

Municipal Water Education for Positive Behaviour Change

National Water and Wastewater Conference 2023
Niagara Falls, ON

Strathcona County

- Specialized municipality
- 100,000 living in urban and rural combined
- 73,000 in Sherwood Park
- 93 full time staff in Utilities department



Purpose of water conservation programs

- Alberta's *Water for Life* strategy
- Avoid costly infrastructure expansion
- Utilities happen behind the scenes



Do my actions really matter?



The power of words

- Word challenged adults.
- Wastewater DAF, describe as Starbucks's Frappuccino
- Use a non-science proof-reader.



There is a need for Duckweed

 The smallest flowering plant in the world provides:



- ▶ Food for fish and waterfowl
- ▶ Shade for frogs and fish
- ▶ Prevents algae by absorbing excess nutrients
- ▶ Keeps water cool and oxygenated

www.strathcona.ca/environment

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COUNTY

Build connections

- Photographing assets and more
- Interpretive signage
- The big picture



Wetland signs

Shoreline plants

These plants aren't afraid to get their feet wet

Cattails and other shoreline plants like to have their roots in the water for at least part of the year, and that's a good thing. Roots help hold the shoreline together and prevent soil from washing away. The tops of these plants are useful too. Birds and other wetland animals nest in the cover of the stems and use cattail fluff to build their nests.



The underground roots of cattails are called rhizomes. Good bacteria on the rhizomes help return nitrogen to the soil.



