

TERMS OF REFERENCE

WEST SOURIS RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

In February 2008, through a Memorandum of Understanding signed with Manitoba Water Stewardship, the West Souris River Conservation District (WSRCD) became the Water Planning Authority for the West Souris River Watershed (Portions of 05NG and 05NF). The Planning Area for the West Souris River Watershed Management Plan is shown in Appendix A.

From the perspective of local watershed residents, there are a number of needs that the integrated watershed management plan should address, including:

- Ensuring that there are ample quantities of high quality potable water available for domestic, agricultural and industrial uses
- Maintaining and improving water quality for human use and ecosystem health
- Encouraging water management decisions which preserve available water in dry years and minimize flooding in wet years
- Setting goals and priorities, allowing conservation agencies to focus on the issues important to residents and on the most vulnerable parts of the watershed

The locally identified needs mesh well with Manitoba's vision for water, which is "The best water for all life and lasting prosperity". Working towards this vision, Manitoba has undertaken many water related initiatives including the review and consolidation of existing water legislation. As a result, Manitoba developed *The Water Protection Act* which was proclaimed in January of 2006. The purpose of *The Act* is to provide for the protection and stewardship of Manitoba's water and aquatic ecosystems.

Part 3 of *The Water Protection Act* includes provisions for watershed management. It describes the designation, role and responsibilities of a water planning authority. Section 16(1) of the Act includes provisions that clearly outline that each plan must:

"a) identify issues relating to the protection, conservation or restoration of water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources in the watershed;

(b) contain objectives, policies and recommendations respecting some or all of the following:

(i) the protection, conservation or restoration of water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources,

(ii) the prevention, control and abatement of water pollution, including wastewater and other point-source discharges, and non-point sources of pollution,

(iii) land drainage and flood control, including the maintenance of land drainage and flood control infrastructure,

(iv) activities in water quality management zones, riparian areas, wetlands, flood areas, flood plains and reservoir areas,

(v) water demand management, water use practises and priorities, the conservation of water supplies, and the reduction of water use and consumption during droughts and other periods of water shortage,

(vi) the supply, distribution, storage and retention of water, including measures to ensure persons in the watershed have access to clean potable water,

(vii) emergency preparedness to address spills, accidents and other emergencies that may affect water, an aquatic ecosystem or a drinking water source;

(c) specify linkages between water management and land use planning so as to facilitate the adoption, in a development plan or other planning instrument, of some or all of the provisions of the watershed management plan; and

(d) identify ways in which the plan can be implemented, monitored and evaluated, recognizing the need to implement the plan with the assistance of individuals, groups, and organizations.”

This plan will endeavor to meet the requirements provided in section 16(1) noted above and the needs of local stakeholders as identified in the process.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the West Souris River Watershed Management Plan is to create a long-term plan for the protection, conservation and restoration of water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources in the West Souris River watershed.

Through implementation of the plan, the stakeholders and resource management organizations within the watershed will be able to cooperatively prioritize human and financial resources and efforts to ensure safe and sustainable drinking water supplies, maintain healthy aquatic ecosystems, and adopt land use and development practices most suited to specific environments and locations.

3. PARTICIPANTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WATER PLANNING AUTHORITY (WPA)

The water planning authority is the Board of the West Souris River Conservation District.

The key roles and responsibilities of the WPA are identified in *The Water Protection Act* (Appendix B).

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM (PMT)

The Project Management Team is the secretariat to the Water Planning Authority and guides the overall management and development of the plan.

Responsibilities:

- Identify a Chairperson to plan meetings, agendas, lead discussions, and be the spokesperson for the group;
- Coordinate all plan related meetings and advertising;
- Establish a balanced watershed team of interested governments and stakeholder groups;
- Develop a communications strategy to inform watershed residents of the IWMP;
- Engage participation and interest from the watershed community; First Nations, Planning Districts and municipalities within the watershed;
- Manage the budget and plan schedule;
- Record and distribute meeting minutes to the water planning authority;
- Collect and compile all information submissions, technical reports and consultation inputs;
- Ensure that goals and actions in the proposed plan are a fair reflection of the solutions developed by a representative and participatory watershed team;
- Ensure that all relevant aspects of *The Water Protection Act* are considered and incorporated into the plan;
- Provide input and edits to the plan;
- Provide annual budget report to Manitoba Water Stewardship in April
- Complete other tasks as required.

WATERSHED TEAM

The Watershed Team is comprised of interested stakeholder groups and government representatives. They provide an overview of existing information and understanding of the watershed, identify issues, assess options, and provide recommendations to address specific watershed issues.

The stakeholders group is identified by the Project Management Team.

MINISTER OF WATER STEWARDSHIP

The final approval of the West Souris River Watershed Management Plan lies with the Minister of Water Stewardship. Upon receiving a proposed plan, the minister may refer it to the Manitoba Water Council for its review and comment.

