

Presentation to the NSWA Watershed Planning Forum

February 27, 2020

Arin MacFarlane Dyer & Neil Fleming



WABAMUN WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL



WABAMUN LAKE

Watershed Management Plan

Prepared by:
Wabamun Lake Watershed Management Plan
Steering Committee

Draft v.2 – Sept. 30, 2019

WWMC, WHO WE ARE

- A **society** formed in 2006 (as recommended by Dr. Schindler's and other studies produced for the lake prior to this date)
- A permanent board of **volunteer** directors made up of a cross-section of about 20 stakeholders from around the lake representing business, government, NGOs, lake residents, etc.
- *Our mission: to guide the development, management and stewardship of lake Wabamun through collaborative watershed planning, research and public education.*
- Membership is free! Go to WWMC.ca to get on our mailing list

WEBSITE WWMC.CA

WABAMUN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

WABAMUN LAKE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Click here to learn how the WWMC is working with Alberta Environment and Parks, the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance and the various municipalities around the lake to develop a watershed management plan for the lake.

Wabamun Lake Fishery

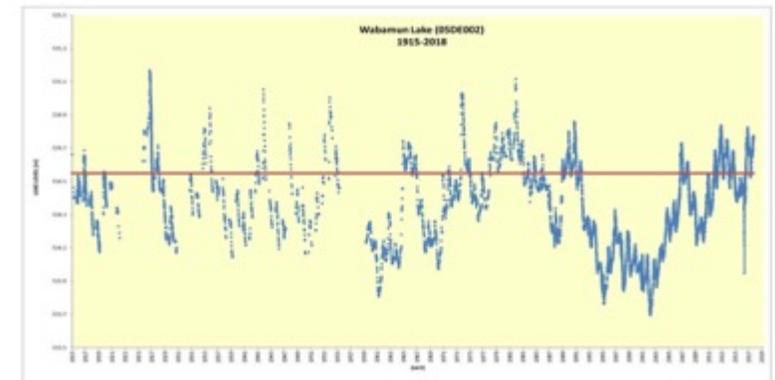
Some of the most frequent enquires the WWMC receives are from anglers who ask why they can no longer harvest fish from the lake. For well over a century, Wabamun Lake was known as a very productive fishery, supporting a vibrant commercial and sport fishing harvest. Over that time, Wabamun had a thriving sport fish community of Northern Pike, Lake Whitefish and Yellow Perch, not to mention ample forage-fish populations of minnows, young game fish, and aquatic insects and other invertebrates.



Historic Lake Levels

In the WWMC's [2013 State of the Watershed Report \(PDF\)](#), the following historical information (1915-2013) about lake level was presented:

- The maximum lake level recorded was in 1927 at elevation 725.17 meters (2,378.56 feet) above sea level.
- The minimum lake level recorded was in 2003 at elevation 723.72 meters (2,373.80 feet).



WHAT WE DO: EDUCATION!

Lakescape
newsletter of the
**WABAMUN WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**
Box 1005, Wabamun, Alberta, T0E 2K0
www.wwmc.ca info@wwmc.ca

No. 21 Spring 2019

Samco/Ridge Water Resort

A lot has happened since our last newsletter was published in the summer of 2018. After last winter's frenzy of activity with regard to the January ice heave and the resultant workshop in May, your volunteer Board was looking forward to a relatively peaceful summer and fall, looking after the watershed management plan and investigating the various unauthorized boat launches around the lake. Then along came the Ridge Water Resort proposal for the north shore of the lake (<http://bit.ly/2P66sla>).

As I'm sure most of you know, the quarter section of forest, east of Fallis, was cleared of vegetation in 2011-12. Many people expressed concerns about the resultant erosion and tons of earthen material washing into the lake and flooding neighbouring properties. As a result, Alberta Environment and Parks and Parkland County issued enforcement and stop orders, respectively, to the developer, Samco Developments Ltd. However, the erosion continued. Then last September we learned what was being planned for that land: a 300-lot Recreation Vehicle campground.



Shortening a very long story, Samco applied for a development permit from Parkland County for the campground. After much back-and-forth, Parkland refused the permit and Samco appealed the refusal to Parkland's Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB). To accommodate all the people who wished to speak to the board, the SDAB held two hearings on January 14th and 28th with regard to Samco's appeal. On February 12, the SDAB released its decision: **Samco's appeal was denied**. In other words, **the development cannot proceed**. The decision was largely based on the development being "not compatible with neighbouring uses."

