



Policy Category: Administration
Policy Number: AD 1.25
Policy Title: Piers, Docks, and Boat Lifts
Date Approved/Amended: April 8, 2025 **Resolution:** RES 25-04-06

PURPOSE

The Government of Alberta established a Disturbance Standard for Temporary Seasonal Docks for Recreation Purposes (Disturbance Standard) in 2021. Due to the Provincial Right of Way (ROW) surrounding Buffalo Lake, dock owners must follow different regulations on Buffalo Lake, compared to other lakes and rivers in Alberta, thereby requiring a Temporary Field Authorization (TFA) from the Alberta Government.

This policy provides guidelines for residents applying for temporary seasonal mooring structures within the Summer Village of Rochon Sands (SVRS).

DEFINITIONS

1. **“Mooring Disturbance Standard”** sets the maximum acceptable footprint for temporary seasonal docks, temporary seasonal boat lifts, and associated mooring structures for personal recreational purposes on the beds and shores of Alberta's recreational lakes and rivers that are public land owned by the Crown. It creates a general permission for most waterfront, semi-waterfront and municipal dock owners. (For most lakes and rivers, it eliminates the need for dock owners to apply for a Temporary Field Authorization if they fall within the standards.)
2. **“Temporary Field Authorization” (TFA)** is a stand-alone authorization for short-term activities on vacant public land. When placing a mooring structure for personal recreational use on Crown land (bed and shore) and the conditions and requirements of the Disturbance Standard cannot be met, a TFA is required. (Due to the Right of Way surrounding the Buffalo Lake shoreline, the conditions and requirements of the Disturbance Standard cannot be met, requiring all Summer Village of Rochon Sands dock owners to submit an annual TFA application.)
3. **The Provincial “Right of Way” (ROW)** is a strip of provincial Crown Land surrounding the entirety of Buffalo Lake.

In connection with the 1985 Parby Creek–Buffalo Lake Water Management project, the Government of Alberta purchased a right-of-way (ROW) around Buffalo Lake in the mid 1990's. Normally, landowners living adjacent to recreational lakes in Alberta, occasionally treat adjoining shorelands as an extension of their lake-side property. Activities often include, landowners modifying, beautifying or building on the near shore to increase the benefits and enjoyment they receive from their property and to enhance their lake experience. As a result of the unique ROW situation, all municipalities on Buffalo Lake are required to be involved in the dock permitting process.

Authorization (written permission) must be obtained from relevant provincial and federal agencies to alter the ROW, build on the ROW or store property on the ROW.

4. **“Bed and Shore”** is the submersed and exposed part of Buffalo Lake that is bounded by its bank and is Crown Land under the control of Alberta Environment to regulate the placement of structures.

5. **The “dock” or “wharf”** means the entire mooring structure and includes the walkway and terminal platform.
6. **The “walkway”** is that part of the dock made of various sections that lead from the shore to the platform area where watercraft are moored. In many cases, a dock may consist only of a walkway (a straight dock).
7. **The “terminal platform”** is that part of a dock at the end of the walkway where additional dock sections or slips are installed in various forms, often in “T”, “L” or “U” shaped configurations. In some configurations, dock sections are arranged to create multiple slips or are placed side by side to form a larger extended surface area.
8. **A “waterfront” landowner** owns the land directly adjoining the bank of a waterbody. No properties in the Summer Village of Rochon Sands are considered waterfront.
9. **A “semi-waterfront” landowner** owns the land directly adjoining a Municipal Reserve (MR) or Environmental Reserve (ER) that directly adjoins the bank of a waterbody. The Summer Village of Rochon Sands is considered by the Province of Alberta to be the only semi-waterfront owner within the municipality.
10. **A “back lot” landowner** is one who does not share a property boundary with a waterbody, Recreation Lease, Provincial Right-of Way, or have direct access to it. All landowners within the SVRS are considered *back lot owners* by the Province of Alberta.
11. **A “shoreline back lot” landowner** (for the purpose of this policy) is the landowner whose land abuts the boundary of the Municipal Reserve that is waterfront as shown in the map in “**Schedule A**”.

