



MLMA PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2014

Nov. 2, 2014

Dear MLMA Members,

We have had a busy year since our last Annual General Meeting of Dec. 8, 2013. The focus of our work has continued to be the protection of Mayatan Lake through education, developing a watershed management plan and developing positive relationships within the watershed community.

The appeal by Rainbow Beach Developments Inc. to the Alberta Court of Appeal regarding the proposed campground for Mayatan Lake was discontinued in February 2014. This means that the decision of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board stands, and the particular application for a campground was refused. This does not mean that there can never be future applications for developments, however. Any future development applications will be assessed on their own merits, relative to policies that are in place at the time of the application. For this reason, MLMA will continue to work hard to develop a watershed management plan, and to encourage County policies that will benefit the lake, in order to preserve its special characteristics for future generations. There will be continued need for collaboration and education on lake management.

It is with this in mind that the MLMA has continued to work with our partners and the community in a variety of ways. The progress we have seen this year has been very encouraging. The work of the MLMA and the community is briefly outlined below.

1. Watershed Management Plan

Our work with the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA) and Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources (ESRD) continues towards the goal of producing a watershed management plan for Mayatan Lake. This year much of our focus has been on stakeholder consultation. The partnership of NSWA, ESRD and MLMA has followed a public consultation process that is internationally recognized (IAPP). We have been very fortunate to be working

with two individuals trained in this process – Dave Mussell of ESRD and Billie Millholland of NSWA. We are tremendously grateful for all of their efforts, as well as those of Dave Trew (Executive Director of NSWA) and Melissa Logan of NSWA.

This year the partnership of NSWA, ESRD and MLMA has planned and held two very successful workshops to engage stakeholders. The goal of these workshops was to identify stakeholders' issues and concerns, as well as identify their aspirations for the Mayatan Lake watershed in the future.

The first workshop, held on May 24, 2014 at Keephills Hall, was a full day workshop and was attended by 46 people. This included representation by Parkland County, ESRD, NSWA, MLMA members, Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS) , representatives of other watershed stewardship groups, recreational users, agricultural community, and most importantly members of the Mayatan community – you!

At this workshop we discussed two questions:

- What watershed issues concern you now?
- What are your long-term aspirations for the Mayatan Lake watershed?

A variety of issues and concerns were identified at the workshop, as well as through comments emailed to the NSWA website. The results of this workshop can be seen at the NSWA website under the Resources section (www.nswa.ab.ca).

A second workshop was held on July 17, 2014 at Keephills Hall. This evening workshop was well attended in spite of a huge rainstorm – 42 participants. Several speakers educated us on a variety of topics. Dave Trew from the NSWA discussed water quality and some of the factors that affect the water quality in Alberta Lakes. Stephen Spencer from ESRD spoke about fish populations and factors that will affect the fish. Sharon Reedyk (Agriculture Canada) spoke on the topic of aspects of environmental effects from different land uses (including agriculture). The issues and concerns that were identified at the May workshop were then analysed through a prioritization matrix method.

The results of this second workshop can also be seen on the NSWA website under Resources.

Consultation was also done through some face to face discussions with various stakeholders in the community, and they were invited to the workshops and asked to email their comments to the NSWA.

While we are pleased with the results of the workshops and meetings, MLMA recognizes that there is continued need for additional discussion and input, particularly from the agricultural community, First Nations (Paul Band), TransAlta, and Parkland County. We are currently

working on arranging some meetings with these sectors. The process of consultation is ongoing your ideas, comments and suggestions are always welcome. Both the NSWA and ESRD are finalizing their analysis of the results of the workshops and these results are expected to be available by the end of 2014.

2. Participation in Parkland County Policy Developments

We have been actively involved in a number of Parkland County meetings held in 2014 regarding the new Community Sustainability and Development Plan and the Environmental Conservation Master Plan (ECMP).

Our Board reviewed the drafts of the ECMP as they were produced, and made comprehensive comments back to the County and consultants (O2 Planning and Design) on the proposed Environmentally Significant Areas for the Mayatan Lake watershed. We also attended a conference call meeting with representatives from Parkland County and the consultants working on the ECMP. We were very pleased with the interest expressed by all involved and their openness to our suggestions. This document will provide information for the new Community Sustainability & Development Plan that Parkland County is developing. The ECMP can be accessed on the Parkland County website and the section describing Mayatan Lake can be found on pages 166-169.