The WWMC thanks all those who took time out of their busy lives to attend the two hearings, and especially those who stepped up to make presentations. The SDAB saw, heard and felt your concerns, and they were reflected in the decision. We would like to especially thank **Shirley Munro** for her dedication and persistence in getting people to show up and express their views at the hearings. She quickly organized the Wabamun Area Stewardship Association (WASA) as a way for people to oppose the development. As a result, WASA was able to hire a lawyer who ensured the legalities the SDAB needed to hear were indeed heard.

The WWMC researched, wrote and submitted a written brief to the SDAB and made a presentation at the hearing, largely based on the law the SDAB would be using to make its decision. We feel our brief and presence was reflected in the decision. We have learned a lot in the process and will put that knowledge to good use in the future.

What happens next? Samco had 30 days after the SDAB decision to appeal to the Alberta Court of Appeals (if the decision erred in law or jurisdiction). According to Parkland County, the deadline of March 14 passed without Samco filing a leave to appeal. So, Samco must wait one year from the appeal decision before it can apply again for a permit to develop such a campground on the property. However, it can at any time apply for a permit for any other type of development.

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Wabamun Watershed Management Council >

PUBLIC GROUP · 252 MEMBERS



Watch Party

Photos

Events

File



Write something...



Live

Photo

Recommend

WHAT WE DO: KEEP INFORMED



Guest Speakers:

- Steven Spencer (Fisheries Biologist AEP)
- Allison Rosland (Municipal Planning Services)
- Brian Ilnicki (Love Your Lake)
- Janine Higgins, AEP (Aquatic Invasive Species)



Attend ALMS Workshops, NSWA Forums, and many other seminars on lake and watershed management.

WHAT WE DO: PARTNER WITH OTHERS



- Landowners
- Parkland County
- Village Of Wabamun
- 5 Summer Villages
- TransAlta
- Nature Alberta,
Land Stewardship
Centre, ALMS, etc.

SEBA BEACH FERTILIZER/HERBICIDE BAN



PARKLAND COUNTY INITIATIVES

Parkland County Environmental Conservation Master Plan

Phase 1 Background Technical Report

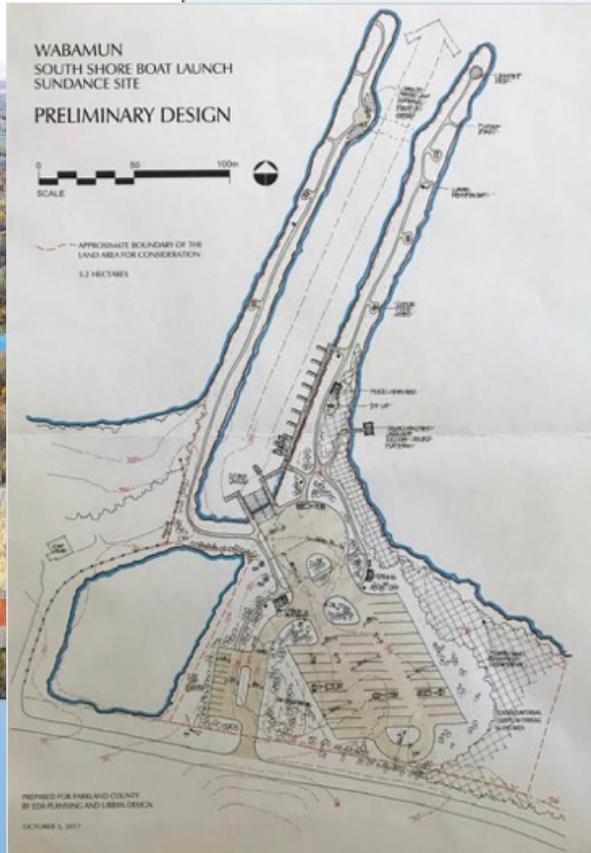


Phase 1 Report

Prepared by : O2 Planning + Design Inc.

