



MANITOBA
WATER
COUNCIL

Annual Report

2013-2014

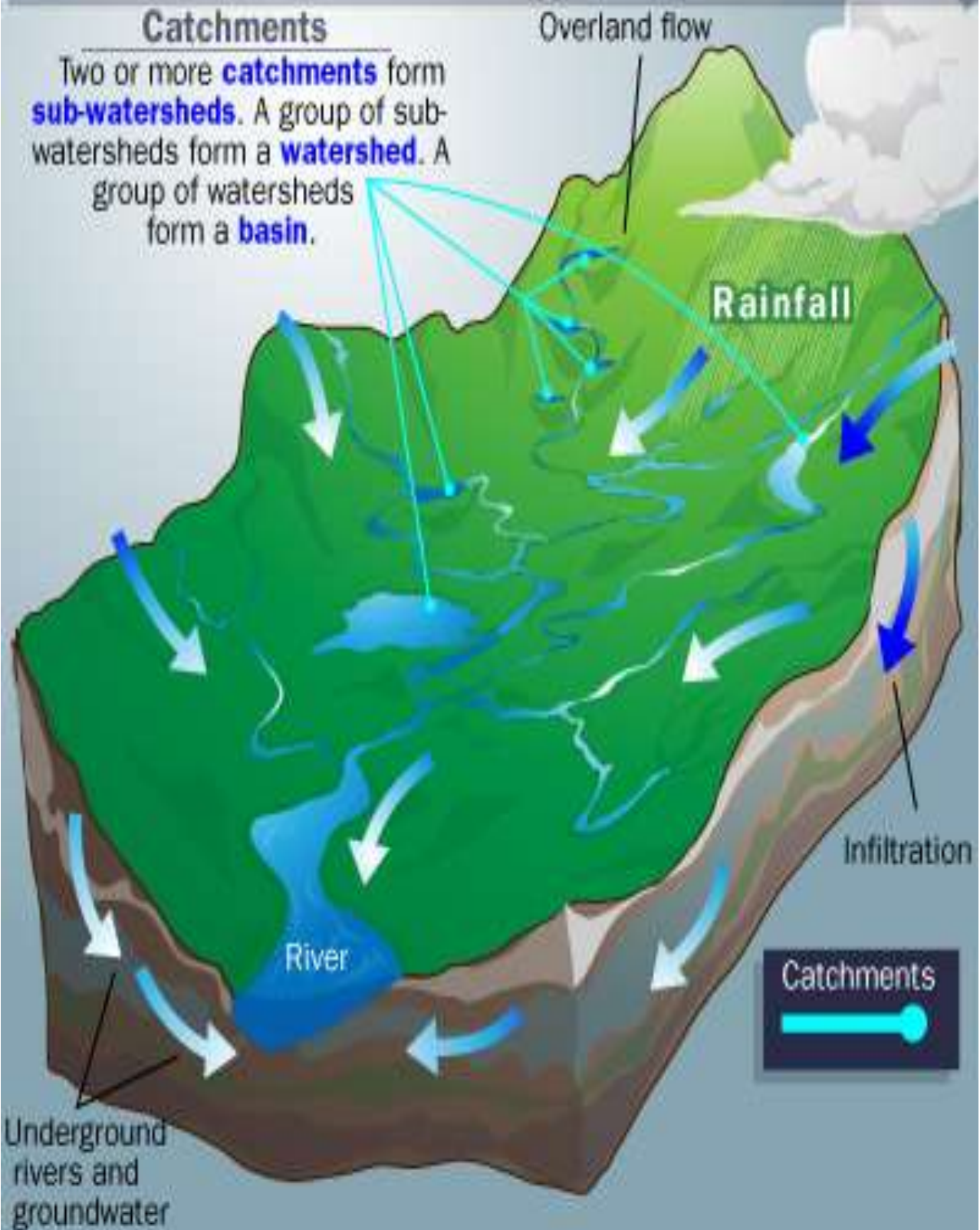


How Watersheds Work

©2008 HowStuffWorks

Catchments

Two or more **catchments** form **sub-watersheds**. A group of sub-watersheds form a **watershed**. A group of watersheds form a **basin**.



The Manitoba Water Council

The Manitoba Water Council is a senior advisory body that reports to the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship who is responsible for *The Water Protection Act*. The Water Council builds consensus among Manitobans on sustainable solutions that will help **protect and manage the Province’s water quality and water quantity**.

Established in February of 2007, the Water Council:

- Monitors the development and implementation of watershed management plans in the province.
- Provides advice in coordinating the work of all provincial advisory bodies on water protection and plays a consultative role in province-wide water issues.
- Review regulations respecting water quality management zones
- Provides advice to the Minister on policies, programs, plans and **legislation to achieve the government’s goal of ensuring a prosperous and environmentally– conscious economy.**
- Is committed to the three pillars of sustainable development: environment, social, economic

The responsibilities of the Water Council are established under the authority of *The Water Protection Act, Section 25*.

