



NEWS RELEASE

June 12, 2026

Clearwater County Council Appoints New Chief Administrative Officer

(Rocky Mountain House, AB) - Clearwater County has appointed Michael Simpson as its new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), effective July 13, 2026. The appointment follows a competitive search that attracted strong candidates from across western Canada.

Mr. Simpson brings over a decade of experience as a CAO, along with a background in media, journalism, communications, and construction. He served as an elected official with the Town of Vegreville for one term beginning in 2013 and moved into a full-time CAO role in 2016. Since then, he has worked with the Village of Willingdon, the Village of Ryley, seven years with the County of Paintearth, and most recently with the Town of Didsbury. His education and professional development include training and certifications in local government administration, land use planning, management, Indigenous studies, law, and agronomy.

Council feels that Mr. Simpson's leadership and experience will help strengthen the County's already strong administrative and operations team and support the County's continued strategic growth and direction.

Council wishes to thank CAO Rick Emmons for his many years serving the residents of Clearwater County and wish him well as he transitions into retirement.

"Council went through a significant process to recruit a new CAO following the retirement notice from Mr. Emmons," said Clearwater County Reeve Jordon Northcott. "Mr. Emmons has provided Clearwater County with a wealth of background knowledge and Council wishes Mr. Rick Emmons all the best in the future and thanks him for his extensive time and commitment to Clearwater County. Council is now looking forward to welcoming Mr. Michael Simpson to serve as Clearwater County's next CAO."

"I am honoured by this opportunity to live and work in Clearwater County, and I thank Council for its confidence in me," said Mr. Simpson. "I look forward to stepping into the role, building strong relationships with Council, staff, and the residents who call Clearwater County home."

Please join us in welcoming Mr. Simpson and his family as they relocate and settle in the County.

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