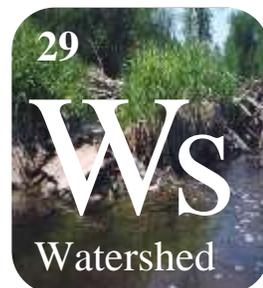
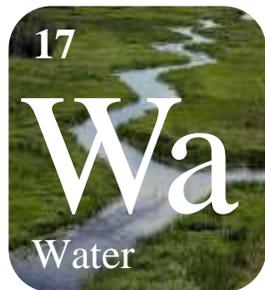
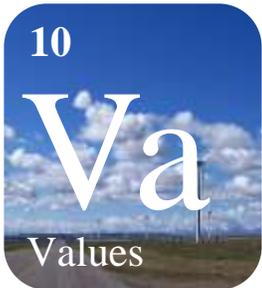


WWS

Watershed Stewardship Grant

2012 PROGRAM REPORT GRANT #10-GRES13

PRESENTED TO ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
BY LAND STEWARDSHIP CENTRE JUNE 30, 2013

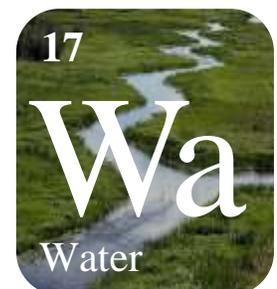


Water for Life

It is not only a resource, it is a life source. We all share the responsibility to ensure a healthy, secure and sustainable water supply for our communities, environment, and economy – our quality of life depends on it.

As stewards of this precious resource it is our collective duty to ensure:

- Safe, secure drinking water,
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems, and
- Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.



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Acknowledgements

Land Stewardship Centre (LSC) gratefully acknowledges the Government of Alberta for making the Watershed Stewardship Grant Program possible through the *Water for Life Strategy*. We also wish to thank all of the 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee members for their hard work and dedication to help deliver such a valuable program.

We also recognize the partner organizations which have contributed to the collective success of this program. Without their involvement the range of stewardship projects undertaken would not be possible.

Finally, we extend our appreciation to all of the committed, grassroots watershed stewardship groups and volunteers who contribute so much time, effort and expertise to improving the health of Alberta watersheds.

2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee Members

Shirley Pickering, Committee Chair and Watershed Stewardship Group Representative

Dale Chrapko, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Jim Craig, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Agri-Environment Services Branch

Brian Ilnicki, Land Stewardship Centre

Jeff McCammon, Watershed Stewardship Group Representative

Mike Murray, Bow River Basin Council

Sharon Nelson, County of Grande Prairie

Diana Rung, Watershed Stewardship Group Representative

Kelsey Spicer-Rowe, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society

Doug Thrussell, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Donna Trottier, Watershed Stewardship Group Representative

2012-2013 Watershed Stewardship Coordinator

Jenna Curtis



Message from the Committee Chair

On behalf of the Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee and Land Stewardship Centre, I am again pleased to submit this final report for the 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program.

It has been noted in previous grant cycles that there is continued geographic spread of new watershed stewardship groups, and increasing sophistication of project activities undertaken by maturing stewardships groups. Improved capacity building of groups to increase leveraging of grant program funds more than six -fold in this 2012 grant cycle demonstrates recognition of need for investment in local watershed stewardship. Strengthening of connections and working relationships between stewardship groups, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils, municipalities and non-government organizations has played a key role in developing this recognition and these connections need to be encouraged across the Alberta watersheds to help promote improved watershed management at local and regional levels.

We thank the Government of Alberta and Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources for continuing to provide funding support for community-based stewardship in Alberta. As the administrator of this fund Land Stewardship Centre realizes the important role the Water Stewardship Grant plays in initiating new stewardship action and in supporting ongoing community based activities in the province. Recognition of the importance of the grant however, is best expressed through the words of the many hard working grant recipients:

“This grant was extremely valuable in that it provided the impetus for the project’s development. The ambition to have a project that focused on Chip Lake has existed for a couple years but with the possibility to support the projects initiation, with the funds from the Watershed Stewardship Grant, the project switched from being simply desired to being actually implemented.”

Carla Amonson, Manager, West-Central Forage Association

“It is crucial to have a science based understanding of your watershed and how land-uses can affect it. It is very important to work collaboratively with others, providing viable solutions rather than just pointing out problems. Without this grant we would not have been able to hire Mr. Hammond to gather this important knowledge. GWAS is now very well positioned and equipped for talks with stakeholders and decision makers.”

Marina Krainer, Executive Director, Ghost Watershed Alliance Society

“We would have not got off the ground without the Watershed Stewardship Grant. The funding has given us the opportunity to engage in activities that have given us credibility and confidence that we are doing something that has merit.”

Sarah Leete, President, Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society

Our recognition goes out to all the members and supporters of watershed stewardship for their significant contribution and achievements.

Shirley Pickering

2012 Chair, Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee

Highlights of the 2012 Granting Period

This report provides an overview of all projects associated with the 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program, made possible through the distribution of \$150,000 from the \$450,000 total grant funds received from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (Grant #10-GRES13).

This is the second of three grant rounds associated with #10-GRES13. This report also provides details of three additional projects awarded funding in 2011 from Grant #10-GRES13, which were extended into the 2012 grant round.

The main objective of this grant funding is to assist watershed stewardship groups to develop community-based projects and initiatives that contribute to achieving the three goals of *Water for Life: Alberta's Strategy for Sustainability*:

- Safe, secure drinking water supply,
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems,
- Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

To accomplish this, funding recipients directed their efforts to developing and delivering projects focusing on one or more of the following areas:

1. **Awareness and Knowledge** – activities that increase the awareness and understanding of local watershed issues.
2. **Tool Building** – activities that help develop tools to demonstrate, test, or display watershed best management practices.
3. **Team Building** – activities that help build membership and organizational capacity to take on team tasks.
4. **Biophysical and Social Monitoring** – activities that measure environmental and social indicators of watershed health.
5. **Community-Based Action** – physical, on-the-ground activities to improve the condition of the local watershed.

Groups with legal status, such as a registered society, were eligible for direct funding. Groups without legal status were permitted to apply for project funding, with the understanding that funds would be issued and dispersed in partnership with an approved legal entity, such as a municipality, county or WPAC. Eligible groups applied to receive up to \$7,500 for projects that sought to raise awareness of local watershed issues through education programs and watershed monitoring and analysis or improve the quality of their local watershed through implementation of improved land and water stewardship practices.

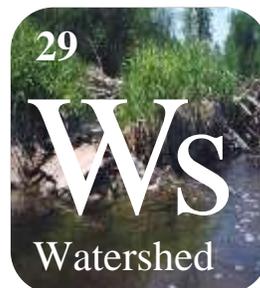
In total, the Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee reviewed 32 applications from stewardship groups from across the province. Of the 32 submitted proposals, 23 projects within nine different watersheds were ultimately selected to receive funding. The total funding request for eligible projects was \$218,973. The total grant funding available was \$135,000, all of which was approved for allocation to the selected successful applicants.

All projects approved by the WSG Committee varied widely in aspiration, intent, scale and scope which speaks to the diversity of needs and the creative approach watershed stewardship groups use to meeting these needs.

Twenty-two of the 23 approved grant recipients completed work as described in their project applications. Two groups (West-Central Forage Association and Elbow River Watershed Partnership) returned a portion (\$1,836.57) of the grant funds as they were able to acquire project items at below the proposed cost. One group (Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta) applied for a time extension to their grant, as they were unable to complete the work planned for the 2012 field work season. This extension was granted with some restrictions and will be reported on in the 2013 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program Report. In addition, one 2011 group (Keepers of the Water-Pembina River Watershed) returned funds from an extended project, due to an inability to complete the project in the extended timeline.

As part of each project's grant agreement, grant recipients were required to submit an interim report outlining their progress, as well as a final report detailing project status, impacts and financial information. Complete project reports and their associated financial records from funding recipients are on file at the LSC office.

In addition to the results achieved by each of the funding recipients, it is important to note that over the past seven years and eight grant cycles of the Watershed Stewardship Grant Program, recipients have, on average been able to leverage funds by a ratio of four-to-one with evidence of an increasing trend, this past year demonstrating leveraging at a ratio of six-to-one.



Geographical Distribution

Projects selected to receive funding were located in nine of the eleven watersheds. The majority of the funded projects were located in the Bow, Oldman and Peace watersheds (Figure 1).