For: Parkland County

Submitted: June 18, 2014

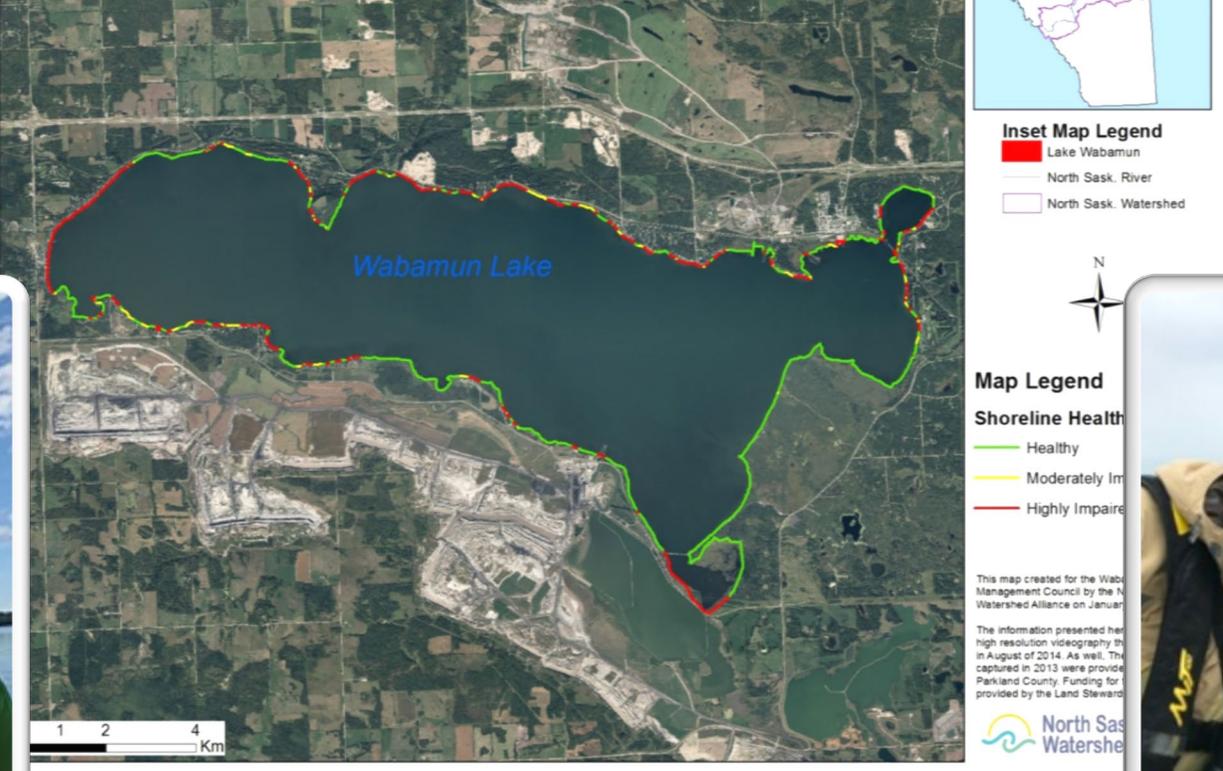


Sundance Boat Launch

- Environmentally Significant Areas Designations
- Environmental Conservation Master Plan
- Lakeshore Development Guidelines
- Bio-physical Assessment Requirements
- Healthy Lakes (Septic Inspection) Program

