



Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association

2019 & 2020 Annual Report

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Acknowledgements

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association (AWSA) would like to acknowledge the financial support of our 37 Grass Roots members who truly value the importance of clean, fresh water and have made a considerable effort to protect this precious resource. We also want to thank the board of directors, staff, and advisory committees and for their time, effort, and dedication towards the AWSA.

We would like to recognize the Water Security Agency for their financial support, guidance, and expertise in aiding us with our *Source Water Protection Plans* now and into the future.

We would also like to recognize the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture for their financial support through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, the Farm Stewardship Program, the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program, the Agri-Environmental Group Plan program.

Finally, we would like to thank ALUS Canada, the Wallace Creek Watershed Assoc. Board, and the Yorkton Creek Watershed Assoc. Board for their continued financial support of the AWSA.



The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association (AWSA) office is located at 29 Second Avenue North in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. Our office hours are Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm (closed 12:00-1:00pm).



Introduction

This is the 13th edition of the Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association's Annual Report, which outlines the activities of the AWSA over their 2019 & 2020 fiscal years (April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020 & April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021). The projects and activities found throughout this report are governed by the association's mission and vision statements, as written by its Board of Directors, and by the objectives, recommendations and key actions contained in the *Assiniboine River Watershed Source Water Protection Plan* and the *Yorkton Area Aquifers Source Water Protection Plan*.

Our **MISSION** is to have healthy source waters throughout the Assiniboine River Watershed.

Our **VISION** is citizens and communities of the Assiniboine River Watershed working together to protect the source waters of the Assiniboine River; its tributaries and aquifers within the watershed.

2019 & 2020 Staff



Jesse Nielsen



Amber Cramer
(Started maternity leave Sept. 1, 2019 - Returned March 1, 2021)



Caitlyn Peters
(Returned from maternity leave Sept. 16, 2019 - Started maternity leave May 7, 2020)



Janet Kristjanson



Serena Klassen
(Started Jan. 6 - Resigned March 31, 2020)



Leah Fieger
(Started May 7 - Resigned Dec. 31, 2020)



Sierra Unick
(Started Jan. 4 - Resigned April 30, 2021)

Board Chair's Message

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association (AWSA) staff and board of directors have experienced trying times locally, regionally, and globally for that matter in 2019-2020. The board and staff have created different ways to meet, make decisions, and to continue delivering Source Water Protection programs and educational opportunities within the Assiniboine River Watershed.

I would like to thank all of our funding agencies, our municipal members and the board members for their continued support. Thank you for your patience and understanding throughout these trying times. I also want to commend our staff for the great work they were able to accomplish through these unprecedented times. Jesse in particular has been able to manage through some extensive staff turnover, changes to programs, all while navigating through a pandemic.

I would like to highlight the notable events and the projects / results pages of the report. Year after year the AWSA delivers countless educational opportunities and hundreds of Source Water Protection Projects within the Assiniboine River Watershed. These projects not only help protect our Source Waters that we preciously need for life, but they also enhance development, and growth. The AWSA has once again, provided in excess of \$2.5 million dollars in incentive programs back to municipalities and ratepayers within our member municipalities.

As the Board Chair, I also sit on the provincial watershed board (Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds SAW). SAW has been working closely with the Watershed Associations and has recently developed a business strategy to improve the efficiency and accountability of all provincial watershed groups. This strategy identifies opportunities to better serve the WSA's provincial objectives but also improve the sustainability of watershed groups across the province. The AWSA has been a leader for years and continues to help other watershed groups grow and to succeed within their individual watersheds. We are looking forward to future discussions with government entities and positive changes that can shape the future for the AWSA moving forward.

As I write this, the watershed is experiencing drier conditions this year and although no one wants to experience the flooding we had experienced in the last 10 years, we do need moisture to replenish our water sources, including dugouts, lakes and our aquifers. I look forward to 2021-2022 with continued support from our funding partners and our municipal members with new optimism of a sustainable watershed that provides safe and secure water supply for all residents, businesses, and industries within. With sound water management, we can ensure that our residents and species within the Assiniboine River Watershed thrive now and for future decades.



Aron Hershmiller
Board Chair,
Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association



Watershed Manager's Message

For me, two things stand out in 2019 and 2020; each defining their respective year and teaching me some of the most important life lessons I've learned since I started working at the AWSA a dozen years ago. 2019's lesson is that eating a big 'ole slice of humble pie may be one of the best motivator's for change that a person could ever ask for. When the director of program delivery for the Ministry of Agriculture looks you in the eye from across the table after you've just finished bragging about the great job you're doing and basically says, "False! You stink!", it lights a fire under the arse of a self-proclaimed perfectionist like myself unlike anything else could! That single meeting in April of 2019 made me rethink my entire approach to how I supervise my staff and run the AWSA. About a month later, with my first ever termination of one of my staff as a result behind me, I grabbed the wheel of that ship called "CAP", and with my talented first mate, Amber, beside me, we turned that bad-boy around and sailed off to the land of the top-performing CAP-delivery group in Saskatchewan without ever looking back!

Though 2019 taught me all sorts of important lessons while rescuing our CAP program from sinking, a sense of normalcy had returned by the end of the year, and it seemed like it was smooth sailing into our 2020 fiscal year. I swapped out first mate, Amber for Caitlyn, and even picked up another crew member, Serena Klassen in January 2020. But the smooth seas did not last long. It was the global COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 that turned the world upside down, and transformed "normal" into a once unimaginable reality; all-the-while teaching me an even more invaluable lesson. We were forced to carry on life in ways we've never before experienced. Our normal lives were restricted and the need to adapt to a rapidly changing social and economic environment was imposed on the world seemingly overnight. Those less resilient who were unable to adapt to the short-term, and ultimately evolve to the long-term change brought about by COVID-19, succumbed to too great of change, in too short of time, and sadly drowned. For those able to weather the storm, "business as usual" took on a whole new meaning. Thankfully the AWSA was one of such businesses.

It was very early during the pandemic that I realized that I am truly blessed to have the job I do. For not only were we not significantly impacted by COVID, we actually flourished during it all, having one of our busiest years ever! None-the-less, COVID did impact our staffing in 2020- resulting in our newly-hired technician, Serena, setting sail for a seemingly more stable port shortly after COVID began in March. Then we took another big hit to our staffing when our coordinator, Caitlyn Peters, left on an unexpectedly early maternity sick leave in the beginning of May. However, a quick turnaround for Serena's vacant position landed us Leah Fleger, who was promoted to acting coordinator with Caitlyn's departure. For the second time in less than a year I found myself keeping the ship afloat with only my trusty first mate by my side. But together we once again not only weathered the storm amongst the unforgiving seas of COVID-19, we did circles around every other boat in the water! In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic we managed to pull off our most successful year of CAP program delivery to date; a feat made even more impressive by the fact that we worked remotely from home, we came back the office, went back home... were seemingly all over the place! . 2020 was the year that taught me to keep my head above water no matter what life throws at me. And no matter how cold the water or fierce the crashing waves, to never stop swimming!

Jesse Nielsen

Jesse Nielsen
Manager,
Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association



The Association at a Glance

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association is an independent, non-profit organization committed to protecting source waters in the Assiniboine River Watershed. The association's vision is:

Citizens and communities of the Assiniboine River Watershed working together to protect the source waters of the Assiniboine River, its tributaries and aquifers within the watershed.

