



RIPARIAN HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING GUIDELINES

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- An experienced planning services team
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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Why Land Use Planning Matters?
- Riparian Regulations Alignment Project
- What is the Best Management Practices Guide?



WHY LAND USE PLANNING MATTERS

- Legislative responsibility
- Managing risk
- Increasing organizational capacity
- Achieving Riparian Intactness targets



LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

- Alberta Land Use Policies
- Water for Life Strategy – 3 main goals
 - Safe, secure drinking water supply
 - Healthy aquatic ecosystems
 - Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy
- Cumulative effect of upstream and upland activities
- Land use policy and regulation as tools in a community's toolbox



MANAGING RISK

- Limiting financial costs to landowners and municipalities
- Mitigating municipal risk and liability
- Climate change adaptation
- Meeting other legislative and regulatory requirements



Yellowhead County struggle with flooding wildfire: 'One extreme to the next'

Global News

June 20, 2023 12:53 pm · Updated June 20, 2023 8:14 pm

News Hour at 6 Edmonton

Yellowhead County struggle with flooding after wildfire

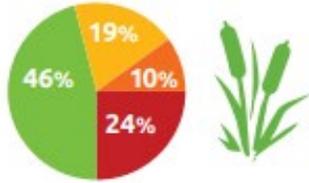


ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- Opportunity for cost savings and increased organizational capacity
- Addressing intermunicipal / downstream
- Opportunity for improved transparency and alignment within the watershed
- Access to additional resources and data to science-based decision-making models



RIPARIAN INTACTNESS TARGETS



Goal 1 Existing (baseline) intact riparian areas are identified, and the proportion is maintained through conservation efforts. Of the riparian areas assessed:

- 46% are categorized as **high intactness**
- 19% are categorized as **moderate intactness**
- 10% are categorized as **low intactness**
- 24% are categorized as **very low intactness**



Goal 2 Degraded riparian lands are restored such that the North Saskatchewan River watershed and each of its sub-basins has a minimum of 65% highly intact riparian areas.



Goal 3 Priority water bodies (tributaries, lakes, and wetlands) in each sub-basin also have a minimum of 65% highly intact riparian areas, and also have a maximum of 25% very low + low intact riparian areas.



Goal 4 Municipalities maintain a minimum of 65% highly intact riparian areas and have a maximum of 25% very low + low intact riparian areas.

**NORTH
SASKATCHEWAN
RIVER
WATERSHED
RIPARIAN
CONSERVATION &
RESTORATION
STRATEGY**

September 2021



RIPARIAN REGULATIONS ALIGNMENT PROJECT

Purpose / Objectives

- Increase awareness of the importance of riparian intactness
- Understand current state of regulatory environment
- Provide specific land use “tools” for communities
- Align land use regulations to support increased riparian intactness

Phases

- Phase 1 - Discussion Guide
- Phase 2 - Workshops
- Phase 3 - Best Management Practices Guide



PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION GUIDE

Analyze municipal Land Use Bylaw based on **three actions** to align regulation with the preservation of riparian intactness.

- **Action 1** – Identify **Common Language** in regulatory documents within the North Saskatchewan Watershed
- **Action 2** – Identify **Subdivision Regulations** to delineate and protect riparian areas
- **Action 3** – Identify **Development Regulations** to mitigate the impact of development on riparian areas



DISCUSSION GUIDE – KEY FINDINGS

Findings

- Limited defined language around riparian areas
- Focus on flood hazard terminology
- No significant differences between urban and rural municipalities
- Inconsistent approaches to manage subdivision and development
- Deferral to other mechanisms – policy documents, Acts and Regulations
- Context-specific
- Administrative complexity and resources



WORKSHOPS

A photograph of a wooden staircase with railings leading up through a forest. The stairs are made of light-colored wood and have a simple wooden railing. The forest is dense with tall trees and green foliage. There is a mist or steam rising from the steps, creating a hazy atmosphere. The lighting is soft, suggesting a morning or late afternoon setting.

Our key take-aways

- Successes across the watershed
- Limitations of our assessment and Discussion Guide
- Broad interest in better tools across communities
- Excitement to co-create solutions

WHAT IS THE BMP GUIDE

- Opportunities identified in Discussion Guide
- Implementable actions
 - Sample definitions
 - Subdivision regulations
 - Development regulations
 - Aligned to commitments to protect and enhance riparian health throughout the watershed

COMMON LANGUAGE

LUB Opportunities:

1. Provide definitions for water features within municipalities, including: watercourses, waterbodies, wetlands.
2. Provide definitions for riparian areas adjacent to water features to aid in delineating sensitive riparian lands.
3. Provide definitions related to other hazard lands, ex. steep slopes, ravines, etc.

ADDING TO YOUR TOOLBOX

- Sample regulations
- Building on your successes and challenges



THANK YOU!

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