

COUNTY CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2012



Wormwood Named to
Noxious Weed List

Erskine
Concept
Plan

2012 Graveling
Program

Buffalo Lake South Shore
Development Plan

Photo Credit: Les Stulberg, Endiang

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



Tulips, crocusses, seeding, budding trees and baby animals all mean one thing: Spring is Here! We want you to share with us your images of our County in the Spring. Phase 1& 2 were a roaring success, and we look forward to accepting your entries for Phase 3: Spring. Make sure your entries are sized 5X7!!

ALL WINNING SUBMISSIONS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE 2013 COUNTY CALENDAR

ONE Grand Prize: iPad 2, \$100 Heart of Alberta Dollars, Custom Framed Print of your Photograph

12 Phase Prizes: \$100 Shopping Spree in Stettler!



PHASE 3 DEADLINE:
MAY 25, 2012

WWW.STETTLERCOUNTY.CA
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Buffalo Lake South Shore
The County, SV of Rochon Sands and SV of White Sands are working on a Statutory plan to guide development on the South Shore of Buffalo Lake.



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View ward-by-ward maps of the County's Graveling Program or 2012. See if your road is on the list, and who to contact if you feel your need

County Connections
Spring 2012; Volume 2 Issue 1

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Managing Editor: Shawna Benson
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Message from the Reeve

What a winter! I'm sure that every municipality in Alberta is way under budget in their snow plowing and ours is no exception but this is still Alberta and

green grass is still some months off. Because of the exceptionally mild winter our graveling programs are ahead of schedule which will certainly give us more flexibility as the year progresses.

The county council has taken a slightly different philosophy regarding county operations. We have downsized our road construction inventory for several reasons: It is becoming more difficult each year to find competent operators who are willing to be employed seasonally; it is very costly to have expensive machines sitting idle because of weather or lack of operators; and construction equipment are major items to budget for. We will also be taking a closer look at specific projects to see if they meet criteria for construction, for example, traffic count, school bus routes, line of sight, safety, connector routes, heavy haul roads and others. As well we will be doing more spot projects to correct problems rather than complete road rebuilds. We have left open the option to contract road building if we feel there is a need or if the cost to build is less than our in house cost.

Road maintenance is our foremost concern and to this end we have returned to stockpiling gravel in a few key locations to ensure timely application when needed. We have also added the option of contracting gravel supply and

placement if we feel it is necessary, or again the cost to gravel is less than our in house cost. Administration tracks the cost of gravel very closely and with the addition of a scale, is able to determine the cost from the crusher to the road bed which make the decision to contract or not much easier. In order to keep a twenty to thirty year supply of gravel the County of Stettler has had to purchase gravel from pits in Starland, Paintearth, and Camrose Counties. Gravel is becoming harder to acquire and more costly each year.

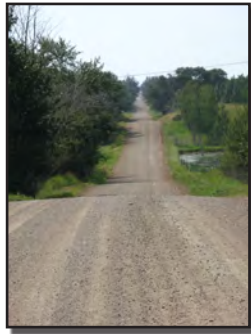
As it is the desire of our county council to be proactive, we have undertaken a Waste to Energy project in partnership with Prairie Bio Gas of Regina in order to mitigate the increasing costs of landfilling. This project is in the permitting stages and we expect to begin some construction soon. Our council is very optimistic about the future of this endeavor and several of our neighboring municipalities have expressed keen interest .

It continues to be our challenge, as county council, to work with administration and staff to ensure that the interests of County of Stettler ratepayers are protected both now and in the future. We are committed to providing the services needed with the minimum taxes necessary. If we continue to be open minded and principled in our decisions the County of Stettler will continue to be a leader amongst our peers.

Budget 2012 Highlights

Gravel

In it's 2012 budget, the County of Stettler has committed to complete the three year gravel program that essentially ensures a rotation of gravel on all County Roads. In addition the County will continue to ensure that the more heavily travelled roads and areas in need of patching will receive continual maintenance. As in 2011, The County will implement adequate gravel applications and maintenance on all of their roads in 2012.



Road Construction

The County of Stettler No. 6 is taking a different approach to road construction in 2012. We have identified several spot projects to address safety and areas that need specific work to address continuing maintenance problems. The County has identified the need to revise the Rural Road Study that was done over a decade ago. The purpose of the new study would be to identify future road construction needs based on specific criteria and to look at hard surfacing needs, gravel needs and traffic demands.

Waste 2 Energy Project

The County of Stettler No. 6 has been working with Prairie BioGas Ltd. to construct a pyrolysis unit at the Stettler Waste Management Authority land fill site north of the Town of Stettler. This project will be funded by the County of Stettler and Prairie BioGas. We have applied to the Alberta Utilities Commission and Alberta Environment for the necessary approvals. This project will convert municipal solid waste to products that can be used to generate electricity. The electricity will then be sold to the grid. The County is extremely concerned about the long term costs associated with expanding to a new cell (5-15 years) under the environment regulations that apply to land fill sites (costs of landfills near us have been as high as 10 million dollars). This venture could virtually eliminate 75% of the waste stream going into the landfill site now and delay the extreme costs of a new cell development. We are working on supplementing these costs through grants and private investment. Unfortunately at this point we do not have any participation from any of the other municipal members of the Stettler Waste Management Authority.



Budget *cont.*

Taxes

This budget reflects an anticipated loss in linear, oil and gas assessment but does not contemplate raising tax levy amounts in 2012. When one compares the County of Stettler mill rates to the neighboring Counties and those of similar sizes we are not the highest or the lowest but right in the middle. In fact on a 5 year comparison of levied mill rates for residential, non-residential and machinery & equipment (2007 – 2011) the taxes are lower now than they were in 2007.

Cash Reserves

The County of Stettler cash reserves have steadily increased since 2004. In our budget process we have been able to increase reserves from a 4 million dollar position in 2004 to over 12 million dollars at the end of 2011. This is good financial management that has positioned County Council to be able to fund necessary projects and operations when the time comes.

County Equipment & Buildings

We have included in this budget funds to replace two motor graders, two tri-axle pup trailers for the gravel fleet , new gravel truck and plow equipment, two new tractors for mowing and a new patrol unit for protective services all for just over 1.4 million.



Fire Protection

Upgrades to the Big Valley Fire Hall at a cost of \$135,000, a pumper tanker fire truck (3,000 gallons) at \$365,000 for Big Valley fire department, joint fire hall renovations and ½ share in a new Fire Chief Command Vehicle with the Town of Stettler. The County of Stettler No. 6 also entered into agreements with all of the Villages to provide fire services for a fee. This was a good example of municipal cooperation by the Summer Villages of Rochon Sands and White Sands and the Villages of Botha and Gadsby whom have never paid to have this stand by service available in the past.

Recreation

The County of Stettler No. 6 has committed to continue funding for operational and special project



funding at the same level as last year.

Planning & Development

The County of Stettler No. 6 has committed funding to do a Buffalo Lake South Shore Growth Node IDP with the Summer Villages of Rochon Sands and White Sands, complete the Erskine Concept plan, storm water management study for the Hamlets of Erskine and Red Willow, there is also a provision for a mandatory revision to the Buffalo Lake IDP, the Municipal Development Plan and the Land Use Bylaw.