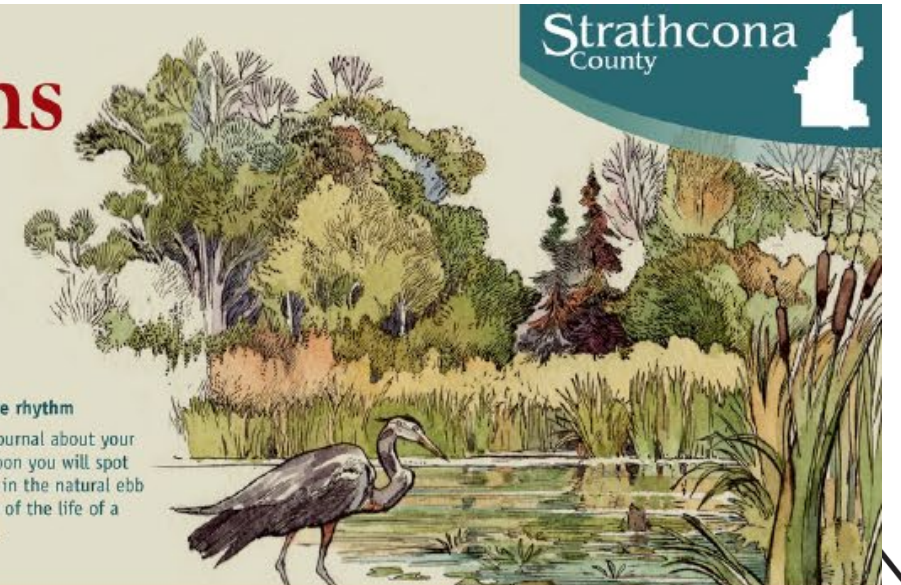
A pond for all seasons

A year in the life of a wetland

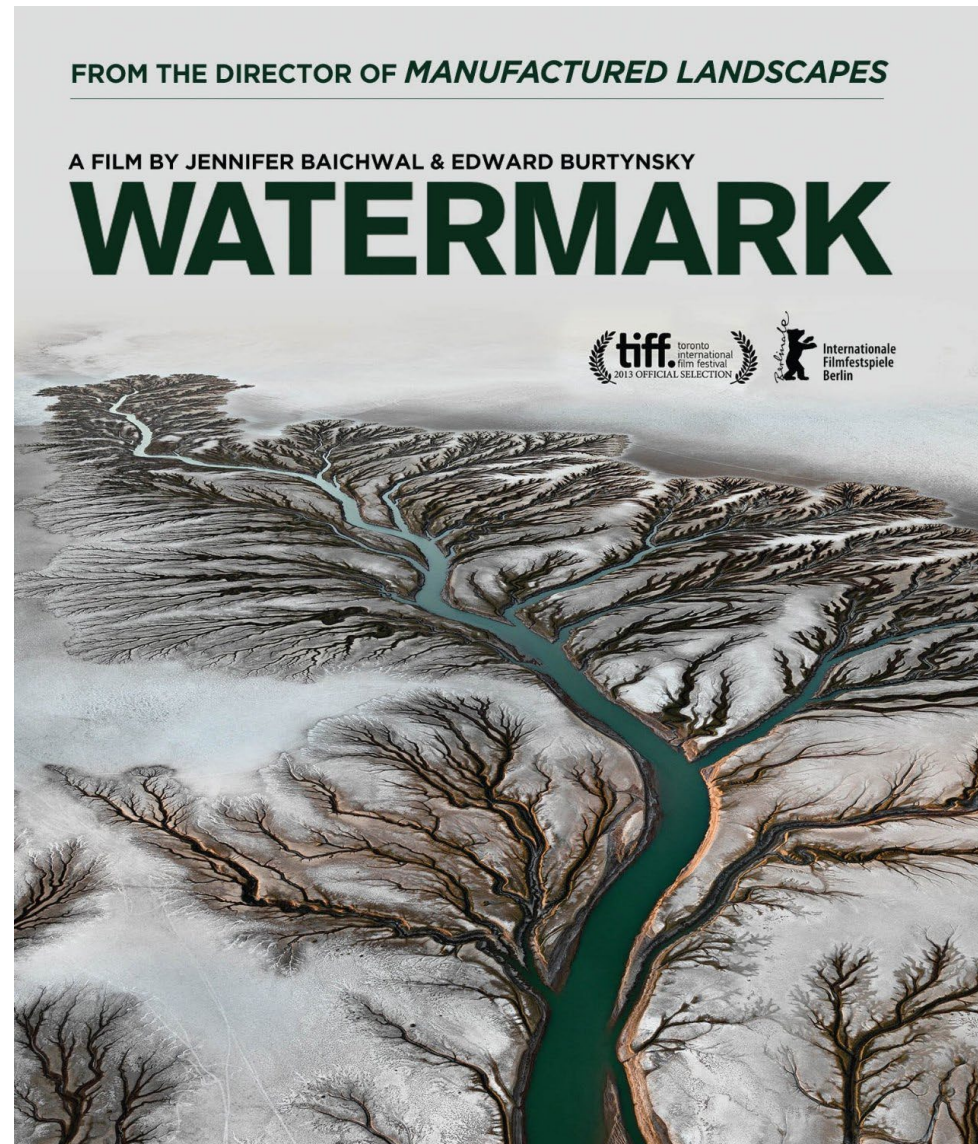
Wetlands go through big changes with the seasons. From spring floods through drought to ice and snow – the amount and form of water affects what can live here. In fact, without regular changes in water levels, many wetlands would fill in and become forests.

Catch the rhythm

Keep a journal about your visits. Soon you will spot patterns in the natural ebb and flow of the life of a wetland.



World Water Day films



Provide tools

- Catch them at the source
- Promotional items with purpose
- Taking action rather than freebies

