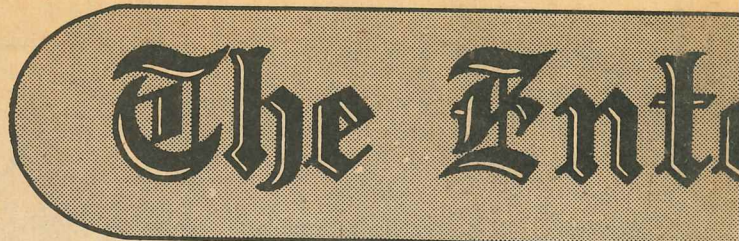


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YORKTON, SASKATCHEWAN

SASKATCHEWAN'S LARGEST WEEKLY

Major changes ahead for the Yorkton Creek

Are the problems of the unpredictable water levels along the Yorkton Creek worth \$1.7 million to solve? Are the inconsistent problems of too much water one year and too little the next, worth the development of an extensive water drainage system that will equal if not better all other such systems in the province? That's going to be the \$1.7 million question facing the provincial government as a collection of RM's, organizations and the cities of Yorkton and Melville proceed with plans to develop a full system of water control mechanisms in the Yorkton Creek basin.

Work towards such a system has been proceeding for over three and a half years but it took perhaps its most substantial leap towards concrete action last Thursday during a meeting pulled together by the Yorkton Creek Watershed Ad Hoc Committee.

It was decided by the representatives of the seven RM's involved, Yorkton, Melville, the village of Willowbrook and several special organizations concerned with the creek (Ducks Unlimited, the Yorkton Natural History Society and the York Lake Reg. Park Authority) that a full watershed association should be formed to further review and promote the development of a \$1.7 million water control system in the basin.

Two representatives of the Conservation branch of the provincial Department of Agriculture were present at the meeting to explain the details

and costs of the major project.

Harry Pelech, a planning and design engineer with the branch, explained that 26 recommendations set out in the phase three report on the watershed. The purpose of the system, he explained, would be two-fold: to stop flooding during particularly wet years and then to control water runoff to maintain consistent levels throughout the year.

The system would link in with the creek's feeders such as the Cussed Creek and Willow Brook, a perennial problem.

The recommendations call for:

—A system of flood control dikes and drains to be constructed to protect the Village of Willowbrook. \$53,500.

—A system of flood control drains and channel improvements between Willowbrook and the Willow Brook diversion be undertaken. \$181,000.

—Channel improvements and reconstruction of the existing Willow Brook diversion works to divert up to a maximum of 450 cubic feet per second from the Willow Brook watershed into Upper Rousay Lake. \$320,000.

—Further channel improvements along Willow Brook between the diversion works and the Cussed Creek.

—That full supply levels (FSL) be established for each of the lakes involved (Upper and Lower Rousay Lakes, 1,677 FSL; York Lake, 1,678.6 FSL; Leech Lake, 1,674.0; Little Leech Lake, 1,676; Little Bone Lake, Maddaford Marsh and

Crescent Lake, 1,676 FSL).

—A control structure and pumping facilities be installed and some channel improvements be carried out between Lower Rousay and York Lakes. Pumping from Lower Rousay Lake would help to stabilize water levels on York Lake without seriously affecting wildlife benefits on Lower Rousay Lake during most years. \$61,000.

—Channel improvements between Lower Rousay and Leech Lakes be undertaken and that a control structure be constructed at that outlet of Lower Rousay Lake. \$423,000.

—A control structure be constructed on the upper northwest arm above the main body of Leech Lake to create the Buckle Project as originally proposed by Ducks Unlimited.

—Channel improvements be carried out and a control structure be constructed at the outlet of Leech Lake. \$367,000.

—Modifications to several road structures on Yorkton Creek between Leech Lake and the Whitesand River be undertaken.

—A control structure be constructed at the north end of the marsh near the Leech lake outlet to form Leech Marsh. \$20,500.

—The existing abandoned highway embankment between Crescent Lake and Maddaford Marsh be raised to prevent uncontrolled spill from Crescent Lake to the marsh. \$1,000.

—Channel improvements between Crescent and Little Bone Lakes and between Little Bone and Leech Lakes be

carried out and that a control structure be constructed at the outlet of Little Bone Lake.

The study also recommended that Melville, which has been considering diverting the Upper Willow Brook watershed for its municipal water supply, abandon that idea and look for an alternative.

It also recommended that the construction of the system begin with the Leech Lake outlet and Yorkton Creek outlet structures followed in turn by: the Rousay Lake outlet and Buckle Project, the Crescent Lake and Little Bone Lake outlet, the York Lake pump diversion, the Willow Brook drains and then all other items of construction as funds and priorities dictate.

The basic premise of the entire system would be to build up reservoirs in which the huge amounts of water that run through the creek system during the spring can be stored to feed into York Lake and Upper Rousay gradually during the summer, thus maintaining the larger bodies' high water levels.

"The prime beneficiaries of this project," Mr. Pelech later commented, "will not totally be the agriculturalists. The environmentalists and all people who enjoy water recreation will gain something from it."

"The farmers in the area will be affected in that they will have stable water levels. Some will lose some land around the lakes but others will gain usable land."

Basically we feel that everyone in the watershed will benefit to some extent."

ok
Willowbrook

Annual meeting in Yorkton

Province drastically

Land use forum

Enterprise

The Broadway musical *Guys and Dolls* will be performed on the evenings of March 31, April 1 and 2 by the students of Yorkton Regional High School. Showtime is 8 p.m. at the Anne Portnuff Theatre.

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Wednesday, March 30, 1977 1

