MANITOBA WATERSHED DISTRICTS PROGRAM 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT





Minister responsible for Efficiency Manitoba

Legislative Building, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8 CANADA

Her Honour the Honourable Anita R. Neville, P.C., O.M. Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba Room 235 Legislative Building Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

Your Honour,

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I am pleased to share the accomplishments of Manitoba's Watershed Districts Program for 2022-23.

Manitoba's 14 watershed districts have a successful, long-standing partnership with local municipalities, enhancing the health and sustainability of watersheds across almost all of agri-Manitoba. Watershed districts offer programs that enhance surface water management, improve water quality, safeguard drinking water sources, and protect sensitive wildlife and aquatic habitat. In addition to these core programs, districts also work with landowners and municipalities to enhance watershed resiliency to the impacts of a changing climate.

The program expanded again in 2022-23, bringing four new rural municipalities on board (Lac du Bonnet, Macdonald, Roland, and St. Clements), and expanding the area of participation for five previously included municipalities (Brokenhead, Reynolds, Ste. Anne, Taché, and Springfield). We continue to pursue expansion to allow all municipalities the opportunity to participate in the program. The program's successes are largely due to the cooperative and voluntary nature of local watershed district boards. On behalf of our government, thank you to all watershed district board members and staff for enhancing watershed health across Manitoba.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Tracy Schmidt Minister of Environment and Climate Change



THE MANITOBA WATERSHED DISTRICTS PROGRAM

WATERSHED DISTRICTS IN MANITOBA

Manitoba's Watershed Districts Program enhances the health and sustainability of watersheds through stewardship programs and partnerships. With funding from the Manitoba government and municipalities, locally appointed watershed district boards make planning and management decisions to improve watershed health across most of municipal Manitoba.

VISION

The Watershed Districts Program strives for healthy watersheds that support watershed residents, the environment, and the economy for the present and the future.

MANDATE

Watershed districts lead integrated watershed management planning and play a key role in plan implementation. Through shared governance and citizen engagement, watershed districts deliver local solutions to complex issues – contributing to healthier, more resilient watersheds.

PRINCIPLES

The Watershed Districts Program:

- functions as a partnership between levels of government and engages local citizens
- is cost-shared by provincial and municipal government partners
- is incentive-based and non-regulatory
- relies on local decision-making through local boards with support from technical experts to solve local issues
- uses watershed management planning to guide decision-making and programming

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that Manitoba is on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, and Nehethowuk peoples.

We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis.

We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

WATERSHED DISTRICTS IN MANITOBA

The Watershed Districts Program is a partnership between Manitoba and 113 municipal partners, with a long-standing history of grassroots decision-making to improve watershed health.