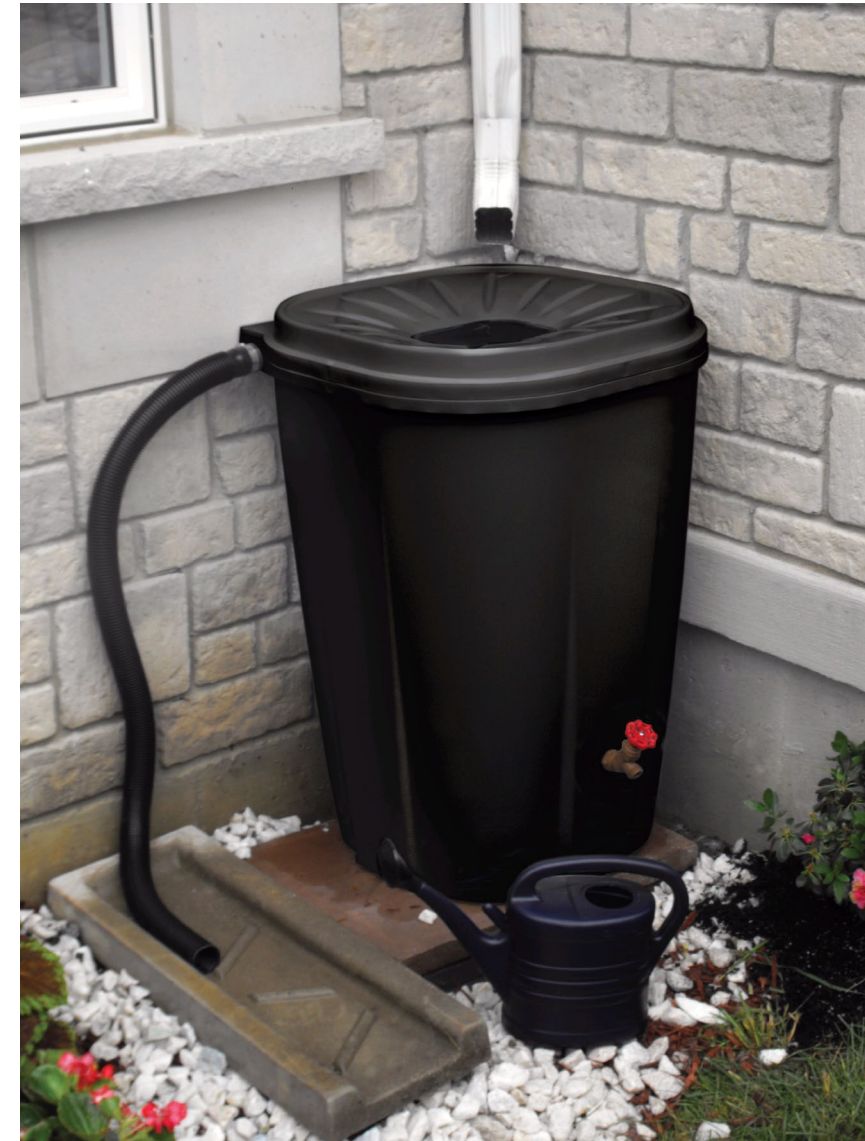


Shower timers



Rain barrel sale - 20 years

- Garden centres in 2003 to RONA in 2014
- Sell an average of 500 in one day



Information at the source

Have data on hand

- Water calculator
- How to fix a leak

Dishes

How many minutes a day do you use a garburator to dispose of food waste?

