

SECTION 8.4

Community Consultations Report

La Salle River Watershed

March 2007

Prepared by:

**Build^{ing}
up**

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Executive Summary:

The La Salle River Watershed in the past year has identified the need to implement a Watershed Management plan. A Watershed Management Plan identifies the actions, goals and priorities needed to improve the health of the watershed.

An integral piece of the plan is the need for community input and consultation from community constituents. La Salle River Watershed began its plans in March of 2006 and a year later the group hosted a series of community consultations. These community consultations were to gather information from constituents on issues they felt were affecting the overall health of the watershed.

The community consultations were held in five communities across the watershed; Elie, Oakville, Sanford, Elm Creek and St. Claude. Ninety-nine constituents within the watershed participated in the community consults.

All participants received information on watershed planning and an overview of the La Salle River Watershed. Following this information, community constituents participated in a facilitated process and with group consensus identified issues they felt were affecting the overall health of the watershed.

Issues from across the watershed were discussed and possible solutions were offered up in each meeting. Some common denominators through all five consults were flooding, water quality, drainage, erosion and pollution, Elm Creek Channel, water flow, lagoon golf course and municipal drainage issues, reduce water flow, build retention, river bank control - erosion.

As a last process, constituents also participated in a visioning exercise and their dream of what the watershed would look like in the next ten to twenty years.

Over the next seven months, the La Salle River Watershed group will move forward with a draft plan asking for input from watershed stakeholders, aided by the Watershed Planning Advisory and Watershed Planning Advisory Team.

The community consult results will comprise a large part of this plan.

The Process:

As part of the Conservation District framework and with direction from Department of Water Stewardship all Conservation Districts over the next five years will complete Integrated Watershed Management plans. The La Salle River Watershed, found within the confines of the La Salle Redboine Conservation District began the process of organization and forming a planning committee in March of 2006.

An integral piece of the plan is consulting the community about their concerns for the La Salle River Watershed. In March of 2007, La Salle River Watershed hosted a series of community consultations to involve those constituents living within the watershed to identify natural resource management issues the constituents wished the Watershed Planning Advisory Team (WPAT) to address.

The community consultations areas identified to host a meeting of constituents were the communities of Elie, Oakville, Sanford, Elm Creek and St. Claude. Each of these communities is located within the La Salle River Watershed.

In order to reach constituents – information flyers, newsletters and advertisements were sent out prior to the March meetings. The community consultation meetings were held during March of 2007. Attendance at the meetings can be found below in Table 1.

Community	Attendance Numbers*
Elie	29
Oakville	16
Sanford	23
Elm Creek	20
St Claude	11
Total Attendance	99

* does not include any staff, members of the WPAT team and facilitator.

The meetings followed an agenda of presentations by Barry Oswald of Water Stewardship on the Integrated Watershed Management Planning process and a presentation of information on the La Salle River Watershed by CD Manager David Huck. Following these presentations those in attendance were led through a facilitated process of identifying issues by the facilitator of this report.

Using a facilitated process (See Appendix I) participants were asked on their own to identify up to five natural resource management issues that they would like to see the Watershed management plan deal with. Once this was done, constituents were assigned to a group, asked as a group to come to a consensus on identifying three to five issues within the group that they felt were of importance and would share with the community consultation process that evening.

Following the group identification of issues; each group was asked to identify solutions for each of the group issues.

Groups presented their issues and solutions to the whole group.

The final activity of the evening was for all in attendance to answer a vision question. The vision question that was presented was

“In order that our children and grandchildren could benefit and enjoy the La Salle River Watershed, what would we, in the best of all possible worlds want to see the La Salle River Watershed look like in the next ten to twenty years?”

The Vision question handout can be found in Appendix II.

Natural Resource Management Issues and Solutions

Each of the community consultations identified issues. The groups were identified by a color process and so the comments listed below are through each of the color groups – within the listing of their issues are their solutions to the issues in the La Salle River Watershed.

