



2017 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

SASKATCHEWAN FARM STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION

From excess moisture in some areas of the province to drought in others, 2017 has been another interesting growing season. Harvest is around the corner and by all accounts it may be an early wrap up, pending mother nature. Before you hit the fields, this is a brief overview of what SaskFSA has been working on this summer. Have a safe harvest and enjoy the time with your family and co-workers in the field.

SASKFSA & WSA WORKING GROUP – INFLUENCING POLICY

SaskFSA continues to work on the AG Water Management policy through working group sessions with WSA. Items on the immediate agenda include developing a policy around infilling, beneficial management practices for infilling, defining minor project amendments that would not require re-submission of an application and a strategy for producers working together with rural municipalities to maximize efficiency of process and protection of infrastructure. The most recent meeting involved having WSA in the field at an approved project to get a hands on view of challenges that still need to be addressed.

BILL 44 – SASKFSA ON WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bill 44 was passed in May 2017 with no amendments, despite many efforts on behalf of SaskFSA, individual producers and the concerns of many other organizations. A direct result of our efforts was the formation of the **Water Advisory Committee (WAC)** to replace the Water Appeal Board (the third party advisory board that dealt with complaints under the previous legislation). Organization members of the WAC now include SaskFSA, SaskCanola, SARM, SCDA, APAS, Western Canadian Wheat Growers & Ducks Unlimited. Myles Thorpe, our SaskFSA President, will be representing SaskFSA on this new initiative and the first meeting will be held August 14th. An update on the meeting will be communicated directly to membership. This is another critical step in representing the producers voice in developing a successful provincial Ag Water Management Policy and we look forward to working with members of this committee!

PILOT AG WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

WSA continues to work within priority basins of the province to bring larger scale ag water management projects into compliance. The priority basins are areas that are either higher risk, a result of a complaint or an ideal project to pilot the new regulations and policy. WSA will be sourcing more pilot projects – if you are interested in taking part, please contact any of your SaskFSA Board Directors or executive.

SARM BOARD TOUR

The July SARM Board meetings were held in Yorkton. The SARM Board and many of the SARM staff members toured the surrounding RM's of Wallace, Orkney, Churchbridge and Langenburg looking at water management infrastructure and waterways. Detailed presentations were delivered by the RM's to provide examples of successful water flow controls and hold backs. SaskFSA participated in the tour to promote working together on the #bestwhenmanaged initiative. RM involvement and cooperation will be critical to the success of bringing projects into compliance.

REBRANDING DRAINAGE – AG WATER MANAGEMENT #BESTWHENMANAGED

Over the years the term drainage has developed a negative connotation. There are some instances where this has been warranted when producers have not done it responsibly. It is also a result of the public not understanding the logistics and the benefits of when agriculture drainage has been done responsibly and the efforts that producers have put forth in the last decade to work with an approval system that was inefficient and unresponsive. A lot has changed, and continues to change. SaskFSA is working hard with WSA on a policy that will work for producers for responsible water management. We also believe that the **messaging around agriculture water management needs to change**. It is no longer drainage but rather RESPONSIBLE AGRICULTURE WATER MANAGEMENT. This will involve everyone – ag producers, WSA, the public, and the agriculture industry. Stay tuned for more information on this initiative!

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN WATER MANAGEMENT PERMIT – CHECKLIST

If you are interested in starting an AG water management project, here is a guide to get you started – [Applying for an Ag Water Management Permit](#).

SASKFSA AGM – SAVE THE DATE – NOVEMBER 16TH

The AGM will follow a different format this year with the AGM in the morning, followed by lunch and guest presentations for the afternoon, including a breakout session for solution-based discussion. "Friends of Farm Stewardship" or our industry partners that have come forward to sponsor producer education events will also be in attendance. This is a call out topics of interest and feedback on what our members would like to see at the November meeting. **Please email saskfsa@gmail.com with any suggestions by August 31st.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT. TALK TO A FARMER FRIEND TO GET THEM INVOLVED!