

In this Issue...

- The Blackfoot Challenge
- Science Forum
- TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup
- Water for Life – Celebrating 5 years
- New Program Coordinator
- Membership Renewal
- Upcoming Events

The Blackfoot Challenge

On August 11th and 12th, 30 landowners, individuals from counties and municipalities, and members of the OWC Rural Team set out on a journey to Ovando, Montana, to visit a watershed organization called the Blackfoot Challenge.



The Blackfoot Challenge is a landowner-based group that coordinates management of the Blackfoot River, its tributaries, and adjacent lands. The Challenge has existed since 1993 and has had 15 years of experience working collaboratively to build trust, partnerships and a culture of working together to successfully solve problems that arise in their watershed.



This group has no shortage of success stories. To date they have initiated projects in noxious weed management, protection of landscapes through conservation easements, stream restoration, water conservation, improved fisheries and wildlife habitat, and reduction of human and wildlife conflicts.

During our visit, we were given the opportunity to learn about some of the projects that the Challenge has been involved in, some of the lessons that were learned, and how to effectively work together to achieve the common goal of a healthy, viable watershed. Watershed Group Members in the Oldman River Basin also shared with members of the Blackfoot Challenge the many successful projects that they are involved in right here in the Oldman Watershed.



Announcements:

- The OWC's Rural Team's *Holding the Reins* Workshop will be February 3rd, 2009
- The OWC's AGM will be held April 30th, 2009. Please ensure you have renewed your membership to be eligible to vote (see back page)

We'd like to thank all that participated in this event and to those counties, municipal districts, and agencies that contributed financially and in-kind to make this tour a success!

For more information on the Blackfoot Challenge, please visit their website: <http://www.blackfootchallenge.org/am/publish/index.php>



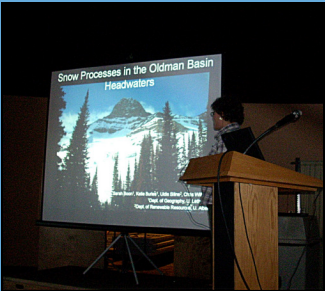
Science Forum



The Oldman Watershed Councils Data Collection and Integration Team hosted their first Science Forum at the University of Lethbridge on October 28th, 2008. The event was not only to showcase research being conducted within the Oldman Watershed, but it was also to celebrate the opening of the new Alberta Water and Environmental Science Building at the University of Lethbridge. A poster session was held during lunch, which also featured research being done in the Oldman Basin. We were fortunate to have a brilliant collection of speakers to present on their research. The following is a list of presenters and their topics:



- **Stefan W. Kienzle:** Simulating environmental impacts on water resources in southern Alberta
- **Sarah Boon:** Snow processes in the headwaters of the Oldman Basin
- **Hester Jiskoot:** Trends in snow & ice at the head of the Oldman River Basin
- **Andrew Hurly:** Responses of avian communities to modified river flows
- **John Derksen:** An integrated approach towards the enhancement of Lee Creek
- **Stewart Rood:** Distinctive riverscapes: Different forms and functions along the southern tributaries of the Oldman River
- **Dan Johnson:** Research in environmental safety for aquatic life: current experiments with invertebrates and fish
- **Cam Goater:** Ecology and evolution of parasite-host interactions in a changing world
- **Lars Brinkmann:** Contamination issues in the Oldman River Basin: Factors contributing to high mercury level in fish
- **Alice Hontela:** What can fish tell us about water quality: Physiological, biochemical and morphological markers of exposure and effects
- **Steve MacRae:** Maximizing the utility of native riparian shrubs for bioengineering projects in prairie ecosystems



Members of the Data Collection and Integration Team would like to especially thank Alice Hontela of the University of Lethbridge for helping to organize the Science Forum. We are also very grateful to Robin Shafthuisen, Barbara Beckett, Robert Cooney and Andy Hurly of the University of Lethbridge, as well as Derek Bly of the Lethbridge College. We are very grateful to the University of Lethbridge for covering the cost of room rental and parking. We also acknowledge the great support from Leda Kozak, formally of the Oldman Watershed Council. We appreciate Bonnie Hofer of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development for all the graphic design services. And finally, a very special thanks to the speakers and poster presenters for contributing to this event.



Did you Know?

- Discarded computer and other electronic equipment is one of the fastest growing categories of solid waste in North America. Abandoned computers contain several hazardous chemicals - including chromium, mercury and lead.



