



Summer Village of Grandview

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Summer Village of Grandview — a Leader in Watershed Stewardship

Municipalities located next to water bodies, and especially Summer Villages, have an important role in ensuring development activities are being done with a minimum impact on the lake's ecosystem. Unfortunately, over the past one hundred years, our lakes have become significantly stressed because of inappropriate actions with the result that water quality has become a great concern.

The Council of the Summer Village of Grandview, on the shores of Pigeon Lake, has resolved to be a leader in watershed stewardship and has taken a number of very important steps in protecting Pigeon Lake. Our goal is to have other municipalities, both at Pigeon Lake and also at other lakes, follow our example so that our lakes will become the focal point for improved stewardship activities.

The following is a list of some of the initiatives and projects undertaken:

1. **Land Use Bylaw:** With the significant support of our residents, a new Land Use Bylaw has been passed which has very specific requirements to protect the riparian area and natural vegetation within our Summer Village. Shoreline retaining walls are no longer allowed to encourage natural shoreline vegetation. The clearing of trees and the grading of land has restrictions to limit the amount of water which flows directly to the lake.
2. **Environment Reserves:** the many municipal reserves in the Summer Village were reclassified as "environmental reserves." This ensured that these areas would be protected as natural areas and cannot be developed or leased.
3. **Restoration of the Grandview Creek:** a 10-acre parcel of land adjacent to the creek was being used for cattle grazing. The passing of cattle through the creek bed was causing significant damage to the riparian zone of the creek and turning the creek into a quagmire. The creek was fenced and a tree planting program was started. The riparian zone has seen a significant amount of natural re-vegetation, the water clarity has improved, and fish have been seen spawning in this water.
4. **Fertilizer and Herbicide Bylaw:** Based on the overwhelming support of the residents of all of Pigeon Lake and using the advice of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Council has passed a bylaw prohibiting both lawn fertilizers and herbicides. Grandview became the first municipality in Alberta to ban lawn herbicides. Leadership in this area has resulted in four other Summer Villages at Pigeon Lake recently passing similar bylaws. Now, a total of 7 out of 12 municipalities have bylaws banning fertilizers. Other organizations from Edmonton and Red Deer have

enquired about our bylaw and have solicited our support in their quest to ban herbicides in their municipalities.

5. **Cyanobacteria Health Advisories:** The Summer Village of Grandview, representing the municipalities of Pigeon Lake and with the support of the Association of Summer Villages of Alberta, has made a submission to Alberta Health Services to change the methodology of issuing advisories for cyanobacteria. At present, if any algae bloom is seen, an advisory is issued for the entire lake with the advice to stay out of the water. Over 30 recreational lakes obtain these advisories. Our submission to AHS recommended that the protocol be focussed on education, caution and self-responsibility. AHS has listened to the concerns and is now amending its advisory protocol to provide guidance of safe ways to use our lakes. This will be a significant improvement and we hope to receive the final proposal in the near future.
6. **Research Project at Pigeon Lake:** Grandview has championed a research project into the fundamental causes of cyanobacteria at Pigeon Lake. Our lake seems to be reacting in an unexpected manner when compared to other lakes. The level of phosphorous is comparatively quite low and yet significant algae blooms can occur. A research project at the University of Alberta will examine the role of the trophic cascade in controlling algae. The hypothesis is that the disruption in the Pigeon Lake fishery has allowed the population of minnows go unchecked. This resulted in the diminishment of the zooplankton population, something the minnows eat, which include the “algae grazers”. Nothing to keep the algae in check results in massive algae blooms. This research project, done in conjunction with ALMS, is expected to start this summer.
7. **Himalayan Balsam eradication project:** Grandview provided the administrative support for the eradication project for this prohibited noxious weed. After five years of routine shoreline patrols, the weed has been finally eliminated from the shoreline. This coming summer, patrols will ensure it is completely eradicated from the shoreline and other known areas of infestation. This weed appears because of careless gardening practices including the dumping of beach refuse in the bush. Other municipalities which have this weed are adapting the “pick, break and drop” protocol developed at Pigeon Lake.

Municipalities can make a difference in land use activities and will find that the support of their residents for taking definitive action will be significant.

—The Council of the Summer Village of Grandview