

December 2013



**EAGLE CREEK
WATERSHED GROUP**

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EAGLE CREEK WATERSHED NEWS

Northern & Southern Eagle Creek AEGP Watershed Groups amalgamate

Northern & Southern Eagle Creek AEGP Watershed Groups are happy to announce that they have amalgamated to create Eagle Creek Watershed Group Inc. We have signed a five year contract with the Ministry of Agriculture under Growing Forward Two which implements changes to the Agri-Environmental Group Plans (AEGP), Environmental Farm Plans (EFP), and the Beneficial Management Practise (BMP) list. Eagle Creek Watershed Group now covers the entire Eagle Creek Basin which services producers within 21 R.M's (see map on page 4).

At the present time we have completed a Environmental Assessment Scan across our entire focus area, an annual work plan, and a five year work plan. Eagle Creek Watershed Group will use the data collected from our assessment scan to identify target areas we would like to spend the majority of our time & resources on. With the help of agri-businesses & agencies we will work with area producers to address these target areas. We will also continue to assist any producers in the watershed area that are interested in implementing BMP projects on their operations.

We can help producers do on-farm BMP projects under the Farm Stewardship Program, Farm & Ranch Infrastructure Program, and the Comprehensive Pest Control Program!

New Technician In Place ...

Lexie Adamson has accepted a new position as a Crop Optimization Specialist with Western Sales in Rosetown. The Board would like to thank Lexie for her enthusiasm and hard work over the past 5 years. Glenn Barclay has been hired to replace Lexie. Glenn was an Extension Agrologist with Sask. Ag. for a number of years based out of Biggar.



Eagle Creek Board of Directors

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Farm Stewardship (FSP) Best Management Practices (BMPs):

Glenn can help you with the application process of the below BMPs:

- Irrigation Management Planning (50% funding—\$2000 max)
- Relocation of Livestock Confinement Facilities (60%—\$50,000)
- Integrated Pest Management Information Collection and Planning (30%—\$5000)
- Irrigation Equipment Modification (30% funding -\$10,000 max)
- Fencing to Protect Surface Water (50%—\$10,000)
- Native Plant Re-Establishment (50%—\$5000)
- Protecting Riparian Areas (75%—\$50,000)
- Farmyard Runoff Control (50%—\$10,000)
- Variable Fertilizer Rate Technology (30%—\$7500)
- Protecting High Risk Erodible and Saline Soils (50%—\$5000)
- Manure Storage Enhancements (30%—\$50,000)
- Improved Stream and Creek Crossing (50% - \$20,000)
- Shelterbelt Establishment (\$600 mile—\$5000)
- Manure Application Equipment & Technologies (30%—\$30,000)

Webinar: Farm Stewardship Program — Dec 10th 2013 12pm - 1pm (Sask. Time)

Michelle Panko, Financial Programs Branch will explain the Farm Stewardship Program in detail, the funding available and how to apply.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND, PLEASE STILL PRE-REGISTER FOR THE EVENT SO THE WEBINAR CAN BE VIEWED AT A MORE CONVENIENT TIME.

Please pre-register at: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/851295250>

Farm & Ranch Infrastructure (FRWIP) BMP's

Eagle Creek can help producers with applying for:

- Remote Livestock Watering Systems (50% funding)
- Decommissioning Wells (90% funding)
- Protecting Existing Wells (50% funding)
- Development of new water sources (wells, dugouts, pipelines) (50% funding)

More information available at: <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/GF2-FRWIP>

Comprehensive Plant and Animal Pest Control

Six programs focus on; control of rats, feral wild boar, beaver, gopher, as well as the invasive plant management program and the invasive plant control program.

For more information contact the Sask. Assoc. of Rural Municipalities toll free at

1-800-667-3604

Finding the Best Route — Excess Water

Jeremy Brown, PAg—Water Security Agency

A large portion of Saskatchewan is experiencing high water levels again in 2013, much higher than those of us currently on the land are used to, and in some cases, prepared for. An abundance of rain the last few years coupled with above normal snowfall and a late spring melt has left many people concerned about high water levels which may affect their operations.

The implications of high water levels are real and significant, including roads washed out, yards flooded, or acres of land remaining under standing water. Landowners have to assess their personal situation and determine, "How can we manage around these fluctuations?"

For the most part, the water levels we are experiencing are not unprecedented; but we are much more often dealing with drought and water shortages. It has been at least a couple of decades since we've seen this amount of precipitation, and our expectations and management practices have adjusted accordingly.

Not surprisingly, this situation has brought to the forefront the topic of altering drainage of water from the landscape. Rather than coin drainage as "good" or "bad", it is important to consider the cost-benefit of such projects as well as the opinions, interests, and authorities of all stakeholders. After all, we are all upstream of someone.

Here are a few points to consider:

If you do wish to alter the natural flow of water, you should first seek appropriate approvals from the Water Security Agency and other agencies. Any drainage ditch, berm, or pump that causes water to flow off of your property requires approval. This process is intended to ensure that the project is properly constructed and that other landowners are not negatively affected. Some examples of co-ordinated drainage projects are those operated by various Conservation Area Authorities in the province.

Increased drainage may contribute to flooding problems downstream. Functioning wetlands store and slowly release water to creeks. The slow release of water helps trap sediments and pollutants and reduces erosion. In addition, more natural flow rates are more likely to remain in the stream channel, reducing flood intensity downstream. Landowners dealing with flooded land should consider land-use options and compensation programs available when making management decisions. Some conservation groups have incentive programs for landowners who maintain or restore wetlands, which can compensate for possible loss of production or increased complexity of management.

In summary, dealing with unwanted moisture can be a challenging issue. In order to make the best possible decisions, seek out as much information as possible and pencil out the short and long term implications to your decisions. Check with your neighbors and local watershed groups to find out what information and financial tools are available in your area. Contact the Water Security Agency to discuss the proper process before altering the natural flow of water.

Our challenging climate will reward those who optimize their land-use and management decisions for the specific situation and "normal" fluctuations. All the best!



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Decommission Wells ~ 90% Funded!

Abandoned homesteads are intriguing places, full of history, but also hidden danger. Abandoned farm sites may have abandoned wells that may pose a risk for people, livestock, wildlife, equipment and the environment. People and animals can fall in and be injured, equipment can be damaged and an old well provides contaminants direct access to the aquifer below which can affect neighbouring wells.

Proper decommissioning of an abandoned well, using layers of bentonite clay and gravel will eliminate all of these risks.



The FRWIP Program will cover **90%** of decommissioning costs!



EAGLE CREEK WATERSHED

