

Respect our Lakes Updates

ALMS Conference

Janine Higgins, Community Engagement Lead

September 18, 2019

Agenda



Water Literacy Survey
Results



Respect our Lakes
Program Review
Results

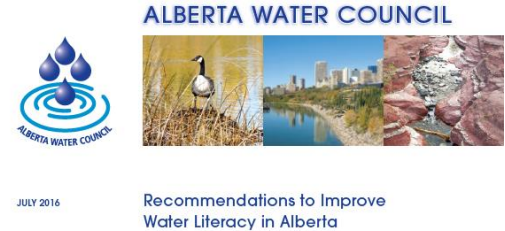


Water Literacy Survey

Lake questions

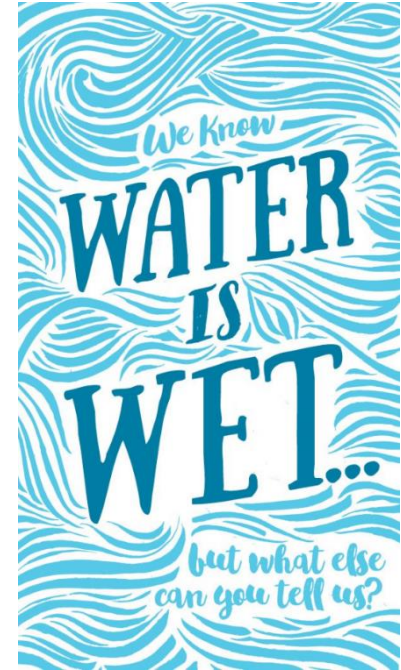
Recommendations to improve water literacy

- 5 recommendations made in April 2016
- Inventory of existing water education programs, products, research, assessments and organizations in Alberta
- A survey tool to assess water literacy levels



Survey Background

- Survey created by Alberta Water Council's Water Literacy Project Team
- Initially delivered by phone to 100 individuals across the province in 2015
- Put online for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19
- Survey was distributed through AEP social media accounts, WPACs, non-profit organizations, at tradeshow & events

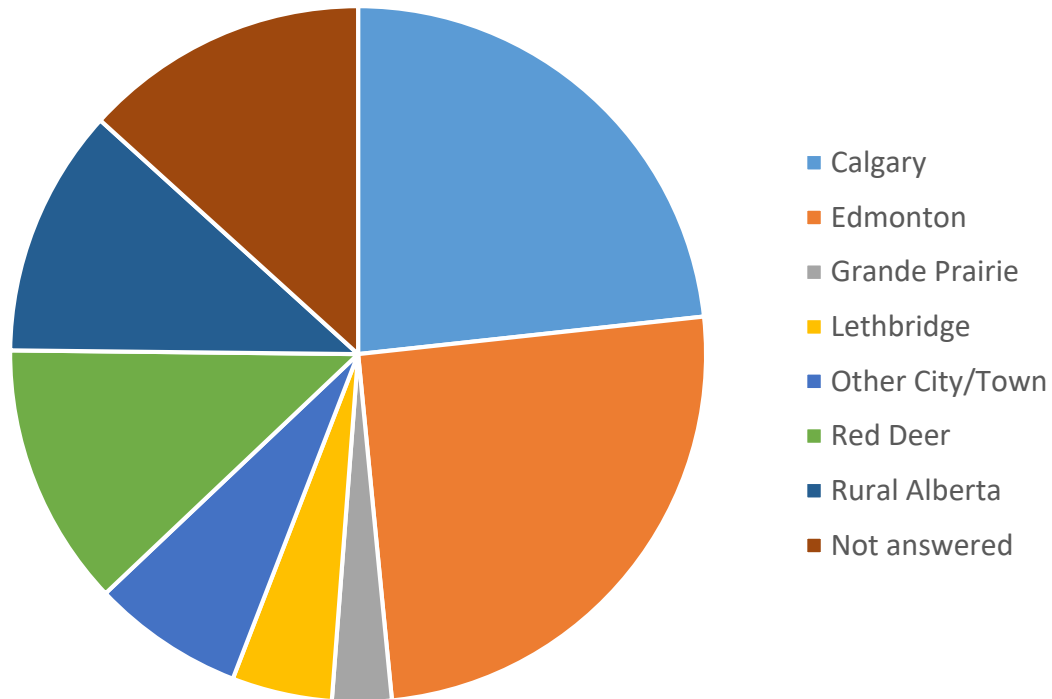


Who's taking the survey?