2012 Budget by Function

Function	Non-Tax Revenue	Expenditures	Tax Funding Required
Legislative & Administration	583,500	3,822,510	3,239,010
Protective Services	686,670	1,988,665	1,301,995
Transportation Services	4,376,811	11,804,853	7,428,042
Environmental Services	8,489,333	7,731,340	757,993
Agriculture Services	213,248	638,675	425,427
Planning & Development Services	44,350	605,350	561,000
Recreation Services	398,107	776,332	378,225
Community Services	138,492	219,629	81,137
Totals	14,930,511	27,587,354	12,656,843

COUNTY RESERVES

Operating Reserves	2010 Balance	Increases	Decreases	2011 Balance
General	\$ 3,795,881.49		\$ 275,000.00	\$ 3,520,881.49
General - Legal	\$ 200,000.00		\$ 200,000.00	\$ -
Public trust	\$ 100,656.37	\$ 1,173.84		\$ 101,830.21
Recreation	\$ 53,112.80			\$ 53,112.80
Recreation - Special Projects	\$ 403,947.98	\$ 75,000.00		\$ 478,947.98
Disaster project	\$ 175,000.00			\$ 175,000.00
Road Plan Registration	\$ 100,000.00			\$ 100,000.00
Planning and Development	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 13,500.00		\$ 123,500.00
Digital Services	\$ 125,000.00		\$ 72,500.00	\$ 52,500.00
Agricultural Services	\$ 27,500.00	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 30,000.00
Doctor Recruitment	\$ 38,000.00		\$ 38,000.00	\$ -
Rural Development Fund	\$ 6,100.00	\$ 64,690.00		\$ 70,790.00
F.C.S.S.	\$ 17,110.27			\$ 17,110.27
Bridges	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 62,835.00		\$ 312,835.00
	\$ 5,402,308.91	\$ 219,698.84	\$ 585,500.00	\$ 5,036,507.75
Capital Reserves	2010 Balance	Increases	Decreases	2011 Balance
Administration	\$ 312,228.44			\$ 312,228.44
Water/Sewer Projects	\$ 2,963,684.10			\$ 2,963,684.10
Fire	\$ 605,420.00	\$ 145,821.00		\$ 751,241.00
Public Works	\$ 2,912,817.37	\$ 270,000.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 3,169,317.37
	\$ 6,794,149.91	\$ 415,821.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 7,196,470.91
Grand Totals	\$ 12,196,458.82	\$ 635,519.84	\$ 599,000.00	\$ 12,232,978.66

2011

THE FUTURE OF *Buffalo Lake* SOUTH SHORE GROWTH NODE PLAN

Landowners in the Buffalo Lake area would be interested to know of a planning process that was started by the County of Stettler No. 6, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands and the Summer Village of White Sands to establish a statutory plan for future development within the South Shore Growth Node, as shown on the attached map. This plan is a requirement of the Buffalo Lake Inter-municipal Development Plan that was adopted by five municipalities in 2010, and will address aspects such as the natural environment, water supply and sewage disposal, public access to the lake, land uses and density distribution, and major roads.

The plan preparation process commenced with a workshop by the planning committee on February 16, 2012 at the County of Stettler Administration Building. Public involvement in this workshop was encouraged through the following methods –

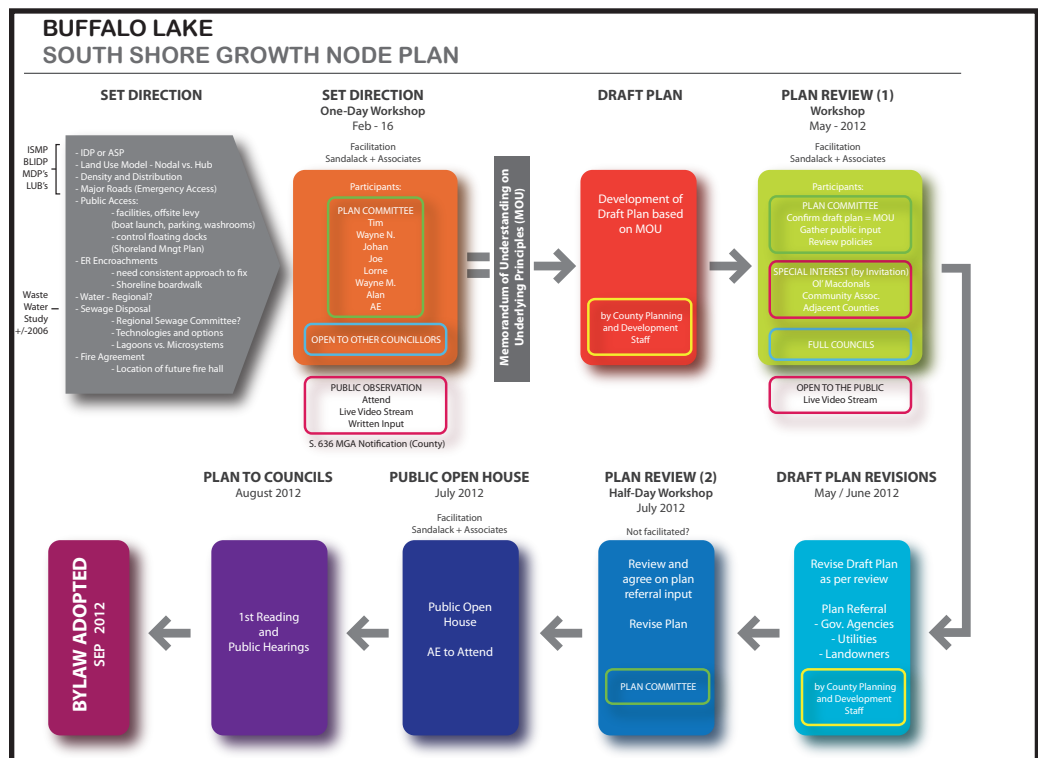
- People could attend the workshop in person
- View the workshop through live video streaming during or after the workshop
- Submit specific or general comments in writing to be considered by the planning committee

Approximately ten landowners attended the workshop while between four and twelve people were viewing the event live over the course of the day. Five letters with comments were received prior to the workshop and were read into each discussion point.

