



# DROUGHT

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

MAY 2024





If you have any questions or comments about the Drought Management Plan, please contact us!



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# SECTION 1

# INTRODUCTION

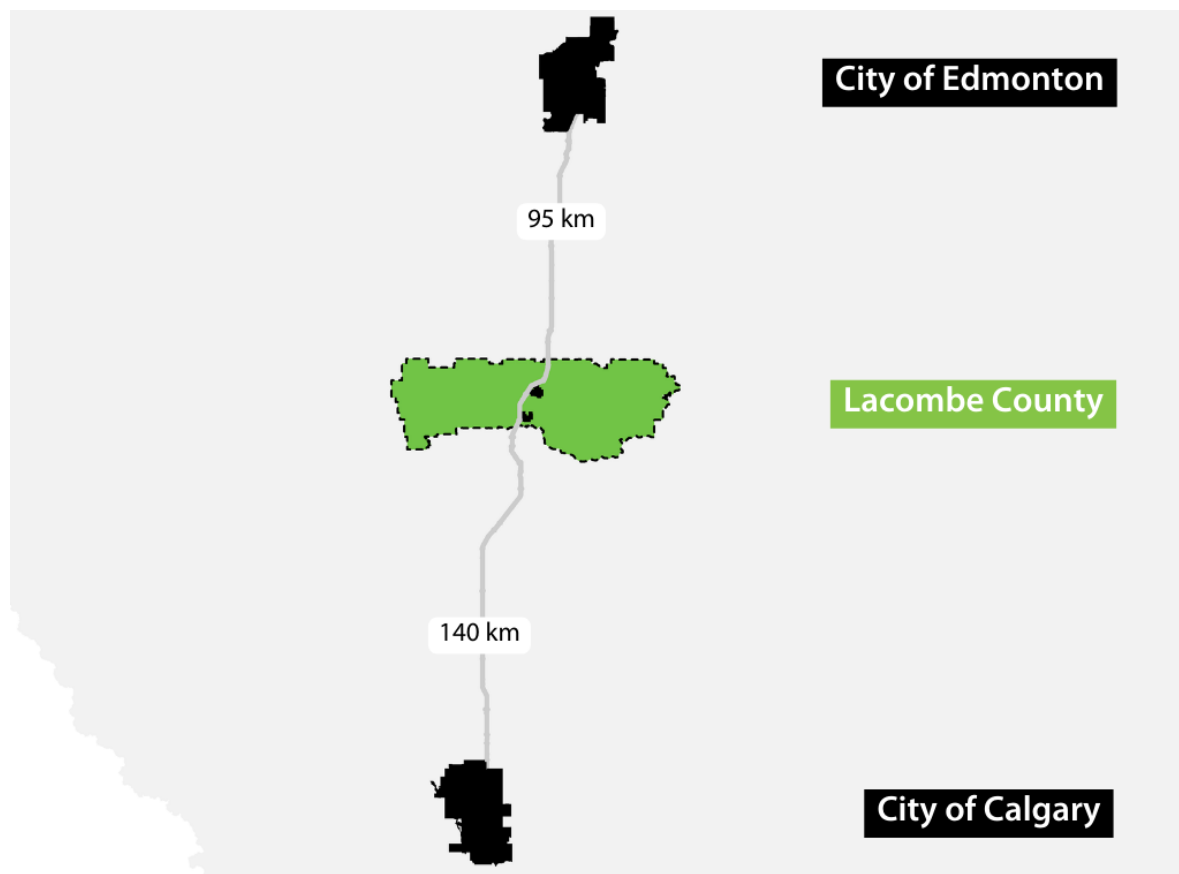




# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CONTEXT

Lacombe County is a thriving rural municipality situated in the heart of Central Alberta, on Treaty 6 Territory. Our municipality is home to three of Alberta's most popular recreational lakes - Sylvan Lake, Gull Lake, and Buffalo Lake, with numerous iconic landmarks that mark our community's strong agricultural roots. Lacombe County is strategically located along the QEII Highway Corridor between Edmonton and Calgary and has attracted high-quality investment for decades.



