

# **SEINE RIVER WATERSHED**

## Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP)

### **Watershed Planning Advisory Team**

#### Notes on Meeting #6

Date: April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007

Time: 6:45 pm

Location: Days Inn Steinbach - Heritage Room

#### Present:

Art Bergmann – RM of Ste. Anne  
Andy Rivard – RM of Tache  
Bob Bodnaruk – SRRCD / RM of Springfield  
Cornie Goertzen, Chair – Water Planning Authority & SRRCD  
Curtis Holowachuk – MB Office of Drinking Water  
Dave Menard – RM of Tache  
Doug Leroux – MB Fisheries Branch  
Garry Gaetz – RM of Reynolds  
Jacques Trudeau – RM of Tache  
Jason Greenall – Wildlife & Ecosystem Protection Branch  
Kristy-Layne Carr - SRRCD  
Laurie Frost – MWS, Groundwater Management  
Maria Neumann – Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC)  
Mark Hamonic – RM De Salaberry  
Maurice Leclair - SRRCD / RM of Ritchot  
Paul Davis – Premier Horticulture  
Randy Eros – Manitoba Sheep Association  
Roger Chartier – RM of Tache  
Roland Chaput – SRRCD  
Roland Gauthier – SRRCD  
Tamara Horechko - PFRA  
Teresa Raines - MWS  
Tim Swanson – Manitoba Conservation Forestry  
Barry Oswald – MWS, Water Planning

Regrets: Meagan Henke (MB Community Plan. Serv.), Randy Yestrau (Town of Ste. Anne)

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm.

#### **2. Welcome from the Water Planning Authority (WPA)**

Water Planning Authority (WPA) and Seine-Rat River Conservation District (SRRCD) Board Chairperson, Cornie Goertzen, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 3. **Introductions**

Everyone introduced themselves and stated which organization they were representing.

### 4. **IWMP Status** – Barry Oswald, Manitoba Water Stewardship

Barry spoke briefly on the ending of the science-based presentations from the Technical Sub-group. He thanked the group for their presentations and written reports but stressed the fact that the focus now shifts towards the local knowledge. The WPA now looks to the WPAT for direction in the creation of the first-cut draft.

Making reference to a previous e-mail by Alan Skrepnek, Barry reiterated that Technical Sub-group members will have editorial license regarding the language of the Plan, in their area of expertise. He also stressed that Technical Sub-group members are still invited to all WPAT meetings, and still need to keep their agencies apprised of the Plan's progress. This is important as it will eventually be vetted through their departments during the approval process by the Minister of Water Stewardship.

### 5. **SoW presentations**

- **Curtis Holowachuk**- Manitoba Office of Drinking Water

To begin his presentation, Curtis gave a brief history of his employment prior to becoming a Drinking Water Officer. He made it known that he is very new to this position but is willing to help the WPAT in any way he can. He showed the group a slide of the MB Office of Drinking Water webpage and went through a recent press release from the Minister of Water Stewardship. Previously there had not been adequate legislation to back enforcement of drinking water quality but now that is changing. As part of the new legislation, water systems are required to test for turbidity and four times per year must test for THM's (trihalomethanes). Curtis then went through all of the water systems in the area, including the number of wells, number of meters and population on the system. He also mentioned that water system operators must now be certified within the next few years. Barry commented that the Drinking Water information will be important in the Source Water Protection Plan.

- **Paul Davis** – Premier Horticulture

Paul started with an introduction to Premier Horticulture, discussing the location of their headquarters and a run-down of their peat-based products. He then went on to discuss what peat moss is, and the benefits of using it. It is a sterile product with no unpleasant odour and high water retention makes it the preferred growing medium of horticulturalists. The Richer operation harvests peat from the Caribou Bog (north of Moose Lake), and the Giroux Bog which is in the Seine River Watershed.

