

Walk Run Roll | Annual Report
the Meewasin Trail 2012-2013

Meewasin 



Chair, Jack Vicq



CEO, Lloyd Isaak

Our Mission Statement:

To ensure a healthy and vibrant river valley with a balance between human use and conservation, and to conserve the natural and heritage resources of the river valley

Front Cover:

Overlooking the Saskatchewan River from the Meewasin Trail.

Compiled & Written by Doug Porteous

Layout and Design by Roger Denis

Edited by Carl Krause and Erin Akins

Cover Photo Karen Edwards

Other photos Amanda Janzen, Brenda Kramarchuk, Doug Porteous, Karen Edwards, Lennox Saunders, Kim Ali and Gordon Waldner — Star Phoenix

Message from the Chair and CEO

Meewasin came into being in the early 1970's when an immediate threat to the tradition of public access to the riverbank in Saskatoon triggered a process that led to the creation of the Meewasin Valley Authority.

Created in 1979 by an Act of the Province of Saskatchewan, Meewasin is a partnership of the City of Saskatoon, Province of Saskatchewan and University of Saskatchewan who decided they could best manage their riverbank lands through one organization.

Thirty-four years later, the Meewasin Valley Project has proven to be an outstanding success, prized locally and recognized internationally. Today, more than 65 square kilometres (25 square miles) make up the Meewasin conservation zone, a gathering of parks, museums, art galleries, interpretive centres, canoe launches, conservation areas and more than 60 km of Meewasin Trail, all frequented by the general public for leisure and recreation, a draw for tourists, and an incentive for workers attracted to our rapidly growing city.

We in Saskatoon are proud of what Meewasin has accomplished and want it to continue. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference held in Saskatoon in the summer of 2012 hosted elected officials from across Canada who toured the Meewasin Valley. They were impressed. Some spoke about similar programs while others sought information as to how such a concept could be initiated in their home communities.

This past year we said good-bye and thank you to four retiring Board members: University of Saskatchewan President Peter MacKinnon, MLA for Saskatoon Northwest Gordon Wyant, and City Councillors Bev Dubois and Glen Penner. We welcomed new board members: University of Saskatchewan President Ilene Busch-Vishniac, MLA Roger Parent, and City Councillors Zach Jeffries and Charlie Clark. We said good-bye to our CEO Susan Lamb and congratulated our new CEO Lloyd Isaak.

We completed most of the River Landing Riverfronts and we expanded the Meewasin Trail to reach our

northwest city limits. We developed plans to connect to Wanuskewin Heritage Park in the northwest and the Circle Drive South Bridge in the southeast. Future plans include extending the Meewasin Trail south to Chief Whitecap Park, and eventually on to the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. One day we envision Meewasin playing a key role in a regional trail network connecting Dalmeny, Warman, Osler and many other communities.

Along with our development projects, we continue to conserve our natural and cultural resources, to eradicate intrusive (exotic) species of plants, to maintain and bring attention to natural areas, most recently the Northeast Swale, and to monitor development in the conservation zone along the river.

Our education programs teach our future decision-makers and business leaders about our cultural and natural heritage. All Grade 3 students in Saskatoon spend a half day at the Meewasin Valley Centre to learn about Saskatoon's history. All Grade 5 students in Saskatoon spend a day at Beaver Creek Conservation Area to learn about prairie flora and fauna.

As for the Meewasin 100-Year Plan, we are embarking on a review of our Strategic Plan. This is a great opportunity for the public to continue to be involved. It all begins in June 2013 with our Five Year Public Opinion Survey.

We thank the Meewasin Board and committees, the Meewasin staff and all of the Meewasin volunteers and supporters for another successful year. ♦



Above: Federation of Canadian Municipalities delegates tour River Landing June 2012

Meewasin Board of Directors



Chair, Jack Vicq Darwin Anderson Mayor Don Atchison Ilene Busch-Vishniac Charlie Clark Bev Dubois* Randy Fernets Marion Ghiglione Lloyd Isaak

Zach Jeffries Mairin Loewen Peter MacKinnon* Brent Martian Roger Parent Glen Penner* Colin Tennent Gordon Wyant* CEO, Susan Lamb*

* retired board member

Meewasin thanked retiring board members Bev Dubois, Peter MacKinnon, Glen Penner, Gordon Wyant, and welcomed new board members Ilene Busch-Vishniac, Zach Jeffries, Roger Parent and Charlie Clark.

Meewasin's Jurisdiction

Meewasin centres in Saskatoon and runs approximately 60 km along the river valley through Saskatoon and Corman Park, from Pike Lake in the southwest to Clarke's Crossing in the northeast. It encompasses conservation areas, parks, museums, interpretive centres, the university lands, canoe launches, community links and more than 60 kilometres of Meewasin Trail. Including the South Saskatchewan River, there are more than 65 square kilometres (25 square miles) in the conservation zone.

What Is Meewasin

Created in 1979 by an Act of the Province of Saskatchewan, Meewasin is a conservation organization dedicated to conserving the cultural and natural resources of the South Saskatchewan River Valley. It is the means by which the three participating parties (the City of Saskatoon, the Province of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan) have chosen to manage their riverbank lands. The creation of Meewasin is based on the concept that the partners working together through a single agency – Meewasin – can accomplish more than they could individually.

Meewasin Committees

Public ownership in decision-making

Public ownership in decision-making is one of Meewasin's five guiding principles. Meewasin committees are invaluable to the work of the Meewasin.

Development Review Committee

The Development Review Committee is created under the Meewasin Valley Act to provide professional and unbiased recommendations regarding the acceptability of proposed improvements within the Meewasin Valley. Committee members were Terry Frank, Moir Haug, Jim McEwen, Elisabeth Miller, Rory Picklyk, Beatrice Regnier, Anna Ringstrom, Bill Schaffel, Mitch Strocen, Doug Tastad, and Terry Werbovetski.

Resource Conservation Advisory Committee

The Resource Conservation Advisory Committee advises the Meewasin Board in its work to ensure the health of the Meewasin Valley, and the conservation of its natural and critical assets. Committee members were Darwin

Anderson, Peter Goode, Margaret Hendry, Tammy Knuttila, Peggy Sarjeant, Janine Shadick, Toddi Steelman, and Gary Wobeser.