Lacombe County is in the northern portion of the Great Plains, falling within the Parkland and Boreal Natural Regions of Alberta. The County's landscape is diverse and generally includes significant areas of highly productive cropland, pasture, remnant native vegetation, and wetlands. Most of the County falls within the Red Deer River Watershed (tributary to the South Saskatchewan River) or the Battle River Watershed (tributary to the North Saskatchewan River).

## 1.2 DROUGHT

Drought is defined as a prolonged period of dry weather that causes a reduction in water resources. Drought is a natural phenomenon in most parts of the world. The frequency, characteristics, and impacts of drought vary from

# INTRODUCTION

region to region.

Lacombe County is no stranger to periodic drought. The Canadian prairies are well-known for having prolonged periods of droughts that have impacted our area's economic, social, and environmental context for hundreds of years. Drought can be seen as a natural environmental stressor that has been a critical part of our local ecosystem since the decline of glacial period 11,000 years ago. Over the millennia, drought has been critical to many ecosystem processes, for example, vegetation succession by leading to fires that cause the regeneration of ecosystems. Drought has also had a profound influence on the distribution of Indigenous and settler communities in North America.

There are four types of droughts that affect our communities (source: Government of Alberta). These are listed by increasing level of impact.

1

## METEOROLOGICAL DROUGHT

refers to a prolonged period  
of little or no precipitation,  
dry weather

2

## AGRICULTURAL DROUGHT

refers to a prolonged period  
of soil moisture deficit that  
leads to crop death or low  
yield

3

## HYDROLOGICAL DROUGHT

refers to when surface and  
groundwater sources fall  
below average levels,  
negatively impacting aquatic  
ecosystems and our ability  
to use water

4

## SOCIOECONOMIC DROUGHT

refers to when long periods  
of an agricultural and  
hydrological drought lead to  
negative social and  
economic impacts to our  
community





# INTRODUCTION

## 1.3 INCREASING IMPACT OF DROUGHT

Unfortunately, in recent decades, the severity and impact of drought events have been increasing in Canada and around the world due to climate change, the depletion of ecosystems, and increasing human demand for water. Due to the intensification of agricultural and industrial uses, drought is now placing an increasing burden on our systems which are becoming increasingly difficult to mitigate.

In the past 120 years, the Canadian Prairies have seen five major drought events that have led to billions of dollars of damage to our economy. The 2001-2002 drought was one of the most severe in Canadian history, leading to a \$5.8 billion loss in GDP and a loss of 41,000 jobs. The drought led to zero net farm income being reported in Alberta for 2002 (source: Government of Canada).

In Lacombe County, droughts negatively impact water supply in four ways:

- **Natural surface water** – rivers, creeks, lakes, and wetlands
- **Groundwater** – wells, basins
- **Water storage infrastructure** – dugouts, canals, reservoirs
- **Soil moisture**

The following are some examples of how drought may impact our community in Lacombe County:

- **Agricultural producers.** Drought can lead to crop death and low productivity and lack of feed for livestock. Severe drought threatens the income, livelihood, and security of our agricultural community.
- **Industries.** There are countless large industrial operations in Lacombe County that require significant water resources. These companies may be impacted in the case of an extreme water shortage.
- **Residents.** A severe drought may impact surface water and/or groundwater resources and increase the cost of water use.
- **Recreationalists.** There has been ongoing concern related to the reduction of water levels in the County's iconic lakes over the years. A prolonged drought will exacerbate this and negatively impact lakeshore recreational developments.
- **Tourism.** Lack of precipitation leads to a decrease in water levels and cyanobacterial blooms that leads to fewer people visiting our recreational lakes.
- **General public.** Drought often leads to an intense wildfire season that places an immense strain on fire resources and negatively impacts air quality, leading to health concerns for the general population, especially the elderly, children, and those with underlying health conditions.
- **Ecosystems.** Low levels of surface water and soil moisture have a detrimental impact to many species. A prolonged drought may lead to fish and plant mortality.

