



# CLEARWATER COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

June | July

# 2019

A Newsletter  
for Residents  
of Clearwater  
County

# 2019 ALBERTA MASTERS GAMES

**AUGUST 22-25, 2019  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE  
CLEARWATER COUNTY**

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2019 Alberta  
Masters Games | 30

# REACH YOUR PEAK

**August 22 to 25**

## Volunteer

*Event volunteers are still needed*

## Compete

*Registration closes August 1*

## Celebrate

*Tickets available for Opening  
Ceremonies and Outdoor Concerts*



[www.albertamastersgames.ca](http://www.albertamastersgames.ca)



## Greeting from the Reeve

Hello everyone,

I hope that your crops and gardens are now flourishing as the recent rains replenish soil moisture reserves. As usual, my Reeve's Message will provide you with a brief overview of the County's recent activities of the past few months and what lies ahead for the summer.

In May, Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) deployed eight members and a structural protection sprinkler unit to assist in the wildfire effort in High Level (see page 18-19 for more details). On the note of achievements, CRFRS was one of two municipal fire departments selected to build a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) structural protection team, funded through the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA). The WUI Program will expand the current training of specialists responding to structure protection needs within a wildfire (see page 10). The provision of frontline fire rescue services, fire prevention programs and public education make the county a safer place and could not be possible without the incredible hard working team of volunteers – I would like to thank CRFRS and its members for their efforts, and for the example they are setting in our community.

In the early part of June, Council took a tour of Nordegg to prepare for the Strategic Planning Council Committee meeting on June 17. As Council prepares for the 2020 budget deliberations, key priorities of each hamlet will be considered as we strive to make Clearwater County a vibrant and growing community. From Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, economic prosperity was identified as the primary objective with six strategic directions. One of those directions is to fulfill the vision of the Nordegg Development Plan and take the next steps towards infrastructure development, innovative lot sale options and trails.



Jim Duncan,  
Reeve

Community support is key to our region's continued growth and sustainability. The new Condor Public Services building is one example of a multi-purpose building that will be home to Public Works, Agriculture & Community Services departments, and Fire Station #20. See page 13.

On another exciting note, Clearwater County has partnered with the Town to bring the 2019

Alberta Masters Games to our region this summer. Over 800 athletes from across the province are already registered, (and more expected), to compete in 15 sports, and we are pleased to welcome this sporting event in our area. This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase our community with national media coverage. The Town and County are proud to host the Games August 22-25, 2019 (see page 2-3 and 30 for more details).

Before I wrap up, I want to take the time to mention the role of Council's governance which includes making important decisions regarding programs and service levels on behalf of the municipality. Council decisions are based on bylaws, policies and due diligence. Council asks that if you have concerns or questions, to talk to your division Councillor directly (contact info on page 5) or call the County office and speak with the appropriate department.

Towards the end of June, members of Council had the privilege of attending local high school graduations. As always, it was a delight to watch students cross the stage, seeing the end of one chapter in their lives while another adventure begins. Council looks forward to hearing about the future successes of our community's youth.

On behalf of Council, I wish you a safe and enjoyable summer.

Jim Duncan, Reeve





# Clearwater County Council



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### Strategic Planning Committee of Council Meeting

September 16, 2019

### Budget Deliberations

December 4-6, 2019

### Upcoming Council Meetings

Council meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 9:00 a.m. at Clearwater County's Council Chambers.

August 27	September 10	September 24
October 8	October 22	

### Cancelled August 13 Council Meeting

Clearwater County Council cancelled their regularly scheduled Council meeting on Tuesday August 13, 2019. The next meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2019.





### June 11

#### **Rescind Bylaw 1017/16**

Council directed Administration to draft a bylaw to rescind Bylaw 1017/16 - passed in 2016 to facilitate a loan of \$1 Million to the Village of Caroline to provide financing for a paving project in the event there was a delay in receiving funding from the province - since 2016 funding was received on a timely basis to complete the project and the loan was not required.

#### **Open Microphone Session**

Council directed Administration to promote the awareness of the delegation process and deferred the discussion of Open Microphone Session to a future date.

#### **Clearwater County Community Broadband Strategy**

Council received a Broadband Summary Report capturing the work completed over the past year and a half and directed Administration to move forward with developing a Partnership Strategic Direction Plan.

### June 25

#### **Bylaw 1066/19 Land Use Amendment**

Following public hearing, Council tabled second reading until further information is provided on the application to redesignate Lot 6, Block 1, Plan 102 2159 from the Country Residence District "CR" to the Recreation Facility District "RF".

#### **Economic Development Strategy & Survey Results**

Council reviewed the survey results that support the direction of the proposed Draft Economic Development Strategy including economic diversification,

workforce attraction, availability of affordable housing, zoned and development ready land, and social programs for young families.

Following review of the Draft Economic Development Strategy, Council approved the final document version with emphasis to communicate back with the community.

#### **Community Futures Central Alberta Delegation**

A representative from Community Futures Central Alberta (CFCA) presented an overview of the non-profit organization's operations in Clearwater County including small business loans, grant advice, business and financial planning, skills development and training, and strategic marketing and networking.

#### **Village of Caroline Delegation - Waste to Energy (W2E)**

Council heard a presentation on a potential Waste to Energy Facility by Village of Caroline Mayor, John Rimmer, a model to demonstrate the elimination of remote or isolated community municipal solid waste with a Caroline-based W2E facility in a fiscally viable and environmentally responsible manner.

#### **Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) Deployment Support**

Council indicated its continued support for CRFRS deployment program, should requests come through the proper channels in the future, based on full cost recovery model.

#### **Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) 2019 High Level Deployment**

Council accepted the 2019 High Level Deployment Update for information including an overview of the equipment and crews deployed to assist in structural fire protection.

## Council Highlights

### **Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) Clerk Appointment**

Council appointed Allanah McLean as Alternate Clerk to the Subdivision Development Appeal Board for term effective June 25, 2019 until October 21, 2019.

### **DRAFT Municipal District (MD) of Bighorn and Clearwater County Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF)**

Council approved in principle the Draft MD of Bighorn and Clearwater County ICF and directed Administration to proceed with development of the ICF Bylaw.

