Vermilion River Watershed Management Plan (VRWMP)

NSWA Municipal Forum
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Outline

• VRWMP Partners
• Basic watershed information
• VRWMP Project Process
• Information Sources
• Public Engagement
• Watershed Issues Identified
• VRWMP- 5 Goals
• VRWMP Recommendations
• GoA Response to VRWMP
• Example: Implementation Project
• VRWMP Implementation – initial steps
VRWMP Partners

- **NSWA** - North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance
- **AB NAWMP** - AB North America Waterfowl Mgmt Plan
- **NEAWMC** - NE Alberta Water Management Coalition
- **Counties** of Beaver, Minburn, Two Hills & Vermilion River
- **Towns** of Vegreville & Vermilion
- **Holden** Drainage District
- **VROAC** Vermilion River Operations Advisory Committee
- **Lakeland College**
- **AESRD** Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development
- **AAFC** – Agriculture & Agri-food Canada

- Funding thanks to AB NAWMP (2008-2011) & AAFC [2010-2013]

*Vermilion River Watershed Management Project*
Landcover [circa 2009] in the Vermilion River Watershed
VRWMP Project Process

1. Build Partnerships
   Summer 2009

2. Characterize Watershed
   Winter 2009/2010

3. Goals & Solutions
   2010-2011

4. Management
   Recommendations
   (VRWMP)
   2011-2012
Information Sources

• NSWA State of Watershed Report (2005)
• NSWA IWMP (2012) – reports and studies
• Mapping information (DU, Ag Canada)
• Vermilion Water Supply & Demand Study
  – Golder & Associates for NSWA
• Cold Regions Hydrologic Modeling
  – Dr. John Pomeroy & team, U. of Sask.
• Remote sensing of Non-cultivated Areas
  – Dr. Karl Steinz, AB Terrestrial Imaging Centre, U of Lethbridge
Public Engagement

• Municipal Survey – Jan-Feb 2011

• Planners Workshop – March 4/11

• VRWMP Discussion Paper & Survey
  - Fall 2011 – Discussion Paper and printed survey
  - On-line survey
  - Nov/11 – Feb/12– 6 Municipal briefings, 4 open houses
  - Feedback incorporated into draft plan or accepted as information
Watershed Issues Identified

Surface Water
- Property security
- Sedimentation
- Drainage
- Flooding
- Wetland loss & alteration
- Channelization
- Climate variability
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Riparian health
- Bank stability
- Recreation
- Biodiversity
- Nutrient management
- Industrial developments
- Agricultural developments
- Erosion
- Residential developments
- Vegetation and beaver management
- Land clearing and alteration
- Lack of planning knowledge & capacity

Groundwater
- Base flow
- Water supply
- Lack of enforcement
- Pesticides/contaminants/lagoons
- Regulations/licensing
- Groundwater quality
- Groundwater supply sustainability

Watershed/Landscape

Vermilion River Watershed Management Project
VRWMP – Solutions to issues

- 5 Goals – aimed to address major issues/topics
- 19 Directions – key recommendations
- 54 Actions – specific activities
VRWMP – 5 Goals

1. Improve capacity for watershed management planning & implementation in communities within the Vermilion River watershed.
2. Improve reliability of surface water supply in the Vermilion River watershed.
3. Maintain or improve surface water quality in the Vermilion River watershed.
4. Maintain or improve aquatic ecosystem health in the Vermilion River watershed.
5. Protect & sustain groundwater quality and supply in the Vermilion River watershed.
VRWMP – recommendations

• **Goal 1** – Develop capacity & knowledge in the Vermilion River watershed
  
  – **Direction 1.1** Improve capacity for watershed management planning and implementation in communities within the Vermilion River watershed
    
    • **Action 1.1.1** Establish a VRWMP Implementation Team to…
    
    • **Action 1.1.2** Develop a long-term funding model to…
    
    • **Action 1.1.3** Integrate the recommendations in this VRWMP into all municipal and industrial planning & decision-making processes.
      
      • **Who’s involved**
GOA Response to VRWMP

- Technical review
- Recommendations were supported in principle
- NSWA and VRWMP - Implementation Team urged to engage all watershed resource managers and key stakeholders to lead the next phases of work
Example: Implementation Project

• Under VRWMP Goal 3:
  • Proposed water quality monitoring project
    – Need a current assessment of water quality conditions
    – Propose several sites along the Vermilion River - two year sampling period
VRWMP Implementation

• Implementation Team
  – VRWMP Steering Committee transition & expansion
  – 1st meeting April 30, 2014 at Town of Two Hills
  – multi-sector representatives have been invited

• Initial tasks – broaden a multi-sector membership & together create a funding model and a multi-year work plan

• Implementation project timeline - 2014-2018
VRWMP Implementation

• **Vision** – The Vermilion River Basin is a healthy and sustainable watershed

• **Mission** – To successfully implement the Vermilion River Watershed Management Plan
Questions?

• Thank you!
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