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.4 STAGES OF DROUGHT IN ALBERTA

There are five drought management stages identified by the Government of Alberta. This forms the basis of this Plan.

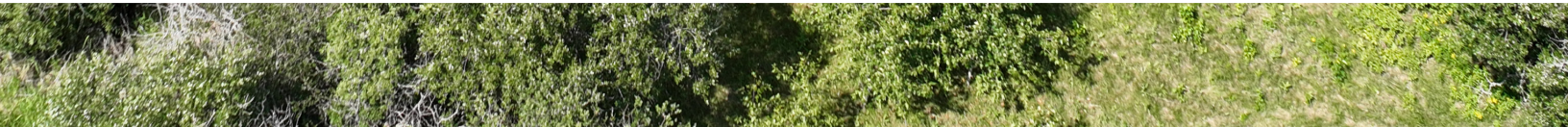






# SECTION 2

# FRAMEWORK





# FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 LACOMBE COUNTY'S ROLE

While nearly all the legislative responsibilities associated with drought management falls on other levels of government, Lacombe County Council and Administration have committed to taking action on variables within our control to help reduce the County's water impact and assist our community in a time of drought.

In the *2022-2027 Strategic Plan*, Council identified "Success Grows Here!" to be the County's vision statement – a testament to our strong agricultural roots and success in attracting high-quality investment to our municipality. Council has set out its mission to build a safe and vibrant community through leadership, innovation, and healthy relationships. This Drought Management Plan is a key ingredient to ensuring that Success Grows Here!

Lacombe County's *Municipal Development Plan* provides a commitment of leadership to our community. The Municipal Development Plan states that the County will embody a set of values and best practices aimed at instilling trust and confidence in Lacombe County not only as a municipal leader and partner, but also as a role model in the community.

The creation and implementation of the Drought Management Plan is fundamental to this commitment to leadership. Through the adoption and implementation of this Plan, the County is committing to supporting our community by reflecting on what we can do as an organization to minimize the impacts of drought within our scope of practice and ensure our community has the resources it needs to enable their success.

## 2.2 DROUGHT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

With the imminent possibility of a major drought, County Council instructed the County Manager to form a Drought Management Committee ('the Committee') to create a Drought Management Plan for Lacombe County. After the adoption of the Plan, the role of the Committee is to continuously monitor the drought situation and ensure the Plan is implemented as intended. The Committee provides information and direction for Council and will review this Plan on an ongoing basis.

The Committee is composed of the following staff:

- County Manager
- Communications Coordinator
- Administrative support
- A representative from each County department:
  - Operations
  - Corporate Services
  - Community Services
  - Planning Services



# FRAMEWORK

The Drought Management Committee meets as needed to review the drought situation in Lacombe County and ensure that this document is being implemented as originally intended. In times where drought is no longer a concern, the Committee may still meet to ensure the Plan remains updated and ready-to-go if conditions change.

## 2.3 THE STRATEGY



### MISSION

Lacombe County's mission for how we will manage drought and help our community.



### PRIORITY AREAS

Five areas the County will focus on to successfully implement the vision.



### INITIATIVES

Within each priority area, there will be a set of actions for the County to pursue.



### REVIEW

Continuously reviewing and monitoring the Plan to ensure successful implementation.

# MISSION

Lacombe County commits to the responsible use of water resources and to empower our community with knowledge and resources to be resilient in a drought.

We want to ensure Success Grows Here!, even in a drought.



# FRAMEWORK

## 2.3.2 PRIORITY AREAS

There are five priority areas the County has identified to make a meaningful impact in reducing the County's water consumption and helping our community be resilient in drought:

- Operations
- Community Services
- Corporate Services
- Communications and Outreach
- Plan Implementation

## 2.3.3 INITIATIVES

Within each priority area, there will be a list of initiatives for the County to undertake. These actions are listed by the stage of drought determined by the Government of Alberta.

