

*Happy New Year 2022 from WWMC to all Wabamun Lake and Watershed stakeholders!*

The WWMC begins the New Year with a brief update of the last year and a glimpse into 2022.

In 2021, the WWMC primarily focused efforts on increasing awareness of the Wabamun Watershed Management Plan (WMP), supporting the establishment of the WMP steering committee to facilitate implementation of the WMP, monitoring water quality in Wabamun Lake, and maintaining interest in TransAlta Utilities Highvale Mine Reclamation Plan.

- It is increasingly clear that Wabamun Watershed stakeholders care about Wabamun Lake and its watershed. Many are aware of and concerned about the numerous threats (e.g., nutrient loading, invasive species, riparian/littoral zone destruction, etc.), vulnerabilities (e.g., small watershed, land development, increasing lake users, etc.) and risks and seek a path forward to protect the lake and watershed for generations to come. The [Wabamun Lake Watershed Management Plan](#) (WMP), completed in 2020, is a science-based comprehensive document/tool that will be used to shape the path forward. This fall, the WWMC released a [short video](#) introducing the WMP. With many thanks, this video was produced by Michael Short of 'Let's Go Outdoors' and funded with a Land Stewardship Centre grant. A second video, curated by Michael and highlighting many WWMC/WMP collaborative partners, will be released in spring 2022.

The WMP focuses on the following 4 overarching goals (each with several further developed objectives):

1. Good Water Quality
2. Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems and Biodiversity
3. Wise Land Use
4. Engaged Stewardship

The WMP document concludes by outlining a 10-year workplan. If you have not already done so, you are encouraged to review the [WMP](#). It will enlighten and situate you for thoughtful discussion and informed action on our lake and its watershed.

- At this point in time, implementation of the WMP is critical to the health of the lake and watershed. Over the past months, the WWMC has worked earnestly to support the establishment of the WMP steering committee. In alignment with the 10-year workplan, the steering committee will provide support, guidance, and management of the implementation of the WMP.

The WMP steering committee, is currently co-chaired by Leah Kongsrude (North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance [NSWA]) and Doug Thomas (WWMC). Thank you to Leah and Doug for stepping up to do this important leadership work. The WMP steering committee is further comprised of Wabamun Lake and watershed stakeholder representatives, at present including the NSWA, Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS), Parkland County, Alberta Environment and Parks, Summer Village of Seba Beach, TransAlta Utilities, and the WWMC. The WMP steering committee encourages additional representation from relevant non-governmental organizations, other government agencies, municipalities and members at large.



*Dave Ball and Stan Franklin winter water sampling on Wabamun this last December*

The inherent synergy that arises from collaboration with all Wabamun Watershed stakeholders on the WMP steering committee will drive positive and lasting change that will benefit our lake and watershed in the years ahead. As the steering committee activity unfolds, updates will be communicated to all stakeholders on [wwmc.ca](http://wwmc.ca), WWMC Facebook, Twitter [@WabamunWMC](https://twitter.com/WabamunWMC)

- In 2021, WWMC participated in water quality monitoring through the ALMS summer [LakeWatch](#) program and the winter [LakeKeepers](#) programs. As noted above, good water quality is one of four main goals in the WMP. “Water quality data is an important part of understanding or managing your lake ecosystem” (ALMS, 2021). ALMS publishes a report for each of these programs each year – for the latest reports, see the [WWMC](#) website > watershed info > studies and reports.  
In addition, during the summer months, the WWMC participated again in an ongoing research project with ALMS and the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute. In this project, water sampling events (x 3) are coordinated with an imaging satellite passing over the lake. This water sampling data is analyzed in conjunction with the satellite images to create a predictive model that will assist in further understanding cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) dynamics in Wabamun Lake.  
Participation in all of these water quality monitoring programs will continue in 2022.
- At the WWMC AGM in October 2021, TransAlta, as part of a required engagement process with stakeholders, gave a presentation on the [Highvale Mine Reclamation Plan](#). The Highvale Mine site is located along the south shore of Wabamun Lake. “The good news for the lake and the watershed is that TransAlta is accelerating their reclamation of the mine site, however, reclamation is a slow regulatory process, with full reclamation anticipated to be completed by 2046” ([WWMC](#)). In early 2022, TransAlta intends to have additional public engagement events on the reclamation plan. WWMC will communicate further information on the TransAlta public engagement events once the dates/times are known.

To conclude this update, and turn the page on 2021, WWMC looks forward to continued work on the above items in 2022. It is imperative I say thank you to all WWMC board members for their deliberate commitment to help to maintain, improve and monitor the health of Wabamun Lake. Also, a huge thank you is extended to all our collaborative partners (named throughout this update), corporate sponsors, individual donors, and volunteers for your generous support of WWMC throughout the year that was.

Do not hesitate to contact WWMC with any questions [info@wwmc.ca](mailto:info@wwmc.ca)

Wishing you and yours a healthy and successful 2022.

Kind regards,

Sue Styles  
[WWMC](#) Board Chair