

# Preserving Our Lifeline

June, 2004

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE BOW RIVER BASIN COUNCIL

### 2003 - 2004

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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 2003/2004 fiscal year. It offers an opportunity for the Council to share information with its members, 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

The Bow River Basin Council long ago established a goal of being the best-managed water basin the world. This past year we made many strides towards that goal. Much has been done – there is much more still to do.



**Bill Berzins, Chairman, BRBC Board of Directors**

The launch of the Province's Water for Life Strategy has given much visibility and credibility to the Council's activities. The Council has contributed greatly already to the Strategy and we have commenced negotiations with Alberta Environment to establish the Council as the Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the region, thereby solidifying our role in proactive management of issues throughout the Basin. The Province has established the Alberta Water Council to look into issues which span the entire Province – as the representative of the watershed councils, I will be asking for help from all of you in identifying issues and opportunities that need to be raised at the provincial level.

Soon we will be releasing the State of the Basin Report, an important update on the condition of the Bow's



reaches that will help us focus our communication and planning activities for the years to come. Jay White and Gary Kindrat have dedicated countless hours to bringing the Report to life.

During the past year, our membership dedicated more than 10,000 hours of volunteer time in critical activities including the South Saskatchewan River Basin Plan, membership forums and participating in activities of our network of watershed protection groups. In particular, under Steve Meadows chairmanship, the SSRB planning process has made important strides towards a strategic plan.

Our quarterly forums continue to build capacity within the Council by promoting increased awareness and establishing much needed communication links throughout our membership. Many thanks to Mark Bennett and Mike Murray for continuing to enhance these and other services to our members. Our current membership level of 135 is committed, informed and engaged on a regular basis.

We achieved our funding-raising targets of more than \$75,000. During the past year we received much-needed help from Susan Pendray and Edie Smith as we expanded our fund-raising activities to secure new sources of contributions.

Finally, we thank you, our members, for your contribution to our efforts. The challenges facing water quality and quantity in the Basin are complex, the stakeholders are many. Your willingness to become better-informed, your participation in crucial planning activities, and your contribution to the Council will help us achieve our goal.

Bill Berzins, Chairman  
Bow River Basin Council

### Fewer Financial Supporters Maintain Funding Flow

While the number of financial supporters was down from 66 to 52, in the last fiscal year, the amount of support was maintained. The BRBC had a one-year extension to a three-year funding arrangement with Alberta Environment. Under the conditions of the agreement, the BRBC was required to raise the full amount of the matching grant, \$75,000 in cash, in order to qualify. The total grant was secured through the actual fundraising of \$73,817.73. This was achieved with the help of a Fundraising and Resource Development Mentor/Consultant and a Fund Development Officer.

### BRBC Financial Supporters for 2003-2004 (as of March 31, 2004):

#### Commercial/Industrial Members

- Brown and Associates
- Earth Tech Canada Inc.
- Glencoe Golf & Country Club
- Komex International Ltd.
- Summit Environmental
- Urban Systems
- Westhoff Engineering Resources

#### Individual Public Members

- Chris Campbell
- Patsy Cross
- Dr. Dianne Draper
- Heather Galbraith
- Tim Giese
- Gerry Guy
- Jenny Krabbe
- Kit Lewis
- Maureen Lynch
- Gordon MacMahon
- Susan McFarlane
- Steve Meadows
- Stella Riesen
- Clayton Roth
- Dr. Derald Smith
- Sandra Stead
- Judy & Dr. Bruce Stewart
- Ken Stiles
- Chris Vermeeren
- Gloria Wilkinson
- Dr. A. Warren Wilson

#### Licensee Members

- Eastern Irrigation District
- Lafarge Canada
- TransAlta Utilities
- Western Irrigation District

#### Municipal Members

- City of Airdrie
- City of Calgary
- Country of Newell
- MD of Foothills
- MD of Rockyview
- Town of Brooks
- Town of Canmore
- Town of Turner Valley

#### Non-Profit Members

- Alberta Irrigation Projects Association
- Calgary Fish & Game Association
- Sarcee Fish & Game Association
- Parks Foundation Calgary

**Regulatory/Administrative/First Nations Members**  
Alberta Environment

**Non-Members (Including Foundations)**

- Alberta Ecotrust
- Stella & Gordon Bennett
- Gillian Ewing and Mark Bennett
- Land Stewardship Centre of Canada
- Bob Morrison
- Mountain Equipment Co-op
- Marianne Murray
- Partners FOR The Saskatchewan River Basin
- Edie Smith