### **Bylaw 1068/19 to Rescind Bylaw 1017/16**

Council granted first reading to Bylaw 1068/19 to rescind bylaw 1017/16, with the condition that second and third reading be granted following advertising requirements have been met.

### **STARS Foundation Delegation**

Representative from STARS Foundation presented an annual update on how funding from Clearwater County has supported STARS as well as current activity statistics in the region. A plaque was presented to Clearwater County Council for their steadfast commitment to STARS with 2019 contribution of \$2.00 per capita in the amount of \$23,894.00.

### **CAO Report**

Council approved the attendance of any Councillor wanting to attend the 2019 Association of Summer Villages of Alberta Annual Conference & AGM on October 17-18, 2019 to meet the new Ministers of Environment & Parks as well as Municipal Affairs.

### **Councillor Verbal Reports**

Council approved Councillors to attend the Cana-

an Association of Fire Chief's Annual General Meeting and Convention in Calgary on September 12-16, 2019.

### **Regional Fire Rescue Services Agreement**

Council accepted in principle a draft Fire Services Agreement between Clearwater County and the Village of Caroline, as amended, and directed Administration to provide the draft agreement to the Village of Caroline for their Council's consideration.

### **Rocky Mountain Regional Solid Waste Authority Agreement**

Council accepted a draft framework moving forward on negotiations regarding the operations of the landfill.

## July 9

### **Town of Rocky Mountain House Lagoon Summary Report & Desludging Cost Sharing Funding Request**

Council accepted as information a summary report from Town of Rocky Mountain House representatives regarding the Town's Lagoon operations, compliance, usage, and capacity; as well as a request for consideration for the County's financial participation in desludging and implementing aeration upgrades to the Town's wastewater treatment facility.

Council approved funding 20% of the additional OPTAER fine bubble laterals, the blower block addition and repair kit, engineering and contingency for the Town of Rocky Mountain House Lagoon up to the estimated amount of \$106,214.00.

### **Condor Lagoon Upgrades – Budget Adjustment**

Council approved an adjustment to the 2019 Capital Budget to reallocate \$474,089.14 from the Sewer Reserve to the Condor Lagoon Upgrades capital project.



## Council Highlights

### **The Village of Caroline's Waste to Energy (W2E) Project**

Council directed administration to draft a letter supporting the Village of Caroline's proposed feasibility study for the W2E Project.

### **Rocky Mountain Regional Solid Waste Authority Development of Cell 2**

Council approved the Rocky Mountain Regional Solid Waste Authority (RMRSWA) proceed with the development of cell 2 at the landfill with corresponding 2019 budget adjustments to increase engineered structures expenditures by \$170,000, transfers from reserve by \$56,667 and grant revenue by \$113,333.

### **Everdell and Ferrier Community Hall Funding Request**

Council approved the funding requests for Ferrier and Everdell Community Halls in the amount of \$20,000 for each hall, out of the Community Hall Grant Funding budget with the additional \$5,000 overage taken from contingency funds.

### **Bylaw 1068/19 to Rescind Bylaw 1017/16**

Council granted second and third reading to Bylaw 1068/19.

### **Records Digitization Policy**

Council approved the Records Digitization Policy to allow storage of records in the Corporate Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS).

### **Proposed Date Change for Select Regular Council Meetings**

Council approved the cancellation of the August 13, November 12, and December 24, 2019 Regular Council Meetings, and changed the date of the first Regular Council Meeting in November to November 5, 2019. Council will discuss scheduled cancellations of Regu-

lar Council Meetings and Mandatory Conferences at the 2019 Organizational Meeting.

### **Health and Safety Related Policies**

Council reviewed and approved the Respectful Workplace Policy (HR1005) and Commitment to Health & Safety Policy (HS-2000) as amended.

### **CAO Report**

Council approved the attendance of any Councillor wishing to attend the CAEP's Fall Engagement Session for Elected Officials in Sylvan Lake on September 13, 2019.

Council approved the attendance of two Councillors to attend a meeting invitation from Lac Ste Anne County to discuss rural issues in late August or September.

## **July 23**

### **Delegation – Clearwater Regional Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)**

Council accepted as information the Clearwater Regional FCSS report regarding the County's proportionate share to cover the funds awarded to the Medical Lending Group (MEL) Society as a community grant in 2018, as outlined in the Regional Agreement, and directed Administration work with FCSS and determine funding options.

### **Land Use Amendment Consideration of First Readings**

Council granted first reading for Bylaw 1070/19 to add a new District to the County's land use bylaw No. 714/01, being the Nordegg Manufactured Home District "NMH", and to redesignate +/- 7.83 acres from the Agriculture District "A" to the Nordegg Manufactured Home District "NMH" within Pt. NW 27-40-15-W5M and proceed to public hearing on September 10.





## Council Highlights

### **Leslieville School Force-Main/Gas Line Relocation – Budget Adjustment**

Council approved an adjustment to the 2019 Capital Budget to reallocate \$124,140 from the Sewer Reserve to the Leslieville School Wastewater Force-main/Gas Line Relocation capital project.

### **Manufactured Home Park/Community Assessment and Taxation Bylaw**

Council granted second and third reading for Bylaw 1067/19 to make Mobile Home Park/Community owners responsible for all the land and manufactured home property taxes beginning January 1, 2022, as outlined in the MGA.

### **Municipal District (MD) of Bighorn and Clearwater County Inter-Collaborative Framework (ICF)**

Council granted three readings of Bylaw 1071/19 to adopt the MD of Bighorn and Clearwater County ICF.

### **Employment Related Policies**

Council approved updated employment related policies as the former employment manual required updating to incorporate new legislative changes to Employment Standards Code and Regulations as well as employment related requirements of Occupational Health and Safety Act, Code and Regulations.

### **Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) Obsolete Policy & Bylaw Clean-Up**

Council requested additional information prior to rescinding selected current policies.

### **DRAFT Fire Rescue Services and Fire Control Bylaw**

Council reviewed and directed Administration bring back an amended Fire Rescue Services and Fire Control Bylaw # 1069/ at a future council meeting.

### **Mutual Aid Agreement – Wetaskiwin County and Clearwater County**

Council endorsed the draft Mutual Aid Agreement in principle between Wetaskiwin County and Clearwater County.

