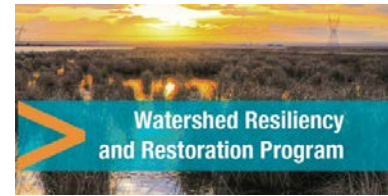


Lesser Slave Watershed Council

2016-17 Annual Report



Thank You to our 2016-17 Financial Supporters



**TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation**



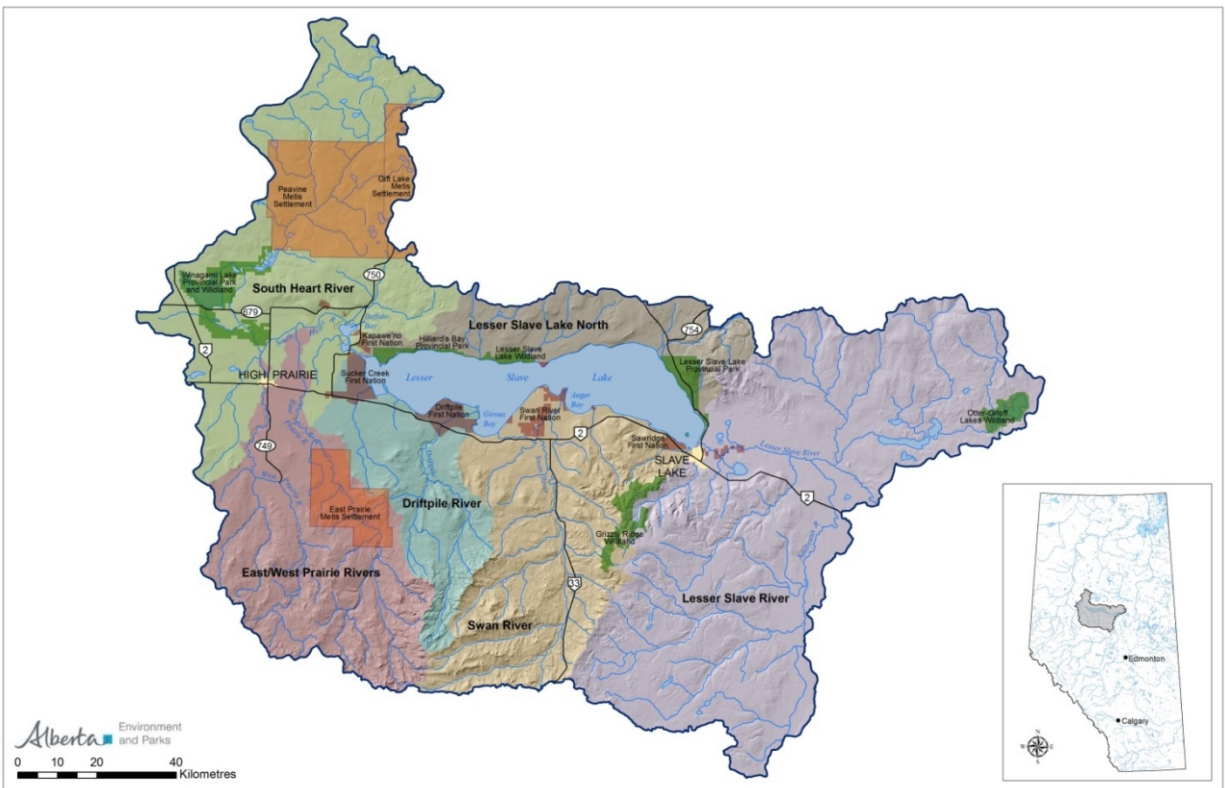
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Sunset at Joussard, Ab. Photo by Traci Hansen

The Lesser Slave Watershed



The Lesser Slave Watershed is centered around Lesser Slave Lake. Water in our lake comes from several tributaries including the South Heart River, the East and West Prairie Rivers, the Driftpile River, and the Swan River. The Lesser Slave River is the only outlet of Lesser Slave Lake and it flows from the Town of Slave Lake to the Athabasca River about 75km East of Slave Lake.



