

# Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership



## Results and Recommendations from the Public Consultation for the Green Growth Plan

Final Report  
of the  
SAAEP Advisory Committee  
to the  
Joint Boards of:



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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>p. 5-8</b>
<b>Project Background</b> .....	<b>p. 9-10</b>
Overview of SAAEP.....	p. 9
The Green Growth Plan.....	p. 10
Consultation Project Parameters .....	p. 10
<b>Stakeholder Engagement Approach</b> .....	<b>p. 11-13</b>
Community Meetings.....	p.11
Community Meeting Schedule .....	p. 11
Industry Input.....	p. 12
Government Input.....	p. 12
<b>Stakeholder Consultation Results</b> .....	<b>p. 13-27</b>
Community Profiles – Each Community .....	p. 14
Industry information.....	p. 25
Provincial Government information .....	p. 26
<b>Project Outcomes and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>p. 28-33</b>
Recommendations for Industry.....	p. 28
Recommendations for Local Governments .....	p. 29
Recommendations for the Alberta Government .....	p. 30
Recommendations for SAAEP .....	p. 31
Recommendations for Community Members ...	p. 32
Recommendations for Post Secondary Institutions	p. 33
<b>Appendices</b> .....	
Appendix 1: Agenda for Community Meetings	
Appendix 2: Community Meeting Results	
Appendix 3: Industry Meeting and Interview Results	
Appendix 4: Government Interview Results	

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In particular, special thanks to John Kolk, chair of the Advisory Committee, who attended all ten community meetings and presented with passion and insight a vision for alternative energy in Southern Alberta. He walks the talk.

The SAAEP Sponsor Management Team of: Linda Erickson of SouthGrow Regional Initiative, Cheryl Dick, Brenda Hunik, and Trever Broadhead of Economic Development Lethbridge and Bev Thornton of Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance. As a team they are effective and efficient, totally committed to the goals of this project, and supportive in every way. As individuals, they are all passionate about their communities and the Southern Alberta region and are a delight to work with.

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The strength of this project and the possibilities it creates for the future result from the participation, enthusiasm and commitment of residents who attended the meetings in their area. They contributed their ideas, wisdom and sense of fervent devotion to their community. Residents remember and are connected to the region’s past and desire a sustainable future.

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## Executive Summary

**“Be a global leader in alternative energy development and manufacturing”**

Southern Alberta  
Alternative Energy Partnership

### Overview

In 2006, Economic Development Lethbridge, SouthGrow Regional Initiative and Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance, identified common interests regarding alternative energy growth in Southern Alberta. Together, they created the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership (“SAAEP”), which represents 37 municipalities in the southwest and southcentral regions of the province. SAAEP has formed a management team with representation from each of the three sponsoring partners. The members of the SAAEP Sponsor Management Team are:

Linda Erickson – SouthGrow Regional Initiative

Cheryl Dick, Brenda Hunik, and Trever Broadhead – Economic Development Lethbridge

Bev Thornton – Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance

In the fall of 2006, the SAAEP Advisory Committee was formed to provide guidance and support in the development of the initiative. The Advisory Committee has representation from the agriculture, research and alternative energy sectors. The following individuals make up the Advisory Committee:

Del Allen

Paul Bohnert

Shelley Boutilier

Steve Cailliau

Bill Halley

John Kolk (chair)

Broyce Jacobs

Klaus Jericho

Herb Groenenboom

Cal Koskowich

Gord Nelson

Ted Smith

Chris Spearman

In February 2007, SAAEP launched the Green Growth Plan (GGP). The GGP is a regional capacity building strategy that will:

- Analyze the region’s capacity for development of this new industry; and,
- Identify potential opportunities and barriers regarding the development and application of sustainable alternative energy systems and businesses.

The focus of the GGP is a multi-stakeholder public consultation process to gather information about the region’s assets or community features. Moving Forward, a Calgary-based company with expertise in facilitating collaborative processes, was contracted to plan for and facilitate community and industry meetings. Ten community meetings, one industry meeting and several industry and government interviews were conducted to identify community assets, and to seek ideas and recommendations to further develop the alternative energy industry in the region.





## Themes

Following is a summary of common themes that surfaced during the consultation process with communities, industry representatives and government:

- People already believe or want to believe that Southern Alberta can be a global leader in alternative energy development**
  - Community members, industry and government are attracted to the idea of alternative energy development; the reasons for support include interest in economic development and/or a passion for environmental improvement
  - Those in the “want to believe” category are seeking information about how alternative energy can become a reality, assurance that it will not have a negative impact on their current way of life and information on the benefits
  
- Education – Communities and individuals are craving credible information**
  - Alternative energy – what are the processes, products, benefits and costs?
  - Residential uses – how can people use alternative energy today?
  - Community roles – how can communities become involved in conservation and the development of alternative energy development?
  
- Role of Government**
  - Province – provide support, provide a “level-playing field”, consider incentives for alternative energy
  - Local/municipal – provide support, coordination and proactive leadership in seeking out development opportunities; efficiently address bylaw and land use planning issues
  
- Structure of the Electrical System**
  - Need access to the grid and transmission lines
  - Need to make it easier and more attractive to produce into the grid
  
- Community Features**
  - High value placed on the lifestyle of small towns and rural communities
  - Communities are open to development opportunities that complement their communities
  - Concern over growth and the impact on lifestyle and infrastructure
  - All communities have unique environmental features that are highly valued
  - Some communities are interested in potential partnership opportunities with developers



- Rural communities see green energy projects as a potential complement to agriculture and as employment opportunities to retain community youth

## **Recommendations**

After synthesizing the input and ideas gathered during the public consultation, Moving Forward has provided recommendations to industry, local and provincial governments, community members and SAAEP.

### **Industry:**

- Understand unique community cultures
- Get involved in the community
- Consider investment role for communities
- Respect environmental assets
- Prepare for water-use assessment
- Site large-scale projects carefully
- Use local resources
- Prepare to consult

### **Local Governments:**

- Place conservation and alternative energy use on the community's agenda
- Review land use plans
- Set expectations for consultation by industry
- Establish systematic application evaluation processes
- Be proactive with developers
- Model conservation
- Promote conservation

### **Provincial Government:**

- Coordinate and disseminate information
- Educate the public about conservation and alternative energy practices
- Model conservation
- Ensure a level playing field
- Learn from other countries
- Develop and communicate the regulatory framework



## **SAAEP:**

- Retain SAAEP as an organization
- Continue with the Green Growth Plan
- Continue to advocate for the region
- Become a proactive educator
- Continue to build networks
- Be a clearinghouse for industry developers
- Be proactive in looking for development opportunities
- Plan for an alternative energy forum
- Be responsive

## **Community Members:**

- Advocate for your community
- Encourage your local council to support alternative energy development
- Raise alternative energy profile
- Conserve and recycle

## **Post-Secondary Educational Institutions:**

- Become noted centers of research and education for alternative energy
- Train local workforce for alternative energy industry
- Deliver continuing education for conservation options

In summary, the SAAEP goal and objectives were very well received by communities, industry and government. Community members in particular noted that they appreciated being involved early in the economic development phase. Everyone confirmed that the region has abundant natural resources for alternative energy development. At the same time, it was also widely understood that any type of development has an impact and that community assets need to be protected. SAAEP is well positioned to be a clearinghouse for information, matchmaker and advocate between communities, industry and the government. The consultation process has confirmed that there is interest in continuing the work of the Green Growth Plan.



## 1. Project Background

### a. Overview of the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership (SAAEP)

The SAAEP was formed with the objective of facilitating the development of alternative energy systems and attracting corresponding businesses to southern Alberta. The three SAAEP partners, Economic Development Lethbridge, SouthGrow Regional Initiative and Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance, represent 37 municipalities in the southwest and southcentral regions of the province. All three organizations have defined strategic objectives towards this initiative within their own business plans.

The focus is on generating alternative energy results from the available natural resources in the region, existing expertise and established developments. The initiative is focusing on three streams of alternative energy:

- Solar/geothermal;
- Wind;
- Bio-energy (including bio-fuels, bio-mass and waste to energy).

The SAAEP Advisory Committee was formed in the fall of 2006 to provide guidance and support in the development of the initiative. Representatives from the Southern Alberta region form the Advisory Committee and they are considering five key areas:

- Reviewing information on alternative energy opportunities and strategies specific to bio-energy, wind and solar energy;
- Identifying barriers to development and recommend political lobbying strategies to support the growth of this sector in the region;
- Identifying specific growth opportunities and make recommendations on developing industry interest;
- Recommending public consultation strategies to enhance broad-based awareness and understanding of the benefits and opportunities for developing alternative energy systems; and,
- Encouraging local applications of alternative energy opportunities both at the municipal and individual stakeholder level.

### Members of the SAAEP Advisory Committee are:

Del Allen	Paul Bohnert	Shelley Boutilier	
Steve Cailliau	Bill Halley	John Kolk (chair)	
Broyce Jacobs	Klaus Jericho	Herb Broenenboom	
Cal Koskowich	Gord Nelson	Ted Smith	Chris Spearman



**The SAAEP is coordinated by the Sponsor Management Team of:**

Linda Erickson – SouthGrow Regional Initiative

Cheryl Dick, Brenda Hunik, and Trever Broadhead – Economic Development Lethbridge

Bev Thornton – Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance

b. **The Green Growth Plan**

As a result of the analysis done to date and at the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the SAAEP has implemented the Green Growth Plan (GGP). The GGP is a regional capacity building strategy that will:

- Analyze the regions capacity for development of this new industry;
- Identify potential opportunities and barriers regarding the development and application of sustainable alternative energy systems and businesses.

c. **Consultation Project Parameters**

The focus of the GGP is a multi-stakeholder public consultation process to gather information about the region's assets or community features. The desired outcomes of the GGP's consultation process were to:

- Define the community features for the region;
- Provide recommendations on how to protect the community features;
- Recommend business planning strategies and tactics that industry can apply to recognize and respect those assets;
- Provide recommendations for government regarding policy and regulatory approvals;
- Provide recommendations for communities on how to be effective in developing green growth.

Through a competitive process, Moving Forward was retained to develop and facilitate the public consultation process. Moving Forward developed a consultation plan to achieve the desired outcomes. The plan was reviewed by the Advisory Committee and approved in April 2007. During late April and May 2007, ten meetings were held in communities across southern Alberta. A separate meeting was held with alternative energy industry representatives and numerous industry and government representatives were interviewed. This report presents the results of the consultation process and the recommendations from Moving Forward.



## 2. Stakeholder Engagement Approach

### a. Community Meetings

The community meetings were facilitated by Moving Forward and were divided into two parts:

1. After the Moving Forward facilitators outlined the meeting agenda and invited participants to introduce themselves, John Kolk, Chair of the Advisory Committee, presented an overview of the SAAEP and the GGP.
2. The facilitators then invited participants to break into 2 or 3 groups to discuss the social, cultural, economic and environmental/land use features in their communities. The facilitators asked participants to:
  - Identify their community features;
  - Provide recommendations on how to protect or improve the features; and,
  - Identify any green growth opportunities in their communities.

