

Honourable Greg Ottenbreit  
Minister Responsibility for Water Security  
[env.minister@gov.sk.ca](mailto:env.minister@gov.sk.ca)

September 20, 2019

Dear Greg:

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Alliance for Water Sustainability (SAWS), we thank you for your response to our request to educate landowners about the new Ag Water Management Strategy when requesting line locates for drainage purposes.

As the regulator, we can appreciate that WSA would prefer a direct stakeholder approach. We however question how you can believe this could be effective at dealing with such a huge ongoing problem as Ag Drainage. Illegal drainage has not stopped or slowed down despite WSA's recent Policy changes. We know that WSA is not approving any drainage works that send water to the Quill Lakes yet the reality is new ditches have been dug every year that do just that and WSA is not regulating them.

So what direct approach is WSA taking at the Quill Lakes? We heard Susan Ross (WSA President and CEO), say that the direct approach at the Quill Lakes failed and WSA has no plans to come back to the Quill Lakes. Rather than educate landowners about the required licensing process and enforcing violations, what will WSA be doing?

From our perspective, new and existing illegal drainage continues to send water to the Quills, farmers remain flooded, and WSA only does enforcement if someone complains and files a Request For Assistance.

We commend WSA for licensing a record number of quarters in other parts of the province but none of these were at the Quill Lakes, one of the highest risk watersheds in Saskatchewan. We know that WSA had contracted QP's and worked directly with some 42 landowners in the Quill Lakes basin to have them consolidate their illegal drainage works.

We also know that none of them complied and their drainage works remain open despite WSA spending hundreds of thousands of dollars asking them to do so.

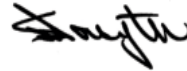
So please tell us what did WSA do in 2019 and what are your plans for 2020 for regulating the illegal drainage in the Quill Lakes Watershed? The Quill Lakes WSA Office has been closed, and the illegal drainage will continue again this fall. If you're unwilling to educate producers what the regulations are when they request line locates, what are your plans for the strong public education campaign WSA has committed to undertake as part of the Ag Water Management Strategy?

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Aura Lee MacPherson, Chair



Sherry Forsyth, Vice-Chair

cc: Blair Swystun, President and CEO, Crown Investments Corporation  
Honourable Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan  
M. J. (Mike) Marsh, President and CEO, Sask Power  
Brian Rakochy, Consultant, Government Relations, Sask Power