

2024 - 2025 Annual Report

working together to nurture, share, and protect the
waters of the Bow River Basin.

Message from the Chair: Steve Meadows

This has been an outstanding year for the BRBC! The release of the [State of the Watershed report](#) was the highlight. This featured diligent and dedicated staff work combined with expert input from BRBC members resulting in a report we can all be proud of. The committee work associated with the report showed that the mix of in-person and online events continues to work very well for us. The Board continues to focus on long-term priorities while allowing flexibility to respond to shorter-term needs in the basin, as demonstrated through the drought preparations over summer 2024. Water availability continues to be a concern, albeit at a lower level than last year.

Once again, my thanks go to both the present and past members of the Board – the BRBC is that much stronger because of your commitment and support. Our long-standing board member, Rob Wolfe is standing down. Rob has been an outstanding supporter and proponent of BRBC, and he will be sorely missed. Our

Standing Committees continue to do outstanding work in evolving their meeting approaches to suit their strategic objectives, deliverables and members' needs.

During the past year our committees met and exceeded all challenges, and we anticipate they will continue their commitment and hard work. In 2024, the BRBC delivered four quarterly forums, a science forum, a legislation and policy workshop, and the usual plethora of excellent communication pieces. The committees continue to be our core strength. My thanks to all committee members. I also wish to thank all the supporters of the BRBC for their continued endorsement of our goals and activities. This support has allowed the organization to successfully navigate and respond to uncertainty and rapidly shifting priorities. As a result, the BRBC continues to grow in both size and capacity, enabling world-class contributions to watershed management in the basin.

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BRBC Board Members

BRBC Chair: Steve Meadows
Treasurer: Mark Bennett
Executive Director: Mike Murray

Commercial/Industrial:
Jason Mogilefsky
Liliana Bozic

Municipal Government:
Jason Schneider
Megan Van Ham

Non-Profit/Academic
Pablo Pina (2nd Vice Chair)
Nisha Saini/Nilo Sinnatamby

Regulatory/Administrative/First Nations
Rob Wolfe
Amanda Hallawell

Licensee:
Richard Phillips (1st Vice Chair)
Scott Taylor

Individual Public:
Steve Meadows
Chris Manderson

The BRBC also continues to have excellent staff working diligently to enable the Board, committees and the membership at large to succeed. This year Brooke Kapeller, our Program Coordinator, will be away on maternity leave, and our best wishes are with her. In the coming months, staff will be focusing on the roll-out of the State of the Watershed report to various BRBC members.

We have also been privileged to have Nolan James join us to assist with of the State of the Watershed report. Nolan will be continuing

with BRBC through to the fall. Financial and Member Services Officer, Medini Prasai, continues to ensure the smooth running of BRBC finances and membership support. The expertise that he provides through fund development and project reporting is critical to our success. Our Publications Editor, Andrea Czarnecki, works hard to deliver high-quality newsletters and bulletins that showcase not only our members' watershed efforts, but also news and research from around the world. Executive Director Mike Murray continues to steer the organization skillfully and diligently

to new successes. All the work and initiative that Mike and the staff have put into supporting the membership, committees and Board are much appreciated and allow us to look forward to the upcoming year with great expectations of accomplishment and success.



BRBC Standing Committee Updates

Legislation and Policy Committee

Judy Stewart and Mark Bennett, Co-chairs

The past year has been productive for the Legislation and Policy Committee. A highlight was our spring 2025 workshop, *Wetlands and Natural Infrastructure in a Changing Climate*, that was of interest to stakeholders throughout the basin. Our membership continues to grow with about ten regular members, and others, such as Maureen Bell, who join us from time to time. Shirley Pickering continues to provide us with excellent information from the Highwood and Oldman watersheds, broadening and informing our discussions. New members from various non-profit organizations update us on water management issues from all regions of the basin. As well, it is always special when our member from the provincial government joins us as we discuss policy and legislative amendments.