TRANSALTA - WHITEWOOD MINE RECLAMATION TOUR



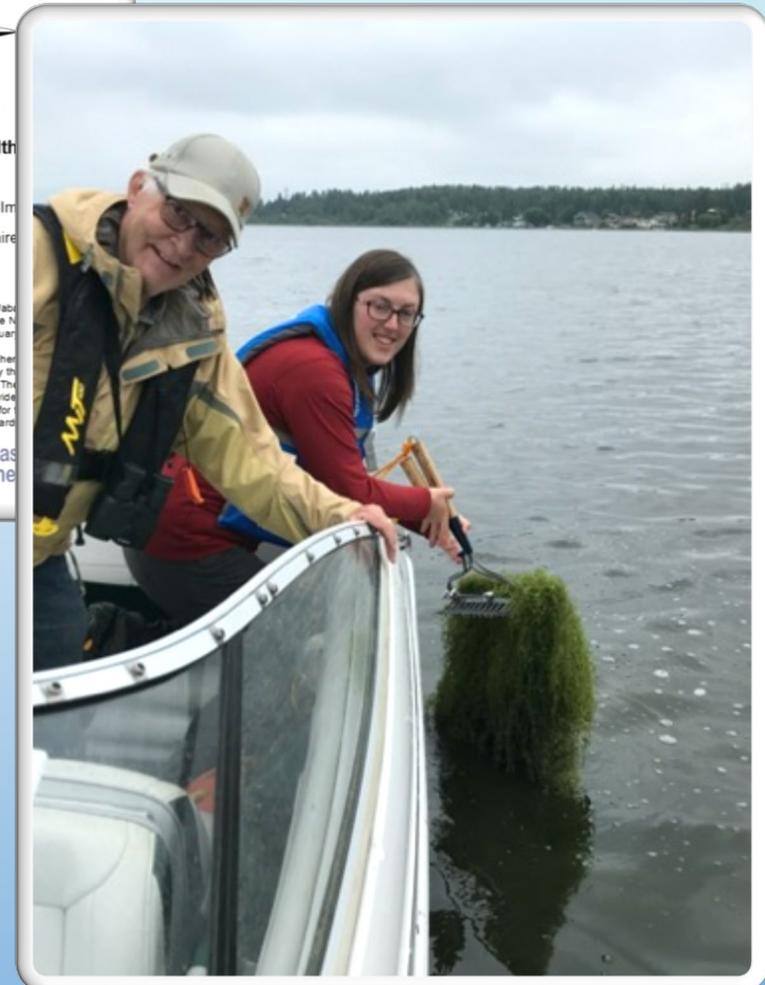


NSWA Riparian Health Assessment

MONITORING



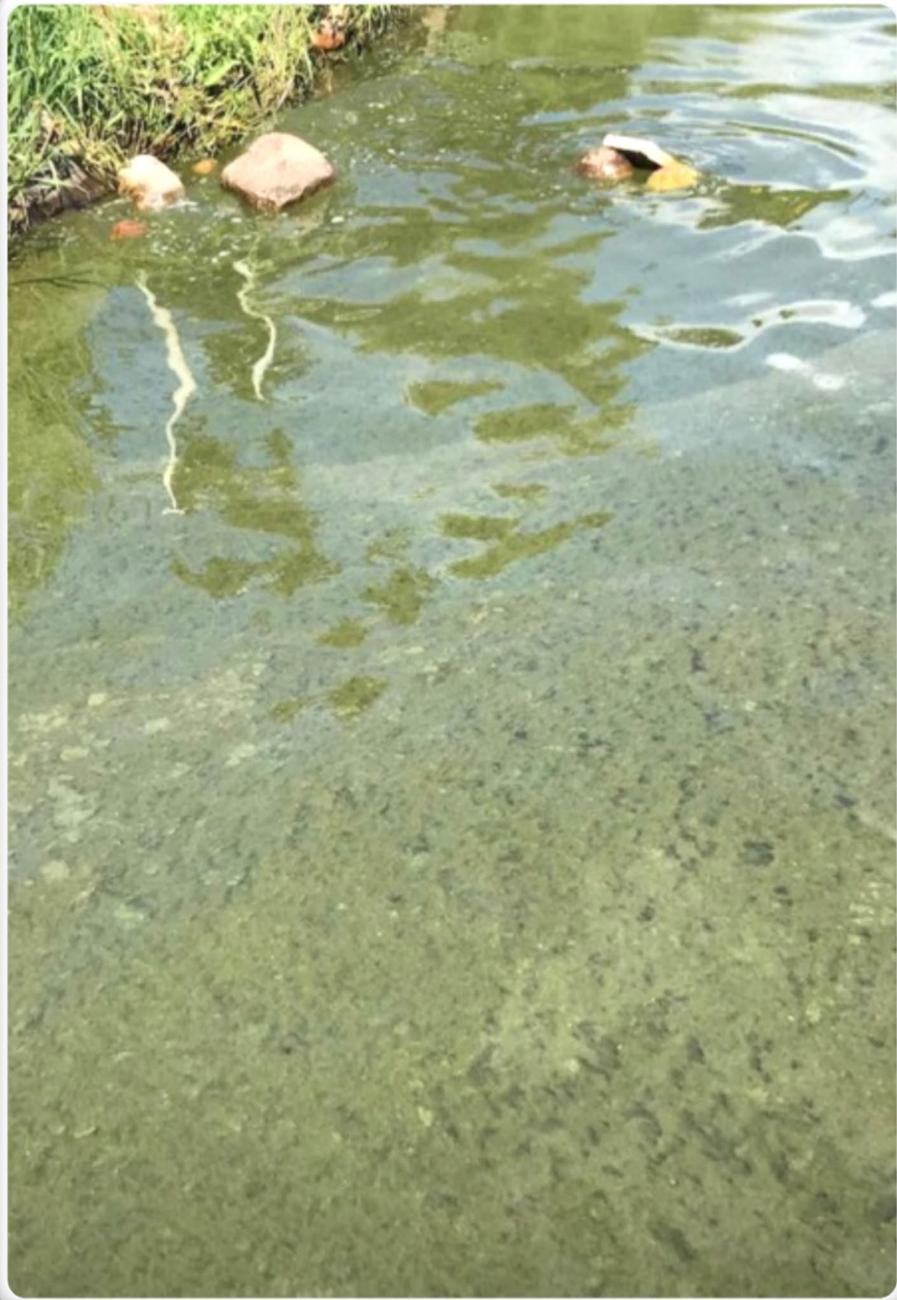
ALMS technician Patrick