STATEMENT

1. The Summer Village must support the Buffalo Lake Integrated Shoreline Management Plan (BLISMP 2011) and Provincial Management Right of Way (ROW) Lands plans and regulations under Alberta Environment Standards.
2. As per the Alberta Mooring Disturbance Standard, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands has no legal authority to control the placement of docks, wharves, piers, buoys or moorings, or other structures in or on the bed and shore of Buffalo Lake.
3. As per the Alberta Government Mooring Disturbance Standard, pier/dock/boat lift applicants must request consent from the Summer Village of Rochon Sands (semi-waterfront landowner) to place the structure in front of the Municipal Reserve land parcel that is waterfront.
4. Under Alberta Government regulations of a seasonal private dock, owners are regulated by the Mooring Disturbance Standards. On other waterbodies in Alberta, the Mooring Disturbance Standards allows waterfront and semi-waterfront landowners to place docks under the Disturbance Standards and not require additional permission from Alberta Environment or the municipality. However, due to the unique nature of the Buffalo Lake Provincial Right of Way, all properties in the Summer Village of Rochon Sands are not considered waterfront or semi-waterfront owners and must apply for a TFA for a seasonal Temporary Dock.
5. The Summer Village of Rochon Sands has developed principles to meet with the Disturbance Standard Regulation challenges the Provincial ROW has created.

