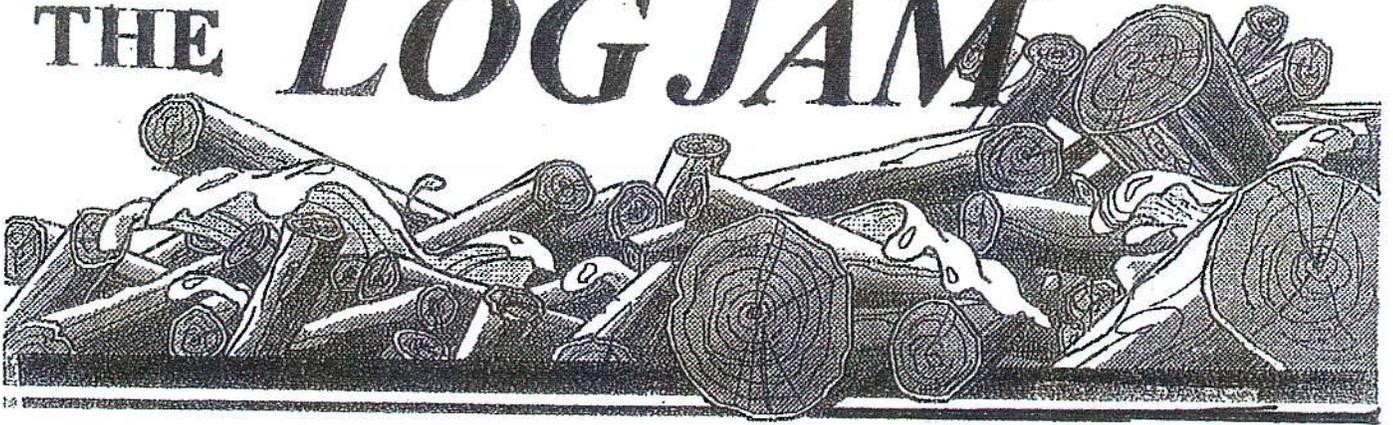


# THE LOG JAM



Published by the Woodlot Association of Alberta (WAA)

September, 2013

## *Wisdom*

*There is a wisdom here  
That man need learn.  
To live in one place  
For a thousand years,  
Maintaining balance with ones surroundings,  
Remaining healthy,  
Providing shelter, security and nourishment  
For other forms of life,  
And when death finally comes,  
Leaving the place not impoverished  
But richer and gentler for your being there  
Is a feat which has been beyond the grasp  
Of any of man's ages,  
Yet has been an integral part  
Of this trees consciousness  
For millennia.*

*Tom Bender*



### ***Our Mission Statement :***

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**"The Woodlot Association of Alberta's purpose is to promote leadership in sustainable forest management by encouraging the development of private forest by increasing awareness of their inherent social, economic and environmental values."**

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Advertisements in the News Letter may be purchased at the following rates:  
**Full page - \$100.00; One half page - \$50.00; Quarter page - \$25.00**

To place an advertisement - write, draw, etc. how you want it to appear in the News Letter, and fax or e-mail to the editor.

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### **Contact - E-Mail, Address's and Phone**

#### **Woodlot Association Office**

Box 303  
Beaverlodge, AB  
TOH - OCO

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E - Mail - [rjolson@telus.net](mailto:rjolson@telus.net)

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Website-----[www.woodlot.org](http://www.woodlot.org)

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Phone ---- 1 - 800 - 871 - 5680

#### **News Letter Editor of "The Log Jam"**

E-Mail---[jurgen.moll@xplornet.com](mailto:jurgen.moll@xplornet.com)

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Phone-----1-780-778-4272

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Box 84 , Whitecourt , AB , T7S-1N3

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### **Board of Directors**

**Peter Mills, Pesident**  
Beaverlodge (780)354 - 8226

**Jurgen Moll, Vice President**  
Whitecourt (780) 778 - 4272

**Louise Horstman, Secretary**  
Morinville (780) 939 - 5858

**Bernice Cassady, Treasurer**  
Edmonton (780) 455 - 9727

**Larry Nofziger, Director**  
Elmworth (780) 354-2710

**Warren Stewart, Director**  
Valleyview (780) 524 - 3178

**Herb Cerezke, Director**  
Edmonton (780) 435 - 6007

**Pieter van der Schoot, Past President**  
Breton (780) 696 2436

## Up Coming Events

Board of Directors - Teleconference - September 29 / 13  
November 24 / 13  
January 26 / 14  
February 23 / 14  
All calls are at 7pm

Board of Directors **meeting** at Whitecourt **March 15 / 14**

Annual General **Meeting** to be held **October 19 & 20** in Whitecourt

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## Classified Ads

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### R.W. & SONS CONTRACTING

#### On-Site Lumber Mill Work

Log owners have your logs band sawed into valuable lumber.