Elie Community Consultation Issues and Solutions:

Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Red	1. Flooding – 95% issue	Consider rerouting Elm Creek Channel into the Assiniboine to reduce flooding of the La Salle Watershed area. This would not damage the Assiniboine in as much as the water gets there anyway via the La Salle – it would get there more directly.
	2. Water quality	Get province to monitor water quality – less fall application of fertilizer, move livestock away from river. If flow of river is slowed quality should naturally improve.
	3. Riparian areas	Grassed runways to drains, more trees along the river, do not allow any more drainage licenses into the

	4. Identify storage areas upstream.	La Salle until flooding issues dealt with. Store water in headlands, gated (managed) drainage ditches, hold back water upstream, control waterflow upstream.
Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Blue	1. Water Quality 2. Drainage, man-made and natural 3. Erosion - grazing, -cropping, -tree harvest	Increase waterflow to a regulated amount. Natural and man-made drainage – water retention plan for the watershed area; slow the flow in coordinated fashion; for municipal lagoons, created wetlands to filter the effluent before it enters the La Salle. Plant more trees, keep a designated riparian area and keep cattle fenced out of this area.
Pink	1. Flooding – spring and summer 2. River Blockages -debris, dams, bridges	Build a diversion (like Portage diversion) from the La Salle and Elm Creek opening to the Assiniboine near Beaudry Park Clean the La Salle River every 3 years of debris, clean span bridges and widen bridges.
Black	1. Water quality testing improvement 2. Water levels – timely draining 3. Pollutants	Implement water testing, limit pumping/drainage of livestock wastes, riparian zones. Remove debris, trees, manage water levels,

Green	<p>1. Where water ends up – pumping and dumping.</p> <p>2. Mismanagement of water levels</p>	<p>Remove trees, have dumping restrictions. It is easy to simply decide to remove industry (livestock, cropping, etc) from the watershed, but by better managing flooding, industry can co-exist. Industry is needed to maintain the viability of the community.</p>
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Other comments or trends to share about the watershed:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent’s comments)

- Water planning advisory team,
- At the La Salle we get more water more often all the time, so flooding becomes more frequent. The upper watershed simply improves their drainage at the cost of the farms at the end of the drainage system!
- Worried about bush/pastureland upstream on Elm Creek Channel being cleared for potatoes and wanting to be drained.
- There seems to be a belief among landowners in the western part of the watershed that the La Salle River can handle all their drainage water. Recognition must be made that their drainage water is causing problems for landowners along the La Salle.
- Man made drainage is breaking me, my family and my neighbours. And putting my residence in high danger with water levels, years ago my grandfather and father never ever had water issues like this and it’s not right in what the government has done to me.
- Water diversion from the La Salle River to Assiniboine, don’t worry about the algae – the Earth’s temperature increases because of the algae, get rid of the damn, because your pumping the water into the La Salle anyway, check water quality – where you pump from the Assiniboine before it enters the La Salle,
- No matter what they do there will always be problems as long as there is flooding. Because they are always pumping into the La Salle why do we need dams to hold water? Something has to be done with the volume of water flowing into the La Salle. With all the flooding it affects habitat, water quality, riparian areas. (A lot of the trees either fell over or died from being under water during the floods)
- The drainage is and has been improved vastly in the western side of the LRWD. The water is coming faster and in more volume each year. As a result flooding seems imminent. Being located on the La Salle River, I fear we are going to see more floods, bigger and lasting longer than we ever have. A solution has been mentioned – to dig a ditch from 7-10-2W east and end up in the Assiniboine River. This would a great improvement (take off some pressure) If you solve land flooding, this will greatly reduce other problems or nutrient overloading, erosion.
- As Elie residents we view the La Salle River as our backyard. Algae growth and water levels restrict us from our recreational enjoyment of our waterway. Cleaning off the dead trees south of Elie dam would be super!

- Pumping water in Mill Creek? If there are beavers along creek, please control beavers before starting that pump. Don't try to pump so water runs over dam.