Climate change and warming temperatures have been on our agenda, in relation to drought in 2024, and conservation and management of critical natural infrastructure in 2025. Our spring 2025 workshop was well attended, with participants sharing their knowledge and expertise in science, technology, best management practices, and emergent policy.

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BRBC Committees

Education and Communication

Co-chairs:

Alesia Cameron &
Rosemarie Ferjuc

Legislation and Policy

Co-chairs:

Judy Stewart & Mark Bennett

Science

Co-chairs:

Wendell Koning & Nilo Sinnatamby

Youth and Young Professionals

Co-chairs:

Nisha Saini & Pablo Pina

Watershed Stewardship

Chair: Liliana Bozic

The excellent line up of speakers at our 2025 workshop inspired lively panel and audience discussions of the opportunities and barriers for conservation and management of natural infrastructure. Participants provided a number of insights about existing tools and mechanisms that might mitigate identified barriers. The committee released a Workshop Summary, and the [June BRBC Newsletter](#) includes a summary of the workshop findings. As with all BRBC committees, we appreciate the invaluable assistance of Mike, Brooke, Joe and Medini, who make these annual workshops possible and our collaborations so much easier.

As we head into the fall and winter months, we will address emergent issues such as the impact of any proposed new legislation regarding the 10% water holdback during water allocation transfers. This is not about red tape, it is about keeping some water back for the aquatic ecosystem when water allocation is sold for profit through water transfers. The 10% holdback was the check and balance that was put in place when water transfers were first discussed and are critical to the transfer system. We will also collaborate, through a series of member roundtables, to identify the most valuable workshop topic for spring 2026. If you have any ideas for the workshop, let us know, or come out and join us in September. We meet on the last Friday of every month from 9:30 to 11:30 am.

Our committee's sole purpose is to review emergent laws, policies and plans, as they arise at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, that may impact the Bow River Basin.

We strive to keep the Board informed, and to keep a channel open for dialogue about water and watershed management with the provincial government and others as needed. We welcome new members and encourage you to join us!



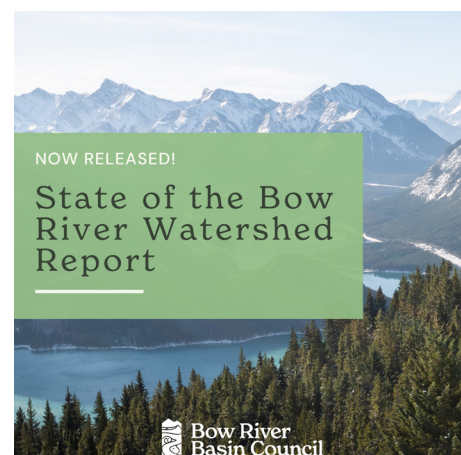
Chris Maderson at the 2025 Legislation and Policy Committee Spring Workshop. Photo: Mike Murray.

Education and Communications Committee

Alesia Cameron, Co-chair

After a two-year hiatus, the Education and Communications Committee (formerly the Stakeholder Engagement Committee) reconvened this past February with six new members. It was a busy start, as the committee was tasked with creating communication materials based on the recently published BRBC State of the Watershed Report (SOW). To effectively share this comprehensive body of work with diverse audiences, the committee decided to produce several tailored products.

The ECC and BRBC staff began by identifying key messages before drafting a public-facing pamphlet and a two-page summary for municipal councils. After several discussions and revisions, both materials are now



ready for print. Designed to be both informative and visually engaging, these resources aim to reflect the content and creativity of the State of the Watershed Report.

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The ECC is excited to share these materials with the community. We plan to distribute them at public events and directly to municipal councils, with the hope that this information will support and inform watershed management efforts.

Our next actions will begin in September, when we reconvene after summer break. Our next projects include the creation of additional SOW materials as well as continued support of the BRBC's quarterly newsletter, [Preserving Our Lifeline](#).

The ECC knows that creating and sharing great content is a powerful way to raise awareness about watershed issues, celebrate the awesome work of the BRBC, and bring water management groups together. If you're curious, creative, or just have a bit of time to pitch in, we'd love to have you on the committee. Come join us and help make a splash!



