

# Preserving Our Lifeline

June, 2005



## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE BOW RIVER BASIN COUNCIL

2004 - 2005



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This Annual Report has been prepared for Council members and the public and provides information on the activities of the Bow River Basin Council in the 2004/2005 fiscal year. It offers an opportunity for the Council to share information with its members and friends, which assists the Council in meeting its goals and objectives of ensuring a healthy river system.

Contact 254-3419.

### Message from the Chairman of the Board

2005 has truly been a year to celebrate, highlighted by our recognition as Alberta's first Watershed Planning and Advisory Council, the release of the State of the Basin Report and the overwhelming success of our inaugural fundraising event, The Icebreaker. Our membership continues to set high expectations for your investment in the Council: we believe we have delivered good value to all of our stakeholders this past year.



**Bill Berzins, Chairman, BRBC Board of Directors**  
**Photo Credit: Marianne Murray**

More importantly, our investment in building capacity amongst our membership has prepared us for the challenges ahead. Our emphasis on networking, education, connectivity, communication and trust-building has developed an engaged and informed membership. In the year ahead, we will engage more stakeholders as we embark on a comprehensive plan for the Bow River Watershed. We will develop web-based information-sharing tools that will be accessible to land and water managers throughout the far reaches of the watershed. Finally, we will embark on an innova-



tive and engaging consultation process that we hope will result in a truly sustainable watershed management framework, with broad acceptance from all corners of our membership and beyond.

Many years ago, the BRBC set a goal to become the best-managed watershed in the world. Your Board of Directors, Staff and volunteers have since realized that the first step towards this goal is to build the best watershed management team in the world. With your help, we're almost there.

Thank you for your continued interest, your participation and your support. It is indeed a privilege to work with each and every one of you as we work together for a sustainable future.

**BRBC: Waxing Waves of Influence**

The Bow River Basin Council's Chairman of the Board, Bill Berzins; Executive Director, Mark Bennett; and Administrator, Mike Murray, have maintained a high profile for the organization by participating in a wide variety of conferences, projects, and committees.

During the past fiscal year, Bill made presentations, on behalf of the BRBC, to the Air & Water Management Association, the Canadian Oilsands Network for Research and Development, and the Consulting Engineers of Alberta.

Mark has been in demand throughout the Basin presenting information on our watershed to many audiences including: a watershed management course at Mount Royal College, the Red Deer River Watershed Council, Elbow Park Elementary School, Wheatland County Watershed Awareness Day, the Calgary Regional Partnership Board of Directors, the University of Calgary's Campus Fair, the water scarcity conference in Lethbridge, Partners for the South Saskatchewan River Basin conference on climate change in Saskatoon, Western Canada Water & Wastewater Association Conference, the City of Calgary Utilities & Environment Committee, as well as during a Lunch 'n Learn at Big Rock Brewery.

Mike represented the BRBC through presentations to Alberta Community Development on parks and protected areas, the Grade 2 class at W.H. Cushing Elementary School, and during the Mayor's Environmental Expo at City Hall.

The BRBC offered financial support to several projects throughout the Basin including: Volunteers in Motion II:

Connecting Alberta's Environmental Stewards, Western Sky Land Trust, and Pembina Wind Power.

Throughout the year, the BRBC was actively involved in 22 projects designed to educate the public about watershed management, including: Bow Water-scapes, the Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Bow Riverkeepers, "The Bow: Our River" exhibit at the Glenbow Museum, the weir project, the Alberta Water Council, Parks Foundation, Calgary Wetlands Committee, Alberta Low Impact Development Partnership, the Wonder of Water Steering Committee, the Bow River Basin Advisory Committee, the International Water Association Conference Committee, the Tri Community Watershed Initiative, and the Water Use Task Force.

The Council was represented at a number of workshops including: the Shepard Wetland complex Workshop, Bow Habitat Station, Watershed Data Workshop, Total Loading Limits Forum, Prairie Drought Workshop, Imagine Calgary Summit, Oldman River Basin Water Quality Initiative Workshop, Alberta Environment Monitory Indicators Workshop, Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation Program Stakeholders Workshop, Canada West Foundation Water & Economy Workshop, and the Highwood Management Plan/Water Management Workshop.

The BRBC was also represented at the following conferences: the Calgary Regional Partnership Congress, the Alberta Lake Management Society Conference, the Partners For the Saskatchewan River Basin Conference, the Calgary Regional Partnership General Assembly, and the Robert Kennedy Jr. Waterkeepers presentation with David Boyd.

Mark and Mike have been active participants in the BRBC Legislation and Policy Committee and the Education and Communications Committee, while Bill adeptly represents all WPACs on the Alberta Water Council. The BRBC looks forward to making even more waves in the Bow River Basin in the year ahead!



