

# The River Current

Summer 2001



**Our Mission:**  
To promote awareness, linkages, stewardship, knowledge and respect for the basin ecosystems and heritage that will encourage sustainable use of the basin's natural resources and nurture cultural values.

**Notice of  
Annual General Meeting**  
Partners FOR the Saskatchewan  
River Basin  
October 11, 2001 12:45pm  
Best Western Hospitality Inn  
135 Southland Drive, SE  
Calgary, Alberta

The 2001 conference is presented by Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin in partnership with:



**Oldman River Basin  
Water Quality Initiative**

## Who Speaks for the Watershed?

**Conference & Annual General Meeting  
October 11 & 12, 2001  
Best Western Hospitality Inn  
Calgary, Alberta**

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin is pleased to be teaming up with three other watershed organizations to present the 2001 Conference "Who Speaks for the Watershed?" We invite you to help us explore the needs, the opportunities, the successes and the difficulties that arise when addressing issues from a watershed perspective, and with broad based input.

With increasing attention from the media on water in the last few years, the issues of stakeholder involvement, integrated decision making, and the concept of working together to achieve common goals, are more important than ever. The conference will begin with discussion of the rationale behind stakeholder involvement in watershed issues; who are the stakeholders, how can they ensure their voices are heard, and how can groups, government agencies and organizations work together.

We are pleased to have Dr. Ron Freethy confirmed as our keynote speaker. Dr. Freethy oversaw a very successful campaign for the clean up of the Mersey Basin which includes the cities of Manchester and Liverpool in England. Their success arose in part through the ability to include a wide range of partners. His presentation will include an overview of their approach, as well as some of the challenges and issues they continue to face.

We will then bring the concepts closer to home with an exploration of various approaches to watershed management within the prairie provinces. Do the agencies charged with policy and decision making take a watershed based perspective? How do they facilitate stakeholder involvement and input? We'll also take a look at some of the tools are available (or that should be available) to ensure that a wide range of interests can be better integrated to facilitate information sharing. We encourage organizations to consider bringing a display or handouts that highlight their work.

This conference will provide some answers, but we anticipate that it will also result in new questions. The sessions will be structured to ensure that there is adequate time for interaction and discussion among participants. Our wrap up session will include a facilitated discussion to identify ways in which partnerships among stakeholders, basin organizations, government agencies, industry and business can be strengthened.

We all need to speak for the watershed, but that isn't always easy. We trust that this conference sounds intriguing and offers the potential to learn from each other, to make new contacts, to put forth your ideas, and to move closer towards a common goal of sustainable and healthy watersheds.

Register today by completing the form on the reverse or by logging onto our website at [www.saskriverbasin.ca](http://www.saskriverbasin.ca).

# Conference Overview

## Session Themes

### *The Rationale Behind Stakeholder Involvement in Watershed Issues*

Why and how do stakeholder groups get involved in watershed issues?

### *Who Speaks For the Watershed?*

Examine the concept of watershed based organizations. What is their mandate? How do they achieve that mandate? How can we better work together to achieve common goals? How can we better serve stakeholders?

### *Tools for Communication*

How can we communicate research results to stakeholders? How can we communicate stakeholder needs to researchers? What are some effective means of communicating information about watersheds?

### *Working Together*

How can the interests of stakeholders be better integrated? How can we encourage stakeholders/government agencies to voluntarily look at the broader watershed when making decisions? What are some appropriate mechanisms for integrated decision making?

### *What Have We Learned*

What have we learned from this workshop? What are some next steps that could be taken? How can we strengthen partnerships between federal government/ provincial agencies/ stakeholder groups?

## Speakers

*Keynote Speakers: Hon. Lorne Taylor - Alberta Minister of Environment*

*Dr. Ron Freethy - Communications & Scientific Director, Mersey River Basin Campaign*

Speakers will include representatives from the Oldman River Water Quality Initiative, the Bow River Basin Council, the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin, Crowfoot Creek Watershed Group, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Saskatchewan Network of Watershed Stewards (SNOWS), and others to be confirmed.