Also assortment of Dry Piled Birch, white poplar & spruce lumber for sale.

Call Bob @ 780-963-4063

*This space is*

*Available for*

*Your Ad*

# Annual General Meeting (AGM)

**When:** October 19 and 20, 2013

**Where:** Whitecourt, Alberta

**Location:** Meeting in the Forest Interpretive Centre

**Time:** Meeting start at 10am the 19th, end 3pm the 20th

**Cost:** Is \$ 40.00, this includes 2-lunches and banquet  
Is \$20.00 for the banquet only

This is really important **If you are going to attend the meeting please let me know in order that I can tell the people that are doing the luncheon and banquet to give them the number attending.** (E-mail - [jurgen.moll@xplornet.com](mailto:jurgen.moll@xplornet.com) - or -1-780-778-4272)

**Don't send the registration fee these can be paid at time of registration.**

## Agenda

### October !9 Saturday

1000 - 1030	Registration and coffee	L. Horstman
1030 - 1200	Meeting call to order/Welcome/Introductions	P. Mills
	Approval/amendments of agenda	"
	Approval of 2012 AGM minutes	L. Horstman
	Determining a Quorum	P. Mills
	Motion to appoint audit committee	"
	Presidents report	"
	1st call for resolutions from the floor	"
	1st call for nominations for the board	"

Motion to ratify and accept actions of 2012/13 Board of Directors

News Letter ( Logjam )

J. Moll

1200 - 1300 Luncheon - sponsored by Woodlands County

1300 - 1500 AWES Report

Peter Van der Shoot

"Bird protection in the oil sands" Dr. Colleen Cassady St. Clair

Financial report

B. Cassady

Change of office provider to Olson Management

P. Mills

2nd call for resolutions from the floor

2nd call for nominations for the board

P. Mills

1500 - 1530 Coffee and Visiting

1530 - 1700 Update on the presentation made to the ADM on  
Leasing white zone land for a woodlot

P. Mills

3rd call for resolutions from the floor

P. Mills

3rd call for nominations for the board

CFWO report

P. Mills

Looking beyond the trees: "Cascading effects of mountain  
pine beetle in a forest ecosystem"

Dr. J.C. St. Clair

1830 - 2000 Banquet at the ROADHOUSE (upstairs)

After Dinner Speaker "Fire Smart to protect the Woodlot"

Kevin Quintilio/RPF

### **October 20 Sunday**

0930 - 1000 Coffee and visiting

1130 - 1200 Presentation on invasive weeds by Seena Handel/ RPF

1200 - 1230 Luncheon sponsored by the Town of Whitecourt

1230 - 1500 Election of members to the board Selected member

### Open forum

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1500 Meeting adjourned

There are some 15 hotels and motels, plus about some 20 eateries in Whitecourt. It may be advisable to reserve a room well in advance, that is if the oil industry gets busy as they could use up most of the rooms.

## HOTELS and MOTELS

### Admiral Inn & Suites

5003 - 50 Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.2316  
www.admiralinn@suites.com

### Alaska Highway Motel

351 - Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.4136

### Days Inn & Suites

5406 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.2399  
www.daysinn.ca

### Glenview Motel

3242 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.2376

### Green Gables Inn

3327 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.4547  
www.greengablesinn.ca

### Holiday Inn Express & Suites

4744 - 49 Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.2512  
www.hihwhitecourt.com

### Lakeview Inn & Suites

3275 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.706.2349  
www.lakeviewhotels.com

### Quality Inn

5420 - 49 Avenue, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.5477  
www.choicehotels.ca

### Renford Inn

3559 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.3133  
www.renfordinn.com

### Ritz Cafe & Motor Inn

5032 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.5055  
www.ritzmotorinn.com

### Royal Oak Inn

3805 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.4004  
www.theroyaloakinn.com

### Snuggle Inn

5028 - 49 Avenue  
Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.5544

### Super 8 Motel

4121 Kepler Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.8908  
www.super8whitecourt.com

### Western Budget 1 & 2

3405 Kepler Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.706.2020  
www.westernbudgetmotel.com

### Western Budget 3

3401 - 25 Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.6692  
www.westernbudgetmotel.com