**Gary Kindrat, Jay White, and Mike Murray  
Photo Credit: Maureen Lynch**

## Information Flows at Quarterly Forums

BRBC members and other experts exchange information on water issues, particularly in the Bow River Basin, at quarterly education forums. The forums are a key element of the Council's strategy to build decision-making capacity among water planners, administrators, town and city councillors and users throughout the basin. Scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of March, June, September, and December, the forums typically see 50 to 80 members in attendance, participating in lively discussion and debate.

This year's topics provided members with exposure to a broad range of issues and opportunities including:

- ◆ Western Sky Land Trust: Acquiring Land for Watershed Protection
- ◆ The Galileo Project: Water Education Programs for Children
- ◆ Glenbow Museum's Exhibit: "The Bow: Living with a River": Celebrating the Art and Culture of the Bow
- ◆ Natural Capital: Valuing Alberta's Natural Areas
- ◆ Calgary's Wetland Policy: The Process of Establishing a Policy for the Future
- ◆ Cumulative Effects: Community-based Monitoring
- ◆ Constructed Wetlands: Their Role in Improving Surface Water Quality
- ◆ Woodlot Extension: Planning for Water Protection in Forestry Management
- ◆ Groundwater in the Bow: The Life-cycle and Chemistry of Water in the Bow River
- ◆ South Saskatchewan River Basin Chile Project: Learning from another Arid Basin
- ◆ Canadian Heritage Rivers: Federal River Recognition Program
- ◆ Influences on Natural H<sub>2</sub>O Quality
- ◆ Thermal Mapping: Technology for Mapping Surface Waters
- ◆ Soil Ecology: Soil Microbiology and Response to Disturbance
- ◆ Fitting Irrigation into the Water for Life Strategy: Irrigation Community Water Management Programs
- ◆ Three Gorges Dam Project: Lessons Learned from another Heavily Engineered River
- ◆ Guyana: Land of Water: Perspectives on a Land with More Water than Less
- ◆ Tri Community Watershed Initiative: Influencing Sustainable Watershed Behaviours.

Quarterly forums also give members an opportunity to hear updates from the Chairman of the Board of Directors and other members, as well as progress reports

from the Communication and Education, Fund Development, and Legislation & Policy Committees. The BRBC looks forward to providing many more informative, stimulating, and thought-provoking forum topics throughout the next fiscal year.

## BRBC Recognized as Watershed Planning and Advisory Council (WPAC)

On December 20, 2004, the BRBC was recognized as the WPAC for the Bow River Basin.

Under the provincial Water for Life strategy, there are three key partnerships for watershed management: the Alberta Watershed Council; WPACs for each of the major basins in the province; and numerous watershed stewardship groups (WSGs). Public participation is key to the effectiveness of the strategy, at all three levels.

The Alberta Watershed Council advises on provincial water management issues, guides and tracks implementation of the Water for Life strategy, and identifies research priorities. Its priorities include the development of a wetlands policy for the Province, identification of research needs, and support of the WPACs that are emerging across Alberta.

WPACs will report on the state of the watershed, develop watershed management plans, and promote best management practices (BMPs) within their basins. WPACs are mandated to engage all levels of government, stakeholders, and the public in water management on a watershed basis, and to be a forum for public discussion to identify, discuss, and recommend priorities for issues and initiatives within the watershed. On April 29, 2005, the BRBC, as WPAC for the Bow River Basin, completed its first assignment and released the *State of the Bow River Basin – 2005 Report*.

Watershed stewardship groups involve interested stakeholders, share information, and take action to protect and enhance their local watershed. The Elbow River Watershed Partnership, The Waters of Wheatland, and the Nose Creek Watershed Partnership are but a few of the WSGs that are already active and working for watersheds in our basin.

water for life



**Financial Statements**

**THE BOW RIVER BASIN COUNCIL SOCIETY  
(Incorporated Under The Societies Act of Alberta)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

**March 31, 2005**

**ASSETS**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2004</u></b>
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 255,652	\$ 74,490
Investments, Note 9	135,222	145,595
Accounts receivable, Notes 6,10	<u>5,622</u>	<u>118,602</u>
	<b><u>\$ 396,496</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 338,687</u></b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

**LIABILITIES**

<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 11,893	\$ 29,399
Deferred revenue, Note 7	<u>60,495</u>	<u>—</u>
	<u>72,388</u>	<u>29,399</u>

**NET ASSETS**

<b>GENERAL FUND BALANCE</b>	<u>324,108</u>	<u>309,288</u>
	<b><u>\$ 396,496</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 338,687</u></b>