### **2019 Fire Apparatus Capital Purchases**

Council approved the purchase of the three apparatus (Tender/Pumper,

Rescue/Pumper and Engine) as presented, with approval for additional capital purchase of AFFRACS radios within the existing CRFRS capital budget.

### **Wildland Urban Interface Program – 2019 Operating Budget Amendments**

Council approved the Wildland Urban Interface program operating budget summary as presented, and amendments to the 2019 operating budget to increase revenues for Regional Fire (WUI) by \$222,550 and Regional Fire (WUI) expenses by \$222,550 for proceeding with the Wildland Urban Interface Program.

### **Delegation - 2019 National Search and Rescue Conference**

Council approved the transfer of \$10,000 from contingency to Emergency Services, of which \$2,000 will go towards covering the cost of attendance for members of Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) and Rocky Mountain House Volunteer Search and Rescue (SAR) Society to the 2019 National Search and Rescue Conference (September 13-15, 2019 in Rocky Mountain House); and the remaining \$8,000 towards the local Search and Rescue Committee to host the conference and cover the extra costs of travel and accommodation for presenters as these costs are not covered by Public Safety Canada or the Alberta government.



## CRFRS Receives \$580K Grant to Develop WUI Team



Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) is one of two municipal fire departments selected to build a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) structural protection team, funded from the Province through the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA). The WUI Program is intended to expand the current wildland urban interface training and capacity by building teams of specialists to respond to structure protection needs within a wildfire.

The \$580,000.00 grant to CRFRS will provide for wages, training and operations of a four-person WUI team for an 18-month period. Together with the Town

of High Level, the respective fire departments will provide WUI Team training, including theoretical, practical and on-scene mentoring and respond to provincial wildfire emergencies when requested by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

This AFCA project includes two, four-person response teams – consisting of a team lead, and three members based out of headquarters - and is designed to be a pilot project in hopes that the program will gain support and continue to be funded. The teams are required to be active by August 1.



## Public Works – 2019 Construction Projects

At the beginning of the summer, wet weather continued to slow progress of road rehabilitation projects as it stopped work for several weeks. The following are just some of the projects scheduled for 2019. Please note that timing and duration of projects are subject to contractor scheduling and weather.

### Gravel Roads

Summer Grader operations have begun. Due to the abundant amount of rainfall, roadways are of continued concern and are being dealt with daily. As a result, the diligent application of gravel crush, to assist with the upkeep of these and all roads within Clearwater County, is ongoing.



### Surfaced Roads

Line painting will be underway next month and will be completed by the end of the summer. Please watch for work crews on the following roads:

- 587 Access
- 752 Access
- Airport Road
- Airport Access Road
- Alhambra Road
- Arbutus Road
- Beaver Flat Road
- Burnstick Lake Road
- Buster Creek Road
- Caroline North Road
- Caroline South Road
- Chicken Ranch Road
- Condor Road
- Crammond Road
- Crimson Lake Access Road
- Everdell Road
- Northfork Road
- Old Dovercourt Road
- Old Highway 11A
- Oras Road
- Prairie Creek Road
- Rainy Creek Road
- Red Deer River Access Road
- Taimi Road
- Wall Street Road
- Withrow Road
- Sunchild Road

### Road Rehabilitation Projects:

- T412-R70/71/72
- RR70-T410/411
- T412-R73
- T392-R65
- R74-T405/410
- R64-T391
- R45-T343
- R60-T354/355
- T391A-R52
- T405-R73
- R81-T391
- T352-R70,T351B-R65  
(Summer Village of Burnstick Lake Access)
- R53-T385
- R52-T390/391
- T372A-R43/44  
(Shoulder Pull)
- T402-R51/52/53/54/55  
(Shoulder Pull)
- Old 11A Hwy from R83 to R93A  
(Shoulder Pull)
- Foothills Tank Rental Service Road (Shoulder Pull)
- R60-T404/405/410  
(Howitt Construction Contract-Beaver Flat Road)
- Quarry Road (Nordegg)
- Nordegg Parking expansion  
(north of hotel)





# Public Works – 2019 Construction Projects

## Bridge Repairs

- Leedale (RR 5-1 south of 41-5A)
- Leslieville (Twp 40-2 west of RR 5-4)

## Bridge Replacements

- Withrow (RR 4-3)
- Wall Street Road
- Stauffer (west of Twp 37-2)

## Beaver Flat Road

The Beaver Flat Road project includes the grading and other work from Hwy. 12 to approximately 4.5 km north with a tentative start date late July.

## Township Road 41-2 (Frisco Pit Road)

Public Works is underway in planning to add this road in its 2019 construction schedule.



## Martin Aggregate Pit Crushing

Recent cleanup took place at the Martin Aggregate Pit (located at NE 13-39-8-W5M), where three bridges were hauled to the County's north facility. Pictured above is the old Clearwater Estates bridge. Aggregate crushing within the Martin Aggregate Pit will commence this season intermittently between August 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019.

The timing and duration of this project will be subject to contractor scheduling and weather. We understand the inconvenience that this could present, but your patience and understanding is appreciated.



RR 4-2 - new guard rail installation south of Hespero cemetery.



## July Long Weekend Taskforce



During the July long weekend, the RCMP integrated traffic teams from Blackfalds, Stettler, Town of Rocky Mountain House, Sheriff's and Clearwater County Highway Patrol in a joint force traffic operation in Nordegg.

The 12 officers were stationed at Clearwater County's Public Services building and conducted checks and patrols throughout the long weekend focusing on

speeding and impaired and aggressive driving.

### Statistics:

- Speeding: 487
- Seatbelt: 6
- Other Non-Moving violations: 61
- Impaired Driving: 1
- Cannabis: 1





### Future Site of Condor Public Services Building

- **Public Works**
- **Agriculture and Community Services**
- **Fire Station #20**



Even with a wet weather forecast in July, the construction on the Condor Public Services building is progressing. To date the following milestones have been accomplished:

- 20,000 gallon cistern has been poured and backfilled
- sanitary service tied into Condor municipal system
- water line complete from well to mechanical room
- underground rough-ins complete for building
- power and communications conduit installed from property to mechanical room
- backfill of foundation complete
- pre-cast exterior wall panels are in place





# Christenson Sports & Wellness Centre



To register: (403) 845-3720 or  
[guestservices@rockymtnhouse.com](mailto:guestservices@rockymtnhouse.com)

HEALTHY BODY.  
HEALTHY MIND.