### Whitecourt Inn & Suites

3415 Caxton Street, Whitecourt, Alberta  
Phone: 780.778.4844  
www.wh3courttinn.com

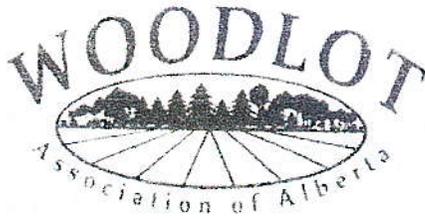
## Speakers Bio's

**Dr. Colleen Cassady St.Clair:** Is a professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Alberta. She grew up in Edmonton and traveled to New Zealand and the USA for graduate studies before returning to the U of A. She and her graduate students study how animals move through human- dominated landscapes and experiment with methods to reduce human-wildlife conflict. *Her talk will describe a monitoring and research program that resulted from a 2008 event in which several hundred birds died on an oil sands tailings pond.*

**Dr. JC Cahill:** Is a professor at the University of Alberta. He received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1997 and has been working at the U of A since 1999. He supervises a large research group of students, focusing on topics that include from plant foraging behaviour, mountain pine beetle impacts on soil ecology climate change effects on rangeland sustainability, and pollution biology. *His talk will focus on a large project underway near Grande Prairie investigating interaction among mountain pine beetle, soil-fungi, soil chemistry, and tree regeneration.*

**Seena Handel RPF:** Is SRD's, Forest Health Officer for the Upper Athabasca Region. She attended the University of Alberta and received a Bachelors of Science in Forest Management in 2000. Her work experience includes cut block lay-out, PSP measurements, logging equipment operator, logging forman. Currently as the Forest Health Officer her portfolio includes mountain pine beetles, forest damaging insects, invasive plants, and abiotic damage to forest cover. She has also worked in the Ft. McMurray area for shorter periods. Seena is married has two boys and lives on an acreage near Mayerthorpe. *Her talk will be on invasive plants that could invade woodlots, and other forest pests.*

**Kevin Quintilio RPF:** Is SRD's, Forestry Program Manager, in Whitecourt for the Woodlands Area. He attended the University of Alberta and received a Bachelors of Science in Forest Business Management in 2004, then took employment with SRD. His responsibilities are the implementation and delivery of the Forest Protection, Forest Management, and Forest Health, programs. Throughout his career he has worked extensively in planning and implementation of wildfire management plans, prescribed fire disturbances on the landscape and FireSmart communities, He is a certified type 1 Incident Commander assigned to fight active wildfires in all areas of the Province, Canada or Internationally. *His talk will be on Woodlots and the FireSmart Program.*



## CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 07- \_\_\_\_\_

Where As, *(Describe the issue, basis, or background to the Resolution)*

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**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors give consideration to:  
*(Describe what it is you wish in terms of addressing your issue or the background)*

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Moved by \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Only Woodlot Association members in good standing are permitted to Move and Second Resolutions to be tabled at the Annual General Meeting. During the introduction of the Resolution at the Annual General Meeting the proponent may be required to speak to the Resolution for clarification and respond to questions. All Resolutions are provided to the Board of Directors for consideration



## Nomination Form

Directors of the Woodlot Association of Alberta

### Nomination

I, \_\_\_\_\_ being a member in good standing of the Woodlot

Association of Alberta, do hereby nominate \_\_\_\_\_  
as Director for the :2014 - 2016 term.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Nominator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Supporting Member**

