



BRBC Annual Report 2017 - 2018

*working together to nurture, renew and protect
the waters of the bow river basin*

Follow us @BowRiverWPAC

www.brbc.ab.ca

Message from the Chair: Mike Kelly

As this will be my last Annual Report message I am taking a slightly different approach. Rather than review just the past year, I will go further back, and provide some longer term thoughts about the future of water management and the BRBC.

The BRBC has grown over the past 10 years: more members, more significant projects, better science and greater attendance at our various Fora, new basin-wide issues of flood and drought coming to the fore, much greater participation by municipalities, practical "on-the-ground" and "in-the-water" projects, greater emphasis on current and future water management, and continuing support from the provincial government for our work. Wish I could take credit for this, but I can't. It's been you, the members and staff, who get all the credit.

An essential element in volunteer organizational success is a high quality support group who make things happen between volunteer meetings. BRBC has the best

staffers in the business. By far! Mark, Mike and Medini make the organization effective seemingly without effort. They are the trio of Derek Jeters that meet every challenge, make us all look smart, and make it look easy.

BRBC is committed and dedicated to collaborative teamwork among members and others interested in improving water management for the environment, economy, health, spirit, and people in the basin. Progress at the BRBC reminds me of an African saying first brought to my attention by Bev Yee: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

The BRBC wants to go far and has done so by going together. It is driven by the membership – collaborative in process, practical in approach, and focused on results to be undertaken by those who were engaged from the beginning.

Much has changed over the past 10 years, and we can expect even more change over the next 10. Here are some examples of change

BRBC Board Members

BRBC Chair: Mike Kelly
Treasurer: Zennon Zelusky
Executive Director: Mark Bennett

Commercial/Industrial:
Jason Mogilefsky / Steve Meadows

Municipal Government:
Brian De Jong / Carolyn Bowen

Non-Profit/Academic
Mike Nemeth / Bob Miller

**Regulatory/Administrative/
First Nations**
Rob Wolfe / Gerry Guy

Licensee:
Scott Taylor / Richard Phillips

Individual Public:
Shirley Pickering / Mike Kelly

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

and what the BRBC has done in response:

The closure of the basin to new license allocations began to create challenges for municipal development and commercial growth. BRBC participated in several municipal problem-solving projects and processes related to water licensing and management issues.

Increasing water demands from population growth and economic development in the basin were well documented in the Water for Life Strategy. BRBC members recognized that “what gets measured gets done” and that historic flow data could be used in a new strategic approach to water management. Membership leaders created and paid for the Bow River Working Group starting in 2010, developing an initial modelling exercise taking a “Systems Approach” to the entire river system, rather than a segmented reach-by-reach or user-by-user perspective. The project reviewed and refined over 80 years of actual historic data to model the many “what if” scenarios of growing demand and supply issues affecting environmental conditions and water management and use.

The participants (virtually all BRBC members) have improved and expanded the basic flow model since 2010. They have used the model to collaboratively study climate change effects, severe

drought and flood conditions, and identify and evaluate mitigation options. They have advised on integrated water management opportunities, keeping always in mind potential environmental effects and means to mitigate any negative impacts.

The most serious flood since at least 1932 and likely since 1902 took place in 2013. The BRBC reset its Business Plan and devoted well over a year to participate in flood mitigation projects, modelling hundreds of options and always injecting environmental considerations as an integral part of large-scale flood mitigation proposals.

BRBC members also recognized the risk to environmental conditions that could arise from a flood-exclusive approach to water management. BRBC supports the Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program to help fund numerous projects through the development of selection criteria, including municipal runoff treatment projects, and other work related to source water protection, flood and drought resilience and more.

The BRBC membership recognized that the Approved Water Management Plan of 2006 significantly altered the management of the Bow, Oldman and South Saskatchewan Rivers, and to some extent the Red Deer River system as well. In 2017

a project was initiated among the affected WPACs to review the effects of the 2006 Plan and consider ways to improve based on the experience of the past 10+ years. The results of this collaborative review will be available in the fall of 2018.

So what of the future? The agreement between the provincial government and TransAlta to substantially alter the timing of flows in the Bow main stem will continue to have profound effects over the long run. Flood risk mitigation is the primary focus, although the Kananaskis system was to be used for drought mitigation. The Bow River Working Group (all BRBC members) recommended this agreement be retained and expanded over time as other drought and flood mitigation options are thoroughly reviewed and selected.