Visit our website at [www.saskriverbasin.ca](http://www.saskriverbasin.ca) for an updated list of confirmed speakers.

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin  
402 Third Avenue South  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7K 3G5

Telephone: (306) 665-6887 or  
1-800-567-8007 (AB/SK/MB only)  
Facsimile: (306) 665-6117  
E-mail: [partners@saskriverbasin.ca](mailto:partners@saskriverbasin.ca)

Full Registration (includes banquet):  
Members/Non-profits \$125.00 \_\_  
PFSRB\_\_ Bow River\_\_  
Oldman\_\_ North Sk \_\_  
Non-profit\_\_  
Non-members \$145.00 \_\_  
Extra banquet ticket \$35.00 \_\_  
Exhibit Space  
Corporate \$200.00 \_\_  
Non-profit \$50.00 \_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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**GST 7%** (Reg.No. 11903 7042 RT)  
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**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate whether or not you will be attending the banquet: Yes\_\_ No \_\_

Accommodations- \$89.00/night (single) - \$94.00/night (double)

Best Western Hospitality Inn, 135 Southland Drive SE, Calgary, AB, Phone: 1-877-278-5050

**Please Note:** A block of rooms have been set aside until September 15, 2001.

Information on other accommodations in the vicinity is available at our website [www.saskriverbasin.ca](http://www.saskriverbasin.ca)

## ***Biodiversity: A Profile for Community Action***

By: Sarah Pullman, Harmony Foundation

October 2001 marks the official release of Harmony Foundation's latest publication, ***Biodiversity: A Profile for Community Action***. Since 1985, Harmony Foundation has been providing quality environmental education resources for community groups and educators across Canada and around the world. Our goal is to build the skills of individuals, schools, communities and other organizations so that they are prepared to deal with the challenges facing them as they confront important environmental issues. This latest publication is an invaluable resource for anyone concerned about the issue of disappearing biodiversity in Canada and around the world.

***Biodiversity: A Profile for Community Action*** is intended as a companion to Harmony Foundation's highly successful ***Community Action Workshop Manual***. The Manual provides a tested framework for community action that can be applied to a wide range of environmental issues, while the Profile (which is only one of a planned series of issue profiles) provides clear, readable information about biodiversity, intended to give individuals and groups the issue-based knowledge they need to take effective action. It contains a concise and accurate overview of the issue, as well as extensive resource listings, and a series of inspiring success stories describing how other groups have already taken effective action on loss of biodiversity in their own communities. ***Biodiversity: A Profile for Community Action*** should be required reading for anyone wondering how they can act upon their concern about this increasingly important issue.



Photo courtesy of Meewasin Valley Authority

If this publication sounds interesting to you, you might also be interested in a training session that Harmony Foundation will be holding on October 20, 2001, in conjunction with Nature Saskatchewan. This training session, entitled "Biodiversity: Tools for Action", will be held at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. It is intended primarily for educators and community group representatives who are interested in learning the skills required to launch a local

biodiversity initiative. Participants will receive a copy of both the ***Community Action Workshop Manual*** and ***Biodiversity: A Profile for Community Action***.

Through a series of hands-on activities, we'll expand your understanding of biodiversity and its decline, both globally and locally, motivate you to take action, and provide you with a simple and effective framework for planning local biodiversity initiatives. By the end of the training session, you'll be prepared to lead a Community Action Workshop, which will guide your organization through the process of learning about biodiversity, identifying a local biodiversity problem to address, and developing a detailed action plan to tackle that problem. Past participants agree this is a practical and inspiring program. Cost for the one day workshop is only \$25.00.