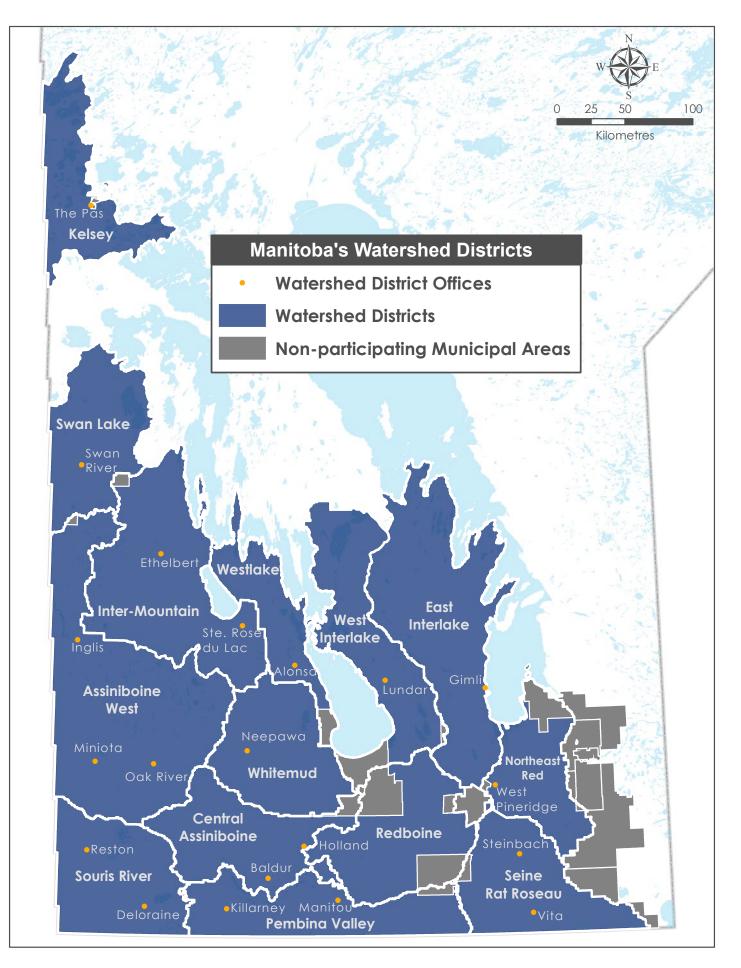
PROGRAM EXPANSION

In 2022-23, the Manitoba government allocated additional funding to expand the Northeast Red, Pembina Valley and Redboine Watershed Districts. In March 2023 with support from municipal councils, Manitoba amended the Watershed Districts Regulation, formally expanding these three districts. Through this expansion process, four new municipalities joined the program (the Rural Municipalities of Lac du Bonnet, Macdonald, Roland, and St. Clements), and five municipalities expanded their included areas (Rural Municipalities of Brokenhead, Reynolds, Ste. Anne, Taché, and Springfield). The expansion increased municipal area in the program from 80,438 km² to 93,986 km².



PROVINCIAL GRANTS

Watershed District	Provincial Grant	Watershed District	Provincial Grant
Assiniboine West	\$703K	Redboine	\$338K
Central Assiniboine	\$408K	Seine Rat Roseau	\$378K
East Interlake	\$300K	Souris River	\$440K
Inter-Mountain	\$782K	Swan Lake	\$225K
Kelsey	\$155K	West Interlake	\$225K
Northeast Red	\$620K	Westlake	\$378K
Pembina Valley	\$605K	Whitemud	\$810K



PROGRAM FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES

Provincial Grant: ^{\$}6,442,500

Manitoba provides an annual grant to each watershed district to implement integrated watershed management plans in their local watersheds. The 2022-23 provincial grants to watershed districts included \$263K for the expansion of three watershed districts and an increase of more than \$200K for infrastructure districts.

Municipal Levies: ^{\$}2,122,333

Participating municipalities provide \$1 for every \$3 Manitoba contributes to watershed districts. Municipalities appoint representatives to participate in the development and delivery of watershed district programs and activities.

Additional Funding:

Additional municipal Additional provincial \$3,267,467 Non-governmental

6,353,275

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Federal \$2,094,681 \$367,597 \$2,058,697

Additional funding is obtained from a variety of sources, including environmental organizations, industry, and government programs.

TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING:

PROGRAM SPENDING BY ACTIVITY

Watershed district programming reflects provincial and local priorities. Watershed districts design programming to meet goals, objectives, and actions identified in their integrated watershed management plans (IWMPs). Although programs vary between individual watershed districts, they can be grouped into five main categories:

Surface Water Management

44%

Water retention, erosion control, and drain maintenance

Nutrient Reduction and Water Quality **Protection**

34%

Riparian area fencing, alternative watering systems, cover crops, forage establishment, and grassed waterways

Natural Area Protection and **Enhancement**

13% Wetland restoration and enhancement, tree planting, aquatic habitat restoration, nature trails, and conservation agreements

Watershed Education and Awareness

6%

Water festivals, producer workshops, project tours, watershed health monitoring, and development of IWMPs

Drinking Water Protection

3%

Source water protection activities such as wellhead remediation. abandoned well sealing, and drinking water testing

2022-23 FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS DISTRICTS RECEIVE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM A NUMBER OF OTHER PARTNERS:

LEVERAGING FUNDING

The Manitoba government provides an annual grant to each watershed district to implement programming to enhance the health and sustainability of watersheds through IWMPs. Participating municipalities are required to match the provincial grant; for every \$3 that the province provides, municipalities in the watershed district are required to collectively contribute a minimum of \$1. This cost-shared funding enables locally-appointed district boards to offer programs that address priorities identified in local watershed plans.