Design Advisory Committee

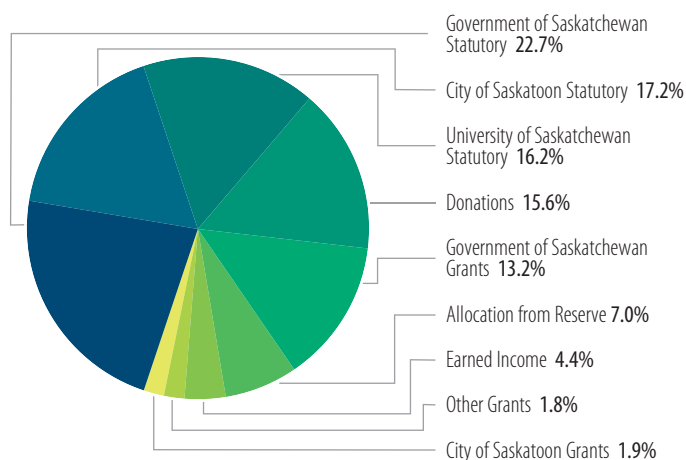
The Design Advisory Committee assists the Meewasin Board in its work to provide professional and unbiased recommendations regarding the acceptability of proposed improvements within the Meewasin Valley. Committee members were Tom Der, Jyhling Lee, Brent Martian, John Penner, Anna Ringstrom, Genevieve Russell and Ryan Walker.

Education Advisory Committee

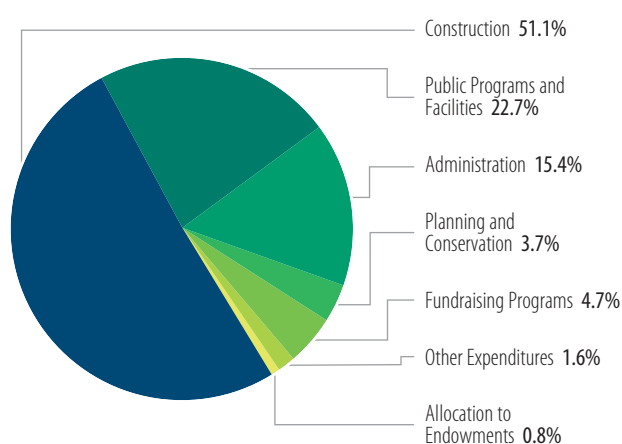
The Education Advisory Committee advises the Meewasin Board on its policy development in education. Committee members were Max Abraham, Brendan Bitz, Cindy Coffin, Corinne Daelick, Melanie Elliott, Marion Ghiglione, Bruce Bradshaw, Nancy Johnson, Lis Mack and Maurice Postnikoff.

Meewasin Financial Highlights as of March 31, 2013

Revenues (All Funds) \$3,999,135



Expenditures and Allocations (All Funds) \$3,999,135



The Meewasin Endowment Fund is managed by the Saskatoon Community Foundation and as of December 31, 2012 stands at \$618,000, the Wes Bolstad Endowment Fund at \$15,000 and the Susan Lamb Endowment Fund at \$11,000. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

Retirement of CEO Susan Lamb

Susan Lamb retired in December 2012 after 15 years as Meewasin's CEO. She was born, raised and educated in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan where she graduated with a Governor-General's Medal. She attended university in both Regina and Saskatoon receiving degrees in science (1974) and education (1978).

Susan began her working career as a journalist with the Star Phoenix in Saskatoon and later ran their Newspaper in Education department. She moved to Meewasin in 1982 and worked as the Public Programs Coordinator, a position she kept for 9 years. She was president and CEO of Tourism Saskatoon for 6 years and returned to Meewasin as CEO in 1997. Since 1982, her impact on Meewasin has been significant: leading the expansion of the Meewasin Trail, the development of Beaver Creek Conservation Area, the development of the Meewasin Valley Centre, Wanuskewin Heritage Park,

River Landing, the Weir Riverworks, and the Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @ PotashCorp Plaza.

During her tenure, Meewasin was named one of the top four river basin agencies in the world. Meewasin's multi-purpose trails have been described as the best thing to do in Saskatoon. The Meewasin skating rink was declared the best outdoor rink in Canada (Reader's Digest 2006), and the Meewasin Trail one of the top 10 trail hikes in Canada.

Susan has been a member of numerous community boards and groups. She was named YWCA Woman of Distinction in 1995 and received a Centennial Medal in 2006. This past October she was honoured at the University of Saskatchewan's 6th Annual Alumni Wall of Honour Event for Outstanding Accomplishments in her Profession, Achievement and Civic Contribution.

Susan's work has made Saskatoon and the greater community a better place to live.

Appointment of CEO Lloyd Isaak

Lloyd Isaak was appointed Meewasin CEO effective January 1, 2013. Formerly Meewasin's Manager of Design & Development, Lloyd is a landscape architect with 25 years experience in large scale open space design and project management. In the past ten years he has worked as project manager for both the River Landing Riverfront and the Cameco Meewasin Skating rink @PotashCorp Plaza, Beaver Creek Conservation Area improvements, Meewasin Trail extensions and the Riverworks Weir Redevelopment.

Lloyd has a diploma in architectural engineering and has been a member of both the Saskatchewan Association of Landscape Architects and the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects since 1998. He has extensive experience in volunteer work and currently sits on numerous committees and is a board member of Wanuskewin Heritage Park.

Lloyd's priorities as CEO will be to extend the Meewasin Trail another 16 kilometres from Wanuskewin Heritage Park to Chief Whitecap Park, and later to the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. He believes that Meewasin has fallen behind the growth of the city and needs to build in all corners, but the Whitecap to Wanuskewin trail will be his first focus.

A second focus will be conservation of the Northeast Swale, an important grassland and wetland in northeast Saskatoon. He believes that there is enough work at the swale to keep Meewasin engaged for 25 years or more. Recent research has shown that numerous threatened and endangered species make their home in this ancient river bed.

Under Lloyd's leadership Meewasin will continue to have a positive influence on how we work and play in Saskatoon. ♦



Above: Meewasin CEO Lloyd Isaak & Chris Dekker Inspect River Landing June 2008

Below: Former Meewasin CEO Susan Lamb at Dedication of Peggy McKercher Conservation Area with Chair Jack Vicq and former Meewasin Chair Peggy McKercher September 2009



2012-2013 Conservation, Development & Education Highlights

Each year Meewasin
planning is guided by
Raymond Moriyama's
100-Year Plan drafted in
1979, the foundation
document for the
Meewasin Development Plan
today. Meewasin initiatives
strive toward the
outcomes of health, fit,
balance and vibrancy.

CONSERVATION

Meewasin's Mandate

Meewasin's mandate is to ensure a healthy and vibrant river valley for now and future generations, with a balance between human use and conservation by:

- Providing leadership in the management of resources;
- Promoting understanding, conservation and beneficial use of the valley; and
- Undertaking programs and projects in river valley development and conservation.