To fulfill this vision, the Association works in partnership with public and private stakeholders on a variety of water management projects. Much of this work focuses on the objectives, recommendations and key actions contained in the *Assiniboine River Watershed Source Water Protection Plan* and the *Yorkton Area Aquifers Source Water Protection Plan*. The Association's Board of Directors has also chosen to undertake some other initiatives, which are detailed in this Annual Report.

The business and affairs of the Association are managed by its Board of Directors. The Board is composed of 12 advisory members: 2 from a rural municipality and 2 from an urban municipality from each of the three Advisory Committees: the Assiniboine River Advisory Committee, the Whitesand River Advisory Committee and the Yorkton Area Aquifers Advisory Committee.

All Directors are elected for a two-year term at their respective Advisory Committee meetings. Directors are elected on a staggered two-year basis (i.e. 1/2 of board member's terms expire each year).

All Directors may be re-elected and are not restricted as to the number of consecutive terms served.

The Board of Directors meet four times a year, and annually appoints at the AGM, a Chair, Vice Chair and such other committee positions as the Board may determine.

The day-to-day business of the Association is overseen by the Watershed Manager. The Watershed Manager reports to the Board, and is granted such powers and duties as the Board may specify.

The Association receives operating revenue in the form of an annual grant from the Water Security Agency and revenues from its paid membership. The AWSA has also received revenue from the MOA since 2009 for administering the AEGP/CAP program across the watershed. Lastly, the AWSA receives revenue for the project management and administration of the Yorkton Creek Watershed Association Board and the Wallace Creek Watershed Association Board. Beyond these revenue streams, the AWSA receives revenue to administer various one-off projects and programming, which varies from year to year depending on grant availability and the success of funding applications.

Membership Representation

2019 Board of Directors

Aron Hershmillier Board Chair	City of Yorkton
Grant McCallum Board Vice Chair	Town of Saltcoats
Alan Holmberg	Town of Sturgis
Andrew Fahlman	City of Melville
Russ Thies	Town of Churchbridge
Lloyd Seymour	Town of Springside
Scott Edlin	R.M. of Cana No. 214
Al Schatz	R.M. of Stanley No. 215
Roy Derworiz	R.M. of Calder No. 241
Garry Liebrecht	R.M. of Wallace No. 243
Ken Demchuk	RM of Good Lake No. 274
Duane Hicks	R.M. of Clayton No. 333

2020 Board of Directors

Aron Hershmillier Board Chair	City of Yorkton
Grant McCallum Board Vice Chair	Town of Saltcoats
Alan Holmberg	Town of Sturgis
Andrew Fahlman	City of Melville
Russ Thies	Town of Churchbridge
Vacant	Urban Vacancy
Scott Edlin	R.M. of Cana No. 214
Brent Ulmer (interim)	R.M. of Stanley No. 215
Roy Derworiz	R.M. of Calder No. 241
Garry Liebrecht	R.M. of Wallace No. 243
Ken Demchuk	RM of Good Lake No. 274
Duane Hicks	R.M. of Clayton No. 333

2019 & 2020 Staff Members

Jesse Nielsen - Manager
Caitlyn Peters - Coordinator (returned Sept. 16/19, started maternity leave May 7/20)
Amber Cramer - Coordinator (started maternity leave Sept. 1/19, returned March 1/21)
Cat Fauvelle - Technician (terminated May 17/19)
Serena Klassen - Technician (Started Jan. 6/20, resigned March 31/20)
Leah Fleger - Technician (started May 4/20, resigned Dec. 31/20)
Sierra Unick - Technician (started Jan. 6/21, laid off Apr. 30/21)
Janet Kristjanson - Administrator

Assiniboine River Advisory Committee

Russ Thies – Town of Churchbridge
Mark Foster – Town of Kamsack
Don Fogg – Town of Langenburg
Johnny Petryshyn —Town of Preeceville
Alan Holmberg – Town of Sturgis
Shayne Wagner – Village of MacNutt
Tim Mitschke – R.M. of Langenburg No. 181
David Zerr – R.M. of Churchbridge No. 211
Roy Derworiz – R.M. of Calder No. 241
Craig Salahub – R.M. of Cote No. 271
Conrad Vogel – R.M. of St. Phillips No. 301
Donald Kraynick – R.M. of Keys No. 303
Ted Klimm – R.M. of Livingston No. 331
Duane Hicks – R.M. of Clayton No. 333
Reg Yaremchuk – R.M. of Preeceville No. 334
Collin Redman – R.M. Hazel Dell No. 335

Whitesand River Advisory Committee

Andrew Fahlman – City of Melville
Brad Gabora – Town of Canora
Lloyd Seymour – Town of Springside
Garry Jopko – Village of Rhein
Kevin Kotzer – Village of Theodore
Brent Ulmer – R.M. of Stanley No. 215
John Zuchkan – R.M. of Garry No. 245
Leonard Kuschak - RM of Ituna Bon Accord No. 246
Leanne Weinbender – R.M. of Sliding Hills No. 273
Ken Demchuk – R.M. of Good Lake No. 274
Dwayne Kitzan – R.M. of Insinger No. 275
Grant Faye – R.M. of Foam Lake No. 276
Don Skoretz – R.M. of Buchanan No. 304
Bev Wyatt– R.M. of Invermay No. 305
Barry Marquette – R.M. of Sasman No. 336

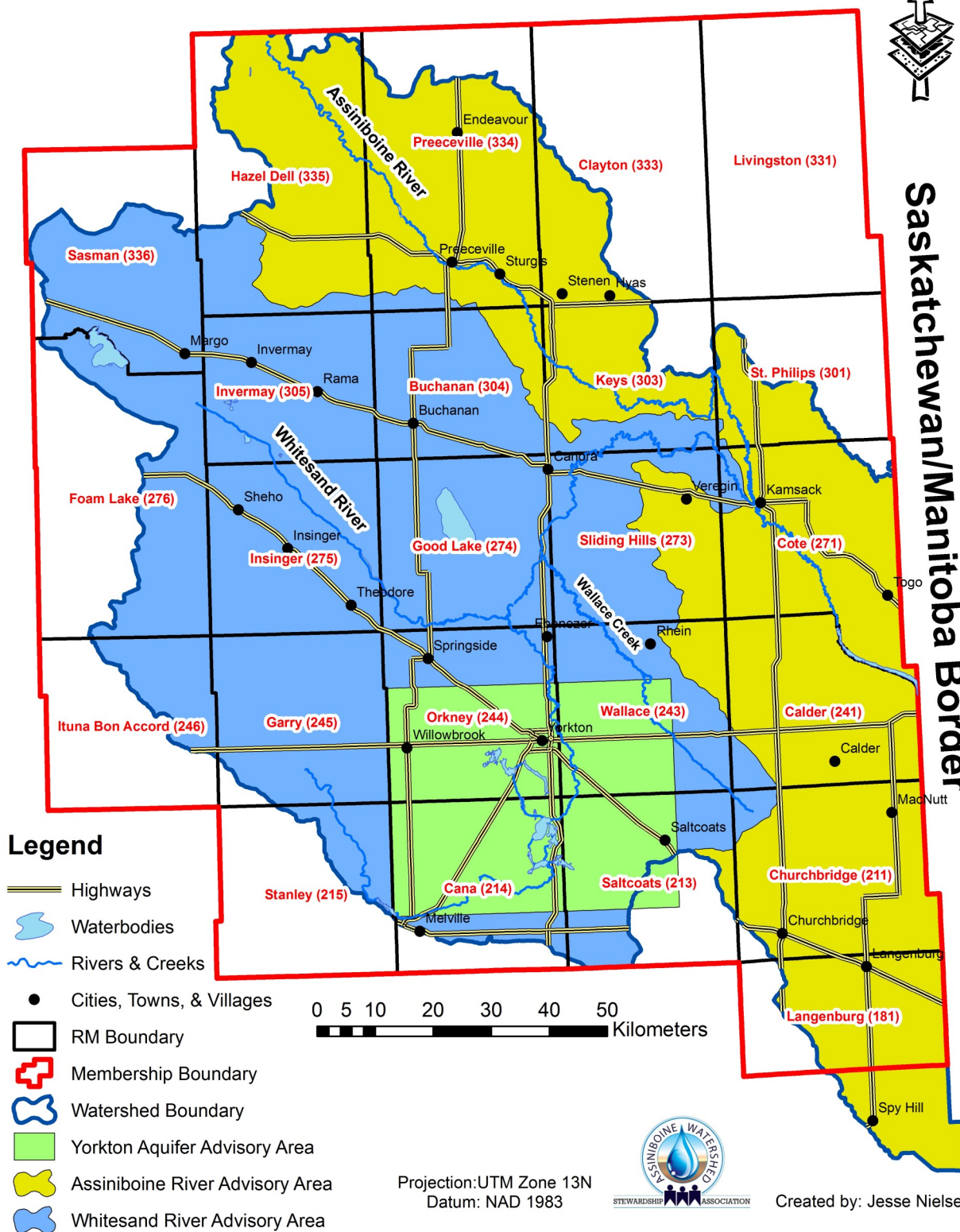
Yorkton Area Aquifers Advisory Committee

