

The River Current

Winter 2008



Our Mission: Promoting watershed sustainability through awareness, linkages and stewardship.

We Are ALL Upstream Conference

November 5-7, 2007 Winnipeg MB

The Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin and the Red River Basin Commission held a joint conference “We Are All Upstream” November 5th through 7th 2007 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The focus of the conference was to address the health issues of Lake Winnipeg, to determine what can be done to alleviate the problems faced by the lake, and how this task can best be accomplished.

The first presentation, by Dr. Al Kristofferson from the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, detailed what research has been undertaken, including the monitoring of nutrients and biological factors affecting the lake. Out of the 60 rivers and streams flowing into Lake Winnipeg, the Winnipeg River contributes 45%, the Saskatchewan River 25%, and the Red River 11% of the total flow. The preliminary phosphorus budget for the lake shows 11% coming from the Winnipeg River, 5% from the Saskatchewan River and 54% from the Red River. The area of largest algae blooms is around the confluence with

the Saskatchewan River due to the high water clarity and light penetration. This research raised a number of possibilities for future research priorities, including native species loss due to habitat disruption and climate warming, the impacts of invasive species, and the effects of the cyanobacterial blooms on food web function and fishery productivity and the effects of reservoir management.

Robert Halliday from R. Halliday and Associates, currently working on the State of the Basin Report, gave a presentation on the status of the report along with background information concerning the location, size and composition of the Saskatchewan River Basin. The participants were told that the Saskatchewan River Basin covers an area larger than Germany though smaller than France. 90% of the water flow in the basin comes from the Rocky Mountains and the terrain elevation changes from 3000m above sea level in the mountains to 260m above sea level at Cedar Lake, Manitoba. In total area, 52% of the river basin is located in Alberta, 42% in Saskatchewan and 6% in Manitoba. As well, there is 28km² of the basin in British Columbia and 1760km² in Montana.

Wednesday's presentations included descriptions of the different basins that feed into Lake Winnipeg and therefore have an impact on the lake. Rhonda McDougal from the Manitoba Water Stewardship discussed the Assiniboine Basin. The Assiniboine Basin is composed of four sub basins with a total drainage area of 162,134km². The Portage la Prairie Spillway and Dam, built in 1970, diverts water from the Assiniboine River to the Portage diversion and then into Lake Winnipeg during periods of high water. This accounts for 6% of the total annual inflow to Lake Winnipeg.

Bud Oliver from the Red River Basin Commission discussed the Red River Basin. The Red River Basin covers an area of 174,514 km² and is composed of 9 major sub basins in North Dakota, 10 major sub basins in Minnesota and 5 major sub basins in Manitoba. The Red River Valley is one of the truly flat landscapes in the world with a change in elevation north to south of only .09m/km and an east/west change of .38 to .57 m/km.

Todd Sellers from the Lake of the Woods Water Sustainability Foundation discussed the issues surrounding the Lake of the Woods/Rainy River Basin. The Winnipeg River Watershed is composed of 2 major sub basins - the English River Basin covering 55,000 km² and the Lake of the Woods Basin with an area of 70,400 km².



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We Are ALL Upstream Conference *continued*

Aboriginal perspectives concerning issues surrounding Lake Winnipeg were also discussed. Melissa Hotain from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs presented a discussion on First Nations Governance related to environmental issues affecting Lake Winnipeg. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs was founded in 1989 in part to improve the socio-economic conditions of First Nations people and communities. Part of the current research and policy focuses on water issues. The second presentation was from Ron Ballantyn who is a commercial fisherman from the Grand Rapids First Nation. Ron discussed his experiences as a fisherman on the lake and the changes he personally has noticed over the years. A comment made by Ron during his presentation was that the fishermen on the lake have been noticing many changes in regards to fish species and water quality. The fishermen are concerned and are hoping that events like this conference can assist in improving the health of the lake.

The following organizations assisted the conference by supplying financial assistance for the program: Manitoba Water Stewardship, The Winnipeg Foundation, The Thomas Sill Foundation Inc, The Assiniboine Credit Union, The International Institute for Sustainable Development, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, Manitoba Hydro, The Lake Winnipeg Foundation, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Canada-Manitoba Water Supply Expansion Program.

We Are ALL Upstream Round Table Discussions *November 5-7, 2007 - Winnipeg MB*

Part of the agenda for the conference included scheduled round table discussions. During these discussions, participants divided into smaller groups to discuss a number of questions raised by the conference organizers. After the discussion period, each group presented their conclusions to the group as a whole. The questions proposed to the groups are listed below, along with some of the conclusions that were reached.



