



Sample Letter and Email Addresses

As promised in our last Newsletter here is a sample letter to email to WSA, the Ministers of Agriculture, Environment, Health, and Parks, MLA's, the Provincial Auditor, and Federal Minister of Environment, Agriculture, and Regional Services, and Department of Fisheries. Please cc us saskaws@gmail.com.

Simply copy and paste the sample letter into an email or change the letter to reflect your concerns and copy and paste the email addresses into the To: box.

Thank you for sharing your voice..

Dear Water Security Agency:

I am sending you this letter to let you know that I and thousands of residents across Saskatchewan are extremely concerned about a new Ag Water Stewardship (Drainage) Policy being developed this fall by the WSA. A Policy that is supposed to protect the water quality of our lakes and rivers but will do the exact opposite.

On September 25, over 2,200 letters were delivered to the Legislature asking one simple question: "Will the new Ag Water Stewardship (Drainage) Policy improve water quality in this province"? I am extremely disappointed to learn that WSA, the agency responsible

for protecting water quality, will create a Policy that will make water quality worse.

These letters, signed by a broad cross-section of people from all corners of the province, highlights people's concerns that this new policy will sidestep wetland conservation, and that illegal and approved wetland drainage will continue to contaminate our drinking water, lakes and streams.

I am very disappointed to learn that despite engaging with stakeholders for over a year that WSA has rejected both a No Net Loss Policy and their own Wetland Retention Policy in favor of a Regional Approach Drainage Policy. Especially concerning is that they were rejected because may limit economic growth. Do not economic growth and environment protection go hand in hand? A growing economy depends on a sustainable environment that conserves our natural resources by protecting water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitat and infrastructure.

How will allowing farmers to drain up to 70% of the wetlands in each approved drainage project keep our lakes free of algae and protect our drinking water supplies? This is very concerning because after spending millions of taxpayers dollars on ag drainage demonstration / research projects WSA's own findings found that:

At 30% drainage there are detectable impacts to water quality.

At 30% drainage there is a 14% loss in the number of bird species.

At 50% drainage there are impacts to infrastructure.

Even more concerning is that I have been told that the Regional Approach Policy would give landowners the power to choose which types of wetlands they can conserve in order to meet the 30% wetland conservation requirement. This will mean farmers can drain even more than 70% of the wetlands by conserving wetlands that are either partially drained or farmed in the 30% requirement, rather than conserving only undrained and unfarmed wetlands. Will not a partially drained wetland send even more nutrients downstream resulting in more toxic algae blooms?

This Policy will not meet the recommendations the Provincial Auditor has been calling on WSA to make since 2018. This is not a Stewardship Policy, it is a drainage policy.

Why are we not developing a policy that protects water quality first, and then works with other industries to achieve success under that policy. How can a policy that focuses only the agricultural industry 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.

This Regional Approach Drainage Policy is unacceptable. I ask you to pay attention to your own research and limit wetland drainage to no more than 30% to avoid impacts to water quality, quantity, damage to infrastructure, and loss of biodiversity.

I look forward to your response to the questions and concerns outlined in this letter.

Sincerely,

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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 or our Facebook page Calling for a Sustainable Quill Lake Solution or Calling Lakes Ecomuseum