− 0 +
MINUTES

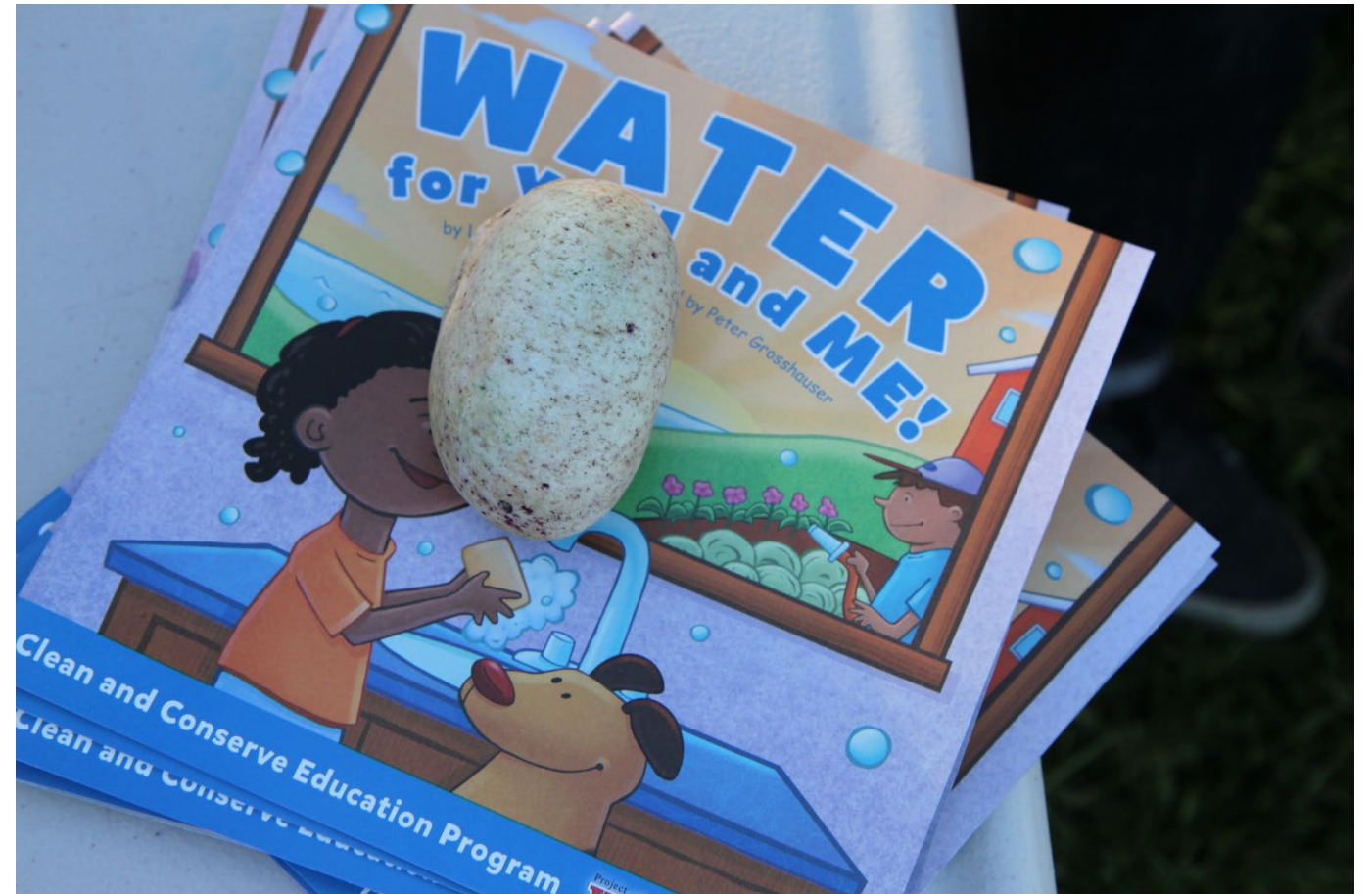
Laundry

How many full loads of laundry do you do a week?

− 0 +

Have data on hand

- Water education at day care
- Farmer's markets in the community
- Identify the products you want them to buy



Ecoscape program



Ecoscape brochure and booth



Greenhouse stickers



Pool water education



Dechlorinate the water before letting it flow down the drain. Chlorinated water released into the stormwater system affects the health of fish and aquatic organisms.

Get in the know before you let it flow
www.strathcona.ca/letitflow



Yellow Fish Road

- Trout Unlimited, Calgary office



Blue Broom Crew



I SWEEP, NOT SPRAY



Use a broom instead of a hose when cleaning driveways and sidewalks.