Sustainability Expo at SAIT, October 2024.
Photo: Youth and Young Professionals Committee.

Youth and Young Professionals Committee

Nisha Saini, Co-chair

The Youth and Young Professionals Committee (YPC) currently has around 70 members, of which approximately 20 are active. The number of members has remained steady over many years, reflecting a keen interest in engaging both youth (ages 8–18), and students and young professionals (ages 19–35) across the watershed. From April 2024 to March 2025, the YPC met four times to coordinate initiatives and events, as well as network. In June 2024, YPC organized a walking tour with Kerr Wood Leidal at the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary to examine their work on the [tributary reconnection project](#). This walk was attended by 17 folks from all parts of the watershed. The YPC also participated in the Sustainability Expo at SAIT in October, 2024, showcasing the BRBC to 50–100 attendees who visited the booth and its activities. In February 2025, YPC partnered with

CPAWS for an educational hike in the Sibbald Lake Recreation Area. This wintery hike was a land-based learning experience, encouraging participants to have conversations about the water hidden in the snowpack and the landscape transformation that we see with our seasons. The YPC continues to seek collaborative opportunities with various youth groups, including the Canadian Rockies Youth Network, Careers NextGen, and Canadian Wildlife Federation (Wild Outside youth program), and hopes to co-host events together soon!



Sibbald Lake Recreation Area hike.
Photo: Youth and Young Professionals Committee

Science Committee

Wendell Koning and Nilo Sinnatamby
Co-chairs

The Science Committee consists of 25 active members who meet monthly from September through June, generally online, to discuss science-focused issues and projects relevant to the Bow River Basin. The mandate of the Science Committee includes:

- Providing scientific expertise on issues referred to the committee by the BRBC Board.
- Commenting on scientific aspects of grant requests that have been submitted to the BRBC Board.
- Initiating projects that promote the health and understanding of the Bow River Basin (e.g., groundwater monitoring).

The annual BRBC Science Forum was held in-person on May 8, 2024, at Mount Royal University. It was well attended and very successful, with 13 oral presentations and 6 poster exhibits. The keynote speaker was Dr. Norman Neumann (University of Alberta), who spoke on "Becoming Secure in an Insecure Water Future: The Urban Oasis Project."

Various committee members helped in the construction of the BRBC basin-wide State of the Watershed report, specifically the surface

water quality and groundwater sections. Special thanks to committee member Dr Pieter Aukes (SAIT) for his leadership in the groundwater chapter.

A groundwater subcommittee was established in 2023–24, and it continues to further the understanding of the importance of groundwater to the sustainability of water in the Bow River Basin. This initiative (highlighted in [this edition](#) of the BRBC newsletter) involves collecting groundwater data in the various parts of the Bow River Basin. We're building on the leadership provided in an existing project by Dr Masaki Hayashi (UCalgary) and his Rocky View Well Watch Program. We're expanding the program to include other municipalities in the basin. As well, the groundwater subcommittee continues to solicit landowner volunteers to monitor water levels in their rural water wells, a key variable to understand how groundwater volumes vary over seasons and years.

The Science Committee frequently invites guest speakers to give presentations at monthly meetings on a wide variety of topics pertinent to watershed stewardship. This year, we invited talks from Dr. Jean Birks (Alberta Environment and Protected Areas) on the province's groundwater

monitoring program, Dr. Steve Wiseman (University of Lethbridge) on the emerging contaminant 6PPD-quinone, and Connor Boyd, who works on the road salt program for the City of Calgary. These presentations ensure that Science Committee members stay up to date on topics of interest to the group and the BRBC.

The Science Committee is made up of individuals who represent a wide spectrum of scientific expertise in fields that include geochemistry, hydrogeology, engineering, vertebrate and invertebrate biology, analytical chemistry, and geology, among others. Together, we have very stimulating meetings covering many subjects, and we work hard to find ways to effectively share our understanding of science to benefit residents in the Bow River Basin. We are always happy to welcome new members!



