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EAGLE CREEK WATERSHED NEWS

A Busy Summer for the Watershed ...

This past summer our watershed put on six tours. One was in conjunction with our Annual General Meeting at Biggar. Other tours were held at Anglia, Forgan, Harris-Tessier, Kerrobert and Luseland. Each tour had a different theme. You can check out the tours at our website; www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca. Just go to Events and look under 2015 “pasture walks” (tours).



Website Enhancements:

Our webpage was launched this spring. In addition to information on our core programs (Farm Stewardship, Environmental Farm Plans and the Farm & Ranch Water Infrastructure Program) we have made several links useful for producers in our watershed;

- *Government of Saskatchewan - Agriculture*
- *The Saskatchewan Forage Council*
- *Agricultural Crown Land Map Viewer*
- *Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds*
- *Saskatchewan Water Security Agency*
- *Soil Survey Reports for Saskatchewan*
- *Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency - Property Specific Information*
- *Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan—Resources & Literature*
- *Invasive Weed Awareness*

Check it out at; www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca

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BENEFICIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES REVIEW:

On April 1, 2015 the federal and provincial governments announced the **Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs)** available through the Farm Stewardship Program have been enhanced. There are now five ***new*** BMPs and enhancements to seven existing BMPs. There are **24 BMPs** under seven categories. **The seven categories** are: Livestock Site Management; Manure Management; Irrigation Management; Land Management; Precision Farming; Agricultural Waste Management and Environmental Solutions.

Livestock Site Management

Relocation of Livestock Confinement Facilities; 60% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$50,000

Fencing to Protect Surface Water; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000

Farmyard Runoff Control; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$30,000

Riparian Area Grazing Management and Fencing; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000

NEW- Native Rangeland Grazing Management and Fencing; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000

NEW - Carcass Disposal Planning; 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$30,000

Manure Management

Manure Storage Enhancements; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$50,000

Manure Application Equipment and Technologies; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$30,000

Irrigation Management

Irrigation Management Planning; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$2,000

Irrigation Equipment Modification; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$50,000

Variable Rate Irrigation Technology; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$15,000

Land Management**Natural Waterway Erosion Control; 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$30,000****Creek and Stream Crossings; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$20,000****Protecting High Risk and Erodible and Saline Soils; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000****Native Plant Establishment; 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$10,000****Shelterbelt Establishment; Flat rate of \$1,200 per mile to a maximum of \$5,000****Weather Data Collection and Monitoring; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$1,000****NEW- Water Flow and Erosion Control; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$20,000****Multi-Producer Erosion Control; Contact the Eagle Creek Watershed Group 306-831-6009****Precision Farming****Variable Fertilizer Equipment; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$5,000****Variable Rate Mapping; 30% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$2,000****Agricultural Waste Management****NEW - Plastic Grain Bag Roller; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$5,000****Used Oil Storage; 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$2,000****Environmental Solutions****NEW - Environmental Solutions; 20-50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$50,000**

The Farm Stewardship Program helps Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers implement practices that maintain or improve the quality of the environment.

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DECOMMISSIONING WELLS FOR SAFETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

By: Anita Dutka Financial Programs Branch, Program Reviewer

Open, abandoned wells pose an obvious threat to the safety of people and animals, and they also provide direct pathways through which surface contaminants can enter the ground water. Due to these risks, landowners should attempt to locate and properly decommission all wells on their property that are not in use. To assist with the costs associated with well decommissioning, the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP) rebates up to 90 per cent of the cost of eligible well decommissioning projects to a maximum of \$10,000. A well decommissioning plan needs to be developed as part of the FRWIP project application process.

There are two types of water wells you may find on your property:

Drilled wells (small diameter, typically three to 18 inches) are usually located in areas where the water is more than 70 feet below the surface. Drilled wells must be decommissioned by a professional well driller using specialized equipment to pump an appropriate sealing material (commonly high solids bentonite grout) to fill the well from the bottom up. Pouring dry bentonite inside the casing or filling the casing with sand, soil, clay or fill is not an acceptable practice.

Bored wells (large diameter, typically 18 to 48 inches) are usually located in areas with a high water table or limited aquifers. Bored wells may be decommissioned by a contractor or by the landowner. Prior to starting a decommissioning project, you should research the well's initial construction. A driller's report will give an idea of the well depth and provide other pertinent information.

By taking steps to decommission a well, be sure to consult the Water Security Agency (WSA) website at <http://www.wsask.ca/>. The website has several resources to assist with well decommissioning projects, including factsheets to help determine the appropriate decommissioning methods and a list of registered well drillers who may be able to provide services.

You can also contact Glenn Barclay at (306) 831 - 6009 for further assistance.

IMPROVING LIVESTOCK WATERING SYSTEMS WITH FRWIP

By: Francine Brule, Financial Programs Branch, Manager Grants and Rebates

When you hear about the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP), often the first thing that comes to mind is the fact that the program provides funding to producers for new agricultural water development projects such as wells and dugouts. Did you know that FRWIP also provides funding to improve livestock watering systems?

The most common type of FRWIP applications for improving livestock watering systems include preventing livestock from directly accessing surface water such as creeks, rivers, dugouts, lakes and wetlands. Restricting livestock's access to surface water promotes the sustainability of the water source by reducing direct contamination and encouraging the growth of bank vegetation, which will prevent erosion by stabilizing the bank and providing a buffer for contaminants. It can also improve herd and pasture health.

A variety of livestock watering options are available. When considering the best watering systems for your operation, consider your location (topography, distance to and availability of power/water sources), operational needs (number of livestock, type of grazing system used, need for portability) and costs.

Improved livestock watering projects that have been approved for cost-shared funding through FRWIP include:

- Fencing an existing dugout and installing a solar watering system;
- Installing a wet well and nose pump or other water appliance as an alternative to direct watering;
- Developing a shallow or deep water pipeline to transport water to a more sustainable area or an area with unreliable or no water; and
- Developing a new well or dugout with a sustainable livestock watering appliance.

For more information on the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program go to the Eagle Creek website at: <http://www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca> and click on Programs.