

Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.

An Update from your Watershed Committee

(306) 452-3292



“balancing the economic, environmental, and social values to sustain and improve the watershed for future generations”

Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.

Box 104
Redvers, Saskatchewan
S0C 2H0

Phone:
306-452-3292

Fax:
306-452-3293

E-Mail:
info@lowersourisriverwatershed.com

Web Address:
www.lowersourisriverwatershed.com



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New Year Wishes from the Lower Souris Watershed Committee

2015 saw some changes in the Lower Souris Watershed. Sheldon Kyle has moved on and we wish him lots of luck in his new ventures. We also congratulate him and Ella on the arrival of baby Oliver. Jim Cairns retired from the board in July. Jim and Sheldon have played such a huge part in building success in the Lower Souris. It’s hard to find words to thank them enough. We wish Jim and Sheldon and their families all the best in the future.

So into 2016, we welcome Tyler Fewings as our new Co-ordinator. Tyler will no doubt bring some new ideas and we look forward to working with him.

On the landscape, things are certainly drier than they were a year ago. Hardly any snow and record December temperatures. We will continue to support farmers and ranchers as they strive to improve their operations both economically and environmentally. Please contact Tyler or Karmen if any of our programs are of interest to you.

New for 2016 - we have a grain bag roller arriving in January and collection centre near Wawota. This machine will be available to farmers to use free of charge. Hopefully this will be an easy to use option for recycling used grain bags. Watch for further details.

On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Lower Souris Watershed Committee, I would like to wish you and your families a happy, healthy and prosperous 2016.

Teresa Walker



Back: Martin Hjertaas, Louis Hebert, Jim Cairns (past chairman), Teresa Walker, Elaine Morgan, Darlene Fisk, and Karmen Kyle. Missing from photo: Don North, George MacDonald & Tyler Fewings

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- ~ Provincial Drainage-Watershed Management Conference
- ~ 4-H Grazing Management & Nutrition Workshop

The Lower Souris Watershed Hires a New Co-ordinator



The Lower Souris Watershed Committee would like to welcome Tyler Fewings as its new watershed co-ordinator. Tyler grew up on a mixed farm north of Pierson, MB. He attended school in Bellegarde, SK and afterwards obtained a B.Sc. in Agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan with a major in Animal Science and a minor in Rangeland Resources. Tyler has worked in the agriculture industry since completing his studies, including time spent with Co-op Feeds, PFRA, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and Paterson Grain. In recent years, he has moved back to the Tilston, MB area where he raises commercial cattle with his family. He is looking forward to working with the Lower Souris Watershed Committee.



Redvers Grade 6 Class Learns about Watersheds

Karmen Kyle, with the Lower Souris Watershed, was invited to spend the afternoon with Mrs. Cowan's Grade 6 class at the Redvers School on November 27.

Following a discussion about what a watershed is the students gathered around the watershed model to learn about the components of our landscape and how our everyday activities affect our neighbors downstream. Kool-aid mix and sprinkles were used to simulate pesticides and fertilizer used in our yards, farms, and outdoor recreation areas, livestock and industrial waste, road salt and more. Followed by a "rain storm", the students saw how these materials make their way into our lakes and rivers. Options to reduce our impacts on the environment such as minimizing the use of pesticides, soil testing to match fertilizer with plant needs, conserving our water, using remote watering systems, maintaining healthy riparian areas and many others were discussed.

We then headed outside to learn about the effects of healthy riparian areas. The students raced along the path of a rope "water way" with the rope straight such as a ditch, curved like a meandering stream, and with "plants" - students along the rope trying to tag the others to simulate plants in the riparian area. They had some inventive ways to get through the plants. Their times were drastically slower when they had to get through the "plants" in a meandering channel vs running in a straight line. They learned that good vegetation cover along our waterways can drastically slow the flow of water.



Provincial Drainage – Water Management Conference Update

The Provincial Drainage – Water Management Conference - “A Realistic Approach to Water Management for Agricultural Producers” was held in Earl Gray on December 7. This event was hosted by the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds and WUQWATR (Wascana Upper Qu’Appelle Watersheds Association Taking Responsibility”). There were over 100 people who participated in this conference ranging from producers, R.M. councillors, and industry and watershed representatives. The Lower Souris Watershed Committee covered registration fees for any of our watershed residents who attended.



Topics ranged from the new Water Security Drainage Regulations announced in September, the role of Qualified Persons, the new drainage complaint process, benefits of forming Conservation and Development Areas, Emergency Response Situations and PDAP, funding for agriculture water management practices, and the Emergency Flood Damage Control Program.

Some highlights from the conference:

- ✚ Despite the benefits of agricultural drainage, poorly designed and uncoordinated drainage can have negative impacts on the environment, infrastructure, water quality and habitat.
- ✚ Drainage approvals will be done using a risk based approach – low risk projects will have a short turn around time; higher risk projects will take longer.
- ✚ An online application process will be in place to complete the 1st level risk assessment.
- ✚ Over the next 10 years, a permit will be required for ALL existing and new drainage works. There is no longer a pre-1981 exemption.
- ✚ Land control issues may be addressed through joint applications
- ✚ Qualified persons (QPs) will receive specialized training to help producers with the new approach to drainage.
- ✚ The anticipated outcome of the new complaint process is a faster response to complaints resulting in either an approval for the drainage works or closure of the works.
- ✚ The privilege to drain will depend on it being done responsibly. Responsible drainage can be accomplished through erosion control & flow control measures. Funding may be available to implement these measures through the Ministry of Agriculture’s Farm Stewardship Program.

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RM of Walpole # 92
RM of Wawken #93
RM of Moosomin # 121
RM of Martin #122
RM of Silverwood # 123
RM of Kingsley #124
RM of Chester #125
Town of Redvers
Town of Moosomin
Town of Wapella
Town of Wawota



COMING EVENTS

Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference

January 20-22, 2016
Saskatoon, SK

www.saskbeefconference.com

Manitoba Ag Days

January 19-21, 2016
Brandon, MB

www.agdays.com



4-H Grazing Management Field Day

The Lower Souris Watershed Committee held a field day for 4-H members on November 1 at North Farms near Carnduff. About 40 members and their families from Alida & Area Beef Club, Redvers, Wranglers Light Horse, Carnduff Beef, Carievale Beef and Fairmede Beef 4-H Clubs came out to learn about grazing management and livestock nutrition.

Karmen Kyle led the members in activities such as a plant identification scavenger hunt, litter collection, water races, water flow on direct channel vs healthy riparian areas, and developing a grazing management plan. They learned about different plants in our watershed, the importance of healthy riparian areas in slowing water flow, the importance of litter for water absorption in the soil, reducing soil erosion and moderating soil temperatures, as well as how to design a management plan to take livestock health and the environment into consideration.

Murray Easton of Co-op Feeds in Moosomin then gave a presentation about livestock nutrition. He talked about what cattle and horses need to stay healthy, how to feed to show calves to obtain their optimal weight for sale day and how to develop heifers.

Everyone enjoyed BBQ hamburgers and hotdogs for supper.

Thank you to the clubs and members who participated in this field day, to Don and Melissa North for hosting this event, Murray Easton for joining us for the afternoon, and to Advantage Co-op in Redvers, BorderVet Services, Co-op Feeds, Redvers Pharmasave and MarVal Sewing for donating door prizes.

\$2000/Acre to Restore Wetlands!

Do you have drained wetlands that you would like to restore? A properly placed ditch plug can help restore wetlands to their natural function. For more information, contact the Lower Souris Watershed at 306.452.3292