

Newsletter



STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION

Winter/Spring 2015

Assiniboine River Basin Initiative (ARBI) Gaining Momentum

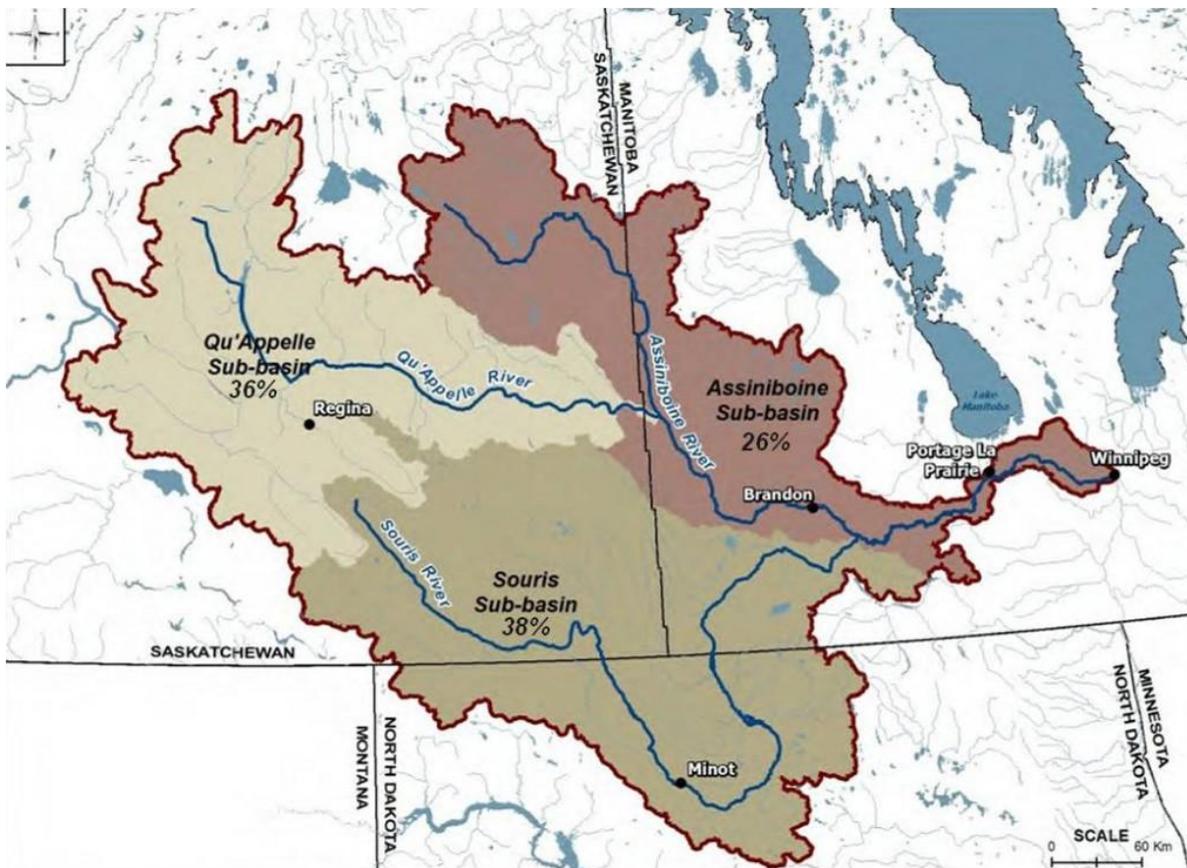
The Assiniboine River Basin Initiative (ARBI) is one step closer towards operational status following a successful conference held in Regina November 12-14. The conference brought together a wide variety of stakeholder groups with an interest in working cooperatively to address water related issues across the Qu'Appelle, Souris, and Assiniboine River basins (collectively, the greater Assiniboine drainage area). The conference brought about collaboration between municipalities and counties, conservation, water, agricultural and science based organizations as well as government departments from Manitoba, North Dakota, and Saskatchewan. The goal was to establish a governance model, membership/board structure, and funding plan that will drive the new organization forward. Throughout the 3 days, speakers highlighted the issues and challenges facing the Assiniboine River Basin, and the work that is currently being conducted by various stakeholder groups. Progress thus far has been driven by the ARBI Planning Committee (of which AWSA Manager, Aron Hershmillier is a member) along with the Prairie Improvement Network (PIN), with both groups continuing to play a key role in the start up of ARBI by facilitating the development of a sustainable organizational structure which will complement existing water management frameworks. An executive director, Wanda McFadyen, along with Lance Yohe, former long-time executive director of the Red River Basin Commission, have been hired by PIN to champion the overall formation of ARBI. With their guidance, ARBI is well on its way to gaining the support and backing needed to get such an initiative off the ground!