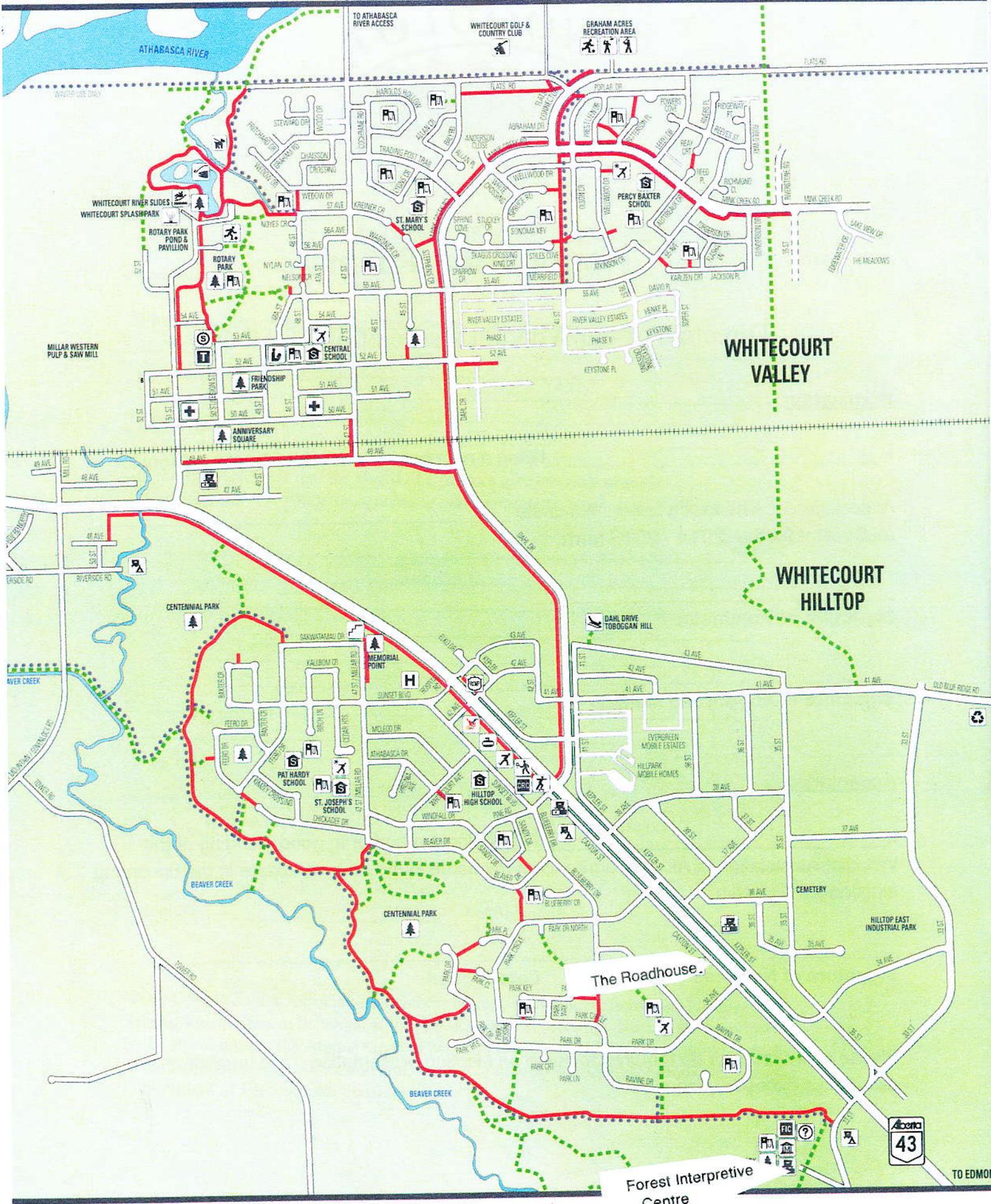
### Acceptance

I, \_\_\_\_\_ being a member in good standing of the  
Woodlot Association of Alberta, agree to let my name stand as a candidate in the upcoming  
election for Directors.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Nominee**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date Signed**

Please note: you may be required to make an election presentation if the number of  
candidates exceeds vacancies.



ATHABASCA RIVER  
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TO ATHABASCA RIVER ACCESS

WHITECOURT GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

GRAHAM ACRES RECREATION AREA

WHITECOURT RIVER SLIDES  
WHITECOURT SPLASHPARK

MILLAR WESTERN PULP & SAW MILL

WHITECOURT VALLEY

WHITECOURT HILLTOP

CENTENNIAL PARK

CENTENNIAL PARK

The Roadhouse

Forest Interpretive Centre



TO EDMONTON

## Presidents Message

*Pete Mills - President*

Hello everyone;

Welcome to another issue of your LOGJAM! I hope everyone has had both a relaxing and productive summer - maybe a chance to get away with the family. In my case we managed to head back east to visit a couple of ailing family members, spend time with my dad (90 yrs old and going strong) and visit a whole bunch of folks on my wife's side of the family. A great visit but 10,000+ km is a lot of driving.

The big event coming up, of course, is our Annual General Meeting. As you will see further on in this edition we have elected to hold it a bit earlier this year so look for it on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of October in Whitecourt. Obviously we are still working on finalizing the details of the agenda but you will find an early and somewhat tentative version here in the LOGJAM so please mark the dates and I'll look forward to seeing everyone there. One point I should bring up is that unlike the past couple of years with the dormitory at Hinton, this year everyone will be making their own motel reservations. Please don't leave it until the last moment as motels in Whitecourt can fill up very quickly and very early with oil patch activity.

