



**TERMS OF REFERENCE –
SOUTHWEST INTERLAKE
INTEGRATED WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

March 17, 2014

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The West Interlake Watershed Conservation District has been designated the Water Planning Authority for the West Interlake watersheds and is tasked with developing the Southwest Interlake Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

The **PURPOSE** of the plan is to positively influence the protection of water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources.

The **PLANNING PROCESS** will occur over a timeframe of approximately two years and include the following steps:

- Designate Water Planning Authority;
- Appoint Project Management Team;
- Develop Terms of Reference;
- Acquire existing information / reports relevant to the watershed;
- Identify key partners and stakeholders in watershed;
- Meet with key partners and stakeholders to identify issues and concerns related to water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources in watershed;
- Review current water management objectives and practices;
- Develop objectives and recommendations respecting water management in the watershed;
- Review objectives and recommendations for the protection, restoration and improved management of water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources; and
- Develop stakeholder-based implementation plans including measures of success.

The following **PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT** apply throughout the planning process:

- **TRANSPARENCY** – throughout the entire planning process including making all information available publicly
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** – for all decisions and actions, accounting for the possible social, economic and environmental consequences
- **OPPORTUNITY** – for meaningful participation throughout the planning process and during plan implementation
- **RESPECT**– for all stakeholders in order to provide an environment for sharing knowledge and ideas
- **RECOGNITION** – of all existing rights, treaties, agreements and obligations
- **COMMITMENT** – to sustainable watershed management and ongoing adaptation
- **SUPPORT** – to the planning process and during plan implementation

PARTICIPANT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The West Interlake Watershed Conservation District was designated as the **WATER PLANNING AUTHORITY** for the Southwest Interlake Watershed through a Memorandum of Understanding signed on March 11, 2009 by the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship. An amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding to modify the planning boundaries and name was approved in February 2014. As Water Planning Authority, the West Interlake Watershed Conservation District is responsible for leading the development of an integrated watershed management plan for the Southwest Interlake watershed that meets the requirements outlined in *The Water Protection Act*.

The **PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM** is appointed by the Water Planning Authority and given the primary role of undertaking the planning process and developing the integrated watershed management plan. They are the key decision makers throughout the process.

The **PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM** includes, but is not limited to:

- West Interlake Watershed Conservation District
- RM of St. Laurent
- RM of Coldwell
- RM of Armstrong
- RM of Woodlands
- RM of Portage la Prairie
- RM of Eriksdale
- Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship

The PMT is responsible for developing the Terms of Reference, establishing the Watershed Team, requesting relevant information about the watershed, coordinating and participating at all meetings, developing promotional advertisements, recording meeting minutes, delivering a public communications strategy, and writing the plan.

The **WATERSHED TEAM** is established by the Project Management Team and given the role of contributing watershed information, ideas and recommendations to the planning process. The Watershed Team is a relatively large group (20-30 people) that have background knowledge and experience in the watershed and/or hold specific management responsibilities in the watershed. The Watershed Team is responsible for providing existing watershed information, presenting watershed issues, assessing management options, suggesting recommendations to address issues, reviewing the draft plan, and contributing to plan implementation.

The membership of the **WATERSHED TEAM** includes, but is not limited to:

- Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
- Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
- Manitoba Municipal Government
- Municipalities
- Peguis First Nations
- Interlake Métis Association
- Manitoba Métis Federation
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Planning Districts
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation
- Beach / Cottage Associations
- Fish and Wildlife Associations
- Trappers Association

The **MUNICIPALITIES** in the watershed are responsible for bringing forward water management related issues, providing background information, participating at meetings, suggesting recommendations to address issues, commenting on the draft plan, and sharing in plan implementation. They are also expected to make planning decisions that will improve the overall health of the watershed.

MANITOBA CONSERATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP is responsible for contributing watershed reports and input to the planning process, participating on the Watershed Team, and sharing in plan implementation.

The Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship approves the final IWMP. Prior to approval, the Minister may refer the plan to the Manitoba Water Council for additional review, advice and comments.