Sunset silhouettes at Spruce Point Park, AB. Photo by Danielle Denoncourt

Message from the Chair

When I first came on as a Board member I had no clue what environmental issues affected my area and what I could offer to the organization. I just knew I wanted to try and create a healthy environment for our youth to inherit and one our elders could enjoy and be proud of. Each of us has personal interests and goals and we are blessed the core of them seems to be to provide safe, clean drinking water and maintaining and excelling in riparian area protection. It wasn't too long ago, no one knew what the word riparian, bog, fen etc. meant but... Kudos to you all... you now know what they are.

I believe the common goal of developing the Integrated Watershed Management Plan over these last 4 years, has brought us as a Council together. I have witnessed the Board's commitment and dedication to the task and I thank each of you. Bringing 22 sectors together to create a tool future generations of decision makers can use as a guiding document has been an educating and rewarding task. With stakeholder, Government and public input I can say it is truly an honor to see the words inscribed in our Vision Statement realized.

Vision Statement: The Lesser Slave Watershed, including its lake and rivers, is a bond that brings communities together, is a part of each citizen's life, is a prime asset and renewable resource, and is a generator of economic development.

In June 2016 bylaw changes were made to include local First Nations and Metis on the board. This has increased our knowledge base and encouraged cooperation in all sectors making me extra proud that our Mission statement is not simply words on a paper. We will continue to build relationship and work with aboriginal communities moving forward in watershed work.

Thank you to Meghan Payne who, in her 9th year continues to work hard to make sure our Council is operating in an accountable and transparent manner. Her professionalism is truly an asset to us all on this Council. Our new recruit Kaylyn Jackson, Watershed Coordinator has helped make the LSWC a household name with her exceptional skills in delivering stewardship and educational programs. This past year has been very successful in raising our profile through various events and media.

Tammy Kaleta, LSWC Chair



Board and Staff at our 2016 Annual General Meeting

Top left to right: Murray de Alexandra, Claude Smith, Shane Knutson, Brad Pearson, Todd Bailey, Rodrick Willier, Lylly Halcrow, Meghan Payne, Spencer Zelman, Mark Missal. Front left to right: Brian Rosche, Scott Mayston, Jamie Bruha, Joy McGregor, Tammy Kaleta, Kaylyn Jackson.

2016-17 LSWC Board of Directors

Sector or Organization	Board Member	Alternate Member
Big Lakes County	Robert Nygaard	<i>Ron Matula</i>
MD of Lesser Slave River	Brian Rosche	<i>Brad Pearson</i>
Town of Slave Lake	Mark Missal	<i>Joy McGregor</i>
Town of High Prairie	Linda Cox	<i>Brian Gilroy</i>
Alberta Environment and Parks	Jamie Bruha	<i>Arin MacFarlayne - Dyer</i>
Driftpile First Nation	Peter Freeman	
Sucker Creek First Nation	Rodrick Willier	
Tourism and Recreation	Tammy Kaleta (Chair)	
Oil and Gas Industry	Bob Popick (Vice Chair)	<i>Spencer Zelman</i>
Cottage and Cabin Owners	Shane Knutson	
Agriculture	Claude Smith	
Forest Industry	Todd Bailey	<i>George Gross</i>
Non-Government Organizations	Jule Asterisk	<i>Vacant</i>
Commercial Fishermen	Murray De Alexandra	<i>Kevin Bell</i>
Member at Large	Tony McWhannel	<i>Bob Jackle</i>
Trappers	Scott Mayston	<i>Vacant</i>

The Lesser Slave Watershed Council is a nonprofit (2007), charitable organization (2010) governed by a Board of Directors. The LSWC was recognized at the formal Watershed Planning and Advisory Council under the Water for Life Strategy January 1, 2007 and began to receive operational and project support grants from the province. The directors are responsible for the oversight and success of the organization. The Directors, while representing a sector or organization, are individually accountable to the LSWC organization. The Directors provide governance and strategic oversight to the Staff while bringing their experiences and knowledge of the watershed to the table making for well-rounded inclusive discussion. Board of Directors are guided by the Society Bylaws (2016) and the LSWC's Board of Director Terms of Reference which can be found online at www.lswc.ca.