The other main news item, that some of you are probably already aware of, is that we have changed the provider for our office support. For years we have used RISA (Resource Industry Suppliers Association) in Edmonton to provide this however that contract had expired so over the past spring and summer we did a thorough review of our needs and costs. This resulted in a request for a new quotation with the result that the new provider is Olson Office Management Services located here in Beaverlodge and a substantial cost saving over our previous supplier. I have known Judy and watched her business grow steadily for over 20 years so I have every confidence that her and her staff will be able to handle all of our needs. We are still in the process of getting a few files moved over but I think the overall transition has been pretty smooth to date.

Once again, should there be articles that you would like to see or better still that you would like to write please don't hesitate to contact any of your directors or our editor, Jurgen Moll directly. In the meantime if there is anything that either I or any of the other directors can help you with please don't hesitate to contact us or the WAA office.

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Capital punishment is as fundamentally wrong as a cure for crime,  
as charity is wrong as a cure for poverty. - Henry Ford

## APPLICATION *for* LIFE TIME MEMBERSHIP

At the last AGM a resolution was passed to institute a Life Time Membership (LTM) for those who have:

- a) Been a member in good standing of the WAA for 10 years.
- b) Are 75 years old.
- c) If disabled or ill and unable to work the age restriction would not be used and the LTM could be given at any age, as long as the length of member is met.

In order to issue these LTM in an orderly manner the board has set the following system for those who meet the criteria to make application for the LTM.

- 1) Members who meet the criteria and which to become a LTM should write a letter or e-mail to our office stating a) their date of birth b) the date they became a member of the WAA .
- 2) These applications will be reviewed by the board prior to the upcoming AGM and will invite the applicants to attend the AGM where the LTM will be presented. For those who are unable to attend their certificate will be mailed to them.

We would like to get a picture of the member and his/her spouse along with a bio to print in the Log Jam

Just a reminder that the WAA administration will not initiate applications for members who meet the criteria. It will be up to members to make their own application for LTM.

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*Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everyone,  
I think is a much greater poverty than the person who has  
nothing to eat.*

*Mother Teresa*

**Give the Gift that Lasts**  
( *Reminder Christmas is not that far away* )

This an opportunity for you to give a friend, neighbor, or relative, whom you think would like to develop a patch of brush that is on their land into a Woodlot. A one year membership to the [Woodlot Association of Alberta](#), for a reduced rate of \$20.00.

How can you do this, Clip out the gift certificate application (*below*) fill it out and mail it to [Jurgen Moll, Box 84, Whitecourt, Alberta, T7S-1N3](#), along with your cheque of \$20.00 (*make cheque out to the Woodlot Association of Alberta*)

*We will then send your candidate a certificate that he/she is now a member of the WAA for one year. Gifted to them by your self , along with a copy of the Log Jam .*

=====

I \_\_\_\_\_ would like to buy a one year membership to the Woodlot Association of Alberta as a gift at the reduced rate of \$20.00,

For: Mr. / Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ of  
\_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E -mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a cheque for \$20.00 made out to the WAA

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Riparian Areas and Best Management Practices

## What are Riparian Areas?

*Richard Rothwell*

“Riparian areas are ecosystems that occur along watercourses or water bodies. They are different from surrounding upslope lands. Soils in riparian areas are normally wet to moist throughout the year and the depth to the water table is shallow. Vegetation in riparian areas is characterized by trees and plants that grow well in moist, cool soil conditions (phreatophytes ~ water loving). Riparian areas are found on floodplains, adjacent to streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands.

## What are Best Management Practices?

“Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practices determined to be the most efficient, practical, and cost-effective measures identified to guide a particular activity or to address a particular problem.” BMPs for the protection of riparian areas are specific practices or activities used to reduce or control the impacts of land use (e.g. forestry, agriculture) on water bodies from nonpoint sources (NPS) of pollution.

## Riparian Buffers and Guidelines

NPS pollution associated with forestry is caused by the removal of streamside vegetation, timber harvesting, road construction and mechanical site preparation for the planting of trees. Soil erosion and sediment transport into water bodies that results from road construction and traffic are the primary sources of NPS pollution on forested lands, contributing up to 90% of total sediment from forestry operations (U.S. EPA 2013).

The prevention of NPS pollution involves a combination of different practices designed to prevent the entry of pollutants into water bodies. The retention of riparian vegetation beside water bodies as buffers is one of many BMPs (Table 1) that can be used to reduce the impact of land use activities on the functions and services of riparian areas. Buffers are effective measures to control erosion, capture sediment, reduce the volume, velocity and/or erosive force of overland flow and storm runoff prevents erosion of channels, stream bank and streambeds. Buffers also sustain aquatic and terrestrial habitats, biological diversity and aesthetics.

