

Brentwood Community News

Environmental News

SPRAY VALLEY PROVINCIAL PARK?????

Many Calgarians and outdoor aficionados were thrilled and relieved when, on June 1st, outgoing Alberta Environment Minister Gary Mar canceled the Genesis resort development proposed for the Spray Valley of Kananaskis Country, and announced that the region would instead become a 358 sq. km. provincial park. However, Mar's proclamation is being seriously challenged by commercial tourism operators.

The ecologically sensitive area is a major wildlife movement corridor, prime grizzly bear habitat, and its natural state is enjoyed by thousands year round. Multiple surveys, policy reviews, and environmental studies have been undertaken over several years, all concluding that commercial development, its required infrastructure, and ongoing impact is environmentally unsound.

Government contacts are listed below, such that you may easily speak up, urgently, in favor of Mar's decision to legally protect this area, in approval of the cancellation of the Genesis project, and in support of a Spray Valley Provincial Park free of commercial development and managed for nature and nature-based recreation. Many, and the environment, will thank you for taking the time to write or call, soon; now!

Contact Information:

The Hon. Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building, 10800 - 97th Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B7
Phone: (780) 427-2251, Fax: (780) 427-1349
E-Mail: Premier@gov.ab.ca

The Hon. Halvar Jonson, Minister of Environment
(since June 2)
#228, 10800 - 97 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
Phone: (780) 427-3665, Fax: (780) 415-0961
E-Mail: Ponoka-Rimbey@assembly.ab.ca

The Hon. Gary Mar, Minister of Health and
Wellness (since June 2)
323 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6
Tel: (780) 427-2391, Fax: (780) 422-6259
E-mail: gmar@assembly.ab.ca

The Hon. Jon Havelock, Minister of Economic
Development
#103, 10800 - 97 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5K
2B6
Phone: (780) 427-3162, Fax: (780) 422-6338
E-mail: Calgary_Shaw@assembly.ab.ca

RAIN BARRELS: Clean Calgary is converting food grade drums into rain barrels, with downspout connections and taps. They can be ordered through the WIN shop, at 230-1443, if you are interested.

We've just purchased two, and will soon be installing them. I'm looking forward to providing my gardens with free, unchlorinated rainwater, and will report on how they're working out at the end of the season. I'll also be reporting on many of the interesting bits of information encountered at the Mayor's Environment Expo held in June.

NORTHLAND FARMERS' MARKET: Tuesdays, 4-8 p.m., near the Northland Recycling Depot at the NE corner of the Northland Mall parking lot. Shop the Market!

SIGHTINGS: Have you seen or done anything environmentally interesting recently? Has your school or child participated in an enviro-event? Have you seen how enviro-concerns are handled elsewhere? *If you live, work, or go to school in Brentwood, we'd like to include your enviro/science doings, sightings, and insights in the Bugle. Give us a shout.

Environmentally yours,
Polly Lee Knowlton Cockett
Email: plknowlton.cockett@home.com



Brentwood Community News

Mayor's Environmental Expo Essay Contest Winners



By: Asha Connery

Winner of a trip to the Imax Teatre.

Brentwood Elementary
Teacher: Mr. Martin

SEW or S.O.W.?

I like to sew, but I want to S.O.W. even more! Are you wondering what S.O.W. means? S.O.W. means SAVE OUR WETLANDS of course. A sewing machine won't help much, but there are lots of simple solutions that can help.

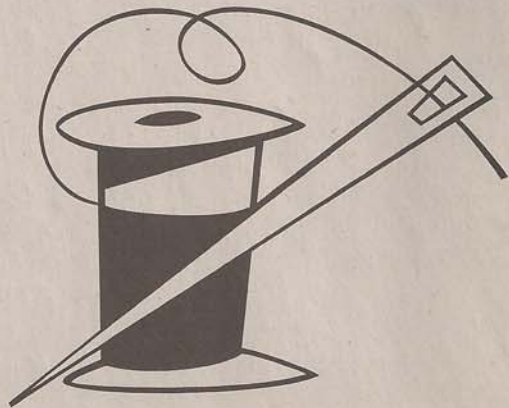
A wetland is an ecosystem. An ecosystem is a term to describe how living and non-living things and their environment live together. A wetland is an area of land that is covered by water for long enough periods to allow water-loving plants to grow. A wetland is part land and part water. There is a wetland for every continent except Antarctica. There are many names for wetlands such as swamps, peatlands, sloughs, marshes, muskegs, bogs, fens, potholes and mires.