He explained that there are different layers in a peat bog; the deeper the layer, the finer the material. Premier Horticulture is only interested in mining the peat down 4-5 feet in depth. Other companies are sometimes able to gain access to a retired Premier site and continue

mining to whatever depth they want. Whether or not a peat bog is restored or left for another company is stipulated on the environmental license.

To restore a peat bog, some peat must remain on the surface. Living sphagnum moss is spread over the area and covered with straw mulch to conserve moisture. The drainage ditches are filled in, and the water table is allowed to rise to the correct level. Premier is also required to build sedimentation ponds at the harvest sites. Water is filtered through these sites before getting into the greater drainage network. During high water events, water is pumped into a storage area and when water levels drop downstream, the water is released. The drainage network of the peat operations includes both shallow and deeper ditches.

- **Jason Greenall - Wildlife & Ecosystem Protection Branch**

Jason discussed the computer database that his branch maintains. From this database, he created a map of the locations of rare species and species at risk in the Seine River Watershed. The watershed consists of three zones; Prairie Ecozone, Aspen Parkland and Boreal Plains. Across the watershed, the landscape goes through a huge transition as it goes from the Red River Valley to Sandilands Provincial Forest.

From the map locations, Jason described several areas in the watershed where rare species were found. The first was the Kleefeld area, which historically tall grass prairie. Rare species here include; white lady slipper, Culver's root and Riddel's goldenrod. In the Winnipeg area, the rare species were all associated with the City's riparian areas. These included the silver chub and leadplant. The Richer/Marchand area is on the western edge of the Boreal Forest and is home to forest/wetland species including; Red Pine, Hop hornbeam, the Barred Owl and the Great Grey Owl. Jason explained that these species may not be endangered in Canada, but there is not much habitat present in Manitoba, which is why they are considered rare.

Jason also defined 'species at risk' for the group, saying that it is a general term including endangered or threatened species. Some of the threats to rare species or species at risk include; urbanization, exclusion by other plants, altered reproduction and illegal plant collection.

- **Tim Swanson – MB Conservation Forestry Branch**

Tim began by stating that the goal of the Forestry Branch is sustainable forest management. In the Seine River Watershed there are two forest management units; 20 and 1. Since unit 1 has little or no commercial forestry within its boundaries, Tim focused his talk on unit 20. From a timber perspective, there are two types of land; productive and non-productive. Some private lands are in forest cover (16%) but the majority of land that his branch deals with is Crown land. About ½ of the Crown land is productive made up of soft, mixed and hardwood trees.

For timber allocation, an annual allowable cut is set by the Forestry Branch, which includes the net land available for harvest (excluding all protected areas). The Forestry Branch operates on a quota system, with 80 quota holders in the watershed. The quota types are hardwood or softwood, and summer or winter.

The concerns for the watershed include; soil disturbance, compaction, rutting, and stream channel disturbance. Creating roads is not a big issue as the primary roads are already in place. Forestry does allow creation of 6kms of block roads per year. Forestry roads that are no longer needed are retired and rehabilitated. MB Forestry also works closely with DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) when creating stream crossings. Any harvested area must be renewed. The site is surveyed when the stand is three years of age and again at

fourteen years. If the site fails the survey, it must be brought up to standard. Proper stand establishment includes mechanical site preparation, licensing, buffers and prompt planting.

Forested Crown land not used for forest management is used for agriculture, recreation and protected areas. Forested land that is harvested for peat does not need to be renewed. The forestry branch does not manage on private land and does not perform drainage prior to harvesting.

## **6. Watershed Issues**

The WPAT was provided with a list of all watershed issues identified at the public consultations and at the WPAT round table discussion. Members were asked to look over the list and suggest any missing issues. Barry would like all WPAT members to submit any additional issues by e-mail as well as prioritize the top five. They were also asked to submit potential solutions to these issues. All WPAT members please respond to the Conservation District manager by May 14 at [manager@srrcd.ca](mailto:manager@srrcd.ca)

## **Wrap-Up**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.

**Next Meeting – To be Announced (Next Fall)**