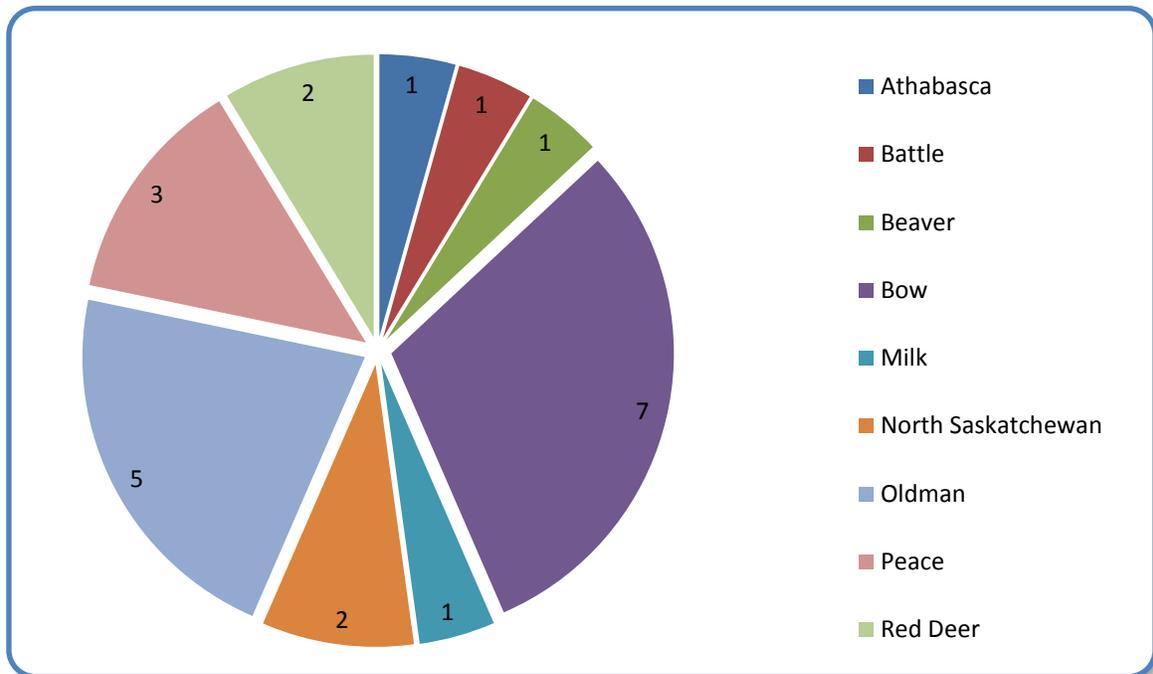


Figure 1—Distribution of funded projects within Alberta’s watersheds in 2012.

2012 Project Summary

In total, 23 stewardship projects were initially funded. All projects generated extensive partnerships between groups, community organizations, municipalities, and other provincial organizations resulting in substantial leveraging and synergy. During the 2012 cycle 22 of the 23 projects were completed and one was granted an extension into the 2013 cycle for valid reasons. Project activities were multifaceted in character with all projects involving building awareness and knowledge through activities that varied from attending and promoting watershed stewardship efforts at local events to developing educational videos. In addition other project undertakings reflected the following:

- 39% developed tools to improve the effectiveness of watershed stewardship efforts.
- 48% incorporated team building components intended to increase membership and build organizational capacity.
- 69% carried out water quality monitoring and riparian assessments to identify local watershed health issues.
- 48% concentrated efforts on community-based action to improve local watersheds through hands-on events such as shoreline clean-ups.

Financial Overview

\$150,000 from grant 10-GRES13 plus an additional \$18,522.50 from 10-GRES13 (2010) were allocated to the 2012 grant program, for a total of \$168,522.50. Grant funds are accounted for as follows:

- Total funding dispersed to projects: \$135,000
- Funding retained by LSC to fund grant administration and projects associated with this document:
 - \$15,000 which represents 10% of 10-GRES13 (2012)
 - \$18,522.50 from 10-GRES13 (2010), which was originally allotted to the 2011 grant round, but was retained for the 2012 grant round.
- In the cover letter to this report, a request has been made to have \$5,279.88 in returned funds from the 2011 grant program and 2012 grant program be carried over for use in the 2013 Grant Program (funded via Alberta Environment Grant: 10-GRES13) where it will be reported on accordingly. A breakdown of these returned funds and reason for their return to LSC are outlined below:
 - \$3,443.31 was returned by the Keepers of the Water-Pembina River Watershed as they were unable to complete their 2011 project within the extended time frame.
 - \$1,252.27 was returned by the West-Central Forage Association because they were able to acquire certain project items at reduced costs from what was originally estimated in their proposal.
 - \$584.30 was returned by the Elbow River Watershed Partnership as they were able to acquire certain project items at reduced costs from what was originally estimated in their proposal.

Figure 2 illustrates how funding recipients generated six-to-one leveraging of the Watershed Stewardship Grant funds, thereby increasing the invested value to \$809,781.75. See Appendices A, B and C for detailed accounts.

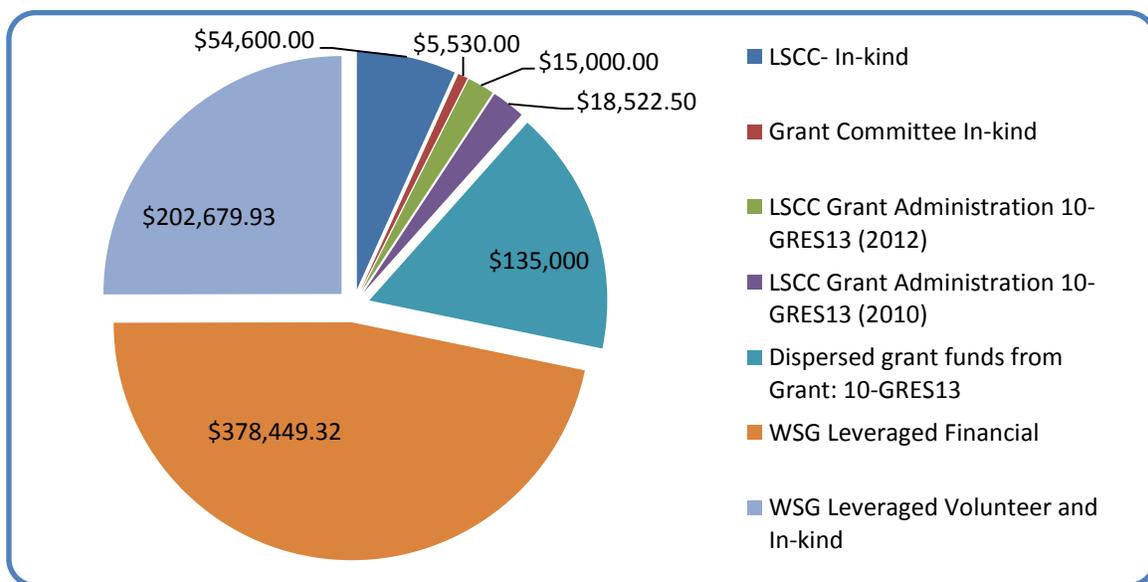
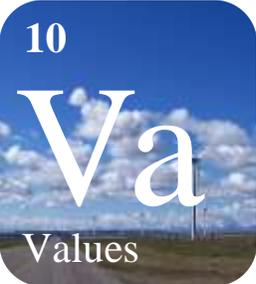


Figure 2 – The value of contributions and associated leveraging achieved with 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program funding.

Grant Recipients and Project Activities by Watershed

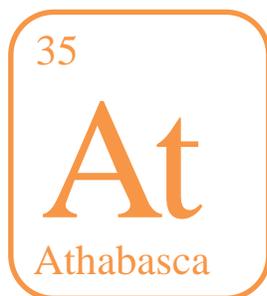


Athabasca River Watershed

The Athabasca River is the second largest river in Alberta. Originating in the Athabasca glacier of the Columbia Icefields in Jasper National Park, the river flows northeast through the province, past the urban centers of Jasper, Hinton, Whitecourt, Athabasca and Fort McMurray before emptying into Lake Athabasca. Water from the basin eventually makes its way to the Arctic Ocean. The basin covers a total area of approximately 159, 000km².