ALMS technician Sarah with WWMC volunteer

OUTREACH



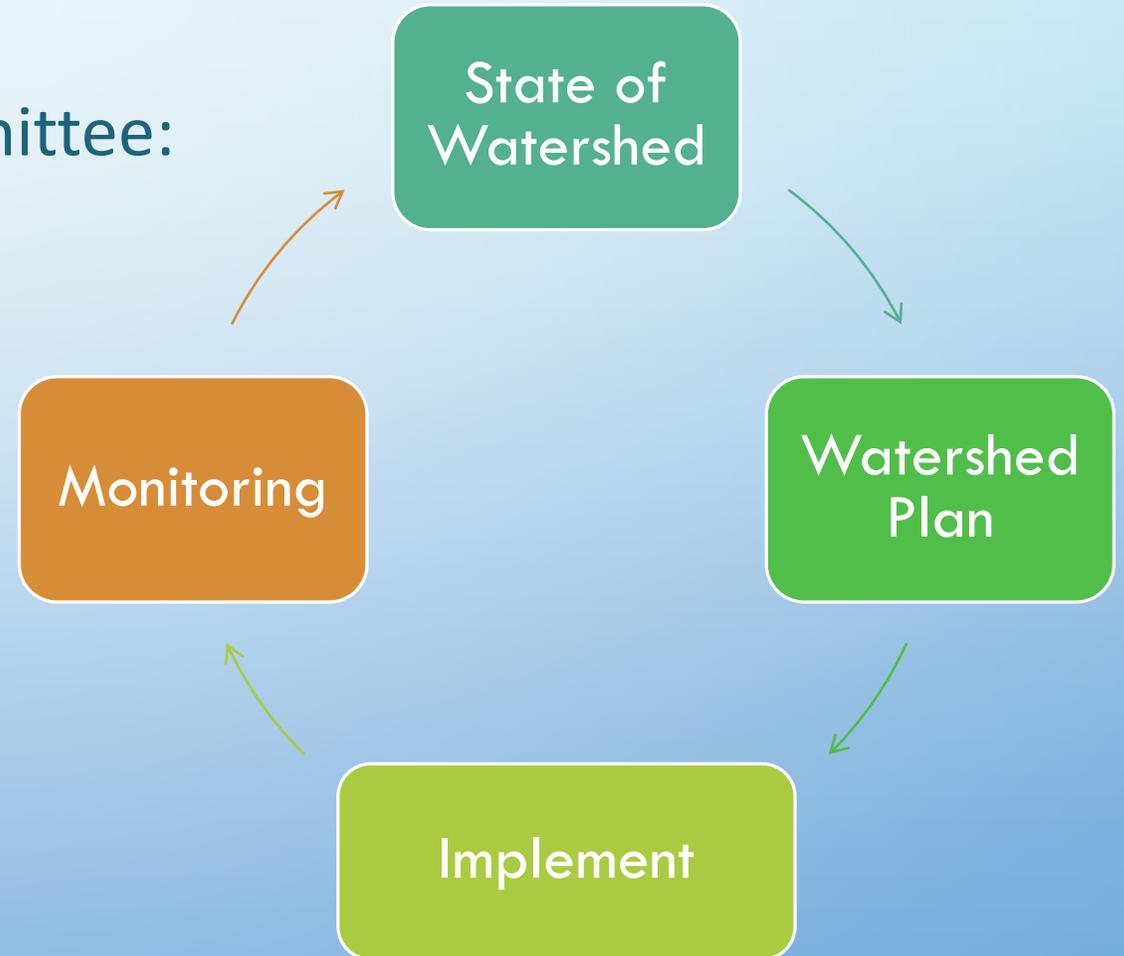


CYANOBACTERIA BLOOM AUGUST 2019

WHAT WE DO: WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Wabamun Lake WMP Steering Committee:

