Arrow Oak

State of the Watershed

UARCD and LSRCD Conservation Districts

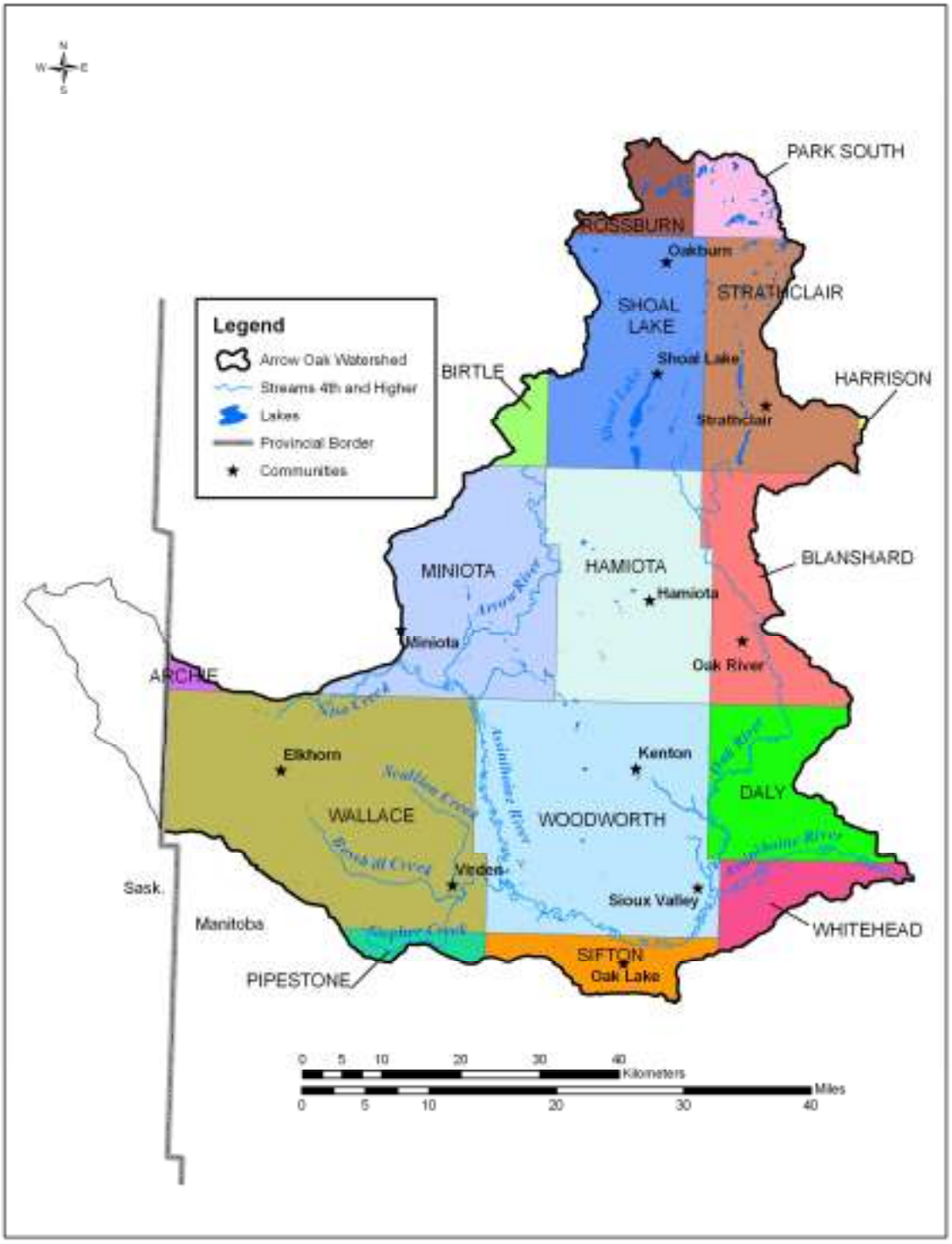
The Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District (UARCD) and the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District (LSRCD) were established to address the member rural municipalities concerns about resource management. The conservation districts have a vision to see a landscape capable of supporting our environmental, economic, and social well being now and into the future. We manage by watershed through our sub-district boards. Sub-district boards are committed to offer water management programs which cross municipal boundaries to address watershed issues from top to bottom. Our programs and services are financed on a cost share basis between member municipalities and the Province of Manitoba. This core cost sharing allows us to access funding from other sources. Local people organized, formed and run the Districts. Local initiative allows people living close to the issues the best chance at providing practical solutions to conservation concerns.