Riparian management guidelines exist for most if not all jurisdictions in Canada and the United States (*cite sources*). Guidelines amongst these jurisdictions are similar in intent but variable given the unique nature of riparian areas and many variables to be considered in their design. The terminology for buffers is also variable. Common terms found in the literature include riparian management zones (RMZ), filter strips, buffer strips, riparian buffers, shade strips and stream management zones (SMZ).

**Table 1 Sources of pollution, pollutants and other impacts, BMP Examples** (*sources*)

Sources and Activity	Pollutants and Other Impacts	BMP Examples
Silviculture and Forestry Road construction and use, timber harvesting, mechanical equipment operation, prescribed burning, fertilizer and pesticide application	Sediment, nutrients from fertilizer application, chemicals from pesticide applications, temperature changes resulting from riparian vegetation removal, and sediment additions, and streamflow increases caused by vegetation removal	Broad based dips Cross Road Drainage Culverts, Haul Roads, Log Decks, Wood chipping, Portable Mill Locations, Re-vegetation of Disturbed Areas, Rolling Dips, Skid Trails, Stream Crossings, <b>Streamside Management Zones</b> , Salvage & Sanitation in SMZs, Water Bars, Ditching.

The following discussion outlines key steps and considerations for the design and creation of riparian buffers:

### 1. Planning

and depth of planning for woodlot owners will be less compared to forest companies that will be doing plans for many water bodies in their forest management areas. The objectives however will be similar,

## 2. Buffer Width

Little scientific information exists to support the use of one single buffer width for all sites because of: differences in groundwater, flow regimens (ephemeral, intermittent, perennial streams), aquatic and terrestrial species habitat requirements, stand structure of riparian forest, slope and the contrast (i.e. boundary) between riparian areas and adjacent terrestrial areas.

The effectiveness of buffers to mitigate NPS pollution increases with their width. Buffer widths should be extended on sites with greater slopes on low infiltration rates which are more prone to overland flow. Most of the potential benefits of riparian vegetation will occur within 5-30 m (15-100 feet) (cite sources) from the stream bank. Narrow widths are effective in the short term but wider buffers provide greater sediment control and are more effective over the long term.

Buffer widths can be fixed or variable. Fixed buffer widths are easier to apply in the field and on maps. Fixed widths commonly vary with respect to high water marks, slope conditions and water body size (e.g. streams, rivers, lakes). A disadvantage of fixed widths is that they are that may not be wide enough to protect riparian functions and services, or may be wider than what is needed for protection.

Variable buffers vary in width based on ecological and landscape principles, specific site conditions, intensity of adjacent land use, and the need to maintain and protect identified functions (Phillips et al 2001). Variable width buffers will be more costly as they require more site visits by experienced technical staff to identify and collect data to establish buffer boundaries. Variable width buffers are considered to provide more protection to riparian functions than fixed width buffers (Phillips et al (2001; Blinn and Kilgore 2001).

## 3. Residual Tree Retention

The amount of trees left in riparian buffer after harvesting is an important consideration with respect to protecting riparian functions and services. Two options for retention of residual trees are: 1) Leave residual trees uniformly distributed in the riparian area, or 2) Leave a higher proportion of residual trees along or near the streambank. Maximum protection is greatest where more trees are left along streambanks where they will continue to provide shading to maintain water temperature within normal ranges, provide woody debris for aquatic and terrestrial habitats, and promote bank stability. Residual trees left must be wind firm to prevent blow down.

The levels of residual tree retention in riparian buffers reported in a literature review of riparian management practices in the United States is highly variable. Residual tree retention is expressed in terms of basal area, crown closure, levels of shading and number of live conifer trees per 1000 feet for streams of different size (large and medium streams). Blinn and Kilgore (2001) report values of: 25-80 ft<sup>2</sup>/acre, 50 percent of crown closure, 50 percent of original canopy, 50% of original basal area, 670 percent of crown closure or 60 ft<sup>2</sup>/acre, 75 percent of pre-harvest shade on stream, 40 live conifer live trees/1000 feet (30 m) along large streams and 30 live trees/1000 feet (30 m) along medium streams.

## 4. Operational and Harvesting Guidelines

Operational considerations and practices focus primarily on the prevention of soil disturbance and exposure that can result in erosion and sediment transport and deposition in water bodies.