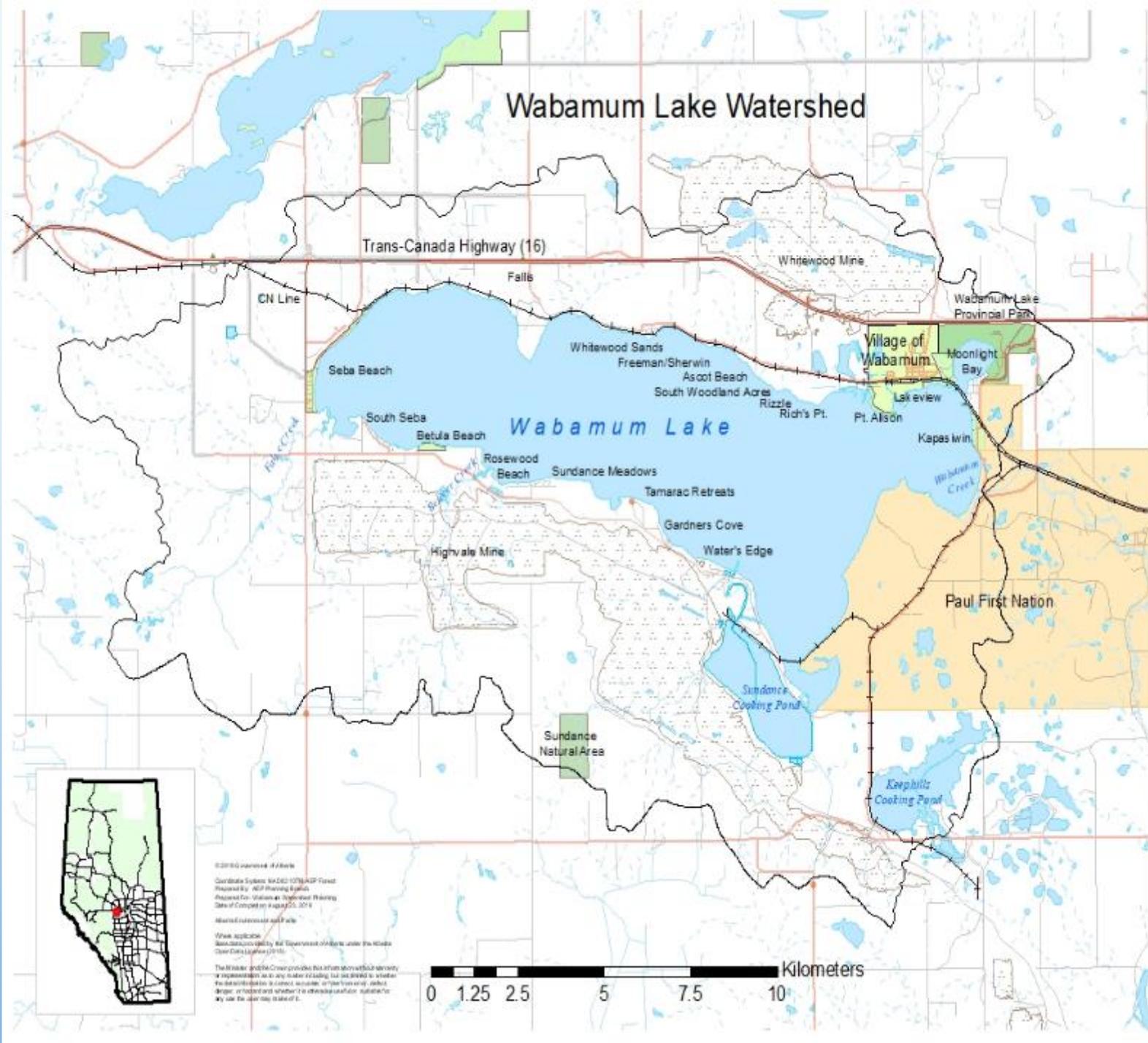
- Parkland County
- Village Of Wabamun
- 5 Summer Villages
- TransAlta
- NSWA
- WWMC