Participants were encouraged to move from one group to another so that they could provide input to each topic area. During the group discussions, the facilitators encouraged all participants to share their views. The focus of the discussion was slightly different in each community; some groups focused more on community features and others spent more time sharing ideas and recommendations.

The facilitators recorded the community features and recommendations on paper taped to the walls so that all participants could see what was being recorded. At the end of each session, the facilitators summarized the notes and sent them to the SAAEP project manager. The notes were posted on the SAAEP website within a few days of each meeting.

### b. Community Meeting Schedule

Following were the dates and locations for the public meetings:

April 24	Vulcan
April 25	Claresholm
May 1	Taber
May 2	Warner
May 8	Coaldale
May 9	Blairmore
May 15	Pincher Creek





May 16      Cardston  
May 22      Lethbridge  
May 23      Lethbridge

All of the meetings started at 6pm and were concluded by 8:30 or 9pm.

The communities were selected by the SAAEP management group and were identified as a representative sample of communities in the three economic development areas. Community members were also invited to contribute feedback by accessing the SAAEP web site or by filling out the questionnaire provided in the information booklets at each community meeting.

c.      **Industry Input**

A consultative meeting with invited alternative energy industry representatives was held in Fort Macleod on May 23. Similar to the community meetings, the meeting was facilitated by Moving Forward and divided into two parts:

1.      John Kolk provided an overview of SAAEP and the GGP. Kerry Brown of Moving Forward provided an overview of the initial data received at the community meetings.
  
2.      Moving Forward invited participants to share:
  - Their views on the attractive features of alternative energy development in southern Alberta;
  - Ideas and priorities for improving green growth development in the area;
  - Suggestions for how the industry representatives could help to advance the SAAEP objectives; and,
  - Advice for SAAEP to move forward.

Moving Forward recorded the discussion on paper and provided summary notes to the SAAEP project manager, which were distributed to the industry participants via email.

SAAEP representatives also conducted telephone interviews with industry representatives in May and June.



d. **Government Input**

SAAEP representatives conducted telephone interviews with provincial government staff from the following departments:

Alberta Energy – Corporate Energy Strategy Development  
Alberta Environment – Industrial Approvals Team  
Employment, Immigration and Industry – Rural Development  
Agriculture and Food – Agri-Industry Commercialization Branch  
Agriculture and Food – Bio-Industrial Development Branch

3. **Stakeholder Consultation Results**

a. **Community Profiles**

The results from each community meeting were summarized and posted on the SAAEP website within a few days of each meeting. The complete results are included as Appendix 2 to this Report. A summary of the key points from each community meeting and observations from Moving Forward are included in the following pages:



### **Cardston Community Profile**

#### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Appreciation of strong family ties and community roots – good place to raise families and good work ethic as a result; religion has a large influence on the community
- Recreation and infrastructure assets – good education system, community hospital, close to Waterton and Glacier parks, rivers, lakes
- Tourism – attracted by Waterton and also agricultural tourism in area
- Good water, air, quiet environment; beautiful and unique views; moderate weather
- Valued agricultural land – however aging agricultural population and high land values are causing land to be subdivided and sold into acreages

#### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

##### **General:**

- Community needs clear, objective information about alternative energy options and implications for consumers

##### **Industry:**

- Development will need to protect the clean air, water quality and outstanding views
- Community is not interested in “smokestack” industry or wind turbines to the west
- Solar/geothermal may be appealing as there is less aesthetic impact
- New industry should be held to a high environmental standard
- Community is open to opportunities for area youth to remain or return to after receiving their education
- Community needs to see economic benefits to any development
- Barriers to development – no rail access; limited expansion possibilities as county is bordered by Blood Reserve and U.S. border; much conservation land and easements result in fragmented land use and somewhat limited development
- Lack of electrical transmission makes it difficult for wind energy development

##### **Community:**

- The community needs a land use plan to determine where and when to use different energy sources
- Community could build transmission line and export wind energy into the U.S.
- Explore the possibility of co-ops to supply energy
- Would like to see Aboriginal groups involved in development

##### **Government:**

- Residents need to be able to feed locally generated electricity into the grid and make money; sufficient reward to make this worthwhile
- EUB should develop regulations and standards around wind towers and land use



**Moving Forward Observations**

- Residents are very aware of the changing demographics of their community – aging population and influx of more urban population who live on new acreages and in new subdivisions
- The community is weighing the balance between leaving things as they are and moving forward to embrace economic development





## **Claresholm Community Profile**

### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Friendly “cowboy” town, low crime rate, good local health care, lots of recreation facilities
- Huge agricultural land base, space for development, affordable housing, forward thinking town council and administration
- Good transportation access between two large urban centers, well maintained and underused airport
- Water supply – Willow Creek basin provides water supply; in five years the community will want to know that they have wisely protected the water supply
- Land Use - concern about incremental, cumulative impacts on natural features which may be causing a risk to the landscape and the Eastern Slopes; e.g. Rough fescue which naturally grows in the foothills and provides a carbon sink

### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

#### **General:**

- Education about alternative energy development and consumer alternatives is needed and wanted by Community
- Recognize that there is a balance in spending and saving – consumers need to know what the benefits are for them.

#### **Industry:**

- Development needs to be in keeping with the rest of the community – visually appealing and enhances the community
- Not interested in population growth explosion
- Consider changing color of wind turbines to blend better with landscape
- Maintenance of electrical transmission lines is a concern

#### **Community:**

- Development would provide a means of keeping youth in the community and keep the labor force local
- Community need to be stewards of the land and set standards – includes industrial development and also changing land use from agriculture to acreage development; need to work with landowners
- Southern Foothills Study – should be used in conjunction with all other information to implement actions

#### **Government:**

- Support and provide incentives for green technologies – community sites several examples of costly attempts to use alternative energy; more support in other jurisdictions

### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Residents are concerned over the cumulative effects of acreage development and industrial development in their community – large emphasis on being stewards of land
- Residents see barriers to green growth at the provincial level – some residents’ attempts to use alternative energy have been costly
- Residents would like to learn more about green technologies



## Coaldale Community Profile

### Community Features Identified by Community Participants

- Small town appeal, yet every convenience and service within 15 minutes
- Good schools, medical services, recreation amenities
- Good transportation – rail, air, roads, access to U.S.
- Excellent irrigation structure, excellent soil, diverse crops
- Manure assets, feedstock for cellulose based ethanol
- Ridges – marginal land, but good location for wind energy
- Skilled labour force, young population, varied service sector, and vibrant small businesses
- Special areas – Old Man River Valley, Scabby Butte, Milk River Ridge, Sundial

### Recommendations from the Community Participants

#### General:

- Education about alternative energy needed and wanted by community – use Community Learning Council to support education initiatives – many residents want to know more about conservation and using alternative energy
- Community needs to communicate to government the desire to have a level playing field for all energy sources and for government to support alternative energy products and processes
- Government should look at standards for alternative energy processes
- Municipal government should look at land use and existing commercial conditions

#### Industry:

- Be efficient with water use – no new water licenses; look for opportunities to reuse/treat/conserv
- Take advantage of feedstock/supply options – wind, sun, manure
- Plan development in conjunction with Lethbridge development

#### Community:

- Create an environment where one individual can make a difference, focus on building a critical mass to lobby starting at the grassroots, create an educational network
- Continue to reduce red tape for new businesses
- Look for ways to be a leadership community – new home construction

#### Government:

- Land use planning – identify potential industrial sites
- Provide incentives for residential and commercial alternative energy retrofitting and new installations
- Ensure standards are in place for alternative energy processes



### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Much interest in green growth from an economic development perspective and from an environmental perspective
- Residents see barriers to green growth at the provincial level – no political will and uneven playing field exists for alternative energy compared to traditional sources
- Residents are keen to learn more, participate individually and create a critical mass to try to influence government policy.

### **Crowsnest Pass Community Profile**

#### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Mining history is a major bond for community; collaborative unique towns; small town culture and family oriented
- Multicultural; performing arts; lots of recreation; “Thunder in the Valley”
- Tourism is large part of economic base – actively seeking developments; mining continues to be a large employer; large and growing retirement community
- “Best water”, clean air, quiet, scenic views, lots of wildlife

#### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

##### **General:**

- Community wants clear, objective information about alternative energy, conservation, options and implications i.e. Full lifecycle of “green products” like the disposal of fluorescent light bulbs

##### **Industry:**

- Community would welcome new green development as a way to continue to attract young people to area
- Growth and development need to be such that will sustain small town community values; protect the clean air, high water quality, and outstanding views in region
- Community interested in partnership with private industry

##### **Community:**

- Promote the use of abandoned mines for geothermal energy; consider solar development; consider using methane from landfills or feedlots
- Local council and economic development should seek green development opportunities; work in collaboration with Crowsnest corridor and other economic development regions in the province
- Community could be a leader in conservation and recycling – complementary approach to development
- Consider results of the Crowsnest Conservation Society’s recent report
- Land use bylaws – need to ensure they are enforced to protect community features

##### **Government:**

- None at this time



**Moving Forward Observations**

- Residents are interested in the economic development opportunities of alternative energy
- Residents are looking to their local councils, economic development groups to be proactive in seeking out proposals
- Community sees great benefit in recycling and conserving in parallel to development
- Mountain landscape and mining history provide opportunities which are different from other communities i.e. Geothermal from abandoned mines

**Lethbridge Community Profile**

**Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Community centered; rich cultural scene; strong spiritual community; small city atmosphere
- Post secondary education approximately 30% of economic base; highest number of PhD's per capita in country; qualified and trained work force
- Agricultural community supported by city residents; abundance of farm land
- Clean air and water; beautiful views and landscapes
- Water is a key resource – cost of using water in new processes must be understood



## Recommendations from the Community Participants

### General:

- Community has requested information on alternative energy processes; climate change; options and implications; individual costs/benefits

### Industry:

- Developers would need to make an investment in the social/cultural aspects of city
- No "social deficit" – developers should use local work force to fullest extent
- Developers should form partnership with SAAEP so that community is involved in advancement of projects
- Producing ethanol from potatoes efficient – few barriers and potatoes produce more energy than other crops; Southern Alberta farmers could be pioneers/leaders in this
- Potential to use residential waste and landfills to create energy; explore co-generation from ethanol production
- Development needs to protect clean air, water quality, views in area
- Change color of wind turbines so that they blend in with the landscape

### Community:

- Create synergies among education, research and tourism; promote Lethbridge as centre of research and education with respect to alternative energy; include surrounding Aboriginal and Hutterite communities
- Review and alter municipal bylaws if necessary to allow for use of alternative energy
- Be aware of infrastructure impacts and costs; also consider climate change footprint and wildlife impacts; protect and grow trail network
- Develop land use plan for industrial, recreation uses

### Government:

- Provide incentives not disincentives for green energy use - commercial/consumer
- Provide rewards for water conservation in industrial processes
- Use revenues from hydrocarbon production to fund alternative energy development
- Conservation should be at top of list of priorities; consider carbon credits
- Make alternative energy part of environmental farming plan in province; ensure landowner rights are protected

### Moving Forward Observations

- Residents are interested in alternative energy development as a complement to the economic base; they see promotion of education/research/development/tourism
- Lots of interest in individual actions – conservation, geothermal/solar options
- Looking for provincial and municipal governments to show leadership in all aspects of alternative energy development – planning, incentives, promotion, education



### **Pincher Creek Community Profile**

#### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- A ranching and farming community with involved residents keenly aware of the appeal of the iconic landscape and the need for its protection.
- A destination area for tourism
- Social, cultural and infrastructure amenities exist in the community.
- Community is familiar with the impacts of wind and conventional energy development

#### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

##### **General:**

- Local sustainable employment to keep and attract a younger population is desirable.
- Any potential projects have to synchronize with what is wanted by the community and with land use and community features.

