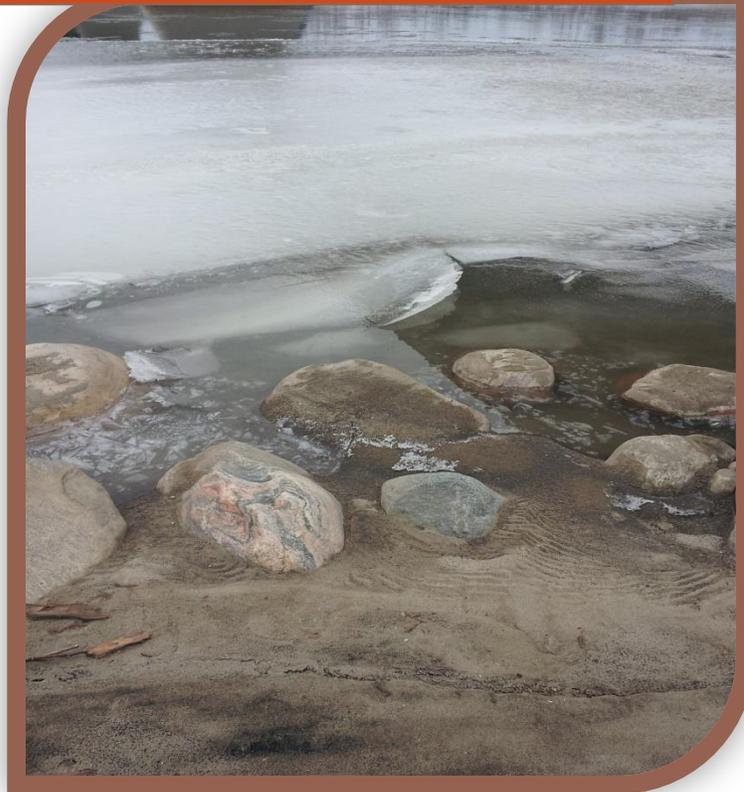


This is an excerpt of the full report to provide an introduction. The full report can be viewed at [www.mightypeacewatershedalliance.org](http://www.mightypeacewatershedalliance.org)

# Mighty Peace Open Houses



## Executive Summary

The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA) is a multi-stakeholder, broad-based, not-for-profit organization concerned with water and watershed issues in the Peace River and Slave River watersheds of Alberta. It is also the officially designated Watershed and Planning Advisory Council for this region. Thus, the MPWA has been given a mandate of watershed management planning in the Peace watershed and 2 important deliverables for this are the production of a State of the Watershed Report and an Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

A key component of these two deliverables is public consultation to gather local information about



Little Smoky River valley.

the watershed and assess the concerns and priorities of the users of the watershed. To do this a series of open house and tradeshow events were undertaken by the MPWA. A total of 22 events in 21 communities were completed with the intention of reaching a broad cross-section of the populace.

An extensive advertising campaign was the first step, not only because the MPWA is a new organization, but also to maximize the effectiveness of the effort made to be on location across the watershed. The effort necessary for travel to these locations across the watershed is only worthwhile and effective when people attend the events. We experienced attendance ranging from 0 (1 event) to 50 people (1 event), the median attendance was 9 and the average attendance was 12.

A wide range of issues were raised at these events and covered all facets of watershed management from legislation, through ecosystem health, industry needs and personal use to

water security. The three most common issues raised were the availability and/or security of drinking water - often from a municipality or provider perspective, ecosystem health, and industrial use of water. There is wide-spread recognition in the Peace watershed of (high quality) water as an ecosystem good and the need to manage our activities to maintain the ecosystem's capability to provide that good. Other commonly voiced issues were questions about the safety of fish consumption, concerns about the impact of dams on the Peace, agricultural runoff, forestry practices and treatment of industry effluent.

### The Numbers

**18** open houses and **3** trade shows were part of this public engagement forum project in **20** communities throughout the Peace River watershed. Travel to attend these events by staff and directors covered **50,086** kilometers. In all, the MPWA directors made themselves available to public for over **181** hours and the staff did so for a total of **128** hours. Over **220** people participated in the open house events and around **3000** people saw our booth at the trade shows. Advertising to encourage people to come out to the events included **166** pages of print ads in **16** different publications, notices on many websites, newsletters and community calendars. There were also **7650** seconds of radio ads on **6** different stations. Beyond this there were interviews given and articles written about the Public Engagement Forums. We issued over **191** addressed invitations to the events. Promotion of our survey at these events helped us receive **122** completed surveys regarding watershed issues (the survey was part of our Issues Scoping and Project Synthesis project).