AUGUST 28, 2019 | 8 AM - 4:30 PM  
\$30 - SNACKS, LUNCH & SESSIONS  
CHRISTENSON SPORTS & WELLNESS CENTRE



Aquatic physical literacy - Axe/knife throwing  
Drone simulation - Archery Darts - Emergency Services  
Synergy Circuit - Indigenous Crafts & Food - Water fight

Ages 11-15



## Aquatic Invasive Species Day

On June 19, Clear Water Landcare teamed up with Alberta Environment and Parks to host an aquatic invasive species day with grade five students. Students from Lochearn and Condor schools explored zebra mussels on various water items like a kayak, tube boat, chest waders and life jacket, and learned about invasive fish from life-size models of goldfish and Asian carp. An interactive game with students playing the parts of native wetland species and invasive species showed how invading species can displace native plants and animals. The grade five science curriculum includes wetland studies providing a perfect link between the classroom and what is happening in Alberta.



## West Country Ag Tour – Mark Your Calendar



### The 32nd annual West Country Ag Tour will be held Tuesday August 20, 2019.

Call 403-845-4444 to register before August 16, 2019.

#### Cover Crop Trial Plots

Showcasing cocktail mixes for soil amendment and extended grazing.

#### Role of Raptors

Learn about the ecological role of birds of prey including an owl demonstration.

#### Pollinator Preservation

Expert advice on how to maintain a healthy population of pollinators.

#### Shelterbelt Showcase

Visit a newly-planted shelter belt and learn important management techniques.

Highlighting hemp mats for weed control.

#### Farm Equipment Demos

Demonstration of new direct sod seeding and cultivation technology available for rent in Clearwater County.



## CRFRS High Level Deployment

On May 18, 2019, Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services (CRFRS) received a mutual aid request to assist with structural fire protection efforts in High Level, as their community faced an imminent threat of an approaching wildfire.

CRFRS was deployed along with three mutual aid departments (Sylvan Lake Fire Department, Lacombe County and City of Lacombe Fire Departments). Engine 913 (Mechanical Spare), Command 902 and Trailer 912 (structure protection sprinkler unit) with 8 members were some of the first municipal crews into High Level early in the morning on May 19.

On May 20, 2019, the request for an additional structure protection crew was also answered by sending Command 903 with 4 members and one of the 6 provincial structural protection trailers from Edmonton to aid in the fight.

Over the next few weeks that followed crews rotated 3 times and operated in the areas of High Level, Mackenzie County, Peerless/Trout Lake, Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement, and La Crete. Many challenges were encountered including the Battle for Paddle Prairie and the defense of the NorBord OSB Plant south of High Level.

CRFRS Fire Chief, Steve Debiegne, is extremely proud of the crews for their professionalism, dedication, commitment, and teamwork in which each of them displayed every day. This deployment would not have been possible without the support of the crews who stayed behind to ensure the home front was protected.

CRFRS is extremely grateful and expresses a heartfelt thank you to the neighboring communities and partners who supported this scale of deployment. To



everyone who sent encouragement and messages of support, as well as to those employers who approved vacation time to free up members to assist, again, CRFRS is thankful.

Due to a request from the local authority and the sensitivity nature of this deployment, a social media blackout was required during this time. This blackout period allowed the incident management team to have consistent messaging of information coming out of the front lines; therefore, no members posted any messaging about the area while deployed.

CRFRS would like to extend their gratitude to the Town of Rocky Mountain House, Clearwater County, and the Village of Caroline, as well as the mutual aid departments that assisted from the communities of Sylvan Lake, City of Lacombe, and Lacombe County. Chief Schmidt and all the High Level Firefighters took great care of the deployed CRFRS members and were accepting as if they were a part of their family.





## CRFRS High Level Deployment - Continued

### High Level Deployment List of Events:

- May 18 – Request from Provincial Operations Centre (POC) to deploy Structural Protection Unit (SPU) crew & engine to High Level
- May 20 – Request from POC to deploy 2nd SPU crew to High Level with provincial trailer
- May 22 – Request from the POC to deploy a division supervisor to High Level
- May 25 & 26 – Crew swap completed
- May 26 – 1 SPU Crew & division Supervisor redeployed to Trout Lake
- May 28 – Trout Lake crew & division supervisor released from fire
- May 29 – Request from the POC to deploy a division supervisor to High Level
- May 29-30 – Larger fire event, Paddle Prairie & Blue Hills impacted by fire
- June 1 – Crew swap completed
- June 6 – All crews released from fires and returned to Clearwater
- June 17 – Request from POC to deploy SPU crew & division supervisor
- June 23 – Crew swap completed
- June 25 – Request from POC to deploy a deputy ops section chief, & task force leader
- July 1 – Crew swap completed
- July 4 – Request from POC to deploy rapid 100\*
- July 7 – Crew swap completed
- July 14 – Crew swap completed
- July 21 – Crew swap completed
- July 26 - Demobilization on return home

\* Type 6 wildland engine



## 5th Annual Plein Air Paint and Photography Day

The Medicine River Watershed Society invites all to our 5th annual *Plein Air* paint and photography day—Sunday, September 15th.

