



Fall 2016

Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.

An Update from your Watershed Committee

(306) 452-3292



"Promoting economic, environmental and social balance to sustain and improve the watershed for future generations"

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Managing Erosion Along Natural Waterways

There are several causes of stream bank erosion such as flooding, land use, stream management, removal of vegetation along the banks, and poorly managed sand and gravel extraction. This can also be accelerated due to saturation of the stream banks, wave action, intense rainfall, changes of direction or acceleration of water flow within the channel, and more.

One of the most effective methods of erosion control in streams and other flowing water bodies is by **restoring bank vegetation**. The significant root systems of riparian vegetation helps to strengthen the bank and reduce erosion problems. Other methods may include gully and bank stabilization using erosion control matting, in-channel control, retention ponds and erosion control dams.

The Natural Waterway Erosion Control BMP through Growing Forward 2's Farm Stewardship Program is designed to protect riparian ecosystems by reducing soil and improve water quality. Producers with erosion issues on natural waterways can utilize re-vegetation or man-made erosion control structures to reduce erosion potential.

Upon pre-approval, 75% of eligible costs (to a maximum rebate of \$30,000) may be available to put some of the practices listed above into effect to reduce erosion problems you may be having in your natural waterways.

Eligible costs for these projects include:

- Engineering/consulting costs associated with design of erosion control structures, determining riparian health and proper restoration measures.
- Costs related to earthwork for bank-shaping.
- Materials and installation for erosion control structures (such as: rip-rap, gabion baskets, erosion mats, silt fencing and concrete).
- Transportation of rocks, soil or other materials to the project site by a third party.
- Re-vegetation for waterways (based on a flat rate establishment cost of \$30.00 per acre).
- Labour including applicant, employee and custom.
- Rented equipment or applicant's equipment

Contact Karmen at 306.452.7953 or the Ministry of Agriculture at 1-877-874-5365 for more details on how to apply for these projects.



INSIDE:

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- ~ Should You Rejuvenate that Old Forage Stand?
- ~ Farm Stewardship Program & Farm & Ranch Water Infrastructure Program
- ~ Lower Souris Grain Bag Roller program



Weed Watch – Scentless Chamomile

Scentless Chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*) is a noxious weed found in Saskatchewan that over recent wet years has spread quickly. Scentless chamomile can cause yield losses in cereal, pulse, forage and oilseed crops. It competes with the crops if allowed to grow.



How to Identify:

- Annual, winter annual, biennial or short-lived perennial
- 6-39 inches tall
- White, daisy-like flowers

Where to Find It:

- Ditches
- Farm land
- Low spots
- Slough margins
- Overgrazed pastures
- Other disturbed areas

How is it Spread?

- Wind
- Water
- Weed infested equipment and vehicles
- Crops

Multiple methods are often needed. Some of these methods include:

- 1) Frequent shallow tillage to reduce the seed bank on a hot dry day so the root system can dry out. Also, late fall and early spring tillage to control the rosettes.
- 2) Mowing or swathing, often multiple times per year, before flowering
- 3) Maintaining a healthy strong forage stand to suppress the growth and establishment of the weed. Seeding alfalfa or smooth brome stands and maintaining them for years may help reduce the infestation.
- 4) Plant a competitive crop such as barley, and avoid less competitive crops such as flax or lentils
- 5) Hand-pulling or hoeing in small areas – the pulled plants should be burned or bagged.
- 6) Clean equipment well between fields and tarp loads or grain or bales during transport to prevent the spread of the seeds
- 7) Biological control - scentless chamomile seed head weevil and a gall midge have been released in Saskatchewan.
- 8) Chemical control. Consult your local weed inspector, the Ag Knowledge Centre, Regional Forage Specialist or Crop Protection Guide for more information
- 9) Contact your local municipality if you spot these plants in ditches but keep the fern-like leaves in mind to prevent reporting similar looking plants.

Should you Rejuvenate that old Perennial Forage Stand? Yes, No and Maybe

Lorne Klein, PAg, Regional Forage Specialist, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

New perennial forage stands that are established on annual cropland will normally produce “artificially” high yields during the first 3-4 years. The perennials have deeper root systems than the previous annual crops. The perennials are recovering moisture and nutrients that the roots of the previous annual crops could not reach. Also, if alfalfa was included in the seed mix, it is able to extract a fraction of the soil phosphorus pool that annual crops could not.

The result: A decline in yield and forage quality after the first 3-4 years. How can we minimize this decline?

The first line of defense is good management. Good management helps to maintain an adequate population of the desirable grass and legume species. You need them to dominate the stand and resist invasion by undesirable plants and weeds.