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Keepers of the Water-Pembina River Watershed (2011)
- Tawatinaw Watershed Stewards (2011)
- West-Central Forage Association



Keepers of the Water-Pembina River Watershed (2011)

Grant #: 14-KotW-PRW-2011s

Location: Pembina Watershed

Grant Amount: \$7,500 (\$3,443.31 returned)

Total Project Value: \$21,359.42

Partners: Athabasca Watershed Council, Fort Assiniboine Keepers, Little Fish Consulting, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society

Project Summary:

The Keepers of the Water was granted an extension until September 30, 2012. The group consulted with a water ecologist to continue water monitoring and to complete a watershed assessment, which will be used to help develop an outreach program for the community. The group wants to encourage citizens to take responsibility for observing and reporting on the health of the water and wetlands to the Keepers through a toll free number. Over 12 regional community events were held which included workshops, meetings, field study and monitoring days gathered groups of people ranging from 10 to 50. Participants gained knowledge about water and watersheds, issues of concern for the region and preventive measures to protect the health of the watershed. Due to the resignation of the project coordinator, as well as unavailability of the water ecologist, the final monitoring work was not able to be completed prior to the extension deadline and the remainder of the grant funds was returned.

Tawatinaw Watershed Stewards (2011)

Grant #: 26-TWS-2011s

Location: Tawatinaw River

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$19,973.66

Partners: Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Crooked Creek Conservancy

Project Summary:

The Tawatinaw Watershed Stewards were granted an extension until September 30, 2012, to complete their project. The group monitored riparian areas damaged by livestock and human activity, and then restored these areas through invasive plant species removal, implementing grazing management system, instituting use of an off-site watering system, and continuing monitoring which was started in 2010. The group engaged Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish) to help them with assessments, and an appropriate site was determined for the project. The site was fenced in the summer months, and invasive plant species were removed from the area. The group has already noted an improvement in the plant community health in the fenced-off riparian area, due to restricted access by livestock. The completed project site will continue to be monitored and will be shown to the public to allow landowners to see the benefits of riparian fencing, off-site watering systems and grazing management.

“The amount of expertise, materials and volunteer hours, which go into such a project, is quite large. The grant we received allowed us to hire Cows and Fish, whose expertise and assessments provided the base from which to develop the project direction and layout. The funding also provided the moneys for fencing and off-site watering supplies needed for the project. Having this financial wherewithal to do this project inspired the volunteers to believe it could be accomplished.”

Janice Pitman, Conservation and Restoration Ecologist, Tawatinaw Watershed Stewards

West-Central Forage Association

Grant #: 18-WCFA-2012s

Location: Chip Lake

Grant Amount: \$5,000 (\$1,233.08 Returned)

Total Project Value: \$10,767.73

Partners: Yellowhead County, Alberta Lake Management Society, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

Project Summary:

West Central Forage Association (WCFA) worked with Yellowhead County and Alberta Lake Management Association (ALMS) to address environmental concerns regarding water quality and riparian areas around Chip Lake and to establish a Chip Lake watershed stewardship group. Three meetings were held with guest speakers, including Dr. David Schindler, to enable the landowners around the lake to instigate community involvement and create awareness.

Working with ALMS, through the Lakewatch Program, the group monitored the water quality of Chip Lake and produced a benchmark report. The group carried out 10 riparian health assessments around Chip Lake including one at the Lobstick River which exits Chip Lake. As a result of the project, WCFA has found that Chip Lake is unlike most other recreational lakes in Alberta, where landowners live near the lake but not directly around it. As a result, most of the lake's use occurs in the winter months. It was found that landowners do not seem to have as much direct and emotional connection to Chip Lake, as is the case with other Albertan lakes, so getting people together to support stewardship of Chip Lake has proven more complex than originally thought. WCFA will continue to work around Chip Lake for at least two more years, which will allow for the collection of adequate data for benchmarking and continued community engagement.

"This grant was extremely valuable in that it provided the impetus for the project's development. The ambition to have a project that focused on Chip Lake has existed for a couple years but with the possibility to support the projects initiation, with the funds from the Watershed Stewardship Grant, the project switched from being simply desired to being actually implemented."

*Carla Amonson, Manager
West-Central Forage Association*

Battle River Sub-Watershed

The Battle River Watershed is a sub-basin of the North Saskatchewan River Basin. The river itself extends 800 km, starting at Battle Lake in central Alberta and flowing eastward to Saskatchewan where it joins the North Saskatchewan in Battleford. Unlike most of Alberta's major rivers, the Battle River is not glacier-fed. It is a prairie-fed system. Its modest water supply comes entirely from local surface runoff, including rain and snow melt, and groundwater flows. As such, the Battle River's natural water flows are typically much lower than that of glacier-fed rivers. In total, the Battle River Watershed covers approximately 30,000 km² (83% of this area is within Alberta, the remainder in Saskatchewan).

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Pigeon Lake Watershed Association



Pigeon Lake Watershed Association

Grant #: 16-PLWA-2012s

Location: Pigeon Lake

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$14,894

Partners: Nature Alberta, Battle River Watershed Alliance, Leduc County, County of Wetaskiwin, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Project Summary:

Pigeon Lake is undergoing significant development and is becoming increasingly eutrophic as a result of nutrient loading. The Pigeon Lake Watershed Association has established a comprehensive stewardship program which includes: environmental workshops, home site assessments, information sessions, shoreline clean ups, studies of best practice, development and distribution of publications to watershed residents, and their Love the Lake program.

This year the group focused on performing 33 home-site assessments and setting up information booths at various events. The Living by Water home site consultant looks at various factors of a home owner's property to determine areas for improvement, such as the presence of invasive plant species, use of fertilizers and pesticides, and the amount of degraded shore. The home site consultant had nine consultations, which had to be moved to the 2013 season for completion, also had 14 more homeowners sign up late in the season for the following year. PLWA believes that the Living by Water program is very valuable in helping residents to learn about and adopt healthy lake practices as they live, work and play around the lake.

"With more people incorporating these ways of living by the lake we hope to start to change the culture around the lake. A couple of Summer Villages are talking about encouraging anyone who wishes to make significant changes on their property to first, engage in a consultation to look at what they intend to do in light of the potential impacts on the lake."

*Susan Ellis, President
Pigeon Lake Watershed Association*

Beaver River Watershed

With a catchment area of about 14,500 km² the Beaver River watershed is one of the smaller major watersheds within the province. The watershed and river extend east, across the provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, emptying into Hudson's Bay. The Beaver River begins at Beaver Lake, and then flows through the urban centers of Bonnyville, Cold Lake and Grand Centre. The basin is characterized by many meandering streams and rivers, which drain such lakes as Cold, Moose, Muriel, Ethel and Wolf.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Moose Lake Watershed Society



Moose Lake Watershed Society

Grant #: 12-MLWS-2012s

Location: Moose Lake Watershed

Grant Amount: \$6,600

Total Project Value: \$52,271.62

Partners: Municipal District of Bonnyville, Town of Bonnyville, Beaver River Watershed Alliance, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, Portage College, Lakeland Agricultural Research Association

Project Summary:

The Moose Lake Watershed Society (MLWS) held their Walking with the Moose day-long fieldtrips for Grade 5 and 6 students, educating students in a hands-on, interactive manner, raising awareness about the environment and solidifying the knowledge gained at school. MLWS had 380 students from eight schools participate in the Walking with the Moose fieldtrips. MLWS has seen an increase in the number of requests for the program, and believe that 2013 will have an even larger turnout.

MLWS also introduced a new program, Operation Alien Invaders, which was a day for people to learn more about and experience working with and around invasive plants. Local community members came out to learn about proper use of ornamentals, such as avoiding use of the non-native Himalayan Balsam, a prohibited noxious weed, and how to keep riparian areas in a more natural state. Volunteers were treated to a barbecue afterwards, which helped to boost spirits and made the volunteers feel appreciated. MLWS will make Operation Alien Invaders an annual event, to aid in the eradication of Himalayan Balsam in the watershed.

"The Watershed Stewardship Grant funding enables the Moose Lake Watershed Society to host Walking with the Moose as a free fieldtrip to the Grade 5's. We have been able to expand the number of schools we offer it to, which has led to an increased interest as well as additional partners. Without this funding the Moose Lake Watershed Society would be very limited on how many schools we could offer it to. The Society is extremely grateful for this grant and would like to thank LSC for offering a funding program such as the Watershed Stewardship Grant."