Meewasin fulfills this mandate by undertaking development review, securing lands of interest and nurturing conservation, development and education initiatives.

Development Review

The Meewasin Valley Authority Act enables coordination or control over the development, conservation, maintenance and improvement of land within the Meewasin conservation zone. It is guided by a statutory committee of professional planners, architects, landscape architects, engineers and geotechnical engineers.

Meewasin development review is complementary to other environmental or heritage review-permitting processes. It focuses on the following parameters:

- Consistency with the Meewasin Development Plan;
- Conservation, preservation and interpretation of significant natural habitat;
- Maintains slope stability and good drainage practices;
- Design aesthetics complementary to the natural setting of the river valley; and,
- Provision for public access.

In the 2012-13 fiscal year, Meewasin reviewed 16 proposed improvements to the river valley conservation zone. The applications included the following:

1. POS Bio-Sciences Expansion;
2. St. Thomas More College Addition;
3. Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan Construction Access Route;
4. Parcel YY (River Landing Village) – south of 19th St. W. between 2nd & 3rd Ave.;
5. Northwest Trail Extension – 71st Street to Wanuskewin Heritage Park;
6. Ronald McDonald House Expansion;
7. Kinsmen Park Phase 1 – Rides Garden and Play Area;



Above: Beaver Creek Conservation Area

Below: SP photographer Gordon Waldner's "Pelicans at the Weir"



Conservation
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8. U of S Crop Science Equipment Storage and Germplasm Addition;
9. Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Site Off-Leash Recreation Area;
10. Saskatchewan Centre for Innovations in Cyclotron Science (SCI-CS);
11. Gordon Oakes – Red Bear Student Centre;
12. 14th Street Storm Outfall Restoration;
13. Saskatoon Water Treatment Plant and Sludge Removal – Phase 2;
14. Southeast Trail Extension – Gabriel Dumont Park to Chief Whitecap Park;
15. Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan; and
16. Rotary Park Lift Station Restoration Work.

Below: Luc Delanoy leads a tour of the Northeast Swale.

Securing Lands of Interest

The original concept for Meewasin was to create a ribbon of green with the river as a spine. The 2009 State of the Valley assessment highlighted the addition of 9 kilometres of publicly-accessible shoreline to the Meewasin Valley in the preceding five years. As well, 227 hectares (561 acres) of habitat were added, creating wildlife corridors, buffers for source drinking water and improved opportunities to experience a natural setting.

Meewasin continues to seek opportunities to secure long-term stewardship of land with conservation value. Stewardship may be secured through public ownership, conservation easements (legally binding) or through voluntary easements (goodwill agreements).



Enhancing Biodiversity

Meewasin strives to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Meewasin Valley through grazing, prescribed controlled burns, removal of exotic species and noxious weeds, clean-ups, seed collection and planting of native grasses and wildflowers.

Valley Stewardship

Many volunteer groups including the Saskatoon Nature Society, school students, corporate volunteers and religious/spiritual groups assist with the conservation work.

These volunteer stewards usually come as part of a group with their own supervisor to work with our valley stewards.

Northeast Swale

In 2009, the Environment Canada EcoAction program provided Meewasin with funds to improve the Northeast Swale over a two-year period. The Swale is a relatively natural 225 hectare area linked to the South Saskatchewan River Valley that is quickly being surrounded by urban development. With EcoAction support and with the help of volunteers, Meewasin undertook a program of habitat improvement including the following:

- A disturbance regime to favour native species and control shrub and exotic species encroachment into grasslands by grazing and controlled burns;
- Removal of (exotic) non-native species;
- Seeding and planting native species in disturbed areas and road right-of-ways;
- Restoration of wetlands;
- Clean-up of illegal dumps;
- Restriction of all-terrain vehicle access;
- Development of interpretive signage;
- Posting warning signage at wildlife corridors;
- Construction of wildlife friendly fencing;
- Implementation of a communication strategy enlisting residents and contractors working on adjacent neighbourhood development;
- Development of a resource management plan for the Northeast Swale;
- Implementation of an EcoBlitz to increase knowledge about the resources to advocate for protection and active management; and
- Creation and promotion of a documentary about the EcoBlitz for public education purposes.



Left: Wolf Spider
Beaver Creek Conservation Area

Below: City removal of the east span of the Traffic Bridge allowed for the Meewasin Trail to be reconnected with a temporary link, Fall 2012



Conservation
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Above: Students study Northeast Swale
Below: Beaver Creek Conservation Area

The Meewasin EcoBlitz of the Northeast Swale Documentary

Written and narrated by Doug Porteous and produced by Tom Simes of Tommy Brook Creations, the 24 minute documentary, *The Meewasin EcoBlitz of the Northeast Swale* has been shown at movie houses in Saskatoon, at the Robin Smith Memorial Lecture and nationally on Shaw Cable for its 2013 Earth Day programming.

The trailer can be found at: BioBlitz, Saskatoon, Meewasin.

River Users Meeting

In the spring of 2012, Meewasin coordinated a meeting of a variety of river users, as well as representatives from the city, fire and police who met to discuss the summer river recreation schedule. Highlights of the meeting included the following:

- City police in conjunction with Fire and Protective Services would continue to patrol the river in an effort to curb illegal and dangerous behavior;
- The police announced that they had created a part time “River Patrol Unit” with specially trained officers; and
- Shearwater Tours launched a new boat called the Prairie Lily, twice the size of their other vessels. ♦



Managing Resources in the Meewasin Valley

The work of the Design & Development Department this past fiscal year was to manage the resources in the river valley. These included:

- Refurbishing the old Meewasin rink shelter previously moved to Beaver Creek Conservation Area for use in year-round programming including an interpretive cross-country ski program;
- Detail design work and construction of the Meewasin Trail extension in the northwest from Adilman Drive to Kinnear Avenue;
- Design work in the southeast for the Meewasin Trail extension to Chief Whitecap Park;
- Planting and maintaining the bioswale at River Landing 1;
- Continuing work in River Landing 2;
- Installing trailhead signs and trail maps at multiple locations;
- Developing trail etiquette signage;
- Installing site furnishings along the Meewasin Trail;
- Conducting public skating operations and the Tim Hortons Twinkle Lights program at Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @PotashCorp Plaza;
- Surveying and conducting Meewasin Trail counts;
- Supporting the Plant-A-Tree program, installing bricks, plaques on benches, seating nodes and planting trees;
- Installation of new interpretive signage at the Water Treatment Plant;
- Completing the Saskatchewan Road Runners Seating Node by the Diefenbaker Centre;
- Coordinating a stewardship plant of 250 trees and shrubs with youth stewards as part of the Canon Take Root program;
- Planting 200 trees and shrubs sponsored by TD Friends of the Environment and 300 trees and

shrubs with the Lions Club at the Peggy Mc Kercher Conservation Area;