What are the indicators of Integrated Resource Management?

- Indicators should include a sound consultative process with a two way flow of communication.
- A workable plan with steps that can then be implemented.
- A level of engagement with breadth and depth across the different sectors.

What have been the keys to successful watershed management planning for your watershed?

- A strong awareness and understanding of the issues with diverse representation.
- A willingness to adopt plan recommendations.
- A strong local committed leadership from the bottom up.

What can we do to help improve water quality in Lake Winnipeg?

- Coordinated efforts are necessary to improve sewage treatment on a multi municipal basis.
- Old septic systems need to be removed and combined into a community system.
- Educate youth on the importance of water quality. They are the next generation of public leaders and developers.

How do we apply this back home in our own watersheds?

- Encourage local stores and businesses to stock phosphate free detergent and other items that will decrease the pollutants entering the water system.
- Increase your own and others knowledge of the different watersheds by writing books and articles related to these areas.

How can we engage First Nations People?

- It is necessary to recognize that there are many different language and cultural groups (First Nations and Métis) located within the different watersheds. One shareholder within a community cannot represent all interest groups.
- It is also necessary to recognize the impediments that currently exist between First Nations and Non First Nations communities in regards to collaboration on infrastructure. This involves such things as waste water treatment systems.

What is a good next step?

- Include other watersheds in decision making. There needs to an ongoing forum to share information.
- Coordination between groups is necessary as there is an overlap between areas.
- One delegate from each organization and/or area could be appointed to share information between the groups and therefore increase knowledge.

Saskatchewan River Delta Symposium

...Past, Present and Future

April 1-3, 2008 at the Saskatoon Inn

For more information or to register online
<http://www.saskriverbasin.ca>

Name: _____
 Organization: _____
 Position: _____
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Permission to print your contact information for listing of participants in registration package and proceedings:

- Please do not list my name or contact details
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Conference Registration (Prices below include GST) (meals are included in registration fees)

Early Bird - prior to Feb 29th 2008

After February 29, 2008 - March 28, 2009

- Student \$26.25 Regular \$157.50 Student \$52.50 Regular \$183.75

Banquet Tickets (Note - 1 free banquet ticket included with regular registration)

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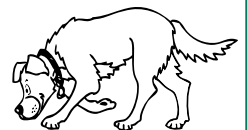
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 Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G5
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Water Watchdog Program

Water Watchdog is a field trip program that requires youth to become “stewards of the river” by encouraging hands-on activities. Youth evaluate a river or wetland by focusing on the wildlife, vegetation and the water quality. The program is designed to offer youth ages 7 - 13 an education in water quality and water management while teaching that one individual can help to shape a better and healthier ecosystem.



Thanks to the wonderful sponsorship of numerous organizations, the Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin is able to make this program available to teachers and group leaders at no cost. If you would like to receive one of these educational kits, please contact our office.



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

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Canada



Summer Employment - Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin (PFSRB) is searching for an Environmental Stewardship Coordinator from May 1, 2008 to August 31, 2008. For full job description details, please visit www.saskriverbasin.ca

Duties

- Assist in marketing, communications, administration, and delivery of PFSRB programs, including State of the Basin Report, Envirothon, Water Watchdog, Click on Climate and Moopher's Amazing Journey to the Sea
- Assist in developing funding proposals for PFSRB programs
- Assist in developing and enhancing partnerships with organizations
- Assist in identifying and developing new PFSRB programs
- General communications, research and marketing activities, to increase awareness about PFSRB and the program that it delivers.

Qualifications: Full-time enrollment in a post-secondary program with experience in communications, marketing, and/or environmental education

Please submit resume by March 1, 2008 to
Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin
402 Third Avenue South; Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G5
partners@saskriverbasin.ca

Only applicants to be interviewed will be contacted. We would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to submit an application.

Conference Listings

World Water Week in Canmore
March 16-18, 2008
www.parc.ca

Canmore, AB

Saskatchewan River Delta Symposium
April 1-2, 2008
www.saskriverbasin.ca

Saskatoon, SK

CWRA-Alberta Branch Conference: Watershed Management in Alberta: Making it Happen
April 6-8, 2008
www.cwra.org/About_CWRA/CWRA.Branches/Alberta/AB2008conference/a52008conference.html

Calgary, AB

**Managing the Health of Canada's Lakes and Rivers
61st CWRA Annual Conference**
June 16-17, 2008
<http://conference.cwra.org>

Gimli, MB

If you have an event you would like to include under our listings, please email us at partners@saskriverbasin.ca

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