Thanks to the success of watershed districts in on-the-ground project implementation, all 14 watershed districts leverage their core cost-shared funding to obtain additional funding from a variety of external sources. These external sources include non-government environmental organizations, industry, and government programs, and in 2022-23, totalled over \$7 million.

Manitoba's Watershed Districts Program offers a cost-effective way to leverage local government funding for local watershed health: for every \$1 that municipalities contributed to the program in 2022-23, watershed districts leveraged \$8 in combined Manitoba government and external funding sources. In addition to these funding sources, watershed districts partner with landowners and residents to complete projects on the landscape. The invaluable contributions of individual partners include labour, equipment, materials, access, and additional cost-sharing.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Conservation, GROW and Wetlands GROW Trusts Manitoba Building Sustainble Communities Program Manitoba Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund Manitoba Hometown Green Team

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Canada Summer Jobs Canadian Agricultural Partnership – Ag Action Manitoba Environment and Climate Change Canada Natural Resources Canada

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

ALUS Canada **Carthy Foundation** Deerwood Soil and Water Management Association Ducks Unlimited Canada Elkhorn and Area Foundation Fish and Lake Improvement Program for the Parkland Region Manitoba Beef Producers Manitoba Forage and Grasslands Association Manitoba Recreational Trails Association Mound Wildlife Manitoba Métis Federation Nature Conservancy of Canada Richardson Tundra Other local organizations, community foundations, corporate sponsors, and individual donors

In addition to these partnerships, many municipalities contribute more than the required matching funds in support of the high quality programs and projects completed by districts.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES 2022-23 MANITOBA'S WATERSHED DISTRICTS PROGRAM:



ENHANCES WATERSHED PLANNING

- develops a shared vision and coordinated action for watersheds
- provides funding for targeted, on-the-ground action to address local and provincial priorities
- builds local capacity for cooperation, improved communication, and local knowledge sharing
- builds and strengthens local, provincial, and federal partnerships



24 watershed management plans in action

new watershed plans in development

5 existing watershed plans under renewal



REDUCES IMPACTS OF FLOODING AND DROUGHT

- improves watershed resiliency to adapt to a changing climate
- targets and prioritizes water retention and peak flow reduction projects
- identifies and coordinates surface water projects
- mitigates flood events
- builds soil health and water retention capacity of soils
- manages waterway networks to reduce flooding impacts, while considering the environment



43 water retention projects with 711 cubic decametres (576 acre-feet) of storage created

108 km

drains maintained or reconstructed

68 crossings replaced or repaired



IMPROVES LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- conserves and restores aquatic, riparian, and prairie habitat
- protects and enhances ecological goods and services
- fosters linkages between land development planning and watershed planning
- promotes sustainable land management



21 ha wetlands enhanced

57,131 trees planted

101 km shelterbelts established

HEALTHY AND RESILIENT WATERSHEDS • STRONG RURAL COMMUNITIES SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION



IMPROVES WATER QUALITY

- implements projects to improve water quality and reduce nutrient loading
- increases local capacity to monitor and understand trends in water quality
- improves soil health and reduce the over-application of nutrients on agricultural lands
- fosters collaboration between technical professionals and local land managers to improve water quality



PROTECTS DRINKING WATER

- conducts source water protection planning for public drinking water systems
- provides recommendations and implements actions to improve drinking water quality
- fosters collaboration between technical professionals and local people to monitor groundwater quality, assess groundwater issues, and implement projects aimed at protecting local groundwater sources



14. erosion control structures established

grassed waterways created

31 streambank and gully stabilization projects completed

> 110 ha buffer strips established



1,298 private wells tested

108 abandoned wells sealed



SUPPORTS PROSPEROUS RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- provides provincial government funding to rural communities, increasing ability to leverage additional sources of external funding
- supports rural employment and local businesses
- educates youth and local land managers
- manages waterway infrastructure to support a productive agricultural landscape and rural development