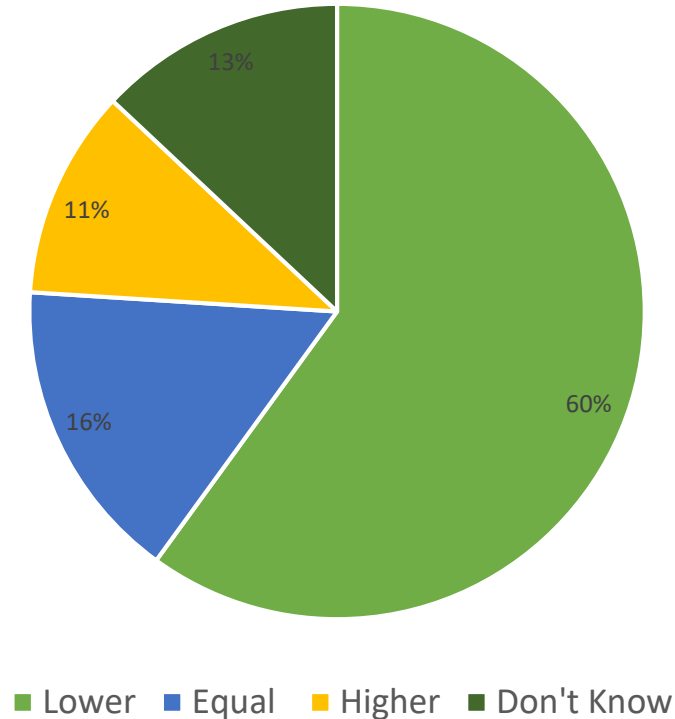
- Fairly equal gender distribution
- 94%+ new respondents

Year	Number of complete responses	Number of partial responses	Average Age
2015	100	100	75
2016	286	420	52
2017	238	340	44
2018	31	45	48

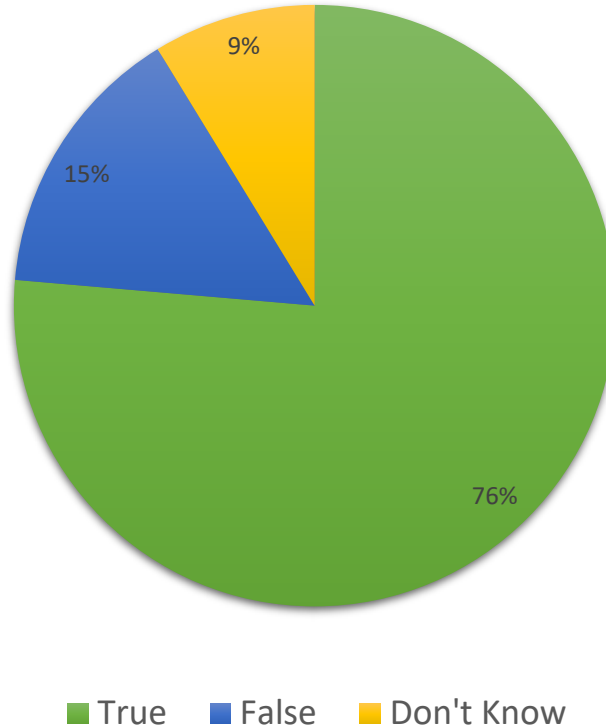
Who's taking the survey?



In comparison to other provinces like British Columbia and Ontario, would you say Alberta has a lower, equal or higher number of recreational lakes.

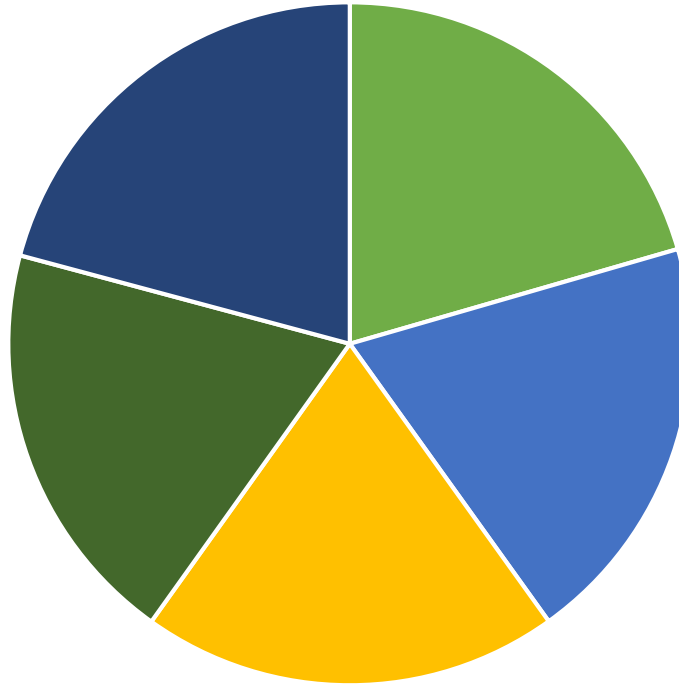


Many of Alberta's lakes are naturally shallow and rich in plant nutrients which make them more likely to have algae blooms.