*Kay Lee Kinch, Secretary and Treasurer
Moose Lake Watershed Society*

Bow River Sub-Watershed

The Bow River originates from Bow Glacier in Banff National Park. The basin is home to more than one million Albertans and the growing population is placing demand on a limited water supply with an uncertain future as glaciers in the region retreat. The area includes several irrigation districts and much of the water supply supports agriculture in the area. Hundreds of thousands of people, who are attracted to recreational opportunities in the area, visit the watershed every year

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area
- Elbow River Watershed Partnership
- Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society
- Ghost Watershed Alliance Society
- Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society
- Nose Creek Watershed Partnership
- Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society



Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area

Grant #: 01-ASCCA-2012s

Location: Pine Creek

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$59,033.17

Partners: Miistakis Institute for the Rockies, Calgary Science School, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Trout Unlimited Canada

Project Summary:

The Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area (ASCCA) plans to restore the north and south arms of the wetlands forming the headwaters of Pine Creek through the reintroduction of beavers. ASCCA was able to successfully reintroduce a beaver family including an adult male and female and two kits on the south arm of Pine Creek, and three beavers to the north arm of Pine Creek. The beavers were relocated to areas where they will provide natural engineering to improve water quantity and quality. To document the results of the reintroduction the group has instituted a monitoring program with the Miistakis Institute for the Rockies. Changes in monitoring program variables from pre- to post-introduction, including vegetation (plant species & composition), diversity of wildlife species present and timing of flows are being monitored and will indicate the success of improvements to water quantity and quality. The Calgary Science School is also participating in a citizen science program which will help to monitor beavers over the next two years.

“The funding from the Watershed Stewardship Grant has enabled the ASCCA and our project partners to begin a multi-year project that, to our knowledge, is the first of its kind in Canada. This funding has allowed the ASCCA to purchase the crucial monitoring equipment necessary to undertaking the citizen science program with the Calgary Science School. This equipment will be used for the duration of the project, allowing us to gather long-term results by tracking identified variables and monitoring changes in water quality and quantity, among other things.”

*Greg Shyba, Chief Executive Officer
Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area*

Elbow River Watershed Partnership

Grant #: 07-ERWP-2012s

Location: Bragg Creek

Grant Amount: \$4,000 (Returned \$584.30)

Total Project Value: \$3,945.70

Partners: Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, City of Calgary

Project Summary:

Over the past few years, the demands placed on the McLean Creek Forest Land Use Zone have increased significantly; from logging and off-highway vehicle use to cattle grazing. The Elbow River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) began monitoring the water quality in McLean Creek at two sites to determine the effects of current land use practices on water quality. The data collected will help identify any trends in water quality changes. The results will be used to encourage the adoption of watershed-friendly practices and facilitate a dialogue with stakeholders as to the connection between land-use and water quality.

Future monitoring and data collection will be done to see if the changes in practices are yielding positive results. ERWP also plans to hire a contractor to assess the water quality monitoring program based on the results and experiences of this first year.

Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society

Grant #: 08-FFCPPS-2012s

Location: Fish Creek Provincial Park Society

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$97,500

Partners: Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, ALS Laboratories, Bow River Basin Council, Trakehner Glen Dressage Facility, Prospect Human Services, City of Calgary, Elbow River Watershed Partnership

Project Summary:

The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society (FFCPPS) monitored Fish Creek from the head waters in McLean Creek Recreation Area to the confluence with Bow River in Fish Creek Provincial Park. As a result of the water quality monitoring, FFCPPS completed an annual report of their findings, which will be used to increase awareness and address any concerns. FFCPPS also conducted a riparian health assessment to gain further knowledge on the health of Fish Creek.

They also implemented phase two of their watershed public awareness campaign, which included holding their annual Creekefest, delivering presentations, developing a new publication, conducting field demonstrations, setting up displays at community events, and organizing a total of 15 watershed conservation outings, which included activities such as tree wrapping, invasive plant species removal, and litter clean ups. FFCPPS reached out to both urban and rural communities located along the length of Fish Creek, and was able to engage approximately 8,000 individuals in all of their 2012 activities.

Ghost Watershed Alliance Society

Grant #: 10-GWAS-2012s

Location: Ghost Watershed

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$9,875

Partners: Bow River Basin Council, Alberta Wilderness Association, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, ALCES Landscape & Land-Use Ltd.

Project Summary:

At a visioning session organized by the MD of Bighorn in 2011, the community expressed grave concerns about increasing land-use in the Ghost Watershed. However, it was recognized that the general public does not have the expertise and knowledge to advise what would be beneficial land-use management practices. Ghost Watershed Alliance Society (GWAS) hired a consultant from Silva Ecosystem Consultants to review the proposed land-uses in the Ghost Watershed. The consultant developed a professional evaluation based on the area's ecology, and provided the group with a report and recommendations for various land-uses that can maintain the integrity of the ecosystem.

Armed with this report, GWAS is now able to provide valuable input into the land-use planning process in their municipality. As a direct result of the consultant's input, Spray Lake Sawmills, a local milling facility, has agreed to leave a 25 meter buffer around a wetland, for the integrity of the watershed, and now recognizes GWAS as a local stakeholder with expertise.

"It is crucial to have a science based understanding of your watershed and how land-uses can affect it. It is very important to work collaboratively with others, providing viable solutions rather than just pointing out problems. Without this grant we would not have been able to hire Mr. Hammond to gather this important knowledge. GWAS is now very well positioned and equipped for talks with stakeholders and decision makers."

Marina Krainer, Executive Director, Ghost Watershed Alliance Society

Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society

Grant #: 11-LCARF-2012s

Location: Horse Creek

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$24,431.47

Partners: Alberta Ecotrust, AltaGas Ltd.

Project Summary:

Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society (LCARF) hired Palliser Environmental to sample water at four sites along Horse Creek from April to October. A report was produced with the contractor's findings, which found that a number of water quality parameters often exceeded Alberta's Surface Water Quality Guidelines, namely conductivity, phosphorus, nitrogen and bacteria. The report also contained information on electrofishing conducted in Horse Creek. There is a hanging culvert by the mouth of Horse Creek, where a population of small brook and brown trout were found, so the group conducted electrofishing, to determine whether the culvert is a deterrent to trout passage upstream.

Results were inconclusive to whether the fish could pass through the culvert, as certain species were found in both locations. The report recommended that further work would need to be done to determine if the culvert was a year round barrier or not. The group will use these findings to plan future projects to improve riparian health and aquatic habitats. LCARF also held an information day to explain their role to stakeholders in the watershed, as well as a field day which featured a look at a horse operation's riparian habitats, and presentations from Cows and Fish and Palliser Environmental.

"We would have not got off the ground without the Watershed Stewardship Grant. The funding has given us the opportunity to engage in activities that have given us credibility and confidence that we are doing something that has merit."

Sarah Leete, President, Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society

Nose Creek Watershed Partnership

Grant #: 14-NCWP-2012s

Location: Nose Creek Watershed

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$137,300

Partners: Trout Unlimited Canada, City of Calgary, City of Airdrie, Town of Crossfield, Rocky View County, Calgary Airport Authority

Project Summary:

The Nose Creek Watershed Partnership worked towards implementing the recommendations from the Nose Creek Watershed Water Management Plan. This included hiring a consultant to complete the monitoring and write a report summarizing the data collected over the past three years. The group also completed a non-contributing areas amendment, which is currently in draft form. Once final edits are made the final report will be made available. NCWP continued to work with local residents, and municipal officials and staff to raise the profile and awareness of NCWP and the work that they perform in the community. In addition, the group hosted on-the-ground stewardship activities such as tree plantings and clean-up events. In total the group held eight different education and awareness days with the support of more than 130 volunteers, resulting in over 1700 trees being planted.

"Hands on participation helps locals buy into these initiatives. It not only provides them with a sense of pride, but also provides them with the information and tools they need to help make sustainable choices going forward."

*Brian Meagher, Provincial Biologist
Trout Unlimited Canada*

Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society

Grant #: 20-WGPPS-2012s

Location: Weaselhead Natural Environment Park

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Total Project Value: \$42,562.42

Partners: City of Calgary, Nature Calgary, Prospect Human Services, Immigrant Services, Starbucks, Alliance Pipeline, Shell, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Conoco Phillips, Arbour Lake School, Rundle Academy, Youth Central

Project Summary:

The Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society (WGPPS) and its volunteers focused on reducing the abundance of invasive plants that interfere with ecosystem function and biodiversity, preventing new invasive plants from becoming established, increasing awareness of invasive plants, and sharing lessons learned following the recovery of native vegetation after weeding. Controlling invasive plant species in the park helps prevent flooding by increasing the ability of floodplains and wetlands to function properly in high and low flow events, reducing sedimentation and erosion and maintaining healthy riparian areas. In their 2012 program, WGPPS introduced over 4000 people to the issue of the problems invasive plant species cause, had 226 volunteers contribute 1190 hours of their time, and presented on watershed stewardship and invasive plant species at seven public events. WGPPS plans to continue with its multiyear project to prevent new invasive plants species from establishing in the park, and to continue mapping and measuring the reduction of established non-native plants.

