

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL UPDATE

MEETING DATE: February 5, 2024

COMMITTEE / BOARD NAME: Leduc Environmental Advisory Board (LEAB)

PREPARED BY: Wendy Yule, LEAB Chair, Mindy Paradis, LEAB Vice Chair

UPDATE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on current priorities for LEAB, including emergent concerns tied to the Municipal Development Plan update. LEAB would like to build awareness around:

- Scientifically supported development setbacks and buffers that protect the watershed, biodiversity, ecosystem services and natural integrity of Telford Lake,
- Naturalization efforts in the City, and
- The Yellowfish Road Program.

Telford Lake Setbacks & Buffers - Currently the City has protected a minimum of 60 m around Telford Lake with environmental reserve (ER) and municipal reserve (MR). Although this is an excellent step in the right direction, LEAB has true concerns that this may not be enough, and that all environmental factors have not been considered. Research shows that in order to protect water quality a buffer of 20 – 50 m is typically recommended; however, in order to also protect wildlife habitat and connectivity a buffer of 100 – 400 m is recommended. Although it is understood that there are constraints to adding more ER/MR around the lake, and that much has been dedicated already, LEAB has committed to researching available information and tools for more informed decision making when it comes to understanding the ecosystem services that Telford Lake provides and the economic and environmental trade-offs of land development.

LEAB recommends that Council direct Administration to investigate the following opportunities before finalizing development decisions around Telford Lake:

- Articulating the value of Telford Lake as a natural asset in an MDP update,
- Developing a model/policy that requires developers to establish scientifically defensible ER setbacks around Telford Lake,
- Exploring opportunities for regional alignment on development setbacks (i.e. North Sask. Watershed Alliance)
- Conducting a Natural Asset Inventory and Ecosystem Service Assessment to understand the economic and environmental trade-offs of land development around Telford Lake, and identify opportunities to incorporate and preserve key ecosystem services into future developments,
- Conducting a Biodiversity Expert Review for more specific development requirements in the transition/buffer areas i.e. lighting, noise, and tree planting in the Land Use Bylaw Telford Overlay, and
- Continued restoration of existing naturalized areas around Telford Lake (i.e. tree planting, naturalization etc.).

Naturalization Efforts - LEAB acknowledges and supports naturalization efforts throughout the City.

Naturalized, ecologically valuable areas, in combination with the City's existing parks network, create unique



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spaces that are part of the high quality of life experienced by the City's residents. Naturalized areas contribute to local and regional biodiversity, including healthy pollinator populations. Recently discussed natural areas include Roesh Park and Deer Valley Park.

Yellowfish Road Program - LEAB plans to support local Scouts in the Yellow Fish Road Program, Canada's premier water education program to reduce water pollution. This program creates awareness by painting yellow fish on sewer drains. The Scouts plan to pilot the program in the Southfork community in 2024.

ATTACHMENTS - Background Report & PowerPoint Presentation