Aron Hershmillier– City of Yorkton
Grant McCallum – Town of Saltcoats
Joe Skitcko – R.M. of Saltcoats No. 213
Scott Edlin – R.M. of Cana No. 214
Garry Liebrecht – R.M. of Wallace No. 243
Randy Trost – R.M. of Orkney No. 244

Assiniboine River Watershed



Saskatchewan/Manitoba Border





Notable Events

2019

April 3&4: MOA CAP Training in Saskatoon
April 4&5: SaskCDA Conference in Saskatoon
April 8: ALUS PAC Meeting
April 15-17: SAW Conference in Moosomin
May 15: Yorkton Creek Tour
June 4&5: Pizza Farm
June 4&5: Watershed Manager's Meeting in Moose Jaw
June 6: SAW Board Meeting in Regina
June 11: Burger & Fries Farm
June 12: AWSA Board Meeting
June 19: WCWAB Meeting
June 21: YCWAB Meeting
June 24&25: Prairie Water Summit in Regina
July 24: Booth at SSCA Field Day in Bangor
July 30: Watershed Presentation at Melville Public Library
August 15: ALUS PAC Meeting
August 23: Amber's Last In Office Day
September 9: AWSA Board Meeting
September 10& 11: ALUS Planning Meeting in Saskatoon
September 11&12: Pizza Farm
September 16: Caitlyn returns to work from maternity leave
September 21-26: ALUS Conference in Quebec
October 10: AWSA begins delivering CAP programming in Lower Qu'Appelle Region
October 16: Access TV Interview
November 12: WCWAB Meeting
November 29&30: Worked SAW Booth at Agribition in Regina
December 3: AWSA Board Meeting
December 6: AWSA/WCWAB/YCWAB Joint Christmas Party at Windy Acres
December 9: Technician Interviews
December 12&13: Watershed Manager's Meeting

2020

January 6: New Technician, Serena Klassen's first day
January 23&24: SAW Conference in Saskatoon
January 28: Booth at Steaks & Stems in Yorkton
January 29: Governance Training in Regina
February 5&6: SAW Indigenous Training in Saskatoon
February 19&20: ARBI Conference in Minot
March 5: AWSA Board Meeting
March 24: Staff begins working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic
March 31: Serena's last day
April 9, 15&17: Technician interviews via Zoom
May 4: New Technician, Leah Fleger's first day
May 7: Caitlyn's last day
June 1: Staff return to working in office

Notable Events

2020 Continued

June 23: AWSA Board Meeting

June 25: YCWAB Meeting

June 25: ALUS PAC Meeting

October 22: AWSA Board Meeting

October 23: Well Decommissioning Demonstration at Cowessess First Nation

November 19: Staff begins working from home

December 18: Leah's last in office day

2021

January 4: Staff returns to working in office

January 4: New Technician, Sierra Unick's first day

January 28: AWSA Board Meeting

February 19: WCWAB Meeting

March 1: Amber returns to work from maternity leave

March 12: Personality Dimensions Training at Parkland College in Yorkton

March 12: Virtual Poster Contest Presentation for Davison School in Melville

March 17: AWSA Board Meeting

March 22: Virtual Poster Contest Presentation for St. Henry's Sr in Melville

March 24: YCWAB Meeting

March 30: ALUS PAC Meeting

March 31: Virtual Poster Contest Presentation for MC Knoll School in Yorkton




Projects / Results

The following chart illustrates the members we worked with and the amount of project funding the AWSA distributed throughout the Assiniboine River Watershed in 2019 & 2020.

1. Water Security Agency (WSA) Core Funding
2. Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) - FSP and FRWIP (April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2021)
3. SWAUMP Fund
4. ALUS SK Assiniboine Project (ASAP)
5. Ministry of Environment (MOE) Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring Funding
6. Wallace Creek Watershed Association
7. Yorkton Creek Watershed Association