Correction Note: In the 2011 Final report it was reported that Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society removed the invasive plant Eurasian water milfoil, when in fact the group's efforts were focused on training volunteers to identify this species should it be found in Alberta.

Lesser Slave River Sub-Watershed

This sub-watershed empties into the Athabasca River just north of Alberta's geographical center. A popular fishing destination with a rich history, Lesser Slave Lake straddles the transition between agricultural interests in the west to boreal activities in the east. The Lesser Slave River is directly impacted by a fixed-crest weir that was constructed in 1983 in an effort to regulate the elevation of Lesser Slave Lake.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- High Prairie Riparian Action Team (2011)



High Prairie Riparian Action Team (2011)

Grant #: 11-HPRAT-2011s

Location: Lesser Slave Watershed

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Total Project Value: \$24,012.49

Partners: Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Peace Country Beef and Forage Association, Municipal District of Big Lakes, Alberta Conservation Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Lesser Slave Lake Watershed Council, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association

Project Summary:

The High Prairie Riparian Action Team (HPRAT) conducted three riparian health assessments, two at new sites and one site reassessment. The group will use the new assessment sites as a baseline to measure progress and changes in the riparian areas during and after restorations. HPRAT intends to help the landowners access programming to help make the necessary improvements such as permanent off-site watering systems, grazing rotation plans and riparian exclusion fencing, and to assess the sites at least twice more over a 5-year period to determine if the changes were successful. The reassessment site showed improvements in the aquatic ecosystems and in riparian health, so no further action is required. HPRAT has stated that the most significant accomplishment of this project to date is having identified new sites through collaborative and trusting partnerships with farmers and ranchers operating on private land.

“Our most valuable lessons come from forming trusting partnerships with landowners. We can share insight with other watershed stewardship groups on how to acknowledge and affirm multiple users, uses and perspectives on a watershed while moving forward with practices that benefit the watershed.”

*Karlah Rae Rudolph
Extension and Agricultural Service Board
Project Coordinator
Peace Country Beef and Forage
Association*

Milk River Watershed

The Milk River Watershed, located in the most southern part of the province, is the smallest of Alberta's ten major river basins¹, encompassing an area of 6,664 km². It is unique; known not just for its dry climate, extraordinary landscapes and diverse plant and wildlife communities, but also for the direction in which the Milk River flows. As the northern-most tributary of the Missouri River, the Milk River is the only watershed in Alberta that drains south to the Gulf of Mexico. The headwaters originate in northwestern Montana. The river then enters Alberta and flows eastward through the southern portion of the province and into Saskatchewan, prior to looping back into Montana.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Milk River Ranchers Group



¹ <http://www.environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins/Default.aspx>

Milk River Ranchers Group

Grant #: 13-MRRG-2012s

Location: Milk River

Grant Amount: \$3,500

Total Project Value: \$6,565.08

Partners: Milk River Watershed Council Canada, County of Warner, Cardston County, County of 40 Mile, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Project Summary:

The Milk River Ranchers Group placed invasive plant species signs within day use areas along the Milk River on natural lands including grazing reserves, grazing co-ops and grazing leases. The signs feature Common Burdock, Babysbreath, Chamomile, and Nodding Thistle which are found throughout the Milk River Watershed. The signs allow the group to create a learning opportunity for their target land users: farmers, ranchers and recreational users such as hunters and hikers. The group had to wait until spring 2013, when the ground was no longer frozen, in order for volunteers to install the signs in the designated areas. With the signs installed, the local community will be informed of the sign locations so that Milk River Ranchers Group can be contacted should maintenance be required. The group will monitor feedback from local residents in an effort to track if any weeds are noticed and removed following installation of the signs.

“The Watershed Stewardship Grant funding has been so important to our group. With these resources we are able to do projects which help educate residents, visitors, producers and recreational users alike to create a healthy watershed. The whole reason the Milk River Ranchers Group was established was to create a healthier watershed, and with WSG funding we are able to do that.”

*Kerry Hyatt
Municipal Conservation Technician
County of Warner*

North Saskatchewan River Watershed

The North Saskatchewan River Basin covers approximately 80,000 km² of the province. The basin originates in the Saskatchewan Glacier in Banff National Park and flows in a general eastward direction to the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. The Brazeau, Nordegg, Ram, Clearwater, Sturgeon and Vermilion rivers flow into the North Saskatchewan River as it passes across Alberta. Major centers within the basin include Drayton Valley, Rocky Mountain House, Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan and the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Clear Water Landcare
- Wabamun Watershed Management Council



Clear Water Landcare

Grant #: 05-CWL-2012s

Location: Clearwater County

Grant Amount: \$7,000

Total Project Value: \$18,900

Partners: Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Clearwater County, Medicine River Watershed Society

Project Summary:

In 2004, Clear Water Landcare, with the help of Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish), performed over 20 riparian health inventories. Several of the landowners, whose properties had originally been inventoried in 2004, agreed to a re-inventory for the 2012 project. The sites chosen by Clear Water Landcare to be re-inventoried had all had management changes since the original assessment, and landowners were keen to make any additional changes necessary. Re-assessments included an assessment of current riparian conditions, a comparison to the previous assessment, and identification of the importance of beneficial practices. On a positive note, overall, the majority of conditions in the sites have improved since the initial assessments. The positive outcomes of these riparian health assessments will be used in the development of stories which will be shared at the next “Celebrate our Success” event to build awareness of and enhance riparian areas. Clear Water Landcare remains engaged with the seven landowners, and through follow up meetings, are discussing possible future projects to keep the momentum going.

“Over the last several years the WSG grant has enabled us to deliver a variety of beneficial events, and various equipment and education/awareness tools available to the community. Clearwater County has been willing to contribute significant human and financial resources to support our programing but reluctant to invest in funding individual projects. This gap has been filled in part through the WSG funding and momentum has been created through connecting projects funded grant.”

Gary Lewis, Landcare Supervisor Clearwater County

Wabamun Watershed Management Council

Grant #: 21-WWMC-2012s

Location: Wabamun Lake

Grant Amount: \$6,000

Total Project Value: \$24,750

Partners: Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Central Alberta Recreational Lakes Group, Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd.

Project Summary:

The Wabamun Watershed Management Council (WWMC) hired a consultant to produce a State of the Watershed report for Wabamun Lake. A State of the Watershed report is the first step in being able to complete a Watershed Management Plan for the Lake Wabamun watershed. The group feels that relative to other lakes in Alberta, Lake Wabamun is quite healthy, but if steps are not taken to limit the nutrients and pollutants entering the lake and watershed water quality could decline. WWMC is waiting on the final version, and expects the report will identify areas of concern around the lake so that the group can focus on making improvements. The report will also enable the group to engage the community and create awareness to secure a healthy future for the watershed.

Oldman River Sub-Watershed

Located in southwestern Alberta, the Oldman River Watershed is a sub-basin of the South Saskatchewan system, which eventually drains into the Hudson Bay. The main tributaries of the Oldman River are the Livingston, Crowsnest, Castle, Waterton, Belly, and St. Mary rivers, which are in turn supplied upstream by numerous small streams and wetlands. The Oldman River has a drainage area of 26,700 km² and it is 362 km in length.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition
- Crowsnest Conservation Society
- Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership
- Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association
- Willow Creek Watershed Group



Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition

Grant #: 03-CCWC-2012s

Location: Castle Wilderness and Pincher Creek

Grant Amount: \$4,000

Total Project Value: \$47,089

Partners: Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation, Municipal District of Pincher Creek, Alberta Conservation Association, Waterton Lakes National Park, Castle Mountain Community Association, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

Project Summary:

The Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition (CCWC) focused its efforts on specific areas of concern by removing invasive plants species, dangerous materials and garbage left behind by users of the Castle. Working throughout the Castle, from staging areas, to areas of high use, and even in the back country, the group was able to access areas previously not visited. The group monitored over 300 locations of invasive species and then submitted the information to Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development for inventory mapping. The group, with the help of volunteers, removed over 350 bags of weeds, multiple bags of garbage and over 300 meters of cable steel from the watercourses. CCWC also reclaimed illegal off-road vehicle trails and erected signs which had fallen over. A large part of the group's work was attending and hosting public events to share information on invasive plant species, the harm caused by illegal off-road trails, and how to care for watersheds and water.

"The Watershed Stewardship Grant has been instrumental in the CCWC's ability to continue removal of invasive species and our restoration work within the Castle. As a multi-use area the Castle will continue to be susceptible to new weed infestations and overuse, especially in riparian areas, which are favourites of users. Our work becomes more important each year as we work towards sharing information about best practices in wild areas and around rivers and streams. This grant helps so much, enabling us to get information out to people on how they can help to sustain the Castle for future generations."