FIRST NATIONS are invited to participate on the Watershed Team to contribute information about the watershed, provide recommendations to address watershed issues, and share in plan implementation.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS are invited to participate on the Watershed Team to contribute information about the watershed, provide recommendations to address watershed issues, and share in plan implementation.

The Water Protection Act guides the development of integrated watershed management plans in Manitoba. The purpose of the *Act* is to provide for the protection and stewardship of Manitoba’s water and aquatic ecosystems, recognizing:

- a) that Manitoba’s social and economic well-being is dependent upon the sustained existence of a sufficient supply of high quality water;
- b) the importance of comprehensive planning for watersheds, with respect to water, land and ecosystems, on a basis that acknowledges and considers their interdependence;
- c) that water resources and aquatic ecosystems require protection to ensure the high quality of drinking water sources;
- d) the importance of applying scientific information in decision-making processes about water, including the establishment of standards, objectives and guidelines;
- e) the need to protect riparian areas and wetlands; and
- f) the benefits of providing financial incentives for activities that protect or enhance water, aquatic ecosystems or drinking water sources.

Part 3 of ***The Water Protection Act*** relates specifically to watershed management plans. It describes the designation, roles, and responsibilities of a Water Planning Authority, required content of an integrated watershed management plan, required consultations, process for plan approval and amendments, establishment and purpose of the Water Stewardship Fund, and the establishment, role and responsibilities of the Manitoba Water Council. As well, it identifies the importance of developing plans that address land drainage and flood control, protect drinking water sources, and identify ways that the plan can be implemented, monitored and evaluated.

To ensure an integrated approach to planning, all efforts will be made to recognize the Provincial Land Use Policies and specify **LINKAGES BETWEEN WATER MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE PLANNING**. The IWMP may include recommendations to update policies in existing municipal development plans and zoning by-laws.

2.0 WATERSHED

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHWEST INTERLAKE WATERSHED

- Includes all or part of the municipalities of Eriksdale, Coldwell, Armstrong, St. Laurent, Woodlands, Portage la Prairie, Fisher and Rockwood
- Main towns and communities include Eriksdale, Lundar, Oak Point, St. Laurent, and St. Ambroise.
- Includes an area of approximately 3,200 square km (1,235 square miles)
- Watershed population is approximately 4,400 people but swells during the summer months as cottagers enjoy the beaches and water-based recreational activities along Lake Manitoba
- Major waterbodies include North, West and East Shoal Lakes, Swan Lake, Lindals Lake and Lake Francis
- The primary agricultural activities are forage and beef production
- Land is characterized by relatively flat ground, with many shallow parallel undulations or ridges oriented in a northwest to southwest direction
- Land cover consists primarily of grasslands, wetlands and open deciduous forest
- Vast majority of the soil surface texture is fine loamy
- Soil drainage is highly variable and ranges from well drained to very poorly drained
- Majority of land has an agricultural capability class of 4 or 5
- The land is gently sloped from east to west. The high elevation in the east is approximately 270 metres above sea level (886 ft asl) and the low elevation at Lake Manitoba is approximately 248.5 metres above sea level (815 ft asl).
- Ducks Unlimited Canada has a wetland project on the north end of North Shoal Lake named the Vestfold Complex. It was constructed in 1986 and consists of four controlled wetland cells, a stop-log weir and a pumping system.
- Recorded water levels at North Shoal Lake from 1976 to 2010 have shown a low of 259.14 metres above sea level (masl) in 1990 to a high of 261.78 masl in 2010, indicating water fluctuations of 8.7 feet.



FIGURE 1 – Watershed Planning Area for the Southwest Interlake Integrated Watershed Management Plan

WATERSHED ISSUES

The following list provides a brief introduction to some of the watershed issues in the Southwest Interlake Watershed. These issues, along with others, will be discussed in greater detail throughout the planning process.