Summary of Operations

From April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 the LSWC board and staff worked to implement our operational plan and meet our four strategic goals. Below is a summary of accomplishments and activities from our 2016-17 fiscal year.

Goal 1. Establish an ongoing collaborative planning and management framework for the Lesser Slave Watershed.

- The LSWC hired Palliser Environmental Services Ltd. To work with the LSWC to develop the Integrated Watershed Management Plan.
- Alan Dolan & Associates were hired to support communication and engagement activities to support the development of the Integrated Watershed Management Plan.
- The LSWC held stakeholder workshops in High Prairie and Slave Lake in the fall of 2016 to review the first draft of the IWMP and have discussion about the goals and objectives of the plan.
- The IWMP Steering Committee met four times throughout the year to ensure the project was on track and major deliverables were met.
- The LSWC Technical Advisory Committee met online four times at key project intervals and provided input to the watershed plans development.
- Ongoing meetings and communication with First Nations and Metis in the watershed.
- The LSWC established a Municipal Working Group for the watershed planning process and the group met twice to discuss the draft plan.
- Alberta Environment and Parks staff provided technical and planning support as well as data throughout the year to support the planning process.

Goal 2. Facilitate watershed research that addresses issues and enables management actions within the watershed.

- The LSWC **distributed over 100 copies of the 2015 Technical Report** summary document throughout the year, sharing the most current watershed information with people in the basin.
- The LSWC Executive Director **participated in the Athabasca River Basin Initiative Project** on the Logistical Advisory Committee and as a member of the working group throughout 2016.
- Ducks Unlimited Canada provided the LSWC with a detailed wetland inventory for our watershed to support the watershed plan's development.
- Laid the groundwork to work with the Alberta WaterSmart Athabasca River Basin integrated hydrologic model to support the watershed plan.
- The LSWC developed a long term water tributary monitoring plan to implement in 2017 and received \$13,000 in sponsorship to support the project.

Goal 3. Promote watershed awareness and literacy through education, outreach and stewardship programs.

- The LSWC **provided \$10,000 in funding** along with staff to support our ongoing partnership with the Lesser Slave Forest Education Society.
- The LSWC worked with the **Caring for Our Watersheds** program to create a short narrated video about our watershed for educational purposes.

Continued.....

- The Little Green Thumbs Program, supported by Agriculture in the classroom Saskatchewan, grew to include **eleven classroom gardens** this year.
- The LSWC partnered with non profit rainbarrel.ca to sell and distribute rain barrels made from recycled poly drums in our watershed. We sold a total of **183 rain barrels** in 2016.
- The LSWC, PCBFA and Big Lakes County hosted a **Watering System Field tour** in September 2016 with 26 producers.
- We engaged with **495 people** at the 2016 High Prairie Gun and Sportsman Show, **354 people** at the 2016 Slave Lake Chamber of Commerce Trade Show.
- The LSWC received a two year Watershed Restoration and Resiliency Grant from the province for **\$37,500** to support on the ground watershed enhancement projects. The LSWC and our partners **initiated 3 riparian enhancement and conservation projects** with local producers.
- The LSWC partnered with Alberta Parks staff for 16 events and camps throughout the year.
- The LSWC and our partners delivered **35 classroom presentations and field trips** with schools in the watershed.
- The LSWC participated in **15 community events** including trade shows, farmers markets, fishing tournaments, etc.
- The LSWC staff **engaged with hundreds of people around Lesser Slave Lake** during our lakeshore visits to local boat launches and campgrounds. We distributed Stewardship Handbooks, Aquatic Invasive Species information and Respect Our Lake resources.
- Thanks to funding from TD friends of the Environment the LSWC was able to provide our **Watershed Wise kits to 5 local schools**.
- The LSWC is growing our Social Media influence. At the end of March 2017 we had **307 Facebook “likes” and 618 followers on twitter**.
- The LSWC had **11 radio interviews** on 93.5 Real Country to promote healthy watershed.
- The LSWC and RBC Staff in the watershed organized **community clean ups** for Devonshire Beach and Jay Cee Park. The LSWC received **\$2000 in community donations** from the RBC.
- The LSWC held its 9th **Annual General Meeting** in June of 2016 and **30 people** joined us at the Slave lake Inn.
- The LSWC, Cows and Fish and PCBFA **hosted a “Living with Beavers” workshop** in High Prairie in October 2016 and has 22 participants.
- Throughout the 2016-17 year the LSWC estimates we **made connections** with at least **3,372 people** through our extension efforts.
- The LSWC participated in **3 Water North Coalition meetings** throughout the year and participated on the Public Education Sub Committee.
- The LSWC **celebrated World Water Day** 2017 with an office open house on March 22, 2017.