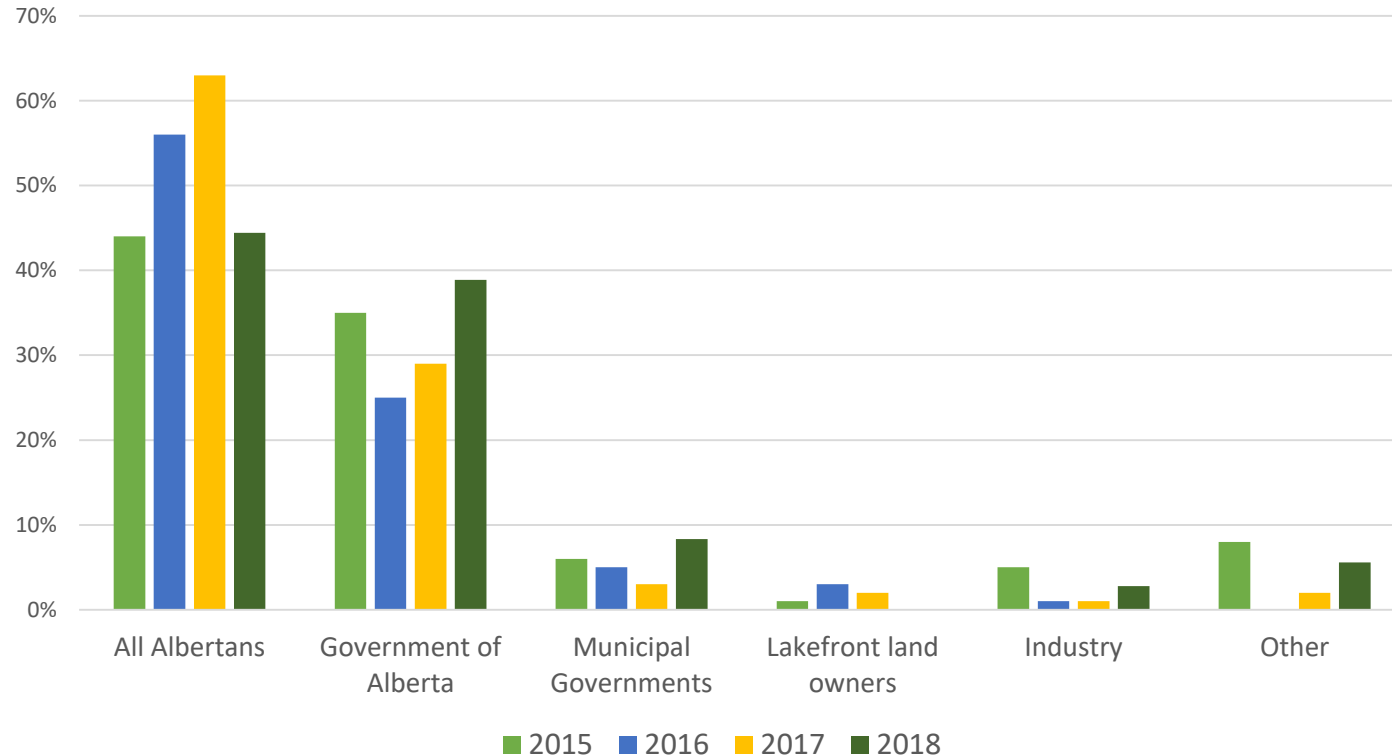


Which of the following human activities that occur on the lakes or in the watersheds that surround them do you think affects the health of Alberta lakes?