Surface Water Management

- High water level at Lake Manitoba
- High water levels and overland flooding at the Shoal Lakes complex
- Drain maintenance – growth of cattails and willows
- Cost effectiveness and sustainability of current drain maintenance program
- Beaver management
- Elevation requirements for seasonal and permanent residences
- Shoreline erosion along Lake Manitoba
- Land use planning and development in flood-prone areas

Water Quality

- On-site wastewater management systems (septic tanks and fields) near waterbodies
- Manure management (spreading, feedlot runoff)
- Cattle in waterways

Groundwater Quality

- Risks of pollution to groundwater
- Poor well construction – surface water impacts on groundwater
- On-site wastewater management systems in cottage areas and near waterbodies

Aquatic Ecosystems / Fish Habitat

- Blockages in waterways impacting fish passage and spawning success
- Impacts of carp on aquatic plants and wildlife in Lake Francis and other marshes

3.0 SCHEDULE

The schedule is organized into three stages: 1) Pre-Planning, 2) Plan Development, and 3) Plan Implementation. There are three check points throughout the planning process to ensure that the Project Management Team and the organizations they represent are in agreement with all documents and decisions before proceeding to the next stage.

PHASE 1 – PRE-PLANNING

Activities:

- Designate a Water Planning Authority
- Form a balanced Project Management Team
- Develop a Terms of Reference
- Complete source water assessments for all public drinking water systems

CHECK POINT 1: Receive endorsement of the Terms of Reference from all of the municipal councils in the watershed.

PHASE 2 - PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Activities:

- Engage watershed residents to gain an understanding of watershed priorities
- Collect and compile scientific, traditional and local knowledge
- Hold at least one meeting with the Watershed Team

CHECK POINT 2: Receive endorsement from all councils on the watershed issues and priorities that will form the framework of the plan.

- Develop a surface water management strategy
- Draft the plan and edit as necessary
- Review the draft plan with the Water Planning Authority, Watershed Team, Rural Municipalities, specific provincial government departments, and watershed residents
- Compile a final draft plan

CHECK POINT 3: Receive endorsement from all councils on the final draft plan prior to submitting the plan for approval.

- Submit the plan to Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
- Once plan is approved, print a minimum of 800 copies
- Promote the plan to watershed residents and stakeholders

PHASE 3 - PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Activities:

- Implement the IWMP
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of implementation annually
- Revisit and revise IWMP

4.0 BUDGET

Manitoba has provided a **WATERSHED PLANNING GRANT** of \$25,000 to the Water Planning Authority to cover the expenses related to undertaking the planning process and developing the plan. The Project Management Team has the authority for expenditure of the grant. The following table lists the tasks and estimated costs.

Tasks	Cost
Engaging watershed residents – meetings and advertisements	\$4,000
Project Management Team meetings	\$3,000
Two Watershed Team meetings	\$2,000
Mail-outs and advertising re: watershed info, issue summary, etc.	\$4,000
Graphic Design of Plan	\$2,000
Printing of Final Plan (Min. 800 copies)	\$8,000
Plan distribution and advertising to encourage implementation	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$25,000

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The IWMP will include an implementation strategy that lists actions and the organization(s) involved and responsible for implementation. This shared strategy will guide and assist stakeholders during plan implementation.

Plan implementation is voluntary; however, the plan will better achieve its goals if all stakeholders participate in implementation. The IWMP will be implemented voluntarily by a group of stakeholders, including the West Interlake Watershed Conservation District. The West Interlake Watershed Conservation District receives provincial, municipal and external funding in order to deliver projects throughout their watershed and is expected to develop their budget in accordance with the watershed goals and actions stated in the plan. Stakeholders outside the boundaries of the West Interlake Watershed Conservation District undertake project implementation with existing budgets, acquisition of external grants, or through creative partnerships.

6.0 ENDORSEMENT

As neighbours, colleagues, and partners, we understand the importance of water management, support the principles of integrated watershed management, and agree to work together to develop the Southwest Interlake Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

Doug Oliver, Chair
West Interlake Watershed Conservation District

Date

Kristin Hayward, Manager – Watershed Planning and Programs
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship

Date

Earl Zotter, Reeve – RM of St. Laurent

Date

Brian Sigfusson, Reeve - RM of Coldwell

Date

Arne Lindell, Reeve – RM of Eriksdale

Date

Kam Blight, Reeve, RM of Portage la Prairie

Date

Donald Walsh, Reeve, RM of Woodlands

Date

Garry Wasylowski, Reeve, RM of Armstrong

Date

Jim Campbell, Reeve, RM of Rockwood

Date