PARCS UPDATE #31 – NOVEMBER, 2012

"WHAT WE LEARNED IN THE FALL OF 2012"

1. TOOLS FOR PROTECTING OUR LAKES:

1.1 - SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLANS

Dr. Bob Patrick, (PARCS Convention, Oct. 2012)

- Most of our water in Saskatchewan flows north to the Hudson Bay. By inter-provincial agreement, Alberta gets to keep up to 50% of the run-off water from the mountains. We, in turn, must pass on to Manitoba 50% of the water that we receive from the west. Sask needs 10-12 source water protection plans.
- We need a ***multi-barrier approach*** that looks at:
  - ***Keeping cattle away*** from riparian areas,
  - Appropriate ***treatment of incoming waste water***,
  - ***Monitoring source water***, (Example: Some of our wells draw from unconfined aquifers.)
  - Plans for ***responding to threats*** to our source water.
- We need to develop our ***source water protection plan*** by:
  - Forming a steering committee
  - Conducting an assessment
  - Developing and implementing a plan
  - Evaluating the effectiveness of our plan

"In Walkerton, 7 people died and 2,300 were left with permanent liver damage because heavy rains washed manure into a town well. As a result, Justice Dennison recommended better source water protection."
Dr. Bob Patrick.

1.2 - COMMUNITY PLANS AND ZONING BYLAWS

Ralph Leibel, Government Relations (PARCS Convention, Oct. 2012)

- Although the federal government controls the water in the lake (Transportation, Fisheries and Oceans) and the provincial government controls the bed of the lake including the foreshore (Agriculture and Environment), yet the MUNICIPALITY GOVERNS THE LANDS BETWEEN THE BANK OF THE LAKE AND THE PRIVATE LOTS.
  - Example – In order to build a ***shore line stabilization project*** the Resort Village of Tobin Lake worked with Sask Power, Fisheries and Oceans and their local Sask Environment.
- RMs and Resort Village must ***exert control by way of their OCP and Zoning Bylaws,*** over the:
  - PRACTICES ON THEIR MUNICIPAL RESERVES
    - Example – The Resort Village of Island View took control over the proliferation of boat houses on their municipal reserves.
    - Example – The Resort Village of Echo Bay took action regarding the storage of private boat lifts for public lands.
  - PRACTICES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES
    - Example – Regina Beach monitored the output from holding tanks and took action against owners suspecting of abuses.
  - PRACTICES ON THEIR LAKE
    - Municipalities need to know that under the Municipalities Act, they can also ***make laws governing boats on the lake.*** *(*Example – Speed laws for boats where, for example, the boat's wake could have a negative impact on public reserve lands.)
    - Example - The RM of Lakeland developed a Dock & Boat Lift Policy and bylaw for Emma and Christopher Lakes such that private docks and boat lifts must be licensed, the number and locations of docks or lifts are regulated, crib docks or stand-alone docks are prohibited and non-compliant structures removed from municipal reserves and private property. **(The District of Lakeland, PARCS Convention, 2012)**

Administrator Dave Dmytruk explains the Lakeland bylaw on docks and boat lifts.

1.3 - REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICTS
MCDP Conference, November 2012[1]

- Background - Sask has 786 municipalities: 296 rural, 16 cities and 474 small urban/northern communities[2]. Of these, only 40% have a Community Plan (and many of these are out of date). There are 19 Planning Districts in the province[3].
- Forming a planning district:
  - Begins with a ***planning commission*** (an advisory board for a group of municipalities).
  - The group then develops a shared vision and goals,
  - A formal plan is completed (detailing scope, membership, finances, dispute regulation).
  - An application is sent to the Minister to become a ***Planning Authority.***
  - The Planning Authority develops the ***District's Official Community Plan***.
- Example – The ***Calling Lakes Planning Commission*** includes the RM of North Qu'Appelle, the Town of Fort Qu'Appelle, the Village of Lebret, and 3 resort villages: RV of Fort San, RV of V-Say-Tah and the District of Katepwa (on 4 lakes). Members **"share a common respect for the history and beauty of the valley and lakes"**. They plan to complete their District Plan, align their municipal bylaws with the District Plan, and seek provincial approval as a planning district.
- Example – The ***WaterWolf District Planning Commission*** represents a regional group of 36 rural and urban municipalities and one First Nation along the South Saskatchewan. The Commission was established to seek solutions to long term infrastructure and land use planning. The Commission is currently fully funded by all municipalities and employs one land use planner.