Members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Village of MacNutt	\$4,027.02		\$5,000.00		\$432.43			\$9,459.45
Village of Rhein	\$4,027.02				\$432.43	\$22,455.81		\$26,915.26
Village of Theodore	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Canora	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Churchbridge	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Kamsack	\$4,027.02		\$5,000.00		\$432.43			\$9,459.45
Town of Langenburg	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Preeceville	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Saltcoats	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Springside	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
Town of Sturgis	\$4,027.02				\$432.43			\$4,459.45
City of Melville	\$4,027.02				\$432.43		\$3,356.67	\$7,816.12
City of Yorkton	\$4,027.02				\$432.43		\$3,356.67	\$7,816.12
R.M. of Langenburg	\$4,027.02	\$16,880.00		\$19,570.00	\$432.43			\$40,909.45
R.M. of Churchbridge	\$4,027.02	\$39,469.90			\$432.43	\$22,455.81		\$66,385.16
R.M. of Saltcoats	\$4,027.02	\$196,033.98		\$11,716.00	\$432.43	\$22,455.81	\$3,356.67	\$238,021.91
R.M. of Cana	\$4,027.02	\$141,834.26		\$3,655.00	\$432.43		\$3,356.67	\$153,305.38
R.M. of Stanley	\$4,027.02	\$278,741.41		\$18,870.00	\$432.43			\$302,070.86
R.M. of Calder	\$4,027.02	\$122,490.67			\$432.43	\$22,455.81		\$149,405.93
R.M. of Wallace	\$4,027.02	\$59,432.89			\$432.43	\$22,455.81	\$3,356.67	\$89,704.82
R.M. of Orkney	\$4,027.02	\$378,692.51		\$31,972.50	\$432.43		\$3,356.67	\$418,481.13
R.M. of Garry	\$4,027.02	\$118,427.21			\$432.43			\$122,886.66
R.M. of Ituna Bon Accord	\$4,027.02	\$84,182.66			\$432.43			\$88,642.11
R.M. of Cote	\$4,027.02	\$52,476.01		\$11,517.00	\$432.43			\$68,452.46
R.M. of Sliding Hills	\$4,027.02	\$77,528.09			\$432.43	\$22,455.81		\$104,443.35
R.M. of Good Lake	\$4,027.02	\$199,678.89			\$432.43			\$204,138.34
R.M. of Insinger	\$4,027.02	\$66,283.02			\$432.43			\$70,742.47
R.M. of Foam Lake	\$4,027.02	\$91,268.20		\$2,871.00	\$432.43			\$98,598.65
R.M. of St.Philips	\$4,027.02	\$74,766.28		\$33,374.17	\$432.43			\$112,599.90
R.M. of Keys	\$4,027.02	\$8,800.00			\$432.43			\$13,259.45
R.M. of Buchanan	\$4,027.02	\$37,201.05			\$432.43			\$41,660.50
R.M. of Invermay	\$4,027.02	\$52,284.86			\$432.43			\$56,744.31
R.M. of Livingston	\$4,027.02	\$21,934.00			\$432.43			\$26,393.45
R.M. of Clayton	\$4,027.02	\$34,726.00			\$432.43			\$39,185.45
R.M. of Preeceville	\$4,027.02	\$137,657.15		\$20,410.00	\$432.43			\$162,526.60
R.M. of Hazel Dell	\$4,027.02	\$38,728.22			\$432.43			\$43,187.67
R.M. of Sasman	\$4,027.02	\$35,084.75		\$9,900.00	\$432.43			\$49,444.20
Totals	\$149,000	\$2,364,602	\$10,000	\$163,856	\$16,000	\$134,735	\$20,140	\$2,858,332

Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP)



FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Farm Stewardship Program (FSP)

- Permanent Tame Forage
- Permanent Native Forage
- Livestock Stewardship
- Riparian Grazing Management
- Rangeland Grazing Management
- Invasive Plants Biocontrol and Targeted Grazing
- Environmental Solutions
- Drainage Stewardship
- Variable Rate Mapping

Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP)

- New Well, Dugout, and Pipeline Rebate
- Well Decommissioning and Special Projects

These projects all have their own requirements and restrictions. Please call the Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association office at 306-783-1696.

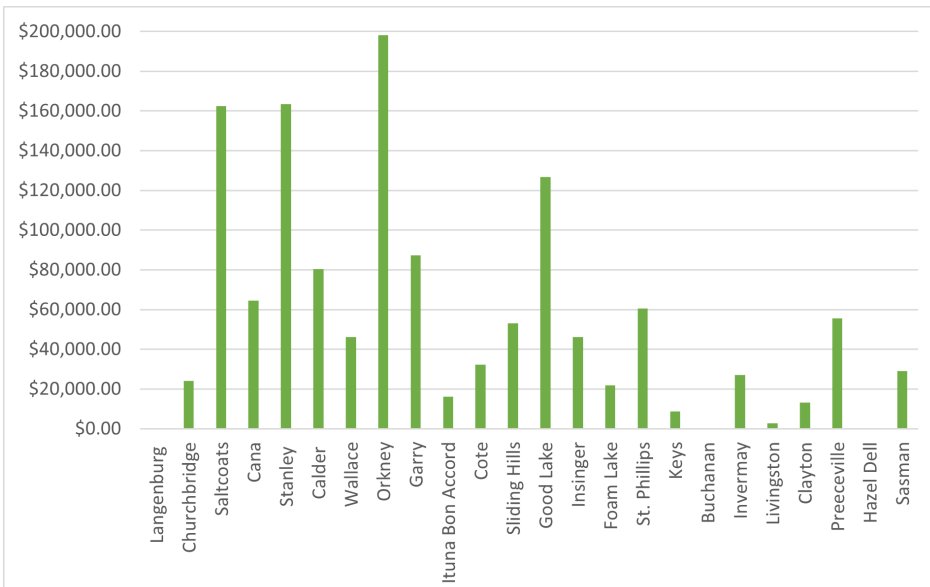
For more information on eligibility visit the Government of Saskatchewan website at www.saskatchewan.ca/CAP



The maximum funding that each producer meeting the eligibility requirements may receive under the CAP program is determined by project type:

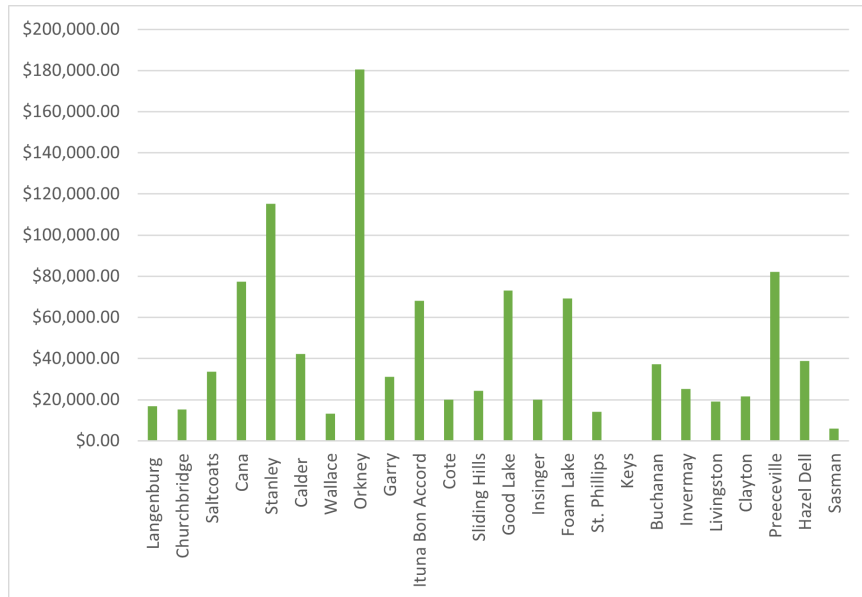
FARM STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (\$50,000 max rebate until March 31, 2023)		
Project Type	% Rebated	Max Claim Amount
Permanent Tame Forage	50%	\$10,000
Permanent Native Forage	90%	\$10,000
Livestock Stewardship	50%	\$100,000
Riparian Grazing Management	50%	\$10,000
Rangeland Grazing Management	50%	\$10,000
Invasive Plants Biocontrol and Targeting Grazing	50%	\$45,000
Environmental Solutions	Up to 75%	\$50,000
Drainage Stewardship	50%	\$20,000
Variable Rate Mapping	30%	\$2,000
FARM AND RANCH WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (\$50,000 max rebate until March 31, 2023)		
New Well	50%	\$50,000
New Dugout or Dugout Expansion*	50%	\$50,000
New Pipeline	50%	\$50,000
Well Decommissioning	90%	10000**
Special Projects	50%	\$150,000***
*Expansions must increase original volume by at least 1/3		
**Well decommissioning projects do not contribute towards overall fundin cap		
***Maximum rebate of \$150,000 per project		