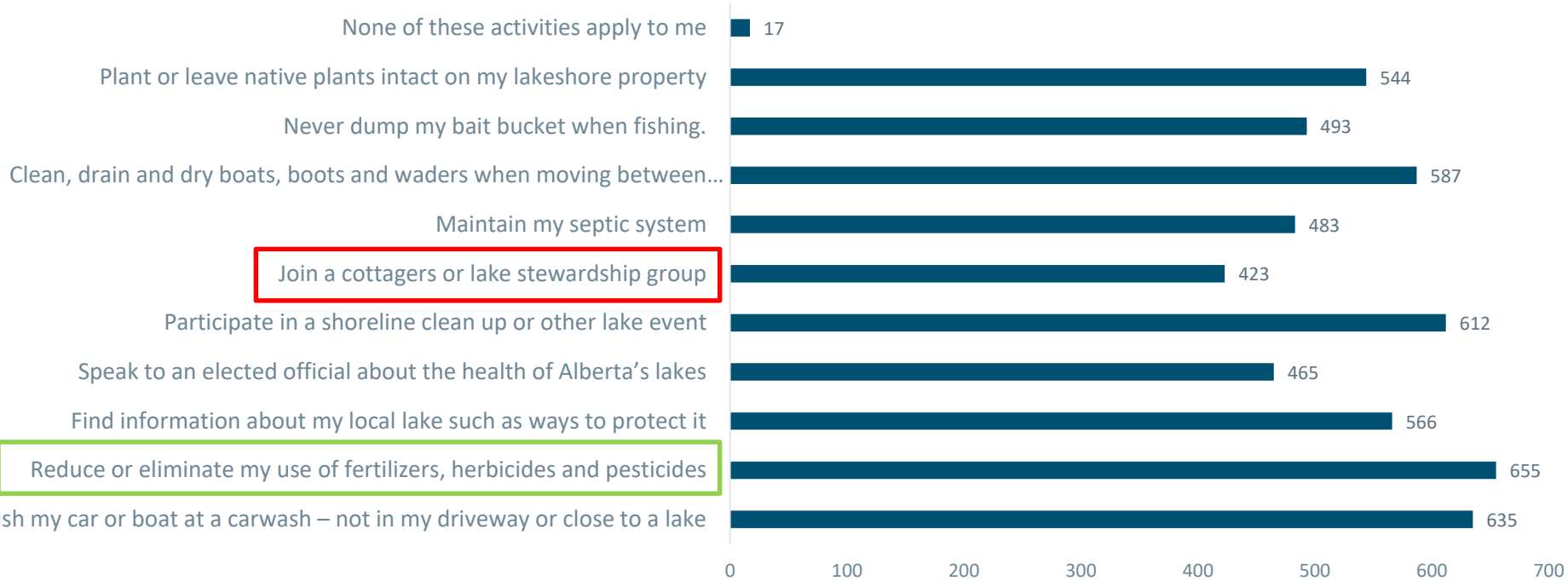
- Urban development
- Septic system draining area
- Recreational activities
- Removal of shoreline plants
- Land uses such as agriculture or industry



Who should have the most responsibility for ensuring Alberta lakes are healthy?



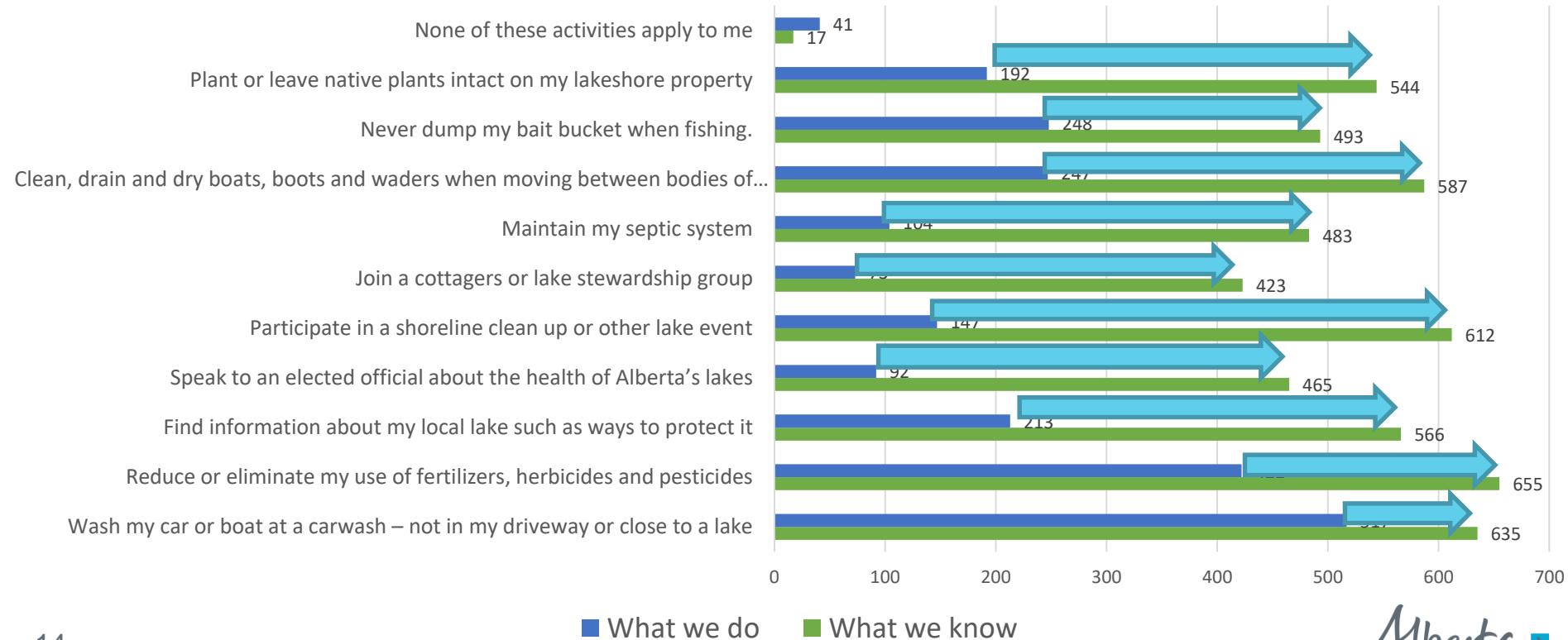
Whether or not you own lakeshore property, which of the following activities could you personally do to help protect our lakes?