Goal 4. Establish a strong operational model in which the LSWC is sustainable, has clear governance, capacity and funding.

- LSWC's staff and four of the Board attended the January 2016 Environment and Parks led WPAC forum in Leduc, AB.
- The LSWC held nine regular meetings of the board and an annual general meeting in the last fiscal year.
- LSWC all grant and financial reporting throughout the year as required by our funders.
- LSWC's Watershed Coordinator attended the provincial education and outreach staff gathering to work on collaborative WPAC education initiatives and learn the successes of the other WPAC's.
- The LSWC Board of Directors reviewed and approved the 2017-18 operational plan and budget prior to the February 13, 2017 Environment and Parks grant application deadline.
- LSWC Society Annual Return and Canadian charitable Annual return were completed for the fiscal year.
- The Town of Slave Lake and Town of High Prairie contributed a total of \$10,000 to the LSWC and we received \$15,000 from Big Lakes County's Ag. Service Board in Environmental Stream funding in 2016.
- Executive Director attended quarterly WPAC manager meetings to address provincial scale collaborative opportunities and discuss common challenges.
- The LSWC began using Nation Builder web software to hold organize all of the organizations contacts, create and send newsletters, and host our website. Nation Builder will improve staff efficiency and organization and allow us to have everything in one easy to use platform.
- Board of Directors participated in a governance and policy workshop to enable to the development of LSWC policy and procedure documents

Alberta WPACs



The eleven **Watershed Planning and Advisory Council's** in Alberta are provincial *Water for Life* partners and also work together collaboratively to tackle provincial scale watershed issues and develop WPAC education and outreach programs for delivery across Alberta.