Checkout www.prairienetwork.ca/assiniboine-river-basin/ for all the info on ARBI

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing source water in the Assiniboine River Watershed.

Our **mission** is to have healthy source waters throughout the Assiniboine River Watershed.

Our **vision** is citizens and communities of the Assiniboine River Watershed working together to protect the source waters of the Assiniboine River; its tributaries and aquifers within the watershed.



The overall Assiniboine Drainage Basin area is composed of the Assiniboine, Qu'Appelle and Souris River basins. The Assiniboine River joins the Red River at The Forks in Winnipeg.

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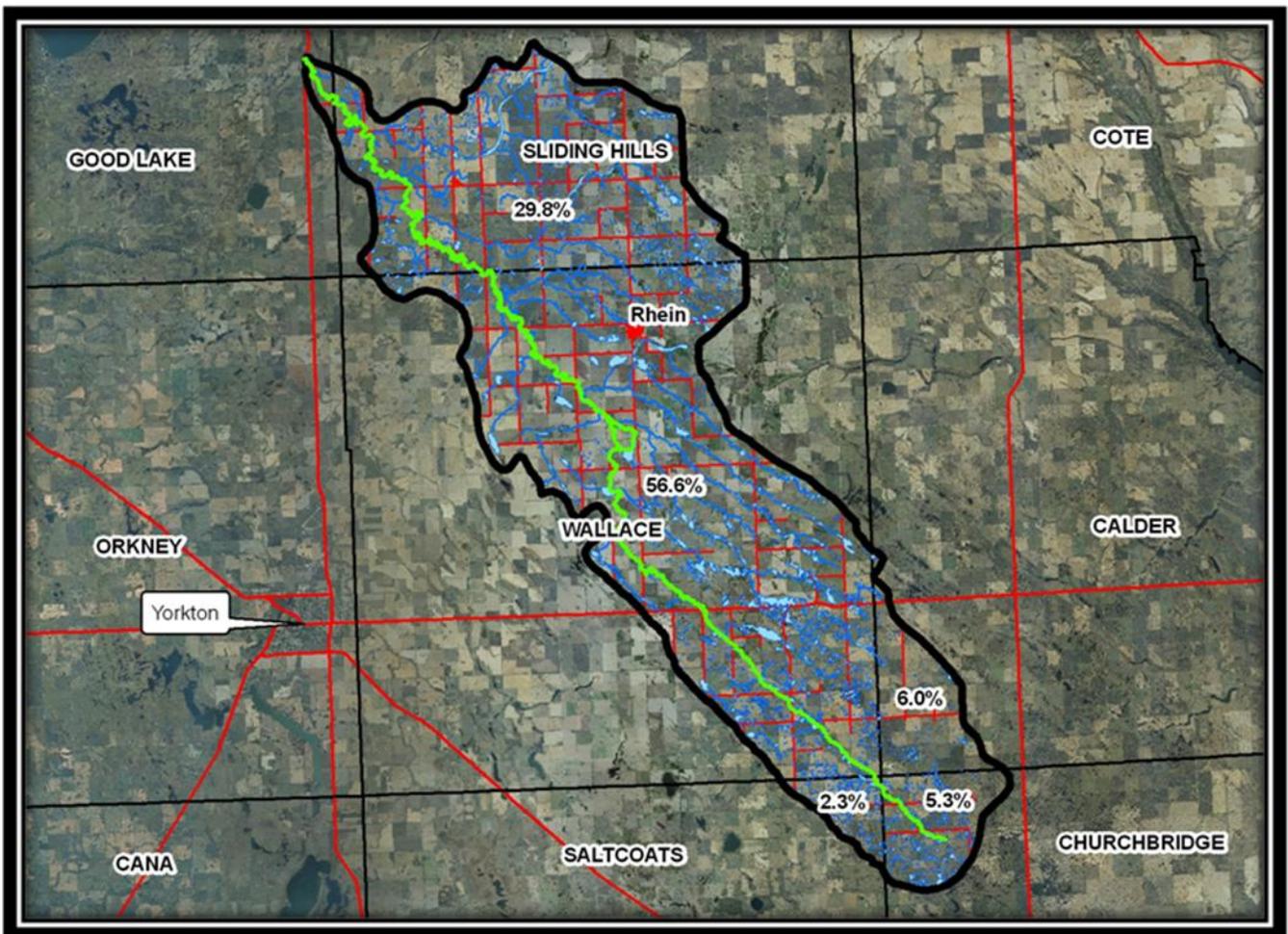
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Wallace Creek Watershed Association Board Making Progress

