

BUFFALO LAKE MANAGEMENT TEAM

November 2014

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QUARTERLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

BLMT Membership

Chairperson: Pud Stevenson

Joe Gendre, (Stettler County)

Brenda Knight (Lacombe County)

Bob Harper (Pelican Point)

Chris Jenson (Spotted Lake)

Lorne Thurston (White Sands)

Don Sproule (Bashaw Bay)

Jack Lyle (Camrose County)

Bill Knight (Parlby Creek)

Jean MacDonald (Commercial/
Landowner)

Dan Hiller (Rochon Sands)

ESRD: Rick Friedl, Carlin Soehn,
Lorne Cole & Sharina Kennedy

LAKE STEWARDSHIP: WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY!

Everyone can contribute to stewardship of Buffalo lake and the surrounding watershed. From cottage owners, to industry, agricultural producers to governments at multiple levels: we all have a role to play. There are many success stories at Buffalo Lake of positive actions that people are taking to ensure that the lake can be enjoyed for future generations. The BLMT would like to highlight these success stories! In this newsletter, we're featuring the role of agricultural producers in promoting lake stewardship through adopting best management practices. Next time, we'll feature a different sector. If you have a success story, let us know! Email it to BLMT chair, Pud Stevenson (ontarget@xplornet.com) or sharina.kennedy@gov.ab.ca.



Watering System Benefits Cattle and Lake

Don and Marlene Sproule installed their innovative cattle watering system about 8 years ago, and have never looked back. "Our calves gain better and we no longer have any problems with hoof rot." says Don. "The system is so much better for the cattle and for the lake. In the past few years, the lakeshore ecosystem has changed completely... There's tall, thick grass where it had been previously trampled by cattle trails".

The system consists of a well and an elevated 1,250 gallon tank that uses gravity to carry water to the watering troughs. The whole system is self-contained and requires very little maintenance.

Top photo: Mineral and salt blocks are provided at the watering troughs and the



Sproules find that their cattle hang around them most of the time. **Bottom Photo:** Solar panels on the water shelter power a system that pumps water into a the elevated reservoir. Gravity carries water from the tank to the troughs.

The BLMT is

currently

recruiting new

members!

FOR MORE INFO:

www.blmt.ca

Or contact Pud at

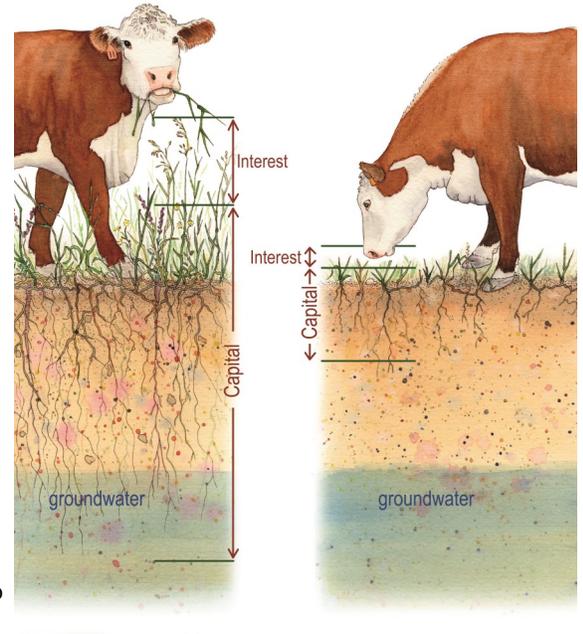
ontarget@xplornet.com

Stewardship [stoo-erd-ship] : *The recognition of our collective responsibility to retain the quality and abundance of our land, air, water and biodiversity, and to manage this natural capital in a way that conserves all of its values, be they environmental, economic, social or cultural. (A Stewardship Roadmap for Canada, 2009)*

AGRICULTURAL STEWARDSHIP TOP 5 LIST Submitted by Norine Ambrose, Cows and Fish

There are many examples of how producers in the Buffalo Lake sub-watershed are contributing positively to lake stewardship. Here are the “Top 5” ways that the agricultural sector can help ensure good lake water quality:

1. **Leave carryover.** Leave a portion of forage behind to protect roots and support vigorous plant growth next year, or to act as emergency feed in drought. Carryover traps moisture and protects the soil from excessive summer heat – it is an investment, not wasted.
2. **Provide adequate rest to each pasture.** Growing season rest allows plants to regrow and strengthen their roots so they are stronger to survive winter and unexpected droughts.
3. **Avoid wet soils.** Avoid grazing or haying lakeshores, wetland margins and floodplains when they are wettest. This minimises soil compaction, erosion and loss of forage productivity resulting from compaction.
4. **Provide alternate livestock watering sources and minerals.** Water and minerals are powerful livestock attractants, optimising use of forage and improving pasture health. Even without fencing livestock away from a natural water source, they will drink from a trough 80% of the time. Numerous studies show cattle gain more weight when drinking from an alternate water source.
5. **Work with your neighbours.** Working together on weed control and watershed management and learning from others who have tried new things has a greater impact than working alone.



To find out about funding programs that could support agricultural environmental stewardship projects, visit:

www.growingforwardalberta.ca

BUFFALO LAKE COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES

The 2014 Buffalo Lake Community open houses held on August 23rd at Rochon Sands and Pelican Point were a huge success!

Over 80 community members joined members of the BLMT, representatives from the Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS), Nature Alberta's Living by Water Project, Cows and Fish, and ESRD for an informative and interactive day.

BLMT looks forward to hosting the open houses in 2015!



LAKE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Buffalo Lake has ended the season at approximately Full Supply Level (780.85m) after slowly dropping down from approximately 781.05m at the beginning of May (a drop of around 20cm); characteristic of summer temperatures and decreased levels of precipitation. Depending on snow pack this winter, and runoff levels in the spring, we can expect an increase in the lake level going into next season.

For more information, visit www.blmt.ca or the Atlas of Alberta Lakes.

Water levels for Buffalo Lake can be viewed at the Alberta River Basins webpage: <http://www.environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins/default.aspx>