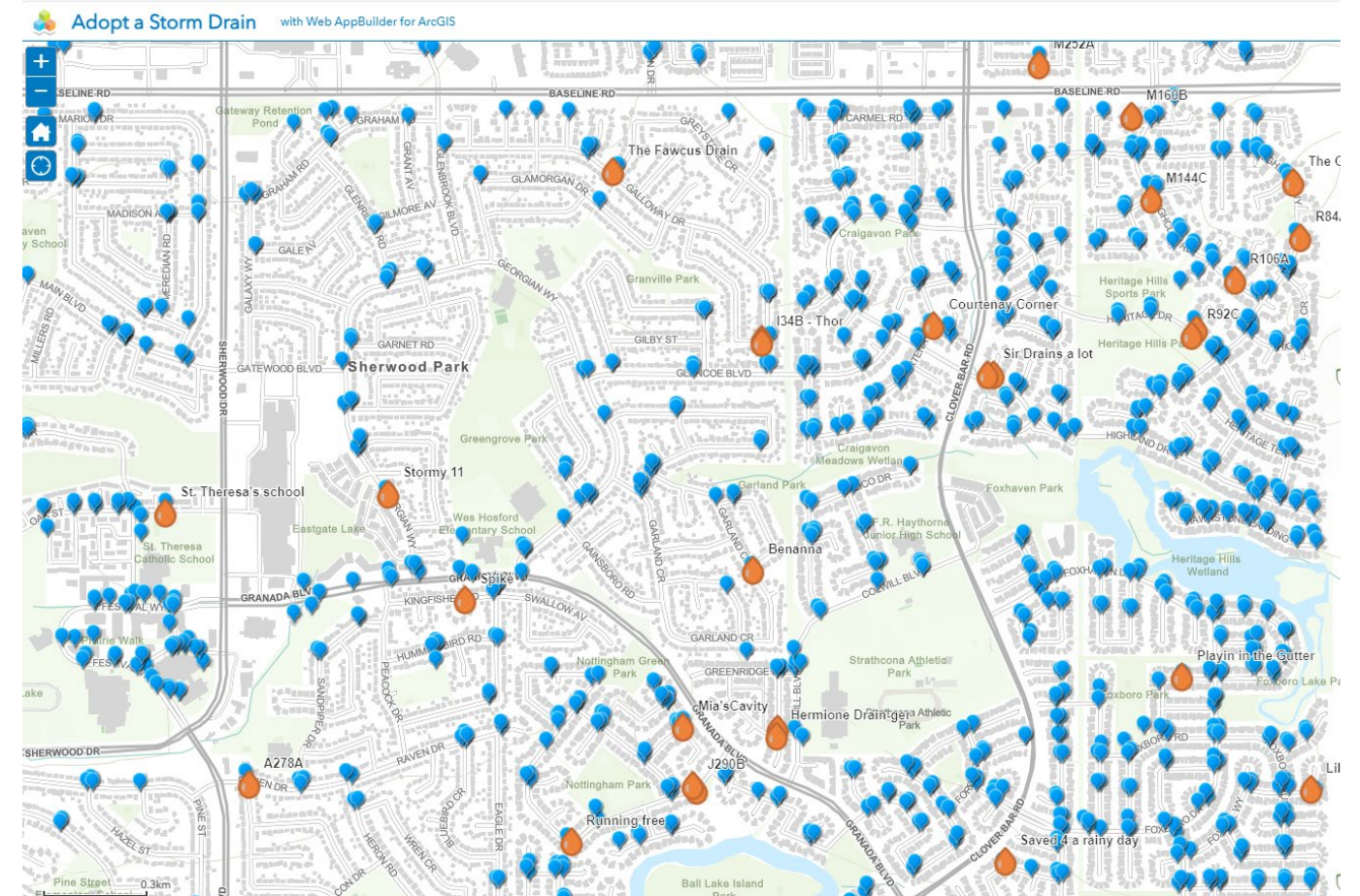
Improve water quality in our river and save precious drinking water.