The Wallace Creek Watershed Association Board No. 11 (WCWAB) was formed under the provincial *Watershed Act* and officially incorporated in September of 2013. The WCWAB is comprised of a 14 member Board of Directors appointed from the municipalities that make up the Wallace Creek Watershed membership area (see map below). The AWSA was appointed by the Board to act as the administrator/projects manager for the new Association. Unlike the AWSA and provincial watershed associations that were formed by the Water Security Agency under the *Source Water Protection Planning Process*, because the WCWAB is formed under the *Watershed Act*, they are considered a form of municipal government with the ability to levy funds from their membership. Thus, for most projects being undertaken by the WCWAB, each rural municipality pays for a portion of the total cost according to the percentage of area each RM has within the Wallace Creek drainage basin (see map below). The WCWAB operating model has proven to be quite effective thus far, with much work having already been completed.

About the Wallace Creek Watershed:

The Wallace Creek Watershed (WCW) is a sub-basin of the Assiniboine River Watershed located in East-Central Saskatchewan. WCW is approximately 692 km², spanning just over 6 different Rural Municipalities: Good Lake (274, not a member), Sliding Hills (273), Wallace (243), Calder (241), Saltcoats (213), and Churchbridge (211). The only urban municipality located within the watershed is the village of Rhein. The main channel of Wallace Creek is an astonishing 188 miles long! That's approximately the same distance as driving from Yorkton to Regina! This inconceivable length is due to the unbelievable meandering nature of the creek which is a factor of the incredibly small amount of elevation drop from the creek's headwaters to its confluence with the Whitesand River.



Wallace Creek Watershed
(Wallace Creek shown in green)

The **Vision** is to see Wallace Creek Watershed as a well-planned, productive, and economically and environmentally sustainable water management system.

The **Mission** is to proactively manage water resources within the Wallace Creek watershed in order to protect residences, municipal infrastructure, and agricultural and private property from flood-related damage, while balancing the agricultural and environmental interests of all stakeholders.

The **Objectives** of the WCWAB are:

- ⇒ To balance the agricultural, environmental, economical, and social interests of the watershed.
- ⇒ Coordination of efforts in relation to works and activities associated with flood management and emergency response.
- ⇒ Management of water related resources to prevent and reduce flooding impacts within the Wallace Creek watershed.
- ⇒ Protection of residences, municipal infrastructure, agricultural land, private property, and water wells from the negative impacts associated with flooding.
- ⇒ Mitigation of the effects of agricultural drainage contributing to increased flows and subsequent flooding within the Wallace Creek watershed.
- ⇒ Maintaining water conveyance capacity throughout the watershed by ensuring that an organized system of culverts and bridges of consistent and adequate design standards is maintained through roadways.



