



## **WSA Releases Plans to Drain 70% of Saskatchewan's Wetlands**

Thanks to everyone who sent a letter to the Premier asking him to create a Wetland Conservation Policy. Your voices are being heard.

Sadly though we have some terrible news to share. We have learned that the Water Security Agency is not listening. On September 28th we heard WSA say that they rejected a No Net Loss Policy and a Wetland Retention Policy in favor of a Regional

**Approach Drainage Policy. WSA told us they selected this approach because they believe the other 2 polices will limit economic growth. It's clear that WSA does not see that economic growth and environment protection go hand in hand. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. A growing economy depends on a sustainable environment that conserves our natural resources by protecting water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitat and infrastructure.**

**WSA told us that this Regional Approach will allow farmers to drain up to 70% of the wetlands in each drainage project. This is very concerning because WSA's own findings from their drainage demonstration research projects found that:**

- **At 30% drainage there are detectable impacts to water quality.**
- **At 30% drainage there is a 14% decrease in the number of bird species.**
- **At 50% drainage there are impacts to infrastructure.**

**We also learned that the Regional Approach will give landowners the power to choose which types of wetlands they can conserve in order to meet the 30% wetland conservation requirement. So farmers can drain more wetlands by conserving wetlands that are partially drained or farmed in the 30% requirement, rather than conserving only undrained and unfarmed wetlands. This will give farmers the opportunity to drain even more than 70%. Healthy wetlands are not farmed or drained. A partially drained wetland will send even more nutrients downstream resulting in more toxic algae blooms. This is not sustainable.**

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**A Healthy Wetland**



**A Farmed Wetland**



**A Partially Drained**

**Wetland**

How can this new policy grow the Saskatchewan economy when it ignores such important issues like: protecting water quality and water quantity in our lakes and rivers, protection of our wildlife and the habitat they depend on, protecting our recreation and tourism industries, protecting our quality of life, and protecting our drinking water and ground water sources.

Your Voice is needed now more than ever. Please send a letter telling WSA and this government that this Policy is unacceptable and that wetland drainage should be limited to no more than 30% to avoid impacts to water quality, quantity, damage to infrastructure, and loss of biodiversity.

To assist you in sending a letter / email watch for a sample letter as well as a list of email addresses for WSA and the other people we suggest you send your letter to in our Newsletter immediately following this one.

Thank You!

**If you would like to join CLEM or LMLSG please call 306 539 6903**



**CLEM is working with the Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group to ensure the health of our lakes in southern Saskatchewan.**

**For more information, visit [www.lmlsg.ca/SAWS](http://www.lmlsg.ca/SAWS) or our Facebook page **Calling for a Sustainable Quill Lake Solution** or **Calling Lakes Ecomuseum****