

West Interlake Watershed Conservation District 2013 Annual General Meeting – January 25, 2013

Manager's Report

TO: All members of the West Interlake Watershed Conservation District

The WIWCD mandate/mission is: *"to assess the health of the watershed and address regional land and water issues in a cooperative, long-term planned approach in a sustainable manner."*

The 2012 year was a success. We delivered many successful projects as outlined below, the RM of Grahamdale is in the process of joining our CD and we have send letters to the partner RMs about the IWMP.

Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Rehabilitation

- The WIWCD applied and was awarded an external grant of \$25,000.00 from Manitoba Water Stewardship's Fisheries Enhancement Fund to conduct an *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Assessment* of the Swan Creek watershed in 2009/10. This study identified 12 priority projects for the rehabilitation of riparian and fish habitat and the improvement of water quality, of which eleven of these projects have been initiated or completed in 2011/12. These projects include spawning shoals, riparian fencing and off-site watering systems which will help decrease cattle access to waterways within the Swan Creek watershed, and ultimately, improve water quality, riparian areas and fish habitat.
- The WIWCD applied and was awarded an external grant of \$25,000.00 from Manitoba Water Stewardship's Fisheries Enhancement Fund to conduct an *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Assessment* of the Lake Francis watershed in 2010/11. This study identified 8 priority projects for the rehabilitation of riparian and fish habitat and the improvement of water quality, of which two of these projects have been initiated or completed in 2012/13. These projects include spawning shoals, riparian fencing and off-site watering systems which will help decrease cattle access to waterways within the Lake Francis watershed, and ultimately, improve water quality, riparian areas and fish habitat.
- The WIWCD applied and was awarded an external grant of \$25,000 from Manitoba Water Stewardship's Fisheries Enhancement Fund to conduct an *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Assessment* of the Dog Lake watershed in 2011/12. The study was finalized in December 2011 by Mark Lowden of AAE Tech Services. The WIWCD looks forward to implementing the priority projects identified in this study, which will restore degraded fish habitat, improve water quality and enhance riparian areas. To date, the WIWCD has initiated or completed two projects in the Dog Lake watershed. The WIWCD has applied for external funding for riparian fencing, off site waterers and spawning shoals on the Chippewa Drain.
- The WIWCD apply for another \$25,000 grant from Manitoba Water Stewardship's Fisheries Enhancement Fund for the Shoal Lakes watershed in 2012/13. The WIWCD didn't receive the external funded. So WIWCD reapplied to the Fisheries Enhancement fund and Lake Winnipeg Basin Stewardship Fund for the Shoal Lake study. To date the WIWCD has initiated or completed three projects in the Shoal Lakes watershed.
- The WIWCD offered a winter off-site watering program. This program received a lot of interested. Eleven projects were approved, of which four were completed and one initiated in

the Swan Creek watershed, two were completed and one initiated in the Shoal Lake watershed one was completed and one initiated in the Dog Lake watershed and one was completed in the Lake Francis Watershed.

Groundwater Protection

- The Well Water Protection Program, which includes sealing abandoned and flowing wells and well head protection projects, has had enormous interest. Eight wells were sealed in the 2008/09 season, twenty-two wells were sealed in 2009/10, fifteen wells were sealed in 2010/11, five wells were sealed in 2011/12 and four wells in 2012/13 for a total of 54 wells sealed since the district's opened its doors in October of 2008.
- The WIWCD initiated a well inventory program in the spring of 2009 to assess groundwater quality in the district. Two summer students were hired to go door-to-door throughout the district and talk to landowners about their wells, test well water quality and promote district programs like well sealing and wellhead protection. Water samples were analyzed for total coliform, *E.coli* and nitrates at no cost to the landowner. Approximately 500 homes were visited with 260 samples collected and analyzed. The well inventory program was offered again in 2010 with two summer students. In the second season, a total of 328 homes were visited and 149 samples were taken. The well inventory program was offered again in 2011 with one summer student. In the third season, a total of 141 homes were visited and 141 samples were taken. In 2012 178 homes were visited with 140 samples taken. The district also transported 382 samples in 2011/2012 and 184 samples in 2012/13 to the laboratory in Winnipeg on behalf of local residents as part of the provincial drinking water monitoring program during floods.

Surface Water Quality

- In 2011/12, the district began to sample surface water quality in the Swan Creek on a quarterly basis in partnership with Manitoba Water Stewardship. This site was added to the Province's long-term water quality monitoring program. Results from this program will be shared with residents once sufficient data has been collected and analyzed.

Soil and Water Conservation

- The WIWCD began a forage seed program in 2011/12 with 29 applications approved, however due to weather conditions, only ten producers were able to seed. The remaining applications were carried over to the 2012-13 season. In 2012/13 season 33 applications were approved, however with weather conditions, only 20 producers were able to seed the other 13 applications will have to reapply for the 2013/14 season.
- The WIWCD purchased 450 composters, of which 361 have been sold at a subsidized cost to landowners. Residents and cottage owners find these units to be very beneficial in their yards.
- The WIWCD purchased 298 rain barrels, of which 118 have been sold at a subsidized cost to landowners.
- The WIWCD offered a low flow toilet rebate program for the first time in 2011/12. The program offered residents a \$50.00 rebate for the purchase of a low flow toilet bought locally. To date 12 applications have been approved and paid out.

Public Education

- The WIWCD hosted a manure composter demonstration day on September 18, 2010. The tour generated great interest with approximately 30 people in attendance. On July 27th, 2012 the WIWCD hosted a portable summer off site waterer demonstration with Carl Driedger of Sun Dog Solar explaining how the system worked and answering any questions producers had, followed by a barbecue sponsored by WIWCD and then producers went to inspect fields that were sod seeded. Three different fields were selected to sod seed three different ways to see which field produced the best results.
- Four “Trapper Days” events have been sponsored by the WIWCD - October 2008, February 2009, October 2009 and May 2011. All four events had excellent turnouts, with many youth and adults learning the benefits of trapping, proper trapping and preparation techniques from some of our own members, including Kris Fjeldsted and Neil Brandstrom. Manitoba Trappers Association held their 2010 Convention & Annual General Meeting in February 26 & 27, 2010 and the WIWCD set up a booth and handed out WIWCD information and promotional products to watershed residents.
- The WIWCD also attended many local events in communities with the district to promote out programming and hand out application forms.
- The WIWCD has partnered with Oak Hammock Marsh to host school visits in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Oak Hammock Marsh organized activities for Grade 1 – 8 students in schools located in Lundar, Eriksdale, Inwood, Woodlands and two schools in St Laurent, Ashern and adding Moosehorn and Gypsumville in 2012/13.

Watershed Planning

- The WIWCD signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Manitoba Water Stewardship and received a \$25,000 grant to initiate an Integrated Watershed Management Plan in 2011. This planning process has begun with WIWCD sending out letters to all the RMs involved to appoint a representative to participate on the planning team in the coming months.

Summary

Even with the wet conditions in 2009, 2010, 2011 and dry conditions in 2012 the WIWCD has successfully started and completed a number of on-the-ground projects and will continue to support and programming to residents of in the coming year. The WIWCD is ready to take on another year of operation in 2013 - 2014.

If any sub-district members have ideas for programs or projects, please talk to myself, Linda Miller.

We thank you for your on-going input and support to our district.

Hope you enjoy the supper.

Sincerely,

Linda Miller
Administrator/Manager