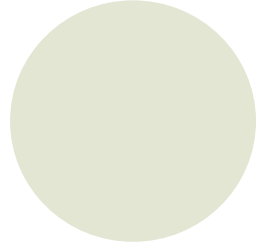
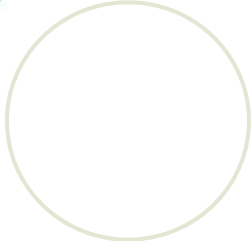




The Hydro Files



Did you know...?

- An American taking a five-minute shower uses more water than the typical person living in a developing country slum uses in a whole day.
- Every 15 seconds, a child dies from a water-related disease.
- A quarter of the world's population is without safe drinking water.

Source: www.water.org

September 2009

Volume 3, Issue 1

Raw sewage flows into river near popular park

The City of Edmonton is trying to find the source of raw sewage that spewed into the North Saskatchewan River yesterday near a popular park. HAZMAT teams cast boats into the river near Government House Park at about 12:30 p.m. They drew samples from a cloud of "stuff" floating down the river, said fire department spokesman Melanie Mochoruk. "It turned out to be raw sewage", she said. The mess started pouring out of the Groat Road outfall -- a few-metres-tall storm sewer outlet -- shortly after noon. The sewage flow didn't stop until about 2:15 p.m., said John Hodgson, manager of drainage services for Edmonton. "It came and went", he said, possibly meaning the sewage

came from a spill rather than a leak. A leak would've meant a longer oozing of sewage, he said.

When city crews arrived at the scene, they saw a blackish liquid by the outlet that was not sewage. Samples of sewage and the black liquid are being sent to a lab to find out exactly what they are, said Hodgson. The Groat Road outfall is up-river from one of the city's two drinking water inlets, he said.

The city's drinking water treatment supervisors were notified about the mess on the river.

"We do take precautions to make sure the water supply is not affected", he

said. In the meantime, his department is hunting for the source of the sewage. It could be illegal dumping, he said, or a quick wash of rain-water within the hour before the spill. The city's dry weather has left storm sewers full of crud that would be washed out by a first significant rain, said Hodgson. No matter the cause, area recreation users were not impressed. "I think it's kind of gross", said Denise Verdonk, 19, who was jogging around the park. "You think they would have some sort of control over what goes in (to the storm sewers)."

By RICHARD LIEBRECHT

June 28, 2009

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WaterEDWest™ Conference 2009

Aquality is a proud sponsor of WaterEDWest™: *A Confluence of Ideas*, a conference to be held in Banff, Alberta from September 10-13, 2009.

WaterEDWest™ is a unique conference focusing on water education, where delegates will have opportunities to

share, network and investigate the current issues and best practices facing those who work to meet the ever growing need for effective water education. For more information, including conference registration and program, please see:

www.wateredwest.ca



Alberta Land Stewardship Act - Bill 36

The *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* received its third reading on June 02, 2009, and Royal Assent on June 04, 2009. The Act will come into force on Proclamation, which has not yet occurred and will occur at the discretion of the Provincial Cabinet. Bill 36 is designed to create the legal authority to support the implementation of the Land Use Framework (LUF). Bill 36 gives the Lieutenant Governor in Council the authority to establish the land-use regions and make regional plans. Bill 36 also outlines the contents of the regional plans, the planning process, and the roles of the Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) and the associated secretariat. Although the RACs and Land-Use Secretariat will provide advice on the regional plans, the Lieutenant Governor in Council has exclusive and final jurisdiction over the content of the regional plans and their subsequent amendments. Bill 36 also creates four new stewardship policy tools:

- *Conservation Easement* – A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified organization to protect and conserve the ecological integrity of a piece of land.
- *Conservation Offsets* – Measures to counterbalance the effects of an activity (i.e., restoration, reclamation, donation of resources, etc.).
- *Transfer Development Credit Schemes* – Schemes to direct development away from ecological areas by designating conservation areas and development areas, and the conditions under which stewardship units may be used in conservation areas.