- ✓ Parks Foundation Calgary – Wetlands Documentary
- ✓ Red Bow Alliance Education Display
- ✓ South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Management Plan (Bow River Advisory Committee)
- ✓ State of the Bow River Basin Report
- ✓ Urban Stormwater Management – Management Implementation Project
- ✓ Urban Water Management (Canada West Foundation)
- ✓ Volunteers in Motion – Connecting Alberta’s Environmental Stewards
- ✓ “Water for Life” (Provincial Water Strategy)
- ✓ Wheatland County – Crowfoot Creek
- ✓ Wheatland County – Range Management Project
- ✓ Wonder of Water Celebration (UN Year of Fresh Water)

**Support Flows from the BRBC to a Wide Range of Projects**

The BRBC committed \$115,000.00 to 19 watershed projects in 2003-2004. Support was extended to both short-term and long-term projects through direct financial contributions, the in-kind support of volunteer members and/or staff, or a combination of the two. All projects listed either began, were completed or extended through the fiscal year 2003-2004. The watershed projects and/or partners include:

- ✓ Alberta Watersheds – Web Page
- ✓ Banff Summit – Mountains as Water Towers Conference
- ✓ Calgary Regional Land Trust
- ✓ Calgary Weir Modification Project
- ✓ Chevron – Texaco Learning Pathway
- ✓ Elbow River Watershed Partnership
- ✓ Float the Bow – Calgary Planning Commission River Tour
- ✓ The Mountain Environment Impact Stream Assessment (MESA) Project

**BAC Tour of the Lower Basin - September 2003**

Several members of the Basin Advisory Committee were hosted on a tour of the lower basin by the Bow River, Eastern, and Western Irrigation Districts and Ducks Unlimited last September. Utilizing a large van and a combination of highways, gravel roads, and prairie trails, participants were treated to a 700 km tour which originated in Calgary and went all the way to the confluence of the Bow with the Oldman. Stops (or near stops) along the way included Ducks Unlimited projects within the I.D.’s, the Bassano Dam, the Carseland Weir, Little Bow and Kinbrook Island Provincial Parks, and many other features related to the use of Bow River water within the irrigation districts.



**Education & Communication Committee Members: Tracy Tarves, Mark Bennett, Rob Wolfe, Mike Murray, & Norm Carlson**

**Financial Statements**

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

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

**March 31, 2004**

**ASSETS**

	<b><u>2004</u></b>	<b><u>2003</u></b>
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 74,490	\$ 81,023
Investments, Note 8	145,595	103,222
Accounts receivable, Notes 6,9	<u>118,602</u>	<u>95,982</u>
	<b><u>\$ 338,687</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 280,227</u></b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

**LIABILITIES**

<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ <u>29,399</u>	\$ <u>28,002</u>

**NET ASSETS**

<b>GENERAL FUND BALANCE</b>	<u>309,288</u>	<u>252,225</u>
	<b><u>\$ 338,687</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 280,227</u></b>

**Financial Statements cont'd**

**THE BOW RIVER BASIN COUNCIL SOCIETY**  
**STATEMENT OF GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS**  
**For The Year Ended March 31, 2004**

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Province of Alberta grant, Note 7	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Federal government grant	—	2,568
Alberta Gaming grant	40,320	—
Municipal Grants, Note 7	54,953	29,666
Corporate donations, Note 7	19,450	36,552
Individual donations, Note 7	4,415	6,900
In-Kind donations, Note 5	14,560	14,560
Interest and other income	3,341	5,150
Prior year's cost recoveries	2,185	—
	<u><b>364,224</b></u>	<u><b>320,396</b></u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Audit fee	1,700	1,400
Computer equipment purchase, Note 10	—	7,664
Contract services	80,767	28,681
Legal fees	200	175
Meetings and seminars expense	7,240	5,563
Membership fees	250	5,221
Office and administrative expenses, Note 4	10,774	14,251
Office rent, Notes 4, 5	13,080	13,080
Project expense	63,383	64,901
Staff salaries	123,080	139,154
Travel and accommodation expense	3,405	8,777
GST expense, Note 6	3,282	3,128
	<u><b>307,161</b></u>	<u><b>291,995</b></u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$ <u>57,063</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>28,401</u></b>

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.



## Quarterly Forums Whet Members' Interests

To keep Members informed about activities in the Basin, the BRBC hosts membership forums four times per year. These quarterly gatherings, at TransAlta's auditorium in Calgary, provide members with the opportunity to make presentations on a wide variety of topical water issues. Topics presented in 2003-2004 included:

- Bow River Project Update
- Lakeland Region Watershed Study
- Species at Risk
- Spray Lake Sawmill FMA Update
- Irrigation Myths and Water Supply
- Crowfoot Creek Watershed Group Update
- Managing Urban Water
- Pine Creek Wastewater Plant Update
- Mountains as Water Towers – Conference Update
- Water Strategy “Lessons Learned”
- An Introduction to Alberta's Water Strategy (Minister L. Taylor's address)
- Results from Water Quality Monitoring in Banff National Park
- Endangered Bow River
- Elbow River Watershed GIS applications
- City of Calgary Water Management Strategy
- Trepanier, BC Water Management Plan
- Urban Sprawl, Water Demand, and Other Challenges West of Calgary
- Regional Land Trust Initiative
- Climate Change Impact Study
- Bow River Impact Study
- Watershed Management in Washington State



**Mike Murray, BRBC Administrator**

## Membership Surge

The Council saw its membership increase from 124 in June, 2002 to 144 by the end of March, 2004 - a healthy 16 percent growth.