Arrow Oak Watershed

Summary of Resource Management Concerns

Introduction

This document contains a summary of the environmental concerns raised by technical experts within their fields. Expert opinion is only part of the equation. You are receiving this document because as a "local expert" we value your opinion and wish to consult you in the process of establishing priority programming at the CD. As you read through this document please ask yourself "What are the resource and environment issues that concern me the most?"



As integrated watershed planning evolves in Manitoba, UARCD and LSRCD are proud to help lead the way. Your input will strengthen this local plan and create a leading example within our province. The four categories covered in this document are Surface Water, Source Water Habitat and Soils.

Ground Water Data

Current lack of data regarding the location of wells (active or abandoned), contribution of groundwater to stream base-flow, aquifer delineation and groundwater quality poses challenges in the understanding and management of groundwater.

Abandoned Wells

Wells are often located in areas of convenience, in the same general areas as potential contamination sources. Neglected, abandoned or unused wells can act as a direct conduit for contaminants from the surface to enter aquifers.

Water

Surface Water Management & Drainage

Water largely managed at the farm or individual field scale, often without any form of comprehensive long-term planning; results in numerous problems: landowners downstream being flooded, infrastructure damaged, negative impacts on water quality and water quantity, as well as cumulative loss of habitat.

Wellhead Protection

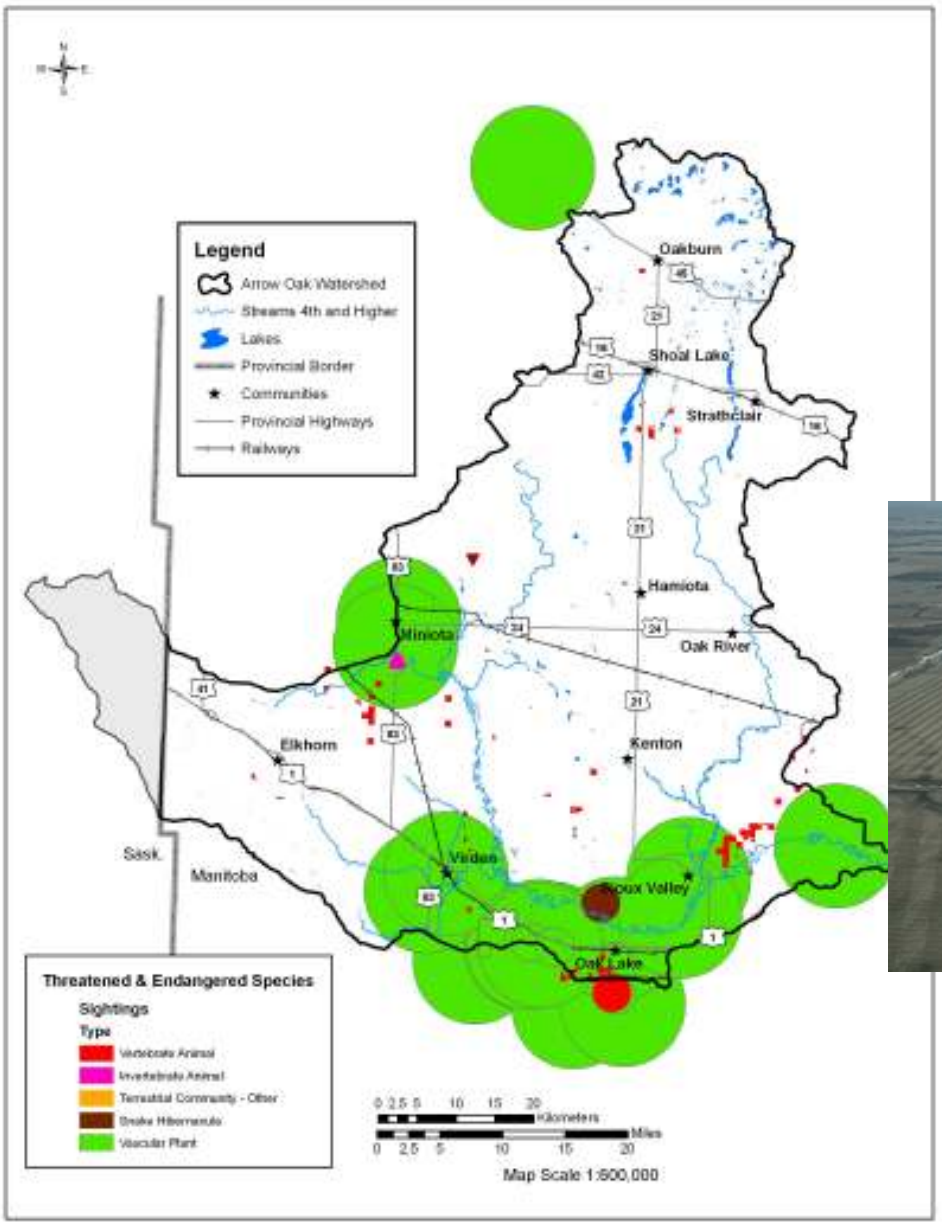
Well location, construction and maintenance are important factors in man-made water quality problems; there are local impacts commonly measured in well water throughout the province.