For more information or to register for the training session, contact:

Attila Chanady, Conservation Director  
Nature Saskatchewan  
15 Simpson Cres.  
Saskatoon, SK S7H 3C5  
tel: (306) 374 6962  
email: achanady@home.com

For more information on any of Harmony Foundation's publications, or to learn more about "Biodiversity: Tools for Action," please visit our website at [www.harmonyfdn.ca](http://www.harmonyfdn.ca) or email us at [harmony@islandnet.com](mailto:harmony@islandnet.com).

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin is honoured to have its Volunteer Watershed Monitoring Program identified as one of the success stories in the Harmony Foundation's new publication ***Biodiversity: a Profile for Community Action***. The two-page article provides an overview of the Monitoring Program that has been delivered in partnership with the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation since 1998. The Friends of Goodspirit Lake were profiled as one of the monitoring groups that have been collecting data for this program.

In the Foreword to ***Biodiversity: a Profile for Community Action***, Micheal Bloomfield, Executive Director and Founder of the Harmony Foundation, notes that "to successfully meet our environment and community development challenges we must promote a massive program of training and education that will help individuals develop goals and values that respect others, are compatible with a healthy environment, promote progressive social and economic decisions, and lead to positive action for the benefit of people around the world, as well as other species and future generations". The groups participating in programs such as local watershed monitoring are certainly contributing in a positive way to that awareness, understanding and action. This summer the Friends of Goodspirit Lake extended their knowledge to the next generation, by facilitating a one day Water Watchdog monitoring program with 14 children and their parents. Congratulations to these and all groups who are helping to develop and increase understanding about a healthy watershed.

## *Meridian Dam Preliminary Feasibility Study*

Sask Water is cooperating with Alberta Environment in undertaking a preliminary study of the feasibility of a dam and water supply project on the South Saskatchewan River near the Saskatchewan-Alberta border. Although the idea behind the project has been around for years, this will be the first time it will be subjected to a comprehensive investigation. Golder Associates Ltd of Calgary have been hired to conduct the study.

Possible benefits cited by proponents of the project include irrigation development, hydroelectric power generation and recreation. Although the project could provide some significant benefits to the local area, there are serious concerns about the impact it would have on the environment and on the water supply for Lake Diefenbaker and downstream. The study will look at hydrology and water supply, conceptual designs, costs, benefits and environmental issues surrounding the proposed project.

Both governments consider public input an important part of the study. Alberta Environment and Sask Water recently held a series of stakeholder consultation meetings to help identify issues that need to be addressed within the study.

Meetings were held in late July and early August in Leader and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and Lethbridge, Calgary and Medicine Hat, Alberta. More than 500 people attended the meetings where engineering, agricultural, social, economic and environmental issues were among the topics raised.

Reports on the stakeholder meetings are expected to be available by mid-September, and will be distributed to those who registered at the meetings. The meeting reports will also be posted on the Sask Water and Alberta Environment websites. The final report on the study, due early in 2002, will also be made available to the public.

*For more information, check out:  
Sask Water at <http://www.saskwater.com> and  
Alberta Environment at <http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/>*

*By Garnet Gobert, Water Resource and Infrastructure  
Management, Sask Water*

## *New Look for PFSRB Website: [www.saskriverbasin.ca](http://www.saskriverbasin.ca)*

With the technical expertise provided by a computer science summer student, the Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin has modified its' website to provide better online support for our program and project initiatives. As part of her summer position, Jody Hawrysh developed a website component for the Water Watchdog program, and then reworked the rest of the Partners website to make it a little more user friendly. Take a moment to check out some of the new features including a listing of our publications and products, resource materials, membership information, and upcoming events. Try out our online registration form for the upcoming conference, or pop into the Water Watchdog section to review some of the findings from children who have participated in the pilot program this summer. We welcome your comments and suggestions for additional information or links to interesting resources. We appreciate the support of the Centennial Summer Student Employment Program for their assistance in funding the summer student position, and wish Jody all the best as she continues her studies.



**Centennial  
Summer Student  
Employment Program**

The River Current is published quarterly by Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin. Articles and news items will be considered for publication. For further information about Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin Project, or to submit items, please contact:

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