Oakville Community Consultations Issues and Solutions:

Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Red	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect water quality of water resource (BMPs/riparian) 2. Drainage that works (size of culverts) 3. Incentives 	<p>Capping wells, riparian area protection for streams and banks</p> <p>Appropriate culvert sizing, proper engineering of RM and producer drainage</p>
Green	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulated drainage 2. Hog Industry 3. Forest management 	<p>Properly managed and maintained drainage, equal playing field for all producers, perhaps a suggestion for drainage licensing,</p> <p>Sitting to close to waterways, impact on water quality from manure</p> <p>Increase forest area for benefit of water control, wildlife, global warming – should be a tax credit for good forest management.</p>
Blue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pollution – animal waste/livestock operations on river banks – Livestock operations on soil not suited for 2. Drainage – maintenance pipe – sizing of culverts - spillways 3. Cleaning up the river (deadfall) 	<p>Let the neighbors down stream determine restrictions that will be put in place before a livestock operation is approved.</p> <p>Concerns from spring damage due to ice jams and tree snags leads to overland flooding, polluting water.</p>

Other comments or trends to share about the watershed:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent’s comments)

- Cleaning out river beds so some natural flow can occur,
- The River seems cleaner than 40 years ago – the pumping station is really helping,

Sanford Community Consultations Issues and Solutions:

Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Brown	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elm Creek Channel 2. Debris – logs and beaver dams 3. River bank maintenance 	<p>Bar none – biggest problem, too much water too fast,</p> <p>Stopping flow of water</p> <p>Cleaning up the banks, tree planting and restoration</p>
Green	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flooding 2. Control Elm Creek Channel 3. Water Quality 4. Drainage strategy 5. Improved utilization (livestock operations, recreation, erosion control, deadwood) 	<p>Spring and summer flooding – the river is rising faster to flood peak than is used to.</p> <p>Elm creek channel needs to be controlled – slowed down</p> <p>Potential to raise dams to improve water quality, also more water for water treatment plant, river flooding events are increasing.</p> <p>Need for drainage licensing and enforcement</p>
Blue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More orderly control of drainage into the La Salle from the Elm Creek Channel 2. Clearing of debris from bridges 	<p>Shoreline tree removal of dead stock</p>

	3. Bank erosion and slumping	Needs to be tree planting along the banks, slumping as a result of over saturation of soil on banks due to frequent flooding.
	4. Maintain and improve water quality	River water quality
	5. Maintain water flow to prevent stagnant water	This would help with poor water quality
Red	1. Water quality – drinking, nutrient and pesticide run-off – residential and agriculture	Is it possible in this area to increase wetlands?
	2. Rate of flow of river water – spring run-off, water retention	Too much drainage from farmers, Keep sources of pollution away from the river – more study on sources of nutrients
	3. Recreation – clean river banks, erosion, tree deadfall, walking trails	Maintain healthy riverbanks – community river bank clean up.

Other comments or trends to share about the watershed:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent’s comments)

- Move towards letting natural processes to filter and regulate movement of water example wetlands to filter out nutrients and riverside vegetation to cool and regulate water flows,
- Trees in the river are mostly due to Dutch Elm disease die off and this is a major problem throughout the watershed.

Elm Creek Community Consultations Issues and Solutions:

Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Red	1. Clean river channel of trees and debris	Clean out trees in the La Salle start downstream working up the river.
	2. Extend Elm Creek channel through to Assiniboine River	Control water upstream – if water is diverted upstream will benefit drainage/flooding all along or in the La Salle Watershed

	<p>3. Control erosion of channels and streams</p> <p>4. Survey of flooding problems on Elm River Channel</p> <p>5. Keep livestock back from streams</p>	
Color	Issues	Solutions
Black	<p>1. Reduce water flow from the top (of the hill)</p> <p>2. Maintain drainage system throughout the watershed.</p> <p>3. Clean river banks from the Red River to St. Claude in that order – to speed drainage.</p> <p>4. Build water retention ponds</p>	<p>Referring to flood peak attention, slow down at the top of the escarpment</p> <p>Drainage cleanouts (ditches and river) mostly the man made portions</p> <p>Clean river, removal of deadfall</p> <p>Water retention ponds (like City of Winnipeg style) for water control</p>
Blue	<p>1. To improve drainage we require water retention</p> <p>2. Dyking of home and lively hood</p> <p>3. Human lagoons being monitored</p> <p>4. Provincial municipal water flow monitoring accountability of permitting</p>	<p>Municipal planning of water drainage</p> <p>Emphasis on permitting and monitoring for water quality improvements. Concern about sustainable development.</p> <p>Water control who is responsible (need for one agency to be responsible for all things water related drainage, allocation, licensing drainage, water quality etc.)</p> <p>Enforcement of water as a resource – Allocation, water quality, drainage, (managed as a system) not just as</p>

		individual groups that don't communicate, Consistent funding for drainage works.
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Other comments or trends to share about the watershed:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent's comments)