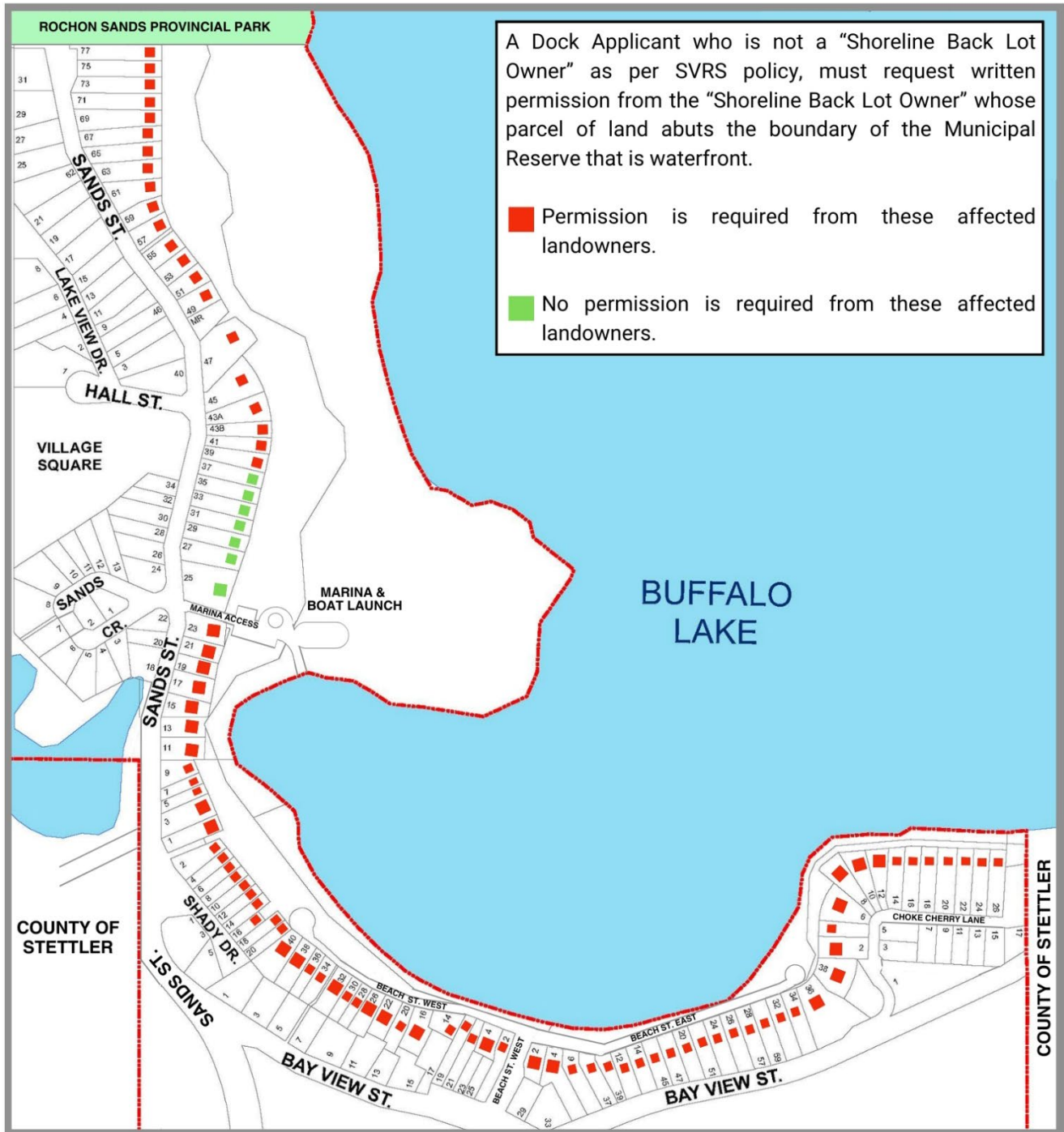
PRINCIPLES

1. Due to the Provincial ROW, Alberta Environment considers all SVRS landowners to be back lot owners, and therefore, require an application for Temporary Field Authorization (TFA) for any docks, moorings, wharves, etc. within the Summer Village of Rochon Sands.
2. All residents submitting a TFA will require a letter of consent from the semi-waterfront landowner, in this case, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands, consenting to the placement of a dock in front of the Municipal Reserve land parcel that is waterfront.
3. Although the province considers all landowners within the Summer Village of Rochon Sands to be back lot owners, Council recognizes that properties directly abutting the Municipal Reserve that is waterfront and the Provincial ROW surrounding Buffalo Lake Shoreline, to be "*Shoreline Back Lot Landowners*".
4. Council directs that *Shoreline Back Lot Landowners*, as determined in the Schedule "A" Map, retain the right of first refusal to place their docks within the mooring area, which is bound by the line of navigation and the setbacks from each projected property line. (*See Determining the Mooring Area in the Mooring Disturbance Standard – Extended Lot Line Method/Coterminous Line Method*)
5. A resident who is not a *Shoreline Back Lot Owner* and would like to place a dock, must request written permission not only from the Summer Village, but also from the *Shoreline Back Lot Landowner* whose parcel of land abuts the boundary of the Municipal Reserve that is waterfront. The Summer Village will not approve an application without written consent from the affected *Shoreline Back Lot Landowner*. (Consent of *Shoreline Back Lot Owner* form included in the dock permit application.)
 - The location of the dock within in the mooring area, as per the Disturbance Standard, is enforceable by the Alberta Government.
6. Alberta Government Mooring Standards require TFAs to be renewed annually, as such the application to the Summer Village is required annually as well.

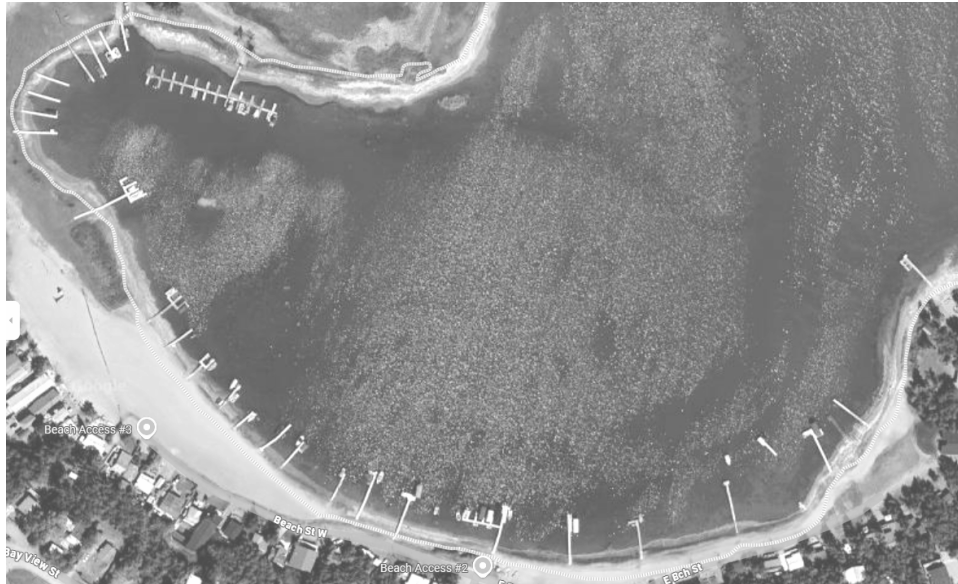
The **Piers, Docks, and Boat Lifts Application** is attached as "**SCHEDULE B**" and may be updated as required.