## 2.3.4 REVIEW

### *Implementation*

Each action item will be implemented based on the stage of drought.

### *Review*

The Drought Management Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Drought Management Committee to assess the effectiveness of the measures that were employed in the past years. Adjustments may be made to the actions annually if deemed appropriate. When adjustments are required, the Drought Management Committee, by consensus, will provide recommendations to County Council to amend the Drought Management Plan.

Clerical edits, corrections, and updating of terms/references will be done administratively on an annual basis.

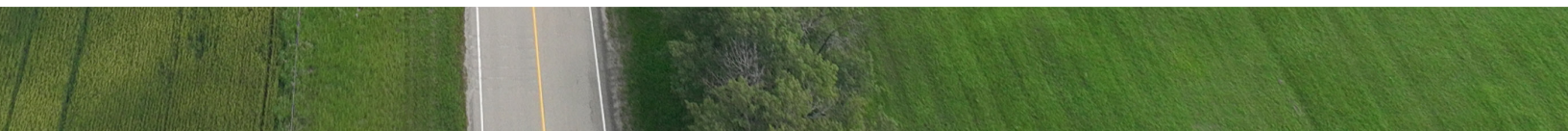


Shoreline of Gull Lake, north of Degraff's RV Resort.



# SECTION 3

# **ACTION PLAN**





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section identifies the **initiatives** that have been identified by the Drought Committee. An **initiative** is a feasible action that has been identified to help the County meet the objectives of this Plan. In the upcoming year, the County will explore these initiatives and will assess their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of this Plan.

These initiatives are categorized by County Department, and then further subcategorized by the drought stage required for activation. For instance, "Stage 3" means that if the drought situation escalates to this stage or higher, the County will embark on that initiative.

It is important to note that these stages may not be an exact categorization of the initiatives undertaken. The Drought Committee will assess the existing context and will make case-by-case determinations of the initiatives that will be undertaken at each time.

Each action is also characterized as **ongoing** or **one-time** items. One-time items can be completed initially. In subsequent years, this Plan will be updated to summarize one-time actions that have already been accomplished because of this Plan.





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.2 OPERATIONS

The Operations Department represents the heart and bones of Lacombe County. Operations builds and maintains most County-owned infrastructure in our municipality, including County paved/gravel road, bridges, culverts, ditches, fencing, trails, parks, and amenities. Our Operations Department prides itself on providing reliable infrastructure that lasts generations, completing all tasks efficiently, on-time, and within budget. This provides County ratepayers with a superior level of service that is highly respected and valued by municipal leaders across Alberta.

Lacombe County is proud to conduct most of our construction and maintenance work in-house, leveraging our vast equipment inventory, manpower, and internal expertise to get the job done right. The County employs skilled and qualified labourers, equipment operators, mechanics, welders, road crew, and administrative staff that are proud to serve our community.

Several County construction and maintenance processes are water intensive. The Drought Committee has identified the following initiatives that can be employed in a drought to reduce our water consumption in the construction and maintenance process. Further, some initiatives have been identified to help our community in times of drought.

### STAGE 1

Stage 1 represents the early warning signs for a possible drought in the upcoming weeks and months. At this stage, the County's Operations Department will be proactive and explore long-term initiatives that can help enhance our sustainability and reduce unnecessary water use overall.

#### **Initiative #1 – Explore Feasibility of Water Recapture Systems**

*TYPE: one-time action*

The County will explore the feasibility and logistics of installing a water recapture system on our Shop and Office Buildings to use excess water to operate our vehicle and equipment washing facilities. This water currently goes to the County's stormwater pond. This water is clean but non-potable, and would be filtered to remove any sediment, captured in a new holding tank, and used to wash equipment.

### STAGE 2

In Stage 2, there may be decreases in surface water sources in the County. In this stage, the County will emphasize public education, specifically pertaining to recreation, as this sector is frequently impacted by actual and perceived lake water levels.