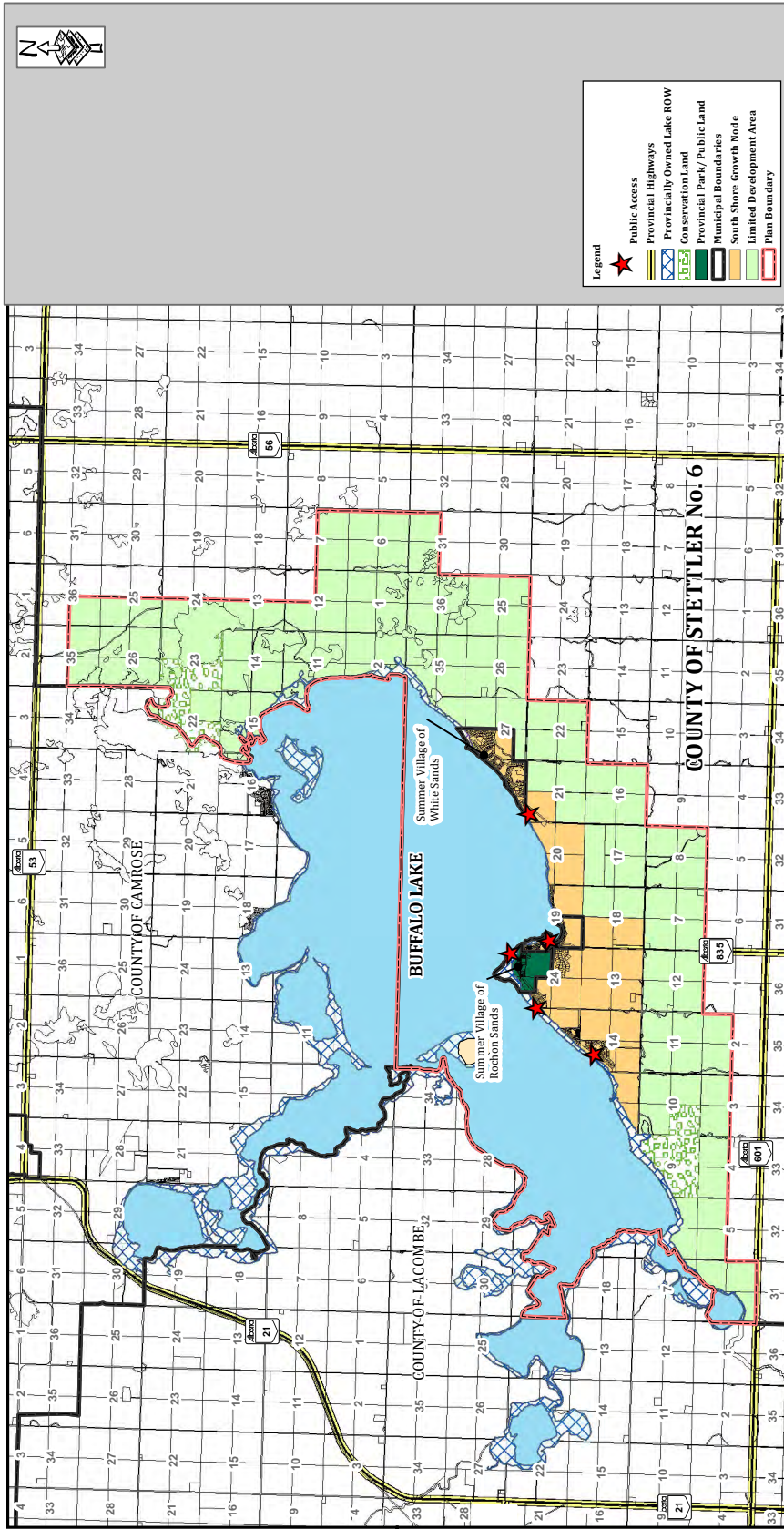
The Planning Committee consists of Mayor Wayne Millar, Mayor Lorne Thurston, Reeve Wayne Nixon, Councillor Joe Gendre, the administrative staff of the three municipalities and Associated Engineering. The workshop was facilitated

by Sandalack & Associates from Calgary. The outcome and direction received from the workshop and from public input will now be used by the County of Stettler Planning and Development Department in conjunction with the Planning Committee to develop a first draft plan (in-house). A second planning workshop will be held in the spring or early summer to review the first draft plan. Specific interest groups will be invited to this workshop, for example community associations. Upon completion of a second draft plan, an Open House will be scheduled to provide landowners and the public an opportunity to review the plan and provide further feedback. Bylaw readings and an associated public hearing are planned to occur before the end of August 2012. This statutory process will be duly advertised. The planning process is shown in the attached diagram.

Please contact the County of Stettler Planning and Development Department at 403.742.4441 should you have any questions or comments regarding this process or to submit your comments and suggestions for this plan.



SOUTHSHORE GROWTH NODE PLAN



County of Stettler No.6

Brushing

Program



The County of Stettler has a brushing program that the residents can take advantage of for removing brush from fence lines adjacent to road allowances. The program works with residents to determine if the area in question needs to be cleared in order to maintain the integrity of the road. For example, if you would like the brush along a fence line removed, and the trees are damaging your fence line or the trees are falling onto the road, the County of Stettler will clear that brush. The trees and brush are normally cleared with a dozer, but we will use other equipment based on the size of the trees.

This service is offered free of charge but the cost of installing a new fence is up to the landowner. The majority of brushing is done in the winter because the ground is frozen and it is easier to clear and remove the brush. After the brushing is completed, it's pushed into piles and left for a period of time (anywhere up to 2 years) to dry out. Once it is dry, the County will burn and bury the pile.

If this kind of service is something that you think you need, please contact Randy Grams at the County of Stettler for more details.



Before



After

Resident Alert: Snowplowing

Large amounts of snow have seemed to have eluded us thus far, but when it does accumulate this year we ask that residents Do NOT push snow across or onto the County Roads or into right-of-ways.

We ask this of you for a number of reasons. The first factor is for safety for employees and County of Stettler residents. It also negatively impacts the quality of roads and quantity of gravel remaining on roads. The small ridges left behind from blade overflow impedes travel for traffic. These ridges could cause a vehicle to lose control and cause an accident.

Also the piles of snow left in right of ways gets very hard and causes safety problems for the snow plow, resulting in breakdowns thus affecting the snow removal time. Leaving the snow in the right of ways is not only a hazard for snow plows but a safety concern for the citizens [ski-doo's, quads]. If an accident occurs from pushing of snow across or into the right of way the resident will legally be held responsible. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the resident assuming the liability for any and all damages incurred as a result of piled snow. In order to keep our roads and residents safe, we will be issuing a notice of non-compliance to first time offenders. Repeat instances of non compliance will be followed up by our peace officers.

We are also asking people to refrain from taking it upon themselves to plow snow from county roads. As this may seem to help the county it can create difficulties for the snow plow operator, and the road itself. As an inexperienced tractor operator plows snow it has a tendency to start to bounce or (buck) as it goes down the road. This creates a washboard effect and makes it hard for the snow plow to correct the situation and make it smooth. As a result we end up losing valuable gravel that is on the road. As a tractor plows the road they are unknowingly mixing gravel with the snow causing gravel to be lost in the ditch, and not benefit us on the road. Thus it affects our roads quality. In the case of an accident that has occurred due to a result of a private resident plowing snow, any and all liability will be placed on the tractor operator. Our grader operators work very hard in the winter and will be around as fast as they can to completely remove the snow. We thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Dust Control

Applications for farmstead Dust Control will be received at the County Office during regular office hours ENDING FRIDAY, April 20, 2012 at 4:30 p.m.

Applications must be made in person and must be accompanied by the fee:
\$1,336.55 plus GST per 200 meters for calcium.

For further information please contact
Dennis Nelson
Director of Public Works
(403) 742-4441

ABSINTHE WORMWOOD

New Addition to the NOXIOUS WEED List

Absinthe wormwood, a weed that has been spreading and causing problems in hayland and pastures, has now been classified as noxious in the County. In our 2011 field scouting, absinthe wormwood, also known as just “wormwood”, was the number one weed problem in the County, far outstripping toadflax, chamomile, or even Canada thistle. So what is the problem with wormwood and what can we do about it? Well first of all, there might be some who do not know what plant we are talking about, so here is some background on wormwood:

Wormwood Facts

- Origin: Introduced to North America from Europe as a garden plant, it now inhabits hayland, pastures and waste areas.
- Life Cycle: perennial, developing a flat rosette in the first year, then growing several 2-4 foot flowering stems in subsequent years.
- Root: deep tap root, developing over time.
- Leaves: deeply cut with several leaflets, silvery-grey, sage-like odor when crushed
- Flower: small and yellowish-green.
- Seeds: numerous (up to 50,000 per plant), small, dark and round
- Concern: toxic to livestock and invasive in nature, having choked out millions of acres through several US States, many of which have classified it noxious.



