

PARCS UPDATE #69 November, 2016



LOOKING BACK AT THE CONVENTION – ORDERING MATERIALS FOR REVIEW

We had an enthusiastic crowd at our October 21/22 convention at the Willows Golf and Country Club. We have saved PDF copies of many of the presentations and listed them in our PARCS CATALOGUE OF WORKSHOP MATERIALS.

In this newsletter, we share a number of those new listings, providing our PARCS members with an opportunity to order copies of the presentations for more careful study at home. To order, just email parcs@sasktel.net stating the **catalogue number** of the articles you wish to order. Please limit your order to no more than 3 per email (multiple emails are OK, however). These catalogue orders are open to PARCS members only.



SESSIONS FOR OHs and RMS - NEW CATALOGUE LISTINGS

The presentation by **Bonnie Chambers**, Ministry of Government Relations, about **ORGANIZED HAMLETS and RM COUNCILS** began with Bonnie's announcement that the amended legislation instituting higher thresholds for establishing new OHs or new RVs has not yet been proclaimed. When it does become law, it will make it very difficult to create new Organized Hamlets or Resort Villages – leaving annexations as the alternative for establishing larger more viable communities.

Bonnie presented a clear and detailed summary of the differences between RM Councils and OH Boards: their legal authority, annual meetings, budgets and special levies, membership and elections, along with the events that can lead to the dissolution of an OH. She concluded with a review of the role of the Appeal Board in settling disputes between RMs and OHs and recommendations for how RM Councils and OH Boards can work together. Catalogue #44, PDF version of Power Point.

The panel on **FAIR REPRESENTATION of COTTAGE OWNERS on RM COUNCILS** began with **Cliff Schmidt** (Councilor on the RM of Hoodoo Council and also a cottage owner) who described how, prior to Cliff's election to Council, POWL (Property Owners of Wakaw Lake) had obtained the necessary signatures on a petition calling on the RM of Hoodoo to hold a referendum to change the RM boundaries so that cottage owners had a more fair representation on Council, how the RM held the referendum during the winter when few cottage owners were available to vote and subsequently, how the vote was lost. **Don Gabel**, POWL president, described how POWL has since asked the RV of Wakaw Lake to enter into a friendly annexation of the RM lake properties (currently in the hands of a consulting group), hoping to obtain a fair voice for cottage owners. PARCS president, **Garry Dixon**, outlined the 3 ways that a reorganization of division boundaries in an RM can occur: 1) The RM can ask the province to initiated the process, 2) The ratepayers can petition the RM Council to reorganize (but the RM is not required to act on this petition, 3) The ratepayers can petition the RM to hold a referendum which it must act at upon. Garry described the situation in his own RM of McKillop where, although approximately 79% of the ratepayers are cottage owners and 21% of the ratepayers own farmland, the cottage owners are under represented on the RM Council. For an article by Garry on this topic, order Catalogue #45, PDF excerpt from PARCS newsletter.

SESSIONS ABOUT AIM – NEW LISTINGS

Kate Wilson is the Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist with Alberta Environment and Parks. It was an honour to have her as our keynote speaker for the Saturday sessions on Effective Stewardship.



Some interesting comparisons for the **summer of 2016:**

	Alberta	Saskatchewan
Lakes tested:	60 waterbodies (Of 100 lakes)	36 waterbodies (Of 50,000 southern lakes)
Boats inspected:	21,500 boats	770 boats
Infected boats:	12 infected	2 infected

(11 of these infected boats stopped at the Alberta border had travelled through Saskatchewan!)

On the convention evaluation forms, 97% of the responses evaluated Kate's session as "Very interesting and useful to me", the highest rating.

The presentation by **Kate Wilson**, Alberta's Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist about **ALBERTA'S PROGRAM TO FIGHT INVASIVE MUSSELS** began with an explanation about how Zebra and Quagga Mussels have travelled to our borders, the estimated annual costs of an infestation and the reasons why Prairie Provinces are so vulnerable. Kate described the elements of the Alberta approach: policy and legislation (prohibition, mandatory inspections), education (clean, drain, dry), monitoring (Alberta Lake Management and others), and inspections (using creative solutions for inspections). Whereas the 770 inspections carried out last summer in Saskatchewan were done by existing conservation officers (no new staff members were hired), we were impressed with Kate's description of how Alberta hired a cadre of approximately 50 hourly employees (mostly students), trained them for a week, and enacted legislation allowing them to stop every boat entering their province. *Catalogue #46, PDF version of Power Point.*

