

Stewards of the river valley corridor

2019/2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Meewasin 

A message from the

Chair & CEO

The 2019/2020 fiscal year did not end conventionally, with the COVID-19 pandemic making many regular services deemed at risk and therefore unavailable for the public. Meewasin's top priority is always safety of staff and the community. With gatherings, schools and events being cancelled in the Spring of 2020, Meewasin has had to adapt our conservation, development, education and interpretive services.

Meewasin recognizes and promotes the benefits of spending time outside for physical and mental health and for that reason did not close the Meewasin Trail or many of our rural sites for public access. Instead we created guidelines for trail and site use, based on precautions set out by government and health authorities to flatten the curve of COVID-19 cases and to ensure community safety.

Beaver Creek Conservation Area, which is staffed with interpreters, had to close its doors for a few months in the Spring and Summer of 2020, affecting the visitation numbers and Meewasin's ability to provide regular education services. Meewasin looked at this time as an opportunity to improve the site while visitation was put on pause.

We look forward to persevering with our community and moving into the next few years, which will focus on significant trail expansion, the relocation and enhancement of our greenhouse and shop facilities, which is already one of the largest growers of native species in the province and ambitious developments in research projects, including both post-secondary and citizen science initiatives. Your support will continue to allow Meewasin to flourish and to grow in community-centered ways. Thank you all for your involvement and generous contributions! We look forward to resuming our in-person programming as soon as possible. Stay safe, healthy and enjoy the Meewasin Valley!



Andrea Lafond, CEO



Colin Tennent, Board Chair

Meewasin Valley Authority

Created in 1979 by an Act of the Government of Saskatchewan, *The Meewasin Valley Authority Act*, Meewasin is a nonprofit 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 (City of Saskatoon, Government of Saskatchewan, and University of Saskatchewan) have chosen to best manage the Meewasin Valley in the South Saskatchewan River Basin. ***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.***



Mission

The Meewasin Valley Authority exists to ensure a healthy and vibrant river valley, with a balance between human use and conservation for the benefit of present and future generations.

Vision

A world class corridor.

**Healthy & Vibrant
Sense of Community
Protecting the Legacy**

Board of Directors

Government of Saskatchewan

David Buckingham, MLA
Mark Feader
Leanne Nyirfa
Sharon Tkachuk

University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Yuguang Bai, College of Agriculture and Bioresources
Dr. Peter Stoicheff, President
Colin Tennent, Board Chair
Dr. Ryan Walker, College of Arts and Science

City of Saskatoon

Charlie Clark, Mayor
Bev Dubois, Councillor
Sarina Gersher, Councillor
Zach Jeffries, Councillor



Advisory Committees

The Meewasin Board of Directors is advised on matters of policy by five committees comprised of members of the public appointed by the board. Public ownership in decision making is one of Meewasin's five guiding principles.

Development Review

Twyla Bergstrom
Rob Crosby, Vice-chair
Ian Judd-Henrey
Paul Koopman
Chris Schulz
Mitch Strocen, Chair
Terry Werbovetski

Fund Development

Robin Chapman
Bev Dubois
Peter Goode
Doug Hodson
Evan Howlett, Chair
Susan Lamb
Robin Lumsdon
Colin Tennent

Conservation Advisory

Luc Delanoy
Peter Goode, Chair
Ron Jensen
Nadia Mori
Amber Weckworth
Bert Weichel
Dr. Yuguang Bai

Education Advisory

Angie Caron
Bill Delainey
Melanie Elliott
Terri Fradette
Mairin Loewen
Janet McVittie
Dean Newton
Courtney Thorne-Goetz
Sharon Tkachuk
Michael Voralia
Matt Wolsfeld

Design Advisory

Bertrand Bartake
Luc Delanoy
Kendra Fisher
Marilyn Gould
Jeff Howlett
Tyson McShane

Conservation

Resource Management Activities

Meewasin is in its 3rd year of the implementation plan set out in the 10-year Valley-wide Resource Management Plan that focuses on stewardship of the Meewasin Valley. Ecological restoration, invasive species removal and preventing habitat loss are just some of the industry leading strategies outlined in the 10-year Plan to improve the ecological health of the Meewasin Valley. Ecological monitoring and reporting is used to measure the success of the implementation of this plan.