**Come one come all** - to the **FREE** beef on a bun dinner at 5 p.m. at the Gilby Hall



### Artists and photographers!

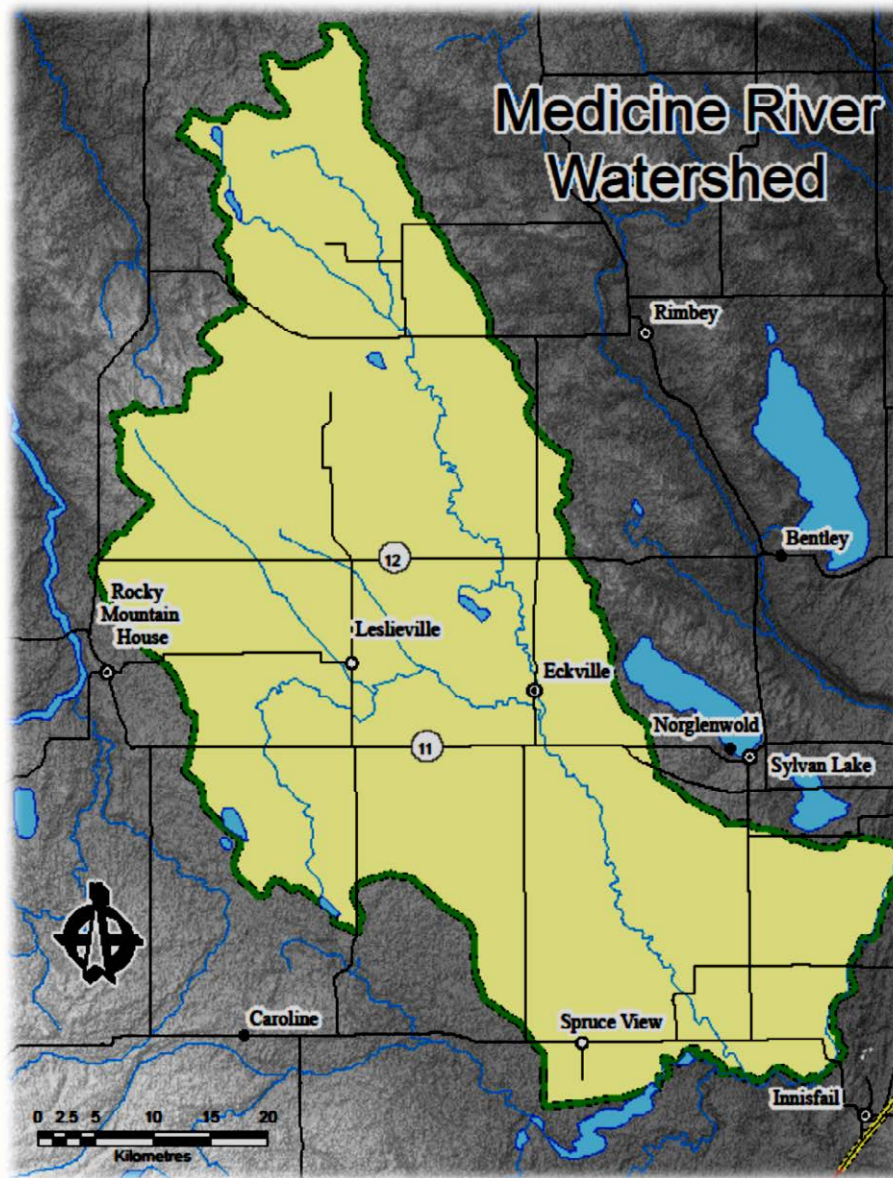
Come capture the beauty of the Medicine river during the day and display your work at the dinner—for more information call  
Derryn 403-746-5990  
Erin 403-506-7913



### Fun Fact

A few Clearwater County-based artists have painted and photographed at previous Plein Aire (mean open air) and are planning to participate again. Some locals attend the showing/supper. Last year's featured artist was Withrow's watercolour artist Heidi Taylor.





The Medicine River is part of the larger Red Deer River watershed, meandering through the counties of Ponoka, Lacombe, Clearwater and Red Deer. Along its journey it collects water off nearly 300,000 hectares of foothills, grassland prairie and aspen parkland. Clearwater County contributes the most water to the river through eight named tributaries and the headwater Medicine Lake. Our contributing land area is more than 100,000 hectares (greater than one-third) of the watershed area.





# The Ripple NEWSLETTER

## Clear Water Landcare

Want to stay in touch?  
Are you interested in receiving the Landcare  
Ripple regularly by email?

Click the link

**“Subscribe to our newsletter”**

at the bottom of the page on our website:

[www.clearwatercounty.ca](http://www.clearwatercounty.ca).



## Celebrating Our Successes

March 13, 2019

### Evaluation comments

**What is one thing you learned from a storyteller that you did not know before?**

- The effect the mountain pine beetle is having on our forests.
- How to overwinter mason bees.
- Remediating the seismic lines for Caribou habitat.
- Orphan wild animals could be fostered by other wild animals.
- Biocomposites, local hemp fiber products.

**How will your experience today help you with your own efforts caring for land and water?**

- Renewed encouragement to appreciate what we have. Importance of stewardship.
- Think more about my impact on the environment and orphan animals.
- There are many people I will try to connect with to learn from and share resources and expertise.
- I will support my environment by creating a bug habitat to support pollinators and healthy predators for around the garden.

Keep an eye out for details on  
Clear Water Landcare's next  
Celebrating Our Successes event!



## Environmental Farm Plan

The majority of the 100+ farms with an Environmental Farm Plan in Clearwater County completed their plan prior to 2005. EFP's now have an expiry date of ten years meaning any EFP beyond ten years old requires renewal. You need a current EFP to be eligible for cost-share funding under the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP) program's Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change section.

Plus, EFP's have moved to a web-based delivery—a WebBook—making it easier to complete and keep current. Contact Landcare staff to help convert your outdated EFP binder into a computer-based EFP.

Click the link for more information or to register for an EFP online:

<http://www.albertaefp.com/>



## Caring for My Land Program

Caring for my Land is a local program made possible with funding from the provincial Watershed Resiliency and Restoration program. Cost-share grants are available to strengthen land against drought and flooding and to protect water sources. Landowners may be eligible for up to \$5,000 per applicant for grazing and winter feeding management, protection of riparian and upland areas and tree planting for shelterbelts and riparian buffers.



### Watershed Fact

“The Blackstone River is a small, relatively short river with a variety of water types where anglers have realistic chances of catching fish.”

Sourced from the North Saskatchewan River  
Watershed Alliance publication:  
LIVING in the SHED.

## Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP)

The CAP program launched in the spring of 2018 with an investment of \$406 million, toward a variety of programs and grant incentives. There is an environmental stewardship component to this program. For more information see: <https://cap.alberta.ca/CAP/Programs/role/Primary%20Producer-Farmer-Rancher> or call 310-FARM.



