

Preparing a Vision for the Oldman Watershed Post-Secondary Workshop Notes

VISIONING

During the Community Workshops in late November and early December one of the reoccurring comments that we heard was that we were missing youth involvement in the visioning process. The IWMP Team took these comments seriously and developed an additional workshop process for University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College students. Two workshops were held, one at the College and one at the University, with a total of 16 participants reviewing and providing advice on the Vision and Qualitative Outcomes developed for the Integrated Watershed Management Planning.

The following notes were gathered at the post-secondary workshops.

Thank you to the post-secondary students that participated and provided comments!

OWC Post-Secondary Workshop Comments All Combined – University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College

Overall Vision Statement

A healthy and resilient watershed, with a safe, secure water supply for a stable economy and healthy aquatic ecosystems, where people, wildlife and habitats can thrive in the face of climatic changes and extremes.

- What does secure mean? Enough?
- Healthy resilient watershed...how?
- Verb needed, promote, ensure, provide solutions, enhance, awareness
- Why focus on climate change? Water Quality?
- What Extremes? Extreme weather?
- Thrive in face of environmental issues
- More specific; too general, open to interpretation
- Period/break after thrive
- Two to three points better than run on sentence
- Time frame could be included...i.e., forever
- Active phrasing; verb usage
- Comma after wildlife
- Restrictive = "Changes"
- Climate changes vs. environment change
- More broad
- Hierarchy of priorities, i.e., economic, environment, social
- Emphasize downstream users
- Agriculture— intense water user. Where does it fit in?
- Action phrasing i.e., "working towards"

Water Quality and Quantity

Outcome: *Cleaner ground and surface water, for safe drinking and healthy ecosystems*

- Cleaner than what? “Clean” is better
- Define – “Cleaner”
- Baseline to explain “cleaner”

Outcome: *More natural river flows for improved ecosystem health, including flooding flows for regenerating cottonwood stands and flushing flows for removing silt*

- Why cottonwood stands? Maybe not so specific
- More? Just natural, increase natural
- How do you create natural flow?
- How to measure ‘natural’? Evaluate efforts
- Redundant flooding opposes flushing
- Focus on habitat, not species i.e., riparian
- Flood and flush flows of riparian zones
- “More natural flow”?? Explain
- Why flushing/flooding?

Outcome: *Aquifers that are replenished, not mined*

- How to replenish aquifers
- Ensuring aquifers can replenish naturally
- Remove mine
- ‘Maintain’ aquifers ability to replenish itself naturally

OTHER comments

- Quantity = too general for diversity of user
- Priority on water users FITFIR—basic human needs

Attitudes

Outcome: *Environmentally responsible and motivated watershed residents*

- Acting residents, educated residents
- More than responsible and motivated
- Whose responsibility to educate?
- Responsible and motivated to what?
- How? Include education
- Blackfoot challenge; Seth Wilson
- Ground Level education/communication.
- Blackfoot grazing association
- Add “Educated” residents
- ‘Environmentally Responsible – Too general, buzz phrase
- Motivated to do what? Conservation, quality
- Sense of stewardship
- Economical motivation transition to Stewardship – How?
- Educated—community involvement. People learn from talking with neighbours quicker than reading informational pamphlets.

Ecosystem Health

Outcome: *Abundant, healthy and biologically diverse ecosystems (both aquatic and terrestrial)*

- Abundant? More than current? Explain
- Healthy = Biodiverse; redundant
- Improving ecosystem health
- Maintaining? Increase in numbers?
- Maintaining/enhancing biodiversity; improving
- Improving = increasing abundance and health/biodiversity
- Biologically diverse vs. natural vs. native
- Not just biodiversity for the sake of biodiversity
- Abundant? = natural

Outcome: *Healthy, protected and restored riparian areas*

- Remove 'healthy' = protect and restore
- Restored; reclaimed could be better
- Areas in need of restored areas
- Baseline for where
- 'Healthy' riparian areas
- Restore damaged riparian areas

Outcome: *More native grasslands*

- Is that possible?
- Arrest destruction; protect native grass
- Take out 'more', just native or 'protect'
- How? Sustain current? Increase/restore
- Just grassland? More
- Native grasslands, forested lands, other
- Mechanism to identify damaged environments

Outcome: *Healthy native fish populations*

- 'Native' = good word, avoid non-native species
- Add 'abundant' no mention on quantity
- Fish species? Stocked systems
- Good
- Native Fish = include other aquatic species

Outcome: *Fewer invasive species*

- More specific, what species? Order? i.e., Plants, Fish insects, Mammals? Birds?
- More specific, but still include All
- Economic feasibility of implementation fewer, reduce
- Talk about fish, plants
- What about others, birds, mammals, insects etc.
- More all-encompassing; points for other species

Ecosystem Health continued...