Prescribed Burns

Meewasin uses prescribed burning as a tool to achieve a range of resource management objectives. Some of the objectives include improved wildlife habitat, native grassland restoration, invigoration of native species, increased biodiversity, reduced risk of wildfire, and invasive species management. Prescribed burning can be utilized across varying landscapes such as native grasslands, forests and croplands, as it recreates some of the effects of fire, a natural disturbance that has occurred over centuries, while minimizing the risks.

Without regular 5 - 10 year disturbances, some birds and plants that prefer vegetation structure created by fire are decreasing in abundance. Native prairie is considered the most endangered ecosystem in the world, and many species that call grasslands home are endangered or at risk.

In the 2019/2020 burn season, Meewasin participated in 19 hectares of land management using prescribed burning techniques at the Beaver Creek Conservation Area, and in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada at the Old Man on His Back Ranch. Meewasin staff also assisted the Saskatoon Fire Department in managing a 27 hectare wildfire at the Cranberry Flats Conservation Area.



Meewasin participated in 19 hectares of land management using prescribed burning in the 2019/2020 fiscal year

A total of 253,453 stems of European Buckthorn were controlled during 2019-2020. A grand total of 1,907,676 stems have been controlled since 1998.



Invasive Species Removal

There were over 293,690 invasive plant stems treated by the Meewasin conservation team in the 2019/2020 fiscal year. This includes locations within the City of Saskatoon such as the Spadina river bank and the Northeast Swale all the way to Cranberry Flats Conservation Area. Targeted plants included Absinthe, Baby's Breath, Canada Thistle, Cicer Milkvetch, Dame's Rocket, Nodding Thistle, Scentless Chamomile, and more.

Leafy Spurge is a widespread weed present in many areas of the Meewasin Valley which has a 'creeping root system' that can choke out other vegetation and can also be toxic to horses and cattle. Leafy Spurge beetles are part of an integrated invasive species control program for this species, as the beetles are used in a long-term "marathon" control of leafy spurge. Chief Whitecap Park, Floodplain Flats and Fred Heal Canoe Launch were treated by releasing 45,000 Leafy Spurge Beetles in 2019-2020.

The adult beetles feed on the leaves of the plants, but it is their larva which does the most control as they mine out the roots of the Leafy Spurge.

Meewasin's Native Plant Restoration Cycle

Meewasin may be well known for trails and riverbank areas, but another important component of what we do is the ongoing propagation and planting of trees, shrubs, grasses, forbs and aquatic plants throughout the valley. ***In the last five years over 34,000 plants have been installed, including almost 12,000 trees and shrubs, over 22,000 grasses and forbs, and almost 200 aquatics. That equates to roughly 6,800 plants per year.***

Every year dedicated Meewasin staff propagate, grow out and plant locally sourced plants for restoration, site enhancements and development projects. Sometimes, based on project needs, nursery grown plants are used to augment the locally sourced supply. In some instances, we also salvage plants for relocation. A typical, repeating cycle from start to finish is as follows:

YEAR 1

- **Summer:** Collect aquatic plants and salvage mature plants from local donor sites.
- Aquatics and salvaged plants get planted right away, or stored for future use.
- **Fall:** Collect seeds from local sites. Information regarding the collection site 'place of origin' is recorded.
- **Winter:** Clean, dry and place seeds in storage. Stratify seeds as needed depending on the plant.

The seedlings are planted in the same area where the seeds were collected as they would be best adapted to grow at that location.

Stratification is the process of breaking seed dormancy in order to promote germination.

YEAR 4+

- Plants are watered and weeded to help get them established.
- Establishment maintenance is ongoing to help the plants grow and thrive in their new homes.

Did you know? Meewasin staff operate a water truck to reach all planting sites, with crews out weeding planted areas as needed.



YEAR 2

- **Spring:** Collected seeds are sown to germinate and grow. The germinated seeds are grown out as individual 'plugs' in styroblocks. Each styroblock holds 120 plugs.
- **Spring (mid-May):** Once it gets to the point where the greenhouse is too warm, the styroblocks of plugs are placed outside in a holding area to continue growth and acclimatize.
- **Summer / fall / winter:** plugs are watered as needed and continue to develop strong roots, stems and leaves. They will be 'heeled in' (protected for the winter) by placing mulch and or soil around the perimeter of the group of styroblocks.

Meewasin operates a hoop structure greenhouse with heating to get the seeds to germinate. At full capacity the greenhouse could produce as many as 40,000 plugs in a season.