- Custom growing more than 17,000 wild flower plugs at Meewasin Nursery;
- Completing final grooming of Beaver Creek Conservation Area accessibility trail;
- Securing and providing plant support vegetation by Beaver Creek Conservation Area bridges affected by runoff erosion;
- Pruning and planting at Thompson Belvedere Memorial in Kiwanis Park;
- Re-establishing plant material at both banks of the weir;



Above: St. Edward Eco Justice class tour the Kinsmen Fishing Platform



Left: St. Mary's Oskaya Dance Troupe at River Landing

Development
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Below: The Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @PotashCorp Plaza was described by the Saskatoon Star Phoenix in 2012 as one of the best things to do in Saskatoon

- Continuing with Northeast Swale restoration and management;
- Continuing to explore new Meewasin Valley Centre options;
- Continuing partnership with St. Joseph High School with special projects focusing on the naturalization of their campus;
- Promotion of biodiversity burns in the Northeast Swale, Beaver Creek Conservation Area, and east Weir; and
- Valley-wide seed collection for custom growing of plant material.

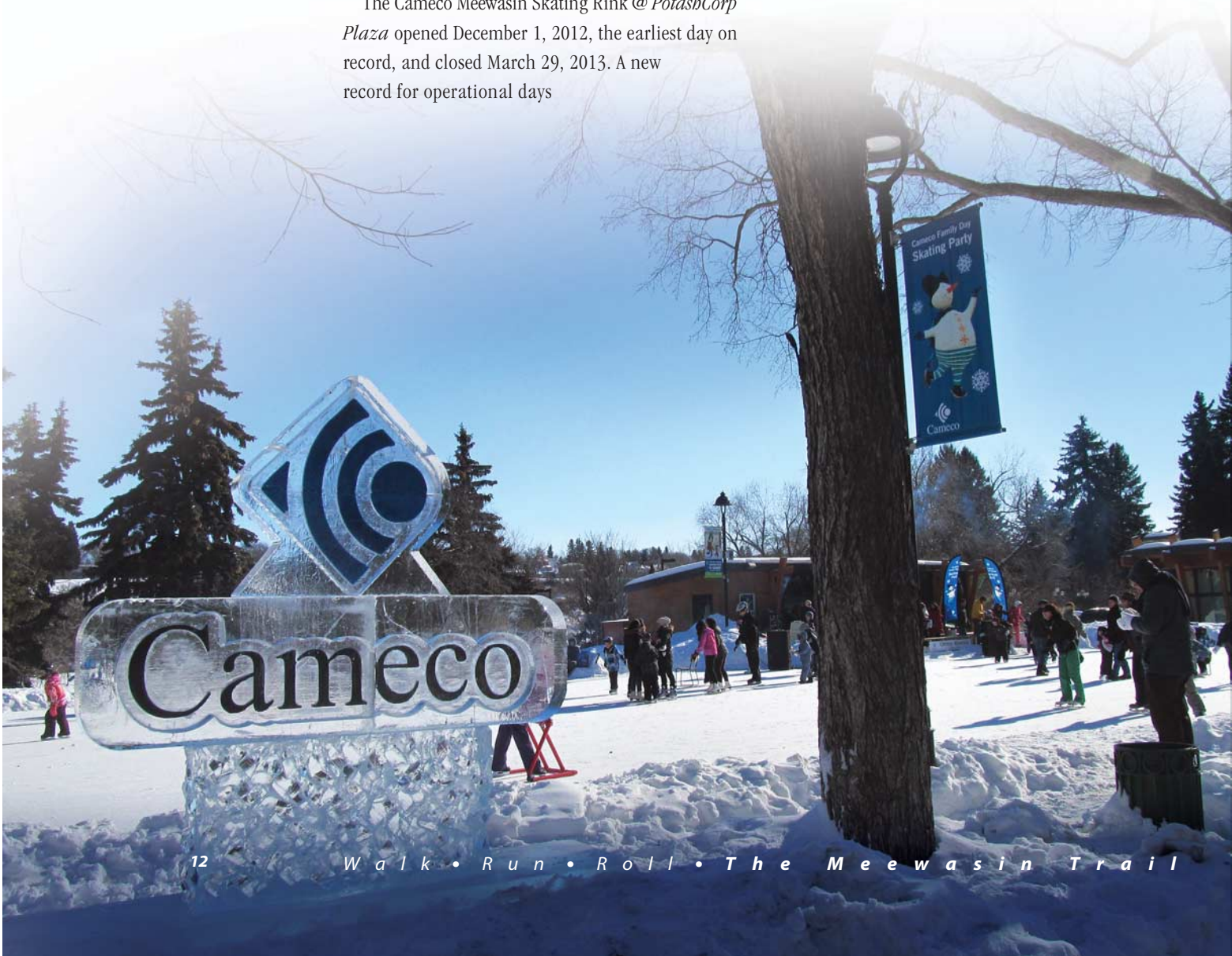
Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @ PotashCorp Plaza

The Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @ PotashCorp Plaza opened December 1, 2012, the earliest day on record, and closed March 29, 2013. A new record for operational days

was set with a total of 119. In comparison, the rink was open 79 days in 2011-2012. Cold weather (-31 degrees celsius with wind chill) closed the facility for four days. The ice surface was expanded and the total number of skaters for the winter totaled more than 31,000.

The official kick-off for the skating season was December 7, 2012 at the **Tim Hortons Twinkle Lights Ceremony**. January 27 saw the **PotashCorp Skating Party**, and February 18, the **Cameco Family Day Skating Party**. These events were well attended. They included face painting, a magician, making balloon animals, horse drawn sleigh rides, ice sculptures, food and music.

Previously declared by Reader's Digest as the *Best Outdoor Skating Spot in Canada* in 2006, it was described by the Saskatoon Star Phoenix in 2012 as one of *the best*



things to do in Saskatoon. The Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @PotashCorp Plaza continued to be an attraction very popular with Saskatoon residents and visitors to our city.

SaskEnergy Beaver Pond

Meewasin opened the SaskEnergy Beaver Pond Room at Beaver Creek Conservation Area on Tuesday June 5, 2012. Representing the Government of Saskatchewan and SaskEnergy was the Honourable Don Morgan, Minister of Advanced Education and Minister of Labour Relations & Work Safety. Representing Meewasin was Board Chair Jack Vicq. In attendance were Grade 5 students from Queen Elizabeth School and Grade 8 students from St. Edward School. Representing the Community Initiatives Fund was Darlene Bessey and TD Friends of the Environment was Dwight Buchholz.

