

## Upcoming Events

**Soils and Crops 2018:** March 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 @ **Saskatoon SK.** Registration is now open for this annual two day workshop organized by the Certified Crop Advisory Board and the Departments of Plant Sciences and Soil Science in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources. Plan to attend one day or two. Interested? Register at the following link: <http://www.usask.ca/soilscrops/registration/index.php>

**Year-Round Grazing Systems:** March 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 @ **Moose Jaw, SK.** Greener Pastures Ranching presents this business management school that will take you into the design and planning of a year-round grazing system. Course tuition in \$750/Farm Unit (plus GST), which allows two members of your farm to attend. To learn more, phone Steve Kenyon at 780.307.6500 or email [skenyon@greenerpasturesranching.com](mailto:skenyon@greenerpasturesranching.com).

**Owls on Tour:** March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 @ 10:00am- 2:00pm **Regina, SK** This Native Prairie Speaker Series in-person presentation will take place at Cabela's in Regina on March 10 at 2PM. Hear Lori Johnson from the Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre at this free presentation. Live owl will be on site as well!

**Weed Webinar: Brush Encroachment:** March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 @ 1:00pm – 2:00pm This Webinar is a presentation from the Ministry of Agriculture. Register at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3958066322592357122>

**A Night with OWWA:** March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 @ 7:00p.m. **Gravelbourg, SK.** Join us for snacks, a screening of "License to Farm" & our NEW watershed videos, a summary of our 2017/2018 year, and more!

**Native Prairie Speaker "Enhancing Bird Habitat in a Semi-Urban Setting":** March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 The March Series from SK-PCAP is titled: Enhancing Bird Habitat in a Semi-Urban Setting, presented by Renny Grilz, Meewasin Valley Authority. Check out the PCAP website for webinar link!

**Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds Conference & AGM:** April 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> **Swift Current, SK.** Come and hear from a variety of speakers with topics ranging from water quality on the prairies, to dealing with salinity, to the NEW CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP details. Register at: <http://saskwatersheds.ca/2018-saw-agm-and-conference/>

**Soil Health Field Day:** July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 @ 9:00am- 4:00pm **Wood Mountain, SK** Come and hear from two great speakers (Jay Fuhrer & Kevin Elmy) and see equipment demos, multiple cover crop variety plots, and intensive grazing fields.



# Watershed Watch

February 2018

Newsletter

## Thomson Lake Source Water Protection Plan is in the Making

Within the Old Wives Watershed, Thomson Lake Reservoir is a highly frequented location which serves as a recreational area as well as the source for municipal water supplies (Lafleche and Gravelbourg). The Old Wives Watershed Association received funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program to pursue a community-based Source Water Protection (SWP) plan for Thomson Lake Reservoir. What is a Source Water Protection plan? Water Security Agency's Source Water Protection Planning Guidebook, defines it as: *It is the first step in the multi-barrier approach. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) define the multi-barrier approach as "an integrated system of procedures, processes and tools that collectively prevent or reduce the contamination of drinking water from source to tap in order to reduce risks to public health"*. The other barriers in the multi-barrier approach include effective treatment, maintenance of the water distribution system, monitoring and emergency response planning. As the first step in the approach, a plan for source water protection is an essential component of any strategy to prevent or reduce contamination risks to a drinking water system. Essentially, it is a document that contains thorough background information of Thomson Lake, a list of potential and existing contaminant risks at the water intakes, and a mitigation strategy for each risk. A steering committee made of stakeholders has been working together to determine these risks and the mitigation strategies. Stakeholders participating in the creation of the Thomson Lake Source Water Protection Plan include: SaskWater, Water Security Agency, Agri-Environment Services Branch, Rural Municipality of No.104, Rural Municipality of Wood River No. 74, Town of Gravelbourg, Town of Lafleche, Thomson Lake Regional Park, Private Landowners, and Residents from Thomson Lake & Gaumond Bay.

Although any community provincially can complete a Source Water Protection Plan, OWWA has the only two completed to date: one for the Village of Vanguard and a second for the Village of Mankota. Based on these projects, SWP plans are intended to be completed on the community level; however, with multiple water intakes in close proximity, this plan was proposed to be completed as a geographical area allowing for all aspects to be considered.

To date, the local stakeholders have met to narrow down risks and mitigation measures. OWWA is currently finalizing the plan with the goal of circulation April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.



Did you know that the OWWA is on Facebook and twitter? Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/oldwiveswatershed> and follow Cierra on twitter at [https://twitter.com/OWWA\\_Cierra](https://twitter.com/OWWA_Cierra) for watershed updates, news & events.