YEAR 3

- **Spring / summer / fall:** Mature plugs are planted on sites throughout the Meewasin Valley. Most are planted into existing soil. Volunteers are often enlisted to assist on planting day.
- Once planted they are heavily watered and may have mulch placed over the soil to retain moisture and help keep weeds down.



Typically, 90% of seeded plants germinate and are available to plant. Many different animals can eat or damage the plugs at different stages of growth, including voles, deer, jack rabbits and the occasional moose. Heat and wind can also take their toll on the sensitive seedlings.

Clean Up Campaign

Meewasin annually leads the Saskatoon and area Clean Up Campaign as a wonderful activity to engage the community in volunteer and conservation activities. 2019/2020 was a wonderful year of community involvement that made an impact helping Saskatoon and area's green spaces shine!

We know that Clean Up has a great impact on both the environment and the volunteer groups that take part.

Last year's cleanup displayed the impact that goes deeper than just caring for the Earth. Mackenzie Wilson, Recreation and Community Development student, said their class' clean up had **"a positive impact not only for the environment but for our group"**. So much so, that they are planning another clean up in the fall. "We felt a sort of accomplishment

especially when we finished. It was a good feeling". Mackenzie says the best part about participating in a cleanup was "doing it as a class, helping the environment and bonding as a class". We hope this amazing stewardship spirit continues for everyone going into the summer. We appreciate everyone's patience, and look forward to the late summer kickoff!

Thank you to our sponsors for making this year's clean up activities possible.



In 2019/2020, Meewasin saw:

- Over 30,000 people involved in community clean ups, with Meewasin supplying the means for over 6,250 volunteers from schools, families, work groups or other organizations.
- Waste pickups total 3,010 kg and recycling pickups totaling 53 kg!



Meewasin Eco-Scavenger Hunts Involve Community in Conservation

Eco Scavenger Hunts are community volunteer events that Meewasin hosts to contribute to monitoring the species that call the Meewasin Valley home. The observations that participants record help Meewasin's future conservation work at areas of sensitive ecosystems and habitats, including the Northeast and Small Swales.

193 volunteers assisted Meewasin in 2019/2020 by recording their observations of plants and animals during the 5 events sponsored by TD Friends of the Environment in areas such as the Northeast Swale, the Small Swale, and the Green Ash Forest between Chief Mistiwasis Bridge and Wanuskewin.

The Northeast Swale is important because it's home to more than 200 plant species, 100 types of birds and numerous mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and insects. What

makes this area even more significant to Saskatchewan's provincial bird, the Sharp-tailed Grouse; is that it's home to their mating dancing ground AKA - a lek. A lek can host 30 to 40 males in a given year, and the one at the Northeast Swale is one of the most recently discovered leks within city limits.

Citizen science is important because it helps us understand what species call the Meewasin Valley home, helping us learn more about these areas from a resource management planning perspective and long term ecological monitoring. These activities bring the community together, get people exploring a new or favourite area, and the 'work' involves taking pictures of plants and animals (or traces of them), sharing them with fellow naturalists, and providing the opportunity to discuss your findings. This helps Meewasin with long term site management, so the more information and citizen scientists involved, the better!



iNaturalist is a citizen science app and website that helps recognize and collect information about the flora and fauna that you can find in the Saskatoon Region. Meewasin uses iNaturalist as a way to collect data on our natural areas and conservation areas such as the Northeast Swale and the river valley. Meewasin created this Wildlife Tracking Guide to assist participants in identifying tracks in the snow.

Meewasin and City of Saskatoon Conduct Natural Areas Inventory

Meewasin partnered with the City of Saskatoon to conduct a Natural Areas Inventory Report to assess the existing Green Network in the City of Saskatoon. It is intended to provide baseline data regarding Saskatoon's Natural Assets (Aquatic, Forested & Shrubland, Grassland) and Enhanced Assets (Green Space and Agricultural Lands). The report also analyzes species observations and cultural significance within the Green Network. The Natural Areas Inventory was identified as a key action in the Meewasin Valley-wide Resource Management Plan and builds upon the success of Meewasin's State of the Valley Report, which focuses on the entire Meewasin Valley. Meewasin is also working with the City on their Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The Green Network Connectivity