In June 2010, heavy rain caused a flood which ultimately destroyed the interpretive beaver room at the site. A major donation from SaskEnergy allowed Meewasin to rebuild the attraction as well as develop a new accessible trail.

Delta Bessborough Gate Unveiled

The Delta Bessborough Hotel and Meewasin commissioned and installed a new pedestrian gate to provide access between the Meewasin Trail and the Delta Bessborough Gardens. It was officially unveiled on the rainy morning of June 14, 2012 with Jim Friesen's class of students from Lawson Heights School in attendance to bear witness. Rob Sexauer of Dragonfly Artistic Metals Functional Art designed and built the gate. Rob describes his creation as a modern interpretation of classical design, using blacksmith techniques to create an ornamental gate consistent with the classic beauty of the Delta Bessborough. The piece makes reference to provincial symbols and the history of the hotel. The use of the red lily is a symbolic reference to the Province of Saskatchewan, and the railway spikes are an acknowledgement of the rich historical heritage of our *Castle on the River* as a Saskatoon landmark. ◆



Top: Minister Don Morgan opens Beaver Creek Conservation Area Trail June 2012 **Middle left:** Capilano Lookout
Middle right: Rob Sexauer of Dragonfly Artistic Metals Functional Art, creator of the gate, with wife Jill Sexauer
Bottom: Lawson Heights School students pass through Delta Bessborough Gate

EDUCATION

Programs Strong and Varied



Above: Students gather at the Meewasin Valley Centre

Below: Westmount School students at the Canon Evergreen Planting, Beaver Creek Conservation Area, Fall 2012

Meewasin offers a number of educational programs that focus on conservation of the heritage resources of the valley, facilitate the appropriate use and enjoyment of those resources and allows the public to experience and learn about them.

These programs include stewardship and celebration, river festivals, in-services, Trail Ambassadors, interpretive canoe tours and partnering with other organizations that have similar goals. Meewasin accomplishes this through our two interpretive centres, the Meewasin Valley

Centre and Beaver Creek Conservation Area, off-site programs, publications, audio-visual resources, a web site (www.meewasin.com), media commercials, public service announcements and appearances at special functions.

The Meewasin Valley Centre (MVC)

The MVC focuses on the original areas of urban development in Saskatoon. It is a place to learn about the Meewasin Trail, Saskatoon history, the South Saskatchewan River and the future of the Meewasin Valley. In 2012-13, the centre had 13,181 visitors who toured the facility, sought information or participated in the interpretive programs ranging from the annual Founder's Day celebrations to two weekends of PotashCorp River Cinema.



The MVC was also responsible for the organization and delivery of the annual Meewasin-Affinity Credit Union Clean-up of the river valley which involved more than 24,000 participants.

Meewasin staff supported other organizations throughout the city including the Heritage Festival of Saskatoon, the Marr Residence Management Team, the Saskatoon Heritage Society, Doors Open Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan Marathon and the Saskatoon CERT (Community, Experiences, Resources and Tours) organization.

The MVC continued to provide interpretive programs to all Grade 5 students in Saskatoon. Participation totaled 2509 students from the Saskatoon Public, Catholic and regional schools. The Meewasin Art Gallery continued to host bi-monthly shows by local artists and photographers. The Meewasin Gift Shop provided unique items for those looking for something naturally or culturally special. Including visitations to the centre of 13,181, and the Affinity Credit Union Clean-up Campaign of 24,000, the Meewasin Valley Centre totaled 39,690 participants in its 2012-13 programs.

Beaver Creek Conservation Area (BCCA)

Located 13 km south of Saskatoon off Highway #219, BCCA was established in 1979. An interpretive centre opened in 1984. A microcosm of the Meewasin Valley, it is located where a prairie creek meets a prairie river. It contains one of the few uncultivated short grass prairie sites in Saskatchewan. The beavers that live there play an important role in keeping the creek habitat teeming with wildlife. Beavers build dams that flood waters upstream, creating beaver ponds. Many plants and animals make their homes in these sheltered ponds. The interpretive centre and staff provide opportunities to discover nature during all four seasons along a selection of nature trails.

BCCA continued to provide interpretive programs to Grade 5 students in 2012-13 from Saskatoon and area



Above: Westmount School student at Canon Evergreen Planting Beaver Creek Conservation Area Fall 2012

schools totaling 2,879 students. General public visitation totaled 13,781 guests who sought information, explored the site on their own or who participated in public programming that included Perseid Meteor Showers, Canada Day Heritage Hoopla, interpretive canoe tours, come-and-go discovery stations and self-guided trail activities. Including all programs, visitation to Beaver Creek Conservation totaled 18,328 visitors.

Chip's Lodge

Since 1979, cross-country skiing has been encouraged at BCCA but never facilitated. In 2010, with the building of the Cameco Meewasin skating rink warm-up facility, the old warm-up facility was moved to the Exhibition Grounds where it sat for two years. In late fall of 2011, it was moved to BCCA for a three year pilot to provide additional facility space for programming and as a warm-up facility for winter activity.

Education
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Above: Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS)

Below: École Sister O'Brien students participate in the Meewasin Affinity Credit Union Clean-up Campaign 2012

The building was placed beside the present interpretive centre on already disturbed ground and refurbished. Canon Evergreen provided \$5,000 to re-vegetate the site. The Saskatoon Community Foundation provided a Quality of Life Grant of \$5,000 to go towards the purchase of a class set of cross-country skis. A donation of \$10,000 from the estate of Carmelle Toner will be used to support the development of year-round programming. The facility is ideal for interpretive theatre, puppetry, arts and crafts, photography, painting and a retreat for small group meetings.

This past winter of 2012-13, three cross-country ski program pilots were conducted using the facility with students from the Greater Catholic and Saskatoon Public school systems.

Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS)

Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) is a bird monitoring program established by the Institute of Bird Populations based in California. Data collected from more than 500 participating members throughout Canada, Mexico and the continental United States are used to understand trends in landbird populations. Meewasin's Beaver Creek Conservation Area (BCCA) is one of three monitoring stations operating in Saskatchewan.

The summer of 2012 marked the sixth MAPS season at BCCA. For six early sunrise mornings throughout the summer, volunteers helped capture birds in mist nets, and brought them to a recording station to be identified and to have their vital statistics taken. Birds captured previously had their bands recorded.