- (example: date)

SCHEDULE "A"



Piers Docks & Boat Lifts Application



Application Checklist

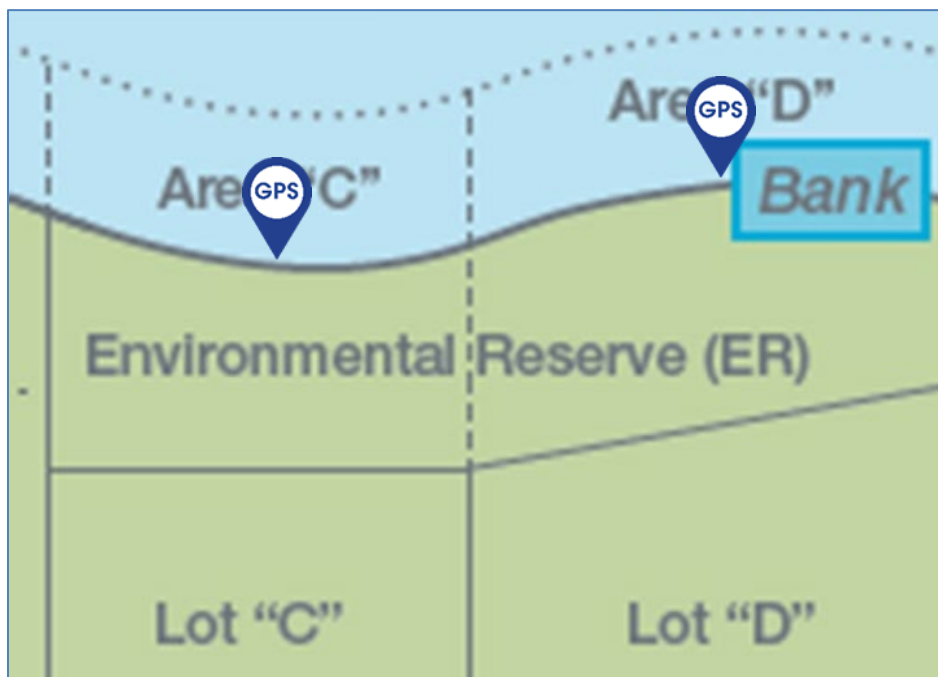
- If not already acquired, apply for an [Alberta Environment Client ID](#). The Client ID is mandatory to submit the required Temporary Field Authorization (TFA). This ID can be used in future years.
- Read and Review the [Docking and Mooring Standards Fact Sheet](#), and the [Docking and Mooring Disturbance Standards](#) documents.
- Read and fill out the [Summer Village of Rochon Sands Policy & Docking and Mooring Application](#) and submit the application and fee to the Summer Village.
 - Application/Processing Fee of \$50.00
([paid online](#) on the website or paid by cheque or cash in person or by mail).
- Once the application is completed and submitted, successful applicants will receive a letter of approval from the Summer Village of Rochon Sands.
- Complete the [Alberta Environment DOCK TFA Application](#) form and include the consent letter from the Summer Village and submit to Alberta Environment.
- Alberta Environment will review and, if approved, allow the installation of the seasonal docking and mooring structure(s) at Rochon Sands.

Ensuring Proper Piers/Docks & Boat Lift Placement & Compliance

It is critical to provide accurate GPS location information for your boat dock application.

