



The Sask. Farm Stewardship Association is a newly formed organization consisting of like-minded producers from eastern Saskatchewan. The group is dedicated to maintaining and improving all Saskatchewan land assets and works to ensure we are able to maximize the productive capability of our land resource. Presently we represent over 80 growers managing over 350,000 cropped acres and 36,000 acres of undeveloped land.

Our association is a strong advocate of organized and controlled water management strategy. We envision this plan to be multi level in nature involving federal, provincial, municipal and regional agencies in its' planning and implementation.

We are proposing that a comprehensive long-term agriculture water management strategy be undertaken that will be acceptable to the majority of stakeholders. Although it should take into account the environmental sensitivities of the public it has to be agriculture focused. An effective strategy will provide land improvement for the wet years as well as providing effective storage and utilization for the dry years.

We would like to encourage the provincial government to allocate all Rural Municipalities to a Watershed area. There has to be a means of *inspiring* each RM to establish a water management strategy that has input from the local watershed area. They may need financial support through grants to access professional design and engineering companies to develop functional design processes.

There also may need to be some penalty or repercussions established for those RM's that do not participate as to do nothing is no longer an option.

The water management strategy also needs to refresh or reinvigorate the Conservation and Development Association. In the 1960's when a number of individual C & D's were implemented some very significant projects were undertaken.

Unfortunately at this time there are over 100 C & D's registered in the eastern half of the province of which very few are physically in operation. Many barriers currently exist for them to even get off the ground. The provincial government needs to identify and assist in reducing those impediments.

Conservation Development Associations we believe are very good means of developing local plans. They are local, member driven, and members know their land better than anyone. They may need to be encouraged financially to seek professional advice from independent companies such as Agri-Trend or various Canadian and US university extension offices that currently offer professional design services.

Lastly our group would like to see support of a trend towards mediation and planning vs. the old approach of enforcement and litigation. Unfortunately the acts that govern water management by individuals are very open to divergent opinions on interpretation. Well-defined, tightly interpreted regulations will need to be established to change with the landscape. We are encouraging the provincial government to assess current legislation and change it to provide more assurances to the Ag producer that he will retain the ability to improve the value of his land in cooperation with downstream and surrounding property owners. We understand the sensitivities of the environmental aspect of land improvement and would suggest there can be compromises made between landowners and the public concerned about preserving wild life areas. We envision, if deemed successful, the ALUS concept to be a model to be considered provincially. We also envision easements as having a positive effect on maintaining sensitive wetlands but also preserving the value of improved land by enshrining the developed water management structures in long term agreements.

Finally we realize that as an organization that if we want to effect change we have to direct that from within. We are encouraging our members to take a more active role in civic politics and the decision making process. Government is a vehicle to implement change we have to be the vehicle to motivate change.

We sincerely hope we share a similar vision and want to encourage your members as well as all stakeholders in our vibrant industry to get fully engaged in this revision process. We would be willing to discuss our plans or expand on our goals at any time.

We can be contacted at 306-896-2647.

Sincerely,

WARREN KAEDING | *Executive Director*

Email: wkaeding@saskfsa.org

Sask. Farm Stewardship Association. Box 147 Yorkton, SK S3N 2V6