Canadian Agricultural Partnership April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020



RM Name	RM No.	Project Cost Totals	Project Applications
Langenburg	181	\$0.00	0
Churchbridge	211	\$24,150.00	7
Saltcoats	213	\$162,517.19	20
Cana	214	\$64,526.51	14
Stanley	215	\$163,447.45	12
Calder	241	\$80,334.84	15
Wallace	243	\$46,232.89	23
Orkney	244	\$198,196.63	44
Garry	245	\$87,255.71	9
Ituna Bon Accord	246	\$16,120.70	2
Cote	271	\$32,386.01	5
Sliding Hills	273	\$53,167.26	10
Good Lake	274	\$126,648.77	16
Insinger	275	\$46,263.02	7
Foam Lake	276	\$21,987.24	5
St. Phillips	301	\$60,626.28	3
Keys	303	\$8,800.00	2
Buchanan	304	\$0.00	0
Invermay	305	\$27,004.86	3
Livingston	331	\$2,800.00	1
Clayton	333	\$13,090.00	5
Preeceville	334	\$55,602.03	9
Hazel Dell	335	\$0.00	0
Sasman	336	\$29,084.75	3
Totals:		\$1,320,242.14	215

Canadian Agricultural Partnership April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021



RM Name	RM No.	Project Cost Totals	Project Applications
Langenburg	181	\$16,880.00	7
Churchbridge	211	\$15,319.90	4
Saltcoats	213	\$33,516.79	9
Cana	214	\$77,307.75	18
Stanley	215	\$115,293.96	13
Calder	241	\$42,155.83	11
Wallace	243	\$13,200.00	4
Orkney	244	\$180,495.88	48
Garry	245	\$31,171.50	7
Ituna Bon Accord	246	\$68,061.96	6
Cote	271	\$20,090.00	9
Sliding Hills	273	\$24,360.83	6
Good Lake	274	\$73,030.12	6
Insinger	275	\$20,020.00	3
Foam Lake	276	\$69,280.96	8
St. Phillips	301	\$14,140.00	2
Keys	303	\$0.00	0
Buchanan	304	\$37,201.05	5
Invermay	305	\$25,280.00	4
Livingston	331	\$19,134.00	3
Clayton	333	\$21,636.00	4
Preeceville	334	\$82,055.12	13
Hazel Dell	335	\$38,728.22	9
Sasman	336	\$6,000.00	1
Totals:		\$1,044,359.87	200

Well Decommissioning Campaign

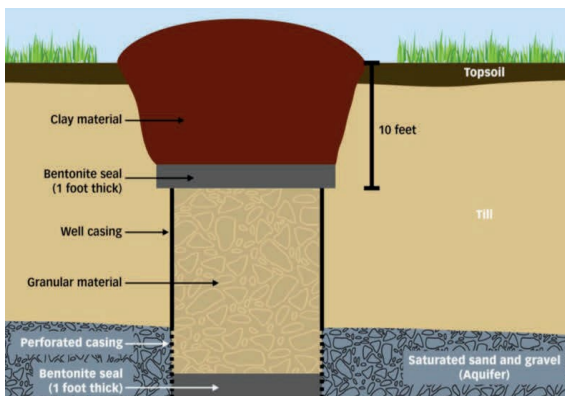
Groundwater is a critical resource in the Assiniboine River Watershed because over 90% of our residents rely on groundwater for their drinking water. In fact, Yorkton is the only city in Saskatchewan that relies solely on well water for its source water- all other cities utilize both groundwater and/or surface water for source water. Protection of our aquifers is paramount, and we encourage producers to complete projects on their farms to maintain and protect the quality of our ground water.

Over the years, many wells and test holes around homes and farms throughout our watershed have been abandoned without being properly sealed and decommissioned. These abandoned wells act as a direct conduit that can allow surface water to directly enter an aquifer, contaminating the groundwater and potentially contaminating nearby wells. Decommissioning abandoned wells will prevent contaminants from entering the aquifer as well as reduce safety risks associated with open wells. Decommissioning abandoned wells is up to 90% funded through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership's Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program.

The AWSA partnered with member RMs to offer this program to all ratepayers. The RM applied on behalf of the landowner, enabling this program to be offered to acreage owners as well. This collaboration had overwhelming success. Since spring of 2019, the AWSA has decommissioned over 100 abandoned wells in the Assiniboine River Watershed!

Cowessess First Nation Well Decommissioning Demonstration Day

In the fall of 2020, the AWSA teamed up with the Cowessess First Nation to hold a well decommissioning demonstration. People were able to watch a well decommissioning from start to finish and were educated on the importance that well decommissioning plays in protecting source water.



Partnerships like the ones showcased above are invaluable to the AWSA, we look forward to continued collaboration in the future!

Source Water Protection Extension Program

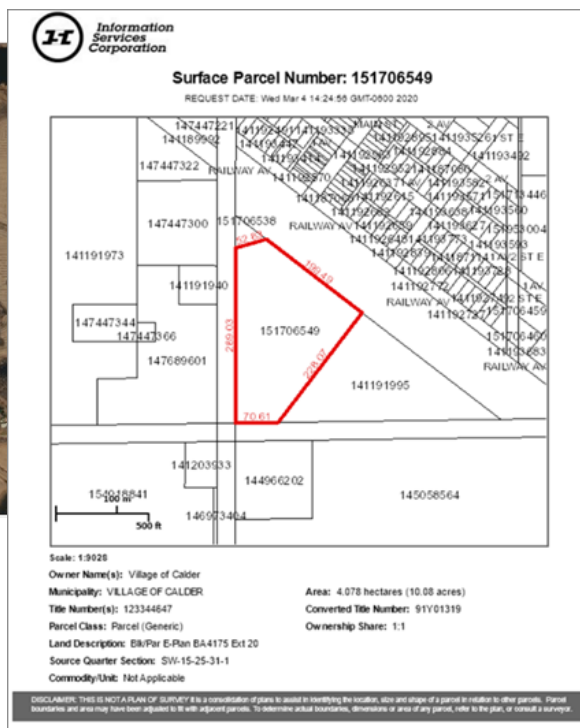
Source water protection is considered the first barrier in the multi-barrier approach to attaining safe drinking water, and is viewed as the most cost-effective means of ensuring the safety of drinking water. In 2012 the government directed development of a 25 Year Saskatchewan Water Security Plan. The Water Security Agency was charged with the implementation of this plan. Goal 3, Action Area 3.4 of the plan includes Source Water Protection Planning. The Water Security Agency (WSA) partnered with the Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association (AWSA) to deliver a Rapid Risk Assessment (RRA) for the drinking water sources of all communities within the Assiniboine River watershed.

The AWSA investigated the source water of 27 communities. We identified the status and location of the source water(s), updated all relevant databases, completed rapid risk assessments for each source and created a SWPEP report.