#### **Initiative #2 – Education on Lake Water Levels**

*TYPE: ongoing*

Decreasing water levels at Gull Lake, Buffalo Lake, and Sylvan Lake have already begun to provide challenges for recreation uses. Further drought conditions will continue to degrade this situation. To help the public understand the situation, the County's Operations and Communications teams will help educate the public on the matter, as follows:

- The County will provide public information to make the public more aware of issues around water levels and the impact on boat launch use specifically. At County owned and operated



# ACTION PLAN

facilities, additional signage may be needed to warn boaters of changing conditions.

- The County will make this information available to community groups to make them aware of the challenges and limitations when they are seeking changes to beaches or challenges with boat docks.

## STAGE 3

There are no specific initiatives for the Operations Department in a Stage 3 drought, but initiatives listed in Stage 1 & 2 will continue to apply.

## STAGE 4

In times of a Stage 4 drought, the County's Operations Department will focus its efforts on reducing its water use for its maintenance and construction activities.

### **Initiative #3 – Dust Control for Maintenance and Construction**

*TYPE: one-time action*

Operations facilitates dust control on its own maintenance and construction projects. This is a critical mitigative measure. However, in times of water shortage, the County will explore the following measures:

- The Operations Department will explore options to use water from County-owned dugouts, gravel pits, and the stormwater pond as a water source, if needed, due to the lack of other available water resources.
- The Operations Department may explore options for scaling back the watering program from typical practice to focus on areas of high priority, such as the front of residences.
- The Operations Department may explore calcium chloride, or another commercial dust suppressant, as an alternative to watering at higher use locations.
- In an emergency situation, should water restrictions affect the County's ability to water haul routes, a communications strategy will be undertaken to inform affected landowners of the situation.

## STAGE 5

Stage 5 represents an extreme drought in which water restrictions will be a reality. In this extreme scenario, the County's Operations Department will need to make difficult, last-resort water saving measures to minimize the loss of water resources for our community.

### **Initiative #4 – Reduction in Vehicle and Equipment Washing**

*TYPE: Ongoing, until conditions improve to Stage 4*

Washing is necessary to ensure equipment longevity and a safe work environment. However, water restrictions may require the frequency of these washes to be decreased, or alternative vehicle/equipment cleaning methods may be explored.



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## **Initiative #5 – Public Water Availability at Tees and Rainy Creek Road Shops**

*TYPE: Ongoing, until conditions improve to Stage 4*

The Tees and Rainy Creek Road Shops both have wells that could be opened to the agricultural community in the case of an extreme water shortage. These wells have limited capacity and would require approximately one hour to fill the 3000-gallon cistern which limits their ability to fill large tanks on a regular basis. As such, this would be a last resort option for the County to provide assistance to local agricultural producers with some water. At this time, Operation would set up a system whereby a fee is charged to recoup the wear on the system and schedule availability.

Tees Shop





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.3 COMMUNITY SERVICES

True to its name, the County's Community Services Department provides our community with various critical municipal services that improve the quality of life of our residents. Our Community Services Department is vast, and encompasses numerous critical functions including, but not limited to

- **Agricultural Services.** Hosts education workshops, seminars, and education campaigns to inform the public about agriculture-related topics. Agricultural Services provides many great resources to the agricultural community. Agricultural Services also has many qualified staff who carry out the functions required of Lacombe County under the Weed Control Act, Animal Health Act, Agricultural Pests Act, and Soil Conservation Act.
- **Environmental Services.** Environmental Services facilitates environmental initiatives to promote sustainability within our organization and in the community. Environmental Services aims to ensure we continue to advance as an organization to becoming more environmentally conscious. This also includes initiatives and education on water use and water conservation.
- **Community Peace Officer / Enforcement.** Our Community Peace Officers play an instrumental role in ensuring Lacombe County's municipal bylaws and applicable provincial or federal legislation are enforced. With respect to a drought, if water restrictions are necessary in the future, the County's Community Peace Officers would be responsible for enforcement of the applicable bylaws.
- **Fire Services / Emergency Management.** The County's Fire Services team is critical to keeping infrastructure, assets, and lives safe in Lacombe County. The risk of fire is exacerbated in times of drought. As such, Fire Services' role in community education and the mitigation of fire threat increases significantly during this time.
- **Utilities.** The County's Utilities group represents the most significant water user within our organization. Through regional water commissions and communal water systems, the County's Utilities group ensures our hamlet, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational developments are serviced with potable water. This operation would be the most imminently affected by water restrictions.

