

Vincent Lake to be focus of new study

Residents to be involved in riparian projects

By Rhonda Noyce
Staff Writer

said Gerry Ehlert, manager for provincial grazing reserves in the Northeast region.

After collecting data and working proactively with the surrounding residents for a couple of years, the information from this working model will be transferred to other communities.

"We chose Vincent Lake because we've had a number of concerns there for many years and we've also had concerns from cottagers," said Wayne Nelson, a fisheries biologist from Natural

Resources.

Ehlert said there is also some livestock raising in the area and cottages in the riparian area.

"There is a variety of the good, bad and the ugly at Vincent Lake, plus it's close to St. Paul," said Ehlert.

Because the words "environmentally sustainable" are the key words of the day, Ehlert said awareness, education, tools, laws, regulations and enforcement are the key ingredients to ensure land and water developments and uses

are environmentally sustainable.

"We will be focusing more on the awareness, education and tools, then hopefully, enforcement won't be an issue."

Riparian areas, particularly the vegetation that grows along the shorelines of lakes, is important to assist the overall watershed continue to supply quantity and quality water, said Ehlert.

The research group will develop tools so that any individual or group can carry out an assessment of their

riparian area to determine if the area is functioning properly.

Ehlert and Nelson asked for the County to provide agriculture fieldman participation with the working group, to apply to AESA for funding, to provide mail addresses of cottagers from the five priority lakes in the County of St. Paul, to help sponsor the awareness and education workshop in March, 2000 and to provide an ag fieldman to help carry out the ongoing work in the County following the

completion of the working model.

"What our working group plans to do is a positive and proactive way of dealing with the riparian issue and working with the community on solutions. This is compared to the alternative way of getting things done by reaction, regulations and enforcement," said Ehlert.

Council decided to support the project as long as they work closely with the cottagers and farmers in the area.

Shoreline properties

New Water Act will bring change

The County will be meeting with the provincial departments involved in the changes to the Water Act.

Ag Fieldman Dennis Bergheim said the government can force lakeside land owners to straighten up their lakeshore property under the revised Water Act.

"They are presently focusing on Lac Sante as an awareness program and are proposing to do an assessment of Vincent Lake

and other lakes with property development on them within the County," said Bergheim.

All council members and County staff involved with this issue are scheduled to meet with Natural Resources (Fish and Wildlife) sometime in February.

"Further to the awareness program, severe cases of shoreline disturbance (under the new Water Act) will be reviewed by a provincial committee

and orders may be issued to property owners to revegetate the disturbance areas. Fines may also be issued," said

Bergheim. Natural Resources want to inform the County on how this legislation is coming about.

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 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & ENHANCEMENT ACT
 NOTICE OF APPLICATION

In accordance with Part 2, Division 2 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, the County of St. Paul No. 19 has applied to Alberta Environment for a renewal of an existing approval to apply herbicides under specific conditions, within 30 horizontal metres of the North Saskatchewan River at NW of Section 23 Township 56 Range 5 West of the