Those without a band received one



before they were released. Meewasin newly banded 142 birds in 2012, of which there were 20 species:

- American Goldfinch
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Clay-coloured Sparrow
- Downy Woodpecker
- House Wren
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Red-eyed Vireo
- Spotted Towhee
- Veery
- Yellow Warbler
- American Redstart
- Brown Thrasher
- Cedar Waxwing
- Gray Catbird
- Least Flycatcher
- Purple Finch
- Song Sparrow
- Tennessee Warbler
- Warbling Vireo
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

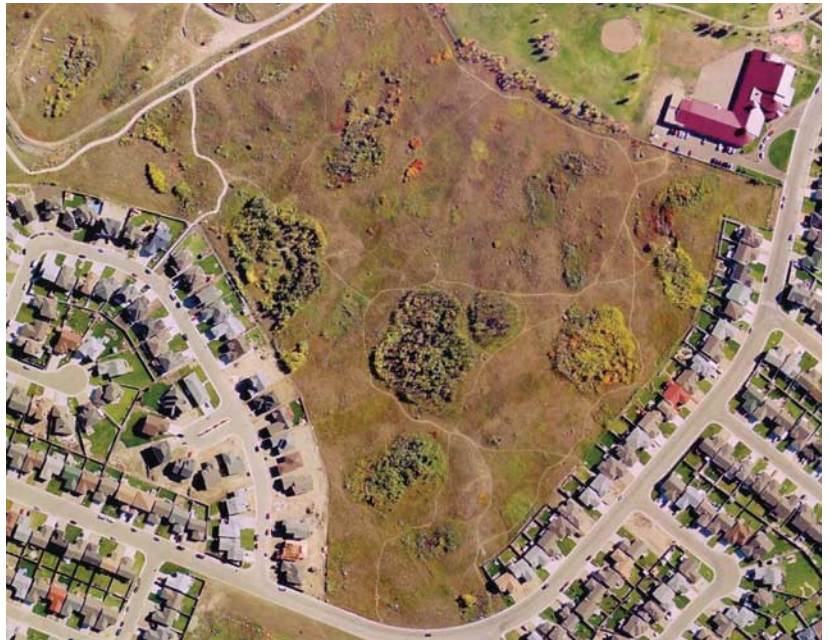
In 2012, 15 birds captured in previous years returned: 3 from 2007, 1 from 2008, 2 from 2009, 3 from 2010 and 6 from 2011. Five species were represented in the returning birds: American Redstart, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Red-eyed Vireo and Yellow Warbler.

The total number of birds banded over six years at BCCA is 891, representing 36 species. Only two of these species reside year-round at the conservation area. This suggests that Beaver Creek is an important migratory destination for species from wintering grounds in the United States, Central and South America. The overall trend of the number of birds banded at BCCA has declined. Nationally there has been a 12% decrease since 1970.

Thank you to BCCA Interpreter Brenda Kramarchuk who has coordinated the MAPS program for the past six years with support from volunteers from the Saskatoon Nature Society and others.

The Saskatoon Natural Grasslands

The Saskatoon Natural Grasslands (SNG) is a 13.8 hectare (34 acre) parcel of native Saskatchewan grassland persisting in a surprisingly natural condition. It lies within the area known as Silverspring (located in the northeast sector of Saskatoon, 8 kilometres from the city centre along the South Saskatchewan River). This fescue grassland is not just grass, but an ecosystem – a



Above: Saskatoon Natural Grasslands



Left: St. Edward School Eco Justice Class cross-country ski Beaver Creek Conservation Area Winter 2013

complex association of grasses, flowering and non-flowering plants, birds, animals and insects representing 10,000 years of natural history since the glaciers receded.

Thanks to education programs provided by the University of Saskatchewan Centre for Continuing and Distance Education, the Saskatoon Nature Society, the City of Saskatoon, the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division, the Saskatoon Public School Division, Meewasin and others; and the stewardship by the Silverspring community, the SNG continues to provide habitat, aesthetic and recreational opportunities, soil protection and a gene pool for future medical and agricultural research.

Education

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Top: Meewasin
Interpretive Canoe Tours

Below: RtoL Meewasin Canoe Guide
Gillian May, and Volunteers
Rob Porteous and Cameco German
Exchange Student Stefan Nowak
paddle Meewasin canoe upriver
to Fred Heal Canoe Launch for river
removal and winter storage,
September 2012.



PotashCorp River Cinema

Meewasin River Cinema 2012 was sponsored by PotashCorp. It ran for six nights; Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the weekends of August 4 and August 17, in Friendship Park. This was the first year that the outdoor family movie event had a major sponsor. The PotashCorp sponsorship allowed Meewasin to contract Fresh Air Cinema and its large screen and projection equipment. On August 4, the weather was rainy and cold and counted only 50 patrons in attendance. August 19, more than 1000 patrons gathered in Friendship Park to see *The Lorax*. Total visitation for the six nights was 2,700, an increase of 900 from the previous year.

Meewasin Interpretive Canoe Tours

Meewasin Interpretive Canoe Tours provide an opportunity for participants to learn about the South Saskatchewan River from the river in Meewasin's ten passenger voyageur clipper canoes. Tours depart from Beaver Creek Conservation Area paddling out onto the South Saskatchewan River for two to three hours allowing the paddlers to experience those of the early voyageurs. Adult groups usually paddle upriver to the Berry Barn, while youth groups canoe both in the creek

and on the river, stopping on a sand bar for interpretive games and a snack. Paddles, lifejackets, canoe and safety training are provided by Meewasin National Lifeguard, Paddle Canada certified interpreters. Adult charters cost \$200 per canoe. Non-profit groups access the program at no charge.

During the summer of 2012, weather and river conditions affected the number of tours. From June through August 2012 there were 43 tours, with 11 cancelled or postponed due to weather conditions. Participants totaled 405.

Conservation Award 2012

The Meewasin Conservation Award is given annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the conservation of the heritage resources of the Meewasin Valley. The recipient for 2012 was Louise Jones of Saskatoon. Louise graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1970, receiving a Bachelor of Arts Degree with High Honours. Throughout the 1980s and to the present she has worked as a consultant to governments, educational organizations and private companies on a variety of topics focusing on the natural and cultural environment. Louise has authored and co-authored more than 25 publications and reports including the book *The St. Victor Petroglyphs: Land of the Living Stone* with Tim Jones. From 1990-2002 she was the Project Leader for the Brightwater Science and Environmental Centre for the Saskatoon Public School Division.