To save our wetlands we need to pollute less. To pollute less we need to do the 4 R's. The 4 R's are Recycle, Reuse, Reduce, and Repair. You can recycle glass bottles, pop cans and more. You can reuse Styrofoam, milk cartons and toilet rolls for crafts. You can reduce by turning the water off when you are brushing your teeth or turning off the light when you go out of a room. You can repair clothes, furniture, and others instead of throwing them away and buying new stuff. If you are doing these then you are helping to save a wetland. You can preserve existing wetlands instead of building on them. If you build on a wetland you are taking away many lives and even endangering some. Encouraging animals from wetlands is good. Breeding birds and letting them go

back to their wild animal kingdom helps. Teaching others about wetlands so that they care and sharing the beauty of wetlands is important. If you are in a car and your partner rolls down the window and throws a can out say "No, you're polluting". You can make sure that the wetland is undisturbed by making sure a parking lot or road isn't built next to it.

You can purify the water by making sure no one comes by and dumps a can of paint or a tank of gas in the wetland. Anything that isn't part of a wetland like paint or gas will hurt or perhaps kill the wetlands and all of the living creatures in it. If we share wetlands without hurting them everyone will be happy. You can study a wetland as long as you put everything back as it was when you came.

A wetland doesn't just contain water animals but many more. Deer and other animals come to drink at the wetlands. The grasses provide nesting places. Pussy willows are good for bugs and birds to land on. Wetlands provide food and shelter, so let's leave it that way so every one is happy. Frogs, ducks and the other animals don't appreciate having gassy water, garbage all over the place and pop cans floating in the water. Let Save Our Wetlands. Some day I might also sew a wetland (quilt).



Brentwood Community News

Mayor's Environmental Expo Essay Contest Winners



By: Reilly Derkitt

Winner of a trip to the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery

Brentwood Elementary
Teacher: Mr. White

Water Purification Time to Help Calgary's Wetlands

When you think of water in Calgary, do you think of the Bow and Elbow Rivers? If you answered yes, you would only be partially right. Within the confines of Calgary, we have many interesting and little known creeks and wetlands, which as our city grows, are shrinking in size and in some cases disappearing altogether, either through development or pollution!

The Northern part of our city has many wonderful natural wetlands and marshes that play an important part in keeping the water within the Bow River clean and safe for animals, vegetation and humans downstream from our city. To the west, near Bearspaw, many sloughs and small creeks again purify the water that eventually runs into the Bow River that supplies our city's water needs. In the Southern portion of Calgary, as our transportation needs grew, freeways such as Glenmore Trail threatened to destroy natural wetland areas that had existed hundreds of years before Calgary was known as Fort Calgary.

Thanks to grant money from the Federal government and the insight of city officials, the city of Calgary, in 1994, built a Constructed Wetlands Site at 69th Street in the Southwest. Today the 69th Street Wetland area is part of the City of Calgary's Park and Recreation department and can be enjoyed by all citizens (human and animal) while helping to purify stormwater runoff from the Glenmore and other streets and avenues. The City of Calgary's redevelopment of the 69th Street Wetland area is an example for other cities throughout the prairies on how to help natural wetland areas flourish and grow. Unfortunately, I think Calgary needs to take a lesson from this project itself.

The reason I say this is that last fall; my class took part in a field trip to Nose Hill and studied the natural wetlands area at the corner of Shaganappi Trail and John

Laurie Boulevard (Shaganappi Pond). Although the area was home to many species of plants, weeds, insects and animals, it was also a collector of garbage and waste material from people's cars, careless hikers on the Hill and the surrounding housing developments. Did you know that this Wetland area has become so dirty and polluted that you could not see the dirt on the bottom? Also within the water were plastic bags, pop cans, paper and floating oil from the nearby roads runoff. Little baby ducklings were swimming in that water and probably drinking it to. They could get sick or even die! Having a garbage pick-up isn't enough! Even though this Wetland is a natural one it stills needs help in cleaning it's self. It might be able to clean water but it **Can Not** clean up garbage.