Carolyn Aspeslet, Executive Director, Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition

Crowsnest Conservation Society

Grant #: 02-CCS-2012s

Location: Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$71,644.40

Partners: Alberta Conservation Association, Municipal District of Crowsnest Pass, Oldman Watershed Council, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society

Project Summary:

Crowsnest Conservation Society (CCS) completed the second year of a riparian restoration project, with a focus on weed control and riparian diversity. The funding was used to support volunteer efforts for community weed pull events; to help maintain and update the plant monitoring database and its data analyses; to redesign the CCS website to include information related to watershed issues; and to create and print educational brochures related to watershed issues, including identification and eradication techniques for invasive plant species. In four weed pull events, over 40 volunteers removed 45 large bags of weeds after they were trained in weed identification and removal techniques, which they can

put to use in their own yards and neighborhoods. CCS also hosted two planting events, during which 177 trees and shrubs were planted along the Crowsnest River and its tributaries. At the end of the second year of this project the number of recorded noxious weeds had decreased, more native trees and shrubs had been planted, monitoring areas were more clearly defined and public education related to invasive plant species had increased. The *Crowsnest River Riparian Report 2012* was written to update the 2011 report and provide direction for future activities.

Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership

Grant #: 06-DYCP-2012s

Location: Drywood Creek

Grant Amount: \$7,200

Total Project Value: \$21,772.69

Partners: Trout Unlimited Canada, Southwest Alberta Conservation Partnership, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Royal Bank of Canada Blue Water Project, Shell Canada Waterton Complex, The Western Producer, Pincher Creek Voice, Waterton Biosphere Institute, Miistakis Institute for the Rockies, University of Lethbridge, Alberta Beef Producers, Oldman Watershed Council

Project Summary:

Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership (DYCP) worked with Trout Unlimited Canada (TUC) to conduct field tours for local landowners, community members and other partner organizations. One day was specifically held for 80 local producers to encourage their understanding of beneficial management practices (BMPs) that are currently being applied on the landscape. The field tour visited some of the on-the-ground projects that DYCP has completed in the past with TUC, such as riparian fencing and off-stream stock watering systems. As a result, DYCP, TUC, and the South West Alberta Conservation Partnership are currently working on a partnership with a local producer to implement a new off-stream watering system. The second field tour was held for approximately 60 local junior high students to learn about the importance and functionality of riparian areas. Activities and learning stations offered information on electrofishing and fish handling, riparian plant life, BearSmart, amphibian life, range health, aquatic invertebrates and species at risk.

“The Watershed Stewardship Grant allowed us to host a successful watershed tour and youth field day. These activities allowed the DYCP to meet and engage community members and connect with partners. We hope these events also serve to expand the potential for new projects within the Drywood and other watersheds. The media attention the tour brought to the DYCP was also positive in that it shows Albertans the good work and stewardship that is going on in southwestern Alberta. The funds provided through the WSG program allowed us to focus on the tour and education, and giving producers the chance to share their experience and knowledge with others. We are excited to have completed one significant fencing project in 2012 and to be in the process of initiating a new project in 2013. We will continue to work with the community to keep the momentum going and complete more works on the ground.”

Tony Bruder, Chair, Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership

Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association

Grant #: 17-WBRA-2012s

Location: Waterton Biosphere Reserve

Grant Amount: \$6,250

Total Project Value: \$16,941.74

Partners: Nature Conservancy of Canada, Waterton Lakes National Park, Chief Mountain Landowners Information Network, Waterton Watershed Group, Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership, Chinook Area Land Users Association

Project Summary:

The Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association (WBRA) hosted a three-day, digital storytelling workshop for seven attendees including ranchers, land managers and conservation professionals. Augmented with photos and music, participants created and shared personal stories that reflect their diverse experience and unique relationship with the land in southwestern Alberta. The workshop consisted of a team-building exercise where individuals developed and shared their ideas of what stewarding the Waterton Biosphere Reserve meant to them.

WBRA originally envisioned that this project would produce digital stories highlighting specific stewardship activities, however, the stories produced were deeper, more introspective stories about the very personal relationships between the storytellers and stewardship of the land. The digital stories will be shared at a screening during the June annual general meeting, and have been posted on the WBRA website. These stories are intended to renew and strengthen the stewardship ethic, encouraging the community to work together to maintain a healthy watershed and create a sustainable future.



“The Watershed Stewardship Grant funding was critical for completion of this digital storytelling workshop. The funding enabled us to develop seven digital stories that will be a valuable ongoing resource for our group. They will provide a vehicle to raise the profile of WBR, grow our membership, and inspire WBR residents to participate in stewardship activities.”

*Nora Manners, Executive Director
Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association*

Willow Creek Watershed Group

Grant #: 19-WCWG-2012s

Location: Willow Creek

Grant Amount: \$7,000

Total Project Value: \$14,000

Partners: Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society, Alberta Conservation Association, Oldman Watershed Council, Municipal District of Ranchland, Municipal District of Willow Creek

Project Summary:

Willow Creek Watershed Group (WCWG) worked with Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish) to perform seven riparian health assessments on sites that had been selected by Agriculture Fieldmen from the local rural municipalities. The assessments, conducted on sites which have undergone land management changes, will enable the group to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these changes. The project over the long term will assist landowners and managers to improve their management skill and knowledge in range and riparian health, as well as improve the riparian health, fish habitat and water quality. WCWG intends to have the sites reassessed in five years to monitor the changes to riparian health, and to include the project sites on stewardship tours in the area.

“The Watershed Stewardship Grant funding has enabled our group, and the community that lives day to day in the Willow Creek watershed, to have more concise data and insight into the health of the watershed. It has enabled us to be able to focus our efforts more clearly on areas of concern in the watershed that are affecting riparian health such as invasive plants and riparian area grazing timing.”

*Jeff Porter, Conservation Coordinator
Municipal District of Ranchland*

Peace River Watershed

The Peace River begins in the mountains of northern British Columbia where it is influenced by the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. It then flows into Alberta, continuing northeast across the province through the town of Peace River and empties into the Slave River. At Peace Point the Peace River has a mean annual discharge of 68,200,000 dam³ and a drainage area of 293,000 km². The Peace/Slave River Basin includes the Wapiti, Smoky, Little Smoky, and Wabasca rivers. It is the largest basin in Alberta, occupying approximately 30 percent of the province. The basin is predominantly covered by native boreal forest and is part of the Mackenzie River system, which eventually drains into the Arctic Ocean.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Clear Hills Watershed Initiative
- Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta
- Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta



Clear Hills Watershed Initiative

Grant #: 04-CHWI-2012s

Location: Clear Hills County

Grant Amount: \$6,000

Total Project Value: \$20,604.28

Partners: Clear Hills County, Eureka River Agricultural Society, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

Project Summary:

The Clear Hills Watershed Initiative (CHWI) continued their previous water quality monitoring work in an effort to add to their current database. The group focused on increasing awareness of how the water resources in the area need to be properly managed by incorporating beneficial management practices (BMPs) in their work and promoting them to community members. One of their flagship events that increases awareness, the Community Supper event, sold 90 tickets and generated 10 new memberships. Along with attending a tradeshow, which provided exposure to over 2500 people, the group held their annual school contest to engage children and increase awareness in the area. CHWI is also working on identifying point and non-point sources of contamination, areas of riparian deterioration, and the effects of industry, private and municipal activities on the watershed to add to their 3-5 year plan. All of these efforts will help maintain healthy aquatic ecosystems and establish the group's value within the local community.

"The Watershed Stewardship Grant funding has enabled our group to grow and establish a presence in our community that is actively involved in assessing different activities and the impact they have within the watershed. Also, we have been able to establish great working relationships with the schools in our area and have had multiple opportunities to bring awareness of good stewardship principles to students of all ages. We have been able to maintain a great group of engaged volunteers to help spread the stewardship message."

Sherri Larsen, Secretary & Treasurer, Clear Hills Watershed Initiative

Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta

Grant #: 23- ZSRCMAA-2012s

Location: Peace River

Grant Amount: \$2,100

Total Project Value: \$5,562.55

Partners: ACME Economic and Environmental Services, Town of Peace River, Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd Pulp Mill, Northern Sunrise County

Project Summary:

The Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta held a watershed science for youth day in Peace River. The group took seven Metis youth on a day trip where they learned about the science of hydrology, meteorology and the Metis cultural aspects of watercourses. The youth also went on a boat trip along to learn about river features such as deltas, rock formations, water sediment, and the industrial usage of water. The youth were instructed in the safety and science of water sampling, and then performed color and alkalinity analysis testing on water and compiled reports of their observations. The Metis Association hopes that the day inspires the local Metis youth, so they will

become knowledgeable and interested in water quality and quantity issues and get involved in local water-related projects.

Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta

Grant #: 22-ZSRCMAA-2012s

Location: Grande Prairie

Grant Amount: \$2,100

Total Project Value: N/A

Partners: N/A

Project Summary:

The Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta is planning on hosting a watershed science for youth project in the Grande Prairie area; this event will be fashioned after the Peace River day (see project summary above – Grant #: 23- ZSRCMAA-2012s). The group will take students on a day trip where they will learn about riparian areas, water and ecology, go on a boat trip, perform water testing and compile reports of their observations. The group hopes that local Metis youth will become knowledgeable and interested in waters quality and quantity issues and get involved in local water-related projects. The Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta was granted an extension until September 30, 2013 in order to complete their project.

Red Deer River Sub-Watershed

Almost wholly contained within Alberta, the Red Deer River originates in the Canadian Rocky Mountains in Banff National Park, flows northeast and then southeast, joining up with the South Saskatchewan River just eight kilometers into the province of Saskatchewan. Although its headwaters are located within the Rocky Mountains, the Red Deer River receives minimal glacier runoff. It is fed primarily by snowmelt, groundwater, precipitation and inflows from its numerous tributaries. Consisting of a drainage area of nearly 50,000km², the watershed is the largest sub-basin of the South Saskatchewan River basin. It encompasses 55 urban centers and 18 rural municipalities.

Watershed Stewardship Groups

- Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society
- Pine Lake Restoration Society



Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society

Grant #: 09-GLWQMS-2012s

Location: Gull Lake

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Total Project Value: \$7,821.16

Partners: Hydrogeological Consultants Ltd., Red Deer River Watershed Alliance

Project Summary:

In phase one of their project, the Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society (GLWQMS) hired a hydrogeological consultant to identify groundwater resources in the Gull Lake Watershed and create an aquifer map. All aquifers were identified as either hydraulically connected to the lake or not. The group ultimately wants to be able to use the information when working with municipalities to put development controls on water wells being drilled in the area, such as recommending that wells be drilled primarily in aquifers not connected to the lake, and where necessary, recommending appropriate drilling depths be determined so that aquifers are not depleted if wells are connected to the lake. GLWQMS has also been focusing on increasing awareness, and spreading the word of their group and its work at various community events, through their website and through hands-on activities for volunteers like well monitoring. The consultant has put together a full scope of work and estimate for Phase II of the project, which is intended to be completed in 2013.

“The WSG funding has been the very lifeblood of our project and has enabled us to engage a very knowledgeable consulting firm to develop our project from a grain of a concept to a clear scope of work, including schedule and realistic costs. We have also gained new funding commitments are now in a position to really gain momentum toward acquiring all the necessary funding to complete the project.”

Trevor Wannop, Volunteer Project Manager, Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society

Pine Lake Restoration Society

Grant #: 15-PLRS-2012s

Location: Pine Lake

Grant Amount: \$3,250

Total Project Value: \$3,970.67

Partners: Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Red Deer River Watershed Alliance, Central Alberta Recreational Lakes, Red Deer County, Alberta Lake Management Society

Project Summary:

The Pine Lake Restoration Society (PLRS) has been active and performing water quality testing since 1998, when they had a hypolimnetic withdrawal system installed at the lake. Testing in 2007 indicated that there was an alarming increase in pollutants and nutrients entering the lake from seven feeder creeks. PLRS continued to perform more water quality monitoring to determine the sources of pollutants and nutrients. They will formulate a recommendation for remedial activities that can be performed to increase water quality based on the results of the monitoring, and will share their findings with partnering organizations. The group also aimed to increase awareness among lake and surrounding community residents of potential threats to water quality and presented on their findings at the PLRS Education Day on June 15, 2013.

Report Summary

The Watershed Stewardship Grant continues to enable Alberta's stewards to accomplish initiatives that are enhancing their watersheds and positively impacting their communities. Over the course of the Grant's history, groups have completed a wide variety of projects ranging from invasive plant species removal to water and fisheries monitoring. In some cases, stewardship groups have also developed technical reports and state of the watershed reports demonstrating the increasing level of sophistication and maturity exhibited by stewardships groups as they have evolved over time.

Sharing Success

2012 was another very successful year for grant recipients. A total of \$135,000 was granted to 23 projects, of which 22 were completed as originally proposed. The year proved to be more conducive to stewardship activities than previous years, with less inclement weather such as flooding affecting project timelines. Only one extension was requested, because there were alternate priorities when the original project was scheduled, limiting the number of youth available; as such the project has been rescheduled for spring of 2013.

Growing Stewardship

As mentioned in the previous year's Watershed Stewardship Grant (WSG) report, Land Stewardship Centre (LSC) is dedicated to improving the grant program, as access to funding is a major priority for Alberta's stewardship groups. In 2011, the WSG program underwent a major enhancement. All documents associated with the WSG, such as application forms, reporting forms and support resources, were reviewed, edited and refined to enable groups to more easily access and understand grant-related information, apply for the grant, and report more effectively and efficiently. The grant program was also given an enhanced presence on the LSC website and prominent coverage within the Alberta Stewardship Network electronic newsletter *Grassroots News*, which is distributed four or more times per year to a distribution list of nearly 700 people. Overall, stewardship groups appreciated the improved features and forms, and having enhanced access to WSG and stewardship information online.

Adding Value

Grant recipients continue to express their gratitude for the Watershed Stewardship Grant funds, without which they would not be able to implement their plans and deliver their projects. In addition, receiving consistent and regular funding has enabled them to create continuity for their grassroots initiatives to the benefit of many.

Watershed stewardship groups are also developing long-term relationships with local communities, NGOs, WPACs, municipal districts and counties to generate thousands of volunteer and in-kind hours which contribute to the success of projects. The consistent leveraging of dollars against financial, volunteer and in-kind commitments permits the scope and reach of projects to far surpass the monetary value of grant funds provided. 2012 was an exceptional year for leveraging. The granted dollars were leveraged at a ratio of six-to-one resulting in a total value of \$809,781.75 which far surpasses the average of four-to-one leveraging.

Appendices

Appendix A: 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program Financial Summary

Funds Received	Amount
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development Grant 10-GRES13 for 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program	150,000.00
Funds from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development Grant 10-GRES13 (2010) allocated to 2012 administration	18,522.50
Total Funds Received	168,522.50

Funds Expended	Amount
2012 Grant Funds issued to recipients (23 projects up to \$7,500 each)	135,000.00
2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant administration costs (Grant 10-GRES13)	15,000.00
2010 Watershed Stewardship Grant administration costs (Grant 10-GRES13)	18,522.50
Total Funds Expended	168,522.50

Appendix B: Total Value of 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program

Watershed Stewardship Projects—Cash	Amount
Total grant funds issued to projects (23 projects up to \$7,500 each)*	135,000.00
Leveraged funding	378,449.32
Watershed Stewardship Projects—Cash Subtotal	513,449.32

Watershed Stewardship Projects—In-Kind	
Documented group volunteer time and in-kind (equipment materials, technical volunteer time, etc.)	202,679.93
Watershed Stewardship Projects—In-Kind Subtotal	202,679.93

Total Value of Watershed Stewardship Projects	716,129.25
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Grant Program Administration and Delivery	
Watershed Stewardship Grant Coordinator (paid)	33,522.50
Land Stewardship Centre in-kind contributions	54,600.00
Grant Program Administration and Delivery Subtotal	88,122.50

Watershed Stewardship Grant Committee In-Kind	
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	970.00
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development	430.00
Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development	400.00
Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish)	420.00
County of Grande Prairie	500.00
Land Stewardship Centre of Canada	360.00
WPAC (Bow River Basin Council)	560.00
Watershed Stewardship Group Representatives	1,230.00
Watershed Stewardship Group Representative and Chair	660.00
WSG Committee In-Kind Subtotal	5,530.00

Total Value of Grant Administration and Delivery and WSG Committee In-Kind	93,652.50
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Total Value of the 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program	809,781.75
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The following amounts have been used to calculate the value of in-kind contributions:

Volunteer Time	\$20/hour
Technical Expert	\$30/hour
Equipment Costs	\$40/hour

* This is the total value of the 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant Program funds granted, not the total funds used.

