Buffalo Lake Nature Club

 Annual General Meeting January 18, 2018

 Roll Call:

Chris Verhoeven, - is hearing Owls

 Wilma Z, present

Katie - the normal winter birds, and seen a Great Horned Owl near their place

 Lily- found some strange animal prints in the snow at the school yard in Erskine little foot prints with a long tail dragging in the snow- maybe a muskrat ?

 Charley- normal feeder birds eating seeds and suet at his feeders in Erskine. 3 Eurasian Collar Doves, there seems to be one mated pair and an extra male who is trying to win the female. They are starting to call now so mating season is closer. Chickadees, a few Redpolls and a Red Breasted Nuthatch, magpies and the occasional raven will fly over.

 Wayne - A flock of 200 - 300 waxwings fly around regularly in Bashaw. Most yards have mature Mt. Ash Trees. Most waxwings are Bohemian but there are the occasional Cedar Waxwing as well.

 John- has an unwelcome flock of English Sparrows that frequent his feeders in Stettler. He regularly sees Jack Rabbits out on the street in the evenings.

 Elmer- Has a flock of chickadees but can only count up to 10 at a time, Red Breasted and White Breasted Nuthatches as well as Eurasian Collard Doves. He has a young deer that visits his yard regularly and noted the absence of Jack Rabbits in his yard this year.

Anne - Reminded us all of the importance of setting water out for birds in the winter. They have a heated water bowl on the deck that is used regularly. It helps the birds so they are not wasting their energy eating snow.
 Karin- went home to Barrhead for Christmas. Some of the birds in her mothers yard include; large flocks of chickadees and red polls, 3 pairs of Pine Gross Beaks, pairs of Hairy and Downy Wood Peckers, 4 - 6 Blue Jays, A Northern Flicker, Roughed Grouse and a Squirrel. Back in the Stettler area she has observed a Snowy Owl around Trochu and a pair of Juvenile Bald Eagles down by Joffre Bridge.

Thomasina- saw moose tracks in the yard and has been following several other strange tracks in the fields.

 Marie - reported Bald Eagles and a male mallard duck spotted in the Joffre Bridge area

Lauralee G - from Botha. Chickadees and Red Polls, and she has a muskrat taking refuge under her deck.

Gabriel- 2 or 3 Blue Jays

 Alex- In their yard in Botha the fox are starting to call. And they often see deer. By Beiseker they saw a Great Horned Owl.

 Chris P - Red Polls and chickadees at his feeders in Erskine

 Charley reported that Marion, long time member, has moved into Points West and he would enjoy visitors.

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Business

IBA

Katie who has been the Director for the IBA of Erskine and Ewing Lakes is looking for assistance. She is very interested in mentoring someone to take on the chairperson role as her business is taking off and she will be on the road a lot in the spring.

Nature Alberta

Claudia has agreed if no one else is willing to step forward, to continue as BLNC representative on the Nature Alberta Board.

Reminder of the Hypothermic Half Marathon in Edmonton Volunteers are needed to help marshal the route, Nature Alberta receives a donation from the marathon group. Feb 4 and 18 are the dates.

Claudia - Please report any sightings of Snowy Owls to Claudia

 Watershed Stewardship Grants Katie asked if the group is interested in applying for some of the available grants which could be used for projects like bird nest box trails, or the IBA , education and awareness projects. The deadline is Feb. 22, 2018.

Environmental Impact Assessment Report, Special Areas Water Supply Project (SAWSP)

Katie also brought to our attention the SAWSP, which will divert water from the Red Deer River, through a pump station northwest of Big Valley. From the pump station the water would be transported via pipeline generally eastward across Stettler County and the County of Paintearth for 97.5 km to Lehman Reservoir.

Christmas Bird Counts

Discussion on our safety while driving back roads to do the many surveys we do through out the year. There have been a few incidents where surveyors have encountered landowners questioning our activity. This is justifiable with the increase of rural crime; residents and landowners are more conscientious of unknown vehicles in the area. In the last 2 years we have written newspaper articles to try to make people aware of our planned activities, and we have gone to most of the landowners on the Owl survey routes. These are great strategies however we will try to improve the coverage of the awareness. Suggestions were made for more awareness, visibility and credibility, by having signage on the road and vehicles, meet personally with landowners prior to the surveys, give letters to landowners, use social media and other forms of advertising, and wear our BLNC hats buttons.

The next meeting will be

 February 15 Alex and Tina will give a presentation on some local plants and their many uses.

 Chris has a couple of tentative presenters lined up and asked for any other ideas for presenters or activities. It was suggested we try to have topics other than birds Karin Lindquist volunteered to do a presentation on grasslands and a recommendation was made for the topic amphibians and reptiles.

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Financial Report Chris V. reported we had a bank balance of 2973.62. She will have the audit and annual report completed.

Elections Chris P asked for any nominations and /or volunteers for any positions on the executive no one came forward. The 2017 Executive has agreed to stay on for another term :

President: Chris Pfeifle

Vice President: Bob Schreiber

Secretary: Marie Payne

Treasurer: Chris Verhoeven

Nature Alberta Rep: Claudia Lipski

Directors: Charley Bird

 Mark Higgins (meeting instigator)

Web master:

Telephone:

Environment Executive:

Program: Executive

Lunch /Door Prize Scheduler: Chris Verhoeven

 Next meeting: Feb. 15, 2018 Presentation Edible Plants

 Lunch -Wilma and Alex Door- prize Ann