In **Hayfields**, second cutting or grazing between the periods mid-August to mid-September can potentially weaken plants. During this time plants need to be filling their root systems with carbohydrates for overwintering. Cutting or grazing during this time can result in weakened root systems prior to winter

In **Pastures**, “overgrazing” is often the biggest cause of declining production. There can be considerable debate about what level of management provides adequate rest periods, but as general rule, consider targeting: 1) paddocks be grazed no more than twice per season, 2) paddocks be grazed two weeks or less with each rotation, and 3) leave behind approximately 30% of the forage with each grazing.

Even with good management, reduced production may be unavoidable due to nutrient export and low inherent soil fertility. Fertility can be enhanced by adding nutrients through commercial fertilizer or manure. The challenge when purchasing commercial fertilizer is determining whether it is an economical method of obtaining more forage for your operation compared to buying feed or renting pasture.

If reduced production is due to physical and/or chemical soil limitations such as light soil texture (sand, gravel), salinity or solonchic (burnout) soil, you may be best to “tolerate” the low production. You could be spending resources trying to increase production with only limited success.

Reasons to terminate and reseed include the loss of legumes, loss of desirable grass species and stand domination by undesirable plants and weeds. Weed control with herbicide, sod seeding and broadcast over-seeding of desirable species along with good management and added fertility are other possible options. These options will likely require a longer time frame to accomplish results compared to termination and reseeding.

Sod seeding and broadcast over-seeding have a better chance of success when there is bare soil. Bare soil allows for better seed to soil contact, and gives seedlings a chance to establish with less competition from surrounding plants.



Sod-seeding legumes into old perennial forage stand.

For more information on forage rejuvenation practices, contact Lorne Klein, Regional Forage Specialist in Weyburn at 306-848-2382 or the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

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RM of Moosomin # 121
RM of Martin #122
RM of Silverwood # 123
RM of Kingsley #124
RM of Chester #125
RM of Willowdale #153
Town of Redvers
Town of Moosomin
Town of Wapella



COMING EVENTS

Well Decommissioning Demonstrations

October 14 – Fertile, SK 10:00 a.m.
October 19 – Langbank area, 9:00
Contact Karmen at 452-7953 for more information

7th Annual Forage & Grasslands Conference

November 15-17
Winnipeg, MB
Canadianfga.com/CFGA_Conf/

2016 Drainage Conference

December 1, 2016
Moosomin, SK

Foraging into the Future IX

December 7-8
Swift Current, SK

Did you know that there are funding programs available to you through Growing Forward 2?

Farm Stewardship Program

Provides eligible Saskatchewan producers with financial assistance to implement Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) on their farms to help maintain or improve water, soil, air and biodiversity resources.

Projects include: (**not a comprehensive list)

- ❖ Developing riparian pastures to better control timing, intensity and duration of grazing in these sensitive areas
- ❖ Relocating livestock confinement facilities away from water sources
- ❖ Farmyard runoff control to divert runoff away from your farmyard or livestock facilities
- ❖ Seeding forages to address salinity issues, highly erodible soils and for buffer strips around wetlands and creeks.
- ❖ Reducing soil erosion and improving water quality along natural waterways
- ❖ Improving private drainage works by installing water control & erosion control structures, reshaping drainage ditches and seeding forages in the waterways
- ❖ Implementing variable rate fertilizer application
- ❖ Better management of grain bags and used oil

Farm & Ranch Water Infrastructure Program

Provides eligible Saskatchewan producers, non-district irrigators, value-added agricultural businesses and First Nations bands financial and technical assistance to secure water supplies for agricultural use. These projects are designed to expand irrigation acres, grow the livestock industry, encourage rural economic activity and mitigate drought impacts.

Projects include:

- ❖ Small & large diameter on-farm wells
- ❖ Shallow buried pasture pipelines
- ❖ Deep buried pipelines
- ❖ Deep buried pipelines that connect to an established municipal water source
- ❖ Dugouts and dugout expansions (at least 1/3 size increase)
- ❖ Relocation of existing livestock water systems for environmental purposes
- ❖ Protecting existing wells
- ❖ Decommissioning abandoned water wells
- ❖ Community well development, well head protection & well decommissioning - Rural Municipalities & First Nations Bands

Contact Karmen Kyle at 306.452.7953 for more information.

A reminder as harvest 2016 wraps up & livestock feeding season approaches.....



The Lower Souris Watershed Committee has a **Grain Bag Roller** for residents of the watershed to use on their farms **free of charge!**

Simply contact us to schedule a date to use the roller on your farm. Roll your plastic bags. Leave rolled bags on the trailer and they can then be returned with the roller to the collection site once you're finished.

We also have plastic bags available for twine and netwrap collection for recycling.

Contact Tyler Fewings at 306.452.3292 for more details.