The presentation by **Ron Hlasny**, since 2014 Environment Saskatchewan's AIS Coordinator, about **SASKATCHEWAN'S PROGRAM TO FIGHT INVASIVE MUSSELS**, revealed a similar education component to Alberta's (namely the "clean drain dry" program). The main differences in our Sask model were found in the legislation and the inspection. Whereas Alberta legislation requires that all boats submit to inspections by specially hired and trained border inspectors, Saskatchewan legislation appears to reserve the right to inspect for conservation officers only. Environment Saskatchewan has, however, made significant strides in educating special groups such as watercraft dealers and owners of float planes. Ron's presentation revealed that Environment Saskatchewan will continue to put its effort into education rather than inspection. Ron quoted the Ministry's position that "unless border inspections operate 24/7 on every road entering the province, there is a chance for AIS to enter our province" (**and by inference - if you can't achieve total coverage, why bother to better the odds?**) *Catalogue #47, PDF version of Power Point.*

The presentation by **Brent Webster**, the Director of Conservation Officer Services for Saskatchewan Environment, about **SASKATCHEWAN'S AIS INSPECTION SERVICES** confirmed that he had been asked, in 2016, to "put together an inspection strategy using only the staff that they currently had". By way of risk assessment, that plan concentrated on the southern and eastern parts of the province (from Moose Mountain to Hudson Bay) with inspection stations set up for two days at a time on major highways. Brent spoke to the advantage of partnering with Canadian Border Services by having them filter out the high risk boats, turning back the American boats or requiring the Canadian boats to report to a decontamination site. Brent stated that the Ministry would be looking at "partnership opportunities, opportunities for other jurisdictions to assist: and would be making recommendations for the inspection strategy for 2017." *Catalogue #48, PDF version of Power Point.*

OTHER INFORMATIVE SESSIONS – NEW CATALOGUE LISTINGS

The keynote address by **Diana Adams** of KPMG, titled **UNDERSTANDING FRAUD AND ETHICS** began with a description of ethical behavior. Diana explained about fraud assessment, prevention and detection. She provided examples of fraud risk management programs and policies. Diana explained that what usually happened when there was a combination of motive, opportunity and rationale. She provided examples of how these three factors can result in fraud. The session included descriptions of fraud risk management programs and policies. It concluded with a depiction of ways to proactively establish an environment where the risk of fraud is minimized.

Catalogue #49, PDF version of Power Point



The session by **Diana Lee**, Ministry of Government Relations, about **EFFECTIVE COUNCILS**, provided an overview of Council's role and responsibilities, its Code of Ethics and possible conflict of interest and its required bylaw outlining meeting procedures. Diana outlined the role and responsibilities of the Administrator, described the cycle for passing a bylaw and differentiated between policies and bylaws. She touched on the processes for financing infrastructure, for purchasing and for tax enforcement. Diana stated that annual meetings are not required by law but can provide an opportunity for information exchange. *Catalogue #50, PDF version of Power Point*



"Commissionaires can also be contracted to provide overnight drive-around services."

The presentation by one of our sponsors, the **Commissionaires of Southern Sask** explained how they provide **PART-TIME BYLAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES** to 70 small communities, using verbal discussions, written warnings, possible Orders to Remedy or fines - in a consistent unbiased way. *Catalogue #51, PDF version of Power Point*. Also, for information about the Bylaw Enforcement Survey that preceded the convention, order *Catalogue #52*.

Colleen Fennig, of WUQWATR, described the **LOVE YOUR LAKE PROGRAM** which, in 2016, resulted in 3,863 lakeshore assessments on Last Mountain Lake, Christopher, Emma and Anglin Lakes, Blackstrap and Pike Lakes, Katepwa and Wakaw Lakes, along with parts of Jackfish and Murray Lakes. She described the signs and benefit of healthy shorelines (reminding us that "nature is not neat and manicured"), along with the signs and impacts of unhealthy shorelines. Love Your Lake, a packaged program for evaluating the properties along a lakeshore, is coordinated by the Watershed Authority for that lake. Cottage owners assist as volunteers. Assessments are done from a boat. Properties are observed and photographed. The individual shoreline reports are confidential; only the property owner received the report for that particular property. A summary report is generated for all of the properties on the lake and encourages community associations to work together as stewards of their lake. Contact information is provided on the report. *Catalogue #53, PDF version of Power Point*