##### **Industry:**

- The landscapes here can appear vast, but they are more fragile than they appear and link one into the other. These landscapes must be protected.
- There must be well planned, transparent public consultation processes for any proposed development.

##### **Community:**

- More education on and commitment for conservation practices at the community level; industry development and economic benefits will follow.
- Continue to preserve the small town, cowboy, First Nations cultural identity of the area.
- Continue to support and engage in community planning processes.

##### **Government:**

- At local and provincial level provide incentives to stimulate change in individual habits toward more conservation awareness practices.
- Provide strong leadership at municipal level to promote the area and at the same time protect and sustain the social, cultural and environmental community features.

#### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Community members are highly sensitive to the strong visual appeal of this area. While being open to and encouraging opportunities for potential development, the community does not want to jeopardize any of the special qualities that attract and keep people here.
- The community has worked together and with proponents in response to various development proposals in the past. It is important to recognize here the importance of effective planning processes at the local government level and thorough public consultation processes by development proponents.



## **Taber Community Profile**

### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Progressive, forward thinking community with great community spirit; strong civic leadership; family businesses and family values; young population;
- Independent – not a bedroom community; has supported large commercial endeavors; multicultural; large potential labor force
- Agriculture is very diverse; irrigation is key to success of agriculture; energy industry
- Good rail and road access; thriving downtown; affordable housing; local amenities
- Water supply is key to economic base; good air quality; green spaces and parks well used

### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

#### **General:**

- No additional information requests at this time; residents like the Green Growth initiative

#### **Industry:**

- Community would welcome new development as a way to continue to attract people to the area and retain youth
- Development needs to respect the features that make Taber such a great place to live
- Community is business minded and has a social conscience; open to development but not at all costs
- Local government is open for business; willing to look at by-laws to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers
- Parcels of land which are not productive for agriculture could have alternative uses
- Future development should not adversely affect water supply or air quality

#### **Community:**

- Keep productive land in agriculture
- Balance development with recreational interests
- Some concern that transmissions lines, crop spraying from airplanes, and wind turbines may conflict

#### **Government:**

- None at this time

### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Taber has significant experience with large scale developments and would have the capacity to consider large or small scale enterprises
- Water supply for irrigation is particularly important to the economic base in Taber



## **Vulcan Community Profile**

### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Appreciation of a "farming way of life"; large community spirit; safety; progressive attitude
- Clean air and water; good quality and value agricultural land; good wind potential
- Water sources within regulatory framework and lakes need to be protected
- Good recreational opportunities

### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

#### **General:**

- Community has requested information on alternative energy processes, consumer options, information about impacts on communities where alternative energy projects exist today
- Residents are aware of cumulative impacts of increasing oil and gas development in area on land and environment.

#### **Industry:**

- New technologies should adapt to existing culture i.e. Work with farmers, not impose drastic changes on their operations
- Residents recognize the potential for job opportunities for local residents and particularly youth, including spin-off or multiplier effect jobs; also potential for farmers to change products and access local markets for their products if they choose
- Community has a progressive attitude and is open to new ideas
- Residents recognize large up front capital cost of projects and that developers will want a reasonable return on investment.
- Recognition that residents may be fearful of the unknown or change

#### **Community:**

- Alternative energy projects would need to be scaled appropriately to work for Vulcan; controlled growth is necessary so that infrastructure can keep pace.
- Residents would like to see sharing of new development projects among communities

#### **Government:**

- Green energy needs to become more economical than traditional sources; reduce cost of green and consider appropriate cost for traditional energy
- Residents happy to use green but not clear on price premium they are prepared to pay; need to be clear about what green energy really is.

### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Residents are interested in alternative energy development as a means of sustaining the economic base of the town
- Substantial focus on the importance of scaled development and the ability of county and town infrastructure to keep pace; residents are concerned about having to pull resources away from other priorities such as recreational facilities to continually build infrastructure



## **Warner Community Profile**

### **Community Features Identified by Community Participants**

- Appreciation of farming lifestyle; small town; closeness; friendships; safety; huge community spirit which has propelled residents to take on large projects successfully, i.e. Warner Hockey School and bid for Hockeyville Canada
- Beautiful natural landscapes; Milk River Ridge; Ridge Park
- Towns in area are located on major highway connecting to the U.S; good value and skilled labor force
- Hutterite colonies – over 50% of land base in Warner County; may provide market opportunities for green growth development

### **Recommendations from the Community Participants**

#### **General:**

- Community education is needed – SAAEP should hold meetings/workshops with county and town councils throughout the region.

#### **Industry:**

- Successful development requires – benefits for the community; opportunities to retain young people; partnerships with industry; “industry should work for the town, not the town working for industry”
- Projects should include investment opportunities for local residents
- Be strategic about where wind turbines are located
- Balance between preserving beauty and economic development is important

#### **Community:**

- Community should quickly begin to enhance and market their assets – safety, lifestyle, open spaces – “Appreciate what we have and sell it to others”
- A collaborative approach with other towns in the county – desire to bring in opportunities which would benefit all regional residents, not just one town
- Consider potential for home-based businesses
- Community needs to support existing local businesses and support potential growth opportunities
- Important to have a regional economic development office to provide leadership and become the focal point for potential opportunities
- How does community get ready, get specific, and move forward?

#### **Government:**

- None at this time

### **Moving Forward Observations**

- Residents are very keen about the economic development opportunities of alternative energy
- Community has pulled together in past to successfully take on large projects – feel that they can do that again; a desire to start looking at opportunities quickly
- Looking for economic development leadership to identify opportunities



### **Alternative Energy Industry Input**

#### **What attracts alternative energy development to southern Alberta?**

- Community interest and enthusiasm
- Friendly, supportive municipal districts
- Regional pride – want to stay in the community
- Abundant resources – wind, solar, biomass
- Good infrastructure - rail and trucking access

#### **What are the key changes that would support alternative energy development in southern Alberta?**

- More support from local councils
- Transmission lines enabled; AESO structure changes
- Educate the public about alternative energy options
- Renewable energy tariffs
- Access to provincial government departments to educate and influence change

#### **What can industry do to advance the goal of southern Alberta being a leader in alternative energy manufacturing and development?**

- Participate in future meetings and be a sounding board for SAAEP
- Speak to the public about alternative energy options
- Participate in meetings with government
- Be an example of profitable operations
- Promote alternative energy technologies
- Open up job sites for people to see alternative energy options

#### **What advice do you have for SAAEP?**

- Work with experts and industry associations
- Lobby Alberta government to develop policy to stimulate alternative energy technology and encourage conservation
- Develop protocol for how new developers should approach communities
- Look for ways to attract international industry and spin-off opportunities, e.g. maintain turbines here rather than Europe
- Use industry associations when talking with government
- Tap into learning and advice from European countries which are significantly more advanced than Canada with respect to cultural expectations for conservation/alternative energy
- Identify possible partnerships between farmers and industry, e.g. wind farms; SAAEP could help to make matches
- Create a government/industry summit to educate and raise awareness



### Provincial Government Input

#### What is your department mandate as it relates to alternative energy?

- **Corporate Energy Strategy Development** – developing a comprehensive energy strategy for the development of Alberta’s renewable and non-renewable energy sources and for conservation of energy use. Also, to develop recommendations to ensure the continuing effective operation of Alberta’s electricity system to meet Alberta’s growing need.
- **Environment** – to administer the Environment Protection Act and the Water Protection Act.
- **Rural Development Employment, Immigration and Industry** – rural development and capacity building to help communities be ready for alternative energy development.
- **Agri-Industry Commercialization Brand Agriculture and Food** – bio-mass utilizing forest stands mostly in northern Alberta
- **Bio-Industrial Development Branch Agriculture and Food** - funding support for bio-energy initiatives.

#### What barriers exist, either legislative or external to the development of alternative energy?

- With respect to bio-fuels, standards need to be created and implemented so that industry understand what the expectations are
- Potential trade barrier with B.C. where the government plans to legislate ethanol blends of 5% by 2010, ahead of the federal government plan. Also, B.C. plans to offer tax exemptions to blenders and processors, whereas Alberta plans to offer to producers.
- Large fuel retailers have business units created to address these initiatives.
- Environmental risk assessment and regulations of the EPA are based on size. Individuals producing for their own use would probably not be required to complete an environmental assessment, however all commercial developments will be required to. Alberta Environment approval process takes from three to six months.
- There is a tremendous learning curve for small business and they often do not have the time or resources to research and pursue new opportunities.
- There is a lack of coordination regarding the regulatory approval process for alternative energy projects because they are so new. This results in projects being delayed for long periods of time.
- With respect to ethanol and other bio-fuels, questions around how to market the product and what interest the large retailers have in the product.



**What activities and programs are in place or being developed related to alternative energy?**

- Developing a comprehensive energy strategy, including standards for bio fuels
- Providing consultation to potential project developers regarding the Environmental Protection Act and the approval process
- Development of a "Community Progression Scorecard" which could be used by communities to be a self-assessment tool of their capacity to undertake alternative energies and/or projects
- Completing a feasibility study for small use bio-mass alternatives. This model might be adaptable to other technologies and projects.
- Providing assistance with basic business and marketing information and are also willing to make presentations to councils, encouraging business and communities to take leadership roles.
- Developing a nine point bio-energy plan for the province

**What advice do you have for SAAEP?**

- Consult with large industry participants to understand marketing barriers and solutions
- Focus on looking at small use/individual projects which can be developed faster and demonstrate results more quickly. Success in small projects may lead to successful larger scale development.
- Facilitate industry and community access to government resources and information
- Target leaders in business and the community who are interested in becoming informed and will champion new technologies



## 4. Outcomes and Recommendations

The recommendations provided in this chapter are primarily a synthesis of the input and ideas shared by community members, industry representatives and provincial government employees. Additionally, a few of the recommendations are based directly on the consultants' own observations.