Source Water Rapid Risk Assessment												
Town of:		Calder							Operator ID #:		3072	
Village of:									Station #:		SK05MD0027	
Hamlet of:									Lat/Long:		51.158041 -101.7479	
5%		50%		20%			20%			5%		
Population	Risk	Source	Risk	Land Cover (see descriptions below)	Risk	Percentage of Catchment Area Covered	Total	Potential Source of Contaminants	Risk	Is this source present? (enter the risk ranking)	Land Ownership	Risk
0-99	1	Ground Deep*	1	Native prairie	1	3%	0.03	Ag. Livestock-Low intensity-pasture	1	1	Yes	0
100-499	2	Ground Shallow**	4	Forest/shrubland	1	0%	0	Ag. Livestock-High intensity-ILO	2		No	2
500-999	3	GUDI	8	Water/wetland	1	0%	0	Agriculture-cultivation	2	2		
1000-5000	4	Surface or blended	10	Tame forage	2	7%	0.14	Municipal development	3	3		
				Annual cropland	3	90%	2.7	Industrial development	4			
				Expose d land/barren	3	0%	0	Recreational activity (surface source)	5			
				Municipal development	4	0%	0					
				Industrial development	5	0%	0					
				Total Land Cover (100%)		100%						
Possible Score	1-4		1, 4, 8, 10		1.0-5.0		1-17		0.2			
Rank	1		1		2.87		6		0			
Final	0.05		0.5		0.574		1.2		0			
Total Risk	2.324											



An example of the data collected for each community within our watershed.



Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)

ALUS is a community-developed, farmer-delivered program that provides support to farmers and ranchers to enhance and maintain nature's benefits.

Our 2019 & 2020 program funding structure:

Project Classification	Annual Payment	Description
Forage Conversion	\$50/acre* + \$50/acre for establishment	Converting cropland to perennial forage cover using a blend of tame grass/legume species. * (1/2 payment if forage is hayed or grazed)
Wetland Conservation < 2 acres	\$30/acre	Conserving existing prairie pothole wetland habitat (basin size less than 2 acres in area).
Wetland Conservation > 2 acres	\$20/acre	Conserving existing prairie pothole wetland habitat (basin size greater than 2 acres in area).
Upland Conservation	\$20/acre	Conserving existing upland habitat composing of native trees, shrubs, and grasses.
Exclusion Fencing & Solar Watering Systems	Up to 2/3 cost-shared	Fencing off waterways to permanently exclude direct cattle access and providing an alternate source for livestock watering.

In 2019 & 2020, we signed up **16 new participants for over 660 acres** of restored and enhanced ecosystem services within our watershed!

Program Coordinator, Jesse, and PAC Chair, Katelyn Haynes, attended the 2019 national ALUS conference near Montreal, QC. They got a first hand look at what projects in the east look like and brainstormed possible expansions of our own ALUS program. We also recruited Charlotte Ward from the Ministry of Agriculture as our program forage specialist. She is providing technical assistance to our participants in choosing the correct seed blend.

Throughout 2021, we will be focusing on further expanding our PAC and further spreading the word about our ALUS program. If you have acres you'd like us to consider enrolling into the ALUS program, would like to get involved with our PAC, or know of an opportunity to reach more producers, please speak with someone from the AWSA office.



ALUS Photos



Top: Forage conversion project along the Assiniboine River
Bottom: Exclusion fencing project along the Assiniboine River

Loblaw Water Fund - Exclusion Fencing

In 2019 the AWSA was successful in a proposal to WWF's Loblaw Water Fund to receive grant funding to provide an incentive for ranchers to eliminate direct access of their cattle to creeks, streams and rivers through cost-shared funding for exclusion fencing and remote off-site watering systems. In addition, the projects aimed to mitigate the damage caused to the riparian areas along these waterways through tree and shrub planting.

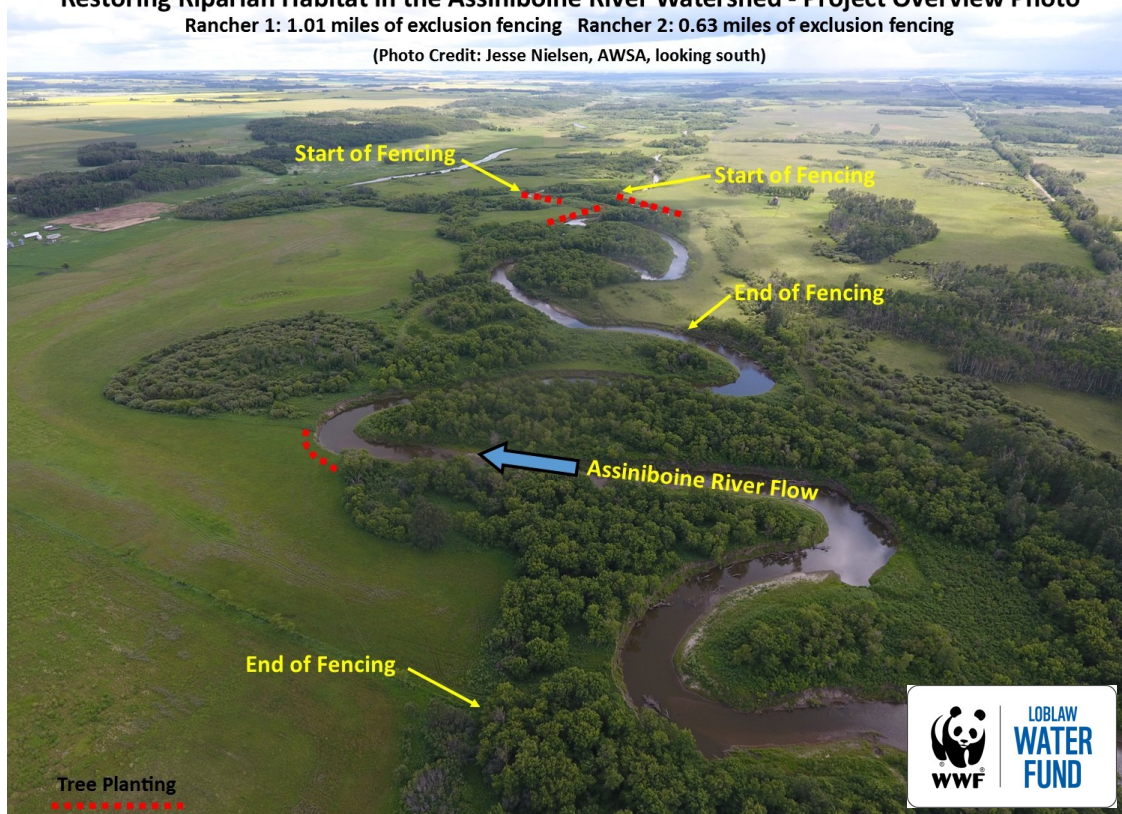
Two ranchers located next to the Assiniboine River, north-west of Kamsack, were chosen to receive two-thirds cost-shared funding to implement their projects. The two pastures, located directly across from each other on opposite sides of the river, both previously used the river as the watering source for the cattle. With funding assistance from the AWSA, one rancher installed 0.63 miles of permanent three-strand barbed wire fencing and purchased a portable wagon and solar-powered float pump watering system that he'll use as his water source for the summer grazing he does on this particular pasture.

His neighbor across the river used the same type of fence to exclude 1.01 miles of the river from direct access by his cattle. He developed a shallow well and pipeline water system that will serve as the new water source for both summer grazing and wintering of his cattle. The AWSA staff finished off the projects by planting over 400 Tristis poplar and Golden willow trees along the riverbank of the two sites in order to help bind the soil and prevent future erosion.