## Sapsuckers Bird Species

They can be heard from in early spring to late summer; a lazy rat-a-tat-tat along with an occasional mewing sound, like what a cat might make. For the most part, they are a relatively attractive and harmless bird, with a red hood, distinctive black and white markings and of course a yellow belly.

Native tree and brush species are often the best choice for shelterbelts because of their inherent resistance to sapsuckers. They usually manage to rebound while non-native species do not always recover.

Contrary to popular belief, the yellow-bellied sapsucker attacks only living trees, pecking horizontal rows of small, regularly spaced, round to squarish, quarter inch size holes through the bark. Unlike other woodpeckers, who focus on diseased or dying trees while looking for grubs or worms to eat, sapsuckers seek the carbohydrate-rich sap – which is 20-30 percent sugar – of live trees.

Their name is somewhat misleading though. They don't actually "suck" the sap from the holes, but lap it up, with a rough tongue that can extend outward the length of their beak. Perhaps a more apt name would be the yellow-bellied sap-lapper. Even hummingbirds are lappers, not suckers.

Control options are limited as the sapsucker is protected under the Migratory Birds Act, which contains regulations to protect migratory birds, their eggs, and their nests from hunting, trafficking and commercialization.

Damage to trees and buildings can be prevented to some extent, by placing noisemakers and devices to frighten the birds in trees and areas where they are active. Individual trees may also be wrapped with burlap or some other protective material during the spring and summer seasons.

Tree damage can be dealt with by clearing the holes of hardened sap and debris, then spraying the area with pruning paint to reduce sap flow and prevent the entry of insects and disease.



As a keystone species, sapsuckers play a critical role in the natural environment. When it comes to nesting behavior, sapsuckers prefer excavating cavities in fungus infected aspens, which are subsequently used for the same purpose by two species of swallows.

The holes drilled in living trees are often referred to as nature's soda fountains, exuding sweet sap to provide nutrition to more than three dozen different species of birds.

One of spring's early arrivals is the ruby-throated hummingbird. It is known to follow the sapsucker around, scaring off other birds while supplementing its diet of nectar from early blooming flowers, with tree sap and the insects that stick to it.

The sap also nourishes a variety of insects and animals including squirrels, bats, porcupines and about 20 different insect families including bees, wasps, and moths. It's proven that the diversity and size of forest populations is greater in areas where there is sapsucker activity.





## Bats and the Ecosystem

Mosquitos love two things – hot weather and rain. That combo can cause an egg to adult assault in less than one week. And it's the breeding mosquitos that are the biters. Elementary math tells us that more mosquitos laying eggs plus more hot, wet weather equals clouds of biters.

Fact. Take an empty small soup can, which holds about one cup of liquid, and imagine it full of water where just one mosquito lays its eggs. In one season that can will incubate 1,000 eggs.

While we cannot eliminate all standing water, we can empty containers, keep eavestrough's working, change bird bath water, and refresh the kiddy pool.

Which brings us to bats, where the most common to Alberta are the big brown, little brown, hoary, red, silver haired, and a few types of long bats. Collectively these species take the night shift and feed on pests such as beetles, flies, gnats, grasshoppers, mayflies, midges, mosquitoes, moths and termites.

The average bat can eat up to half of its body weight in insects per night while mother bats are able to consume as much as their full body weight. If large colonies of bats exist (one million bats can consume approximately 10 tons of insects), consumption of insects could lead to breaks in the population cycle of pests.

Bats can provide a long-term return on investment when incorporated into a pest management system. The little brown bat for example has a lifespan of approximately 30 years!

Responsible land management should incorporate the maintenance of a recurring bat population while recognizing that reproduction rates are low which makes it difficult for bats to recoup from quick population declines. Most bats only have 1 pup per year.

White-nose syndrome (WNS), caused by a deadly fungus that infects bats in hibernation. The fungus



can be transmitted from bat to bat and can be found on muzzles, wings, ears and tails, resulting in near 100% death rates.

WNS affects the sleep pattern of bats which results in energy loss, dehydration, starvation and death. As bats are true hibernators, they rely on fat reserves to make it through the winter. Each disturbance can result in one bat using as much as a 65-day supply of hibernation reserve which is perilous when infected with WNS.

Which brings us to fish and a host of other potential mosquito harvesters. In the case of fish, one must be sure it's the right kind since not every finned swimmer is welcome in Alberta lakes and streams.

The Alberta Invasive Species Council has further information at <https://abinvasives.ca/>.

Alberta has an aquatic invasive species prevention program to protect Alberta's waterways, to learn more visit <https://www.albertaparks.ca/albertaparksca/science-research/aquatic-invasive-species/>.



## Avoid Buying Weeds When Purchasing Baled Forage

There are advantages to sourcing forage for winter feed during the summer rather than later in the season. Key among those advantages is the ability to identify invasive weeds in a standing crop that if purchased, could require serious control issues later.

After all, why would anyone want to pay good money for weeds? Once they have become established in a new location, they can be very difficult to eradicate, entailing plenty of frustration, money and time.

If contaminated forage is fed, most weed seeds will survive the digestive tract and be deposited elsewhere. In the case of leased pasture, or travelling horses, that may mean the introduction of invasive species to neighboring pastures or sensitive recreational areas, even if the contaminated forage is not fed there.

Increasingly, both National and Provincial Parks are requiring visitors to feed only processed hay cubes or certified weed free forage to their equines. A growing problem of invasive weed species overtaking native range is reducing the food supply for native ungulates in these areas.

The Alberta Certified Weed Free Hay Program, based on the standards of the North American Weed Free Forage Certification Program, certifies producers who meet the inspection criteria. Increasingly popular, the certified hay usually sells for a premium.

Noxious weeds threaten beneficial land uses, cost millions of dollars to control nationwide and jeopardize environmental diversity. In Clearwater County, Tall Buttercup alone costs over \$750,000 annually in lost production and has grown to cover a total area of more than 25,000 acres.

It is much easier to spot weeds in hay fields before harvest than it is to identify them after the forage has been baled. Buying locally whenever possible, provides the advantage of being able to personally inspect fields prior to purchasing forage, with the knowledge of local weed issues.

Often a simple drive-by from the road will indi-



cate what invasive species may be present. If a more detailed look is required, then a discussion with the forage producer is a good idea. Responsible producers will be equally concerned with weed spread and may choose to control the weeds before harvest.