### a. Recommendations for the Alternative Energy Industry

1. **Understand unique cultures:** Each community has a distinct culture. While they all similarly value their "small town culture", local residents identified different features in each area. For example, Claresholm residents described their town as having a cowboy atmosphere and Warner residents spoke about their previous collaborative ventures such as the girls' hockey school. Industry representatives should work to understand the local culture and support it by talking with town councils and local special interest groups.
2. **Get involved in the community:** Be involved in the local community by establishing links to educational institutions, faith communities, Aboriginal groups and other networks. Recognize these individual communities within the larger community and consider the benefits that may be associated with them, e.g. potential market, potential source of feedstock, potential workforce.
3. **Consider community ownership:** Examine approaches for the communities to have an active investment role in the alternative energy development. Towns will value the potential employment benefits as one way to retain the youth and they are also interested in sharing directly in the ownership benefits.
4. **Respect environmental assets:** Each community has identified special environmental community features. Become familiar with them and respect them.
5. **Prepare for water-use assessment:** Communities are well informed about the value of water as a commodity and the need to plan for a secure, sustainable source of water. In some areas, water is an integral part of the economic base, i.e. irrigation. Be prepared to work with local, regional and provincial authorities for any projects that require significant water resources.
6. **Site large-scale projects carefully:** All communities are attracted to economic development and to alternative energy development in particular, but not at any cost. The need for economic development is more urgent in some towns than others. All communities would be interested in smaller scale projects that fit with the culture and protect the features. Some communities seem to be better suited and would be more receptive to larger scale projects.



7. **Use local resources:** Take advantage of the different supply and feedstock options in different communities, e.g. wind, solar, animal carcasses, potatoes, by-product waste streams from food processing facilities, landfills, mining sites.
8. **Prepare to consult:** Continue to plan for on-going consultation with each community in order to understand the unique issues and opportunities, and also to build support for any project. Appropriate levels of involvement with the community may be different for each situation; the options could include informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering (see [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org) for information about public involvement approaches).

b. **Recommendations for Local Governments**

1. **Add to community agenda:** Place conservation and alternative energy use on the community's agenda. Allow people to participate in community-based conservation initiatives.
2. **Review land use plans:** Local governments should ensure that their current land use plans appropriately accommodate future potential alternative energy developments.
3. **Set expectations for consultation by industry:** Establish criteria for appropriate and effective public consultation and require that business proponents of potential alternative energy projects follow that process.
4. **Establish systematic assessment processes:** Ensure that local development application processes are thorough and strong enough to properly assess and evaluate a full range of alternative energy development applications. The assessment process must provide for outcomes that are consistent with the community's objectives and culture.
5. **Be proactive with developers:** Local governments can show leadership in identifying and attracting alternative energy business opportunities by being proactive in economic development and by staying connected with and informed of regional initiatives such as the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership.
6. **Model conservation:** Local governments can lead by example by modeling conservation behavior for the community and facilitating education on alternative energy.
7. **Promote conservation:** Local governments can promote conservation by ensuring that conservation opportunities, such as recycling fit easily into lives of people in the community. Conservation can also be promoted by providing incentives to participate. An example is financial incentive through utility rates for the installation and use of low flush toilets.



c. **Recommendations for the Alberta Government**

1. **Coordinate and disseminate information:** There is a provincial government role to demonstrate leadership in the provision of accessible, visible, coordinated information on conservation and alternative energy practices and development. People are seeking consistent, well researched and trustworthy information on topics such as:

- The incorporation of conservation practices into daily life.
- Developing individual projects such as using solar and wind energy to 'get off the grid'.
- The potential development of larger scale commercial alternative energy projects.

The Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Sustainable Resources all provide some related information on their web sites. Participants in the open houses indicated they would like one definitive source of information from the province.

2. **Educate:** In a similar vein, there is a provincial government role to also actively promote and provide education to the public on conservation and alternative energy practices and development. The public's perception and support of alternative energy projects is linked to their understanding of the proposed development and how it would complement their community.
3. **Model conservation:** Residents of the province look to the provincial government to model the use of conservation practices in many areas such as vehicle use and building design and operation.
4. **Ensure level playing field:** Perceptions exist within communities and industry that disincentives are present against alternative energy practices and development and that there is not a level playing field with carbon based energy.
5. **Learn from other countries:** Alternative energy development and use is well established in many European countries. The Alberta provincial government can look to these models for successful concepts to integrate here.
6. **Develop and communicate the regulatory framework:** The Alberta Energy and Utilities Board regulates the energy industry by ensuring that the development and delivery of resources 'takes place in a manner that is fair, orderly and in the public interest.' The development and delivery of alternative energy also requires standards and regulation. Current and potential developers want to understand what the guidelines will be for operating in this province.



d. **Recommendations for SAAEP**

1. **Retain SAAEP as an Organization:**

- **Value in Identity:** SAAEP, through this project has developed an independent identity and is now known throughout Southern Alberta. Residents of the region are already looking to SAAEP to spearhead further alternative energy initiatives and see SAAEP as a group which will be aware of and supportive of community features and values. SAAEP should continue in a leadership, coordination, and education role for the development of alternative energy in Southern Alberta.
  - **Value in Numbers:** Community members and industry representatives were very impressed by the collaborative nature of SAAEP and the fact that 37 municipalities are represented by the organization. This size of critical mass provides the organization with opportunities to truly represent the region of Southern Alberta with respect to industry development, local governments, and the provincial government. Project momentum and coordination would be lost if SAAEP were dismantled and the responsibilities delivered back to individual, local economic development authorities.
2. **Continue with the Green Growth Plan:** Continue to educate and promote the Green Growth Plan among Southern Alberta communities. Some community participants were unclear about what the Green Growth Plan includes and there are a number of community residents who did not attend the public meetings and will not be aware of the initiative. It will be important for SAAEP to stay connected with the participant network established through the public meeting process.
3. **Advocate:** Continue as an advocate for the region for alternative energy projects. A permanent SAAEP organization could be very proactive in working with all levels of government and industry in seeking out appropriate projects for the region. SAAEP could become a "link in the chain" between the provincial government and Southern Alberta regional communities.
4. **Educate:** Work with the provincial government to become a central repository and pro-active educator with respect to conservation and alternative energy systems. There is a connection between public education and economic development that became evident during the public consultation process. Support from area residents with respect to alternative energy development depends on their level of understanding of the project, how it provides "green growth", how it will contribute to the economic development of their community, and the "fit" with the community.



5. **Continue to build networks:** Identify and build relationships with alternative energy associations and Boards to keep abreast of industry developments and to advocate for southern Alberta.
6. **Be a clearinghouse:** Provide a local/regional presence for industry developers to approach and seek input or advice regarding potential projects. In addition, be proactive in looking for potential development opportunities and partnerships among industry and communities with either local or international industry developers.
7. **Plan for an alternative energy forum:** SAAEP should consider organizing an alternative energy forum for Southern Alberta. This would bring together participants from industry looking to develop projects, local and provincial government representatives, and members of the public. The forum could address large scale development opportunities, individual alternative energy projects, and conservation education for the public. In addition to being a logical “next step” for the partners of SAAEP and the region, working on a large initiative such as an Alternative Energy Forum provides a focus for the continuation of SAAEP (i.e. A focal point to rally around so that momentum is maintained in the organization).
8. **Be responsive:** Community members and industry participants are craving an organization that will be responsive to their queries and concerns. It will be important for SAAEP to remain nimble as its role grows and transitions over time.

e. **Recommendations for Community Members**

1. **Advocate for your community:** Become familiar with and work to protect your community features.
2. **Encourage:** Work with your local council to support alternative energy development.
3. **Raise profile of alternative energy:** Make conservation and alternative energy use a part of community life.
4. **Conserve, recycle:** As suggested at many community meetings, people can support green energy growth in some simple ways by conserving energy, recycling and attending local meetings. Although consumer education and conservation initiatives are outside the current scope of the SAAEP, these topics were discussed repeatedly at the public meetings.



f. **Recommendations for Post Secondary Educational Institutions**

1. **Research and education:** Position Lethbridge educational institutions as noted centers of research and education for alternative energy development.
2. **Training:** Deliver programs for providing a local trained workforce for developing and maintaining the alternative energy industry.
3. **Continuing Education:** Deliver programs for people wanting to incorporate conservation practices and principles into their daily lives.

# Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership



## Results and Recommendations from the Public Consultation for the Green Growth Plan

### APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Agenda for Community Meetings

Appendix 2: Community Meeting Results

Vulcan  
Claresholm  
Taber  
Warner  
Coaldale  
Blairmore  
Pincher Creek  
Cardston  
Lethbridge

Appendix 3: Industry Meeting and Interview Results

Appendix 4: Government Interview Results

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## Appendix 1

### Agenda for Community Meetings

#### 1. Introductions

- Moving Forward provided an overview of the meeting and invited participants to introduce themselves

#### 2. Overview of the Green Growth Plan

- John Kolk, Advisory Committee Chair, gave an overview of SAAEP and the Green Growth Plan

#### 3. Questions

#### 4. Group Discussions

- Attendees were asked to divide into smaller groups to facilitate discussion of the community features, considering:
  - Environment and land use;
  - Economic; and,
  - Cultural and social.