Learn more at: www.albertawpacs.ca

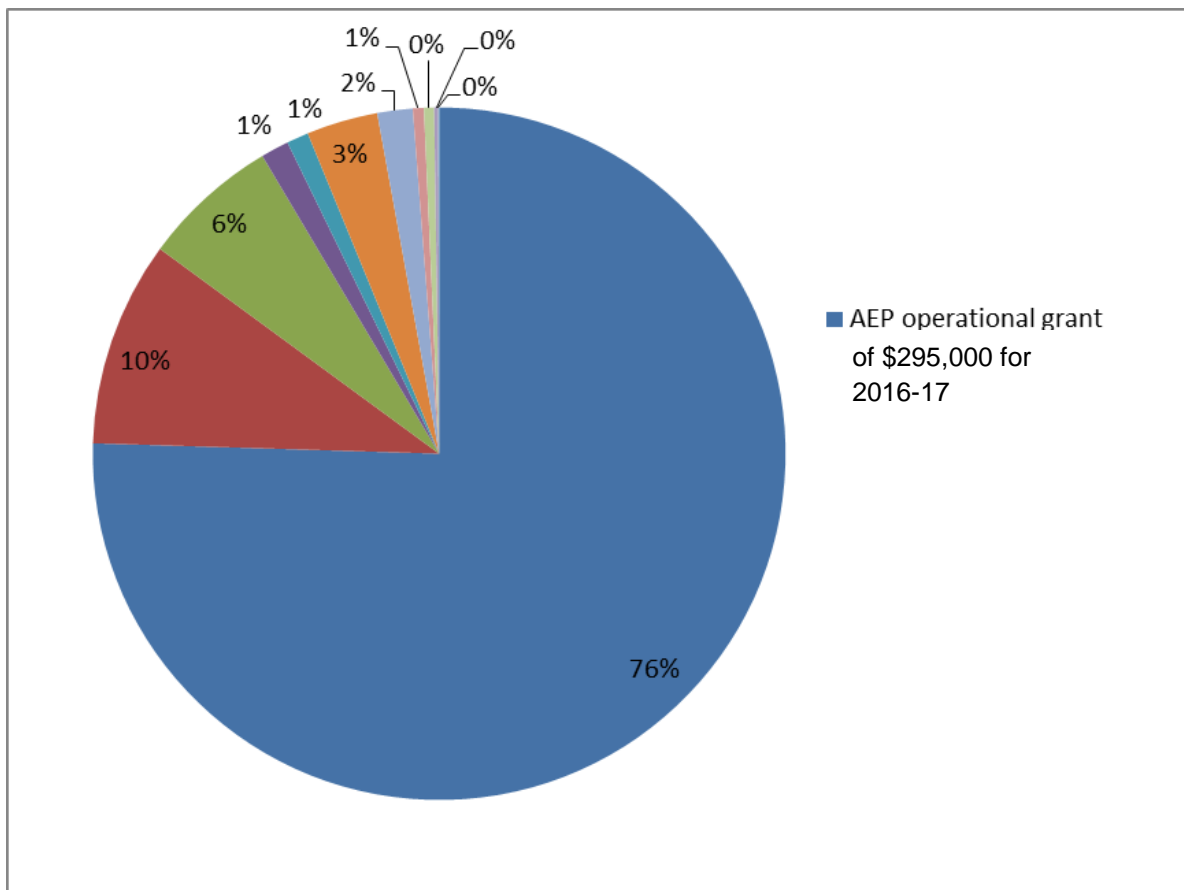


Financial Report

The LSWC receive the bulk of its support from the Government Alberta through the Water for Life partnership grants. The LSWC also receives support from other grantors and foundations, through sponsorship and in kind from many people and businesses.