Classifying Wormwood as Noxious

So, why did the County classify wormwood as a noxious weed? The County staff has long been providing help and advice in controlling all weeds, particularly absinthe wormwood. But it has been frustrating for many hardworking ratepayers who control their own weeds, only to have seeds from their less diligent neighbor invade their clean fields. Without wormwood being classified as noxious in the County, there was little the weed inspectors could do other than encourage those less diligent neighbors to consider controlling their problem. Now with wormwood being named as noxious, weed inspectors can force ratepayers to control those problems by issuing a weed notice, if necessary. This way we can make progress in controlling this alien invasive species for the benefit of all County ratepayers.



Wormwood control

Wormwood has been a long term problem in the area, with some pioneers saying it has been around as long as the railways. Over the years, the tiny seeds of this plant have spread far and wide in the County, including infestations near Donalda in the north, Scollard in the south, Gadbsy and Byemoor in the East, and Nevis in the West. So, all ratepayers in the County need to be aware of wormwood and its control. What do we do to keep this alien invasive species in check? In cultivated fields, the first year rosettes are destroyed by field operations, but in direct seeded fields and pastures, we have to rely on competition and herbicides for control of the mature, seed bearing plants. A healthy crop or forage stand competes well against wormwood, but it can still establish in a field or headlands and take advantage of any square inch of bare soil. Chemical control has been found to be necessary in many cases. There are only a few weed control products that list wormwood on their label, so you may need to discuss your best options with your agricultural chemical company.

So feel free to contact the County about identifying and controlling this noxious alien invasive species. And don't worry, we'll also be talking to your neighbors about their wormwood, but if you see an infestation that does not appear to be controlled, call us at the County and we'll follow up on your information. Thanks to all ratepayers for their efforts to date in controlling this problem weed, and we look forward to using the fact that it was named a noxious weed to be able to encourage additional control in the future.

Reminder: Development Setbacks

Please remember that you do not need a development permit for an agricultural operation as long as any structures such as hay sheds, granaries, livestock shelters, barns and shelter belts meet the 125 feet setback from the center line of the County road.

If development is proposed along a provincial highway a Roadside Development Permit issued by Alberta Transportation is required. Please contact Alberta Transportation at 403.854.5550 or visit their website at www.transportation.alberta.ca.

For more information regarding development please contact the County's Planning & Development Department at 403-742-4441.

Termination of Accreditation under the Safety Codes Act

Home owners, landowners and contractors are hereby advised that, effective December 19, 2011, the County of Stettler No. 6 and the Villages of Donalda, Botha, Gadsby and Big Valley have voluntarily terminated their accreditation with the Safety Codes Council for the purpose of the Safety Codes Act in the disciplines of building, plumbing and gas, electrical and private sewage disposal. The reason for the termination is based on the allocation of available resources and economic considerations. IJD Inspections Ltd. has provided the five partner municipalities with an excellent service over the past six years of accreditation. Any open permits will continue to be completed by IJD Inspections Ltd. out of Red Deer. Please call them at 1-877-617-8776 in order to complete your existing permit inspections. New applications for Safety Codes permits may be submitted to IJD Inspections Ltd. or any other Safety Codes inspection company. The County's administration office at 6602 – 44 Avenue in Stettler will continue to be a drop-off and collection point for building plans and other documents, both for IJD Inspections Ltd. and any other inspection company. For more information please call the Planning and Development Department at the County of Stettler No. 6, at 742-4441.

You Need 'Em? We Got 'Em!!

Agriculture Service Board Rental Program

So, you've got a skunk smelling up the place? Need to get a sample to check out the quality of your hay bales? Got some weeds you need to control? Your Agriculture Service Board has rental equipment that can help take care of that, most of which only requires a damage deposit to rent. While some of the



equipment is mainly used for agricultural use, they are available to all ratepayers of the County at any time, although during busy seasons, there might be a waiting list. In order to serve the maximum number of ratepayers, most equipment also has a late fee to encourage return of the equipment prior to the end of the rental period. Here is a list of the equipment and the fees associated with them. You might want to clip this chart out and keep it on your fridge, tackboard, or someplace handy for future reference:

STETTLER COUNTY ASB RENTAL EQUIPMENT LIST

Equipment	Rental term	Fee	Damage deposit	Late fee
Forage Probe	Two days	No charge	\$50	\$50/week
Magpie Trap	Two weeks	No charge	\$50	\$50/week
Electronic Tag Reader	Three days	\$10	n/a	\$50/day
Skunk Trap	Two weeks	No charge	\$50	\$50/week
Backpack Sprayer	n/a	No charge	\$25	n/a
Truck Mount Sprayer	n/a	No charge	\$150	n/a
Tree Mulch Applicator	n/a	No charge	n/a	n/a
Water Pump & 6" pipe	n/a	\$20/hr to a maximum of \$200/day	\$250	n/a

For more information on the equipment, its capacity and how to use it, contact your Agriculture Service Board (403-742-4441). There are also a number of services we offer, including tree planting, cattle weighing, plant identification, and custom chemical weed control for small jobs that private contractors cannot do. In addition, we hope to be able to sell a gopher control compound to ratepayers, which should be available shortly if the federal government approves its distribution again this year.

COUNCILLOR

Blake

Chapman

STETTLER WARD



As with any job or position, there is stress and there is reward. It is 4:00 am the day before Council and I am feeling more of the stress than the reward on a decision Council needs to make today. Often the decisions made by Council will have an impact on plans and future dreams of ratepayers and so should never be taken lightly. The stress of these decisions is much easier to handle knowing I have six other councillors whom I trust to be fair and thoughtful along with excellent administration staff to give us the needed information to help us make these decisions.

My first day on Council, I remember our current MLA took me aside and informed me I am not a grader operator, gravel truck driver, back-hoe operator nor a road foreman, I am just a councillor. That means I am to make policy and then get out of the way of staff so they can do their job. I appreciated that advice Jack. Sometimes I look back and I have to laugh at myself because before being a councillor I thought I could drive a grader better than most even though I had never sat on one, criticize Council decisions even though I did not know how the decisions were arrived at, or I wondered what that entire office staff did all day. Well now I know

those grader operators are very skilled at what they do, there is a tremendous amount thought and preparedness that goes into Council decisions, and that office staff, you will find many of them there after hours trying to keep up with all the paper work the Federal and Provincial governments keep downloading onto Municipalities. The employees of the County of Stettler work as a well-oiled machine under the direction of Tim and Yvette and make me proud on a daily basis.

“Often decisions made by Council will have an impact on the plans and dreams of ratepayers and should never be taken lightly.”

The reward part of Council is in the shaping of positive policy to move the County into the future in a sustainable manner. It is said you cannot drive a car by only

looking into the rear view mirror so we have to learn from our past but plan and develop for the future because the future is where we will spend the rest of our lives. Through goal setting and strategic planning, the County can move forward towards the future with confidence. If you do not like to read, maybe County Council is not for you. Often the council package is more than 200 pages and as a councillor you get about five days to read and

make notes to prepare for Council. This package by the time it printed on paper and bound with coil binding was getting to be an expensive document as well as being very time consuming for staff. So, administration with foresight decided Council should receive their packages electronically. This has turned out to be a tremendous time and money saver and has been applauded provincially by our mother ship the "AAMDC".