Outcome: *Protected areas for medicinal plants*

- Medicinal, include invasive/introduced/natural
- Natural, medicinal plants
- How to achieve this?
- Knowledge of what is medicinal
- Native medicinal plants?
- Invasive species
- Cultural significance
- Access, more specific on medicinal

OTHER comments

- Other non-aquatic watershed species
- Environment changes; understanding the specific effects of land uses

Water Allocation/Use

Outcome: *Water allocations balanced between humans and the ecosystem*

- Human use
- Is there a balance? Over consumption
- Not reality, plausibility of this statement
- Point on balance could be remedied in the following points
- Allocation is still important, could be included in “More water for the ecosystem”
- Allocation for the ecosystem (healthy)
- Incorporate flow rate requirements of ecosystem as benchmark
- Balance isn’t quantifiable

Outcome: *Enough water for everyone*

- What does everyone mean?
- What does enough mean?
- Include time frame, future
- ‘Enough’? What does that mean
- Basic needs
- Wants vs. needs
- ‘Residents of the watershed’ not everyone

Outcome: *More water for the ecosystem*

- Sustainable
- Glad ecosystem is isolated
- Get rid of point “water allocations balanced between human and the ecosystem” or get ride of “enough water for everyone” and “more water for the ecosystem”
- Worded well
- “Water allocations balanced between human and the ecosystem” and this one conflict.
- Describe humans vs. ecosystems
- Only so much water; increase conservation to provide environment water
- Incentive
- Reduced demand vs. conservation
- Water use priorities

Water Allocation/Use continued...

Outcome: *More efficient water use through reduced urban, agricultural and industrial water demand*

- How to reduce?
- Doesn't above bullet say that?
- More specific
- How?
- Balance between basic human needs and industry

Land Use, Landscapes & Recreation

Outcome: *Land managed for multiple users, such that urban sprawl is minimized and the agricultural land base is maintained*

- Maintaining land base is impossible = 'maximize'
- Holistic approach to land use i.e., 'build vertical'
- What's urban sprawl/how to stop this
- Use multiple users, focus on agriculture, urban. Include other users i.e., recreation
- What land? Private, public, ALL

Outcome: *Well planned, low impact development, with restricted development along waterways*

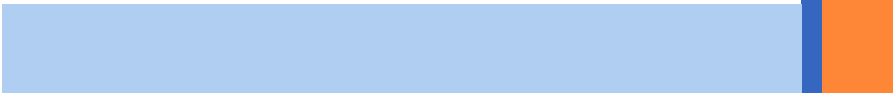
- Low impact and high density to aid land base
- Project some riparian vs. low impact in other
- Patchwork vs. corridor
- Desirable areas to restore and benchmarks will help
- Take out 1st 'development' and 'with'
- What kind of development? More specific. Needed for legal purposes
- Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational

Outcome: *Sustainable population growth, managed in a way that improves watershed function*

- Get rid of IT
- Awkward point
- Population growth that improves watershed function?

Outcome: *Protected and forested headwaters, with reduced recreational impact, lower road density and less evidence of human activity*

- Forested headwaters
- Explain forested vs. deforested vs. restoration
- Evidence of human activity
- Concentrated vs. diluted
- What does less mean
- How?
- Broad collection of points
- Landscape, recreation
- Clarify which goals fall into which category
- How to measure viewscapes; variable by person
- "Land managed for multiple users..." and this outcome conflict; public access vs. lower road density
- Closed areas of the river? Ensure open areas remain open



Land Use, Landscapes & Recreation continued...

- Its long; Could be covered in previous bullet
- Add headwaters above
- Separate sentences
- How to achieve? Education, enforcement
- Protected forested headwaters
- Less evidence, put on its own; hard to achieve
- 'Evidence' = archaeology? Campfire, clear cut
- Impact of human activity
- You can hide evidence
- Less damage

Outcome: *A blue-ribbon trout stream*

- Define 'Blue Ribbon'
- Remove
- Blue ribbon trout vs. Other trophy species
- Focus on river and aquatic species; need holistic approach to other non aquatic species needs to be more inclusive
- What does that mean; define
- Just trout?
- Just 4? More? Better? Many?
- Just say improve sport fishing?

Outcome: *Youth-based ecotourism in historically significant areas*

- Like what? Where?
- Good
- Why just 'youth'? Take out youth

Outcome: *Beautiful natural and historic views*

- Good
- Viewscape = only from where people can see
- Better definition; natural vs. historic vs. protected areas – coal tailings are historic, beautiful?
- How to measure views; variable by person

Outcome: *Recreational public access to waterways and river valleys*

- Why?
- 'Low – impact' access

OTHER comments

- Broad collection of points
- Landscape, recreation
- Clarify which goals fall into which category
- Not all industries mentioned, forestry is: livestock, mining, other etc.
- Define what land uses are occurring in basin

OTHER Comments

- Education is important
- Access can increase impact
- Monitoring, reporting, water quality
- Need guidelines, need to evaluate, enforce
- No visual impact vs. real impact; coalbed methane
- Energy with minimal damage to watershed
- Urban agriculture; tie with holistic development
- Agencies between government levels to focus on monitoring, reporting, approving, provincial incentives
- Conservation authority (Conservation Ontario)
- Non-government but retain power
- Enforcement of stronger legislation i.e., pollution from Agriculture
- Best management practices; ensuring funds are available to allow users to update, other incentive
- Commitment to education, research, commitment to adaptive act based on research
- More incentive
- International cooperation
- Be more specific about what needs to be done vs. what we want
- Don't use words that no longer mean anything i.e., "sustainability"