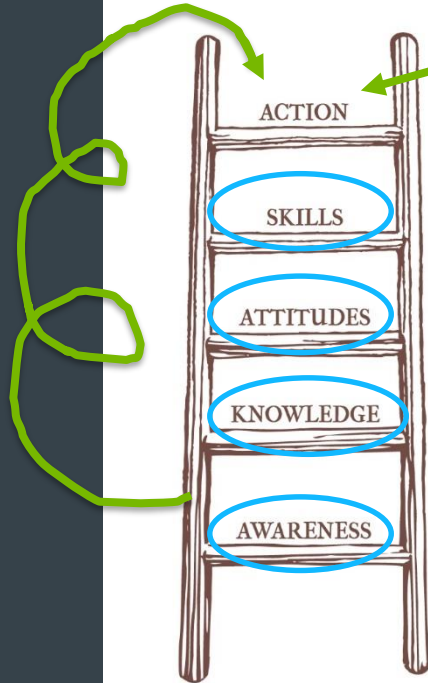
Whether or not you own lakeshore property, which of the following activities to improve lake health have you done in the last 12 months?



Knowledge ≠ Action!



But don't worry....
This is what environmental education is
all about!



Taking personal and collective **action**

Using critical thinking **skills** to create place-based solutions

Attitudes of appreciation and concern for the environment and inspiration to act with the environment in mind

Deeper **knowledge** of natural systems and processes

General **awareness** of the relationship between the environment and our choices

Adapted from 2007 Campaign for Environmental Literacy

Respect our Lakes

Program Update

Respect our Lakes Program

- Program review in 2018/19
 - Survey filled out by 61 people
- ARL Forum postponed due to the election



Overall goal

The ultimate outcome of Respect our Lakes is that Albertans understand, value and respect healthy lakes and their watersheds, and are actively involved in lake and watershed stewardship.

What we heard....

- Brochures are a great resource
 - Need better stewardship actions based on user group
 - More information on legislation
 - Bring down the language
- Need different styles of resources
 - Infographics or videos
- Need to continue to link to partner programs/resources that are already created

What we did...

- ✓ Create(ing) key messages with experts from across the department to be able to create resources
- ✓ Create(ing) an education & outreach strategy
- ✓ Met with partners to discuss ideas and needs
- ✓ Started working on everything!

Where we are now...

- Shoreline assessment templates available on the water channel!

SHORELINE ASSESSMENT

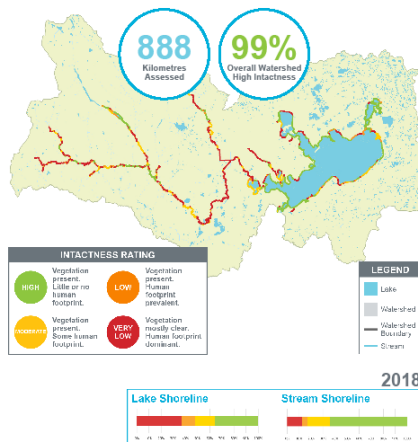
Riparian areas are the biologically rich and productive shoreline areas at the edges of lakes, streams, wetlands and rivers. While these areas provide a wide range of benefits, the loss and impairment of riparian areas has been significant. Clearing vegetation, building structures, adding or removing rocks, using off-highway vehicles or allowing heavy grazing by cattle all damage riparian areas and ultimately, the health of the lake.

A GIS-based method and data set was created to assess riparian intactness (or condition) at a watershed scale, including lakeshores and streams. Riparian intactness refers to the extent to which natural habitat has been altered or impaired by human activity. The assessment was based on the cover of natural vegetation, woody vegetation and human impact and development visible from satellite imagery. The riparian area was assessed for 50 metres back from the water line, for the entire length of the lakeshore, as well as the right and left banks of the streams flowing into the lake.

Summary of Results:

Only 45% of the riparian areas in the Sylvan Lake watershed were considered high intactness. Areas that were assessed as poor in 2007 remain poor in 2016 and some areas that were assessed as good in 2007 are now classified as fair, which suggests areas may have experienced further degradation over the last 10 years.

Lake Name



Why are riparian areas important?

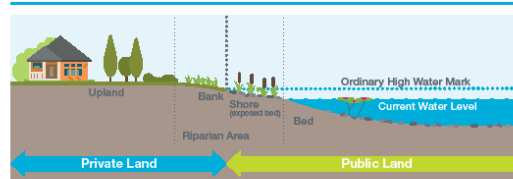


- IMPROVE WATER QUALITY** by trapping sediments, filtering nutrients and pollutants, reducing enrichment that leads to increased aquatic plant and algal growth;
- MITIGATE FLOODS AND DROUGHTS** by storing and slowing the release of water and reducing erosion;
- IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY** by providing fish and wildlife habitat and cooling water temperatures;
- PROVIDE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AREAS** for recreation or cultural activities; and
- ADD LOCAL ECONOMIC VALUE** by increasing property values or providing areas for nature viewing.