Monitoring rural water wells.
Photo: Science Committee

Watershed Stewardship Coordinating Committee

Liliana Bozic, Chair

The Watershed Stewardship Coordination Committee (WSCC) membership consists of representatives from:

- Watershed Stewardship Groups: Nose Creek Watershed Partnership, Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Ghost Watershed Alliance Society, Friends of Fish Creek, Highwood Management Plan PAC; Big Hill Creek Preservation Society, and Calgary River Valleys.
- Government agencies: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- ENGOs: Foothills Land Trust and River Watch
- Individual stewards
- BRBC Program Coordinator and Board Chair.

The committee met six times in the past year to discuss a variety of activities and initiatives. During the meetings, priority was placed on expanding our membership, broadening collaboration opportunities on programs that promote watershed protection, and raising awareness of watershed priorities. Our members continued with implementation of programs such as watershed health monitoring, field study, riparian restoration, and education.

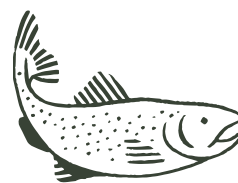
Some of the activities over the past year include:

- The Riparian Projects Showcase with Lakeland College, presented by Mary Ellen Shain (North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance)
- Review of progress on the Watershed Management Plan and State of Watershed report for Fish Creek (under development by Friends of Fish Creek)
- Review and input into the State of the Bow River Watershed report
- CABIN monitoring in the Ghost and Elbow watersheds, and potential for CABIN monitoring in the Sheep and Highwood watersheds

A Quarterly Educational and Networking Forum, hosted by the WSCC, was held on December 11, 2024, at SAIT. The agenda focused on actions towards achieving watershed sustainability, with presentations from The City of Calgary,

Alberta Low Impact development Partnership, Elbow River Watershed Partnership, Ghost Watershed Alliance Science Committee, Friends of Fish Creek, Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute, and youth engagement groups. Topics ranged from water stewardship and water quality monitoring and protection, groundwater monitoring, natural asset integration, biodiversity protection, and stewardship support and collaboration.

The committee will continue to meet bi-monthly over the next year. The main committee goals remain raising awareness of stewardship efforts, watershed education and field programs, and fostering collaboration and connections towards shared watershed protection goals.



Ghost River. Photo: Andrea Czarnecki.

The Last Word ...

We did it! The State of the Watershed Report (SOW) was officially published in December 2024. This was a project I initiated in 2021, and with a tremendous amount of support from you – the membership – it has finally become a reality. It is also the first time the BRBC has used the ESRI Experience Builder platform. This platform allowed us to use in-house expertise to deliver a data-rich, science-based, yet user-friendly report, incorporating GIS mapping, analyses, and contributions from over 100 individuals/experts and organizations.

The SOW builds upon our understanding of the basin from previous reports, expanding this knowledge base with new chapters and subject matter. As a collaborative project, we worked with our stewardship partners to create detailed, sub-watershed chapters informed by the great, hands-on organizations that work tirelessly in support of their, and our, watersheds. This allowed for reporting on multiple scales, utilizing the wide spectrum of perspectives and unique local knowledge/expertise of these essential organizations.

The SOW is a work in progress as we continually augment and expand its content. I invite you to explore the report, and if you find something you



BRBC Executive Director, Mike Murray. Photo: BRBC.

could help us with just let us know as we would be delighted to work with you. Notably, such partnering and cooperation has been critical to the report's success, allowing us to leverage funding with in-kind support (over 6000 hours) from our members and partners. This is a remarkable achievement, particularly given unprecedented inflation and our increased costs over the past few years. Without this in-kind support this type of project would not have been feasible.