We need to encourage the City of Calgary to raise money for another Constructed Wetland Site, this time at the Shaganappi Pond area. We must do this before it is too late. By helping the Pond area, we can preserve the quality of this water source for the surrounding plants, animals and insects that depend upon it for their survival. Or disaster will strike.

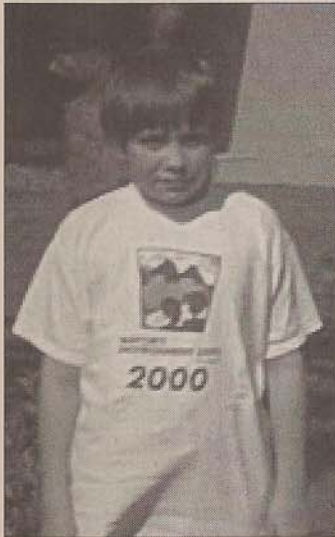
The City of Calgary has determined that Constructed Wetlands could present the City with significant savings, both in dollars and water quality, by assisting in the removal of storm water. Storm water can contain such pollutants as: fertilizers, bacteria, metals, salts, petroleum products, silts and other contaminants, all of which, without wetlands or treatment facilities will eventually end up in either the Bow or Elbow Rivers. As Calgary is the largest contributor of stormwater in the Bow River Basin, accounting for 85 percent of all urban area in the basin, it is time that the City began to pay more attention to its natural wetlands and make sure they survive. Even our provincial government has recognized the importance of Wetlands by stating that the goal of the Alberta government is to sustain the environmental, economic and social benefits that wetlands provide now and in the future. The future is now! Let's save our wetlands. Let's save the Shaganappi Pond and other threatened wetlands! Now!

I think that once a month Cityworkers or groups of people should go and inspect all the Wetlands in Calgary to see that they are free from garbage and other junk which will allow them to work properly and reduce dirty water from entering the rivers and to keep them ALIVE!

I would like to thank Mr. Tully Clifford a Project Manager with the City of Calgary for providing me with information on the **City of Calgary's Constructed Wetland** project and the **Wetland Policy for Alberta**.

Brentwood Community News

Mayor's Environmental Expo Essay Contest Winners



By: Tiernan Cahill

Winner of a trip to the
Bears paw Water
Treatment Plant

Brentwood Elementary
Teacher: Mrs. Slemko

Wetland Worries

I believe Calgary's wetlands are a limited resource, it's not like we can demolish a wetland, then change our minds and build a new one. Once wetlands are gone they are gone, forever. And if Calgary's wetlands are destroyed it could mean big trouble for the environment around Calgary. We need to protect our city's wetlands to protect our city. Did you know that more than 60% of wetlands in areas settled by humans have been wiped out by drainage in the last 100 years? This could easily be reversed through simple and inexpensive water controls. It could be so easy to stop this destruction if only enough people took the initiative.

Ducks Canada is a very helpful organization to Alberta's environment, especially our wetlands. Why is this? Because Alberta is home to 20% of North American Ducks surveyed every spring. There are more than 220 large wetlands in Alberta they consider key.

While irrigation, which is coming from a wetland, is usually a destructive force, irrigation flowing into a wetland is generally a good thing. And here are some reasons why:

1. Some wetlands would be non-existent without irrigation and we need an many wetlands as we can get.

2. It allows wild and domestic animals, which both need water to live, to live harmoniously.

3. It feeds 80 bodies of water, making over 300² miles of surface water, and more than 1,000 miles of shore. The solution of irrigation can help us save draining and drained wetlands. Now, what about wetlands that are being destroyed either by building or walking off path? Here are my solutions:

Attempt to pass a bylaw stating you cannot demolish a wetland without permission from the Environment Minister. And build walkways where a section of wetland has already been damaged by walking so people will stay on that path instead of destroying more areas. Also, build small information kiosks along these walkways to help people understand why wetlands are important.

And why are wetlands important?

1. They clean water, filtering out dirt and other contaminants.
2. They control floods.
3. They store water for when we really need it.
4. They have a wide variety of plant and animal life, forming what we'll always need, a diverse ecosystem.
5. They provide something Calgary thrives on, Tourism!
6. Recreation! People can go canoeing in some of the larger ones and hiking in the small ones.

There, six good reasons why to preserve wetlands. Now, why would you want to tear up something that useful? I believe that if enough people work together to do something, chances are pretty good they'll do it. All we have to do is get started and that will make Calgary a much better city.