- **Buffer Design** addresses a number of different issues on the width and extent of buffers with respect to the size of streams or water bodies
  - **Buffer width (effectiveness)**
  - **Fixed width vs Variable Width**
  - **Forest Cover retention**
  - **Size of streams and water bodies**
  - **Slope conditions**
  - **Length of buffer along streams**

## Woodlot Library

As you may recall in the March issue I told you that the CFS was discontinuing their library which included the woodlot portion of the library. We the WAA got the material and gave it to the local library in Blue Ridge. Most of the material has now been cataloged and can now be obtained via the TRAC library system. You can do all this through the internet as follows.

Go to - [www.tracpac.ab.ca](http://www.tracpac.ab.ca) - and scroll or type in the subject you are looking for. Then when you find the book you want you can order it right there but you **must have** a TRAC library card.

If you have a card you will have to fill out, the user name and the password.

For the **user name** - put in the numbers but leave out the spaces that are under the barcode on the library card.

For the **password** - put in the last four numbers of your telephone number be sure to use the same number that you gave when you got your library card.

The book that you have ordered will be sent to your local library, who will contact you when the book is in and give you five days to pick it up.

For those who do not have a TRAC library card can still make use of this web site, you can scan it for books and when you find one that you want contact your local library who will order it for you.

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## Medicinal Plants

### BLACK SPRUCE

*Picea mariana* (Mill.) BSP

Evergreen tree; 10--90 ft. Needles stiff, crowded, 4-angled; dark-green, *mostly glaucous*. Cones short-oval to rounded; dull gray-brown. **Where found:** Woods. Canada to Pa., Va. mountains; Wisc.

**Uses:** American Indians poulticed inner bark on inflammations. Inner-bark tea a folk medicine for kidney stones, stomach problems, rheumatism. Resin poulticed on sores to promote healing. Needles used to make a beer that was drunk for scurvy. **Warning:** Sawdust, balsam (resin), and even the needles may produce dermatitis.

Inner bark, resin

Pine Family

## Urban sprawl is destroying farmland

Despite its huge area, Canada has relatively little dependable farmland. Good soil and a friendly climate are hard to find. So it seems like good news that on a clear day you can see about half the best agricultural land in Canada from the top of Toronto's CN Tower. If we're to feed our growing urban populations, having food lands close to where people live will be critical to sustaining local food security.



Some regions of the country, like the Golden Horseshoe surrounding Toronto, have been blessed with an abundance of Class 1 soils. But an increasing proportion of the best soils in the Golden Horseshoe and in most urbanized regions of Canada now lie beneath sprawling housing developments, highways, strip malls and other infrastructure. As urban communities have grown over the years, agricultural lands and natural areas have far too often been drained, dug up and paved over.

**According to a 2006 report by the David Suzuki Foundation**, our growing cities sprawl over what once was mostly farmland. Only 5 per cent of Canada's entire land base is suitable for growing food. At the same time, urban uses have consumed more than 7,400 square kilometres of dependable farmland in recent decades. That's an area almost three times the size of Prince Edward Island.

Almost half of Canada's urban base now occupies land that only a few generations ago was being farmed. For the most part, this land can't be used for agriculture again, despite efforts of city people to use community gardens, green roofs and even guerrilla gardening to grow food.

Though there are strong sprawl-busting policies in provinces such as Ontario, with its internationally renowned Greenbelt Act and Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan, prime farmland and rare ecosystems in the region, like wetlands, remain at risk from further urban development.

**A recent report by the David Suzuki Foundation** examined threats to farmland in a 94,000-hectare patchwork of farms, forests and wetlands circling Toronto and its surrounding suburbs, called the Whitebelt Study Area. The report warns that this productive mosaic of green space and rich farmland is at risk from the blistering pace of urban expansion in the Golden Horseshoe.

Municipalities there have proposed developing more than 10,000 hectares of the Whitebelt over the next three decades. This is in addition to 52,000 hectares of land the province had already approved for development before new policies to curb urban sprawl came into effect. Together, these lands are more than twice the area of the city of Mississauga.

Paving over remaining prime farmland and natural assets like wetlands is foolhardy. Studies show that near-urban croplands and farms in the Golden Horseshoe contribute billions of dollars in revenue to local economies each year, from a cornucopia of fruits and vegetables, beef, pork, dairy and award-winning wines.

And as the Foundation report shows, near-urban farmland and green space also represents a Fort Knox of additional natural benefits that we typically take for granted: trees clean the air, wetlands filter water and rich productive farmland soils store greenhouse gases.

Today, Ontario's towns and cities are at a crossroads. Down one path is continued low-density, creeping urban expansion. We know how this well-worn route looks: endless pavement, long commutes and traffic jams, not to mention the high social and ecological costs associated with such a wasteful form of urban design. Simply put, continued sprawl threatens the health and well-being of our communities and the ecosystems that sustain us.