Another innovative project of administration for Council was the institution of iPhones for Council and several staff. Now if a ratepayer calls the County Office with a complaint or question, the question or complaint is instantly sent to the appropriate councillor with what needs to be done, who is going to do it, when it will be done and when it is completed. This system has really reduced the information gap that may have existed before.

Contracting Vs. Owning

This question often comes up when talking with ratepayers. Should the County own road building equipment, a fleet of gravel trucks, roadside mowing equipment etc.; all very good and needed questions. As a Council, we are starting to put together the numbers to help us make these decisions. With this information, Council will be able to decide if it is prudent to own or contract or maybe a hybrid of

both but at least the decisions will be based on sound accounting.

Hats off to our public works staff for the work done on bringing our road infrastructure around after a tough spring on roads in 2011. It became clear to Council and administration that more gravel was needed on County roads. The gravel budget for 2011 was increased and contract trucks were brought in to help get the product on the roads in a timely manner. We are now finally catching up with the gravel program and are going into 2012 in much better shape.

The position of County Councillor is definitely more reward than stress and I applaud anyone who has the courage to throw their hat into the ring at election time. Many people choose to criticize from a distance rather than get into the trenches and institute change. Be a changer!



Public Notice
Road Construction Completed

Pursuant to the Municipal Government Act M-26.1 534 THE COUNTY OF STETTLER NO. 6 hereby provides notice to any person having an interest in land that is adjacent to lands which the County of Stettler No. 6 has constructed a public road. Persons entitled to compensation from the municipality for loss of or the permanent lessening of use of that person's land caused by the public work are advised to make claim within 60 days after this notice is published.

The following locations have been completed as of December 31, 2011:

- NW & SW 18-38-17-4
- NW & SW 19-38-17-4
- NE & SE 13-38-18-4
- NE & SE 24-38-18-4

For more information, please contact:
 Tim Fox, Chief Administrative Officer
 Box 1270, 6602 – 44 Avenue
 Stettler, AB T0C 2L0
 Ph: (403) 742-4441



DID YOU BYO BAG?

(DID YOU BRING YOUR OWN BAG?)

A promotion by the *Heartland Beautification Committee* to reduce the number of single-use plastic bags consumed in the Stettler and County of Stettler area.

WHY REDUCE PLASTIC BAG USAGE?

- *Stettler and the County of Stettler consume over 1 million single-use plastic bags every year.*
- *Single-use plastic bags are often used for just 2 or 3 minutes (store to car, car to house), a considerable waste of non-renewable resources for such a brief purpose.*
- *Plastic bags blow around our area and are unsightly.*
- *Plastic bags clog our street drains.*
- *Plastic bags contaminate our lakes, rivers and our crops.*
- *Animals eat or get entangled in plastic bags.*
- *Plastic bags are a major part of Stettler's landfill. It could cost \$10 million to build a new landfill.*
- *Plastic bags take on average 400 years to breakdown but don't decompose. They just become ever smaller pieces that still contain toxins.*



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

BRING YOUR OWN BAG, EVERY TIME YOU SHOP.

BRING YOUR OWN BAG, FOR EVERY STORE.

DECLINE A PLASTIC BAG, IF YOU FORGOT YOURS.

KEEP YOUR RE-USABLE BAGS IN YOUR CAR.

SHOPPING? THINK WALLET AND RE-USABLE BAGS.

Sponsored by the
Heartland Beautification Committee.
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Health Watch

**By: Ed Woodward
Paramedic**

INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI)

It would seem that winter has finally arrived in Alberta, and with it colds and flu. As a result, Stettler District Ambulance has seen an increase in calls for people suffering from influenza-like illness. Colds and Flu are most prevalent in the winter months but can be seen all year round. Though rarely fatal, the flu can produce some quite serious symptoms such as dehydration, hyperthermia (High fever), pneumonia and vomiting. Like most illnesses, the symptoms of ILI can have more serious consequences in very young children and the elderly.

Prevention

The most effective method for preventing the spread of ILI or catching it yourself is hand washing. On average, people touch their faces over 100 times a day. If your hands are contaminated with an ILI virus (After touching a contaminated door handle, for example) and you rub your eye or scratch your nose, you stand a very good chance of contracting the virus and getting sick. So by washing your hands frequently you reduce this risk significantly. Also by doing this, you prevent contaminating other surfaces with your own hands.

Another important method in preventing the spread of ILI is to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. This sounds obvious, but it is often overlooked, particularly when an individual

doesn't feel sick. But remember, a person can be infected with ILI and not show symptoms for up to 24 hours but still be infectious.

Signs and Symptoms

ILI has multiple symptoms which can include fever, chills, muscle aches, inflammation of the sinuses, 'wet' cough, sneezing and nausea/vomiting. These generally last for a few days before subsiding.

Treatment

Typically the best treatments for ILI are the old home remedies; bedrest, lots of fluids, tylenol to combat fever and keeping warm. There is no cure for ILI and these methods are effective in supporting your body's immune system to fight the infection. A common misconception is that



antibiotics are effective in fighting ILI, but this is only true if your illness is caused by a bacterial infection. Most colds and flu are caused by viruses and antibiotics are completely ineffective against them.

Occasionally, people will suffer more serious complications of ILI. These may include altered level of consciousness,

confusion, difficulty breathing, severe neck/back pain or inability to move neck, or persistent high fever. These rare cases are emergencies and should be seen by a physician. Call 911 or take the individual to the hospital if they display these types of symptoms.

Erskine Concept Plan

On July 13, 2011 the County hosted a workshop for the Erskine Concept Plan. At this meeting the consultants, Beverley Sandalack and Francisco Alaniz Uribe of Sandalack + Associates, obtained very valuable input from residents on matters that concern them about the future development of the hamlet. This included the following topics:

amenities (1) apartments (1) appealing (1) architectural (1) assets (1) beautification (1) camping (1) central (1)
 character (2) **community** (4) contribute (1) **deer** (2) density (1) **existing** (3)
 facilities (1) fire (1) **friendly** (2) **future** (3) gas (1) getting (1) **green** (3) hall (1) **highway** (3)
 housing (1) industrial (1) **issues** (2) lot (1) **maintain** (2) mix (1) mobile (1) needs (1) noise (1) oppose (1) parks (1)
pedestrian (3) piped (1) plant (1) playground (1) poison (1) potential (1) **preserved** (2) program (1)
protect (3) proximity (1) **quality** (2) **red** (2) residential (1) rich (1) **river** (2) rural (1) rv (1)
safety (2) seniors (1) servicing (1) sewage (1) sidewalks (1) **spaces** (2) **speed** (2) station (1) storm (1)
 subdivisions (1) tower (1) **town** (2) **trees** (2) upgrade (1) upkeep (1) walking (1) waste (1) **water** (10)
 wells (1)

On October 27 the second open house was hosted where the consultants provided a draft plan based on the previous community input. Residents were asked to review the draft plan and make any comments that they feel could improve the plan or confirm that the consultants correctly incorporated their initial input from the first workshop.

The consultants reviewed the comments from the October 27 open house and prepared a final draft plan. On January 11, 2012 the County Council considered the presentation of the final draft plan, and on February 8, 2012 adopted the Hamlet of Erskine Concept Plan by resolution.