## Financial Statements cont'd

**THE BOW RIVER BASIN COUNCIL SOCIETY**  
**STATEMENT OF GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS**  
**For The Year Ended March 31, 2005**

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Province of Alberta grant, Note 8	\$ 250,000	\$ 225,000
Federal government grant, Note 8	57,000	—
Alberta Gaming grant, Note 8	—	40,320
Municipal grants, Note 8	28,412	54,953
Corporate donations, Note 8	34,332	19,450
Individual donations, Note 8	3,233	4,415
In-kind donations, Note 5	14,080	14,560
Interest income	3,181	3,341
Cost recoveries	1,483	2,185
	<u>391,721</u>	<u>364,224</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Audit fee	1,800	1,700
Contract services	79,566	80,767
Legal fees	536	200
Meetings and seminars expense	9,422	7,240
Membership fees	400	250
Office and administrative expenses, Note 4	13,987	10,774
Office rent, Notes 4, 5	13,080	13,080
Project expense	114,003	63,383
Staff salaries	134,270	123,080
Travel and accommodation expense	4,215	3,405
GST expense, Note 6	5,622	3,282
	<u>376,901</u>	<u>307,161</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>\$ 14,820</u>	<u>\$ 57,063</u>

This is a summary of the BRBC's financial statements. Complete audited statements are available through the office. Please contact Mike Murray at (403)254-3419. The financial statement notes are not included in the summary above.

## A Wellspring of Support

BRBC fund development increased in both the number of contributors (85 this year, 52 last year) and in the amount raised. The \$438,847 total includes \$250,000 from Alberta Environment and represents increased support from non-members, including foundations. The BRBC heartily thanks the following supporters:

### **Commercial/Industrial Members**

Aquality Environmental Consulting  
Brown and Associates  
Clearwater Environmental Consultants  
Glencoe Golf & Country Club  
Golder Associates  
Komex International  
Morrow Environmental Consultants  
Spray Lake Sawmills  
Urban Systems

### **Individual Public Members**

Chris Campbell  
Tim Giese  
Cornelia Heydenreich  
Jenny Krabbe  
Claudette Lacombe  
Eric Lloyd  
Steve Meadows  
Thanh Nguyen  
Nichole Nichols  
Susan Ryan and John Mader  
Paul Sabatini  
Sandra Stead  
Judy and Bruce Stewart  
Gloria Wilkinson  
Dr. A. Warren Wilson  
Kori Woodard  
Gus Yaki

### **Licensee Members**

Bow River Irrigation District  
Eastern Irrigation District  
Lafarge  
TransAlta Utilities  
Western Irrigation District

### **Municipal Members**

City of Calgary  
County of Newell  
MD of Rockyview  
Town of Banff  
Town of Black Diamond

Town of Brooks  
Town of Canmore  
Town of High River  
Town of Strathmore  
Tri Community Watershed Initiative  
Wheatland County

### **Non-Profit Members**

Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition  
Calgary Regional Partnership  
Canada West Foundation  
Inside Education  
Parks Foundation Calgary  
Sarcee Fish and Game Association  
Urban Development Institute, Calgary

### **Regulatory/Administrative/First Nations Members**

Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development  
Alberta Environment  
Environment Canada (Eco-Action)  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

### **Non-Members (including Foundations)**

Alberta Conservation Association  
Alberta Ecotrust  
Alberta Irrigation Projects Association  
Alberta Road Builders  
Rick Alsip  
John Armstrong, QC  
Alexis and Eliza Bennett  
Stella and Gordon Bennett  
Susan Buckee  
Ald. Craig Burrows  
Calgary Stampede  
Enbridge Inc.  
EnCana Corporation  
Evergreen Foundation (Unilever)  
Gillian Ewing and Mark Bennett  
Fortis Alberta  
James K. Gray  
Margaret Herder  
IPEX Inc.  
Lakeside Farm Industries  
Dr. Jessica Latshaw  
Dennis Lawson  
Bob and Denise Morrison  
MPE Engineering  
Kieran Murray  
Susan Pendray  
Royop Corporation  
TD Friends of the Environment  
Teresan Utility Services  
Tesera Systems Inc.  
Treherne Resources Ltd.  
Edie Smith

## Satisfaction Survey Indicates BRBC is Navigating the Right Course

“The BRBC is an effective organization.” Eighty-two percent of the respondents to our recent satisfaction survey *agree or strongly agree* with that statement! We are pleased with this result and the BRBC will continue to increase overall effectiveness while working towards improvements recommended by members and friends, like you.



The Bow River Basin Council’s membership has remained stable over the past year. Currently there are 110 separate organizations and individuals represented in six categories: Commercial/Industrial; Individuals; Licensees, Municipal Government; Non-profit/Academia; and Regulatory, Administrative and First Nations.