Membership numbers reflect both recruitment and retention. The Executive of the BRBC feel it is paramount that the composition of the Council be balanced and representative; so, when gaps are identified, it becomes necessary to try to attract and recruit members in key areas.

“One area where we have yet to attract some members is in the Oil & Gas Sector. That is a priority for the coming year” says Mark Bennett, executive director. “And it remains a priority to attract the Urban Development Institute (UDI) into re-establishing themselves as Council members.”

Retention is equally important. “The BRBC has a broad spectrum of deeply committed volunteer members and every effort must be made to insure that these members continue to hold the Council in high regard and feel that it is a worthy recipient of their time and efforts,” he adds.

## Survey Says Members Satisfied with BRBC

The Council is doing something right. Comments collected on a *Membership Satisfaction Survey*, at the December forum, indicate a high level of satisfaction among attendees. Here is what some Members had to say:

“I believe in the BRBC.”

“A great forum that provides an invaluable service to the Alberta government and basin residents and stakeholders”

“You continue to provide relevant presentations that encourage us to become more active in water management. Your message is always positive but full of valuable debate and controversy. The increased attendance over the years should tell you that the format is working well.”

“I feel you are headed in the proper directions on helping to protect one of our most valuable resources.”

“...excellent forum to vet issues and gain perspective from various sectors and governing bodies.”

“The quarterly forums are the best regular educational events that I participate in. I look forward to them.”

“Bow River Basin Council has, overall, been a good experience and does a good job of getting people

together with different points of view.”

“I have always been of the opinion that the BRBC is one of the most appropriate and effective educational cooperative forums for the discussion and dissemination of water quality and water quantity information. It appears to be one of the few places where fingers are not pointed in a counter productive way.”

“The BRBC has been a great leader in water management and it has been rewarding to watch its evolution over the years.”

## BRBC's Profile Spreads into the Community at Large

The BRBC enjoyed favourable media coverage over the last fiscal year. Increasingly, local and regional journalists view the BRBC as an objective and authoritative voice on water management in southern Alberta. QR-77 conducted an in-depth interview with Mark Bennett, the executive director, on the BRBC and the Provincial “Water For Life” Strategy. Bennett was also interviewed on local channels such as CFCN and Shaw Cable 10.

The Council's web site ([www.brbc.ab.ca](http://www.brbc.ab.ca)) is a very functional communications vehicle. Revising and updating the site is an on-going process. Traffic to the site is increasing: the total cumulative visitor count was 5,106 at the end of 2003; as of March 2004 it was 7,555. This represents over 50 unique visits per week.

The BRBC's second site, which deals exclusively with the issue of Urban Stormwater ([www.urbanswm.ab.ca](http://www.urbanswm.ab.ca)) attracts visitors at a variable rate. The count as of

March 17, 2004 was 1438.