A copy of the plan will be mailed to every household in Erskine by spring. In a nutshell, the plan proposes street tree planting along Main Street and Prospect Avenue with on-street parking as a possibility along both sides of the wider section of Main Street. The plan proposes new residential development in the northeast corner of the hamlet that will be fully integrated with the existing community. It provides for infill development of existing larger lots and for a few acreages to be subdivided on properties along the north


edge of the hamlet. The improvement of the pedestrian environment is also recommended, through the reconstruction of old sidewalks and a future pedestrian pathway with possible crossings along Highway 835. Long term developments could include negotiations to relocate or build a new community hall in a more central location, and the provision of storage yards south of Highway 12 in order to encourage the relocation of existing oil field equipment and other materials that are stored outdoors on properties along Highway 835.

In their adoption of the concept plan, County Council directed Administration to convert the plan to a statutory area redevelopment plan and to develop a program of prioritized actions, budget and time line necessary to implement the recommendations of the Concept Plan. This process may take several months to refer the plan to provincial government agencies and utility companies, and develop policies for the implementation of the plan over a period of time. The process will culminate with a public hearing and bylaw readings, which will be advertised. The implementation program may take several years to complete, to allow for negotiation, planning and development approvals, and appropriate budgeting each year.

The County would like to thank everyone who participated in the development of the Erskine Concept Plan. For further information, please contact the County's Planning & Development Department at 403-742-4441.

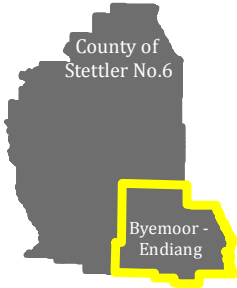


photo credit: Jordan Bauman, County Resident

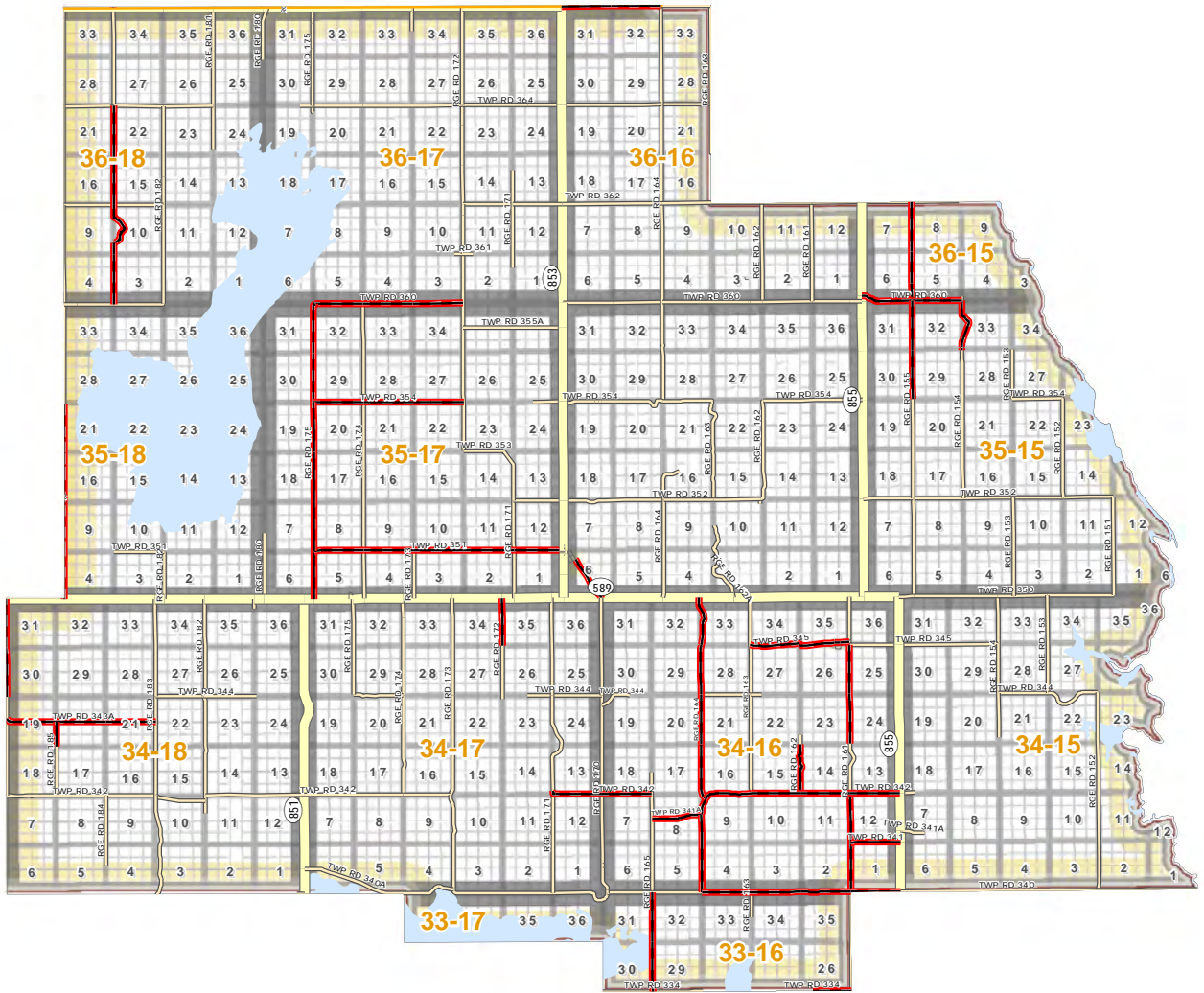


2012 Graveling Program

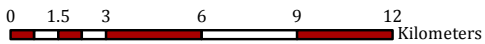
The 2012 gravelling program is presented on the following pages. This is the completion of our 3-year gravel rotation that ensures every road gets gravel at least once in that time frame. The roads indicated in the following maps are tentatively scheduled for gravel in 2012, and some of them have already received gravel as the conditions are perfect for winter gravelling. These maps are merely a plan, and the roads that receive gravel are subject to change as needs and repairs arise. If you have any questions about the program or your roads, please contact our Public Works Department by calling 403-742-4441.