Each group within Community Services is affected by the threat of drought and can play a role to assist in the crisis.

### COMPLETED INITIATIVES

Community Services has implemented various initiatives in the past years to help promote drought resilience in our community.

#### **Initiative #6 – Roadside Haying Policy**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

Drought limits the growth of pasture and feed crops. Agricultural producers find it difficult to secure adequate feed for their livestock during drought. Lacombe County recognizes the value of legumes and grass growing in municipal road allowances during times of drought. In April 2023, Lacombe County committed to working cooperatively with agricultural producers who wish to hay Lacombe County road allowances for use on their farming operation. The County adopted Policy AG(16), which outlines a process for agricultural producers to hay the County's road allowances.

# ACTION PLAN

## **Initiative #7 – Resident Environmental Sustainability Program (RESP)**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

The Resident Environmental Sustainability Program supports the distribution of products which support residents with the adoption of environmental best management practices on their property. In previous years, Lacombe County has hosted a rain barrel sale which offered rain barrels to Lacombe County ratepayers at a 50/50 cost share. This program has assisted many residents in obtaining a rain barrel to collect water for garden, outdoor, or agricultural uses. Currently, the RESP is supporting drought resiliency through the sale of potted trees at a discounted rate to residents.

## **Initiative #8 – Supporting Adoption of Beneficial Management Practices**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (S-CAP) and Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) programs engage farmers and ranchers in creating nature-based solutions on their land to build climate resilience and enhance biodiversity for the benefit of communities and future generations. While Lacombe County does not directly administer these programs they continue to be active in our community and the County continues to encourage and support enrolment into these programs. ALUS and S-CAP programming emphasizes the conservation of wetlands, riparian areas, and water bodies that continue to provide ecosystem services to the agricultural community. Additionally, these programs financially support producers in the adoption of beneficial management practices. These efforts have helped our agricultural producers retain important features on their landscape that enhance drought mitigation and can provide a source of pasture and surface water in the case of drought.

## **STAGE 1**

At this lower risk level, Community Services will explore pre-emptive initiatives aimed at reducing the County's water use overall. The following initiatives will help Lacombe County reduce its water use and find alternative sources of water, being more sustainable and efficient regardless of a drought.

## **Initiative #9 – Hamlet of Mirror Hydrant Flushing to Capture Potable Water**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

The County will capture potable water released during regular hydrant flushes in Mirror and gravity dump this water into a water facility of choice (manhole, reservoir, dugout, etc.). In the Hamlet of Mirror, hydrants must be flushed annually to ensure they are clean and ready-to-use in the case of a fire emergency. Currently, the County needs to flush 28 hydrants for 5 minutes each, resulting in 8,400 seconds of total flushing and 336 square metres of water that is lost in the process. This represents 11-12 truckloads of water. Capturing and redirecting this water to a facility will eliminate water loss by putting that water back into a location where it can be used again.

## **Initiative #10 – Apply for Temporary Diversion Licences for County Water Sources**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

In preparation for potential water shortages, the County will apply for temporary diversion licences to divert water from the County stormwater ponds and lagoons. If water sources become depleted in the



# ACTION PLAN

County's existing sources, the County will be able to use these sources temporarily to reduce the strain on the existing sources.