- Emphasis on watershed concept to solve drainage issues,
- Reduction of peak also reduces erosion and can improve water quality
- Evaluation of culvert sizing for peak flow attention,
- Concern for producers bottom line, economic stability, need for more landowner control over land management decisions
- Need for action
- Need for someone/agency to claim responsibility for water issues.
- Change priority from water control, back to drainage and most of these problems will disappear,

St Claude Community Consultations Issues and Solutions

Color Group	Issues	Solutions
Blue	1. Drainage concerns/retention and compensation 2. No consensus on government administration departments. 3. Monitoring the different tributaries as to ascertain the major problem area 4. Lagoon, golf course drainage and manure management.	Incentive program to build water retention structures and compensation annually for flooding. Need for partnerships on how to work with watershed as a group seems to be too many independent agencies. Monitoring of tributaries for water quality to identify areas of risk
Green	1. Water flow needs to be improved – blockages/debris at bridges, increase flow of water in summer 2. Ocean and fisheries authority – impact on activities.	Tree clean up in river Too much power for DFO

	3. Municipal, cottage etc. sewage discharge – control of	Proper sewage control, concern about town releases (more controls, testing and upgrading of leaky structures).
	4. Water quality – improve water quality for recreation usages.	Water quality improved through water storage to reduce erosion, improve base flows during dry periods (drought protection)

Other comments or trends to share about the watershed:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent’s comments)

- Too much political interference, too little action, much too late.

Common factors/issues from each community identified throughout the watershed:

Elie	Oakville	Sanford	Elm Creek	St Claude
Flooding	Drainage	Elm Creek Channel	Reduce water flow, build retention ponds	Lagoon, golf course, municipal drainage issues,
Water quality	Erosion and Pollution	Water quality River bank control – erosion, maintain,	Clear debris from Rivers and control erosion	Water flow, drainage, monitoring

Vision Comments from constituents:

(Note each bullet represents a constituent's comments)

“In order that our children and grandchildren could benefit and enjoy the La Salle River Watershed, what would we, in the best of all possible worlds want to see the La Salle River Watershed look like in the next ten to twenty years?”

- Water clean enough that we could enjoy if for recreation, strive to reverse the damage of today and improve waterway for future generations, we would like to set an example for the next generation to follow
- Clean water,
- Clean water, a chance to make a good living on the farm, a perfect environment,
- Improved monitoring of sources of watershed, improvement of water quality, enforcement of regulations,
- Definitely needs improving, better water quality, less overland flooding,
- More regulations, less water flow,
- Reduced flooding, effective ditches and culverts, La Salle River and its tributaries remain in their natural and clean state,
- Clean water throughout the year, navigable river (by row boat), reduce deadfall along river banks,
- Build large retention lake on the top part of water shield for future agriculture use, wildlife, personal use and for future water treatment plant,
- Clean and maintained river channel, flow flooding control, water diversion.
- A clean river channel, soil erosion controllable, controls on water coming off the escarpment,
- Clean water, clean shores, example Los Angeles river,
- Clean channels, clean water,
- Clean water surface children to energy,
- Clean debris and improve functional ability of river,
- Cleaner water, picturesque scenery, control water flow to help prevent flooding,
- Quality water in a pristine well, maintained natural environment,
- Clean clear water in the river, four foot culverts of every mile road on the channel,
- Implant what is on posters, clean water,
- Clean up river bank, have clean and good quality of water,
- Clean up dead wood and trees, water quality improved,
- Clear, blue, water in spring, slight high in summer, - no deadwood, good drainage,
- Naturalization of drains for recreational esthetic value, improved habitat along La Salle River for birds and fish, work with other watershed districts – exchange ideas, data, and things that work,
- Clean potable water, fish habitat,
- Clean up river debris/overhanging etc., Look into directing the Elm Creek channel to the Portage diversion,
- That the river be clean enough to continue recreation such as fishing, canoeing, skiing and snowmobiling,
- More innovative drain-pipe sizing etc, maintenance of agriculture/both crops livestock, more access on river i.e. canoeing,
- Better control on livestock operations and waste disposal, clean riverbeds increase in flows and better water quality for wildlife, information folders/pamphlets to farm operations on use of fertilizers and pesticides,
- Better pollution control and better drainage – control,