- *Conservation Directives* – Expressly setting aside specific parcels of land under regional plans to protect, conserve, manage and enhance environmental, natural scenic, esthetic or agricultural values.

While Bill 36 does not create a general right to compensation, compensation can be obtained for lands subject to conservation directives or under other Acts or regulations. Bill 36 includes consequential amendments to more than 25 other Alberta Acts to support regional planning in Alberta and ensure compliance with regional plans. If there is a conflict between Bill 36 and any other Act or regulation, Bill 36 prevails.

The regional plans are binding on the Crown, government departments, local authorities, decision-makers and the public. After the regional plans have been made, Bill 36 requires local government bodies and decision-making bodies, including the Energy Resources Conservation Board, Alberta Utilities Commission and Alberta Environment, to review their regulatory instruments to ensure compliance with the regional plans.

Of particular interest to industry is that regional plans may expressly affect, amend or extinguish statutory consents (i.e., regulatory permits, licenses, approvals, authorizations etc.) or their terms and conditions for the purpose of achieving or maintaining an objective or policy of the regional plan. However, holders of statutory consents will be given reasonable notice of any

changes and be provided with an opportunity to propose an alternative means of achieving the regional plan's objective.

The LUF represents a significant step-change in the use of land in Alberta. Future decisions by regulatory bodies will need to align with new regional plans and existing regulatory approvals are not immune from the requirements arising from the LUF's implementation through Bill 36; however, the real implications of the LUF's implementation will depend on the details of the regional plans themselves which have yet to be developed. While Bill 36 provides for the review of regional plans at least once every 10 years, regional plans are government policies and cannot be appealed. This highlights the importance of actively participating in the consultation and planning process for these regional plans. Resource developers should take advantage of opportunities to present their views about regional plans and should keep abreast of developments in their regions of interest to effectively prepare for these upcoming changes.

For more information, see:

www.assembly.ab.ca/bills/2009/pdf/bill-036.pdf

Written by S. Denstedt, J. Jamieson, R. V. Rodier and J. Ng
June 2009

The Lieutenant Governor in Council has exclusive and final jurisdiction over the content of the regional plans and their subsequent amendments.

Fight to the Last Drop: A Glimpse into Alberta's Water Future

The 2008 report, *Fight to the Last Drop: A Glimpse into Alberta's Water Future*, written by Ecojustice and Bow Riverkeeper, provides an overview of a number of water allocation challenges in Alberta with case studies on the controversial Balzac water rights transfer.

A **water right** refers to the right of a user to divert water from a water source (e.g., a river, stream, lake or source of groundwater). In Alberta, a water right is articulated on paper as a water license, which the government issues under the *Water Act* and its regulations. A water license typically defines the amount of water that can be diverted, the timing of diversion, the rate of diversion, the source of water, and other terms and conditions, as well as the seniority of the water right. Seniority is determined by the date of license application and determines who gets their water first in the case of a water shortage.

A **water rights "transfer"** occurs when a water license holder transfers all or a portion of their water license to

another party, which often involves a financial transaction. Generally a transferred water right maintains the same seniority and terms and conditions of diversion as stated in the original water license. Because the water right is bought and sold between willing buyers and sellers, the term 'water market' is often used.

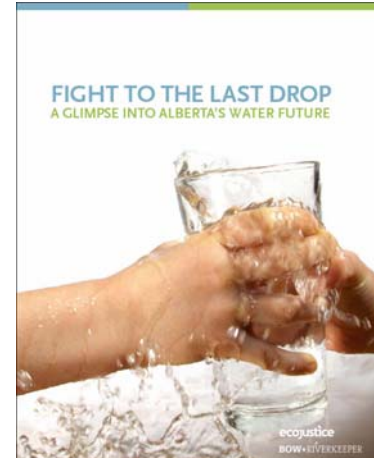
According to supporters, the ability to transfer a water right gives license holders an incentive to use water efficiently because they are permitted to sell or lease any water they do not use. Transfers also make possible the reallocation of water rights from economically low value uses to higher value uses. Theoretically, a water rights transfer may help avoid conflict as existing license holders are not forced to give up or share water rights but could do so voluntarily if motivated by a sufficiently attractive financial offer. Water rights transfers can enable the 'freeing up' of water to new users. New users could then gain access to water without incurring the cost to the environment by withdrawing new water from the river or other source. Other jurisdictions

have been successful in ensuring environmental flows are maintained in the transfer of water rights.