Sustainable Groundwater Development

Sustainable yield values are not available for aquifers in this area – this means that we are unsure how much water we can withdraw from the aquifer without depleting it over time.

Nutrient Enrichment

Since the early 1970's, Lake Winnipeg phosphorous loading has increased by about 10 % and nitrogen loading by about 13 %. As part of the Lake Winnipeg Action Plan, the Province of Manitoba is committed to reducing nutrient loading to Lake Winnipeg to those levels that existed prior to the 1970's.



Habitat

Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation

Habitat loss continues at a rate greater than current preservation and restoration efforts.

Source Water Protection

Drinking Waters Exceeding the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality

Virden's water exceeded the level of 0.01 mg/L for arsenic. (due to levels recently being changed)

Drinking Water Susceptibility

There are 7 drinking water sources in the watershed. Kenton's water supply has been identified as a high risk.

- ### Loss & Draining of Wetlands

  Drainage is occurring without regard for ecological significance of wetlands, as well as impacts of loss to water quality and quantity.

Riparian Habitat

Encroachment upon and elimination of riparian habitat by agricultural and other activities has a detrimental effect on the filtering capabilities of the riparian areas around water sources.

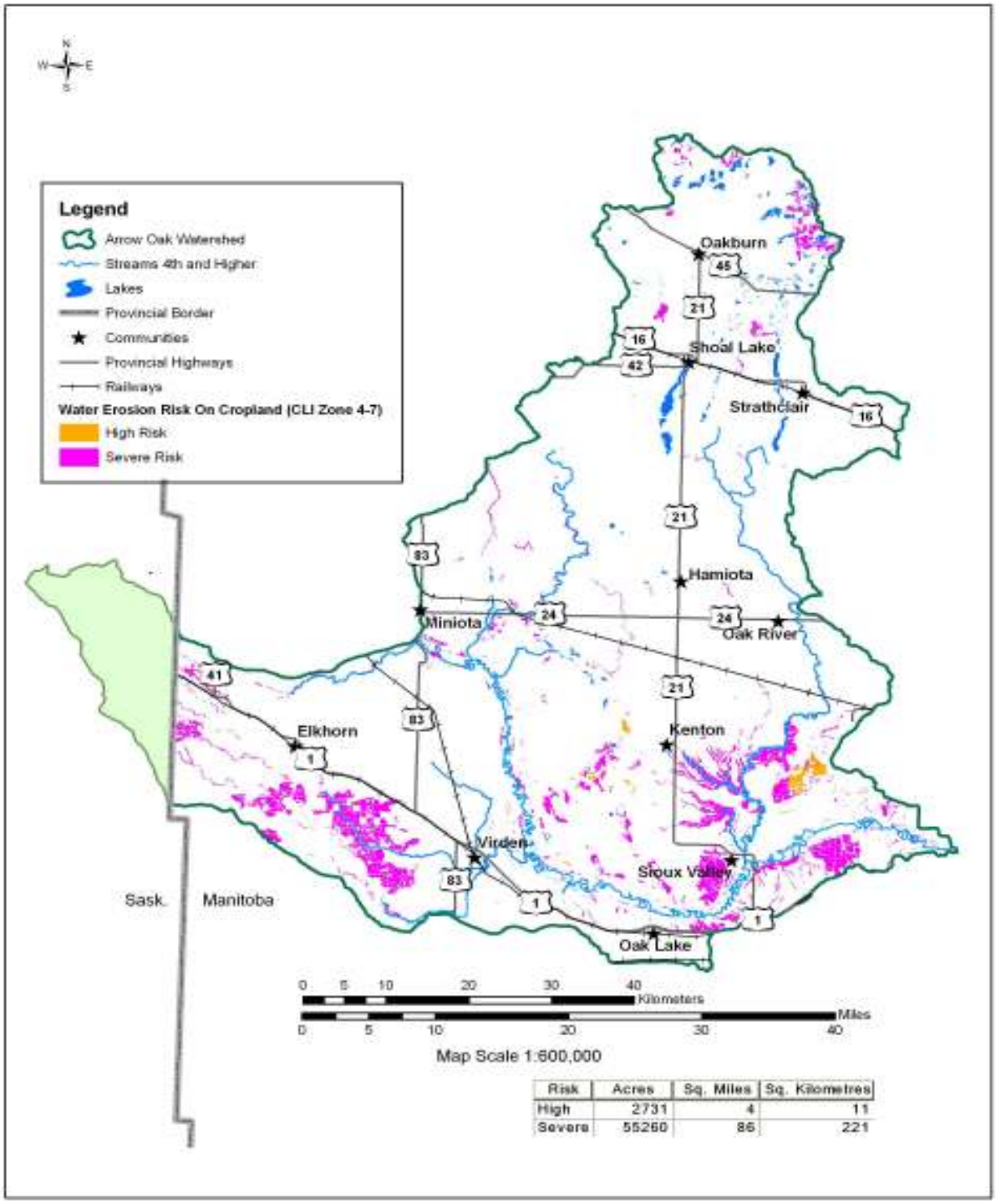
- ### Aquatic Ecosystem Health

  There is concern that natural and human induced changes to the quantity and timing of waterflow is altering and impairing the health and sustainability of aquatic and riparian ecosystems. Specifically, some of the streams in our watershed suffer from periods of low water flow, which fall below the historical flows.