Managing the Bow main stem in the public interest as a first priority is important to future watershed management. However, an effective renewable hydropower system is also in the public interest, and so are transmission stabilization and short-term demand/supply functions that the Bow hydro system provides. An ecologically robust and healthy riverine system is in the public interest. Adequate and clean raw water supply for

BRBC Committee Updates

Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Brittany Stahl, Chair

The BRBC's social media presence has continued to grow through Twitter and Facebook. Currently, there are over 1000 followers on both social media platforms combined. The social media communications lead has continued to produce daily and weekly posts that capture audiences within and outside the basin. The Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC) is excited to see the reach of the BRBC expanded through consistent and responsible use of the social media communication platforms.

The committee has summarized and edited hydrological information for the public on a new West Bragg Creek educational sign, in collaboration with the Elbow River Watershed Partnership. The post-flood resurrection of the Chevron Pathway sign in Prince's Island Park in Calgary was also supported. The Preserving Our Lifeline (POL) newsletter has continued to be published quarterly without a hitch this past year, providing updates on various studies, educational opportunities, and habitat and environmental conditions in the Bow River Basin.

The committee is also discussing and developing communication framework improvements, visual identity updates to enhance BRBC's online and forum presence, as well as POL "Reflections" updates from the membership and committee alumni. The team continues to grow, with about 14 members on the current committee roster. If you are interested in joining the SEC, please send an email to Mike at: Mike.Murray@calgary.ca.

Message from the Chair

Continued from page 2

the growing municipalities in the basin is obviously a public interest. Efficient and diverse food production is increasingly a world-wide public interest, and certainly in the public interest of the many rural communities who depend on irrigation agriculture. So, where is this leading?

Collaboration in watershed management is an obvious requirement to meet the known, expected, and most of all, the unknown challenges the natural

environment will present in the next 10-50 years. Thanks largely to the BRBC, "The Bow River Basin is fortunate to have a strong history of collaborative exploration of water management challenges and opportunities." So says the Bow River Working Group in its final report, page 11, available here:

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/bow-river-water-management-project-advice-to-government-on-water-management-in-the-bow-river-basin>.

- Mike Kelly, BRBC Chair

BRBC Committees

Governance

Chair: Shirley Pickering

Legislation and Policy

Chair: Judy Stewart

Science

Chair: François Bouchart

Stakeholder Engagement

Chair: Brittany Stahl

Youth

Chair: Mike Nemeth

Watershed Stewardship

Chair: Shirley Pickering

Legislation and Policy Committee

Judy Stewart, Chair

The Legislation and Policy Committee (L&P) engaged in discussing a diversity of policy topics in 2017-2018. We reviewed the need to regulate and control recreational vehicles on and near the Ghost Reservoir. We were introduced to the proposed role of the BRBC in community-based monitoring as part of the emerging provincial system. In mid-2017, we discussed amendments and regulations emerging from the Municipal Government Act review, including the impact of the new mandated Calgary Metropolitan Region Board that recently replaced the volunteer-led Calgary Regional Partnership. More recently, we looked at policy implications of a proposed development along Nose Creek from a high-level policy perspective. We learned about work being done by stewardship groups in both the Ghost and the Bighill Creek watersheds.

In January, we discussed the City of Calgary's Draft Source Water Protection Plan and submitted commentary on ways to improve the plan. The draft plan provided us with an opportunity to consider the inherent difficulty in trying to manage natural systems that are necessarily intermunicipal and multi-jurisdictional, including First Nations and the federal government.

In February, we hosted a very successful workshop on

stormwater use as a strategy for sustainability. Our excellent lineup of speakers provided background information about the complexity of developing policy for using storm drainage, including managing risks of harm to human health and the environment. The workshop provided a couple of examples of how innovative projects are being piloted in the Bow River Basin, from both governance and technological perspectives. A workshop summary will be made available after a review by the workshop presenters.

The role of WPACs as it emerges through the provincial review is of continuing interest, and the L&P Committee will continue to keep a watchful eye on that process. Different policy issues attract different members to the committee, and all help to inform debate and considerations as we move forward in stewardship of the Bow River and its tributaries.

Science Committee

François Bouchart, Chair

The Science Committee had another very successful year, hosting the 2017 Science Forum on May 3rd. The Forum started with a presentation on Global Water Futures by Dr John Pomeroy of the University of Saskatchewan. Other presentations spanned the breadth of State of the Watershed, Threats to Human Health and Aquatic Ecosystems, and Innovative Methods of Aquatic Assessment. The Committee continued its work on Hydrologically Sensitive Areas, which has now been leveraged into a research project led by Committee member Suzanne Marechal. Finally, the Science Committee continues to work on the latest version of the State of the Watershed report.



The BRBC Legislation and Policy Committee's annual workshop at the Cochrane RancheHouse. Photo: Mike Murray.