Ward 1: Byemoor-Endiang

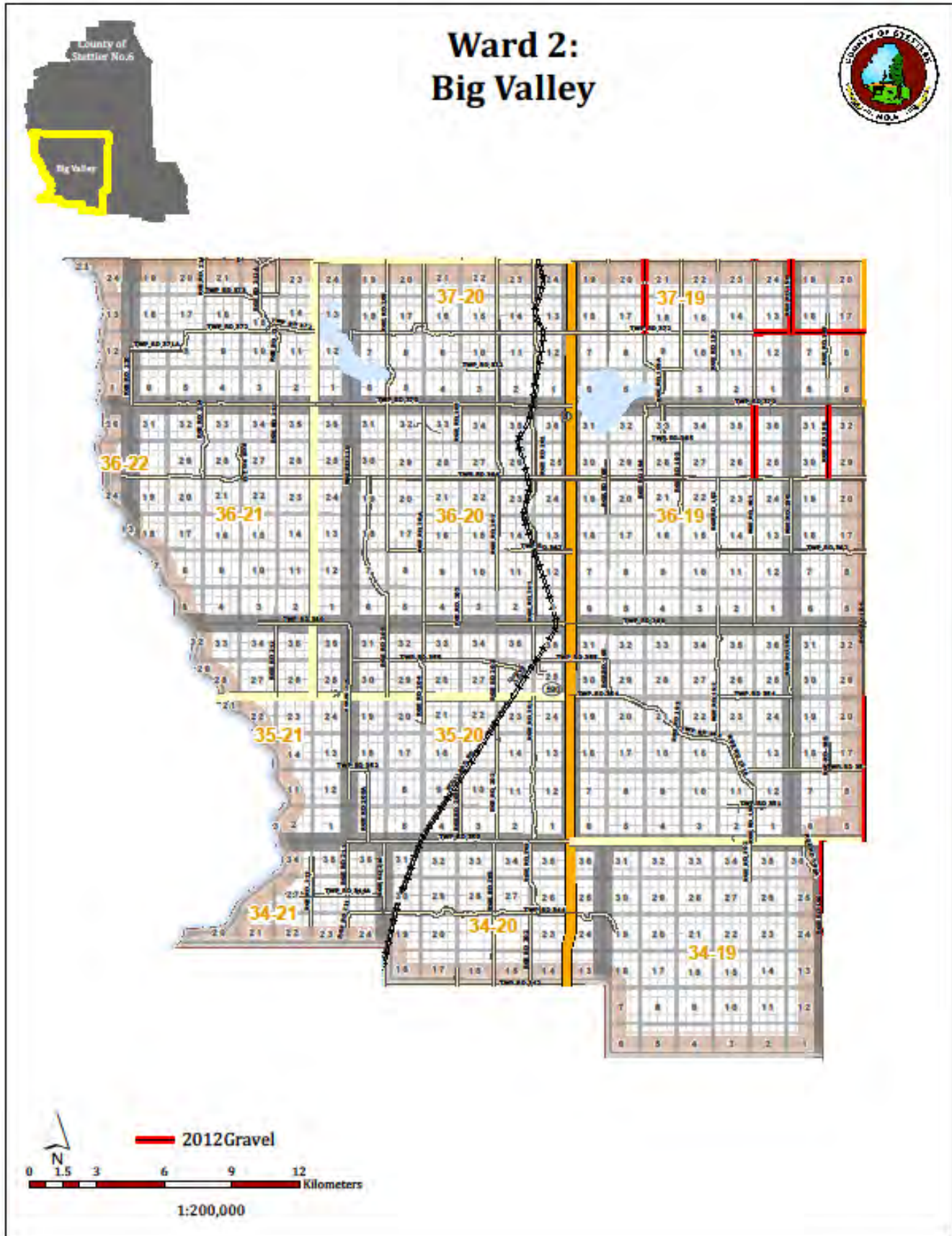


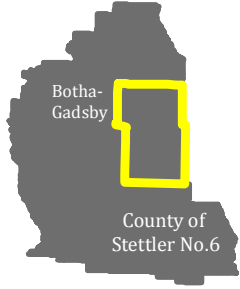
— 2012 Gravel



1:200,000

CC 2012 GRAVELLING PROGRAM

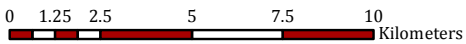




Ward 3 : Botha-Gadsby



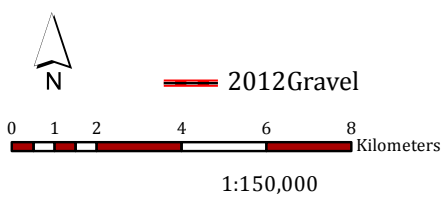
— 2012 Gravel



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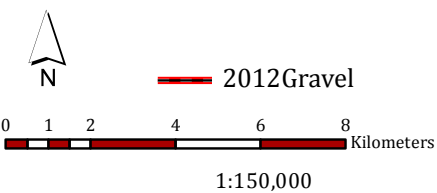


Ward 4: Erskine South- Warden



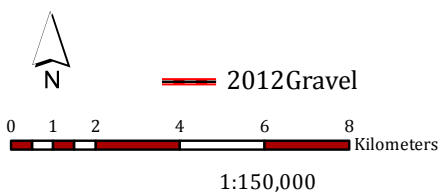
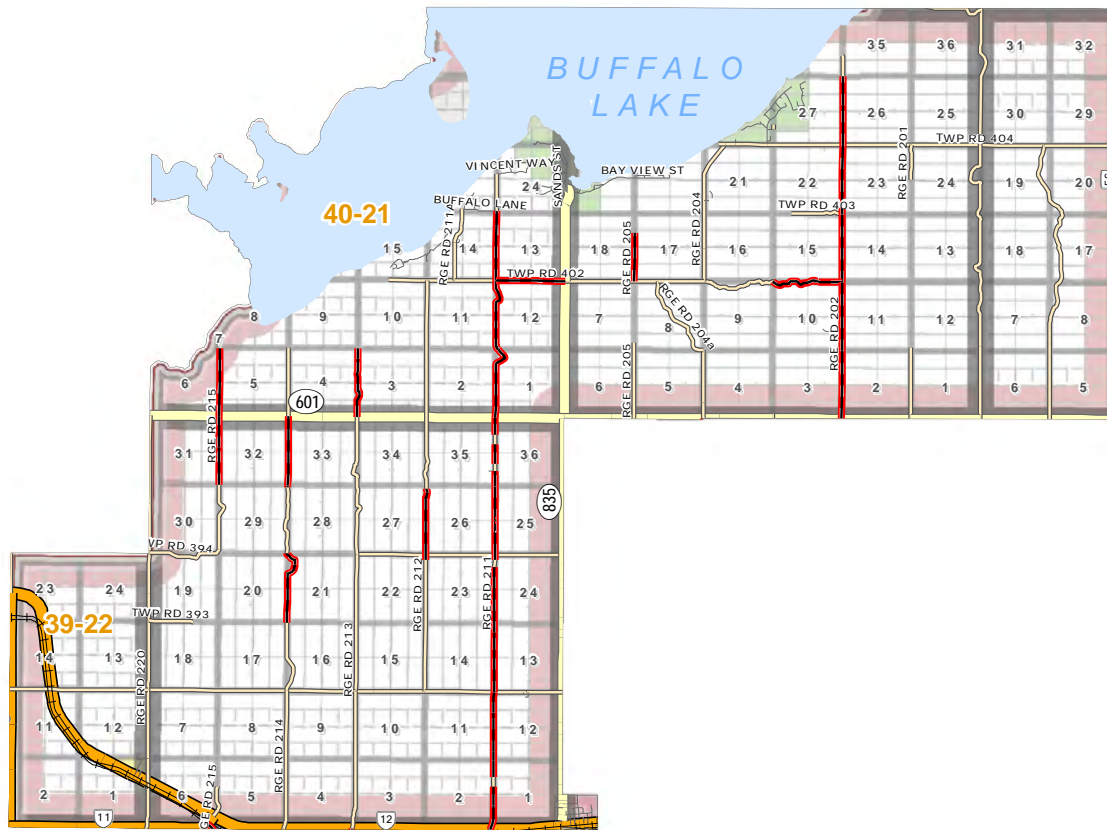


