

## SUMMER VILLAGE OF WHITE SANDS BEACH FACTS

Here are a few facts about our lake that you may not be aware of:

- The land between lake front properties and the lake is under the control of the Village. It consists of Municipal Reserve, Environmental Reserve and a lease of the Right of Way next to the water at the 1-100 year high level mark (780.85 metres above sea level).  
Any activity that encroaches on these areas must have approval from Environment and Parks.
- The level of Buffalo Lake fluctuates a great deal and not always on a yearly basis. We have heard stories how many years ago they took hay off the bay at Rochon Sands. We have also seen our beach widen and narrow with the level of the lake. We have been at a high level over the past few years, actually over-full and draining into the outlet weir back to the Red Deer River.  
Although Buffalo Lake has been “stabilized”, pumping for stabilization of the lake levels has not happened in a number of years. There is now a 5-year moratorium on pumping because of the Prussian carp in the Red Deer River.  
Though the lake usually goes down several inches during the hot weather, last summer the lake maintained its level. It was still over-full at the end of September.  
This past winter Red Deer had the lowest moisture levels recorded in 99 years, 9.6 ml compared to the average of 49.9 ml. This dry winter will lead to lower lake levels.
- The beach is harrowed every spring but we do not harrow a wide swath because if the lake goes down, the sand dries out and blows away. Maintaining the sand is essential, not just to retain our beaches but to maintain the lake bottom in the shallow areas. Some may remember the year we had the big ice push that gouged out the beach. That year, after the beach was repaired, nature had harrowed more of it than we normally do.
- The berm is an integral part of preventing flooding of private property and maintaining our sand. The berm can only be rebuilt using sand from the immediate area or by using extremely expensive washed sand. This is similar to the boat launch where we have to purchase washed gravel approved by Environment and Parks.  
If the berm is moved, in some areas a pocket may form which can collect weeds and become stagnant. Also, in the earlier years, when the lake levels were down, folks cleared rocks and created peninsulas into the water. This prevented proper shore line wave action to carry away weeds and keep the water at shore line fresh.
- Several years ago, we received permission from Environment and Parks to straighten our shore line to stop stagnant pools from forming and to allow for good shore line wave action. Those of you who have been here for a while may recall our beach then and recognize how much it has improved. We believe that White Sands has the best swimming and recreational shore line on the lake.
- Last summer due to the high lake level and the wave action produced by the tremendous wind storms, the berm between CJ1 and CJ2 was breached and the slough was bigger than normal between the lake and private properties. We hope the lake goes down a little this year so that we can repair the beach.
- There is also an area along Front street where there has been substantial erosion. The Right of Way is under water and significant erosion of the shore line resulted up to about 25 feet from private property.
- Shore stabilization will cost about \$200 per foot and we have 750 to 1000 feet that needs to be addressed. Environment and Parks reviewed the damages but the Village is responsible for repairs.

A copy of this information has been reviewed by Environment and Parks for accuracy. As you can see, Mother Nature is in charge of the lake. We are only the “guardians” and must do everything we can to preserve what we have. Though we may never have “Waikiki Beach”, we do have a beautiful lake area for us to enjoy. And remember the Field of Dreams – “If you build it, they will come!”

The Ol’ Gray Mayor Lorne Thurston For the Summer Village of White Sands Council (403-742-0210)