Restoring Riparian Habitat in the Assiniboine River Watershed - Project Overview Photo

Rancher 1: 1.01 miles of exclusion fencing Rancher 2: 0.63 miles of exclusion fencing

(Photo Credit: Jesse Nielsen, AWSA, looking south)



Lake Winnipeg Basin Fund - Wetland Restoration

The AWSA was part of a 3 year (April 2018-March 2021) wetland restoration project coordinated by Wanda McFadyen, of ARBI. We restored a total of 69.19 acres in 2019 with 5 different landowners and 8.5 acres with one more landowner in 2020 in our watershed. The remainder of the 200 acre program target was completed by the Upper and Lower Souris watersheds. Program participants received \$1700/acre of wetland restored in return for signing a 10 year conservation agreement on the parcel of land.



Canada

Wallace Creek Watershed Association Board

In the fall of 2019 the WCWAB carried out a long-overdue channel clearing project on an 8.1 mile stretch of the creek in the southern portion of the RM of Sliding Hills. The area is one of the flattest in the entire watershed, causing extreme silt build-up in the creek for decades. The build-up was particularly bad under the one bridge crossing in that area. Over 5 ft of silt and debris were removed from under the bridge! The work will go a long way to achieving the Mission of the WCWAB: *to proactively manage water resources within the Wallace Creek watershed in order to decrease the negative impacts of flooding on agricultural lands within the watershed, and to protect private property and municipal infrastructure from flood-related damage.*

BEFORE



AFTER



Wallace Creek Watershed Association Board

The fall of 2020 saw WCWAB performing more channel clearing work, this time it was a small 0.6 mile stretch of the creek prone to causing flooding due to excess silt and vegetation accumulation over the years.

BEFORE



AFTER

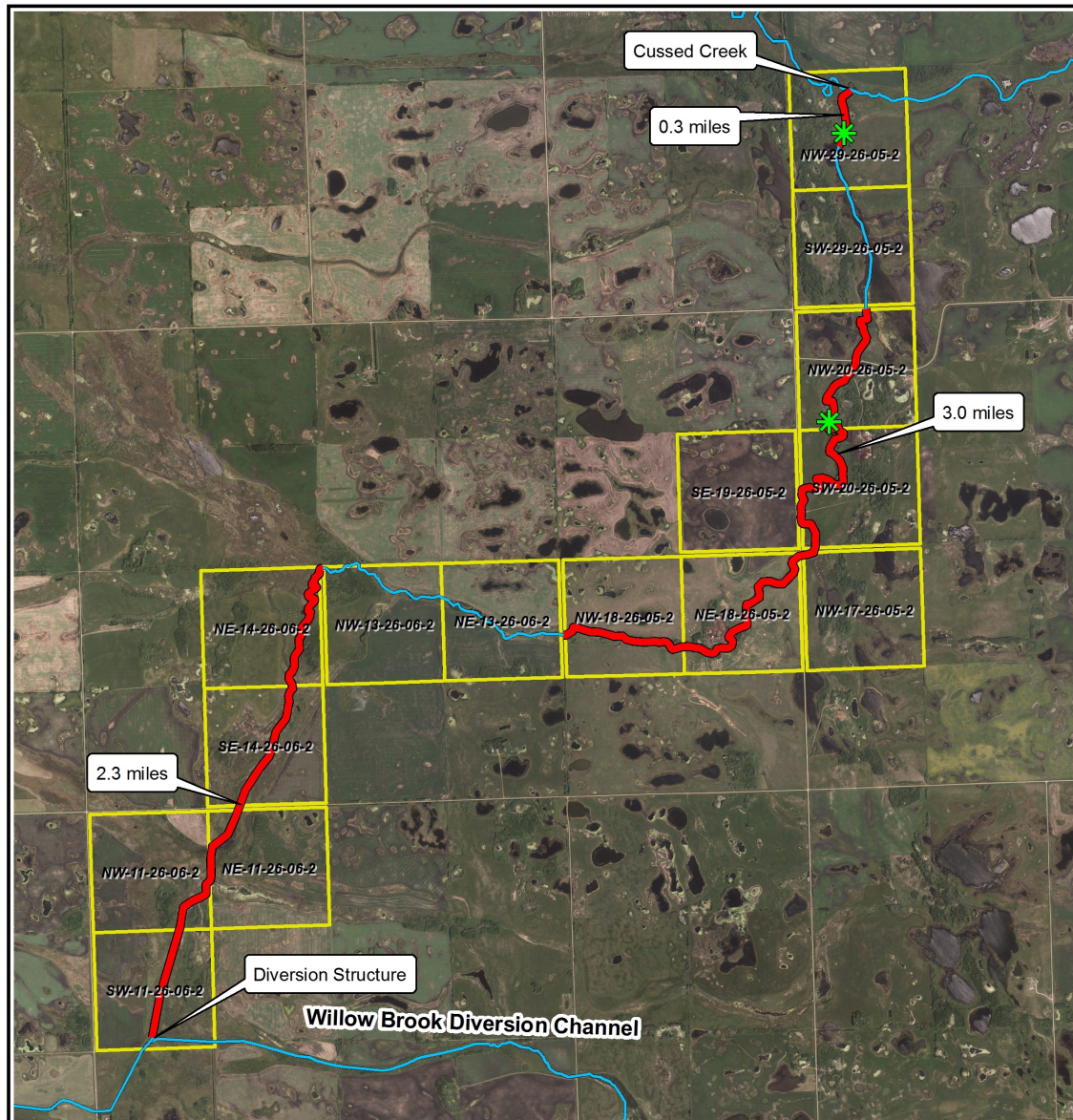


Yorkton Creek Watershed Association Board

The YCWAB undertook a large channel clearing project in the fall of 2020 that involved 5.6 miles of clearing of Willow Brook, from the Willowbrook diversion structure to its confluence with Cussed Creek.



Yorkton Creek Watershed Association Board Proposed Channel Clearing Project Map



1:35,000

Legend

- Willow Brook - Channel Clearing Area (5.6 miles)
- 2020 Channel Clearing Quarters
- New Dugout Location



Created: Sept. 28, 2020
Projection: UTM Zone 13N
Datum: NAD 1983
Created by: Jesse Nielsen (AWSA)

Yorkton Creek Watershed Association Board

According to the YCWAB Operations Guidelines, should the flow rate at the Willowbrook diversion structure exceed $12.75\text{m}^3/\text{s}$ (450 cfs), that water is to be diverted north. The problem was that the channel was so severely grown-in with vegetation that it had little conveyance capacity should the need arise for water to be diverted north. The YCWAB partnered with the RM of Orkney to cost-share the channel clearing.

SW-11-26-06-W2 Willowbrook Diversion Structure BEFORE



SW-11-26-06-W2 Willowbrook Diversion Structure AFTER



2019 Poster Contest

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association once again participated in the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) provincial poster contest in 2019. The theme was “Wetlands and Wildlife”, and the contest was open to all grade 5 to 7 students. AWSA staff, Amber and Cat were busy delivering 12 educational presentations and edible aquifer creations to 8 schools across our watershed! Once again we received the most poster entries in the province, over 150! Cash prizes ranging from \$25-\$100 were handed out to the top 3 entries in our watershed, with all first place posters in the province then getting judged at the 2019 SAW conference for the chance to win the grand prize of \$1000, which went to our watershed’s winner!



**1st Place Local and
Provincial Grand Prize Winner**
Trinity Happy

Yorkdale Central School
Yorkton, SK

To see our Top 10 posters,
visit our website!



