



**West Interlake Watershed Conservation District
2009 Annual General Meeting – November 19, 2009
Manager's Report**

TO: All members of the West Interlake Watershed Conservation District

Nearing the end of 2009, we can reflect at what has been accomplished and more importantly, what we have to look forward to in the coming year. This past year has seen many transformations as we establish ourselves as a Conservation District. We have persevered and instituted a number of important programs and received positive results.

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 WIWCD is constantly exploring new programming but we focus in five main areas:

Watershed Planning
Soils
Water

Public Education
Wildlife/Fisheries

Watershed Planning

- The WIWCD signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Manitoba Water Stewardship to initiate an Integrated Watershed Management Plan in 2010.

Public Education

- Trapper Days in the Interlake, sponsored by the WIWCD, were held October 2008, February 2009 and October 2009. All three events had excellent turnouts, with many youth and adults learning the benefits and proper trapping and preparation techniques from some of our own members, Chris Fjeldsted and Neil Brandstrom.

Soils

- Composters were purchased and sold at a discount to watershed residents. Our urban residents and cottage owners found these units to be very beneficial in their yards.

Wildlife/Fisheries

- The WIWCD was awarded an external grant of \$25,000.00 from the Provincial Fisheries Enhancement Fund to conduct an *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Assessment* of the Swan Creek watershed.
- The WIWCD contracted Mark Lowdon of AAE Tech Services to conduct this assessment. The report is due in December 2009 and will contain recommended projects to restore fish habitat, improve water quality, and enhance riparian areas.

Water

- The Well Water Protection Program, which includes well sealing, flowing well and well head protection, has had enormous interest, with eight wells being sealed in the 2008-2009 year. The 2009-2010 year has seen an even greater number of well applications with 21 wells approved for sealing.
- To date, one riparian project has been identified from the *Swan Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Assessment*. A Water Stewardship Fund proposal request has been submitted.
- Through the Riparian Management Program, we conducted our first demonstration day in Lundar on July 30, 2009. An off stream watering system demonstration and riparian management were discussed. It was extremely well attended. The morning ended with a barbecue lunch provided by the WIWCD.
- There is one off stream watering system installed in the Dog Lake Sub District.
- The WIWCD initiated a well inventory in the spring of 2009 to assess groundwater quality in the District. Two full time staff (Brock Appleyard and Nelson Ridgeway) were hired to approach landowners to inquire and report on the state of their well and collect a water sample which was 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.

Education

- We will be using an educational model given to us by MCDA to use in the schools for Grade 4, 7 8 and Senior 2 (Dynamics of Ecosystems). It is our intention to begin speaking to these grades at the three schools in the District (Eriksdale, Lundar and St. Laurent) between now and May 2010.

Despite an overly wet year and other challenges that came with the beginning of a new venture, the WIWCD has been successful in protecting ground and surface water quality. We at the office are ready to take on another year of operations in 2010 as the WIWCD.

Sincerely,



Ann Melnichuk
District Manager