## STAGE 2

In Stage 2, the risk of drought escalates even further, and our Fire Services staff will begin preparing for the possibility of a risky fire season.

### **Initiative #11 – Identify Water Sources for Fire**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

Lacombe County Fire Services will identify local water sources throughout the County that can be accessed and used by firefighters in case of a fire emergency.

## STAGE 3

There are no specific initiatives identified in Stage 3 for Community Services, but the initiatives identified in Stage 1 and 2 continue to apply.

## STAGE 4

A Stage 4 drought will include a significant reduction in surface water resources in the County. As such, there will be increased demand from the public to use water bodies on County-owned lands as a water source.

### **Initiative #12 – Process for Responding to Requests to Utilize Water from Designated County Lands for Agricultural Purposes**

*TYPE: Ongoing*

At the point when regular truck fill stations close, the County will consider requests to use water on designated County-owned lands (eg. some stormwater ponds, lagoons, etc.) on a case-by-case basis. Individuals accessing the water source will be responsible for testing the water, and staff will monitor the pumping activities to record the volume of water removed from the water course. The applicant will sign an agreement indemnifying the County from any adverse effects from using the water and the applicant agrees to be responsible for any damage caused by pumping activities. At its discretion, the County may decline any request to pump water from County lands.

## STAGE 5

Stage 5 is defined as an emergency under the *Water Act*. This gives the Government of Alberta the authority to take dire measures to reduce water use, including the suspension of operation of any licence, suspension of water diversion, or designating purposes and volumes in which water may be diverted or used. This will have the greatest impact on our water utilities, and further restrictions may be imposed by Lacombe County and/or the regional commissions.

### **Initiative #13 – Water Restrictions**

*TYPE: Ongoing, until conditions improve*

Water restrictions may be pursued at any stage of drought if there is a significant water supply shortage will



# ACTION PLAN

impact our ability to deliver water to our residents and businesses.

A water restriction will be issued prior to an emergency to conserve water resources. The decision to proceed with water restrictions will be based on water availability in the Red Deer River and the ability of the regional water plants in Red Deer and Stettler to deliver water. Progressive water restrictions can be taken at any stage of drought as there is a reduction in water availability.

In the case where a water shortage poses a threat to the community, the County will explore the following water restriction options:

- Adjusting water distribution pressures to reduce consumption.
- Imposing non-essential water use restrictions.
- Public education on water conservation.
- Reduce hydrant flushing, cleaning of lift stations, wastewater system flushing and reusing water for flushes.

Hamlet of Mirror





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.4 CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services Department is responsible for the legislative, financial, and information technology operations of Lacombe County. The Department includes the following:

- Assessment
- Finance
- Information Technology Services
- Information Management
- Purchasing and Inventory
- Administrative Support

Most notably, Corporate Services is responsible for working with the regional water commissions and ensuring our bylaw framework is set up properly for upcoming droughts.

Lacombe County is served by two commissions: the North Red Deer River Water Services Commission (NRDRWSC) and the Highway 12/21 Commission (H12/21). North and South Aspelund Industrial Park (via the Town of Blackfalds) and Wild Rose Commercial Park (via the City of Lacombe) are served by NRDRWSC. The H12/21 serves the far east portion of the County, including the Hamlet of Mirror. The County has utility bylaws for these areas that will allow the County to restrict water use in dire water shortages.

### COMPLETED INITIATIVES

Corporate Services has implemented various initiatives in the past years to help promote drought resilience in our organization.

#### **Initiative #14 – Water Conservation Measures at the County Office**

*TYPE: One-Time*

Recognizing the County Administration and Shop Buildings to be a major user of water in our municipality, the County has changed some of our practices and made retrofits to conserve water.

- Reduction of water pressure.
- Retrofitted with backflush filters on water treatment system to release back into storm pond.
- Optimized backflushing of water system to reduce water waste.
- Repair water pumps and tanks to reduce leakage.
- Repair of leaky taps and fixtures
- No lawn watering.
- Hand watering of plants.



