

Alberta Lake Management SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS: What are the strengths of the lake management process and community in Alberta? What are we doing well?



Ideas that arose from the strengths discussion are:

- Alberta has a strong network of stewards and volunteers,
- good collaboration amongst stakeholders,
- monitoring programs such as Winter LakeKeepers,
- many examples of effective cooperation (Sylvan Lake Regional Wastewater Commission),
- passionate stewardship of lakes,
- partnerships built through the Water for Life model,
- engaged Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils,
- strong communication of information on lakes and watershed, and
- lots of data for many lakes across the Province.

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WEAKNESSES: What are the weaknesses of the lake management process and community in Alberta? What are we not doing well?



Ideas that emerged from the weaknesses discussion are:

- lack of collaboration with Indigenous communities,
- low water literacy amongst Albertans,
- weak policies and regulations on land use,
- minimal capacity for enforcement,
- not enough funding for monitoring, management, and enforcement,
- too many jurisdictions responsible for management,
- reactive rather than proactive management, and
- not enough guidance from the Government on lake management.

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OPPORTUNITIES: What opportunities exist to improve the lake management process and community in Alberta?



Ideas that emerged from the opportunities discussion, include:

- a renewed Water for Life action plan,
- emerging Communities of Practice,
- natural infrastructure projects and funding,
- rapidly evolving technology for monitoring algae blooms and changing landscapes,
- opportunities for educating youth and adults on water literacy,
- improving the curriculum to promote a stewardship ethic,
- engagement with the private sector/industry,
- value focused programs (water credits like carbon credits),
- quantifying the value of the environment,
- opportunities to improve our understanding of lakes in the winter,
- new digital tools like Datastream and THREATS

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THREATS: What are the threats to the lake management process and community in Alberta? What threats are immediate, short-term, and long-term?



Ideas that emerged from the threats discussion, include:

- impacts from climate change,
- the threat of invasive species,
- the spread of misinformation,
- aiming for short-term results instead of long-term commitments,
- lack of baseline data for many lakes and watersheds,
- outdated regulations and policies,
- wetland loss and the interconnectedness of natural areas,
- volunteer burnout,
- development pressure including industrial, commercial, agricultural, and residential,
- over-population and over-fishing,
- lack of political will for environmental protection,
- threats to groundwater quality.