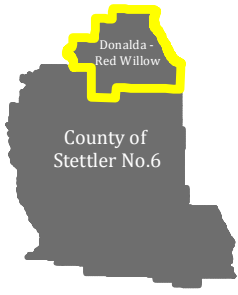
Ward 5: Stettler



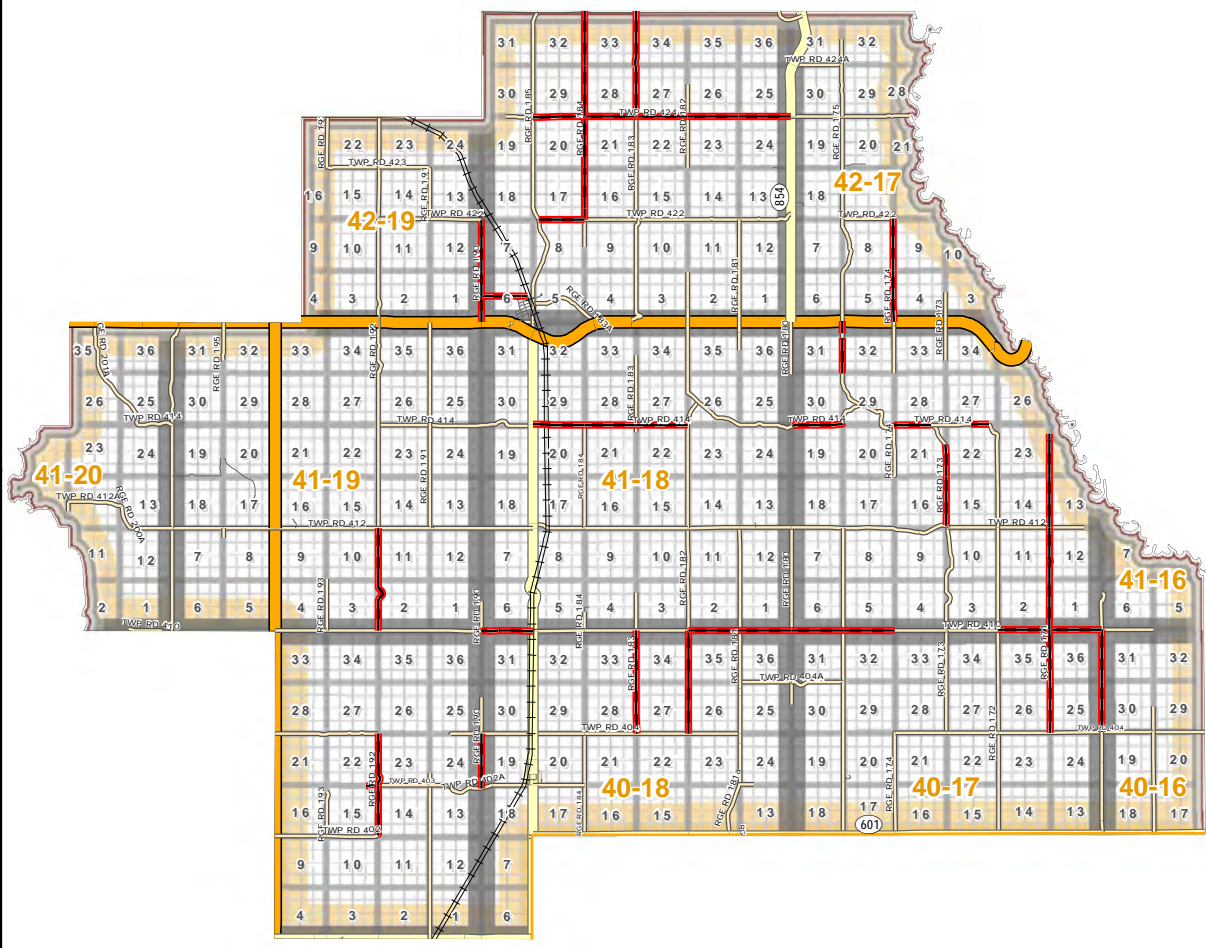


Ward 6: Erskine-Buffero Lake

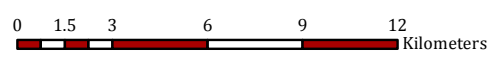




Ward 7: Donalda-Red Willow



2012 Gravel



1:200,000

ICE SAFETY

This mild winter means we get to participate in one of our favorite pastimes as Canadians - Ice Fishing. Here are some tips to keep you safe on the lake especially as spring creeps upon us.

There is no such thing as completely safe when dealing with ice. It should always be assumed that unsafe conditions exist no matter where you travel on ice. There are many factors that can change the thickness of ice even in the coldest weather. It is not uncommon for large areas of water to open up as a result of pressure cracks even when the ice is very thick.

SAFE PRACTICES

- Make sure someone is aware where your going and when to expect you back.
- Save your alcohol for the shore (ICE IN THE DRINK NOT DRINK ON THE ICE)
- Never travel on the Ice alone take a buddy.
- Don't travel to close together.
- Learn about hypothermia and how to treat it.
- Ensure your hut has proper ventilation for the heater or stove.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- A cell Phone (Store it in a zip lock bag to keep it dry and turn it off to conserve the battery)
- GPS device (Visibility can change from clear to near Zero in a few minutes even on a clear day just from the wind.)
- Compass if you don't have a GPS
- Throw Rope (if someone falls in do not approach use the rope)
- Tether Rope 50' between buddies (If your testing ice this is essential)
- Ice Picks (a very inexpensive way to save your Life, wear them around your neck all the times)
- Flotation Device or flotation suit
- A Walking stick 6ft or more (useful for balance and to test Ice)
- A change of Dry Clothes (kept in a plastic bag)
- Thermal Mylar Blanket (very cheap and small)
- Cleats many injuries take place as a result of simply slipping.
- Glow sticks
- Floating Flashlight
- Signal Flares
- Hand & Foot warmers
- First Aid kit for cuts scrapes and hook removal

ICE SAFETY FACTORS

- Springs or currents can erode ice thickness from below.
- Sand bars heat up on sunny days and change ice quality quickly.
- Snow on ice acts as an insulator and prevents ice from forming properly.
- Ice that has thawed and refrozen is less safe.
- Holes left behind when a hut is moved can swallow a snowmobile or ATV.
- Slushy Ice is not safe.
- Pressure cracks can form open water at any time no matter how cold or thick the ice.
- Over used trails onto the ice can degrade into holes or very thin ice.
- Wind can cause large pieces of sheet ice to break free sometimes miles wide.
- Shore Ice will melt first and create dangerous soft or thin ice.

TAKING CARS AND TRUCKS OUT ON THE ICE

- First rule would be, Don't do it.
- Move slowly (Vehicles moving across an Ice surface creates a pressure wave that can cause ice to fail, especially near shore)
- Park far apart - all too often we see vehicles parked too close together. It may take hours for the combined weight to cause the ice to sink and then fail.
- Park as far from your fishing spot as you can - If the ice does fail you may lose your vehicle but you will be alive to tell the story
- Leave your window open when traveling, if your vehicle does go through you won't be able to open the doors it's your only way out.
- Undo your seatbelt, you need to be able to vacate the vehicle quickly.



ICE THICKNESS

- Less Than 3" or 7cm Stay Off
- 4" or 10cm Walking or cross country Skiing
- 5" or 12cm Snowmobile or ATV
- 8" - 12' or 20 - 30cm Car or Small Pickup
- 12" - 15" or 30 - 38cm Medium Truck

POINTS OF INTEREST

- It's unlikely that you have coverage for your vehicle if it falls through the ice.
- You as the owner of the vehicle are responsible for the costs to recover your vehicle. (Expensive)
- You may receive fines for environmental cleanup if your vehicle goes through.
- You may be personally liable for the people in your vehicle.

COURTESY

- If you move your hut, mark the hole you left behind.
- Be quiet, fish are very aware of sound and will move off if disturbed, even loud talk can do it.
- When traveling stay clear of other fishermen and huts with your vehicles.
- Remove your hut at the end of the season, don't pollute or create navigational water hazards.

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