# ACTION PLAN

This has significantly reduced Lacombe County's water consumption. The County will continue to explore ways to reduce the water consumption of our municipal buildings.

## STAGE 1

There was one initiative identified for Corporate Services. This initiative is a one-time bylaw adjustment.

### **Initiative #15 – NRDRWSC Bylaw**

*TYPE: One-Time*

Should the NRDRWSC introduce new rationing provisions, the County will adopt a new bylaw that is consistent with the Commission's updated water rationing policies.

Lacombe County Administration Building and Shop





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.5 COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Communication is vital to all aspects of municipal government in our County. Communication and outreach will be critical to achieving the mission of this Plan and ensuring that our public is empowered with the knowledge and resources they need to be drought resilient. A strong public communications strategy will help ensure our community is aware of the ongoing situation and understand how they can help do their part.

### 3.5.1 PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The County's Communications Coordinator will develop a *Public Communications Plan – Addressing Drought in Lacombe County*. This document will set up a framework for how the County will educate and engage with internal staff and the broad community on the importance of water conservation during potential drought conditions. The aim of this strategy is to foster a culture of sustainability and proactive water management practices across all sectors of the community. Further, it will effectively communicate and educate the community about drought and fire hazards, promoting awareness, preparedness, and proactive measures.

### 3.5.2 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Further, the County's Communications Coordinator will also develop an *Internal Communications Plan – Addressing Drought in Lacombe County*. This strategy will focus on informing all Lacombe County staff about upcoming drought communications, ensuring they understand their role and the importance of their participation as a community ambassador. This internal knowledge will help County staff make an impact in the drought situation while also being able to guide the community.

### 3.5.3 RESOURCES

As a part of the abovementioned communications strategies, the County has created a webpage with drought-relevant resources for the community. This will include information on where residents can find water fill stations and also information on the initiatives listed in this Plan as they are applied. This page can be accessed at [www.lacombecounty.com/drought](http://www.lacombecounty.com/drought)

Lesser scaup (*Aythya affinis*) in a County lake





# ACTION PLAN

## 3.6 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### 3.6.1 ACTION ITEMS

During times of drought, the Drought Management Committee will meet regularly to assess the drought situation and highlight the list of actions in the Drought Management Plan that need to be completed based on the current drought stage, with associated timelines. This list will be forwarded to all Department Directors, and Directors will be responsible for ensuring the measures are undertaken in a time-effective manner.

### 3.6.2 PUBLIC COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

Strong public awareness is critical to the successful implementation of this Plan. The County's Communications Coordinator will continue to update the public on changes to the drought situation, provide information on available supports and resources, progress on the Plan, and updates to the Plan itself. More detail is provided in Section 3.5.

### 3.6.3 ENFORCEMENT

At the time water restrictions are required, the County's Peace Officers will lead enforcement. The County's approach to enforcement will be education first. The initial aim will be to educate the community on ongoing water restrictions and their importance to preserving water resources for our community. If ongoing violations persist, the County's Community Peace Officers will have no choice but to take enforcement action such as the issuance of violation tickets, as specified in the respective water restriction bylaw.

### 3.6.4 ANNUAL REVIEW

The Drought Management Plan will be reviewed by the Drought Management Committee on an annual basis to ensure that County is on track to complete all the actions that were required. Annually, the Committee shall prepare a monitoring report summarizing the following:

- The drought situation in the past year.
- Actions that were implemented.
- The success/failure of each implemented action in supporting the mission of this Plan.
- If required, recommendations for amendments to the Plan.

The annual review report will be presented to Council annually for each year a drought is identified.

## SOURCES

Agriculture Canada. Lessons Learned from Canadian Drought Years 2001-2002. <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agricultural-production/water/lessons-learned-canadian-drought-years-2001-2002>

Government of Alberta. EPA Drought Risk and Management. <https://www.alberta.ca/system/files/epa-drought-risk-and-management.pdf>