canadians will understand the serious consequences of our global waterway debris problem.**



**Harness Racing - Dec. 2, 2009**

Once again we are pleased to announce the up-coming harness racing event at Northlands on Wednesday December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009. Last year we had a great evening with 62 members and guests attending and we all had a lot of fun! Please tell your friends and neighbors as we

can have a group booking of as many as 200 people. Everyone is welcome and we need your cooperation by responding **quickly**. Your choice of meal at the "Colours Restaurant" at Northlands will cost \$32.82 which includes a full meal, dessert and coffee or tea and gratuity, a great deal for a fun night. We sponsor a race and then are given the privilege of presenting the Prize to



the winner. If you have not already submitted your name to attend the races now is the time to do it as time is running out. We would like to know how many people will attend and what their first and second choice of meal will be. Looking forward to seeing you there! (rsvp NOW please!)

Please e-mail Chris Daniel at [chrisddaniel@xplornet.com](mailto:chrisddaniel@xplornet.com) or phone Ruth Kolodychuk at 780-985-2140 or Kate Daniel at 780-985-3287 by **November 15<sup>th</sup>** please. To those of you who have not signed up yet and would like to join us we hope to hear from you soon and to those that have already signed up and paid "Thank You" as we are looking forward to seeing you all on December 2nd at the harness races.

### **Wildlife Sightings at Wizard Lake**

There have been many sightings of wildlife this past fall. Deer, moose, elk, as well as recently a cougar on the South side in the Wizard Ridge area. We mention this only as a 'heads up' if you bring young children or small pets to the lake this winter. As the ice freezes, these animals can cross the lake, so they may be sighted on the South side also. There has been no dangerous interaction with humans, however, precautions should be taken.

### **Reduced river phosphorus following implementation of a lawn fertilizer ordinance**

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#### **Abstract:**

Statistical comparisons of 2008 surface water quality data with a historical data set at weekly and sub-weekly resolution revealed statistically significant reductions in total phosphorus (TP) and a trend of reduction in dissolved phosphorus following implementation of a municipal ordinance limiting the application of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus. No reductions were seen at an upstream control river site not affected by the ordinance. Non target analytes including nitrate, silica and colored dissolved organic matter did not change systematically as did P. The data were analyzed in the context of a statistical model that characterized historical temporal variability and predicted the sampling effort needed to detect changes of specified magnitude. Expected changes of about 25% in monthly mean value were predicted to require weekly samples during the summer for only 1 or 2 years for TP; statistically significant reductions measured after 1 year averaged 28%, or about 5 kg P/day. The lawn fertilizer ordinance was only one component of broader efforts to reduce nonpoint source loading of P, however, so the magnitude of its role in the measured changes remains uncertain.

### **Albertans urged to limit consumption of some species of fish - October 23, 2009**

Edmonton... Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health has issued a public health advisory that recommends people avoid or limit their consumption of some species of fish caught from specific bodies of water in Alberta.

Tests found high enough levels of mercury in certain fish to prompt the advisory. It is recommended pregnant women, women of child-bearing age and children do not eat walleye from the Pine Coulee, northern pike from Twin Valley Reservoirs in southern Alberta, walleye from the Red Deer River at the mouth of the Blindman River, and walleye, sauger and goldeye from the South Saskatchewan River at the Bindloss Ferry and Medicine Hat.

"While levels of methylmercury identified do not pose an immediate health threat, limiting consumption is the best way to reduce any long-term health risks," said Dr. Andre Corriveau, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health. "I recommend people who eat fish frequently from these bodies of water either avoid or limit their weekly consumption."

Fish consumption advisories are based on test results received by Alberta Health and Wellness from Alberta Environment and the Regional Aquatics Monitoring Program Committee. Alberta Sustainable Resource Development assists with the collection of fish for testing from provincial water bodies.

Mercury in fish in Alberta water bodies likely originates from natural sources. Once in a lake, mercury is converted to methylmercury by bacteria or chemical reactions. Fish absorb methylmercury from water as it passes through their gills, or from the prey they eat. Large predatory fish like walleye and northern pike accumulate more methylmercury as they consume smaller fish.

The Government of Alberta regularly issues and reviews fish consumption advisories for fish caught from local water bodies to help people make informed decisions about safe amounts of fish that can be consumed, while balancing the potential health risks and known health benefits of eating fish. Mercury advisories are included in the *Alberta Guide to Sportfishing Regulation* and at: <http://www.albertaregulations.ca/fishingregs/> (click on "helpful information").

*Don't forget  
the upcoming  
Wiz 'Spiel in  
March. Watch  
for posters!*

### **For Sale (all with the Wizard Lake logo):**

T-shirts— only L and XL..... \$18

Caps- black or beige ..... \$20

Toques- black ..... \$10

Contact Chris Daniel at 985-3287 or  
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