- The GPS coordinates help confirm that the dock is placed within the applicant's designated waterfront area and complies with municipal, provincial, and federal regulations.
- It ensures the dock does not encroach on neighboring properties or restricted zones.
- It also helps with enforcement, ensuring all structures on the water are registered and approved.
- Incorrect location details could lead to application rejection, delays, or the need to move the dock later, which can be costly and inconvenient.
- Providing precise coordinates from the start helps streamline the approval process.

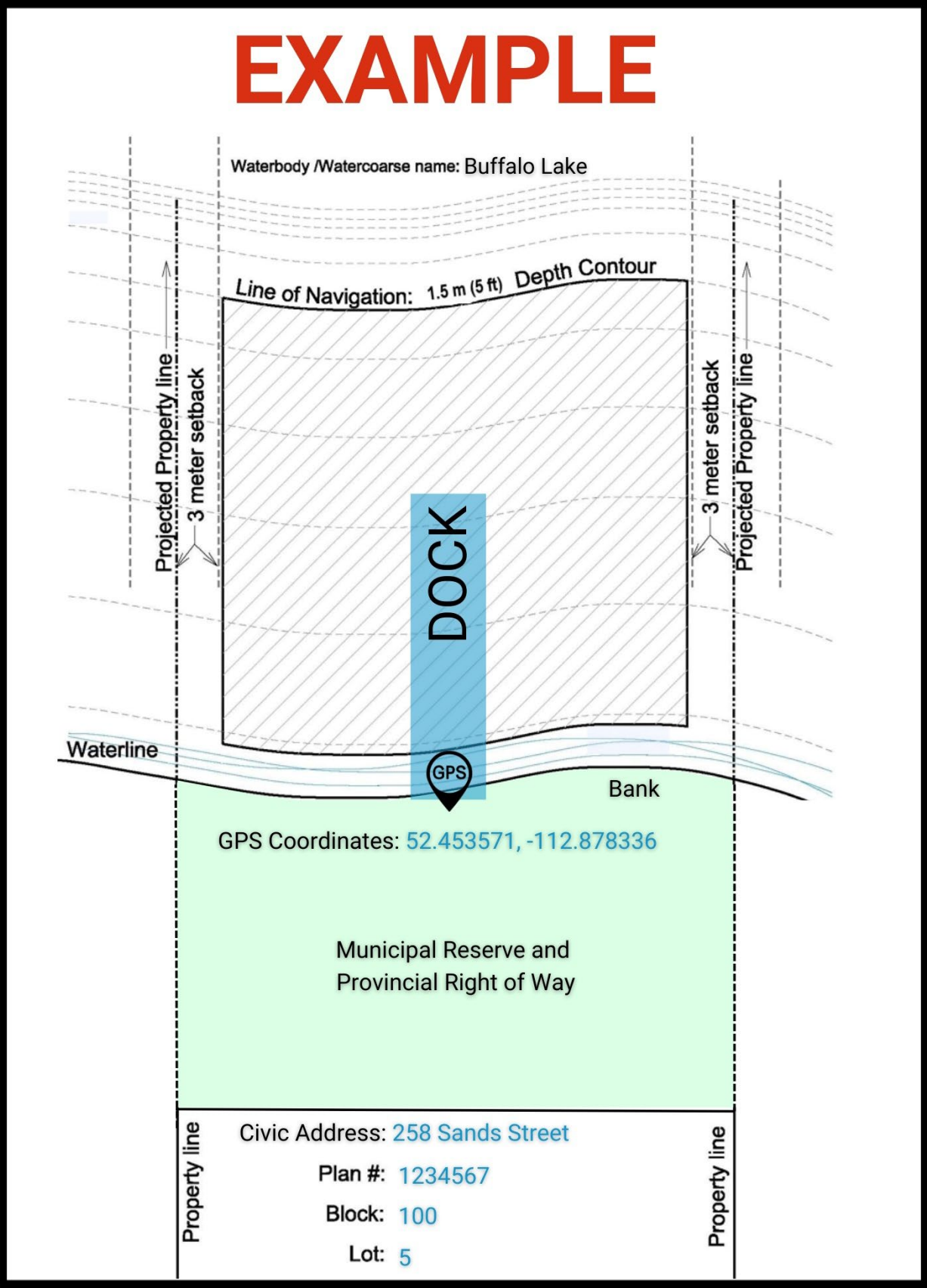
Use a smartphone or GPS device or Google Maps to mark the exact dock location and double-check coordinates before submission can help prevent issues.