How can you improve the health of your riparian area?

- Leave your shoreline natural—don't remove any plants, grasses or aquatic vegetation as they all play an important role in keeping your lake healthy.
- If your shoreline has been cleared of vegetation, replant with native plants as much as possible and watch for invasive species. Report as appropriate.
- Learn more about the health of your riparian area
- For larger areas, create a management plan to improve the intactness of the riparian area over time
- More resources are available at alberta.ca search "riparian"

Where is a riparian area?



Shoreline Assessment Template



[Home](#) » [The Water Channel](#)

The Water Channel



Welcome to The Water Channel! This platform was created by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to connect water literacy practitioners and policy makers, and to promote water literacy tools, events, networking, collaboration and information sharing.

What's a practitioner? An individual or group involved in planning, directing and delivering information about water to an audience. This can include those who work in the formal education system, but also federal, Indigenous, provincial and municipal governments, non-profit organizations, industry, and policy makers.

Being "water literate" means having an understanding of the significance of water in life, and understanding where water comes from and how to use it sustainably.

Throughout this platform you will find information about water in Alberta, and opportunities to discuss water issues with other practitioners. We hope to extend the reach of current water literacy programs and resources, develop new products and programs to inform Albertans based on gaps identified, and create a community where practitioners can communicate with each other!

We welcome all comments but ask that you please familiarize yourself with our comment policy:

- [Government of Alberta - Comment Policy](#)

Personal Information Collection and use Notification

Opinions and comments you provide on Water Channel website, hosted by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) are being collected under the authority of Section 33 (c) of the Alberta *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* (FOIP) Act and managed in accordance with Part 2 of the FOIP Act. Comments and opinions you provide will be used by AEP for the purpose of connecting water literacy practitioners and policy makers, and to promote water literacy tools, events, networking, and collaboration. Participation on the Water Channel website is strictly voluntary, and your comments and opinions will not be disclosed for any other purpose than stated without your written consent or unless required by law to do so. AEP does not intend on anonymizing any of the comments provided on the Water Channel

REGISTER to get involved!

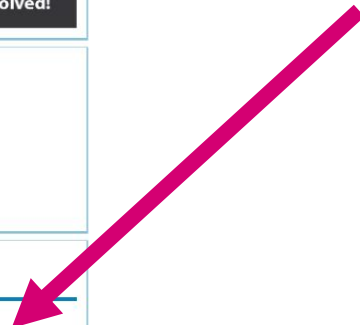
Tweet #ABwater



Document Library

- [Shoreline Assessment Templates](#)
- [Alberta Recreational Lakes Forum](#)
- [Education Planning Tools](#)
- [Graphics](#)
- [Water Fact Resources](#)

[more..](#)



Where we are now...

At the booth:

- Draft content available for comment
 - Brochures
 - Infographics

Share your thoughts!

DRAFT

Brochures

Target
specific user
groups
(audiences)

Address
specific issues
(Blue-green
algae)