Membership

The Water Council members represent the regional diversity of Manitoba including local government, agricultural, and environmental perspectives.

Chair: Jean Friesen

Vice Chair: Don Sexton

Members: Bill Barlow

Alice Bourgouin

Gordon Goldsborough

Albert Dohan

Loretta Mowatt

Wes Williamson



The Honourable Gord Mackintosh
Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
Room 330 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

March 31, 2014

Dear Minister Mackintosh:

It is my pleasure to present to you the 2012-2013 Annual Report of the Manitoba **Water Council**. **The Report profiles the Council's accomplishments and activities for the fiscal year 2013-2014.**

Sincerely,

Jean Friesen
Chair, Manitoba Water Council

Message from the Chair



On behalf of the members of the Water Council, I am pleased to report that 2013/14 year was a very productive year for the Water Council. As the Council was not involved in any targeted initiatives, or consultations, we were able to investigate some of the many water issues that had been brought to our attention in previous consultations and meetings with Manitobans.

The Council focused their work plan on three areas that Manitobans had brought to their attention: Transboundary and Integrated Watershed Management, Communication and Outreach and Water Conservation and Efficiency. Three separate committees were struck to research, investigate and analyze these areas. These smaller groups gave the Water Council members the opportunity to meet more often and expand their expertise. This led to some very informative reports and useful findings that were presented to the Minister.

The Council as a whole met four times throughout the year with one highlight being the Manitoba Conservation District Association tour hosted by the Pembina Valley Conservation District.

The Council also underwent change this year with the departure of Anne Lindsey who had been on the Council since its inception. Anne was a dedicated member who brought a depth of environmental knowledge to the group and will be missed. We welcome our new member, Albert Dohan from Ethelbert.

Our year concluded with the celebration of the United Nations World Water day and Canada Water Week with the Manitoba Youth **Canada Water Week Artwork Project. This year's theme was "Watershed 101". We have included a pencil drawing of a watershed** by Kaitlyn Harper in this report.

Jean Friesen
Chair, Manitoba Water Council



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Photo Credit: Dr. Gordon Goldsborough



Water Council Meetings

The Manitoba Water Council meets on a regular basis to discuss important water subjects across the province. The Water Council in past years moved around the province in order to meet with Manitobans and various organizations and to promote an open dialogue on water subjects. The Council also meets with several provincial departments to actively take part in policy discussions about current programs and initiatives **to effectively manage Manitoba's waters.**

This year, the Water Council had four Council meetings at the following locations:

April 30, 2014

Legislative Building in Winnipeg, Manitoba

June 26, 2013

Winkler, Manitoba

October 25, 2013

Legislative Building in Winnipeg, Manitoba

March 17, 2014

University of Manitoba

In addition to the regular Council meetings, the Council created three subcommittees that met on a regular basis to discuss and implement the work plan. Each Water Council member identified the subcommittee(s) which they would like to participate on.

The Water Council members have also been involved in various projects and initiatives, as representatives of the Water Council. These include:

- Lake Friendly Stewards Alliance
- Sustainable Water Resources Class at the University of Manitoba
- International Joint Commission – Red River Basin Commission

These meetings and other activities provided the Water Council with an invaluable platform to meet with Manitobans, potential partners and other stakeholders. Also, this allowed the Council to expand cooperation for **sustainable management of Manitoba's waters** and to be aware of other emerging water issues in the province and across Canada.



Manitoba Conservation District Association Study Tour

On June 27, 2013, the Manitoba Water Council participated in the Manitoba Conservation District Association (MCDA) sponsored annual field **tour that showcases conservation districts' projects** and best practices on sustainable watershed management.

This year, The Pembina Valley Conservation District (PVCD) hosted the MCDA study tour. Members from other conservation districts, non-government organizations, representatives from provincial departments and other stakeholders attended the field tour.

PVCD presented their successful projects including water retention, gully erosion control, bank stabilization, and interpretive sites. The group visited the following sites:

- Binney Corner Nature Reserve
- Deerwood Soil and Waste Water Retention Science/ Steppler Dam – Twin Watershed – Cattle Feedlot Containment and Irrigation
- Bob Robinson Dam
- White Dams on the Dead Horse Creek Watershed
- Seward Wetland Restoration

The field tour provided the Water Council members and other participants with an understanding of the management approaches of successful water retention projects implemented by PVCD. The tour also showcased concrete and doable projects that could improve soil condition, protect water in a sustainable manner, prevent flooding and mitigate occurrences of drought and provide long-term economic benefits, particularly for farmers.