55 tours and demonstrations with 5,290 attendees

2,390 youth attended water festivals

58 full-time and 36 part-time and seasonal staff employed

CUMULATIVE PROJECT OUTCOMES (2018-23)

MITIGATING FLOOD AND DROUGHT IMPACTS:



6,697 cubic decametres storage capacity

MAINTAINING INFRASTRUCTURE:

a state





2-23 Watershed Districts Annual Report

REDUCING EROSION:



87 grassed waterways

145 gully and streambank stabilization projects

IMPROVING RIPARIAN AREAS AND WATER QUALITY:



362 alternative watering systems installed





PROTECTING DRINKING WATER SOURCES:





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WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING

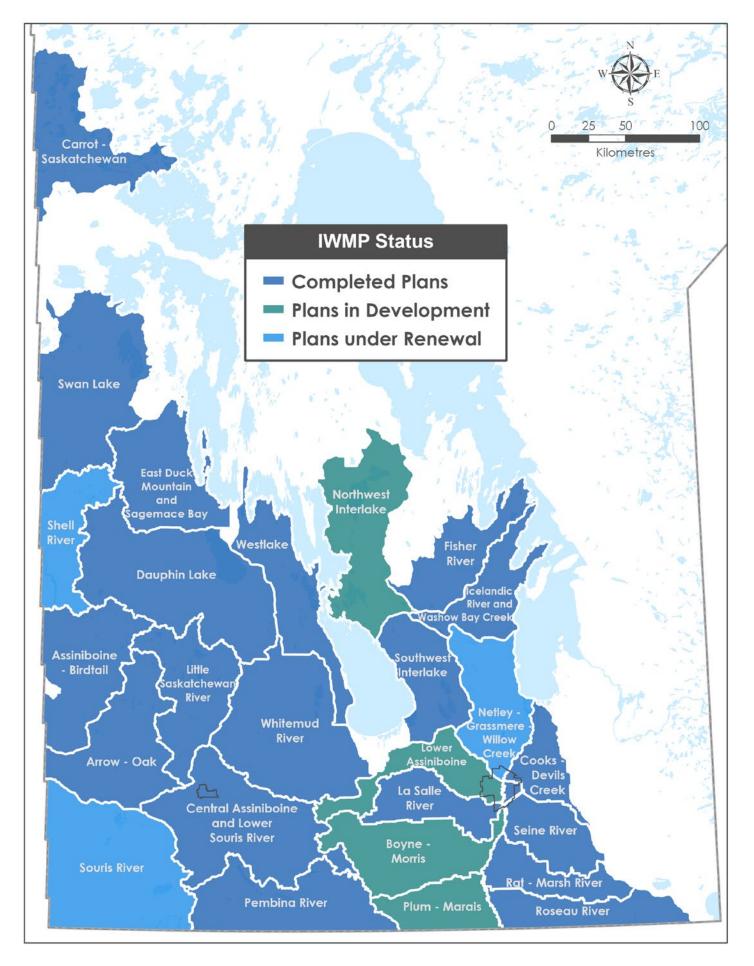
Integrated watershed management plans (IWMPs) provide a decision-making framework for the protection, restoration, and management of water, aquatic ecosystems, and drinking water sources. The planning process engages watershed residents, organizations, and government to identify and prioritize watershed issues, gather and analyze local, technical, and traditional knowledge, and develop recommendations to address priority issues in targeted areas. Plan implementation is shared by watershed districts, all levels of government, watershed residents and organizations..