## Community Meeting Results

<b>Meeting Location: Vulcan</b>	
<b>Date: April 24, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 15</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social and Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safety</b> – significant population growth could affect crime rate, peace and quiet, increased traffic</li> <li>• <b>Community Spirit</b> – needs to be maintained in preference to economic improvements from green energy development. However, it is also recognized that community spirit could be enhanced through community involvement with green energy development projects</li> <li>• <b>Clean Air/Water</b> – need to be maintained</li> <li>• <b>Farming Way of life</b> – new technology should adapt to existing culture ie. Work with farmers, not impose drastic changes</li> <li>• <b>Progressive Attitude</b> – community open to new ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlled growth is important so that infrastructure can keep pace. Concern that extensive infrastructure will take resources away from other community assets like recreation, etc.</li> <li>• Scale of projects needs to be appropriate for each community</li> <li>• Recognition of benefits for community youth who work now in energy sector, but will need other employment in the future</li> <li>• Recognition of benefits for keeping community going through offering employment to younger generation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Farming</b> - new development offers opportunities for farmers to change products and access local markets if they choose</li> <li>• <b>Local Market</b> - would provide opportunity for residents to purchase energy locally</li> <li>• <b>Future</b> – potential for job opportunities for local residents in the future, including spin-off or multiplier effect jobs.</li> <li>• <b>Progressive Attitude</b> – community open to new ideas</li> <li>• <b>Barriers</b> – up front capital cost of large projects. Developers will want return on investment</li> <li>• <b>Appropriate Size</b> – projects would need to be scaled appropriately to work for Vulcan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green energy needs to become more economical than traditional sources. This occurs in two ways – green technology becomes less expensive, and consideration given to whether we pay the appropriate amount for traditional energy</li> <li>• Residents are happy to use green energy, but not clear on price premium they are prepared to pay – this is a value question.</li> <li>• Be clear about what green energy really is – if you use a “green” process to heat your home, you may reduce your gas bill, but have a very high electrical bill</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Land</b> - relatively lower land costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good agricultural land</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness that people may want development, but not in their back yard.</li> <li>• Fear of the unknown or change</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wind</b> - good potential – “Buffalo Hills” have higher, more consistent winds</li> <li>• <b>Water sources</b> – within regulatory framework and lakes are important and need to be protected</li> <li>• <b>Recreation</b> – lakes, camping opportunities</li> <li>• <b>Waste management</b> – very important</li> <li>• <b>Cumulative impacts</b> – be aware of increasing oil and gas development in this area has increasing impact on land and environment</li> <li>• <b>Esthetics/landscape</b> – impacted by wind turbines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of generational differences in terms of regard for the environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Further information requested on:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative Energy processes – how they work</li> <li>• Consumer options – wind power generation, etc</li> <li>• Credible information about the extent of environmental protection in these processes</li> <li>• Information about impacts on communities where projects such as these are already in place</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like to see sharing of new development projects among communities and counties.</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Claresholm</b>	
<b>Date: April 25, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 15</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<b>Social/Cultural</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly town, low crime rate, no traffic jams</li> <li>• Community spirit is good- “cowboy town”</li> <li>• Community well supported by local press</li> <li>• Large number of religious affiliations</li> <li>• Good local health care system</li> <li>• Recreation facilities – campground, indoor pool, 18 hole golf course, active Agriplex, facilities for children such as soccer, ball diamonds, skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development needs to be in keeping with the rest of the community – visually appealing and enhances the community</li> <li>• Would not want huge growth explosion</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huge agricultural land base</li> <li>• Space for development</li> <li>• Forward thinking town administration and council</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Town is situated on a major transportation route and between two large urban centers</li> <li>• Larger center than other neighboring urban centers</li> <li>• Community has a well maintained and underused airport with heated indoor terminal and accommodation for pilots.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labor force – development would provide a means of keeping youth in the community and keep the labor force local</li> <li>• Recognition that there is a balance in spending and saving – consumers need to know what the benefits are for them.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Land Use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Water Supply</b> – Willow Creek Basin provides water supply for all towns in MD except Ft. Macleod. Springs from foothills flow into creeks and aquifers. There are intertwined impacts between flowing water and ground water.</li> <li>• In five years the community will want to know that they have wisely protected the water supply. Everyone needs to be diligent and active in protecting the water supply</li> <li>• <b>Rough Fescue</b> – naturally grows in the foothills – natural carbon sink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not fence creeks, but pump water up from them for cattle</li> <li>• Encourage irrigation with sewage (grey) water</li> <li>• Community need to be stewards of the land and set standards</li> <li>• Southern Foothills Study – should be used in conjunction with all other information to implement actions.</li> <li>• Land use – need to work with landowners in areas that could be developed. May need to provide incentives not to develop for people</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about incremental, cumulative impacts of natural features</li> <li>• “Growing Energy” changes land use, watersheds, food prices and land prices</li> </ul>	<p>owning land in certain vulnerable areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are wind turbines white? Could they be a color that blended better with the landscape?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions about ethanol and how “green” it really is – lower BTU value, means more consumption and more energy to produce it.</li> <li>• Concerns over changing land use – land turned into acreages and away from agricultural uses may not be maintained as well, causes a risk to the landscape and to the Eastern Slopes</li> <li>• Barriers to using green technologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing government programs do not support building houses with alternative energy systems;</li> <li>• Governments seem not to understand what energy efficiency is – they should be encouraging the production of something from nothing;</li> <li>• It is just as important to conserve energy as it is to produce it from alternative sources.</li> <li>• Geothermal technology is very effective, although more expensive up front – incremental cost to home of \$16,000 – monthly power bill of about \$210/month;</li> <li>• Other jurisdictions – B.C., Ontario, California are much more supportive;</li> <li>• Concern that provincial government is conflicted due to the amount of money provided by fossil fuels.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Concern over remote electrical generation – significant line losses through transmission – need smaller, local production.</li> <li>• Concern over maintenance of electrical transmission lines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community education needed</li> <li>• Need easy access to consumer information – how can residents access alternative energy technologies?</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Taber</b>	
<b>Date: May 1, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:00pm</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 6</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social and Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Progressive Forward Thinking</b> – community open to new ideas</li> <li>• <b>Great community spirit</b> – Apex awards recognize youth achievement; community has a social conscience and supports people; long history of service clubs</li> <li>• <b>Family businesses and family values</b> – strong traditional of family operators</li> <li>• <b>Young community</b> – oil and gas opportunities attract young people</li> <li>• <b>Independent</b> – not a bedroom community; e.g. Taber police force, choice of schools, churches of every faith, college branch</li> <li>• <b>Supports large businesses</b> – has supported large processing facilities and commercial endeavours</li> <li>• <b>Multicultural</b> – former migrant workers from Mexico now reside in the area</li> <li>• <b>Strong civic leadership</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community would welcome new development as a way to continue to attract people to the area and to keep young people; however, the development would have to be done in a way that respects the features that make Taber such a great place to live.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agriculture</b> – very diverse in region</li> <li>• <b>Irrigation</b> – key to success of agriculture</li> <li>• <b>Energy</b> – large oil field service sector</li> <li>• <b>Stable, growing</b> – due to business mix</li> <li>• <b>Rail and road access</b> – rail access is key for many local businesses</li> <li>• <b>Progressive business attitudes</b> – innovative, open to new ideas, willing to take risks, experienced with large scale projects, e.g. Taber corn has become well-known across Alberta</li> <li>• <b>Thriving downtown</b></li> <li>• <b>Affordable housing</b></li> <li>• <b>Local amenities</b> – able to attract and host large events such as soccer tournaments</li> <li>• <b>Labour force</b> – potential for large pool of workers to be available from outside Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is business minded and has a social conscience; open to development, but not at all costs</li> <li>• Local government is open for business ideas; with a project on the table, will be willing to look at by-laws to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers</li> </ul>