Louise is a long-term volunteer with Nature Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Environmental Society, the Saskatoon Zoo Society and the Saskatchewan Outdoor Environmental Education Association (SOEEA). She was the recipient of the SOEEA's Bernie Melanson award in 2003, given in memory of an exceptional outdoor educator. Louise has recently been a volunteer with the Prairie Ecovillage Development Corporation, a non-profit organization promoting the development of sustainable neighbourhoods. She is a volunteer with the Northeast Swalewatchers and the Saskatchewan Environmental Society's Water Issues Committee.

Pelican Watch 2012

Meewasin's 17th annual Pelican Watch Awards Ceremony was held June 17th. Normally held on the Realty Executives Boardwalk at the weir, inclement weather necessitated the event be held at the Meewasin Valley Interpretive Centre. The first pelican to touch down between the C.P. Bridge and the weir in 2012, as observed by Meewasin's official spotters from the Saskatoon Nature Society, was Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at 7:00 a.m. This was the 17th year of the Meewasin Pelican Watch Contest. More than 2,500 entries were received. Of the 15 prize packages, 6 were won by Saskatoon and area elementary school students, and 7 by Saskatoon and area adults. Prizes were provided courtesy of Realty Executives Saskatoon, the White Pelican Bed & Breakfast, the Pelican Market, Don's Photo Shop, the Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Saskatchewan, Homestead Ice Cream and Meewasin.

Yellow Fish Road 2012

Since 1999, thousands of Canadian youth have participated in the Yellow Fish Road program, learning about their water supply. Painting the storm sewers with yellow fish and distributing the fish-shaped yellow brochures is a reminder of the importance of clean water and the proper disposal of hazardous waste. The program reinforces the concept that whatever goes into the storm sewer flows directly into the river.

Meewasin, the Girl Guides of Canada (Saskatoon), Brightwater, and Trout Unlimited Canada with the support of the City of Saskatoon have partnered to promote the program in Saskatoon and area since 1994.

Despite the threat of rain on May 5, 2012, 150 Girl Guides met in Saskatoon's Silverwood neighbourhood, painting all 179 Silverwood storm drains with yellow fish and distributing 1169 door hangers. When the work was done, the Girl Guides celebrated at a luncheon.

Summer Students

The week of August 20, 2012, Meewasin bid a formal good-bye to our 19 summer students. The students developed a summer's end presentation that focused on what they had accomplished to support resource management, interpretation, interpretive canoe tours, horticulture, Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin and construction. Summer students come to Meewasin from post secondary institutions. Without this bright energetic group, Meewasin could not accomplish what it does. ♦

Top: Meewasin Construction Crew, July 2012

Bottom: Louise Jones of Saskatoon receives the Meewasin Conservation Award from Chair, Jack Vicq



PARTNERS FOR THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER BASIN (PFSRB)



Mandate and Mission

Founded in 1993 by Meewasin, the national award winning PFSRB is a non-profit organization with a mandate to increase understanding, awareness and stewardship of the Saskatchewan River Basin. Its mission is to promote watershed sustainability through “awareness, linkages and stewardship”. It is governed by a board of directors with members from the three prairie provinces.

Caring for our Watersheds

PFSRB partnered with Agrium Inc. to deliver Caring for Our Watersheds, a competition for Grades 7-12 students in Saskatoon and area that asks: What can you do to protect your watershed? Through a written proposal and then a final top ten oral presentation, students compete for \$6,000 in cash prizes and the opportunity to implement their projects with matching funds provided by Agrium.

Stan the Sturgeon Fish Habitat

PFSRB is currently working on a new program for youth called Stan the Sturgeon Fish Habitat. This program will inform youth about healthy fish habitat and what they can do to protect it.

Canadian Heritage River Nomination

PFSRB is working on the nomination and designation of the South Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Rivers, within the borders of Saskatchewan, as Canadian Heritage Rivers. In May 2012, these rivers were nominated as candidates for Canadian Heritage Rivers based on their cultural heritage values. The project will involve further research and extensive consultation with communities, and interest groups along the river, First Nations and Métis, the general public and all levels of government. The objective is to identify the values to be conserved, protected and promoted, and how this would occur through existing and future management plans. The final product will be a legacy document, including a component that will address monitoring and reporting on any significant changes in the rivers' heritage values or uses. ♦



Above: Prairie Clover

Top left: Lynne Yelich, MP Black Strap, United Empire Loyalist & Minister Don Morgan at PFSRB Canadian Rivers Heritage Nomination

ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN URBAN PARKS & CONSERVATION AGENCIES

Mandate and Mission

The Association of Saskatchewan Urban Parks & Conservation Agencies (ASUPCA) is a non profit organization dedicated to sharing expertise and pride in conservation, development and education for the purpose of supporting the work of each member organization:

- Battlefords River Valley, Battlefords
- Chinook Parkway, Swift Current
- Meewasin Valley Authority, Saskatoon
- Pehonan Parkway, Prince Albert
- Tatagwa Parkway, Weyburn
- Wakamow Valley, Moose Jaw
- Wascana Centre, Regina

ASUPCA member agencies represent 60% of the population of the province. They have chosen to conserve their parks and conservation zones, educating the public about them and developing them for public access. These organizations have three things in common: a water body, an independent board and a locally developed master plan.

As not-for-profit organizations, ASUPCA members raise money from the private and public sector to support their conservation, development and education initiatives. The ASUPCA Carbon Credit Offset program is one of ASUPCA's fund development initiatives.

Through ASUPCA, an individual or an organization can mitigate their own greenhouse gas emissions by voluntarily purchasing carbon offsets. ASUPCA members will use the revenue to reforest and naturalize their urban parks and conservation zones. Each member will report annually on what they have done in the previous year, and what carbon offset projects they plan to do in the coming year. Visit carboncreditcanada.ca for more information. ♦



Above: Mule Deer at Beaver Creek Conservation Area



Below left: Saskatchewan's Floral Emblem Western Red Lily, Beaver Creek Conservation Area



