

## Water Licensing Branch - Little Saskatchewan River Watershed Report

The Water Licensing Branch is the regulatory body that is responsible for issuing authorizations (e.g. permits, licences, etc.) under *The Water Rights Act* for the use of water for agricultural, municipal, industrial, irrigation, or other purposes. Water used for domestic purposes does not require a licence. A more detailed description of the Water Licensing Branch's mandate and contact information are available on the Manitoba Water Stewardships website.

The intent of water rights licensing is to protect the interests of licensees, domestic users, the general public and the environment with respect to the use or diversion of water or the construction and operation of water control works under licence. Licences are issued on the "first in time – first in right" principal", established by the date the application is submitted. The general and specific conditions that are included on all licences reflect, in part, the information received from the technical and management studies that have been carried out for the project and/or water body. For surface water projects, this determination is based on an analysis of stream flow data, riparian needs, the water use requirements of senior water users, domestic needs, and instream flow requirements. For groundwater projects, this determination is based on an assessment of hydrogeological information including; geological information on aquifers, aquifer sustainable yield estimates and water allocation budgets, where available, as well the water use requirements of senior users and domestic needs.

Aquifer or stream water budgets have not been established for the Little Saskatchewan River watershed. Therefore, the percentage of water available for allocation in the watershed has not been determined. There are currently seventeen surface water projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch in the Little Saskatchewan River watershed, of which twelve of these projects are for irrigation purposes, one agricultural project, and one application for other purposes. There are also three surface water municipal distribution systems, including Rivers which is allocated 598.24 dam<sup>3</sup> per year, and three applications from Minnedosa. However, based on an average annual stream flow of 3.63 m<sup>3</sup>/sec (measured at Minnedosa) there is sufficient water available to allocate for these projects. The three instream reservoirs greatly enhance the availability of water on the system. There are presently seventeen groundwater projects in the Little Saskatchewan River watershed of which nine are for agricultural purposes. These projects tend to be livestock producers, utilizing on average 8.8 dam<sup>3</sup> of water per year. There are also two industrial projects, two irrigation projects, and three licensed groundwater municipal distribution systems in the watershed, including the Neepawa Condominium Corporation No.1, allocated 12 dam<sup>3</sup> per year, Erikson, allocated at 123 dam<sup>3</sup> per year, and Rapid City, allocated at 39.8 dam<sup>3</sup> per year, and one municipal application from Jachian Enterprises Limited.

The following tables present all of the projects on file with the Water Licensing Branch for licensing in the Little Saskatchewan River watershed:

### **Licences:**

Purpose	Licences Issued		Total Licences
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	8	0	8
Industrial	0	0	0
Irrigation	1	6	7
Municipal	3	1	4
Other	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>

**Applications:**

Purpose	Applications		Total Applications
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	1	1	2
Industrial	2	0	2
Irrigation	1	6	7
Municipal	1	2	3
Other	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>

**Allocations:**

Purpose	Allocated Under Licence (dam <sup>3</sup> )		Total Allocation (dam <sup>3</sup> )
	Groundwater	Surface Water	
Agricultural	79.0	0	79.0
Industrial	0	0	0
Irrigation	49.0	574.8	623.8
Municipal	174.8	598.2	773.0
Other	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>302.8</b>	<b>1173.0</b>	<b>1475.8</b>

**State of the Watershed Report Card Recommendation:**

☺ No allocation limits have been set for the major rivers in this watershed. Current allocations are believed to be below the sustainable yield of the major streams, based on site specific water budget evaluations carried out during the course of issuing water rights licences.