Forty-one members took the time to answer the 15 questions that examined the satisfaction levels on a wide range of BRBC activities. The survey covered communications/education initiatives like the quarterly forums, newsletter and website, member involvement opportunities, public awareness of the BRBC, and overall approval rating. Members were also encouraged to make suggestions for improvement and change.

The quarterly forums ranked highest among the communications initiatives. When asked what could be done to improve them, comments were generally positive.

“The forums run pretty smoothly”

“Quite like them as they are...”

“Just as they are”

“I think they are excellent”

Others wanted more opportunity for discussion and debate than is presently available.

“More discussion and debate”

“Get a bigger room, invite more people...”

“...add discussion opportunity”

“More debate; keep topics closer to home”.

Some members wanted to add field trips.

“Perhaps the occasional field trip to demonstrate the study results would be worthwhile”

“Try to have a visit to points of interest...”.

The website ranked high with 64% of respondents. They felt it provided useful information. When asked how it could be improved, “more links” was the most common suggestion. The Education and Communications Committee is currently working to establish a new set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) with links.

Eighty-two percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “overall the newsletter provides useful information”. Comments on how the newsletter could be improved reflect the high level of satisfaction. “great job”  
“excellent job, particularly at the cost”.

Most of those suggesting improvements simply wanted more.

“More often”

“More educational items”

“When the newsletter goes out, there should be encouragement each time to forward to a wide range of users”. Forty-eight percent of the respondents claimed to forward or share their newsletter with colleagues or friends.

When it comes to involvement, 88% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “overall the BRBC provides an appropriate level of opportunities to get involved”.

Asked what the BRBC could do to provide greater opportunities for member involvement, member comments included the following:

“Appreciate those who volunteer by holding volunteer appreciation nights”

“Hands-on projects”

“Have volunteer opportunities that are project-based”

“Have meetings in different places...”

“More interpersonal interaction”.

Some members took the time to identify opportunities for improvement. When asked what they liked least about the BRBC, comments included:

“The lack of hands-on activities”

“Self-doubt that gnaws at the Council constantly”

“Clear definition of purpose is not there”

“More advocacy”

“We are our own best-kept secret”.

A general sense of satisfaction was apparent as members cited what they like most about the organization:

“Inclusiveness and a positive atmosphere”

“Quarterly forums”

“The opportunity to get involved in water issues...”  
 “Friendly atmosphere of partner experts”  
 “Initiatives in water stewardship”  
 “The strong commitment of members to share information...”  
 “Support of staff for smaller watershed groups”  
 “It brings together a diverse group of parties and fosters understanding of other’s views”.

The BRBC administration, support staff, and volunteers, will endeavour to address the concerns and suggestions received through the satisfaction survey and greatly appreciate the time taken by members to respond. With your support and guidance, the BRBC will continue to develop and grow by finding more opportunities to fulfill our mandate and the expectations of our members.

**The Last Word:  
 A Message from the Executive Director**

Well, what a memorable year it has been. Through this Annual Report you have reviewed a catalogue of this past year’s accomplishments. Once again, it has been a very good year for the BRBC. It is my distinct pleasure to offer thanks. This is not without some challenge. Where to start? I always fear that someone important will be inadvertently left out.

By now many, or all, of our members know of my affection for a well-turned axiom. One of my favorites is...“Success has many parents, failure is an orphan.” So I want to start by thanking all of our members, supporters and friends for the little (and big) things they

have done in this past year to assure the success of the BRBC. I know that I would need a very large floodlight, indeed, to illuminate all who have aided us and give them the well-earned opportunity to bask in the warm glow of our achievements.

I am compelled to make a few very special mentions. First, Gary Kindrat, Jay White, and Fay Westcott; these three, along with a formidable supporting cast, crafted the State of the Basin Report. I marvel at the accomplishment and the pride I feel when I look at it is only surpassed by my gratitude to all those who worked so hard at bringing it home.

Next I wish to thank Barry Erskine, Judy Stewart, Susan Ryan and Edie Smith; the vanguard, who led a larger group of very dedicated individuals who put together our fabulous first gala. Wow, what an accomplishment. I once met with one of Calgary’s Captains of Industry who advised...“Go big, or go home”. The gala crew ably demonstrated how to do that!

Finally, deep gratitude goes to our Board of Directors. This past year I have had to lean heavily on this group. Our Board is exemplified in the wisdom of Edgar Powell who said, “No organization is stronger than the quality of its leadership, or ever extends its constituency far beyond the degree to which its leadership is representative.”

It is a privilege for me to continue to serve an organization that is strong both at the top and at its foundation. Thank you.



**Gillian Ewing, Mark Bennett, and Ralph Klein  
 Photo Credit: Mike Murray**

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