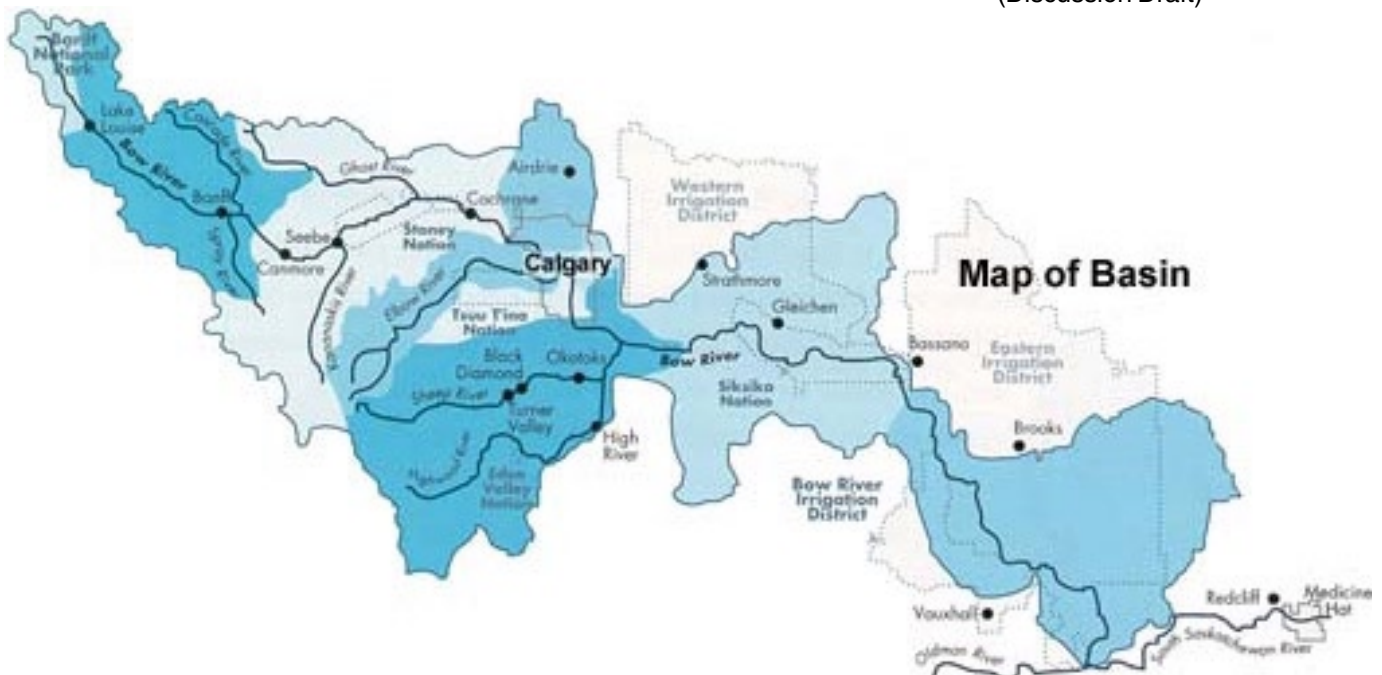
In addition to web sites the BRBC communicates with members and other interested individuals through its newsletter, “Preserving Our Lifeline”. This publication improves with each issue, thanks to the considerable efforts of the editors.

A big part of the BRBC's improved profile stems from the numerous public presentations made about the BRBC. Over the past year, presentations were given at the request of the following organizations:

- Alberta Environment (Minister and Senior Department Staff)
- Calgary Chamber of Commerce (Water Task Force)
- Canada West Foundation Advisory Committee
- FEESA 2003 Water Education Institute
- Kananaskis Field Station (U of C)
- Operations and Environment Standing Committee of Council (City of Calgary) Pine Creek
- Operations and Environment Standing Committee of Council (City of Calgary) Urban Stormwater
- Official Opening of the Chevron – Texaco Learning Pathway
- Leadership Calgary
- Watershed Management Course (Mount Royal College)
- Watershed Awareness Day (Wheatland County)

The BRBC also participated in various meetings, forums, and workshops in 2003-2004 including:

- Special Membership Meeting Water Strategy (Discussion Draft)



- Alberta Ingenuity Fund Water Conference Planning Meeting
- Climate Change & Water in the South Saskatchewan River Basin Workshop
- FEESA Water Education Forum
- UN Year of Fresh Water – Wonder of Water Regional Steering Committee (Banff)
- Pine Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Planning Workshops (Calgary)
- National Watershed Stewardship – Policy Discussion Forum
- Oldman River Basin Water Quality Initiative Stakeholders Meeting
- Oldman River Basin Water Quality Initiative 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Quality Workshop
- University of Calgary President's Roundtable Consultation (Stakeholder Outreach)
- Canadian Rivers Day
- Watersheds in Action II Conference

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

This has really been a remarkable year. Fiscal 2003 - 2004 was another strong year for the Bow River Basin Council (BRBC). It continues to be an incredible experience working for the BRBC and I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with and for our organization's membership.

The BRBC, through the hard work of its members, continued to excel in important areas. More monies were raised than ever before and this resulted in the highest level yet of project support. Important new members were added while, at the same time, the retention of the Council's valued existing members remained strong. The BRBC continued to build credibility and profile. As a closing commentary, I would like to re-cap our accomplishments by relaying a few heartfelt

thank-you's.

**To Bill Berzins and the rest of the Board**, this dedicated group of committed leaders represents close to 100 years of cumulative experience with the BRBC. An effective organization always starts with an effective Board of Directors. This past year saw increasing activities by Board Standing Committees (Education & Communications and Fund Development) both of which are instrumental to the long-term success of the BRBC.

**To our contributors**, thank-you for the faith that you show in the BRBC and for investing in our watershed.

**To our members** involved in project delivery, thank-you for your hard work and demonstrating the value of investing in our Council.



**Mark Bennett, BRBC Executive Director**

**Thank-you to all the presenters**, for allowing us to offer thoughtful sessions that catch and hold the attention of our diverse members. Attendance at the BRBC Quarterly Educational and Networking Forums continued to rise, bolstered in large part by the excellent and informative presentations from our members and guest speakers.

**Thank you both to our new members**, for deciding that you want to know more about the BRBC and joining us, **and to our returning members**, for staying with us and helping to build our successes.