Join the Blue Broom Crew
watersaver@strathcona.ca
780-467-7785

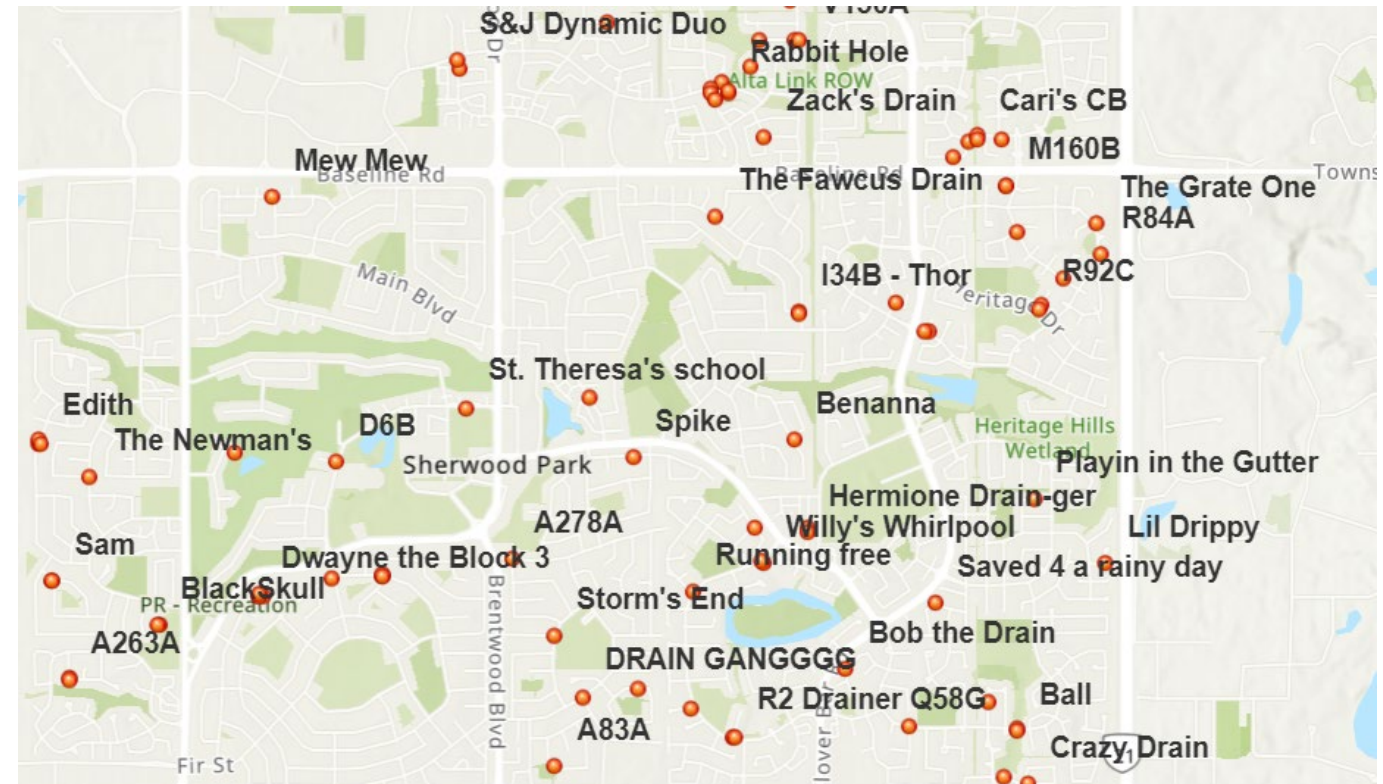


Adopt a Drain

www.strathcona.ca/StormDrain



Adopt a Drain



Wastewater to Wetlands Classroom Presentations

- Grade 5 focus
- Global water presentations for Grade Two
- Bottled water presentations for Junior High



Collaborate

If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.