<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Green spaces/parks</b> – well used by people and wildlife</li> <li>• <b>Air Quality</b> – no burning by-law; community opposition to tire burning facility</li> <li>• <b>Water</b> - water supply is key to economic base; drainage is a challenge in the region</li> <li>• <b>Future growth</b> – on-going challenge to balance population growth and economic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware that transmissions lines, crop spraying from airplanes, and windmills don't mix well</li> <li>• For future development, keep productive land in agriculture</li> <li>• Many parcels of land are available that are not productive for agriculture and could have alternative uses</li> <li>• Future development should not adversely affect water supply or air quality</li> <li>• Balance development with recreation interests</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional requests for information at this time</li> <li>• Good initiative to talk to communities at this stage of development</li> <li>• Looking forward to seeing the results from the meetings across southern Alberta</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Warner</b>	
<b>Date: May 2, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 9:00</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 11</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<b>Social/Cultural</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Benefits to a small town</b> - closeness, friendships, safety</li> <li>• <b>Appreciation of the farming lifestyle.</b></li> <li>• <b>Huge community spirit</b> – the community can and has pulled together to successfully take on large projects such as the Warner Hockey School and bid for Hockeyville Canada.</li> <li>• <b>Concerns that the community is losing its young people</b> as a function of tough economics in agriculture</li> <li>• <b>Retention of schools and hospitals</b> is very important to the community</li> <li>• <b>Attract families</b> - the community would like to attract new families to live in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful development in this area requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits for the community;</li> <li>• Opportunities to retain young people in the community;</li> <li>• Partnership with industry – benefits to working with large companies who have the technological expertise – but venture must be for benefit of community.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Community would look for ways to balance the lifestyle with economic opportunities</li> <li>• “Industry should work for the town, not the town working for industry”</li> <li>• Suggestion that the community begin to enhance and market their assets – sell qualities like safety, lifestyle to others</li> <li>• Community would want a collaborative approach with other towns in the county – desire to bring in opportunities which would benefit all regional residents, not just in one town.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hutterite Colonies</b> – many in the area which may provide market opportunities for Green Growth Development</li> <li>• <b>Good value, experienced labour force.</b></li> <li>• <b>Natural assets</b> which could be developed to provide economic returns, e.g. Ridge Park</li> <li>• <b>Major highway</b> - Towns are located on a major highway which enters the United States.</li> <li>• <b>Waste products</b> – could be used to generate power.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion that community start soon to market potential to others – necessary to sustain community.</li> <li>• Desire for diversified economic base – do not want to be a one-industry town</li> <li>• Consider the potential for home-based businesses</li> <li>• Community needs to support existing local businesses and support potential growth opportunities.</li> <li>• Alternative energy projects should include investment opportunities for local community members i.e. Ownership of power grid/transmission assets.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to have a regional economic development office to provide leadership and become the focal point for potential opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Milk River Ridge</b> - treasured, unique natural asset.</li> <li>• <b>Water supply</b> - from the St. Mary's River and an underground aquifer on the Milk River</li> <li>• <b>Beautiful natural landscapes</b> in the area.</li> <li>• <b>Landowners do not always have control</b> - recognition that landowners do not always have the right to control development on their land</li> <li>• <b>Hutterite Colonies</b> - Over 50% of land base of Warner County is owned by Hutterite Colonies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be strategic about where wind turbines are located.</li> <li>• Expand the use of existing parks</li> <li>• Balance between preserving beauty and economic development is important</li> <li>• "Appreciate what we have and sell that to others"</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question about different "green" technologies such as ethanol – is it really green and is it economic?</li> <li>• Community requires more information on – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green growth processes – how they work, what are the inputs and waste products from each process? What technologies would work best in this area?</li> <li>• Biodiesel – we hear mixed reports about the technology. What is the real status?</li> <li>• Home use of alternative energy sources – are there any funding programs available? Where can we find additional information?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community education needed</li> <li>• SAAEP should hold meetings/workshops with county and town councils throughout area.</li> <li>• How does the community get ready, get specific, and move forward?</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Coaldale</b>	
<b>Date: May 8, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30pm</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 14</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social and Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Small town appeal</b> – friendly, small schools, opportunities to become involved with local boards and service organizations</li> <li>• <b>Everything you need within 15 minutes</b> – most services are in Coaldale, the rest are in Lethbridge; no need to go to Calgary</li> <li>• <b>Choice of schools</b> – separate, public, alternative, Dutch</li> <li>• <b>Communities amenities</b> – parks, library, museum, Birds of Prey, churches</li> <li>• <b>Recreation</b> – pools, baseball, curling, soccer, hockey, figure skating, dance</li> <li>• <b>Medical services</b> – doctors, dentists, optometrists, hospital in town; specialists in Lethbridge</li> <li>• <b>Proximity to research institutions</b> – WISE, U of L, Research Station, College; can service high tech industries</li> <li>• <b>Family events</b> – parade, Festivals of Lights, Family Day events</li> <li>• <b>Young population</b> – open to change; 45% of Lethbridge County under 25 years; 75% less than 45 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and education within the community will support green growth</li> <li>• Coaldale could be a leader in Alberta for green growth and business development</li> <li>• Room for Green Growth in the community</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diverse agriculture</b> – crops already being adapted to provide bio-mass supply</li> <li>• <b>Irrigation</b> – allows flexibility</li> <li>• <b>Affordable housing</b> – cheaper than Lethbridge</li> <li>• <b>Varied service sector</b> – welders, fabricators, electricians</li> <li>• <b>Manufacturing</b></li> <li>• <b>Steady growth, less variable</b> – due to variety of economic drivers in the community</li> <li>• <b>Transportation hub</b> – access to rail, airport, highways in all directions, including to U.S.</li> <li>• <b>Skilled labour force and access to research</b> – from colleges, research centres, university</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community needs to apply pressure to government to get political will to support access to alternative energy products, e.g. diesel vehicles</li> <li>• Review existing commercial conditions; land for development needs to be made available; consider tax incentives</li> <li>• Designate industrial sites in land use plan</li> <li>• Since there are no more water licenses available, look for ways to treat and conserve water supply, e.g. re-use waste water from one enterprise to another</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good labour supply</b> – from young population</li> <li>• <b>Small business community</b> – entrepreneurial mindset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at green options and incentives for new home construction</li> <li>• Government needs to ensure level playing field for all energy sources, e.g. tar sands have lower standards for polluting than other sectors</li> <li>• Consider incentives for consumers who retrofit or new installations of alternative energy options</li> <li>• Need standards for forms of alternative energy (e.g. diesel) to enable more widespread use and protect consumers. This also applies to biogas development to protect residents from odour.</li> <li>• Keep improving business accessibility</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Excellent Irrigation Structure</b> – consistency in production; potential for electrical generation on canals, and also a source of local demand.</li> <li>• <b>Land</b> – 95% crop land, 75% is irrigated</li> <li>• <b>Manure</b> – asset for biofuels opportunities</li> <li>• <b>Cellulose based ethanol</b> – area provides good opportunity for this technology</li> <li>• <b>Agricultural Community</b> – opportunity to sell byproducts to this big market</li> <li>• <b>Soil</b> – area has #1,2, and 3 soils – some of the best soil in Canada</li> <li>• <b>Ridges</b> – areas of marginal agricultural land, but could provide good location for wind energy such as Chin Ridge. Grazing land would be compatible with wind development, but not crop land.</li> <li>• <b>Special Areas</b> – Old Man River Valley, Scabby Butte by Nobleford, the Sundial at Picture Butte, Milk River Ridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regulations</b> regarding energy production through biofuels need to be revised. The need to locate production within one mile of the market to avoid having to put electricity into the grid and build pipelines for gas is an economic disadvantage to these development opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need legitimate sources of information about alternative energy options, implications, where to locate green growth.</li> <li>• Need information and perhaps regulation changes with respect to “reverse electricity” opportunities.</li> <li>• Very important for individuals to be able to make a difference.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use Community Learning Council to support education of community</li> <li>○ Community could make a difference with respect to policy development in this area by forming a critical mass and lobbying municipal and provincial governments in this regard.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions around corn based ethanol and how efficient an energy source this is. There is also concern that Southern Alberta does not have enough water to support this type of ethanol production along with supporting the irrigation structure.</li></ul>	
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<b>Meeting Location: Crowsnest Pass (Blairmore)</b>	
<b>Date: May 9, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30pm</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 11</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<b>Social and Cultural</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mining history</b> – major bond for community</li> <li>• <b>Small town culture; family oriented</b></li> <li>• <b>Collaborative towns</b> – each town in pass is unique and collaborates with others</li> <li>• <b>Multicultural</b></li> <li>• <b>Performing arts</b> – music, dance; longest standing amateur symphony in Alberta, mentoring program</li> <li>• <b>Recreation</b> – ski hill, 2 arenas, pool, golf course, fishing, hunting, 1200 miles multi-use trails, 800 campsites within 60 mile radius</li> <li>• <b>“Thunder in the Valley”</b> – very popular annual fireworks festival</li> <li>• <b>Service clubs</b> – Legions, Elks, Shriners, Lions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community would welcome new green development as a way to continue to attract people (families in particular) and keep youth</li> <li>• Want to attract growth and development that will sustain small town community values</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tourism</b> – community actively seeking resort developments; increasingly popular as a tourist and recreation property destination</li> <li>• <b>Retirement Community</b> – large population of retirees</li> <li>• <b>Mining</b> – significant employer</li> <li>• <b>Recreation</b> – fishing, hunting, skiing, trails – all are key to attracting and keeping people in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of abandoned mines for geothermal energy</li> <li>• Consider solar energy development</li> <li>• Consider using methane from landfills or feedlots</li> <li>• Work in collaboration with Crowsnest corridor and other economic development regions in the province</li> <li>• Investigate options for green project development in partnership with private businesses – don’t wait for government to make it happen</li> <li>• Local council and economic development should seek opportunities</li> <li>• Consider the Okotoks model for a passive solar and geothermal subdivision</li> <li>• Provide information about green energy development, grants, residential use</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Land Use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Best water</b> – known for very high water quality</li> <li>• <b>Clean air, quiet</b> – accustomed to trains; other noise is minimal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development will need to protect the clean air, high water quality and the outstanding views in the region</li> <li>• Community could be a leader in</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenic views</b> – valuable, treasured feature of the region</li> <li>• <b>Wildlife</b> – 400 species of birds; migration area for eagles</li> <li>• <b>Recreation trails</b> – Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad – leaders in environmental stewardship</li> <li>• <b>Land use bylaws</b> – need to ensure they are enforced to protect community features</li> <li>• <b>Former mining areas</b> – some areas may require reclamation before being redeveloped</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>conservation and recycling – a complementary approach to green growth development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite corporate environmental leaders so that they buy into community priorities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need clear, objective information about alternative energy, conservation, options and implications</li> <li>• Consider the full lifecycle of “green” products e.g. disposal of fluorescent bulbs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider results of Crowsnest Conservation Society's recent report</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Pincher Creek</b>	
<b>Date: May 15, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30pm</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 23</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social and Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteers</b> – readily available</li> <li>• <b>Affordable housing</b> – disappearing; need to maintain affordable housing</li> <li>• <b>Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community</b> – has roadmap available at <a href="http://www.sasci.ca">www.sasci.ca</a>; gives lay of land from regulatory perspective</li> <li>• <b>Services and amenities</b> – police, fire, service clubs, churches</li> <li>• <b>Green space, parks, library, pool</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve cultures: small town, First Nations, ranching, e.g. powwows, cowboy poetry, rodeo</li> <li>• Want deliberate community design</li> <li>• Want to attract and retain young families</li> <li>• More schools, hospitals, medical care, daycare etc. are needed to keep up with growth</li> <li>• Consider social impact of development from start to end of business</li> <li>• Consider “Smart development” approach using scenarios</li> <li>• Need on-going, transparent planning process where people have true input through consultation and participation with decision making power; find and use best practices; keep public well informed</li> <li>• Work toward collective consensus on balanced development</li> <li>• Community needs to make room for change; this will happen if information is shared so that people understand benefits; welcome newcomers</li> <li>• Community support needed for future development; need more information on structure and ownership of current alternative industry; who benefits from it?</li> <li>• Want construction workers to have benefits and safety programs</li> <li>• Make apprenticeships available</li> <li>• Need strong leadership at MD level, need to have MD work collaboratively with province</li> <li>• In future years have events to celebrate renewable energy culture</li> <li>• Develop in a way that does not result in</li> </ul>

<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recreation and tourism</b> – culture supports tourism industry, campsites and dam are readily available</li> <li>• <b>Increased awareness of alternative energy</b> – now is the time for development</li> <li>• <b>Agricultural anchor</b> – current economic focus for community, but financially not sustainable; family farms are struggling; agri-business is thriving, agriculture is declining</li> <li>• <b>Sour gas</b> – can see impact of sour gas in community; prefer alternative energy</li> <li>• <b>Clean air, clean water, biodiversity</b> – high value for community</li> <li>• <b>Green growth</b> – community is aware of and open to possibilities; hinges on economics</li> </ul>	<p>conflict between landowners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider cooperatives for energy producers or users</li> <li>• Legislation needs to be more accessible for loops, small businesses</li> <li>• Province and town should provide incentives for alternative energy use and conservation, e.g. low flush toilets; incentives should be part of development guidelines</li> <li>• Offer apprenticeships to encourage young people to stay</li> <li>• Jobs are needed to keep/attract families</li> <li>• Economic development has to focus on community benefits, not only jobs and revenue</li> <li>• Encourage vertical integration of industry; more spin-off benefits</li> <li>• Need plan to maintain infrastructure; concerned that existing infrastructure won't be able to meet demand</li> <li>• Community needs to recognize itself as having a renewable energy culture and become involved in long-term evolution of energy sources/ industry development; economic benefits will follow culture change</li> <li>• Desire to be a knowledge and skills centre for renewable energy, e.g. college (Lethbridge satellite courses)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Watershed</b> – protection is important</li> <li>• <b>Clean air and water</b> – needs to be protected</li> <li>• <b>Biodiversity</b> – large in this area; wildlife and vegetation</li> <li>• <b>Open spaces/roadless areas</b></li> <li>• <b>Natural capital</b></li> <li>• <b>Landscape</b> – can appear vast but landscapes tie together and one change impacts other areas; fragile</li> <li>• <b>Carcasses</b> – can be used as an energy source, disposal of them is necessary</li> <li>• <b>Iconic area</b> – the landscape is the area; ranching, biodiversity, etc. It is a destination, not a gateway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reclamation projects need to use native plant species</li> <li>• Support needed for neighbourhood groups to deal with projects</li> <li>• Location needs to be sensitive to landscape</li> <li>• Cannot destroy what draws people to the area; preserve natural attributes</li> <li>• Industry needs to have local buy in, involvement and benefit from development</li> <li>• Find ways to keep positive forward movement</li> <li>• Want best land use practices on a very specific, zonal scale</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any potential projects have to synchronize with what is wanted by the community, and with land use</li> <li>• Sustainable, low impact recreation</li> <li>• Government support for less intrusive oil and gas exploration</li> <li>• Want energy to be harvested without changing anything</li> <li>• Educate community about environmental practices; reusing, recycling</li> <li>• Needs to be an overall framework in place that determines the acceptability of any development project so that local community doesn't have to continually deal with individual projects</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Location: Cardston</b>	
<b>Date: May 16, 2007</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 8:30pm</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 13</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social and Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strong Family Ties</b> – Cardston is a good place to raise families; youth grow up with good work ethic and as a result are the area’s greatest export</li> <li>• <b>Strong Roots</b> – pace of life is “laid back”; what is here has always been here – some resistance to change within community</li> <li>• <b>Religion</b> – has a large influence on the county</li> <li>• <b>Aging population</b> – area is becoming popular for retirement and for those wanting to move from cities; recognized that this will affect area infrastructure such as hospitals; also affects ability of youth to stay in area. However, new modular and log home building industry has brought younger families into the area.</li> <li>• <b>New subdivisions</b> – recognition that changing demographic will have an impact on area social/cultural values.</li> <li>• <b>Recreation and infrastructure assets</b> – good education system, community hospital, sports oriented community, close to Waterton and Glacier parks, many rivers, lakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community is looking for opportunities for area youth to remain or return to area once they receive their education.</li> <li>• The community needs to find the balance between leaving things as they are and moving forward in economic development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tourism</b> – Waterton close by; area attracts visitors from U.S. and Canada; not commercialized like Banff or Jasper. However, some potential tourism developments have gone elsewhere due to “dry” legislation.</li> <li>• <b>Agriculture Tourism</b> – guest ranches and outfitters in the area</li> <li>• <b>Acreages/new subdivisions</b> – community is on the cusp of changing; people moving to area who will work via internet in remote locations – not necessarily bringing jobs to area</li> <li>• <b>Barriers for development</b> – no rail access; limited expansion possibilities as bordered by the Blood Reserve and U.S. border; conservation land and easements – result in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardston owns their electrical distribution lines, but can only supply their own buildings; should be able to sell to residents too</li> <li>• People need to be able to feed into grid and make money; need sufficient reward to make this worthwhile</li> <li>• Explore possibility of co-ops to supply energy</li> <li>• Would like to see Aboriginal groups involved in development</li> <li>• Do not want any one group to delay progress</li> <li>• Consumers/community needs to have economic benefits to development</li> </ul>