Soils

Salinity
207,329 acres of weakly saline land is in annual crop production.

Water Erosion
Approximately 58,000 acres of cropland are in areas of high to severe water erosion risk; areas mainly along the Assiniboine River. About 37 miles of waterways are in cropland that are in high and severe erosion risk areas.



Risk	Acres	Sq. Miles	Sq. Kilometres
High	2731	4	11
Severe	55260	86	221

Wind Erosion
Approximately 44,368 acres of cropland are in high or severe wind erosion risk areas.

Conclusion and Invitation

This document summarizes the "expert" opinion on our watershed – the issues that the experts see as most important. However, this is only part of the equation we also need to establish the priorities of the people who live, work and play in the watershed. This means YOU.

There may also be resource/environmental issues that are not included here, but which affect or are important to you. Please let us know what these important issues are and how you would like to see them addressed. We are holding a number of public consultations in the watershed, it is important for you to come out and voice your opinion on which of these issues are most important and should be dealt with first.

It's in our hands

Arrow Oak Watershed Representatives

UARCD Chairman – Leonard Sitko

Johnny Michasiw – Upper Oak River

Todd Brown – Lower Oak River

Robert Alexander – Lower Assiniboine

Theresa Michalchuk – Arrow River

Bill McQuaker – Bosshill Creek

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This Document is a joint effort between Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District and Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District. Please contact your local CD for more information:

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