



TREATMENT: *Wilderness-based recovery centre opens west of Nordegg. A3*

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Rocky Mountain House, Alberta

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Rams pay tribute to Cale Stecyk

A ceremonial faceoff was held at centre ice to honour the memory of Rocky Rams player Cale Stecyk who died earlier this year. Cale's father Alan dropped the puck and he was accompanied by his daughter Teagan. In the faceoff circle were Rams captain Grady Mofford and Airdrie Thunder captain Tanner Chapman. A permanent tribute to Cale Stecyk will be displayed at the arena. The Rams all have a number 19 on their helmets and will soon have a patch on their jerseys with Stecyk's initials and number. More on page B2. SUBMITTED

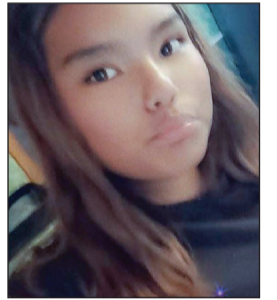
RCMP request public assistance in locating missing youth

On Sept. 22, Rocky Mountain House RCMP issued a statement asking for the public's assistance in locating 14-year-old Saydie Raine.

Raine was last seen on Aug. 29, 2023, in Rocky Mountain House. RCMP are concerned about her well-being.

Saydie is described as: medium complexion, 5 feet 4 inches tall, 130 pounds, black hair, brown eyes. She was last seen wearing a red tank top and black shorts.

If you have an information regarding the whereabouts of Saydie Raine, you are asked to contact the Rocky Moun-



14-year-old Saydie Raine.

tain House RCMP at 403-845-2881. If you wish to remain anonymous you can contact Crime Stoppers by phone at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), by Internet at www.tipsubmit.com or by SMS (check your local Crime Stoppers www.crimestoppers.ab.ca for instructions).

Nature-based wastewater treatment system opens in Leslieville

BY BRITTANY WILLISIE
STAFF REPORTER

The Leslieville Wastewater Treatment Facility has been upgraded from a lagoon to a nature-based treatment system. Wastewater will now be treated through a biofilter-based wetland system, which was developed by MAGNA Engineering Services Inc.

The subsurface engineered wetlands are an effective and economical way to treat wastewater. As it is a passive system, it requires less operators and maintenance.

MAGNA partnered with Alberta Innovates to upgrade the Leslieville facility. They hosted a grand opening on Sept. 21.

"It's not very often that you actually get to see your dream come to life and I would say today is one of those days for me," said Anton Skorobogatov, MAGNA director of innovation.

"Today, certainly, is a major milestone, not only for those of us who are gathered here today to celebrate the construction of the site, but also in general for nature-based solutions in the province, Canada, North America, potentially beyond. Some of you may think that wastewater treatment is not that exciting or glamorous, but it is very much essential because it's all about what happens to water after we are done with it."

MAGNA's Biofilter Wetland System (MBWS) is a relatively new option for municipalities. The pilot project was launched in Prince Rupert, B.C., ear-



MAGNA Engineering Services Inc. held a grand opening for the updated Leslieville Wastewater Treatment Facility on Sept. 21. To ceremoniously open the site with a toilet paper cutting, local dignitaries and a MAGNA representative posed for a photo. Pictured are Clearwater County councillors Jordan Northcott, Bryan Cermak, Genny Mehlhaff, reeve Daryl Lougheed, MAGNA CEO Jennifer Massig, and councillors Sydney Graham, Neil Ratcliffe and Michelle Swanson.

BRITTANY WILLISIE | THE MOUNTAINEER

lier this year. The Leslieville site is one of the first to be installed. MAGNA CEO, Jennifer Massig, indicated that other Alberta municipalities are interested in touring the Leslieville facility to see if it's a viable option for their communities.

The biofilter wetland system works by naturally breaking down pollutants in wastewater as it travels through wetland vegetation and soil.

To accomplish this, the MBWS has two cells that the wastewater will pass through. On the surface of the first cell, willow saplings and native plants have been planted in mulch, including some florals for pollinator habitat. Skorobogatov said it should be completely green next summer. Under the surface, horizontal pipes sprinkle the wastewater and vertical biofilters pull air

into the system.

After passing through the mulch, and layers of pea gravel and sand, the water is pumped into the second cell where it repeats a similar natural filtration process. From there, the water is ready to be discharged. The water at Leslieville will drain into the former lagoon, which has been relined for clean water storage, as discharge will only happen once a year from that location.

Skorobogatov spoke more about the importance of this project.

"It's a big win for the environment because instead of building a conventional treatment plan, we've built this living ecosystem basically that uses natural processes to purify water," he said, adding that the bioengineered landscape harnesses the power of microorganisms and special-

ized media plants to turn wastewater into clean water.

"By working with nature rather than against it, we're addressing some of the wastewater treatment objectives, but we're also doing it in a way that's environmentally friendly and resilient for the future."

This project is also important because it's an easy, low maintenance and practical solution for Clearwater County.

Skorobogatov said it not only keeps costs low to allow resources to be allocated where they're needed most, but it also improves quality of life for the community.

"By treating wastewater locally and using these sustainable measures, essentially we have the opportunity to create a cleaner, better, more resilient future for everyone who lives here."

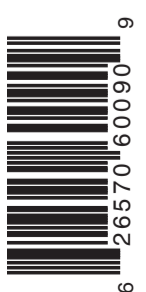
Clearwater County reeve Daryl Lougheed echoed Skorobogatov's comments at the grand opening.

"Creating a project that not only mimics nature, but works with nature, I think, is a terrific showcase for what can be done," said Lougheed.

"We look forward to the continued success of this project as it's opened and moved forward and ultimately bringing a focus on an innovative solution to the challenges that face almost every municipality."

Following formal speeches, a ceremonial toilet paper cutting ceremony was held in place of a traditional ribbon cutting.

Attendees then had the chance to tour the site, speak to MAGNA representatives and ask questions about the biofilter wetland system.



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