ASUPCA

Association of Saskatchewan Urban
Parks & Conservation Agencies logo

FUND DEVELOPMENT



Top: Sask Roadrunners Seating Node Drinking Fountain

Bottom: Meewasin Water Station Volunteers, Saskatchewan Marathon May 2012

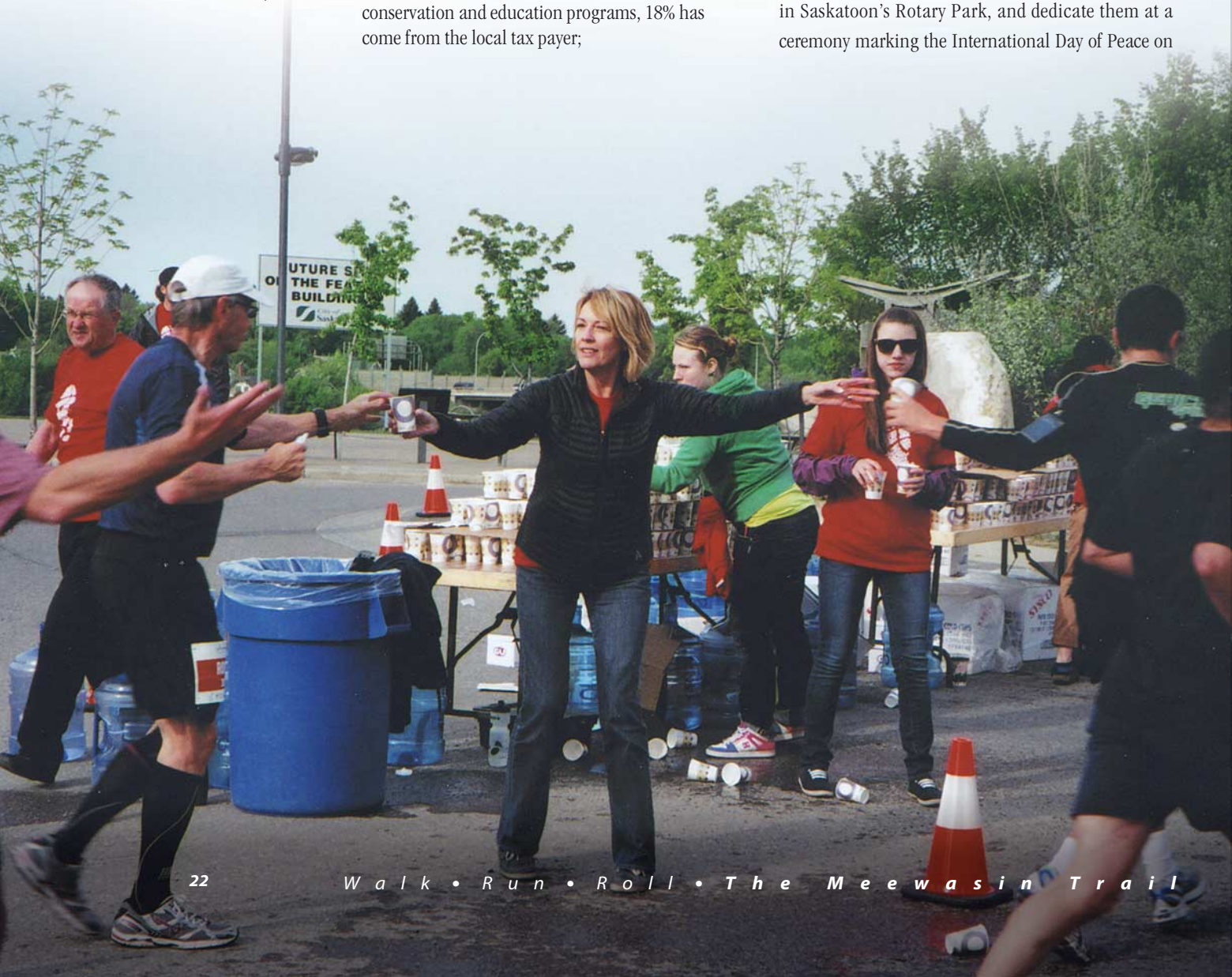
Good Reason to Support Meewasin

Meewasin is a registered charity. Approximately 35% of its revenue for 2012-13 came from non-statutory sources to support conservation, development and education initiatives. Some reasons to support Meewasin include the following:

- If you wanted a pill to cure 70% of ills in today's society, it would be exercise in a clean nurturing environment;
- More than 90% of the general public support the work of Meewasin and want it to continue;
- Of the more than \$90 million that Meewasin has spent in park and trail development, and delivering conservation and education programs, 18% has come from the local tax payer;
- The Meewasin Valley concept is known and studied around the world as to what a community can do to conserve a river valley for the purposes of health and enjoyment; and
- Meewasin has been recognized internationally on numerous occasions, three times a finalist for the prestigious Thies Riverprize awarded annually in Brisbane, Australia.

Rotary International Peace Plaza

The Rotary Club of Saskatoon Nutana, in partnership with Meewasin, offers the opportunity to sponsor a brick in honour of past recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Each year the Rotarians place bricks at the Peace Plaza in Saskatoon's Rotary Park, and dedicate them at a ceremony marking the International Day of Peace on



or near September 21. The double-size red granite brick recognizes the contribution of the Peace laureates, inspires others to follow in their footsteps and promotes the Peace Plaza as a destination for citizens and tourists. To date, the Rotarians have recognized Mother Teresa, Lester B. Pearson, Desmond Tutu and in 2012, the Red Cross 1917.

Speakers this year included Rotarian representatives, Ms. Bodden of the Red Cross, His Worship Mayor Don Atchison, Ms. Leslie Gosselin representing the year's sponsor SaskEnergy, and Doug Porteous of Meewasin.

Plant-A-Tree Dedication

The 26th annual Meewasin Plant-A-Tree Dedication was held Saturday, June 16, 2012 in Boomtown at the Western Development Museum. In attendance was Her Honour Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, Plant-A-Tree Chair Wayne Dyck as the master of ceremonies, Chair Jack Vicq bringing greetings on behalf of Meewasin, former Meewasin Manager of Resource Conservation John Gerstmar, accompanied by his wife Donalda Gerstmar, who spoke on behalf of donors and recipients, Corman Park Grade 6 student Katharyn Walker accompanied by her music teacher Vivian Dyck who led *O Canada* and performed two selections, and Brad Fenty who piped in the Vice-Regal party.

The 2012 program included the sponsorship recognition of 68 trees and shrubs, 14 Meewasin Trail benches, 12 bricks at the Rotary International Peace Plaza, 12 bricks at River Landing and 22 bricks at the Saskatchewan Road Runners Seating Node.

Saskatoon Road Runners Seating Node

The Saskatoon Road Runners Seating Node opened on June 27, 2012. The Road Runners presented Meewasin with a cheque for \$100,000 for the development as well as a cheque for \$2,500 as the charity of choice for the Saskatchewan Marathon. ◆



Top: Meewasin Plant-A-Tree Commemoration June 16, 2012

Bottom: German Junior Folk Dancers at River Landing cheer on Saskatchewan Marathon participants, May 2012

A special thank you to our many sponsors, donors and supporters

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