

## Fact Sheet For Caring for our Watersheds Leader Guide

### 1. What watershed do you live in?

The Old Wives Watershed Association (OWWA) is located in the Old Wives Watershed.

### 2. Include a map or outline of your watershed:

Refer to the picture located at the bottom of the document.

### 3. How big is your watershed?

The watershed is approximately 16,850 km<sup>2</sup>.

### 4. How many people live in it?

Based on OWWA's Old Wives Lake Watershed Plan in 2014, there are approximately 9,300 residents within the watershed area.

### 5. What are the main sources of water?

The main source of water for the watershed is the Wood River and the major tributaries that connect to the river are the: Wiwa creek, Notukeu river, Pinto Creek. Our watershed is a closed basin watershed meaning all water sources depend on rainfall to fill bodies of water.

### 6. What are the names of the major bodies of water?

The largest stream in the watershed is the Wood River, which originates along the southern boundary. The Notukeu Creek is a main tributary to the Wood River in which Russell and Mosquito Creeks are tributaries to the Notukeu Creek. The Wiwa Creek is the other main tributary to the Wood River; however, there is also the Pinto, McDonald, Six Mile, Lynthorpe, and Flynn Creeks that act as tributaries to the Wood River.

In addition to the naturally occurring water bodies, there are a number of man-made reservoirs. Thomson Lake, formed by the Lafleche dam on the Wood River is the largest fresh water body within the watershed (Old Wives Lake is larger in size but is considered entirely saline). Thomson Lake Regional Park was the first regional park created in Saskatchewan. Overall, there are seven reservoirs located in the watershed: Admiral, Cadillac, Gouverneur, Russell Creek, Braddock, Summercove, and Kincaid.

Old Wives Lake is the largest natural water body in the watershed with a total lakebed area of approximately 300km<sup>2</sup>.

All the water ultimately flows through the Wood River and ends up in Old Wives Lake and/or Chaplin Lake (through an engineered diversion).

### 7. Describe the land.

The Old Wives Watershed is located in southwestern Saskatchewan and is located in the Missouri River Basin. The area was originally mapped by John Palliser in the 1850's and is considered to be the heart of the Palliser's triangle. An area of land considered unsuitable for agricultural production. According to our latest census in 2006, it was reported that 58.10% is annual cropland, 26.24% is native pasture, 10.01% is tame pasture/ hayfields, 5.13% water and riparian areas, and 0.42% urban and barren. The majority of land is being used for agricultural production despite Palliser's findings.

The land in our watershed has pockets of high quality clay valuable for crop production. There are large gullies and hilly crop outcrops that are surrounded by native pasture and are used for grazing cattle. There are few trees in the landscape except along creeks or large wetlands. A lot of salt can be found in the soil profile, which contributes to salinity in the area and helped form large saline lakes. Old Wives Lake, Reed Lake, and Chaplin Lake, are three of the largest saline lakes in our watershed and are part of a global network of extremely important bird areas. These lakes provide an abundance of food for migratory birds and are essential stops on the major flyways heading to the arctic (Red Knot).

## **8. What are the largest towns/cities?**

Within the watershed, there are a total of 17 towns, villages, and organized hamlets and one First Nation located within 32 rural municipalities. The largest urban municipality in the watershed is the Town of Gravelbourg with a population of 1,116 in 2011.

## **9. Does your watershed cross borders?**

The Old Wives Watershed does not cross any borders; however, it is bordered to the east by the Moose Jaw River watershed, to the west by the Swift Current Watershed, and to the south by the South of the Divide Conservation Action Program.

## **10. Where does the water come from? Where does it flow to?**

Old Wives Watershed is unique because it is one of the few in Saskatchewan that is closed to surface water outflow, which means that water only enters from rainfall and only exits through evapotranspiration, groundwater recharge, and consumption. Therefore, there is no incoming water sources, we are dependant on the snow runoff, rain, and groundwater reserves. The water begins at Summercove dam, all tributaries empty into the Wood River, and the water ends up in Old Wives Lake.

## **11. What are some of the main businesses in your watershed?**

Due to the 94% of land allocated to agriculture practices the primary businesses within the watershed include:

- Crop Production Services (Woodrow & Gravelbourg)
- South West Terminal (Hazenmore)
- Hawks Agro (Gravelbourg)

Other important businesses within the watershed include the many Co-op's, Trailtech located in Gravelbourg, and the newly established helium plant located in Mankota (Weil Group Resources, LLC).