Invasive weed species frequently grow in patches that can be cut and baled separately. In such cases the infested forage may be retained by the landowner and fed in a contained environment where control of the potential spread is more easily achieved.

The spread of invasive weeds occurs as a result of many factors aside from infested hay. Seeds hitch a ride on livestock/wildlife and are transported as a result of farming, recreational, industrial and environmental activities.

Clearwater County's Agriculture and Community Services department administers the weed free hay program locally and can certify producers who meet the requirements. For further information regarding the program, or assistance with herbicide application or weed identification, call 403-845-4444.



## Property Taxes Deadline September 16, 2019

Property tax payments, for all assessed property, must be received by Clearwater County on or before September 16, 2019, to avoid a penalty. After September 16, an 8% penalty will be applied to all outstanding taxes. An additional 4% penalty will be applied to all outstanding tax balances after December 16, 2019.

Payment Options include: Online (please contact your bank for more details, and keep in mind electronic payments may take up to 5 days); by mail; and in person during office hours. An after-hours drop box

is located at the front door of the County building. Please include your remittance portion of the notice.

Combined Assessment and Taxation Notices were mailed June 7, 2019. If, for some reason, you have not received your 2019 tax notice, and you own property in Clearwater County, please contact the County office at 403-845-4444 or email [assessment@clearwater-county.ca](mailto:assessment@clearwater-county.ca).

Address change forms can be found on the County's website or at the County office.

 **Alberta Wildfire**

**OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES CAN START WILDFIRES.**

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1. Exhaust and muffler
2. Under the seat
3. Engine and manifold
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*Alberta*

[wildfire.alberta.ca](http://wildfire.alberta.ca)





## Blue Green Algae

As temperatures increase in spring and summer months, it is worth noting what is happening in dugouts, sloughs and ponds. Algae plays an important role in the aquatic environment by acting as a food source for organisms living in the dugout or pond, but it can get out of control quickly. With the right combination of nutrients, warm weather and sunlight, accelerated algae growth can occur.

Of particular concern is the appearance of blue-green algae, or cyanobacteria. Bacteria of course is a straightforward reference to a growing organism. In this case, one with nasty characteristics to be cautious of.

That blue-green tinge is important to recognize as it looks like pea soup and the texture is like lawn grass clippings.

Cyanobacteria, when ingested, causes damage to internal organs and can lead to death. Pets and livestock have succumbed from drinking affected water. You should remove your livestock from the water source if you suspect you have any blue-green algae growth. Human health is also a concern including dermatitis (skin rash).

Not every greenish growth on a body of water is necessarily blue-green algae. A properly drawn water sample submitted to a lab is the best way to determine if blue-green algae is present.

Duckweed, sometimes mistaken for algae, is a beneficial plant and nutritious for waterfowl. Duckweed acts like a pond cover, inhibiting sunlight from growing nasty or nuisance plants. The shade it provides lowers water temperature. Its leaves have a cress-like appearance.

If you have nuisance or dangerous algae or other pond weed problems, the first step is to determine what is causing the problem. Some sources, like treed areas (decaying leaves), brush piles (decaying wood) and peat soils are naturally occurring and difficult to manage. Other sources, like nitrogen and phosphorus

fertilizers and livestock manure, can be controlled.

Bacteria accelerates when livestock have direct access to the water source, or if runoff adds fecal matter to a dugout. Protect surface water fed dugouts with vegetated inflow areas and introducing cattails as water filters. Use a berm to protect groundwater fed dugouts. Whatever the water source, fencing livestock out and pumping water to a trough.

When you have a water quality problem, the second step is choosing a treatment. There are pros and cons with a variety of options.

Copper sulphate, or bluestone, is a common chemical method used in dugouts and ponds to eliminate algae. Before including it as part of a control system be sure to review both its positive and negative effects.

Bluestone is effective against algae but kills beneficial zooplankton and other creatures within the ecological cycle of the water body, disrupting natural algae control. High concentrations extremely harmful toxins can be released as alga dies. In this case, consumption by humans or animals should be avoided.

Overuse of bluestone has resulted in a copper resistant alga. The resistant strain has little competition in the way of food or predators which can lead right back to large algae blooms.

Barley straw only suppresses algae and dosing is an issue. Too much straw and the decomposition deplete more oxygen killing aquatic life. Too little and the suppression is minimal. The process is tedious for an attempt at suppression only.

Penn State University recommends 10-25 grams of straw per square meter of pond area but knowing the exact size of the pond is a challenge. Straw is typically in a mesh bag, anchored mid-pond to the bottom with the bag just below the surface to allow adequate sunlight and oxygen.

Depending on water temperature, it can take two to five weeks for chemicals in straw to activate. Early application with cooler temperatures is recommended



## Blue Green Algae - Continued



but a short growing season makes it a challenge to get ahead of algae growth.

There are various branded chemical treatments available. Some require repeated applications, some need the water to be agitated and, depending the size of the water source, may require a boat ride to the inner area of the pond. Knowing the volume of water being treated, to apply the proper dose, is always a challenge.

The third step, and the best treatment option for long-term improved water quality, is aeration. By circulating water healthy dissolved oxygen levels are sustained and temperatures are kept cool.

Zooplankton thrive in a cool oxygenated environment and can feed on the existing algae within the water. These miniscule animals become food for insects, which then become food for fish and other creatures, thus maintaining the ecosystem's cycle.

Nutrients from sediment that has settled at the bot-

tom of the dugout or pond are more likely to stay put when aeration is in place. The system prevents the release of excess phosphorus and iron from the sediment minimizing the available food source for algae and limiting algae blooms.

When planning for or rehabilitating an existing dugout, the Alberta Ag publication "Quality Farm Dugouts" is one of the best resources available. A hard copy can be picked up from our office or downloaded online from: <https://open.alberta.ca/data-set/9781460123508>.

For health related questions contact Alberta Health Services or see: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/blue-green-algae.aspx>

Managing sources of contamination and aerating your dugout or pond remain the best one-two punch. An investment in aeration equipment and proven management practices will pay water quality dividends.



