

Following are the comments from Community Planning Services (Morden and Deloraine Offices) on the Pembina River Watershed Characterization draft document.

Comments:

In general, cultivated farmable and pasture lands are designated for general agricultural activities and livestock operations. General agriculture and livestock uses are limited around settlement centres, villages and towns. Streams, creeks, lakes, and ravines are designated separately; some are designated as reserve and/or recreational areas. A map showing the land use zones of the Pembina River watershed area is attached. Please note this map does not include the information for those areas handled by the Deloraine or Portage CPS Offices.

Municipalities are amending their Development Plans and Zoning by-laws to regulate expansion of existing livestock operations or the establishment of new livestock operations:

The proposed amendments would prohibit livestock operations:

- i. within recreational policy areas, designated Reservoir Areas, Lakes, Rivers, and Streams
- ii. on soils with agriculture capability of class 6, 7, or unimproved organic soils as defined under the CLI

Would limit Livestock operations:

- i. around an urban area, rural residential areas and environmentally sensitive areas along Rivers, Stream and Reservoirs

An open house was held on February 11, 2008 in Pilot Mound to review a draft of the Louise Planning District Development Plan including a new Livestock Policy for the area. A summary of the comments received at the open house follows:

- Maintain and encourage all types of farming. Use minimum and reasonable restriction on any kind of farming activities.
- Setbacks from drains and water are excessive. More than 100 metre buffer from each side of a waterway is excessive. Less stringent setbacks would be better.
- More environmentally safe methods of animal feeding close to residential areas would be more acceptable. e.g. bale grazing... lower concentration of manure
- Riparian areas should be allowed to graze periodically to harvest excessive vegetative growths to reduce nutrients flow.
- Drainage is the biggest problem in the area. A proper survey should be done to solve the problem.

- Aquifers should be protected. Future development and water quality is a concern.
- Livestock operations are too big and may pose risk to the environment and the waterways.
- Industrial development should be encouraged to attract population growth.
- Local communities should retain the right to grant permission to support suitable livestock operations.
- Blue Berry industry along the Goudney reservoir may be a good choice.
- Old livestock operations should have the right to start up again after being dormant.

Observations:

1. Water quality is a major issue for the province and the major issue for local people living within the watershed.
2. The current round of reviews of local Development Plan By-laws is resulting in new policy statements about the protection of water quality.
3. The province is also undertaking a comprehensive review of the Provincial Land Use Policies including general development, agricultural, and water policies.
4. The province is also looking at new regulations requiring the establishment of riparian areas along provincial water bodies and waterways.
5. The location of livestock operations within the watershed was identified as an on-going concern and the provincial initiative of having all municipalities and planning districts adopt local livestock operations policies was the result.
6. Livestock operations policies are being adopted in local Development Plan By-laws aimed at reducing land use conflicts between residential land uses and new or expanding livestock operations, usually relying on mutual separation distance requirements.
7. Planning policy statements which require site assessments for new and expanding livestock operations is one of the checks and balances needed to help protect the natural environment.
8. Existing livestock operations located within riparian areas along waterways continue to be a local and provincial concern -- while the province can add to applicable regulation and policy approaches, the CD could look at programs to help the land owner with relocation efforts.
9. Land set aside programs like ALUS seem to have many benefits for the natural systems and paying land owners not to cultivate water sensitive and other vulnerable land areas seems like a reasonable way forward in balancing the public good and land owners needs.

10. Improvements to municipal solid and liquid waste sites and operations are another initiative with positive environmental consequences.
11. Provincial policies and CD programs are aimed at reducing the negative consequences of human occupation within the watersheds natural systems and there is an increasing awareness of the need to be proactive to help protect our natural environment.
12. There are an increasing number of people suggesting that water will become increasingly important to all humans on this earth and Manitoba needs to do its part in protecting the quantity and quality of its naturally occurring water resources.
13. CDs play an important role in affecting change for the protection of the important natural resources we all know as land, air, and water.