It is also important to emphasize the capacity that PVCD has built through time to network with other external donors and partners to fund some of their projects. They were able to partner with Ducks Unlimited Canada, Environmental Youth Corps, and RM of Pembina, as well as to leverage additional funds and in-kind support to assist them in the implementation of their programs and projects.

For more information about the Pembina Valley Conservation District visit their website at <http://www.pvcd.ca/water.html> or check out the Manitoba Conservation Districts Association website at <http://www.mcda.ca/> for more interesting information about the works of other conservation districts.



Transboundary and Integrated Water Resource Management

The Water Council thought it was appropriate and timely to assess how Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs) and their goals are being reflected in other local planning documents, to determine whether there is an increase in community awareness of watershed planning, and finally to identify challenges presented by transboundary watersheds.

To achieve this, the Water Council formed a sub-committee to review six planning districts and their respective IWMPs (East Interlake, South Interlake, Brokenhead River, Nor-Mac, MacDonald, Ritchot and Selkirk and Area Planning District). The Committee also met with Rhonda McDougal, Director of Watersheds, Conservation and Water Stewardship (CWS) and David Neufeld, Director of Community and Regional Planning, Municipal Government (MMG) to discuss how their two planning processes are integrated.

The Selkirk Journal, Interlake Spectator and the Brandon Sun were reviewed to see if any articles related to water, IWMPs and Conservation District (CD) programming were reported. The Committee also met with Lance Yohe, former President of the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) and the Swan Lake Watershed Conservation District (SLWCD) to discuss challenges presented by transboundary watersheds. The District Manager of SLWCD, Brent Erendson and Watershed Planner, Sharla Boychuk, participated in this discussion. The role of different levels of government and how they address transboundary issues was reviewed, particularly how CDs deal with challenges associated with the inconsistency of watershed boundaries and political boundaries. Additionally, what are the challenges for planning that crosses provincial and international boundaries



nd Accomplishments

Communications on Local Water Priorities and Programming

The Water Council has had the opportunity to travel through parts of the Province and to enter into discussions with Manitobans on water issues and Provincial water planning. The Council has thus become aware of the need for a better communication and outreach strategy for communicating the current science and work across Manitoba on water. The Water Council wanted to find additional ways to inform Manitobans of provincial water initiatives, programs and policies and in particular to engage young people.

An expanded communication and outreach strategy would encourage public support for the adoption of best management practises on new water initiatives. It would also assist in having relevant and valid information on water available as widely as possible. It is particularly important for Manitobans to learn of the success stories and achievements of their fellow citizens and industries.

The Water Council created a subcommittee that started out by reviewing the communications and outreach of neighbouring provincial and state governments. They then met with communication staff from the Department of Culture, Tourism and Heritage to discuss how the government utilizes various communication platforms and social networking media to inform the public. **Water Council members reviewed Manitoba's website as well as websites from other jurisdictions and identified elements that were useful to integrate into Manitoba's website. In addition, the Water Council worked with a fourth-year University of Manitoba Water Management class to design a survey of young people to determine their sources of information and attitude to public participation in water issues.**



Water Conservation and Efficiency

As outlined in Manitoba's Green Plan *TomorrowNow*, Manitoba has committed to build on the momentum of various water conservation initiatives in the province and to develop a strong and pro-active water conservation plan. This includes defining conservation targets, promoting public education, incorporating building code changes, and developing best land use practices, as well as, the potential for further regulatory steps to support individual and local action on water efficiency.

The Water Council created a Subcommittee that reviewed a range of water conservation and efficiency initiatives that are taking place in Manitoba, across Canada and internationally. The Subcommittee is in the process of developing a discussion paper as part of the advice to the Minister that will identify strategic direction and next steps for the development of a water conservation and efficiency strategy.



and Accomplishments

2014 United Nations Water Day and Canada Water Week

Manitoba Youth Canada Water Week Artwork Project

In February 2014, the Manitoba Water Council launched a pilot water awareness-themed artwork project in celebration of 2014 United Nation (UN) World Water Day and Canada Water Week.

The objective of the project is to increase awareness on the importance of water and highlight ongoing efforts to protect and enhance Canada's precious waters. Specifically, the project aimed at showcasing the **creativity of Manitoba's young artists, celebrating Canada Water Week** and at the same time promoting healthy watersheds in our province.

The artwork project adopted Canada Water Week's theme for 2014 of "Watersheds 101". Participants from across the province between the ages of 10 and 15 were invited to get involved and show off their talents and skills by submitting original artwork or photograph that describes how they view their watershed.

The Manitoba Youth Canada Water Week Artwork Project has become a platform to inspire young Manitobans to understand, care and appreciate our waters through art.

Watershed 101

"A watershed is a ridge of land that separates two adjacent river systems, but to me it means so much more than that. To me a watershed means life. It holds so much activity. Such as the exquisite bear, and the absolutely stunning fox. Even the bugs, for instance, the common butterfly. It's angelic wings are very admirable; the way it flutters through the tall fresh smelling grass.