Alongside the tremendous effort put towards the SOW, the BRBC continued to provide outstanding quarterly

forums, where high-quality information was shared and opportunities to network with colleagues were enjoyed. Additionally, our Science Committee once again organized a Science Forum, giving us all the opportunity to learn about new, developing science and understanding in the basin. Another workshop, *Wetlands and Natural Infrastructure in a Changing Climate*, was delivered by the Legislation and Policy Committee. This was well received and there was even pie for dessert! The Watershed Stewardship Committee also hosted a fantastic

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BRBC staff and members enjoying a wintery outing in the watershed. Photo: BRBC.

stewardship workshop – the first for our newest staff member Joe to help coordinate ... well done! Rounding things out, our Youth and Young Professionals Committee were an excellent source of energy and inspiration; members of this committee supported all aspects of the BRBC this year and they continuing to develop new ideas and activities for the BRBC.

Looking to the future, keep an eye out for Joe who is going to be out in the watershed at events such as the Mayor's Expo and other public events, supporting stewardship groups doing CABIN Monitoring and providing day camps for our young scientists. The Education and Communications Committee has reconvened and is off to a strong start with the development

of our outreach materials for the upcoming 'SOW Road Show.' This road show will see us heading out into the watershed to deliver presentations on the SOW and solicit feedback on what is working with the report and what could be augmented. We are happy to present to anyone with an interest, so if your organization would like to have us come for a visit just let us know!

The staff are working hard for you and the team of Medini, Brooke, Joe and myself look forward to hearing from you. We also enjoyed working with our summer student and ART Intern Nolan on the Climate Change chapter of the report and his support of our GIS projects. Andrea produces our wonderful newsletters and keeps us all up to date with the

news and events bulletins. To share your watershed stories or have your events publicized, please get in touch with her. Behind the scenes, Medini is busy working with our partners in accounting, fund development, and tracking the work we do, finding more opportunities to partner and support our goals.

One final thanks and congratulations go to Brooke, whose work on the SOW was a total inspiration and a big reason for its success. Brooke is now working on an even better project, leaving the BRBC for a year as she starts her new family. We wish her the very best and look forward to her return next year.

– Mike Murray
BRBC Executive Director

Financial Statements

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The Bow River Basin Council Society
incorporated under the *Societies Act* of
Alberta

Statement of Financial Position for the Year Ended March 31, 2025

All values are \$CDN.

Please refer to the March 31, 2025 Auditor's Report for official financial statements.

ASSETS

CURRENT

	Operating Fund 2025	Casino Fund 2025	Reserve 2025	TOTAL 2025	TOTAL 2024
Operating cash	1,005,064	92,996	-	1,098,060	743,608
Accounts receivable	9,794	-	-	9,794	15,893
Due from casino fund	21,659	-	-	21,659	22,600
	1,036,517	92,996	-	1,129,513	782,101
LONG TERM INVESTMENTS	-	-	1,136,920	1,136,920	1,312,132
	1,036,517	92,996	1,136,920	2,266,433	2,094,233

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

CURRENT

Accounts payable	3,126	-	-	3,126	\$3,126
Due to operating fund	-	21,659	-	21,659	22,600
	3,126	21,659	-	24,785	25,726
DEFERRED INCOME		-	-	-	50,000

NET ASSETS

	3,126	21,659	-	24,785	75,726
	1,033,391	71,337	1,136,920	2,241,648	2,018,507
	1,036,517	92,996	1,136,920	2,266,433	\$2,094,233

The BRBC gratefully acknowledges and thanks the following supporters

Sustaining Partners

(3 years or more of consecutive support)

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas
Alberta Irrigation Districts Association
Beth Bowerman
Bow River Irrigation District
Cal Hill
City of Brooks
City of Calgary
County of Newell
David Swann
Eastern Irrigation District
Executive Director Glacier Legacy Funds
Foothills County
Government of Canada
Heather Sinton
John Groeneveld
Judy Stewart

Mark Bennett
MD of Bighorn
Megan Van Ham
Mike Murray
Perlette Fund (through TCF)
Rob Wolfe
Rocky View County
Sandra Stead
Steve Meadows
Town of Banff
Town of Cochrane
Town of Okotoks
Town of Vauxhall
TransAlta Generation Partnership
Wendell Koning
Western Irrigation District
Wheatland County
Wolf Keller

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City of Airdrie
City of Calgary
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Forest Resource Improvement Association

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