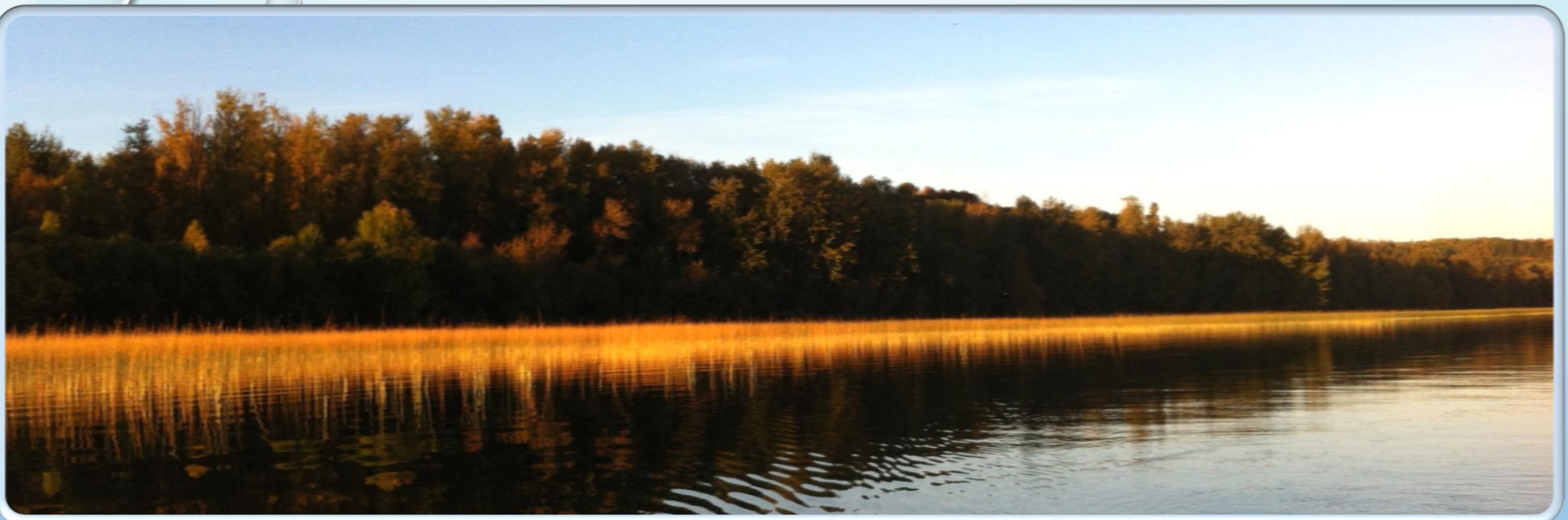


TAKING A WATERSHED APPROACH...

...TO MANAGE RISKS OF

- Invasive Species
- Blue Green Algae
- Nutrient Loading
- Residential Development
- Loss Of Riparian Function
- Agricultural Intensification
- Climate Change
- Cumulative Effects