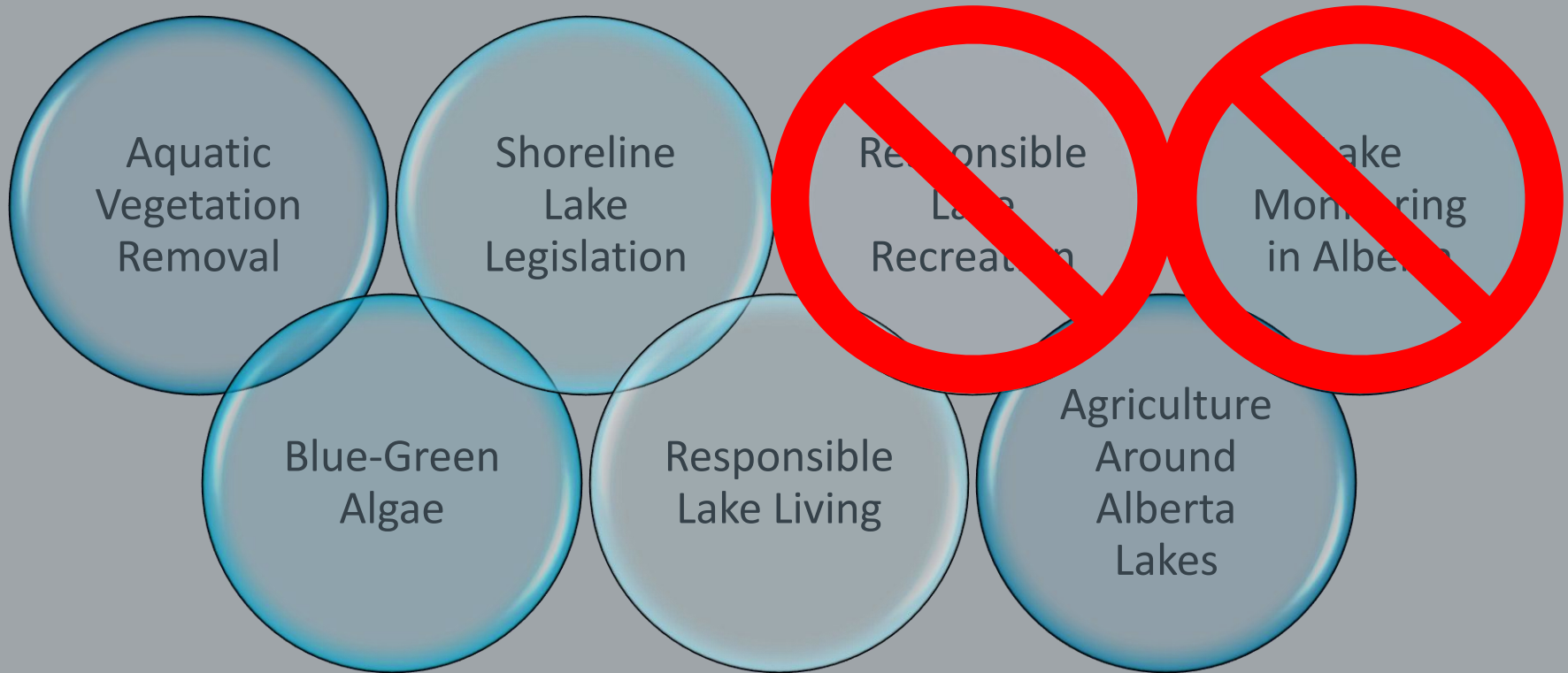
Target Audiences

- “Lake users”
- Shoreline Owners
- Backlot Owners
- Recreationalists
- Agriculture
- Public

Partners

- Municipalities
- Stewardship groups
- eNGOs

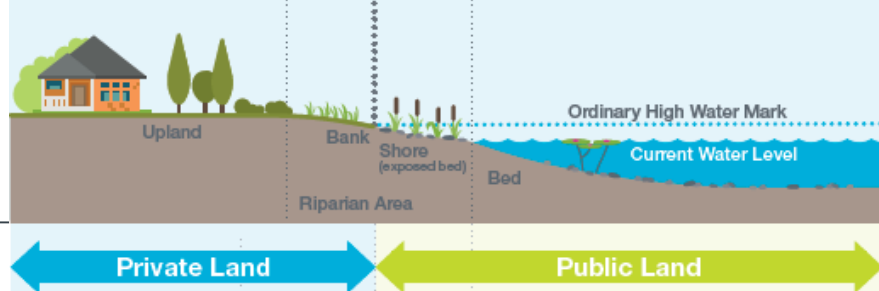
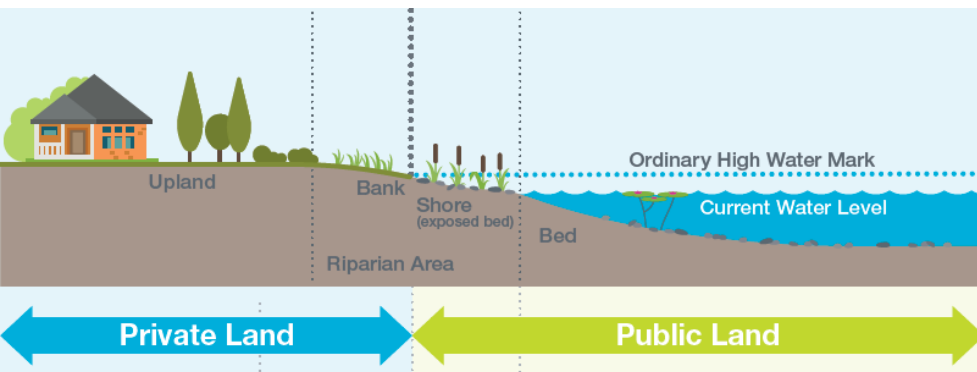
Brochure Topics



Looking for feedback on...

- What can we remove? SO MANY WORDS!
- What's missing? (Hopefully nothing!)
- Is the language appropriate for the target audience?
- Do you have ideas for other visuals?
- What other topics need to be included?

“Infographics”



Water Act

Applies to any activities that modify a waterbody, the bed and shore, aquatic vegetation, or may cause a negative effect on the aquatic environment (such as quality or quantity). Water diversion also requires an approval.

Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act

Prohibits the release of substances into the environment, and covers pesticide regulations, fertilizer storage and application, storm water drainage and municipal wastewater treatment facilities.

