

NEWS RELEASE

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Pigeon Lake environment gets a boost from technology

The *Pigeon Lake Watershed Management Plan*, an innovative environmental strategy and 2021 Emerald Award nominee, will soon get a significant boost from technology.

A “smart buoy” with satellite communication capabilities will be able to provide information every 15 minutes about key air and water column conditions like air temperature, barometric pressure, wind speed and direction, and water dissolved oxygen levels, temperature, clarity and total algae using a weather station mounted above the water, and sensors that measure variables below the water all the way down to the bottom of the lake. With the Pigeon Lake smart buoy providing essential data to understand lake health, the lake community can not only apply targeted measures to help Pigeon Lake, but the information could help all Alberta lakes.

The buoy project is the result of the collaborative work to implement the Pigeon Lake Watershed Management Plan, in particular the “In-lake technical committee” of the *Alliance of Pigeon Lake Municipalities (APLM)*. The initiative is being funded by the Summer Village of Crystal Springs through a Community Partnership Grant from Alberta Municipal Affairs.

The buoy is the latest innovation in an aggressive program by area residents to implement the landmark 2019 report that contained some 46 science-based recommendations to improve conditions in the lake and watershed.

Alberta Municipal Affairs Minister Ric McIver said, “Albertans treasure their environment and so does their government. We’re proud to work with the community by providing technical advice and \$200,000 in funding. This smart buoy will help us be even better stewards of our land so that residents can continue to enjoy places like Pigeon Lake for generations to come.”

Crystal Springs Mayor and project lead Ian Rawlinson said the buoy initiative “should indeed have potential value to every Alberta lake, but it is also another significant step in Pigeon Lake’s drive to become Alberta’s premier recreational lake”. “The project speaks to the potential of technology in understanding lake health and the value in community/government partnerships.”

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