<p>fragmented landscapes and somewhat limit development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of electrical transmission</b> – difficult for wind energy development; recognition that some residents do not want transmission facilities on their land</li> <li>• <b>Aging agricultural community</b> – economic pressure to be a large, corporate ranch or subdivide the land into acreages. Four large ranches own a great deal of land in the county.</li> <li>• <b>New light industry in community</b> – modular and log home building – directly employ approximately 130 people; community also seeing spin off economic opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community could build transmission line and export wind energy into the U.S.</li> <li>• Potential for solar farms</li> <li>• Ethanol – not ideally located here as area is mostly ranching, rather than grain producing</li> <li>• Waste to energy – not enough feedlots – mostly cow-calf operations</li> <li>• Windmills generate economic returns for a much greater time than pump jacks – the EUB needs to develop regulations and standards around wind towers and land use to make this an attractive investment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good water and air quality, quiet environment</b></li> <li>• <b>Views, unique landscape</b> – key appealing factor for the area; town is growing to the west because of the view</li> <li>• <b>Agriculture</b> – farmland and rangeland is valuable</li> <li>• <b>Local initiatives</b> – working with Leavitt Irrigation Authority to bring in untreated water for non-residential use, e.g. parks, golf courses; alternative energy in by-laws; 3 turbines in town in the past year</li> <li>• <b>Cottages/acreages increasing</b> – bring in dollars and different expectations; also draw on energy resources</li> <li>• <b>Land stewardship groups</b> – active in the region</li> <li>• <b>Weather</b> – area enjoys open winters and moderate temperatures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development will need to protect the clean air, water quality and the outstanding views in the area</li> <li>• Do not want smokestack industries</li> <li>• Do not want wind turbines west of Cardston</li> <li>• Solar/geothermal may be appealing to community since there is less aesthetic impact</li> <li>• Need a land use plan to determine where and when to use different energy sources</li> <li>• New industry should be held to a high environmental standard</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need clear, objective information about alternative energy options and implications for consumers in Cardston</li> <li>• Very difficult for small communities to deal with new technology issues</li> <li>• The local community may be underestimating the impact it's making on the environment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>

<b>Meeting Location: Lethbridge</b>	
<b>Date: May 22 and May 23</b>	
<b>Start and end time: 6:00 – 9:00</b>	
<b>Number of Attendees from the Public: 45</b>	
<b>Community Features Identified</b>	<b>Recommendations from Community</b>
<p><b>Social/Cultural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Centered</b> – great involvement in social/cultural aspects of community</li> <li>• <b>Clean, beautiful, and quiet</b></li> <li>• <b>Recreation opportunities</b> – mountains, skiing, hiking, sailing, wind surfing</li> <li>• <b>Rich cultural scene</b> – art galleries, theatre</li> <li>• <b>Strong spiritual/church community</b></li> <li>• <b>Education</b> – very important – highest number of PhD's per capita in country</li> <li>• <b>Small city atmosphere</b> – safe, lifestyle</li> <li>• <b>Agricultural community</b> – community culture is to support farmers by buying locally</li> <li>• <b>Preservation of Unique Landscape</b> – community culture of preserving unique characteristics such as Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developers would need to make an investment in the social/cultural aspects of the community</li> <li>• The community wants no “social deficit” from development ie. Developers should use local work force to the greatest extent possible.</li> <li>• Encourage developers to form a partnership with SAAEP so that community is involved in advancement of projects.</li> <li>• Form partnerships with the church community to explore ethical decisions such as future land use and the ethics of using “food for energy”.</li> <li>• Communities within the city need to determine the optimal size for growth so as to maintain the community feeling</li> <li>• Get the public on board</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Post secondary education</b> – University and College form large part of economic base, approximately 30%. LCC creates training opportunities – Pratt &amp; Whitney training center, Wind Turbine training center. This develops a trained, local work force who would service and maintain alternative energy projects. Can respond quickly to changing needs</li> <li>• <b>Qualified and trained work force</b></li> <li>• <b>Abundance of agricultural land</b></li> <li>• <b>Feasibility of alternative energy is high</b> compared to other parts of the province – wind and solar in abundance</li> <li>• <b>Potato production</b> also a feedstock for energy and in abundance</li> <li>• <b>Clean air</b></li> <li>• <b>Clean water</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Lethbridge area as a centre of research and education with respect to alternative energy.</li> <li>• Create synergies between education and research and tourism. Eco Tourism could be built by showcasing alternative energy demonstration projects. This could be linked to the Native communities and Hutterite colonies so as to include all members of the community.</li> <li>• Consider possible synergies/partnerships between different sectors</li> <li>• Promote local use of locally produced energy – like “Alberta Beef”.</li> <li>• Provide incentives, not disincentives for people to be self sufficient in energy. This could include tax incentives for personal shifts to alternative energy</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City and region is a stable economic entity</li> <li>• Inexpensive energy costs</li> <li>• Research station</li> <li>• Stable work force, but not excess capacity</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Value added agri-business located here</li> <li>• There is not a waste reduction mentality here yet.</li> </ul>	<p>usage and education about possible incentives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to have a well rounded approach to alternative energy development rather than a focus on just one segment.</li> <li>• Any dramatic shift toward alternative energy must be sustainable – it should not create an unnatural draw on the community.</li> <li>• Review municipal bylaws and change if necessary to allow for use of alternative energy or waste systems.</li> <li>• Need infrastructure support at the commercial/consumer level – biofuels for vehicles. Also needed is encouragement and support at the consumer level – currently it is a financial penalty to build a house with solar or geothermal technology – the government needs to show leadership.</li> <li>• Recognition that increased development will create an impact on infrastructure – roads, traffic, etc. How will this cost be supported? Be aware of all possible outcomes and plan accordingly, e.g. weather, population growth.</li> <li>• Producing ethanol from potatoes efficient – fewer barriers and potatoes produce more energy than other crops. Southern Alberta farmers could be pioneers in this field and become world leaders.</li> <li>• Cost of using water in all of these processes needs to be well understood.</li> <li>• Provide a reward for conservation of water – processes which do not use water as input should be rewarded; consider planning now to increase storage capacity.</li> <li>• Use revenues from hydrocarbon production to support Alternative Energy Development – legislated policy regarding exceeding pollution limits would be directed to alternative energy systems.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use residential waste to create energy</li> <li>• Use or re-use what we now consider waste; divert or recycle; explore biomimicry</li> <li>• Alternative energy development could help smaller communities which may be struggling economically. Strive to achieve balance in the economic base, ie. Not just one industry per town – look for value-added developments</li> <li>• Put in place a straightforward policy and process to get projects on stream on a smaller scale</li> <li>• There is an education deficit on this topic. Need a local, massive public awareness and education program. Develop marketing program to educate. Use the Herald, the City newsletter, internet – make it prominent</li> <li>• Subsidies to encourage alternative energy production (as sued in EU countries. Subsidy to producer (not for infrastructure); consumer has choice between conventional energy or alternatives at different price</li> <li>• Look at successful models elsewhere (EU) where there is integrated political, social and economic approach</li> <li>• Consider models of ensuring benefits flow through the region; not to a few large scale producers</li> <li>• Municipalities need to lead by example; vehicles and fuel used, recycling</li> <li>• Need more water storage capacity to ensure stable supply</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clean air, clean water, good climate</b> – attracts people to the area</li> <li>• <b>Views, unique landscape</b></li> <li>• <b>Water</b> – key resource; need water plan at local and provincial level, e.g. new industry in Taber getting water from Taber Irrigation District – is this a good idea?</li> <li>• <b>Windmills are a distinctive feature between Lethbridge and mountains</b> – how many will be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need land use plan that includes locations for windmills, pedestrian/recreation use, agriculture; how windmills and aerial agriculture applications can co-exist; siting for future plants</li> <li>• Start with a local plan and build up to provincial plan; encourage communities to review provincial government's proposed land use plans; review MD of</li> </ul>