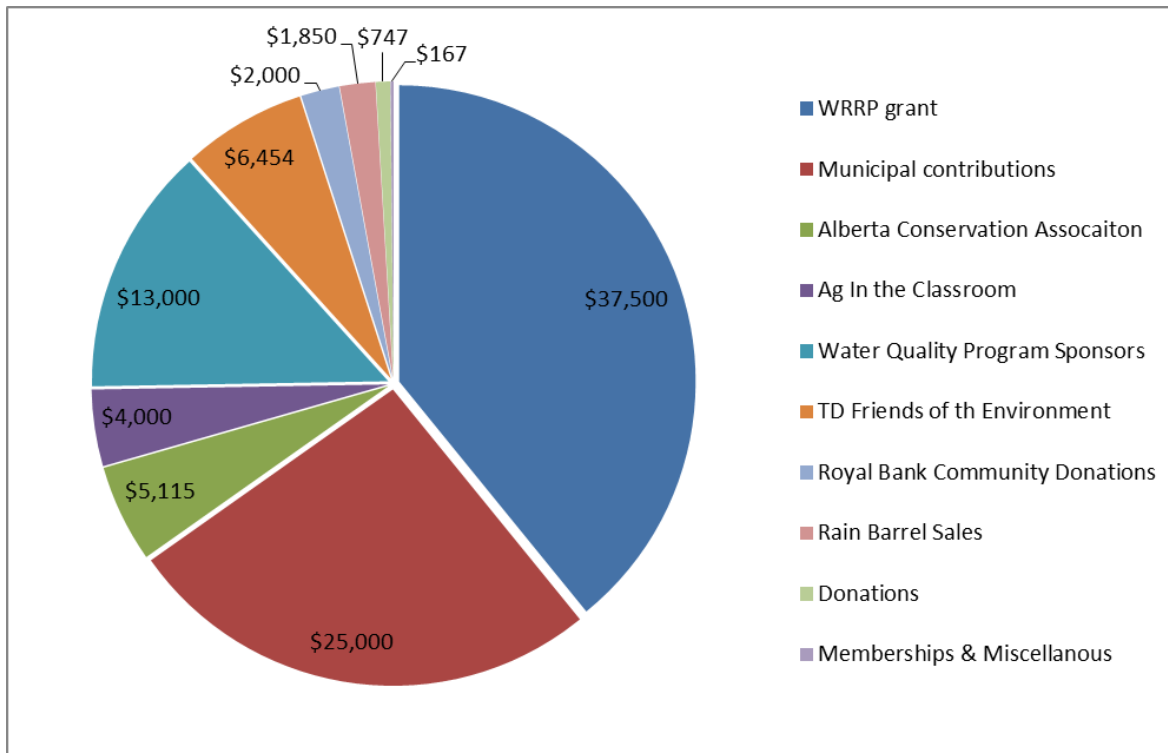
2016-17 Total Revenue

The below graph show the LSWC's total revenue broken down by percentage of total revenue.



Non-Operational Revenue

This graph shows a break down of the LSWC's non-operational revenue and sources for the 2016-17 fiscal year.



In Kind Support

The LSWC tracks all of the in kind support we receive from our partners, volunteers and committee members. Manpower contributions are calculated at \$45 per hour and travel expenses are calculated at \$0.535 per km.

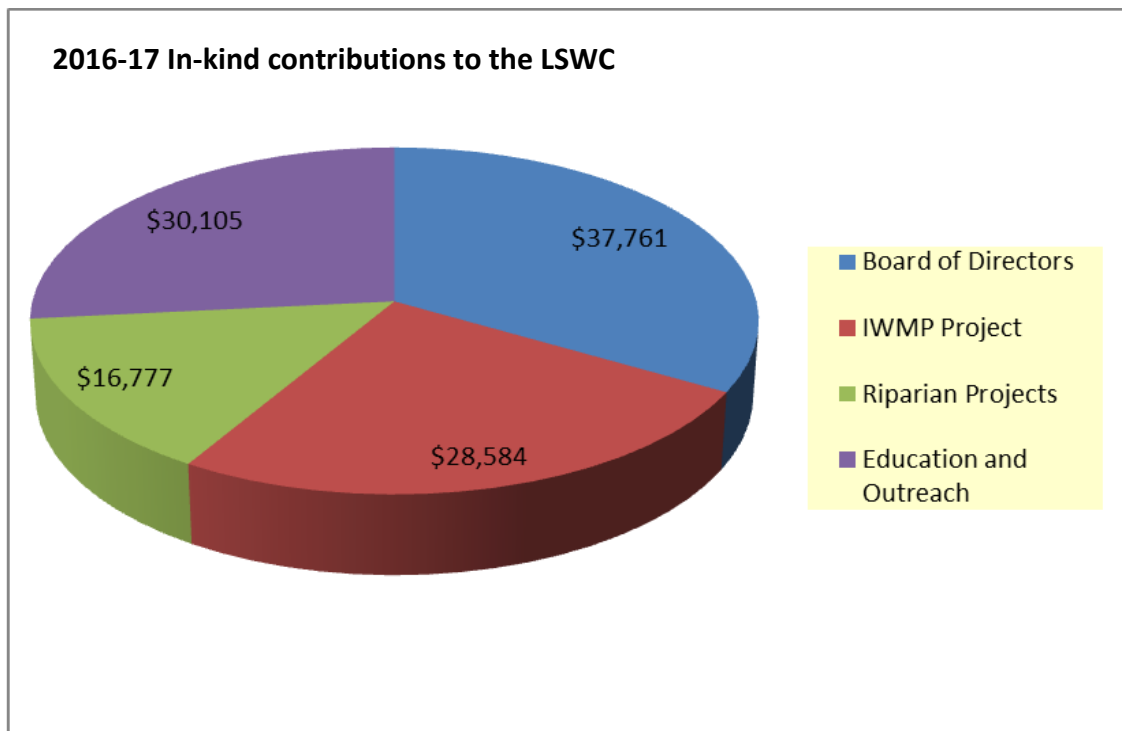
Directors contribute their time for meetings, review of correspondence and WPAC related events. They are all volunteers and we greatly appreciate their time.

