

Frequently Asked Questions

IWMP Phase Two—Risk Assessment and Priority Setting

A set of *Frequently Asked Questions* about the IWMP Phase Two process have been created for your reference. These questions were developed to assist you when interacting with colleagues, friends, and residents of the Oldman watershed. The questions address all aspects of the process, from who is the OWC, to how they can become involved in Phase Two.

Who is the OWC?

The OWC is a not-for-profit organization working in partnerships with communities and residents to improve the Oldman River Watershed through sustainable water management and land use practices.

What is an Integrated Watershed Management Plan?

An Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) is a comprehensive approach to managing water and land resources. This involves looking at what affects the health of rivers, wetlands and riparian areas, particularly in relation to water quality and quantity. It combines local and scientific knowledge to manage watersheds in environmentally, socially and economically sustainable ways. Scientists and people who live and work in the watershed are brought together to identify watershed issues and goals, and to develop and implement a watershed management strategy/plan.



Debby Gregorash

How will the IWMP be completed? (Process)

The IWMP process has been divided into phases to provide focus and achievable results in a timely manner. Phase One was completed in the spring of 2010, and through a process of interviews, online surveys, workshops and open houses, a set of qualitative outcomes and a Vision statement for the IWMP were developed.

Phase Two will pull together the scientific and qualitative information to identify risks and priorities for future phases of the IWMP. Implementation plans and management decisions for the identified priorities will lead to action on the landscape.



Rochelle Coffey

Who will be on the IWMP team?

There is a Working Team assembled to develop and manage the process. This is a dedicated group of individuals from the Oldman Watershed Council, Alberta Environment, Alberta Tourism, Parks, and Recreation, and the University of Lethbridge. To ensure all sectors and sub-basins are represented, a diverse group of stakeholders have been brought together to form a Core Team for the main discussion and decision making. A list of the IWMP team can be found online at www.oldmanbasin.org

How long will the Priority Setting and Risk Assessment take to complete?

The IWMP Team will be conducting the risk assessment and priority setting process in the fall/early winter 2010. A final Strategic Watershed Assessment and Planning Priority report will be developed as a key document in addressing watershed priorities and implementation.



When will the IWMP be released to the public?

The Strategic Watershed Assessment and Planning Priority report will be released at the OWC's Annual General meeting in June 2011.

What's the next step once Phase Two is complete?

Once the Strategic Watershed Assessment and Planning Priority report is complete, the Board of Directors and IWMP Team will discuss and determine what the planning priority area is for the OWC to address.

Note: This may not be the first priority identified in Phase Two as the decision will be based on a number of contributing factors including: staff capacity, funding, further research needed, achievability, etc. This is an iterative process and the priorities identified through the priority setting process will provide focus and direction for the Council.



How can watershed residents provide input into the IWMP?

Two surveys will be conducted during the Phase Two process. The surveys will be circulated through the OWC Bi-Weekly Update as well as posted online.

The information gathered from the surveys will be incorporated into the overall Strategic Watershed Assessment and Planning Priorities report.

Where can watershed residents get information on the IWMP?

The OWC website (www.oldmanbasin.org) will have an IWMP page where information will be posted as it becomes available. There is also an OWC Facebook page which will have regular updates.

Who do watershed residents contact if they have questions?

For more information on the IWMP residents can contact Stephanie Palechek, OWC Executive Director, at (403) 382-4239 or stephanie@oldmanbasin.org or Terry Kerkhoff, OWC Chair, at (403) 732-4089.