In the other direction is an extraordinary new path: ending sprawl using the principles of smart growth and creating compact, higher-density communities serviced by public transit, bike paths and walking trails, and surrounded by local greenbelts of protected farmland and green space.

Our political leaders should seize this opportunity. While industry and developers will continue to pressure us to sacrifice our cultural and ecological heritage, together we must embark on a visionary path. We must protect near-urban nature and farmland and ensure the health and well-being of all Ontarians.

If we value local food and want to maintain the critical benefits that nature provides, we must put food and water first. That's why we're calling on municipalities and provincial governments to redouble their efforts to protect our remaining farmland and green space from costly and polluting urban sprawl.

## Our Woodlot

*Gary and Doreen Davis*

My father and mother purchased the half section of land, that my wife and I live on, from my uncle and aunt in 1944. It is located ten miles north of Rochford Bridge in the Connor Creek valley in an area affectionately known as Oat Meal Valley. It was mostly settled by Scots in the 1920s and 1930s, thus the name. The land lies on the slope of the valley and ranges from very hilly to some larger areas of fairly flat ground. The quarters run north and south and a tributary to Connor creek cross the land diagonally from the north east corner to the north west corner of the south quarter. About one half of the area is open ground and the rest remains forested. It is just a stroke of luck that a lot of the forested land was not turned into cultivation. In the late forties and fifties when my father was active in agriculture times were tough and the money was not there to get the clearing done.

We moved back to the land in 1980 when my father moved off the farm. We mainly focused on a cow calf operation and tried to maintain about forty head of cows. Extra land had to be rented for hay to carry our herd through the winters. No additional clearing was done and the forested area acres remain the same.

I remember a large sawmill set on the north quarter when I was a youngster and in the mid 50s my dad had a mill move in and sawed a large amount of the conifer. In the late 80s we had a logging firm come in and log out most of the poplar as just about all of the aspen was infected with hypoxylon canker. This area now has now regenerated with aspen and very heavy growth of white spruce to the point that it should almost be thinned. Around 1990 we needed a new barn and a neighbor had a log mizer, so he came in and we sawed enough lumber to frame it. That is about all of the logging history and not much has been done in the last 20 years.

We have been selling fire wood the last five years, from blow down and beaver kill. It is a struggle just to keep up. The family just enjoy having our own forest area and find it very relaxing to walk and quad through and have the beauty of the trees surround us.

## Pictures of - Gary Davies - Woodlot

### Shelter Belt



Started from seed collected from Swan Hills Lodgepole Pine  
Transplanted twice before coming to rest in our shelter belt

### Wood Pile



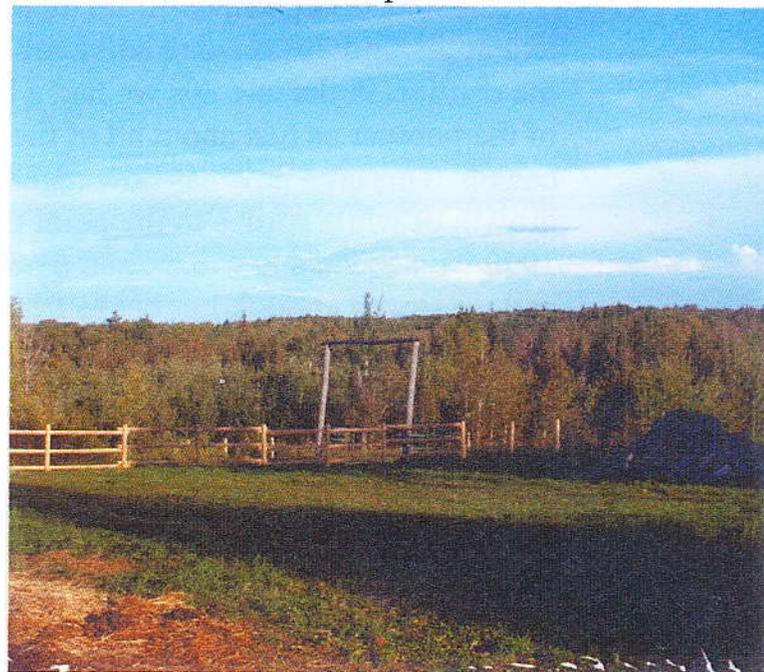
Start of fire wood to be sold in two years time  
Collected from wind throw and trees the beaver fell

### Regrowth Aspen



Regrowth in area that had poplar logged  
Overstory and under story spruce was protected as much as possible

### Landscape



Overlooking the area previously logged for poplar