The Integrated Watershed management Plan (IWMP) is a big project with many people involved. We have tracked time and travel contributions of the Steering Committee Members, Municipal Working Group Members, Technical Advisory committee members for each meeting, call and review of documents.

The LSWC works with many partners to deliver education and stewardship programming in the watershed. The in kind time contributions from teachers, educators, volunteers, and partner organizations help us achieve our goals of enhancing watershed literacy in our region.

The LSWC is working with Peace Country Beef and Forage Association, Big Lakes County, Cows and Fish, the High prairie Riparian Action team and landowners in the watershed on projects and events that will lead to watershed health improvements. We track in kind for these projects as well as a part of our grant reporting requirements.

The graph below breaks down the in kind contribution to the LSWC over the 2016-17 year.



Honorable Minister of Environment and Parks Shannon Phillips and Lesser Slave MLA Danielle Larivee presented the LSWC with a Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program grant in the amount of \$37,480 for project that will improve riparian and wetland health in the Lesser Slave Watershed throughout 2016 and 2017.

2016-17 Statement of Financial Position

Bobby's Accounting in Slave Lake, Alberta with support from Benjamin Dyck and Associates have completed our April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 financial review engagement. The LSWC's revenues and expenses are outlined below.

	2017	2016
RECEIPTS		
Provincial government grant income	\$332,480	\$142,500
Municipal government grant income	\$25,000	
Non government grant income	\$21,774	\$58,356
Donation income	\$13,726	\$100
Revenue deferred from previous period	\$64,900	\$93,373
Revenue deferred to subsequent period	(\$119,532)	(\$64,900)
	<u>\$338,348</u>	<u>\$229,429</u>
EXPENSES		
Advertising and promotion	\$12,835	\$16,056
Amortization	\$879	\$644
Donations	\$10,050	\$10,000
Insurance	\$3,862	\$3,887
Interest and bank charges	\$121	\$83
Office	\$8,185	\$6,027
Project expenses	\$141,883	\$91,610
Administration	\$1,220	\$1,200
GST expense	\$5,158	\$3,444
Professional fees	\$2,015	\$2,015
Office Rent	\$11,809	\$11,406
Repairs and maintenance	\$2,057	\$75
Salaries and benefits	\$145,824	\$131,931
Phone, fax, and web	\$4,834	\$4,804
Training	\$16,160	\$1,273
Travel	\$19,645	\$16,415
	<u>\$371,993</u>	<u>\$300,870</u>
DEFICIENCY OF RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	<u>(\$33,645)</u>	<u>(\$71,441)</u>

Watershed Resiliency and Restoration

In 2016 the LSWC was the recipient of a Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program grant from the Government of Alberta. These funds are allocated to on the ground riparian and wetland projects in the Lesser Slave Watershed that will improve or conserve riparian areas and wetlands. The LSWC initiated 3 landowner projects in summer 2016 and had riparian health inventories completed for each of them by Cows and Fish staff.

The LSWC works with Peace Country Beef and Forage Association, Big Lakes County Ag. Department, Cows and Fish, and the High Prairie Riparian Action team to promote the implementation of best management practices that will improve water quality, riparian health and producer operations.



In September 2016 the LSWC and our partners at PCBFA hosted a Watering Systems field tour for local producers. Marvin Jackson from Sundog Solar systems joined us and provided technical advice to our producers and provided advice on watering system solutions at two of the LSWC's project sites. Producers also received resources about the Growing Forward program and the opportunities available to them.



In October 2016 the LSWC and PCBFA hosted a Cows and Fish "Living with Beavers" workshop in High Prairie. Participants learned about the important role beavers play in water cycle and local ecosystems as well as strategies to manage and live in harmony with them.

Watershed Wise – tools for learning



Watershed Wise is an educational magnetic board which was created by the LSWC in fall of 2015. Since then it has become one of our most effective outreach tools. Whether at the beach, in a classroom it is easy to set up and show off. Demonstrating the different activities that take place on our landscape and how there is always a way to work with the environment rather than against it. Watershed Wise promotes best management practise and shows that watershed stewardship is everyone's responsibility.