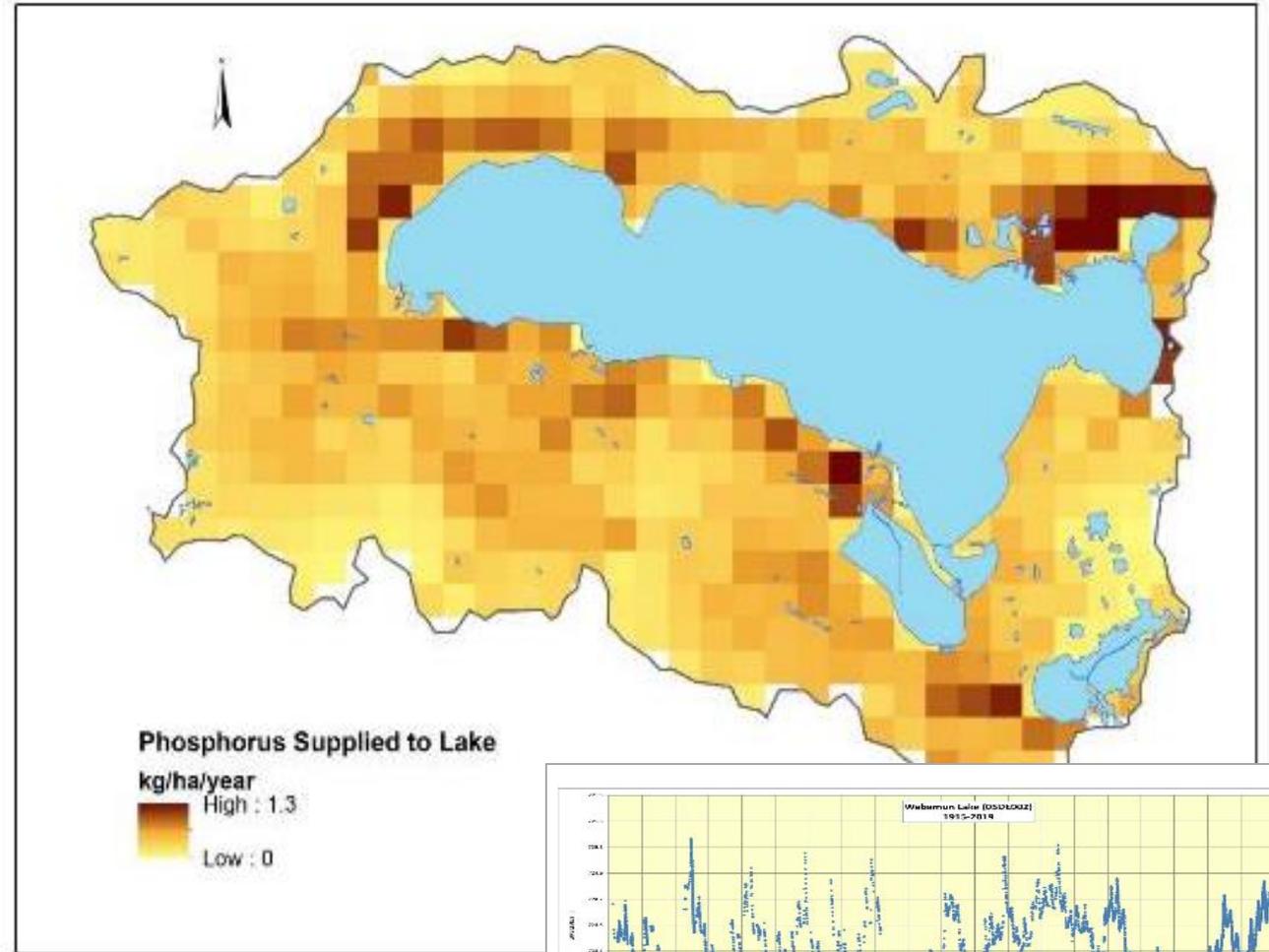


VISION

The Wabamun Lake watershed is a healthy ecosystem with a robust economy and a thriving community that demonstrates its collective responsibility to be the best stewards of the lake environment, for current and future generations.

GOAL: GOOD WATER QUALITY

- *Objective: surface water quality is maintained or improved*
- *Objective: lake users are knowledgeable about and able to adapt to lake levels, which fluctuate with natural variability*
- *Objective: groundwater quantity and quality is maintained and protected*



GOAL: HEALTHY AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS & BIODIVERSITY

Objective: aquatic ecosystem health is maintained or improved.

Objective: biodiversity is maintained or improved and the occurrence and spread of invasive species is prevented or mitigated.



GOAL: WISE LAND USE

Objective: To the extent possible, natural land cover is retained and land use does not impair lake or watershed health.

Objective: Policies and plans are aligned between authorities and regulatory bodies such that development does not impair lake watershed health.

Objective: Knowledge needed to manage the Wabamun Lake watershed is gathered and made available to decision-makers.

REAL ESTATE

Alberta's lakefront properties see prices soar amid bidding wars

Sparse inventory can't feed a growing demand for recreational homes in places such as Wabamun Lake



This large house fetched \$1.15-million, the highest sale on Wabamun Lake this year.

PHOTOS BY WAYNE HEINE

WMP GOAL: ENGAGED STEWARDS

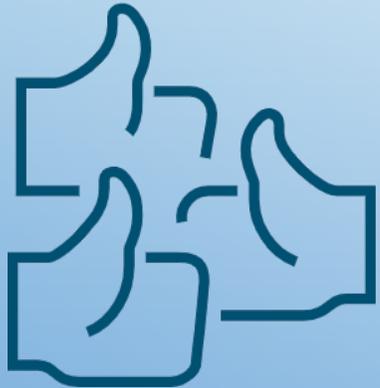
Objective: the community shares its collective responsibility to be the best stewards of the Wabamun Lake watershed and stewardship programs inspire action.



WMP NEXT STEPS



Engage other stakeholders and the public on the draft WMP



Finalize and approve the WMP

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES



Maintaining a collaborative, representative steering committee



Continue educational activities with an initial focus on invasive species, riparian health and agricultural best practices



Setting up a robust water quality monitoring program that informs decision-makers



Restoring shoreline riparian function



Continuing to align municipal policies, plans and processes that promote watershed health

LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR?

- WMPs take time!
- The best time to produce a WMP was 50 years ago, the second best time is now. WMPs must be fluid to adapt to future unknowns.
- There is a lot of apathy and denial out there, it is hard to motivate people.
- Community and municipal buy-in is critical so focus on relationship building throughout the planning process.
- Groups like WWMC have limited capacity...need to leverage! We couldn't do this without the support of NSWA and our other partners!

QUESTIONS?





THANK
YOU!