

Summer 2008

Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.

An Update from your Watershed Committee

(306)-452-3292

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

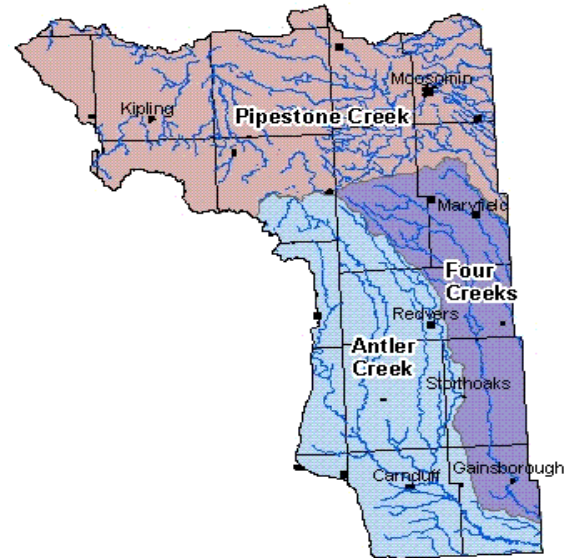
A watershed is an area of land that catches rain and snow and drains toward one source. It is also sometimes referred to as a drainage area or drainage basin. Watersheds come in all sizes and often one watershed is part of a larger watershed. It is made up of a unique mixture of habitats that influence each other. These habitats include forests, wildlife, creeks, rivers and lakes, farms, ranches and towns. Everyone lives in a watershed!



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

WHERE IS THE LOWER SOURIS WATERSHED?

The Lower Souris Watershed is geographically the extreme southeast area of the province that drains into the lower Souris River. It is made up of three sub-watersheds. These sub-watersheds are the Pipestone Creek, Antler Creek, and Four Creeks Sub-watersheds.



Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.

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WHAT IS THE LOWER SOURIS WATERSHED COMMITTEE INC?

The Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc. is a non-profit, basin-wide organization which incorporated in 2006. It is made up of representatives from each of the sub-watershed groups which are made up of representatives from Rural Municipalities, Urban Councils and local Conservation Groups.

Upcoming Events

* Be sure to check out the events calendar on our website

INSIDE:

- ~ Meet the committee and staff of the Lower Souris Watershed Inc.
- ~ Find out what projects are going on in your area
- ~ Read about how one family in the watershed is doing their part



MEET THE COMMITTEE

Alan Arthur represents the Antler Creek Sub-watershed Committee.

Jim Cairns represents PCAB – the Provincial Council for Agriculture Development and Diversification ADD Boards for Saskatchewan Inc.

Jim Lorette is the delegate representing the 4 Creeks Sub-watershed Committee.

John Van Eaton is the Chairperson and delegate representing the Pipestone Creek Sub-watershed Committee and has also taken on the role of Chairperson for the Lower Souris Watershed Committee.

Elaine Morgan is the Executive Administrator for the Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc.



Back row, left to right: Jim Lorette, Elaine Morgan, Alan Arthur
Front row, left to right: John Van Eaton, Jim Cairns

UPDATE FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

For the past number of years, the Lower Souris Watershed Inc. has carried out a great number of projects in the area. Because of the nature of the projects, some may feel that ensuring sustainability for future generations is only a rural based issue. Most people do, however understand that ensuring a sustainable future for our children and grandchildren is everyone's responsibility.

Our programming scope is currently being adjusted to be more inclusive of all watershed residents, regardless of their postal address.

For more information, please contact myself, or your local watershed representative.

~ **John Van Eaton,**
Chairperson
306-646-4450

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Lower Souris Watershed Resident Phone Survey which took place in April.

See the complete survey results on our website.

What Do We Do?

- provide watershed education
- restore wetlands for conservation
- develop sustainable community water supplies
- identify and reduce surface and groundwater threats
- assist landowners to implement Beneficial Management Practices
- preserve and develop local fish habitat
- engage in research projects
- monitor water quality



UPDATE FROM THE COORDINATOR

Our organization is continually searching for projects and programs that will enable us to fully implement our source water protection plan. To date we have been successful in securing program funding for a variety of watershed projects. Many of our programs complement each other moving us towards an intergraded watershed management plan.