Planning grants are provided to watershed districts for the development of IWMPs, as outlined in the Watershed Management Regulation under The Water Protection Act. In 2022-23, Environment and Climate Change issued planning grants to two watershed districts: Northeast Red Watershed District for the first generation Brokenhead River IWMP, and Pembina Valley Watershed District for the second generation Pembina River IWMP. As of 2023, watershed districts have completed 24 first generation watershed management plans. There are an additional five first generation plans (Brokenhead River, Boyne-Morris, Lower Assiniboine, Northwest Interlake, and Plum-Marais) and four second generation plans (Pembina River, Shell River, Souris River, and Netley-Grassmere-Willow Creek) in development. For more information on integrated watershed management planning in Manitoba, please visit www.manitobawatersheds.ca



The Watershed Planning and Programs Section (Water Science and Watershed Management Branch) of Environment and Climate Change administers and manages the Watershed Districts Program under the authority of The Watershed Districts Act. The section also coordinates and supports watershed management planning as outlined in The Water Protection Act.

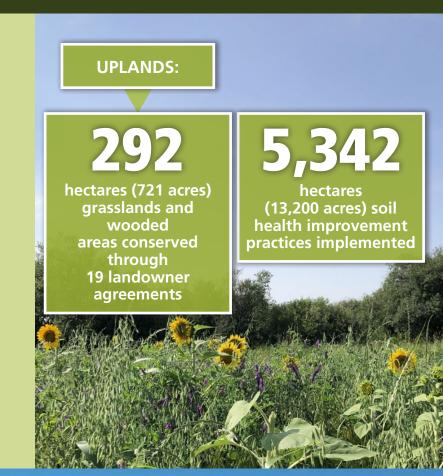
For more information, please visit www.manitobawatersheds.ca or call 204-945-6784



GROWING OUTCOMES IN WATERSHEDS 2022-23

Growing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW) supports delivery of ecological goods and services in Manitoba. GROW enhances watershed health and resiliency by prioritizing and funding projects that mitigate and prepare for drought and flooding, improve nutrient management, and improve water quality. In addition, GROW projects can improve on-farm water management, enhance sustainable agricultural production, improve biodiversity and habitat, and sequester carbon.

As the delivery agents for GROW, watershed districts work with landowners to develop and deliver projects that align with GROW priority outcomes and co-benefits. In addition, watershed districts develop locally relevant programming to ensure the projects they deliver support actions identified in local watershed management plans and address watershed needs. Each district delivering GROW has established a local GROW committee with representation from agricultural producers, watershed district members, technical experts, and other partners.



WETLANDS:

969

hectares (2,394 acres) Class 1 and 2 wetlands conserved through 96 landowner agreements



RIPARIAN:

219 hectares (541 acres) riparian area conserved through 6 landowner agreements

hectares (171 acres) buffer strips planted through 5 landowner agreements



alternative watering systems and 18 km riparian fencing installed, removing 4,590 head of cattle from riparian areas

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23 km shelterbelts established

hectares (171 acres) riparian buffers enhanced



cubic decametres (147 acre-feet) water storage capacity established

2022-23 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

	Project number	Area or Length	Other metrics
SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT			
Assessment - flow and retention	17		
Assessment - infrastructure inventory	197	60 km	
Erosion control in-channel	14		
Infrastructure WD - Brushing and mowing	310	1,683 km	
Infrastructure WD - Crossing maintenance	44		
Infrastructure WD - Crossing replacement	24		
Infrastructure WD - Drain maintenance	51	105 km	
Infrastructure WD - Drain reconstruction	3	3 km	
Management - urban rain gardens	15		
Mangement - beaver impacts	73		
Surface water flow and retention assessment	74		
Water control works applications reviewed	32		
Water control works applicatons submitted	44		
Water retention - gated culverts	8		
Water retention - large dams	1		128 dam ³
Water retention - maintenance	56		
Water retention - small dams	42		583 dam ³

NUTRIENT REDUCTION AND WATER QUALITY PROTECTION			
Livestock - alternative watering systems	53		4,835 cattle
Livestock - crossings	16		1,157 cattle
Livestock - pasture pipeline	13	14 km	3,150 cattle
Livestock - riparian area fencing	29	47 km	2,626 cattle
Livestock - rotational grazing	13	617 ha	675 cattle
Livestock - runoff control	1		
Riparian area conservation		219 ha	10 agreements
Riparian enhancement - buffer strips	9	110 ha	
Riparian enhancement - grassed waterway	9	14 ha	
Riparian enhancement - gully stabliization	9	36 ha	
Riparian enhancement - streambank stabilization	22	26 ha	
Soil health - cover crops, polycrops	169	8,016 ha	2,595 cattle
Soil health - forage establishment	84	2,396 ha	
Soil health - salinity control	9	262 ha	
Soil health - soil quality indicator testing	276		

