



Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) Update - December, 2011

The development of an IWMP is being sponsored by the Pigeon Lake Watershed Association (PLWA) with the support of the Battle River Watershed Alliance (BRWA) and Alberta Environment.

IWMP? What is this?

PLWA proposes that our IWMP be an **action-driven engagement process**. The IWMP will engage, educate, and enable, people and organizations around and involved in the lake, to take coordinated and prioritized actions for the health of our lake and watershed.

Together, we will systematically identify and tackle the impacts on the lake impacting water quality. We will equip stakeholders to do their part and based on collective agreement, act. We will learn what we need to about each priority impact in order to evaluate the potential effectiveness of mitigation measures, decide together and then implement the agreed measures. As we create collective agreements for action, we will implement them, not waiting for a final plan to act.

Throughout the IWMP, we will:

- Attract the resources and funds to tackle priority actions to improve watershed and lake health;
- Set indicators and benchmarks;
- Allow for the measurement the results of collective actions;
- Maintain a public accountable record of our collective commitments;
- Inform stakeholders and guide actions well into the future; and,
- Recommend policy changes, where appropriate to the respective government agencies.

The outcomes of the IWMP process will solidify the community to work together for the health of the lake and watershed, all necessary for the greater community's environment, social, and economic benefit.

How did this come about?

In 2007 the PLWA commissioned the completion of the State of the Watershed Report. That Report recommended undertaking a watershed management planning process. The development of an IWMP is enabled by the province's *Water for Life* policy.

Why should this be done?

The water quality of Pigeon Lake is a major concern, evident by the algae growth and outbreaks. A variety of factors are at play including increased nutrient loading, impacts of development (and redevelopment), lake levels, and other changing environmental factors. The decline in the lake water quality is in turn impacting the quality of life enjoyed by those living, working and recreating in the watershed.

Mission: To Enhance, Preserve & Protect Pigeon Lake & Its Watershed

What has been done so far?

PLWA appointed an IWMP Steering Committee to provide recommendations for getting IWMP underway. They have drafted the IWMP Terms of Reference including the scope, timeline, budget and engagement strategy.

What about the planning that has been done by Leduc County and the County of Wetaskiwin? Aren't we already doing what needs to be done?

Yes, some good things are happening, yet not all governments and regulators are working together. The public needs a voice in the plans. Some good work is happening. Some good planning has been done. Yet, we need a broader base of collective knowledge, we need a greater capacity to work together, we need collected, supported action. We need shared priorities, and common sustainable regulations and practices. We need a robust response to the state of the lake. The IWMP process will result in actions and eventually produce an overarching plan to ensure the continued commitment by the communities and governments around the lake.

Won't the IWMP slow down other efforts?

No. PLWA and others will continue projects for the health of the lake that will simply be dovetailed into the IWMP process when the IWMP work tackles the related impacts. The lake cannot wait. The good work that is happening must continue to be worked on alongside the IWMP process.

Who is involved?

There is a small Steering Committee and a larger Advisory Committee. Participants on these committees include representatives from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Alberta Environment, Battle River Watershed Alliance, County of Leduc, PLWA, and seven Summer Villages.

What needs to happen next?

As resources become available the IWMP will be implemented in phases over a period of years. With support, work in 2011 will include:

1. Securing required resources;
2. Engaging stakeholder groups and the public on the Terms of Reference and obtaining their input into the Plan;
3. Identifying existing data, defining data gaps, data collection and analysis;
4. Community Consultation to identify the priority issues impacting water quality and associated mitigation measures; and,
5. Finalizing the Terms of Reference.

What can I do?

Participate. Donate. Speak up. Let your Summer Village or County Councilors know how important the IWMP their involvement is to you. Tell PLWA what you think. Send us your questions. **Thanks for your interest and support.**

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