- Heavy cover (bush) along all waterways,
- Cleaner flowing water, less animal waste along watershed, at least 5 to 10% increase in forested areas,
- Less drainage,
- More grass and trees growing along banks,
- Clean water, animal waste from mega farms must be managed properly; drainage should be such that no one group benefits from municipal decisions at expense of other tax payers.
- Better regulated run off in spring, more trees, possible holding areas on low land would be a buffer,
- Children and grandchildren moved to Alberta,
- More green, more water, less signs of erosion,
- Clean pristine water, room for the animals (wild) as well as us, a clean place for recreation and living,
- Good comment about cleaning up by controlling flooding, very good comment,
- More consistent flows within the banks, consideration to existing industry versus explosion,
- Healthier water, wider riparian zones, better water management of excessive rain events,
- Available flowing potable river, with a wide green riparian strip on both sides, inside of a couple of nice rows of trees,
- Maintain water levels, cleaner water less algae, same amount or more trees on riverbanks,
- Water quality, pollutants, debris that limits recreation use, water levels,
- Control the amount of water into the La Salle River, build a diversion so my kids can stay where the family farm was settled,
- It would be the same as it is now along my land and my neighbors land, alleviate flooding so the river isn't full of crap all the time,
- Cleaner water, all water draining equally across area, no area causing problems for another,
- To release the excess water, by way of channels to the big Assiniboine River – ASAP,
- More trees along river banks, buffer strips for residences and livestock,
- A clean flowing river, consistent water flow,
- Improved drainage, quality water,
- Improved water quality in the La Salle, the danger of excessive flooding is reduced,
- A clean, flowing managed water system, with large water storage areas that can be used to sustain fauna without threatening the human population,
- I'd like to see no obstruction on the water flow and definitely have the threat of residential and over-land flooding removed. If a child or adult were to wade in the La Salle River it should be free of harmful chemicals.
- No more flooding in the spring and summer from river,
- Clear channel, no trees in water, clear water – no algae, bacteria, properly drained farmland along river,
- A river that is an attraction for canoeists, a river that is allowed to function like a river not a flood channel, a river that is an asset to real-estate value,
- Hold water back upstream, alleviate water pressure on La Salle by digging alternative channel to Assiniboine, widen riparian strip along La Salle River by 50 feet.
- Gentle flow, clear clean water, lots of wildlife – fish and animals,

Conclusion:

La Salle River Watershed has completed the community consultations in the watershed. These community consultations have allowed and encouraged community members to bring their concerns, issues and solutions to the attention of the watershed. Stakeholders were advised of these issues in a brief report on Friday March 23, 2007.

The issues and solutions identified will need to be reviewed by the Watershed Planning Advisory Team. It will be from these issues and solutions that the Watershed Planning Team and the WPAT will begin to make their strategic direction of what they will need to identify as the priorities, goals and objectives for the La Salle River Watershed.

Appendix I

We all live in a watershed, and as part of developing an Integrated Watershed Management Plan, La Salle Redboine Conservation District is asking you, as watershed constituent, to be involved in our planning.

On your own, please answer the questions below:

Based upon your experience of living in the La Salle River Watershed, name five natural resource management issues that you would like to see the Watershed management plan deal with...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now moving into your designated group – please share your each of your 5 issues with members in the group. Please allow each member of your group to share their 5 issues before making any comments.

In your group, once everyone has shared their thoughts – looking at each of your issues please come to a consensus as a group your top 3 to 5 issues that you want to share with the community consultation process this evening. Thank you.

Group Issues
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

On your own, reviewing the top three issues from your group work, please list below, what are some of the practical solutions to these issues in the watershed?

Are there any other comments you feel you would like to share about the watershed? Trends, opportunities, etc. Please write below.

Thank you

Vision Question:

In order that our children and grandchildren could benefit and enjoy the La Salle River Watershed, what would we, in the best of all possible worlds want to see the La Salle River Watershed look like in the next ten to twenty years?

Please list three items below.

- _____
- _____
- _____