(http://www.parklandcounty.com/About_Us/Projects_and_Studies_-_Current/Environmental_Conservation_Master_Plan_and_Policy_Updates.htm)

One initiative that Parkland County is undertaking is the Wabamun Lake Subwatershed Land Use Plan. The MLMA has been named as a member of the stakeholder committee. This planning process will eventually produce a land use plan for Wabamun Lake, as well as a toolbox for other lakes to use for land use plans in their watersheds. However, this document is not a watershed management plan, and so a watershed management plan is still essential under the Province of Alberta's policies – Water for Life. This underscores the importance of our own work at Mayatan Lake to produce a watershed management plan which will provide advice to Parkland County on future policies at our lake.

We will continue to participate in the Parkland County initiatives in the coming year. The public has been invited to give their comments at open houses and workshops, as well as through emailed comments. One important policy document being worked on is the new Municipal Development Plan (now being called the Community Sustainability Development Plan). We would encourage you to attend these planning events and have YOUR say in the future of

Parkland County, and to support your municipal representatives in their goals of protecting the lakes and the environment.

3. Collaboration with other Watershed Stewardship Groups

The MLMA has continued to partner and collaborate with other watershed groups. One exciting initiative has been the forming of the Lakes of Parkland County group. Our Board realized that we needed to have a way to network with other watershed stewardship groups, and in February 2014 we held our first Lakes of Parkland County meeting. We have held several meetings this year, and there have been representatives from 8 lakes in the County (Wabamun, Jackfish, Hubbles, Spring, Cottage, Gladue, Lake Isle, Mayatan). This has been a wonderful opportunity to hear what other watershed groups are planning, to hear of their concerns and issues, to share information, and provide each other with encouragement and support.

A MLMA Board representative regularly attends the Wabamun Watershed Management Council as an observer. A few of our Board members also attended the CARL (Central Alberta Recreational Lakes) workshop in May 2014 at Pine Lake Hall, where we heard a variety of speakers and updates on watershed programs from many other lakes including Pigeon Lake and Sylvan Lake. Board members have also attended workshops like the NSWA Fisheries Forum, and the WPAC (Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils) Summit.

4. Events in our own Backyard

The MLMA has also been busy closer to home. We held our annual Road and Boat Launch Clean up in May, and afterwards had a BBQ to get to know our community. Several people participated in a project lead by Dave Cleary and Gina Trites to make loon nesting area signs. We hope to use these next year to help protect the struggling loon population at the lake. We also participated in the Stony Plain Street Sale (June 2014) and our efforts made about \$500 in profits for the MLMA budget.

We have also started a MLMA Newsletter – if you have stories or photos to share we will try and include them.

5. Scientific Characterization of the Watershed

We have continued to learn about the watershed and gather more scientific information, as was suggested in our State of the Watershed Report (2012).

The ALMS LakeWatch water quality testing was not done this year at Mayatan, as they needed to extend their work to other lakes. We will continue to partner with ALMS in the future to do water testing, in order to provide an ongoing set of data for Mayatan Lake. This August we completed a drone mapping of the riparian area of Mayatan Lake, as was suggested by the NSWA. This involved a drone taking video footage of the entire shoreline of both the eastern and western basins of the lake. Thanks to Al and Sandy Steinke and Grant and Sharon Maxwell for the use of their rafts and motors. This drone mapping will provide us with a permanent record of the riparian area of Mayatan Lake as it was in August of 2014. Some more analysis of this drone mapping will likely be done in the future.

What is Coming Up in the Next Year?

MLMA will continue its work on the Watershed Management Plan in partnership with the NSWA, ESRD and other Steering Committee members. We will continue to seek your input and ideas, and to work to engage as many people as possible. We truly desire the Watershed Management Plan to be a reflection of community ideas, in conjunction with the expert technical and scientific knowledge provided by our project partners including the NSWA and AESRD. We will keep you informed of upcoming events and opportunities for input.

We hope that we will have more opportunities to plan some events to get to know our neighbours better. We are considering a bird project to keep track of the variety of birds in the watershed. Perhaps we could hold a canoeing trip around the lake next summer. We would really love to hear your suggestions for projects and events, and if you are able to help us plan an event that would be very appreciated.

I personally am available to hear your concerns, and to present your ideas to the MLMA Board. Please call me (780 436 2451) or email me at info@mayatanlake.ca.

I would especially like to thank the MLMA Board members for their dedication and hard work. Our MLMA Board spends countless volunteer hours in efforts to protect and care for Mayatan Lake. I truly appreciate each of them and their many talents and abilities – without the amazing team effort of the MLMA Board we would not be able to accomplish as much as we do.

Thanks to all of you for your support of MLMA in 2014!

Elisa Brose

President