Watershed Education Opportunities

Through collaboration of its 11 member watersheds, the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) has created an online source of educational materials tailored for the new Saskatchewan Science 20 Curriculum being implemented in the fall of 2015. These materials will promote awareness of the importance of agriculture and watershed stewardship via a student-directed study format. Each watershed has provided two “scenarios” of current environmental issues or challenges they are dealing with in their watershed. Materials center around the research and exploration of each of these scenarios. This is a great initiative for students to learn about “real life” science that pertains to issues taking place right here in Saskatchewan.

For more information check out: www.aginthewatershed.com

SAW is also excited to announce that it is now the delivery agent for the **Yellowfish Road Program** created by Trout Unlimited Canada, and previously delivered by the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. The program partners with elementary schools to raise awareness of the impact our actions have on fish habitat within the watershed. Specifically, Yellowfish Road aims to make the public aware of the connection between pollution coming from urban storm drains and nearby fish habitat by painting yellow fish symbols over storm drains in their community.

For more information check out: www.yellowfishroad.org



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The AWSA's annual poster contest is once again being offered to students within the watershed. This year's **theme is: Water and Wildlife**. The goal is to educate students as to the source of their drinking water, the role of wetlands in protecting that source, and the animals that rely on wetlands for habitat. The contest is **open to Gr. 5-7 students**. The **deadline for poster entry is March 31st**. First place prize within the Assiniboine River Watershed will receive a \$100 Gift Card, second a \$50 Gift Card, and third will receive a \$25 Gift Card. The first place winner's poster will then be shown and judged at the annual SK Association of Watersheds conference in April against the top posters from the ten other provincial watershed groups for the chance to win the **Provincial Grand Prize: A \$1000 outdoor sporting gear package custom-tailored to the student's interests!**

Check out: www.assiniboinewatershed.com for full contest info and details.



One Wetland Restoration Program Wraps Up, While Another Begins

Fall of 2014 marked the end of a two year wetland restoration program in the Assiniboine Watershed. The program, funded by Environment Canada's *Lake Winnipeg Basin Stewardship Fund*, paid landowners \$2,000/acre to re-establish previously drained and ditched sloughs or wetlands. Over the course of the two years a total of 169.4 acres of wetlands were re-established (114 basins) on 16 quarters of land, involving 16 landowners. For those landowners that may have missed out on the program or for anyone interested in restoring wetlands on their property, you are in luck! The AWSA recently received confirmation that they will once again be offering an identical program for the next four years, starting in 2015, from funding received from Environment Canada's newly established *National Wetland Conservation Fund*. Give Jesse at the AWSA a call to discuss further: 306-783-1692.



Part of the National Conservation Plan, this project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada.
Dans le cadre du Plan de conservation national, ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.



Office Hours are 8am-5pm Mon-Fri (closed over noon hour)

The Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association would like to recognize the valued support of its members:

Rural Municipalities	Towns	Villages
Langenburg No. 181	Town of Canora	Village of MacNutt
Churchbridge No. 211	Town of Churchbridge	Village of Rhein
Saltcoats No. 213	Town of Kamsack	Village of Theodore
Cana No. 214	Town of Langenburg	
Stanley No. 215	Town of Preeceville	Cities
Calder No. 241	Town of Saltcoats	City of Melville
Wallace No. 243	Town of Springside	City of Yorkton
Orkney No. 244	Town of Sturgis	
Garry No. 245		
Ituna Bon Accord No. 246		
Cote No. 271		
Sliding Hills No. 273		
	Good Lake No. 274	
	Insinger No. 275	
	Foam Lake No. 276	
	St. Philips No. 301	
	Keys No. 303	
	Buchanan No. 304	
	Invermay No. 305	
	Livingston No. 331	
	Clayton No. 333	
	Preeceville No. 334	
	Hazel Dell No. 335	
	Sasman No. 336	

The AWSA would like to recognize the Water Security Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture for their financial support.