Watershed Stewardship Coordinating Committee

Shirley Pickering, Chair

Membership

The 2017 Watershed Stewardship Coordinating Committee (WSSC) membership consisted of representatives from:

- WSGs: Nose Creek Watershed Partnership, Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Ghost Watershed Alliance Society, Friends of Fish Creek Park Society, and Highwood Management Plan PAC;
- Government agencies: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Counties of Wheatland and Rocky View.
- ENGOs: Foothills Land Trust and River Watch Institute
- Individual Stewards
- BRBC Program Coordinator and Board Chair.

Activities

The committee met twice during this past term. Member activities were shared. Some members of the committee were still involved in carry-over activities related to the Elbow and Highwood flood management and mitigation engagement processes. Others continue to be involved in projects supported by the Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (WRRP) to improve watershed resiliency through riparian restoration and assessment project work, as well as moving forward with local State of the Watershed reporting and/or completing Watershed Management Plans. The WSSC continues to support BRBC Board activities, and this year provided specific representation and

input at the AEP Environmental Science and Monitoring Division Community Based Monitoring consultation, as well as continued representation on the AEP-led Bow River Phosphorus Management Plan Implementation Committee. As part of its regular support for the BRBC, the WSSC planned the December Forum which focused on showcasing watershed stewardship projects and introducing new information on advancing stewardship action. The WSSC promotes holding this forum in smaller rural Bow Basin communities to provide opportunity for engagement of local rural watershed stakeholders. This past term, the forum was held in Cochrane and was well received. Attached is a photo from the event.



The BRBC December forum showcasing watershed stewardship projects. Photo: Mike Murray.

Youth Committee

Mike Nemeth, Chair

This past year the BRBC Youth Committee (YC) did some really fun, interactive and engaging activities that helped increase awareness of the BRBC and engage youth and young professionals in the watershed. The group has increased in size with many new members, and is actively planning activities and events for the next year. The committee continues to meet quarterly, and now has several activities and events that are or will likely become annual events.

Events over the Last Year

Glenmore Water Treatment Plant

- A tour of the facility took place in November 2017, followed by an offsite networking event.

Brewery event

- In partnership with Cold Garden and the City of Calgary, the BRBC hosted our third annual brewery event. This year it was "MORPHOLOGY & MALT: A History of the Bow River in Calgary's Historic Beer District." The event focused on the Bow River and how it has changed over the last 100 years - including a look at development, dams, the world-famous fishery, as well as its importance to one of our great local breweries.

Science forum

- The annual science forum was once again supported by the YC (planning, session chairs). This year's forum was in May 2017 at MacDonald Hall (SAIT). John Pomeroy was a key note, and there were 13 other speakers. The YC decided after this forum that they would try to take a greater role in this event for next year.

School visits and interacting with school age youth

- The YC participated in Inside Education's Navigate2018 Youth Water and Environment Summit. The BRBC was a sponsor of this event, and the YC had three members attend over two days, providing facilitation support and expertise for students and teachers. It was a really great event that is certainly worth investing our time and effort in for future summits. It is good to see the future will be heading into capable hands with respect to water and the environment!

Our focus for the next year will be to continue to increase YC membership and active involvement in some of the BRBC's other activities and initiatives, and continue to support events that engage with youth and young professionals in the basin around water.

Governance Committee

Shirley Pickering, Chair

Membership

The 2017 Governance Committee membership consisted of three Board members and one BRBC Staff member.

Activities

The Governance Committee met once to plan the BRBC AGM, which was held as part of the regularly scheduled BRBC June Forum. Otherwise the committee continued in its role of reviewing and advising the Board regarding policy revisions as required throughout this past term, communicating largely through e-mails and conference phone calls. Any Board-proposed policy revisions and/or additions are reviewed for approval at the BRBC AGM.



Banff National Park. Photo: Mike Murray

The Last Word ...

It is really gratifying when I am told what a great job the BRBC is doing. Remarkably, I am often credited for this achievement. Let me tell you that I enjoy undeserved praise as much as the next guy, but I am long overdue in directing that praise to where it belongs. In the past I have willingly and appropriately recognized the contributions of members, the Board and our many contributors.

But it is high time to focus on three key individuals, who are in many wonderful ways the glue that holds this Council together. I'm referring to my staff colleagues, Mike, Medini and Andrea. Each holds a special position essential for the smooth operation and productivity of the BRBC.

Mike Murray joined the BRBC in 2003, not that long after I did. While starting as an Administrator, Mike quickly proved he could do so much more. It is often said that co-workers should complement one another and it was apparent to me that Mike had many strengths, more often than not in areas of my own deficiencies. Mike showed himself to be very adept with accounting and logistics. He has proven to be a true organizational wizard, a fact clearly demonstrated at least six times every year with our Quarterly Forums and other

events. It is only through Mike's considerable efforts that these events run so seamlessly, each one a glowing testament to his ingenuity and dedication. In 2017 Mike took the lead role in the SSRB 10 Year review project as the project manager, the final report is due in September. In 2009 Mike became our Program Manager, and this year, the title of Deputy Director was added.