If needed, Summer Village of Rochon Sands office staff can offer guidance or resources on how to obtain accurate GPS data.

SITE PLAN SKETCH

EXAMPLE



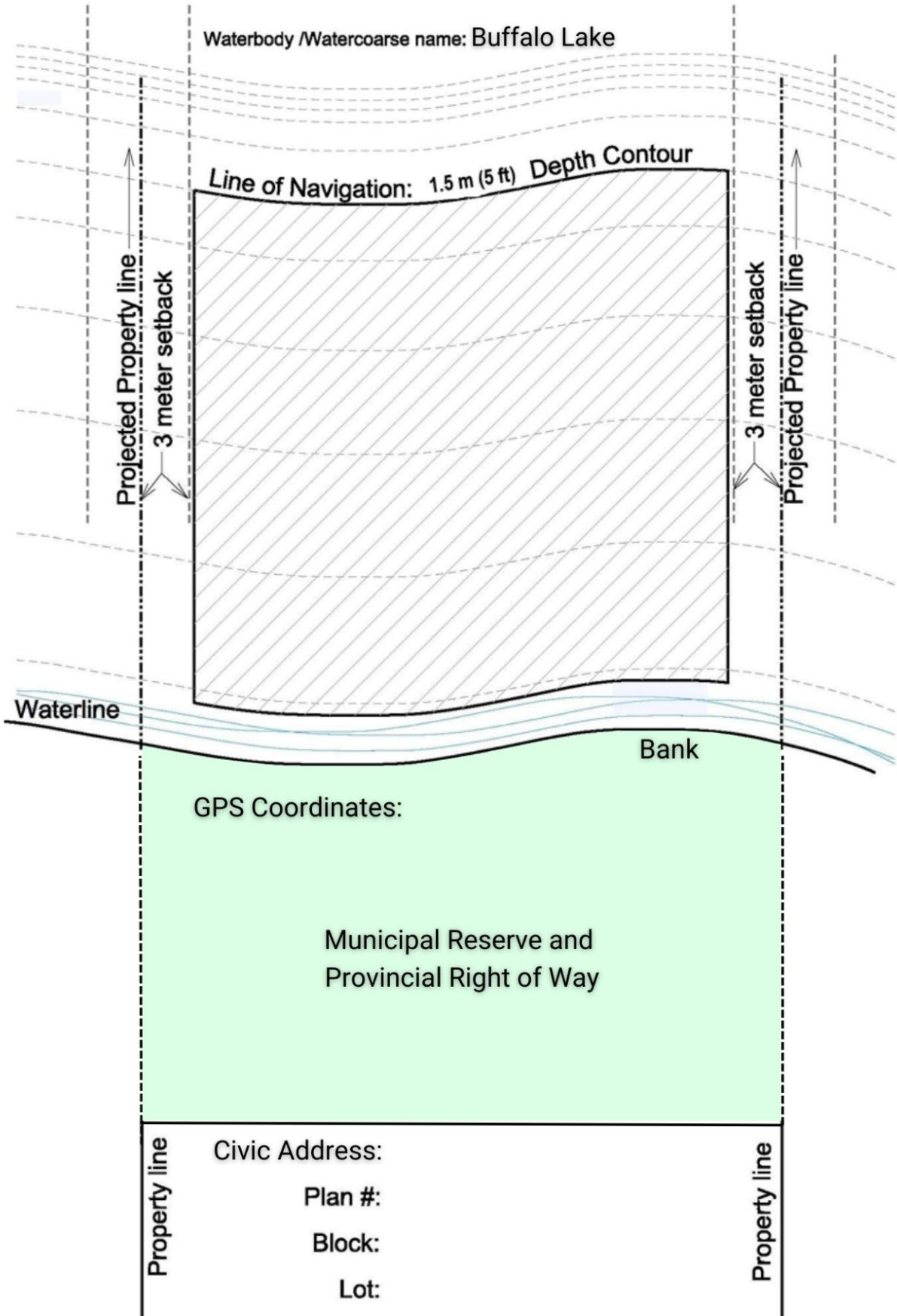


Piers/Docks & Boat Lifts Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
NAME:		
LAKE ADDRESS		
HOME MAILING ADDRESS: (If different from Lake Address)		
HOME TELEPHONE:	CELL PHONE:	
EMAIL:		
SITE INFORMATION – PROPOSED LOCATION OF DOCK OR MOORING STRUCTURE		
CIVIC ADDRESS OF LOT ADJACENT TO MUNICIPAL (MR) OR ENVIRONMENTAL (ER) RESERVE LANDS:		
LOT:	BLOCK:	PLAN:
PROPERTY OWNER OF LOT ADJACENT TO MUNICIPAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE LANDS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
LANDOWNER (S) CONSENT IS REQUIRED IF APPLICANT’S PROPERTY IS NOT ADJACENT TO MR/ER		
<i>If you marked NO on the above question, please have the landowner whose parcel of land abuts the boundary of the municipal reserve that is waterfront, fill out the “Consent of Landowner(s)” form to authorize your requested placement of the structure and attach it to this application.</i>		
GPS COORDINATES FOR THE STRUCTURE:		
NUMBER OF DOCKS OR MOORING STRUCTURES:	NUMBER OF PERSONAL WATERCRAFT:	
REQUEST DETAILS		
ARE YOU A PROPERTY OWNER IN THE SUMMER VILLAGE OF ROCHON SANDS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
AGREEMENT TO CONDITIONS FOR THE PIERS/DOCKS & BOAT LIFTS APPLICATION		
Attach the following documentation/information		
<input type="checkbox"/> If you are NOT a landowner whose parcel of land abuts the boundary of the municipal reserve that is waterfront, please submit the signed <i>Consent of Landowner(s)</i> form.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Include with your application a \$50.00 application/processing fee. (Pay online on the SVRS website or pay by cheque or cash in person or by mail).		
Other Information:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorization does NOT provide unrestrictive access to the lands for the applicant, nor does it restrict access by others. Reserve lands are for Public use and enjoyment. I acknowledge by my signature that the Summer Village of Rochon Sands assumes no responsibility for