For more information on OWWA please contact:

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ATTENTION AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS: **DEADLINES TO SUBMIT CLAIMS HAS BEEN EXTENDED** for the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP) to **MARCH 15th, 2018.**

**OWWA is looking to HIRE A 2018 SUMMER WATERSHED TECHNICIAN!**  
Must be a returning student within the field of agriculture, biology, environmental sciences, or a related field. Interested persons can contact Cierra Wallington (306-648-3220) for the full job ad.

## **DRAINAGE: Water Security Agency's Agricultural Water Management Strategy**

Adapted from Water Security Agency



Within the Old Wives Watershed there are many locations where field drainage has been utilized. Producers need to be aware that new regulations, legislation and policies have been implemented to support responsible drainage. Responsible drainage allows landowners to manage water while addressing the impacts on neighbours and the environment.

### **Why is a new approach needed?**

Drainage has been a key part of settling Saskatchewan. It has made land available for communities, roads, crops and resource development. However, poorly designed projects can have negative impacts, including:

- local to large-scale downstream flooding and infrastructure damage;
- degraded water quality from erosion and increased contaminants; and
- negative impacts on wildlife (and aquatic) habitat.

### **What is the new approach?**

The new approach is about approvals (all drainage needs an approval) and networks. In drainage networks, groups of producers and other landowners work together to operate a drainage project that drains into an adequate outlet. A coordinated approach creates efficiencies for both effectively draining land and reducing impacts. Producers and other landowners may work together by forming a formal organization such as a Conservation and Development Authority (C&D). Producers have proven that this approach works. In February 2017, 73 landowners made history when they received a single approval for an 18,000 acre drainage network. The Dry Lake Project is located within the Upper Souris Watershed in the southeastern part of the province. Other large network projects are underway in Saskatchewan.

### **The new approach means that:**

- landowners are able to operate their drainage works for the term of the drainage approval, and if they sell their land the drainage approval will transfer with the title.
- negative impacts from drainage will be reduced through mitigation conditions on approvals.

### **How will the new approach affect me?**

- ALL drainage needs an approval. Over a period of time, all drainage works need an approval regardless of when they were built. No unapproved works are grandfathered. Drainage works built pre-1981 also need an approval.
- New types of permission to use land. When draining, the proponent must have permission to move water onto, or across, any other person's land to the point of adequate outlet. The most secure form of land permission is a registered easement. Permission to use land can also be obtained through joint applications or written agreements.
- Drainage approvals will consider how to reduce impact and will reflect the risk involved. Approval holders will be required to use best practices in design and construction of works to reduce impacts of drainage. The types of mitigation conditions will depend on the size of the project and where it is located in the province.
- Approval holders may be required to install and operate structures to control the release of water from a drain. In order to prevent drained water adding to flood peaks, higher risk activities will be required to install permanent flow restriction structures, such as suitably sized culverts or gates.

- Approval holders may be required to retain some surface water or storage space for water. In order to prevent drainage adding to flood peaks, higher risk activities may be required to permanently retain a portion of the surface water they wanted to drain as wetland or dead storage (ability to fill).
- 'Qualified persons' (QPs) will assist landholders to prepare drainage applications. Drainage applications (especially in networks) are complicated because they often involve many legal parcels and landowners. Landowners should expect to hire a qualified person for assistance in most cases.
- WSA's response to drainage complaints now focuses on achieving compliance. When WSA receives a request for assistance, we will confirm that there are drainage works and whether they are approved. If they are not approved the owner of the works has a period of time to obtain an approval, or be required to close the works.

### **How will the new approach be implemented?**

WSA is focussing on approvals in high priority areas where they have received Requests for Assistance. In 2018 WSA is working on approval of a number of large network projects. Work in these areas will involve the local watershed groups, including OWWA, to help implement the new drainage approval process for both new and existing works. If you would like more information on the new drainage regulations or to see how they may impact your operation specifically, contact Cierra.

### **Become a Member of OWWA**

OWWA is a non-profit organization that was formed to serve the residents of the Old Wives Watershed by helping to manage the water in a sustainable way in order to ensure the economic success and environmental preservation of our watershed for generations to come. We are run by a board of dedicated volunteers representing both urban and rural interests across the watershed. RMs, communities, individuals and groups can become members! Individual memberships cost only \$25 per year. For more information on how to become a member or if you have an idea for a future event or project in the watershed please contact OWWA.

## **OWWA 2018 Calendars are still available!**

**Each calendar is NOW only \$10 (picked up) or \$12 (mailed out)! Limited Supply!**

***A BIG thank you again to each of our prize sponsors!*** We sincerely appreciate your support. The sponsors in each of the categories are:

Creekside Grain Cleaning  
Shadow Ranch  
Town of Gravelbourg  
Gravelbourg Tribune  
Chaplin Nature Centre  
Hickseed Ltd.  
Elaine Bouvier; Berry Jam Festival  
Rolling Rock (Gravelbourg)  
Treasure Valley Markets  
Crop Production Services  
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