Medini Prasai came to us first as a volunteer in 2008-2009, was converted into a contract position in Fund Development for a short time, and then was subsequently hired as our full-time Fund Development and Member Services Officer. Medini easily wins the contest for the most interesting route to the BRBC. Growing up in Nepal, Medini attended graduate school in Australia, only to find himself working for the UNHCR in Kosovo. Medini provides stalwart service in looking after the financial management of BRBC-supported projects. In addition, after successfully securing STEP funding, Medini is supervising the BRBC's first summer student, an activity we hope to continue into the future.

Andrea Czarnecki took over the position of Publications Editor in 2012 from Claudette Lacombe. Through this transition the quality of our publications didn't suffer in the slightest. Our publications are the "public facing"

elements of the BRBC and we have enjoyed consistently high quality, information laden offerings that are well received. The scope of Andrea's work has expanded over time culminating in our current project, in which Mike and Andrea have teamed up on the South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Management Plan 10-year Review. This endeavour marks the first occasion in which a major project has been fully funded by the BRBC, with no external funding sought or received.

I am truly blessed to work with three such high-calibre co-workers. I like to think that while the four of us don't make the BRBC, we do try hard to make it better.

- Mark Bennett
BRBC Executive Director



Bow River. Photo: Mike Murray

Financial Statements



The Bow River Basin Council Society incorporated under the Societies Act of Alberta Statement of Financial Position for the year ended March 31, 2018

All values are \$CDN.

Please refer to the March 31, 2018 Auditor's Report for official financial statements.

ASSETS					
	2018			Total	2017
Current	Operating Fund	Casino Fund	Operating Reserve		
Operating Cash	\$200,494	--	--	200,494	\$430,632
Unrestricted Investments	504,740	--	--	504,740	500,646
Restricted Cash and Investments	--	44,385	534,023	578,408	526,823
Accounts Receivable	124,394	--	--	124,394	12,997
Due from Operating Fund	--	3,740	--	3,740	3,012
Prepaid Expense	--	--	--	--	3,326
TOTAL	\$829,628	48,125	534,023	1,411,776	1,477,436
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS					
LIABILITIES					
	2018			Total	2017
Current					
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$11,417	--	--	11,417	\$6,949
Due to Casino Fund	3,740	--	--	3,740	3,012
	15,157	--	--	15,157	9,961
NET ASSETS					
Fund Balances	814,471	48,125	534,023	1,396,619	1,467,475
	\$829,628	48,125	534,023	1,411,776	1,477,436

The BRBC gratefully acknowledges and thanks the following supporters ...

Sustaining Partners

(3 years or more of consecutive support)

Alberta Irrigation Projects Association	Rocky View County
Bow River Irrigation District	Sandra Stead
Bob McAlpine	Shirley Pickering
Brian de Jong	The Calgary Foundation
City of Brooks	Town of Banff
City of Calgary	Town of Black Diamond
County of Newell	Town of Canmore
Eastern Irrigation District	Town of Cochrane
Government of Alberta	Town of Okotoks
John Groeneveld	TransAlta Corporation
Kananaskis Improvement District	Urban Systems
MD of Bighorn	Wheatland County
MD of Foothills	Western Irrigation District
Rob Wolfe	Zennon Zalusky

Supporters

(Project-based support)

Alberta Environment and Parks	LCARF Appreciation Society
City of Airdrie	MD of Bighorn
Environment and Climate Change Canada	Rocky View County
	The Calgary Foundation

Annual Supporters

Bernie Amell	Sarah Leete
Bonnie Raitt	Steve Meadows
Calgary Regional Partnership	Suzanne Oel
David Swann	The Calgary Foundation
Diane Coleman	Town of Vauxhall
Patrick Saunders	Wendell Koning
Moira Balkwill	

Contact information

Mark Bennett
Executive Director
(403) 268-4596
mark.bennett@calgary.ca

Mike Murray
Program Manager
(403) 268-4597
mike.murray@calgary.ca

Medini Prasai
Fund Development and Member Services
(403) 268-6447
medini.prasai@calgary.ca

Andrea Czarnecki
Publications Editor
andreacz@shaw.ca

Mailing Address
Bow River Basin Council
Spring Gardens - Building D
861 40th Avenue NE
Mail Code #64
PO Box 2100 Stn M
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 2M5