4. PROCESS, BUDGET AND TIMELINE

PLAN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLE	BUDGET	TIMELINE
Designation of Water Planning Authority	Signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	In kind (MWS and WSRCD)	Feb 2008
Identify purpose, participants, roles and responsibilities and process schedule	Signed Terms of Reference	In kind (MWS)	February 2009
Consultation with public, First Nations, planning districts and municipalities to obtain input on watershed issues and solutions	List of prioritized issues and solutions	\$6,000	March – July 2009
Develop Source Water Assessments for all Public Water Supply systems in watershed	Source Water Assessments	In kind (MWS)	June 2009
Summarize information from first round of consultations	Issues identification document	In kind (MWS and WSRCD)	July 2009
Prepare for and Host Watershed Team Meeting 1	Discuss solutions for priority issues	\$3,000	July 2009
Synthesize information from watershed team meeting 1 and technical information to create rough outline of plan	Plan outline document	In kind (MWS and WSRCD)	July-August 2009
Host Watershed Team Meeting 2	Review plan outline, ensure watershed team input is fairly represented and provisions of the Act are met	\$3,000	August 2009
Compile information into a draft plan	Draft plan	In kind (MWS and WSRCD)	September 2009
Host Watershed Team Meeting 3	Provide comments on Draft Plan and create measures of success, and a detailed schedule	\$3,000	October 2009
Make edits to plan based on all feedback received to date and create communication document for public and stakeholders	Final plan and summary documents	\$10,000 and In kind (MWS, WSRCD)	November 2009
Submit plan to Minister of Water Stewardship for review and approval	Provincially approved Watershed Management Plan	In kind (MWS)	December 2009
TOTAL		\$25,000	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLE	BUDGET	TIMELINE
Implement the Watershed Management Plan	Revise and initiate programs and projects to carry out the actions described in the plan, measure success	To be determined	January 2010 - Dec 2020
Develop annual plans to adopt targeted programming to address priority issues identified in plan	Progress reports	\$2,000	Annually

5. ENDORSEMENT

The West Souris River Conservation District and Manitoba Water Stewardship – Watershed Planning and Programs section agree to these terms of reference for the preparation of an Integrated Watershed Management Plan for the West Souris River Watershed (Portions of 05NG & 05NF).

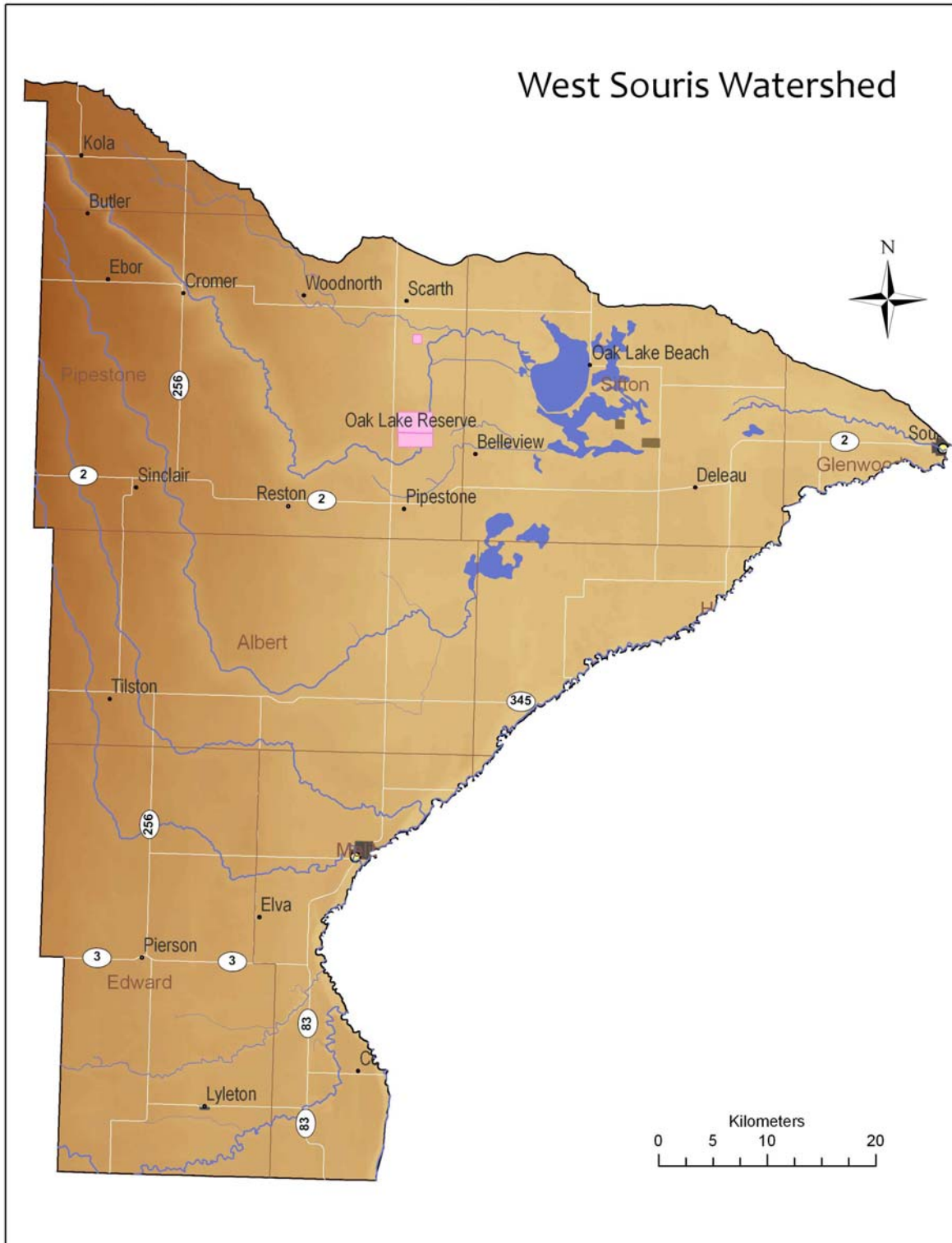


Figure 1: Map of Study Area