Appendix C: Overview of Watershed Stewardship Group Project Information

2011 Watershed Stewardship Grants			Project Grant Funding			Leveraged Contributions		Total Project Value
Grant #	Applicant	Signing Authority	Requested	Approved	Spent	Financial	In-Kind	
11-HPRAT-2011s	High Prairie Riparian Action Team	Peace Country Beef and Forage Association	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	988.39	18,024.10	24,012.49
14-KotW-PRW-2011s	Keepers of the Water -Pembina River Watershed	Keepers of the Athabasca Watershed Council	7,500.00	7,500.00	4,056.69	3,382.73	13,920.00	21,359.42
26-TWS-2011s	Tawatinaw Watershed Stewards	Applicant Group	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	889.41	11,584.25	19,973.66
Total			20,000.00	20,000.00	16,556.69	5,260.53	43,528.35	65,345.57

Appendix C (continued)

2012 Watershed Stewardship Grants			Project Grant Funding			Leveraged Contributions		Total Project Value
Grant #	Applicant	Signing Authority	Requested	Approved	Spent	Financial	In-Kind	
01-ASCCA-2012s	Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	47,903.17	3,600.00	59,003.17
02-CCS-2012s	Crowsnest Conservation Society	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	54,064.40	10,100.00	71,664.40
03-CCWC-2012s	Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition	Applicant	7,500.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	31,360.00	11,729.00	47,089.00
04-CHWI-2012s	Clear Hills Watershed Initiative	Applicant	7,500.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	1,061.78	13,542.50	20,604.28
05-CWL-2012s	Clear Water Landcare	Clearwater County Trout	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	4,900.00	18,900.00
06-DYCP-2012s	Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership	Unlimited Canada	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	9,113.26	5,459.43	21,772.69
07-ERWP-2012s	Elbow River Watershed Partnership	Applicant	5,000.00	4,000.00	3,415.70	30.00	500.00	3,945.70
08-FFCPPS-2012s	Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	54,000.00	36,000.00	97,500.00
09-GLWQMS-2012s	Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	321.16	-	7,821.16
10-GWAS-2012s	Ghost Watershed Alliance Society	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	1,175.00	1,200.00	9,875.00
11-LCARF-2012s	Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	13,731.47	3,200.00	24,431.47
12-MLWS-2012s	Moose Lake Watershed Society	Applicant	7,500.00	6,600.00	6,600.00	6,917.12	38,754.50	52,271.62
13-MRRG-2012s	Milk River Ranchers Group	County of Warner No. 5 Trout	7,155.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	870.08	2,195.00	6,565.08
14-NCWP-2012s	Nose Creek Watershed Partnership	Unlimited Canada	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	109,800.00	20,000.00	137,300.00
15-PLRS-2012s	Pine Lake Restoration Society	Applicant	3,250.00	3,250.00	3,250.00	720.67	-	3,970.67
16-PLWA-2012s	Pigeon Lake Watershed Association	Applicant	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	6,594.00	800.00	14,894.00
17-WBRA-2012s	Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association	Applicant	7,500.00	6,250.00	6,250.00	1,862.24	8,829.50	16,941.74
18-WCFA-2012s	West-Central Forage Association	Applicant	7,500.00	5,000.00	3,747.73	1,500.00	5,520.00	10,767.73
19-WCWG-2012s	Willow Creek Watershed Group	Municipal District of Ranchland No.66	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	-	7,000.00	14,000.00
20-WGPPS-2012s	Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society	Applicant	7,500.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	13,762.42	23,800.00	42,562.42
21-WWMC-2012s	Wabamun Watershed Management Council	Applicant	7,500.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	15,000.00	3,750.00	24,750.00
22-ZSRCMAA-2012s	Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta	Applicant	5,389.25	2,100.00	-	-	-	-
23-ZSRCMAA-2012s	Zone 6 Regional Council of the Metis Association of Alberta	Applicant	5,979.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	1,662.55	1,800.00	5,562.55
Total			160,473.25	135,000.00	131,063.43	378,449.32	202,679.93	712,192.68

Appendix D: Resources from Select Projects

Several projects produced resources and tools that contribute to the body of work developed by community stewardship groups over the years. The following is a list of various information resources that were developed using 2012 Watershed Stewardship Grant funds:

Maps

Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society – maps of water wells

Reports

Clear Water Landcare – Riparian Health Summary Final Report

Little Creeks and Rough Fescue Appreciation Society – Final Report 2012

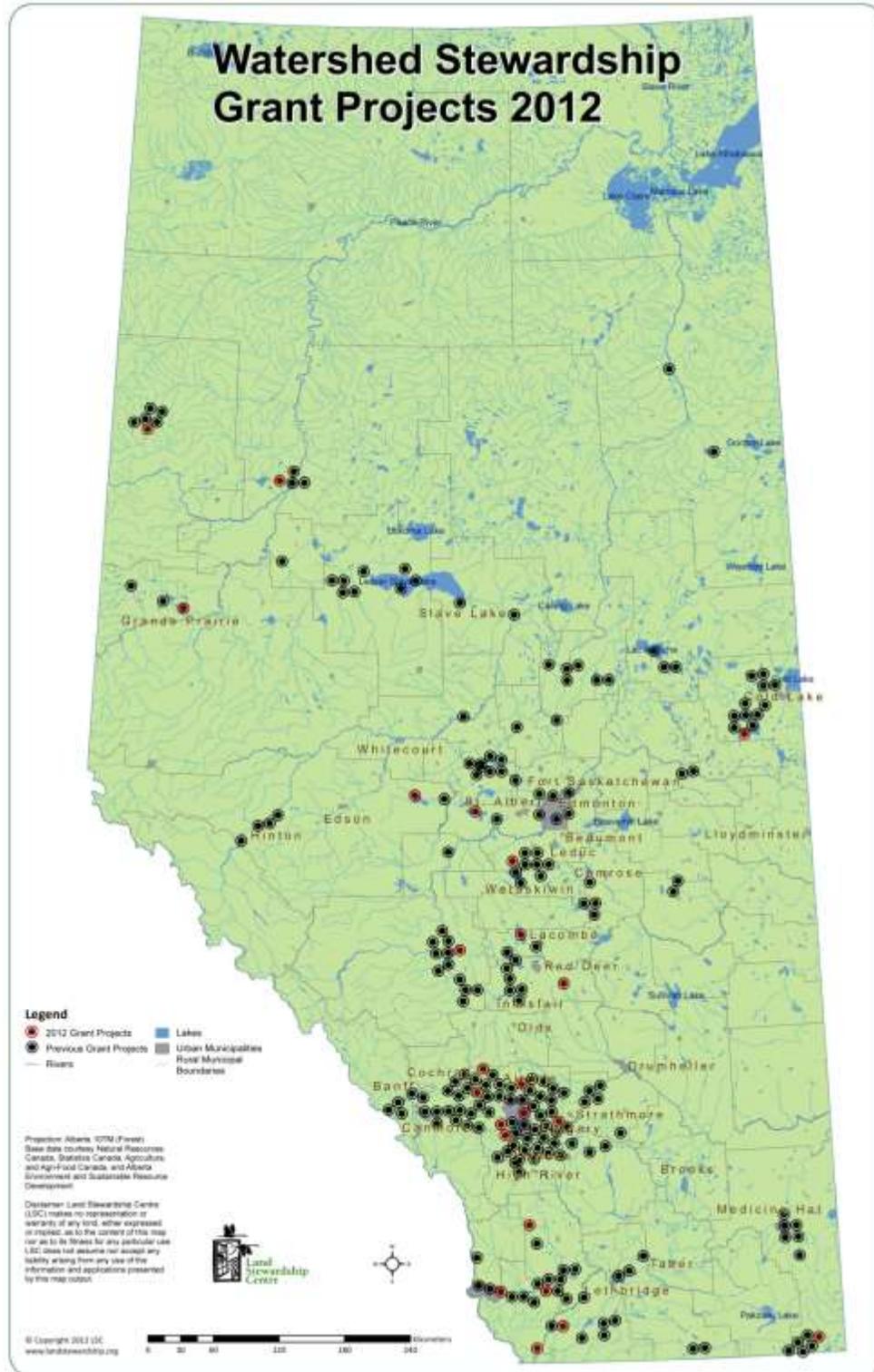
Wabamun Watershed Management Council – State of the Watershed Report

Videos

Waterton Biosphere Reserve

<http://www.watertonbiosphere.com/digital-stories.htm>

Appendix E: Watershed Stewardship Grant Projects Map





www.landstewardship.org