African Proverb



Collaborate



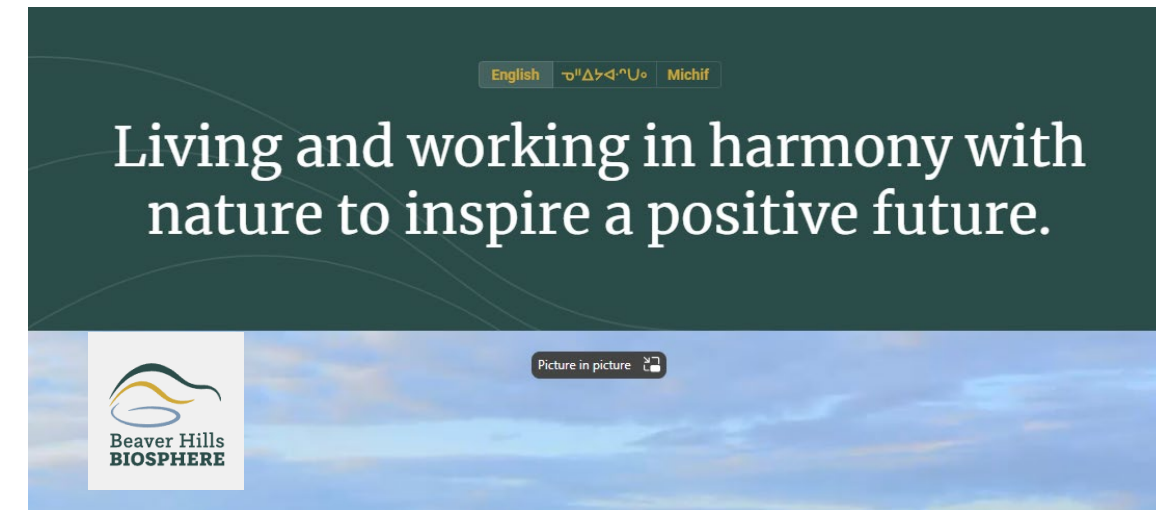
Partnerships



The screenshot shows the EPA WaterSense website. At the top is the EPA logo and a search bar. Below is a navigation menu with categories like 'Environmental Topics', 'Laws & Regulations', 'Report a Violation', and 'About EPA'. The main content area is titled 'Residential Toilets' and features a large image of a toilet handle. To the right of the image is a 'look for WaterSense' logo. Below the image is a text block stating: 'Toilets are by far the main source of water use in the home, accounting for nearly 30 percent of an average home's indoor water'. A 'SEARCH PRODUCTS' button is located at the bottom right of the image area. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with 'WaterSense Home', 'About WaterSense', 'WaterSense Products', 'Residential Toilets', 'Showerheads', 'Bathroom Faucets', 'Commercial Toilets', and 'Urinals'.



The screenshot shows the website for the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA). The top navigation bar includes 'About Us', 'Our Watershed', 'Partnerships & Programs', 'Resources', and 'What's Going On'. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Our Watershed'. The main content area features a map of the watershed area with various locations labeled, including Rosevear, Edson, Carrot Creek, Niton Junction, Entwistle, Onoway, Sturgeon, St. Albert, Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, Beaverhill, Ansel, Seba Beach, Stony Plain, Strawberry, Calmar, Leduc, New Sarepta, Tofield, Cynthia, Drayton Valley, Thorsby, Warburg, Modeste, Millet, Camrose, Lodgepole, Westeros, and Wetaskiwin.



The banner features a dark green background with the text 'Living and working in harmony with nature to inspire a positive future.' in white. At the top right, there are language selection options for 'English' and 'Michif'. At the bottom left, the 'Beaver Hills BIOSPHERE' logo is displayed. At the bottom right, there is a 'Picture in picture' icon. The background of the banner shows a soft-focus landscape with a blue sky and green fields.

Celebrate

- Appreciation. Value.
- Interaction
- We can help motivate by celebrating the small victories or single steps forward



CommuniTEA pond parties



CommuniTEA pond parties



Virtual tree dedications



You *save* paper. We *plant* a tree!

eBill
green by choice

For every new eBill sign up, Strathcona County will plant a tree at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre.

You will get a link to a virtual forest where you can dedicate your tree to a special person.

VANESSA

for STRATHCONA COUNTY

For my family

LOGEPOLE PINE # 123456

Visit www.strathcona.ca/mytree

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Quality of life



CPAWS and Calgary



Photo: Marcus Becker



Photo: City of Calgary

Summary chart

Our previous practices	Trying some new practices	Example
Scientific terms	Common terms	Duckweed ad, Yellow Fish Road
Provide tips	Provide tools	Shower timers, dye tablets
Data at office	Data on hand	Ecoscape stickers, booklet
Enforcement	Champions	Blue Broom Crew, Adopt a Drain

Summary chart

Our previous practices	Trying some new practices	Example
Explain details	Explain connections	Wetland signs and films
Doom & gloom	Celebrate	Pond parties
Ecosystem quality	Connection to ecosystem	Virtual forest
Go it alone	Collaborate	Communities of practice

Residential Icd

Year	Residential (multi-family & single-family) I/c/d
2001	265
2022	161

Conclusion

- Reflect on what works
- Share successes



Thank you

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