Fisheries Act (Provincial)

Identifies 52 prohibited aquatic invasive species, mandatory stopping at watercraft inspection stations, removal of the drain plug while transporting watercraft, and mandatory reporting of invasive species.

Safety Codes Act

Outlines private sewage disposal system regulations and standards of practice for dealing with sewage.

Public Lands Act

Any activities that are likely to result in soil erosion or damage to the bed and shore, or land within the vicinity, require an authorization. The occupation and use of public lands (like the bed and shore) of any waterbody requires an approval. The area of bed and shore fronting a waterfront property and located below the bank is owned by the Province and is open for public passage.

Municipal Government Act

Provides delegated authority to municipal governments to create environmental reserves to protect the wellbeing of the environment. Check with your local municipality for specific bylaws around your lake.

Surveys Act

Defines the bed and shore, and the natural boundary, referred to as the bank.

Federal Fisheries Act

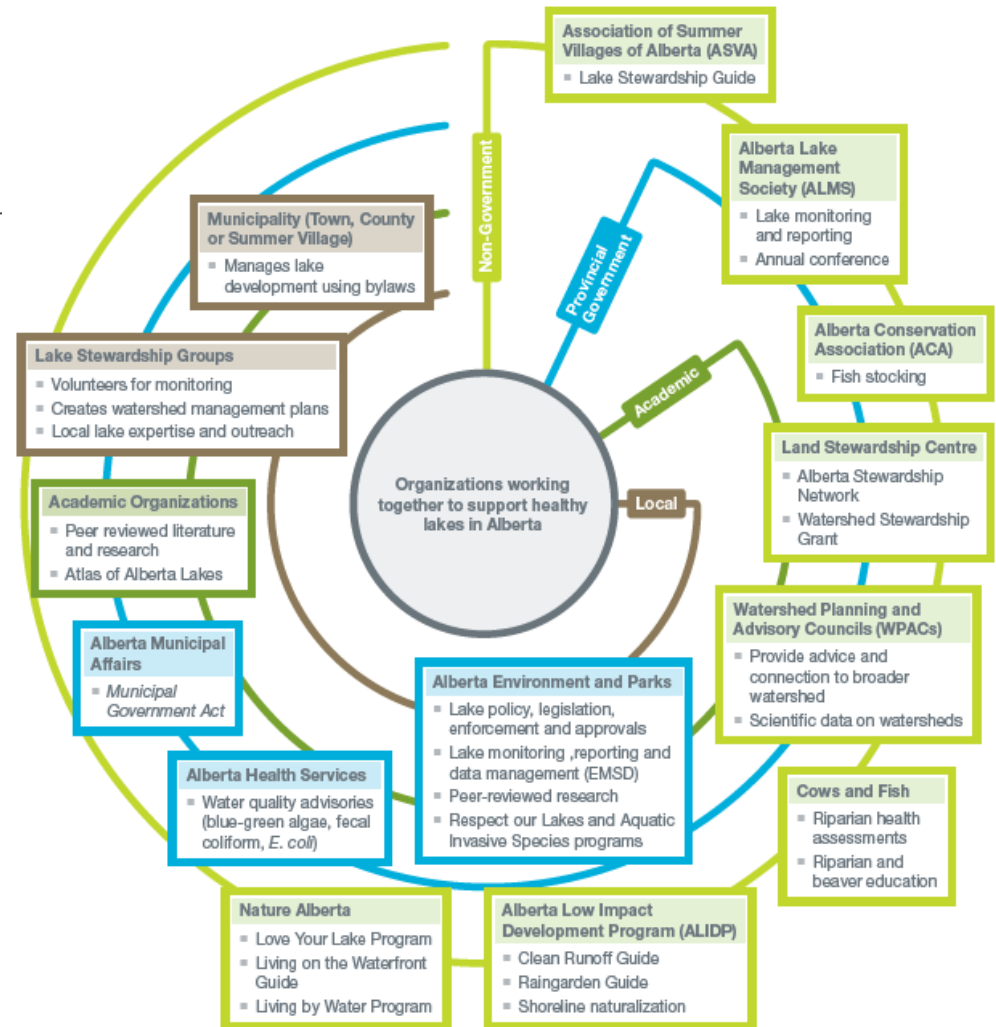
Any activities that are in or near fish-bearing waterbodies that support a recreational or aboriginal fishery require approval. This act also provides prohibitions on the transport and introduction of aquatic invasive species.

Canada Shipping Act

Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations provides province-wide speed limits of 10km/hour within 30m of the shore.

Provincial
Federal

“Infographics”



Next Steps

- Finalize brochures & infographics
- Put together a *Resource Kit Listing* for tradeshow/events
 - Include AIS listing
- Finish “Lake 101 Presentation” with info on:
 - Lakes in Alberta
 - Lake Legislation
 - Stewardship around lakes

Questions?





Thank you!

Janine Higgins, Community Engagement Lead

Janine.Higgins@gov.ab.ca

587-986-6694