<p>too many?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Agriculture</b> – increasing pressure on agricultural land (e.g. for windmills, city encroaching on country)</li> <li>● <b>Concentration of food production plans</b> – about 2 dozen in the area; waste streams are a potential energy source</li> <li>● <b>Generating plant in area</b> – methane</li> <li>● <b>Feedlots</b> – potential energy source for bio-mass; bio-digester</li> <li>● <b>Reservoirs</b> – recreation use</li> <li>● <b>Cheap land and large amounts available</b> – especially valuable for bio-diesel</li> <li>● <b>Solar, wind and land resources</b> – can take advantage of different energy sources when they are available</li> </ul>	<p>Pincher Creek's land use plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider target siting for windmills where people in radius of windmill get some compensation</li> <li>● Development will need to protect the clean air, water quality and the outstanding views in the area; "visual pollution" from windmills will become a bigger issue as more are in place</li> <li>● Need balance between aesthetics and dollars</li> <li>● Be aware of increasing pressure on land for different purposes as people seek country life; has impact on grassland and sloughs</li> <li>● Nature Conservancy has prevented some alternative energy development, e.g. wind farm; conservancy easement sometimes removes land from productive use.</li> <li>● Conservation should be at the top of the list of priorities, e.g. house construction, land development, heating; needs to apply to everyone; need standards and enforcement</li> <li>● Need to change attitudes about conservation; use education, consider incentives, create standards for better labeling, e.g. show country of origin</li> <li>● Development should consider climate change footprint, wildlife impacts</li> <li>● Development should factor in full lifecycle costs, e.g. production, transport miles, packaging, use of product, disposal</li> <li>● Need to educate about impact of choices on food prices, e.g. bio-fuels</li> <li>● Need information on implications of different energy sources, e.g. wind reliability, environmental impacts, costs/benefits, e.g. used to think that whale oil was a good energy source</li> <li>● Need information specific to each community</li> <li>● Government should provide incentives for residential use and businesses, e.g.</li> </ul>
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	<p>models in Germany and U.S.; need both carrots and sticks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Advanced Renewable Energy Tariff (Germany) – pay premium for green power produced instead of subsidizing set up</li> <li>• Explore co-generation: Use waste by-products from ethanol production in bio-digester; then use gas from bio-digester to fuel ethanol production (instead of using natural gas)</li> <li>• Lethbridge should protect and grow trail network</li> <li>• Look at landfills as energy sources</li> <li>• Protect archeological sites and wildlife</li> <li>• Alternative energy should be part of environmental farming plan in Alberta; would result in energy use reductions for agriculture operations</li> <li>• Other ideas for Lethbridge: ban plastic bags and give away cloth bags; promote 100 mile diet (would result in more greenhouses – what are the impacts of greenhouses?)</li> <li>• Regulate packaging, e.g. biodegradable packaging, ban plastic cups in hotels</li> <li>• Consider carbon credit options; make sure they do not just move pollution around</li> <li>• Ensure landowner rights are protected</li> <li>• Change the color of wind turbines so that they blend in with landscape</li> <li>• Consider sharing transmission lines or share right of ways</li> <li>• Look at co-ops for producing and using energy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Issues Raised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “As a consumer, do I have all of the information I need to make informed decisions about alternative energy?”</li> <li>• Are alternative energy processes actually beneficial for climate change?</li> <li>• How will potentially increased input costs affect farmers’ ability to produce for alternative energy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more information available to people about the payback potential of changing to alternative energy sources.</li> <li>• Need more information regarding the Trade and Labor Mobility Act – may have an impact on community decisions which could be overturned as a result of this act.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need clear, objective information about alternative energy options and implications</li><li>• How can individuals have an impact on this process and benefit from the process?</li><li>• Would like to see clarity in big picture goal for SAAEP? Is the focus on dollars? Climate change?</li></ul>	
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Industry Meeting and Interview Results

Meeting Location: Fort Macleod
Date: May 23, 2007
Start and end time: noon to 2:00pm
Number of Attendees from the Public: 12
<p><b>From a business perspective, what is attractive to you about southern Alberta? (social/cultural, environment, economics)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community enthusiasm through the whole corridor; many landowners are anxious to move ahead with alternative energy development</li> <li>• High demand from the public</li> <li>• Discretionary income available (people have money to spend on alternative energy options)</li> <li>• Willingness and support from Economic Development; City of Lethbridge has been helpful in some areas</li> <li>• Some councils across the region have been proactive</li> <li>• Great place to live</li> <li>• Regional pride – want to stay in the community</li> <li>• Wind and solar resources are abundant</li> <li>• Rail and trucking access</li> <li>• Consistent, diverse, abundant agriculture can support bio-diesel and other options</li> <li>• Farmers are interested; opportunities for farmers to supplement their income</li> <li>• Energy infrastructure gap to be filled</li> <li>• Good opportunities for collaboration and synergies for different types of development</li> <li>• Support from the Alberta government for bio-diesel, bio-mass and ethanol</li> <li>• Challenge to balance needs of landowners with need for transmission lines</li> </ul>
<p><b>What changes could be made to assist you in moving forward with your business in southern Alberta?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more openness to and support for alternative energy at the local council level</li> <li>• SAAEP could become a strong lobby group at the provincial government level</li> <li>• Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) Infrastructure – need to enable transmission lines</li> <li>• AESO Structure – currently has a mandate to ensure reliability and support competitive markets; should only have one mandate; AESO should focus on enabling rather than preventing and should align with alternative energy structure</li> <li>• Need a streamlined, coordinated approval process for infrastructure development; needs to be coordinated among local, provincial and federal government; predictable regulatory environment is more important than quick approval</li> <li>• Look at improving metering options; net metering; find ways to reduce the cost/red tape of metering</li> <li>• Implement renewable energy tariffs to encourage investment (e.g. Germany)</li> </ul>

- Need consistent government policies
- Enable merchant transmission in Alberta
- Education – need to educate government regarding alternative energy processes; industry groups want direct access to talk to department staff and politicians, e.g. Department of Energy only understands hydrocarbons

**Among the possible changes, what are your top priorities?**

- Support from local councils
- Transmission lines enabled; AESO structure changes
- Renewable energy tariffs
- Access to provincial government departments to educate and influence change

**What role do you see for yourself in advancing the goal of southern Alberta being a leader in alternative energy manufacturing and development?**

- Participate in future meetings and be a sounding board for SAAEP
- Speak to the public about alternative energy options
- Participate in meetings with government
- Open up job sites for people to see alternative energy options

**What advice do you have for SAAEP?**

- Work with experts and industry associations, e.g. Bio-diesel Association
- Lobby in Edmonton on behalf of 37 communities
- Look for ways to attract international industry and for spin-off opportunities, e.g. maintain turbines here rather than Europe
- Use industry associations when talking with government
- Tap into learning and advice from European countries which are significantly more advanced than Canada with respect to cultural expectations for conservation/alternative energy, e.g. motion sensor lights are common in Germany
- Identify possible partnerships between farmers and industry, e.g. wind farms; SAAEP could help to make matches
- Create a government/industry summit to educate and raise awareness; possible speakers could be Paul Gipe, William Kemp

## Industry Interview Summary

<p><b>What attracts alternative energy development to southern Alberta?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Friendly municipal districts</li><li>• Good rail access, proximity to fat feedstock</li><li>• Significant energy resources – wind, solar and biomass</li><li>• Opportunity: can place 7 turbines on a quarter section and not interfere with agriculture function and generate more revenue for land owner compared to oil wells</li></ul>
<p><b>What are the key changes that would support alternative energy development in southern Alberta?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need transmission lines</li><li>• Help public acquire understanding of alternative energy so that public will support it</li><li>• Remove cap on electricity generation</li><li>• Do not distort economics of energy choices</li></ul>
<p><b>What can industry do to advance the goal of southern Alberta being a leader in alternative energy manufacturing and development?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Companies need to be proactive in working with the communities</li><li>• Be an example of profitable operations</li><li>• Promote alternative energy technologies</li><li>• Participate in industry associations</li></ul>
<p><b>What advice do you have for SAAEP?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with experts and industry associations</li><li>• Outline a multi-point plan for how communities would like to be approached by new potential producers. What type of information would they like and how would they like it to be presented?</li><li>• Lobby Alberta government to develop policy to stimulate alternative energy technology and encourage conservation</li><li>• Create a government/industry summit to educate and raise awareness</li></ul>

Government Interview Summary

<p><b>What is your department mandate as it relates to alternative energy?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Corporate Energy Strategy Development</b> – developing a comprehensive energy strategy for the development of Alberta’s renewable and non-renewable energy sources and for conservation of energy use. Also, to develop recommendations to ensure the continuing effective operation of Alberta’s electricity system to meet Alberta’s growing need.</li> <li>• <b>Environment</b> – to administer the Environment Protection Act and the Water Protection Act.</li> <li>• <b>Rural Development Employment, Immigration and Industry</b> – rural development and capacity building to help communities be ready for alternative energy development.</li> <li>• <b>Agri-Industry Commercialization Brand Agriculture and Food</b> – bio-mass utilizing forest stands mostly in northern Alberta</li> <li>• <b>Bio-Industrial Development Branch Agriculture and Food</b> - funding support for bio-energy initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What barriers exist, either legislative or external to the development of alternative energy?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With respect to bio-fuels, standards need to be created and implemented so that industry understand what the expectations are</li> <li>• Potential trade barrier with B.C. where the government plans to legislate ethanol blends of 5% by 2010, ahead of the federal government plan. Also, B.C. plans to offer tax exemptions to blenders and processors, whereas Alberta plans to offer to producers.</li> <li>• Large fuel retailers (Husky and Shell) have business units created to address these initiatives.</li> <li>• Environmental risk assessment and regulations of the EPA are based on size. Individuals producing for their own use would probably not be required to complete an environmental assessment, however all commercial developments will be required to. Alberta Environment approval process takes from three to six months.</li> <li>• There is a tremendous learning curve for small business and they often do not have the time or resources to research and pursue new opportunities.</li> <li>• There is a lack of coordination regarding the regulatory approval process for alternative energy projects because they are so new. This results in projects being delayed for long periods of time.</li> <li>• With respect to ethanol and other bio-fuels, questions around how to market the product and what interest the large retailers have in the product.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What activities and programs are in place or being developed related to alternative energy?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a comprehensive energy strategy, including standards for bio fuels</li> <li>• Providing consultation to potential project developers regarding the Environmental Protection Act and the approval process</li> <li>• Development of a “Community Progression Scorecard” which could be used by communities to be a self-assessment tool of their capacity to undertake alternative energies and/or projects</li> <li>• Completing a feasibility study for small use bio-mass alternatives. This model might be</li> </ul>

<p>adaptable to other technologies and projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing assistance with basic business and marketing information and are also willing to make presentations to councils, encouraging business and communities to take leadership roles.</li><li>• Developing a nine point bio-energy plan for the province</li></ul>
<p><b>What advice do you have for SAAEP?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult with large industry participants to understand marketing barriers and solutions</li><li>• Focus on looking at small use/individual projects which can be developed faster and demonstrate results more quickly. Success in small projects may lead to successful larger scale development.</li><li>• Facilitate industry and community access to government resources and information</li><li>• Target leaders in business and the community who are interested in becoming informed and will champion new technologies</li></ul>