



Water, is taught by thirst.
Emily Dickenson

October 2010

Special points of interest:

- * **Environmental Forum**, October 4th, IB Building at Lethbridge College - doors open 6 p.m.
- * **SAGE Meeting** October 7th at 7:00 p.m., Fish & Game Hut
- * **Greensence election survey** on renewable energy. Link on [SAGE](#) site.
- * **10*10*10** events on <http://tckctck.org/>
- * Lower Athabasca government survey at <http://www.banister.ab.ca/LARPworkbook/>

Greensence Rates Candidates

Greensence asked all mayoralty and aldermanic candidates to answer questions relating to renewable energy.

A committee of Greensence members evaluated candidates' answers based on the following criteria.

- Willingness to adopt particular proposals to achieve lower use of fossil fuels and generally reduce our energy consumption;
- An underlying acceptance that there is a pressing need to reduce our dependence on polluting, fossil based sources of energy, and to reduce our overall

energy use by transitioning to renewables;

- A recognition that governments at every level, including municipal, must show leadership, both in policy and by example, in encouraging the transition to renewables;
- Degree of knowledge about and commitment to using sustainable sources of energy;
- Quality of ideas for implementing renewable energy policies and a recognition of potential for economic development and green jobs.

The 'green' light has been given to:

For mayor:
Cheryl Meheden
James Frey

For alderman:
Bal Boora
Jeff Coffman
Rory Tarant
Gary Weikum
Ryan Parker
Ken Tratch

For the surveys completed by each candidate, and for the ranking of other candidates, visit the Greensence site: greensence.ca.

Don't forget to come to the Environmental Forum on October 4th at Lethbridge College (IB Building - doors open at 6:00 p.m.).

Advocating for the Alberta Tar Sands Region

The Government of Alberta is asking for feedback on the long-term development of the Lower Athabasca region, including the tar sands.

The [online survey](#) includes

references to the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) report and Alberta's Land Use Framework (LUF) and takes approximately thirty minutes.

Water Matters, an Alberta

advocacy group, has provided additional information from Pembina Institute on [tailings](#); and [wet-land policy](#);

The report potentially supports identifying and man-

aging cumulative effects thresholds that may foster wilderness and biodiversity protection and maintaining clean water and air in the region.

Be involved !

Logging the Castle Crown

A rally in Waterton Parks was organized in front of an international conference to raise awareness of clear-cut logging planned for the Castle Crown Wilderness Area.

Sustainable Resource Development (the department seemingly responsible for the permit) is planning an open house in Pincher Creek on Tuesday, October 5th .

A Stop Castle Logging meeting is planned for a week afterward on Tuesday, October 12th in Beaver Mines (behind the store).

For more information on the importance of this region for wildlife habitat and ecological services in the headwaters of the Oldman River go to the Stop Castle Logging website at <http://stopcastlelogging.wordpress.com/>

To be active, contact your MLA about your concerns.

Drilling on the Blood Reserve

The Blood Reserve is currently being courted to allow drilling for natural gas on 300 sections directly across the river from Moon River Estates, Coalhurst and Highway #3.

It is not clear if these gas wells will be targeting deep zones or shallow zones of shale.

The danger of exploiting shale gas is in the fracturing of the zone to increase gas flow. Gas may migrate up the borehole, or through cracks created by the high pressure and (likely) toxic fluids fractures, contaminating water aquifers.

For sobering documentaries of the dangers of exploiting shallow gas, watch [H2Oil](#) and [Gasland](#). The latter documentary dramatically shows a person set on fire their once potable water running from the kitchen tap.

Ever tried.

Ever failed.

No matter.

Try again.

Fail again.

Fail better.

Beckett

Coming Events & Sources:

Trout Unlimited	Oldman River Dinner & Dance, October 29, 6 p.m. http://www.tucanada.org/TUC_event.php?item=000211
NatureFest	Nature Walk at Popson Part, October 10, 11 & 17 at 2 p.m. with Pam Heather
EcoVillage in Lethbridge	Introductory meeting at Save-On Community Room, October 3rd, 2 p.m. (?)

Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE)

A Leading Voice for a Healthy and Environmentally Sustainable Community.

Visit us at: <http://sage-environment.org/>

If you are interesting in getting involved, contact us at:

info@sage-environment.org

Gas Tax Fund Agreement

The following letter was sent to Rick Casson, MP; Greg Weadick, MLA Lethbridge-West; and Bridget Pastoor, MLA Lethbridge-East. Previous inquiries have been made through Mayor Tarleck and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).

It remains unclear if the City of Lethbridge has an adequate model for environmental leadership to act on the intent of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP/MDP) passed by Council last spring. Without an environmental manager within the city or an arms-length environmental council, the process and outcomes for these tax dollars appear to lack public transparency.

On behalf of the Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE) we would appreciate your collective assistance to understand the process of the Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenues Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities (2005-2015).

It is our understanding that gas tax funds have been transferred from the federal government to the provincial government to be allocated to municipalities

through organizations like the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA). Lethbridge was allotted \$11,291,068 in this agreement. One of the requirements to receive these funds was the development of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) before the extended deadline of March 31, 2010. The goal of the Gas Tax Fund Agreement was to encourage sustainable infrastructure that provides measurable improvements to air and water, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Our questions are:

1. When were these funds released to Lethbridge?
2. Who evaluates the ICSP submitted by Lethbridge? and what were the criteria?
3. When is the Outcomes Report to be made available to Albertans, per the agreement (Section 7.1.2), which will provide information 'on the degree to which these investments have actually contributed to the achievement of the objectives of cleaner air, cleaner water, and reduced GHG emissions'.
4. Who will evaluate the Outcomes Report?

(For Information)

We are confident that there is an accountability process for this agreement, and would very much appreciate your assistance in better understanding how these tax dollars have helped ensure a resilient economy premised on a healthy environment for current and future generations of citizens in Lethbridge.