Fall 2019 Poster Contest

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association once again participated in the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) provincial poster contest in the fall of 2019. The contest was offered a second time in 2019 because the annual SAW conference date as moved to January of 2020 instead of the traditional spring dates. The theme was “Wetlands and Wildlife”, and the contest was open to all grade 5 to 7 students. AWSA staff, Caitlyn and Jesse were busy delivering 10 educational presentations and edible aquifer creations to 6 schools across our watershed! Once again we received the most poster entries in the province, over 150! Cash prizes ranging from \$25-\$100 were handed out to the top 3 entries in our watershed, with all first place posters in the province then getting judged at the 2020 SAW conference for the chance to win the grand prize of \$1000.



1st Place Local Winner

Evia McDowell
Grade 6

St. Michaels School
Yorkton, SK



Caitlyn making and explaining how edible aquifers work with students at Davison School in Melville as part of the in-class poster contest presentations.

Food Farms

The AWSA is proud to have volunteered once again at the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Farms in 2019. Although the initiative is spearheaded by the regional MoA staff, it takes a combined effort from many volunteers to make the days a success each year. The goal of the Food Farm is to educate elementary-aged children about where the food they eat comes from and how it's produced. Children get hands-on experience both planting and harvesting various herbs and vegetables, in addition to learning about the many aspects of agriculture necessary to grow the plants, crops, and livestock that are required to make the food they all enjoy. The AWSA attended two Food Farms in 2019 - the Pizza Farm near Yorkton and the Burger & Fries Farm near Norquay. It's always very rewarding to see the smiles on the faces of all the children during these few days and teaching them about something they previously knew little about sure makes the time and effort well worth it!



At the spring planting days at the Pizza Farm, Amber ran a critter dipping station for the grade 3 students, to teach them about the importance of water and wetlands and the many insects that live in our aquatic ecosystems. Janet returned for the fall harvest days and brought our augmented reality sandbox to teach the now grade 4 students what a watershed is.



At the Burger & Fries Farm, Jesse and Amber ran the critter dripping booth. They also brought along a watershed model. Students were educated on what a watershed is and the important role water plays in agriculture.



Unfortunately due to COVID-19, there were no Food Farms in 2020. We look forward to volunteering at the Food Farms again in the future!

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Monitoring

The AWSA continued to spread awareness and education regarding zebra and quagga mussels throughout 2019 & 2020. Through funding from the provincial Fish and Wildlife Development Fund and the Invasive Species Centre, we monitored eighteen locations in seven waterbodies within the watershed (Batka Lake, Fishing Lake, Good Spirit Lake, Madge Lake, Jackfish Lake, Lake of the Prairies, and Theodore Reservoir). We are pleased to report that no zebra or quagga mussels were found in 2019 & 2020, and to-date, Saskatchewan remains mussel-free!

The AWSA reached over 250 lake enthusiasts with a booth set up at the Parkland Outdoor Show and Expo in Yorkton on April 6 and 7, 2019. The booth, set up next to the main boat display, was a great opportunity to explain the Clean, Drain, Dry process and the impact invasive mussels could have on our lakes in Saskatchewan.

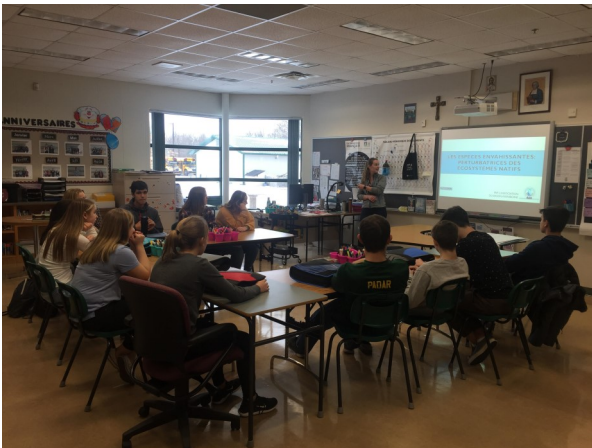
ZEBRA MUSSEL



QUAGGA MUSSEL



The AWSA offered presentations to local high school classes on the impacts of invasive species in our watershed and our province.



Left: Cat giving an Invasive Species presentation to students at Sacred Heart High School in Yorkton.



Invasive
Species
Centre



Government
of
Saskatchewan

Fish and Wildlife
Development Fund

SAW Conference - Indigenous Painting Gift



The 2020 Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds Conference was held in conjunction with the Global Water Institute's annual conference in Saskatoon January 23-24, 2020. At the conference we were humbled to receive this beautiful painting that will remain in our office for the next few years when it will then be hung in another Watershed Stewardship Group's office. The painting was given to Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds and was painted by Mary Ruelling. We are working to strengthen our relationship with the First Nations communities in our watershed. This painting will serve as a reminder of that vision.





Tree Planting Equipment Rental



The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association is pleased to announce that it will now be renting tree planting equipment to all residents within its Rural and Urban member municipalities. We have one tree planter and three plastic mulch applicators available for rental on a first-come-first-served basis.

Rental Costs

- ⇒ Equipment rental
 - ⇒ \$50/day or \$200/week (5 days)
- ⇒ Plastic Mulch
 - ⇒ \$200/roll (4'x1500')
 - ⇒ 3 mm thickness



Equipment Information

- ⇒ Tree Planter
 - ⇒ "Non-hydraulic" model (coulters disc requires well-tilled soil to create furrow)
 - ⇒ Seats 2 people for planting
 - ⇒ Ball hitch
 - ⇒ Can be pulled behind tractor or 4-wheel drive truck
- ⇒ Mulch Applicator
 - ⇒ Pull-type
 - ⇒ Requires 50hp+ tractor with hydraulic hook-up capability
 - ⇒ Clevis-pin hitch



For more information
contact the
Assiniboine Watershed
Stewardship Association
306-783-1696



Culvert Infrastructure Mapping Available

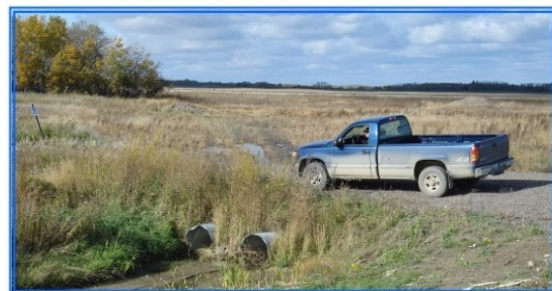


The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association is pleased to offer its services to our Rural and Urban member municipalities interested in having their culvert infrastructure GPS mapped and inventoried. AWSA staff will measure and record dimensions, GPS locations, culvert heights and any other relevant infrastructure information; and compile it in both electronic spreadsheet and GIS formats.

Cost to Membership Municipalities

\$500/day flat rate (field and/or in-office map creation)

- ⇒ Member - Urban and Rural Municipalities will receive 1 FREE day of mapping.
- ⇒ New for 2021 - The AWSA has recently upgraded its survey grade GPS/RTK equipment to better serve its membership.



For more information contact Jesse at the
Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association
306-783-1696





2019 & 2020 EDITION

**Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association
29 - 2nd Avenue North
Yorkton, Saskatchewan
S3N 1G1
306-783-1696**

www.assiniboinewatershed.com