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION		
Abandoned well sealing	108	
Drinking water tests	1,298	
Well establishment	9	
Wellhead remediation	1	
Well shock chlorination	19	

	Project number	Area or Length	Other metrics
NATURAL AREA PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT			
Grassland or woodland - conserved		292 ha	19 agreements
Habitat - duck nesting structures			2 basins
Habitat - fish stocking or rearing	9		
Habitat - lake aeration	3		
Habitat - riparian and aquatic assessments	10		
Maintenance - conservation corridors	652	2,405 ha	
Maintenance - trails	28	64 km	
Trees - community tree nursery			7,440 trees
Trees - field shelterbelts		101 km	52,252 trees
Trees - seedlings provided			83,856 trees
Trees - tree planting			4,879 trees
Wetlands - conserved (temporary)		969 ha	96 agreements
Wetlands - constructed		4 ha	3 basins
Wetlands - enhanced		21 ha	4 basins

WATERSHED EDUCATION AND AWARENES	SS		
Aerial surveys	92	106 km	
Beneficial management practice research	3		
Composters	20		
Education - tours and demonstrations	55		5,290 people
Education - water festivals	9		2,390 people
Education - youth	26		3,615 people
Environmental Farm Plan Workshops	17		22 people
Environmental Farm Plans held by partnering producers	90		
Events - banquets	16		380 people
Geographic Information System (GIS) products	494		
Information - brochures, signs	43		
Information - online, digitial	42		
IWMP Planning	7		
Monitoring - benthic invertebrates	1		
Monitoring - groundwater	3		71 tests
Monitoring - surface water quality	22		237 tests
Rain barrels	286		
Strategic planning	2		
Water use efficiency planning	1		

2022-23 MUNICIPAL PARTNERS 113 MUNICIPALITIES ARE PARTNERS IN THE WATERSHED DISTRICTS PROGRAM

VILLAGES

Dunnottar St. Pierre-Jolys

TOWNS

Altona Carberry Carman Minnedosa Neepawa Niverville Ste. Anne Stonewall Swan River Teulon Virden Winnipeg Beach

CITIES

Brandon Dauphin Morden Selkirk Steinbach Winkler

MUNICIPALITIES

Alonsa Arborg Argyle Armstrong **Bifrost-Riverton Boissevain-Morton** Brenda-Waskada Brokenhead Cartier **Cartwright-Roblin** Clanwilliam-Erickson Coldwell Cornwallis Dauphin **Deloraine-Winchester** De Salaberry Dufferin Ellice-Archie Elton **Emerson-Franklin** Ethelbert Fisher **Gilbert Plains** Gimli Glenboro-South Cypress Glenella-Lansdowne Grahamdale Grandview Grassland Grey Hamiota

Hanover **Harrison** Park Kelsey **Killarney-Turtle Mountain** La Broquerie Lac du Bonnet Lakeshore Lorne Louise Macdonald **McCrearv Minitonas-Bowsman** Minto-Odanah Montcalm **Mossey River** Mountain **Norfolk Treherne** North Cypress-Langford North Norfolk **Oakland-Wawanesa** Oakview Pembina Pinev Pipestone **Portage la Prairie Prairie Lakes Prairie View** Reynolds **Riding Mountain West** Rhineland Ritchot Riverdale

Roblin Rockwood Roland Rosedale Rossburn Rosser **Russell-Binscarth** Sifton Souris-Glenwood Springfield St. Andrews St. Clements St. François Xavier St. Laurent Stanley Ste. Anne Ste. Rose Stuartburn **Swan Valley West** Taché Thompson **Two Borders** Victoria Wallace-Woodworth West Interlake West St. Paul Westlake-Gladstone Whitehead Woodlands Yellowhead



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