Current projects that we are working on deal with issues such as education and awareness, ground water quality, water well management and integrity, invasive alien species infestation, fish habitat and migration and provision of wildlife habitat. Many other issues have been identified within our watershed plan, and we are seeking new program funds to address these issues on an ongoing basis.

Although much work is being done to protect our precious water resources within our watershed we need to fully engage all of our watershed residents to do their part. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

~Sheldon Kyle, Watershed Coordinator
306-452-3292



UPDATE FROM THE GROUP PLAN ADVISOR

The Lower Souris Agri-Environmental Group Plan is a program designed for agricultural producers to implement Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) on their farms in an effort to have a cumulative positive effect on Surface Water Quality in the Lower Souris Watershed.

Through this program, I assist producers in applying for potential cost-share funding for BMPs such as solar watering systems, cross fencing, portable windbreaks, well decommissioning and more through the Canada-Saskatchewan Farm Stewardship Program.

The Lower Souris AEGP has been very successful to date with producers completing over 350 projects to improve water quality and riparian health, thus bringing \$600,000 of public money into our watershed. We are still accepting applications for projects through this program and the earlier that applications are sent in, the better.

Protecting our surface and ground water sources is *everybody's* responsibility. Let's all do our part. Thank you to all producers who have participated in this program. For more information on this Lower Souris AEGP and potential funding opportunities, please feel free to contact me.

~Karmen Kyle, Group Plan Advisor
306-452-7953



UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

One major objective of the Lower Souris Watershed Committee Inc. is to provide watershed education and awareness to all watershed residents. We regularly hold extension events based on various interests within the watershed. We also have hosted school and 4-H field days and trail rides.

Updates and information also come in our quarterly newsletter and in press releases to all local newspapers.

We have the support of a wonderful variety of technical resources and are open to any suggestions for information sessions or field days that would be of interest to watershed residents. If you have comments or suggestions please feel free to contact me.

~Lyn Kuhn, Communications Director
306-736-3091



Embracing Change

In order to survive in today's farming world, producers must have their eyes wide open to constant changes in markets, weather patterns, technology and so forth. In fact, Statistics Canada shows that total agricultural acreage is about the only thing in the agricultural industry that has stayed constant over time. For producers Bob and Ivy Goodbrand, that simply drives home the fact that our agricultural land base is limited, and most of the land that is *of* agricultural use is already *in* use. So if we want it to remain productive, we had better take care of it!

Bob and Ivy Goodbrand and their family run a commercial cattle operation about 10 miles south of Broadview, near the Pipestone Creek. They are no strangers to the changes that have become necessary to survive in today's farming world. Decreases in grain prices, dry weather, and the elimination of the Crow Benefit convinced the Goodbrands to convert their cropping operation to a straight cattle operation in the mid-eighties. They also converted their purebred operation to a commercial herd in the nineties to better suit market demands at that time. Then five years ago, Bob was forced to seek off-farm income to subsidize their operation through the BSE crisis.

The fact of the matter is, however, without suitable land and water resources, agriculture in itself is not viable. The Goodbrands recognize this as a serious issue and perhaps one of the most important places to be making changes in agriculture right now. Whether the emphasis is placed at the producer level or at the technical level, the Goodbrands are definitely doing their part.



Two years ago they began working with Etienne Souldre, a Range Agrologist with the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority. They received their Environmental Farm Plan Certification shortly thereafter and have since implemented several Beneficial Management Practices (BMP's) with technical advice from Etienne and financial assistance from the Canada – Saskatchewan Farm Stewardship Program.

"I did not realize the damage cattle could do to the willows along the creek, and treed areas in general, until Etienne pointed that out," said Bob. And that is one of the main reasons that the Goodbrands fenced off a third dugout as well as a half mile along the creek where the riparian area was in especially bad condition. Having fenced off two dugouts ten years ago, and depending on windmills the Goodbrands were glad to receive assistance in purchasing a portable solar watering system for their cattle. Portable wind breaks have also been provided to offer the animals protection from the elements in the winter and relieve stress on the treed areas of their range.

In addition to these improvements, Bob and Ivy's daughter, Amy, took a keen enough interest in these issues that she went on to earn a double degree in Biology and Geography, and is currently spending her second summer working on a water runoff study along the Pipestone Creek with the Watershed Authority.

The Goodbrands are doing their part to improve the way they manage their soil and water, but realize that the benefits are cumulative and dependant on others following in the same direction, as well as educating the next generation on the value of these resources and the importance of protecting them.

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