## Off Label Pesticide Use

It can be tempting to use that jug of herbicide sitting on the back shelf gathering dust for years. Surely it will work just as well as anything else on those persistent weeds. But can there be that much difference between most products?

In fact, there is a world of difference in the chemistry used in pesticide formulations and concentrations with serious ramifications as a result of misuse. The label on the container and the accompanying booklet are Federal legal documents.

Off-label pesticide use refers to a situation where a chemical is applied in a manner that is not specified on the chemical's product label, such as when it is used for a different pest, at a different rate, or in a manner that is not listed. Misuse of pesticides can have extensive environmental consequences that may lead to the death of fish, bird and honeybee populations as well as contaminated wells and groundwater.

A well-intentioned farm friend may offer herbicide designed for crop use as an alternative to locally available products designed for yard and garden applications. Applying agricultural or industrial pesticides in an urban setting can have drastic consequences as run-off flows through storm systems directly into local rivers.

For agricultural producers, inappropriate off-label use can mean the loss of an expensive crop or reduced yields in the season of application and possibly future years. In some cases, the harvested crop may even be embargoed.

Off-label pesticide use is a lose-lose situation for everyone involved with potential risks to public health and the environment that can exceed monetary value. Pesticide label directions are based on considerable scientific testing and rigorous evaluation by the Pesticide Regulatory Management Agency (PMRA).

PMRA testing is done to ensure that products can be used without harm to workers, consumers and the environment. If used improperly they can jeopardize the



agricultural producer's ability to guarantee safe food for domestic and foreign purchasers.

An added risk is that misuse on the part of farmers may increase public concern about chemical use, creating a distrust that undermines the credibility of all pesticide and food safety regulatory programs in Canada.

Before using any chemical, users should always read and familiarize themselves with the entire label and obtain a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Both provide useful information about the chemical product, its contents, health hazards, safe use and handling instructions, personal protective equipment and first aid. MSDS information is provided free of charge from chemical retailers or manufacturers web sites.

### Reminder - Always read the label first!

Labels are constantly changing, especially since the federal government started re-evaluating pesticides. Certain uses are no longer allowed and new uses are being added. Read the label carefully and note any changes compared to the product you purchase before.







# *Fall* Registration Night

One stop registration for fall & winter programs!

**Both events, together!**

September 5, 2019

2:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Lou Soppit Community Centre



# Wellness FAIR





## Interview with Kelly Carnahan

*Resident participating in Men's Hockey Ages 30-50*

### **What motivated you to participate in the 2019 Alberta Masters Games?**

The love for the sport and my love for competing. I think one of the biggest challenges as you get older is you have less opportunity to compete, especially in tournaments like this. It is pretty cool that we actually get to still do something like this as we are getting older.

### **Have you participated in many events since you left school?**

No, not at all. I am in men's league teams with hockey and soccer but nothing competitive; nothing where you actually have a team and are working towards something, so it is nice to be back.

### **As a father, does this impact the way you motivate your kids to participate in sport? And, was there an influence on you from your parents for sports?**

Growing up we played hockey and soccer competitively all the way through; it wasn't necessarily influenced by my parents but we were allowed and encouraged to do it. But because of that I highly recommend to my kids to be in sport and be on teams. I think you learn a lot of character in playing in sport and on teams. As far as my kids in sport, who knows, maybe they come and watch in support and they say 'hey this is a lifetime sport I want to be involved in or I want to stay competitive and active as an adult'. Right now I am just encouraging them to play and be on team sports.

### **Is it fair to say active adults could lead to active kids?**

I think it is almost a guarantee.

### **What would you say to someone who is on the fence about participating in the Games? How would you encourage them to get involved?**

I have encouraged some people who are into pickleball and that kind of stuff and I have said 'hey, you should sign up and play, come stay at our place'. If there is an event or things they would be interested in, then sign up. I am a Pastor of a church here and we are encouraging our congregation to volunteer and get out into the community and to serve people and love people and I think a lot of people are stepping up to that.

### **What do you feel could be the legacy of hosting these Games for the County?**

I see they are doing a lot of work in the Town and County, like different bike trails and tracks. I think that it will encourage our community to get behind the splash park and other projects like that. I think that our area could be a tourist destination, not just a gas station as visitors are passing through. And I think this event will help us put infrastructure in place that people want to stay and hang around.





## Frequently Requested Numbers

<b>Clearwater County Office</b> .....	<b>403-845-4444</b>
Clearwater County Office Fax .....	403-845-7330
Clearwater County After Hours Emergency Number .....	403-844-8500
Clearwater Mutual Aid Co-op (CMAC) - Oil & Gas Emergency .....	1-866-950-CMAC (2622)
24 Hour Burn Notification Line .....	403-845-7711
Alberta One Call .....	1-800-242-3447
Alberta Environment .....	403-845-8240
Alberta Highway Service .....	403-845-7899
Alberta Land Titles .....	780-427-2742
Chamber of Commerce - Serving Clearwater County and Town of Rocky Mountain House .....	403-845-5450
Family and Community Support Services .....	403-845-3720
Fish and Wildlife .....	403-845-8230
Health Unit .....	403-845-3030
MLA Jason Nixon .....	403-871-0701
Rocky Mountain House Regional Solid Waste Authority .....	403-845-4121
Town of Rocky Mountain House .....	403-845-2866
Village of Caroline .....	403-722-3781

Fire Ban Information ..... [www.albertafirebans.ca](http://www.albertafirebans.ca)

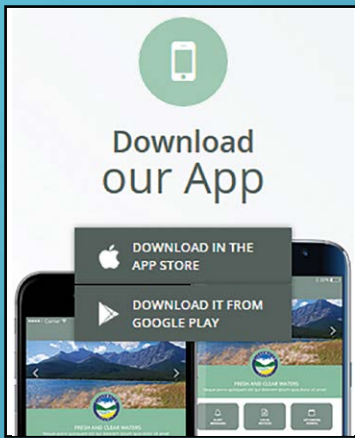
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Stir it.  
Soak it again.**

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*Tell us what you think about the newsletter or provide suggestions for future editions at [admin@clearwatercounty.ca](mailto:admin@clearwatercounty.ca).*

Call us at 403-845-4444

Office Hours: Weekdays, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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