2. CHANGES REGARDING SEWAGE DISPOSAL:

2.1 - THE NEW SASK ENVIRONMENTAL CODES FOR LAND SPREADING
Sam Ferris, Water Security Agency, phone conversation, Nov. 30/2012

- PARCS has recently received a number of calls from communities expressing concerns about the perceived imminent changes (January 1st, 2013) regarding the ***rules for land spreading***. In a conversation with Sam Ferris of the Water Security agency, PARCS was advised that:
  - The new environmental codes are not yet in effect and will likely not be passed until approved by Cabinet, ***becoming law sometime next spring***.
  - Haulers with current permits for land spreading ***will have their permits renewed as usual*** when these permits expire on December 31, 2012.
- The land spreading rules under the code are ***not that much different from current rules*** and can be consulted at the following web location:
  - http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=963d3581-7fc3-4797-ac75-dce206b5d61b&MediaID=6346faaf-c569-400a-9415-4710c4a0a314&Filename=Liquid+Domestic+Waste+Disposal.pdf&l=English
- After the new code comes into effect in the spring, the main change for haulers will be added requirements for them to register for renewals and more record keeping (rather than getting a permit),
- During the next five years (until 2017), it is expected that land spreading will be ***phased out*** (although there may always be some communities where land spreading remains a necessity - such as when an existing sewage works is more than 50 km away or the owners of the nearby sewage works will not allow its use).

PARCS has had a number of reports about sewage haulers who are refusing to land spread after January 1st, 2013.

Cottage communities are advised to ***inform their sewage haulers*** about this information provided by Sam Ferris.

PARCS has agreed to develop a data base of ***cottage communities that are currently land spreading,*** along with their options for changing their sewage disposal. The data will be shared with the Water Security Agency.

[1] Martino Verhaegue, Autumn Dawson, Dana Schmalz, Ken Hutchinson, Murray Rausch

[2] Includes the 40 resort villages; organized hamlets are part of their RM.

[3] Most were developed under the Planning for Growth initiative in 2011.

2.2 – THE NEW WATER SECURITY AGENCY (WSA)

- The Water Security Agency was established on October 1, 2012. All programs and services associated with municipal drinking water and wastewater operations and affiliated surface and ground protection have been transferred to the Water Security Agency.
- WSA has jurisdiction over reservoirs, water levels, domestic wells, drinking water, ground water, wastewater, drainage, flood prevention, water conservation, water allocation . . . and much more.
- For more information visit their website at: ***www.wsask.ca***. Click on **ABOUT WSA** for contact information about their head office in Moose Jaw and their offices in Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton, Weyburn, Swift Current, Nipawin and North Battleford. (Or ***phone 787-6504***)

2.3 – REGIONAL SEWAGE SOLUTIONS ARE THE WAY TO GO

Last Mountain Waste Management Steering Committee (PARCS Convention 2012)

- The Last Mountain Steering Committee members represent 1 town, 4 resort villages, 2 lakeshore developers, 9 organized hamlets and the RM of McKillop. Under the guidance of MCDP[4] , they developed a 10-step plan for developing a regional wastewater system, commissioned a Feasibility Study, and likely will soon be calling for tenders for two lagoons in their area.
- Darlene Dixon tells how they "teamed up with their neighbouring communities to find out how they could build a lagoon together – and decided to build two."

Dundurn and Area Waste Water Utility (MCDP Conference[5], November 2012)

- The Dundurn and Area Waste Water Utility was a 9-million dollar project that resulted in "flush and its gone" sewer to the Town of Dundurn, to two resort villages and to a large subdivision. The project received 6 million in BCF funding (3 million from each of the federal and provincial governments).
- The project initially was planned to service about 1,600 persons but was built to accommodate 5,000 persons in the future. Initial subscriber paid about $10,000 per hook-up. New subscribers are charged actual current hook-up costs (typically about $19,000).

Advice in selecting alternatives for sewage treatment, Frank Reid (MCDP Conference)

- "SWA had observed significant challenges where technology is selected and built based solely on the advice of treatment equipment suppliers. The best route is to instruct an engineering firm to select the best type of equipment for the proposed plant. The ***Terms of Reference*** should be created[6] by the owner(s) prior to the Engineering Investigation. (See WSA publication *"Terms of Reference Preparation Guide"* on their web site.)

Consider carefully, Ryan Evans, WSA, (PARCS Convention 2012)

- When comparing sewage treatment alternative, communities are reminded to consider costs for the entire life of the project.
- Ryan Phillips cautions that "there may be new funding in 2014 and keep in mind that regional ***projects are viewed in a good light when it comes to funding***."

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[4] The Municipal Capacity Enhancement Program
[5] Rosalind Arndt
[6] In consultation with the Water Security Agency.