Critics point out that water serves social and environmental needs that are too important to be left to the whims of market forces. Some argue that the preservation of a commercially valuable fish population is more socially useful than the profligate watering of a golf course; however, market forces may favour the watering of fairways and greens. In other words, environmental interests are not able to compete in the market as it is now structured. The benefits of environmental integrity accrue to society (and non-human interests) collectively and it is naive to expect individuals in search of profits to volunteer to pay for public benefits at the level required for a healthy environment.

For more information, see the full report at:

www.water-matters.org/docs/fight-to-the-last-drop.pdf



“...environmental interests are not able to compete in the market as it is now structured...”

Sturgeon River Watershed Initiative Society

The Sturgeon River Watershed Initiative Society (SRWIS) was formed in June 2005 by a group of decision makers and watershed users interested in protecting the health of the Sturgeon River watershed.

The goals of the Society are:

- To protect and restore the ecological integrity of the Sturgeon River Watershed.
- To promote awareness of the Sturgeon River Watershed and its ecological, cultural, so-

cial, and economic values.

- To promote appropriate and effective public policies and management practices affecting the Sturgeon River Watershed.
- To provide an open forum to enable informed decision-making based on good scientific and cultural information.
- To develop a watershed management plan with a balanced and sustainable approach to managing land use

in collaboration with other land use planning initiatives in the greater North Saskatchewan River Watershed.

- To build partnerships, develop collaboration and share human, information and financial resources.

For more information on the SRWIS, please contact Pat Brennan at (780) 718-3259.



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think. water.

WE'RE ON THE WEB:
WWW.AQUALITY.CA

Alberta Stewardship Conference 2009—Aquality was proud to sponsor *Strengthening Stewardship – Investing at Every Step*, the 4th National Stewardship and Conservation Conference, this past July at the University of Calgary. Approximately 400 people participated from across Canada and internationally, including First Nations and Métis, conservation organizations, individual stewards, all levels of government, industry and media. The conference title, *Strengthening Stewardship – Investing at Every Step* reflects that stewardship has been an active force in sustaining the Canadian landscape, but expresses the urgent need to invest at every level, from grassroots action to policy development, by individuals, organizations, industry, and governments, to ensure Canadians make stewardship a part of living, working, playing and doing business in Canada. Held every three years since 2000, the National Stewardship and Conservation Conferences are the national event where Canada's stewards can meet to discuss emerging issues and develop solutions for the best possible stewardship of Canada's environment. The next conference will be held in 2012.

Jay White provided a plenary address on Impediments to Stewardship which was webcasted live and archived here at: <http://www.stewardship2009.ca/admin/contentx/default.cfm?PagelD=10995>



Hon. Rob Renner, Jay White, and Beverly Yee (ADM for Environmental Stewardship) at the Stewardship and Conservation in Canada Conference, July 2009. Photo: J. Thompson

Aquality's Wetlands Course

Aquality Environmental Consulting is pleased to offer *Alberta Wetlands: From Classification to Policy*, a course aimed at a variety of stakeholders and municipal and provincial government departments. The course is arranged in topical modules and consists of both theoretical and practical components.

We have scheduled course dates for the remainder of the summer and early fall. These dates will be available either in set locations around the province, or for in-house training, depending on demand - please contact us to discuss preferred dates and locations. This list will be updated with locations and space remaining for each date as information

becomes available.

- September 1st and 2nd
- September 15th and 16th - Town of Bonnyville.
- October 6th and 7th - MD Big-horn, 10 spots available.
- October 20th and 21st

For a course description and registration information, please see:

www.wetlandpolicy.ca/wetland-course.html