Did you Know?

- If all of the water on earth were stored in a standard 18-litre water cooler bottle, the available fresh water would fill only 3 teaspoons!



Did you Know?

- That the new Program Coordinator, *Leta* actually replaced *Leda* – who would have thought that there would be 2 of them out there and that they would both have worked for the OWC!



TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

The Oldman Watershed Council and the Helen Schuler Coulee Center partnered once again to host the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup event on September 21st held at the Helen Schuler Coulee Center. About 25 people attended the cleanup this year. Like years past, cigarette butts were the most collected item, followed by food wrappers and containers. A big thanks goes to all who participated and to the Helen Schuler Coulee Centre who let us use their facilities to stage the event.



For more information on the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, visit <http://www.vanaqua.org/cleanup/home.php>

Five Years of Water For Life

In 2003, the Government of Alberta launched the Water for Life Strategy. This year we celebrate its fifth anniversary. The strategy has just gone through a renewal, and continues to build on the good work being done, while reconfirming its commitment to the wise management of Alberta's water resources.

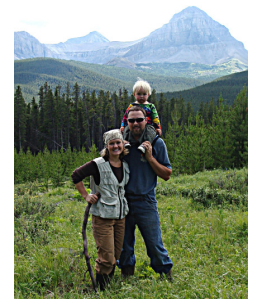
To read the Water for Life Renewal Strategy visit:

<http://environment.gov.ab.ca/info/library/8035.pdf> or contact your local Alberta Environment Office.



Meet our new Program Coordinator: Leta Pezderic

Leta grew up on an acreage east of Claresholm, AB. She moved to Lethbridge in 2000 to attend the Lethbridge Community College. She received her diploma in Renewable Resource Management as well as her certificate in Fish and Wildlife Technology. She transferred to the University of Lethbridge where she obtained her Degree in Environmental Science. Leta spent her summers working in Waterton Lakes National Park as a Non-Native Plant Monitoring Technician. After graduating she accepted a position with Cows and Fish, as a Riparian Resource Analyst. She worked with them for 3 years, one of which was spent on maternity leave. Since then Leta has worked as a Lab Technician in the Environmental Sciences department at Lethbridge College and she spent this summer working for the Alberta Conservation Team, with Alberta Environment. Leta was welcomed by the Oldman Watershed Council in September of this year. She currently lives in Lethbridge with her husband and son.



OWC Mission Statement:

To maintain and improve the Oldman River Watershed through partnerships, knowledge, and the implementation and integration of sustainable watershed management and land use practices.

If you have any comments or questions, or if there are any topics you would like brought up at our Board meetings, you can contact us at:

Oldman Watershed Council
100, 5401 – 1 Avenue S
Lethbridge, AB
T1J 1V6

Phone: (403) 381 - 5801
Fax: (403) 381-5765

E-mail:
leta@oldmanbasin.org

Web Page:
www.oldmanbasin.org

Time To Renew Your Membership!

There are 3 ways to renew your membership:

1. Online: Visit our website at www.oldmanbasin.org and follow the links to membership sign - up.
2. Mail/Fax: Complete the form attached and mail or fax it to us.
3. Email: Send Leta an e-mail to leta@oldmanbasin.org stating that you wish to renew your membership and that you agree with our Goals and Mission.

Remember:

Membership with the Oldman Watershed Council is FREE, but you must sign -up or renew your membership on or before January 31st, 2009 to be eligible to run or vote for the Board of Directors at our Annual General Meeting in April 2009



Upcoming Events in 2009

- Jan. 26 – 28th **The Great Plains Fishery Workers Association Workshop**
Lethbridge, AB
<http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fieldoffices/prairies/fisheriesmanagement/greatplainsfisheryworkersassociation.aspx>
- Jan. 28 – 30;
Feb. 4 - 6 **Waterton Park Front Nature Conservancy of Canada presents: Holistic Ranch Management Course**
Twin Butte, AB
Contact: anne.stevick@natureconservancy.ca
- Feb. 10 – 12 **We Are All Upstream II: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin and the North Saskatchewan River Watershed Alliance**
Leduc, AB
<http://www.saskriverbasin.ca/Upstream2/Home.html>
- Feb. 24 – 26 **The Crown Managers Partnership (CMP) will be hosting the annual Crown Managers Forum**
Pincher Creek, AB
www.rockies.ca/cmp