It's just unbelievably astonishing to see the beautiful ways of nature taking its course. It's just amazing at first sight, so astounding, and so breath taking because of its luscious pine trees, and their aroma is distinct and crisp. When you close your eyes and listen to the beautiful sounds of nature - the running stream of water rushing through the rocks, the birds singing sweet melody in the distance makes the moment even more perfect that what it already is."

- Kaitlyn Marie Harper is a Grade 9 student of Rivers Collegiate, Rivers Manitoba



Integrated Watershed Management Plan Review

The Manitoba Water Council, as outlined in the *Water Protection Act*, has the responsibility of monitoring the development and implementation of integrated watershed management planning in the province. The Water Council has participated in the development of most of the Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs). The Water Council is now involved in many stages including the early stage of the IWMPs development and can provide inputs and suggestions during the course of reviewing the plans.

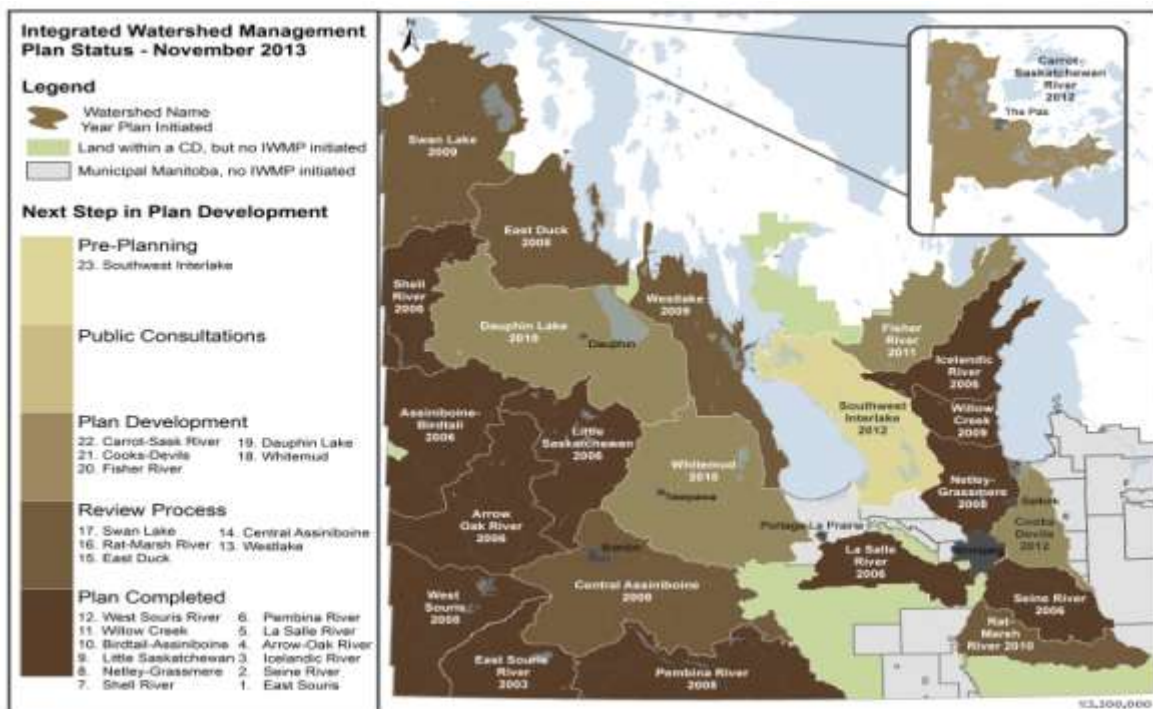
The Water Council keeps in touch and meets with Conservation Districts to build knowledge of the strength of the CDs and the immediate issues facing the integrated watershed management planning process across the province.

The Watershed Planning and Programs Section of Conservation and Water Stewardship provides regular updates on progression of plan development and success of plan implementation.

This year, the Water Council had the opportunity to assess the progress of the following integrated Watershed Management Plans:

- Rat Marsh River Integrated Watershed Management Plan
- Central Assiniboine and Lower Souris Integrated Watershed Management Plan
- Integrated Watershed Management Plan for East Duck Mountain – Sagemace Bay Watershed

As of March 2014, 12 plans have been completed, five IWMPs are in the final review process and five are in the full plan development. The Southwest Interlake IWMP is in its pre-planning stage.



Financial Report

Statement of expenditures for the year ended March 31, 2014

Expenses:

Meals & Meeting Expenses	- \$	1,494.75
Remuneration	- \$	12,544.00
Accommodation & Travel Expenses	- \$	9,275.10
Conference Fees	\$ -	400.00
		<hr/>
TOTAL	\$	23,713.85



For comments and suggestions contact us at:

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