damage done to docks, moorings, watercraft, their content, or accessories thereon due to fire, theft, accident, vandalism, or acts of nature. • I agree to hold the Summer Village of Rochon Sands harmless and further acknowledge that I am not receiving any compensation for the use of my dock space. • Docks, Boatlifts, and other Mooring Structures are NOT to be stored on Environmental Reserve lands within the Summer Village of Rochon Sands. • Clearing of trees or brush on Municipal and Environmental Reserve lands is NOT permitted. • The Summer Village of Rochon Sands may consent, deny, or revoke this agreement at any time upon written notice. 		
_____	_____	
Applicant Signature 1	Applicant Signature 2	

Upon issuance of Alberta Environment and Parks Temporary Field Authorization please provide a copy to the Summer Village of Rochon Sands Office

SITE PLAN SKETCH



Consent of Landowner Adjacent to Reserve Lands

If the applicant is not the registered owner of the parcel of land adjacent to the municipal reserve land that is waterfront where the dock or mooring structure is to be located, the LANDOWNER must complete this section.

I/We _____, being the registered owner(s) of the property located at _____
(ADDRESS)
Rochon Sands, Alberta.

Legal Description : Lot _____ Block _____ Plan _____

do hereby authorize _____ to submit a Temporary Field Authorization application to the Alberta Government to provide for the installation of a dock or mooring structure in front of the Municipal/Environmental Reserve land abutting my property.

Landowner Signature

Date

Landowner Signature

Date

Applicant Signature

Date

Additional Information (if required):

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Application Received: _____

SVRS Pier Dock & Boat Lift Permit Authorization # _____

The Summer Village of Rochon Sands hereby approves access of

Lot _____ Block _____ Plan _____

GPS _____

for the purpose of obtaining a Temporary Field Authorization from Alberta Environment to provide for the installation of docking and mooring structures as described above.

Consent of Landowner Adjacent to Reserve Lands (if required)

Approval Date

CAO - Summer Village of Rochon Sands