Thanks to support from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation we were able to give our Watershed Wise magnetic board to 5 schools within our watershed. St. Andrew's Catholic School science teachers pictured on the right receiving and learning about their Watershed Wise package.



Working hand in hand with our Lesser Slave Lake Stewardship Handbook, Watershed Wise helped make our summer outreach a huge success throughout 2016. Kids really love checking out our resources and their parents learn along the way too!

Out and About in the Watershed



We got creative this summer and entered the High Prairie Elks Pro Rodeo Parade, creating a gigantic walleye from scratch! Executive Director Meghan Payne and volunteer Shauna Gauthier rode with the LSWC and the Alberta WPAC's flag.



We met and talked to hundreds of people about the watershed over the summer while we were out at the Lake.



The High Prairie Municipal Library invited us to participate in their summer reading program and teach the kids about healthy watersheds.



Throughout 2016 we focused on getting our messages out to a broader audience. We worked with Real Country FM High Prairie doing a series of advertisements and interviews.



From watershed models (pictured above) to erosion, fish lifecycles and wastewater we've got a classroom presentation for almost everything.

Little Green Thumbs

In 2016 the LSWC was able to support the Little Green Thumbs program in 11 classrooms around the watershed.



Agriculture in the Classroom
Little Green Thumbs is trademarked
and managed by AITC-SK

Founding
Partner
Agrium

Agriculture for Life provided funding and resources to continue this great indoor gardening program. Our Watershed Coordinator Kaylyn Jackson worked with teachers to ensure the program ran smoothly, made classroom visits to do presentations, and participated in yearend celebrations.



The LGT indoor garden set up allows students and teachers to learn about agriculture, environmental stewardship and healthy eating. Students are always excited to harvest their own veggies after months of hard work.



Christie's Greenhouse has been a fantastic supporter of the Little Green Thumbs Program and LSWC. From providing her expertise to help us grow successful gardens, donating plants for classroom gardening activities and opening up the greenhouse for educational tours and scavenger hunts. (pictured on the left)

CHRISTIE'S
GARDENS & GREENHOUSES

Partners in Environmental Education



The LSWC has been working with the Lesser Slave Forest Education Society (LSFES) to deliver curriculum based environmental education across our watershed since 2010. Water related programs make up 25% of the LSFES's work and the LSWC is able to contribute financially to the LSFES along with providing our staff lead programs and presentations as instructors.

Our programs include:

- "Marsh Monsters" or aquatic invertebrate studies
- Water Quality testing
- Spruce Bog Ecology Hikes
- Snow Studies

Fish Life Cycles

- and more based on requests



For a lot of these programs we do both a classroom portion to teach the curriculum portion of the unit then take kids out to local bogs, marshes and beaches so they get a chance for hands on learning and exploration.

The LSWC also participated in events such as Christmas in the Park and Frost Fest with the Boreal Center for Bird Conservation



Around the watershed - pictures from our friends



Devonshire Beach baby. By Cori Klassen



Sunset at Jousard, AB. By Angie Savill



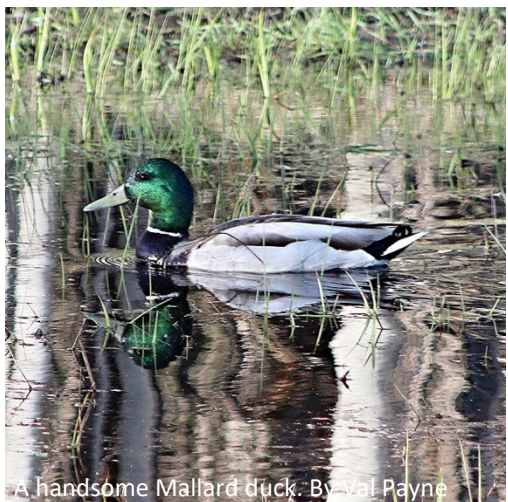
Family of Canada Geese By Val Payne



Splashing in the waves. By Cori Klassen



Sunset fishing. By Michelle Zahacy



A handsome Mallard duck. By Val Payne




Get in touch with the LSWC


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