30 Metre Buffer Network

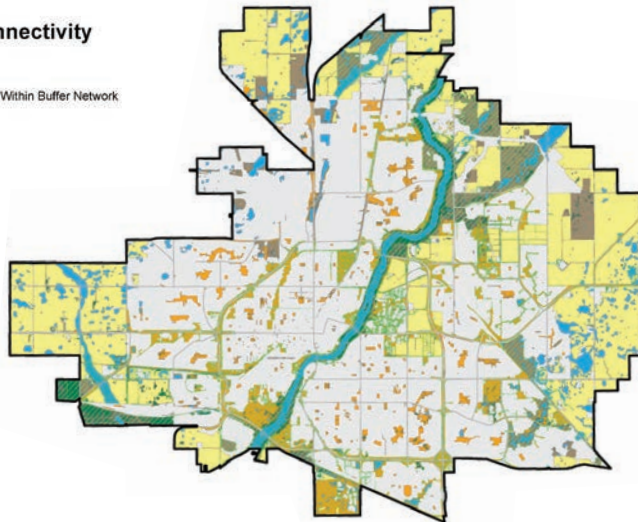
Natural Asset & Green Space Patches Within Buffer Network

Saskatoon's Natural Assets

- Aquatic System
- Forested & Shrubland System
- Grassland System

Saskatoon's Enhanced Assets

- Agricultural Lands
- Green Space

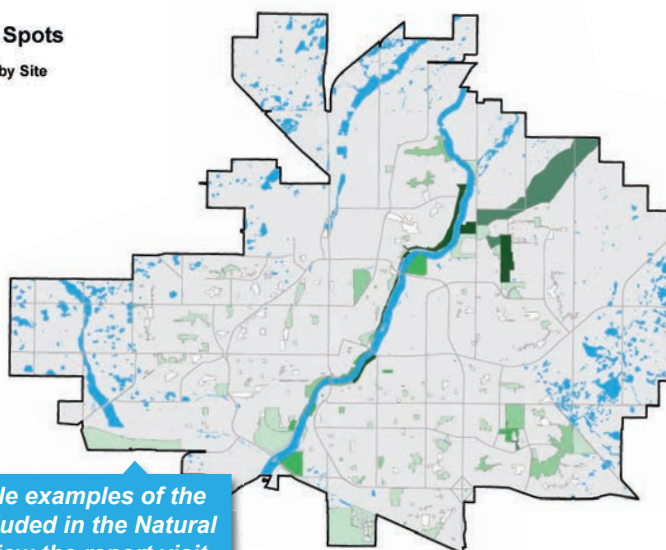


This report has concluded that 99% of Saskatoon residents live within a 5 to 10-minute walk of an urban green space and 82% of residents are within a 5 minute walk to green space.

Nature Watching Hot Spots

Total Number of Observations by Site

- 0
- 1 - 25
- 26 - 200
- 201 - 600
- 601 - 1000
- 1001 - 2123



These are just a couple examples of the maps and graphs included in the Natural Areas Inventory. To view the report visit meewasin.com/conservation.



City of Saskatoon Green Network

The Green Network	47%	11,150 ha	
Natural Assets	14%	3461 ha	
Enhanced Assets	9%	2185 ha	
Agricultural Lands	23%	5504 ha	

The Natural Areas Inventory highlights the fact that the Meewasin Valley Authority is the largest manager of Natural Assets in the City of Saskatoon at 14% of the total classified Natural Assets.

The entire Green Network accounts for 47%, with the percentages shown below for Natural, Enhanced and Agricultural lands comprising the 47%. The remaining 53% is considered 'Built' environment.

Development

Signage: Helping with Wayfinding, Safety and Interpretation

In the past number of years, Meewasin installed trailhead sign bases as part of capital projects being developed. Two sizes and styles have been developed in-house, working with a local metal fabricator, to produce the first models for eventual production. They are all made of mild steel. The two sizes/styles we refer to as primary and secondary – each intended for different locations and purposes. These sign bases house inserted signs with maps that are specific to each location, which provide wayfinding information that helps trail users navigate the over 90 km of Meewasin Trail network.

The primary sign bases – the larger of the two, have been developed to house our city wide trail map, more detailed location map, and other pertinent trail usage information on an insert panel attached to both sides. These primary signs are intended for major trail entry points.

The smaller, secondary sign bases have been developed to house a larger map of the local area, and provide direction and distances to points further along the trail, including estimated travel times on foot and by bicycle. These signs are intended for secondary trail entry points and/or decision points along the trail.

In 2019 Meewasin undertook a full review of the inserted panels and maps, with a goal to update all information in the existing sign inserts and complete installation in 2020. A standardized format for each sign type was designed and developed by Meewasin staff, and they were all ordered this spring. Installations have been completed this summer.

Next steps include the development of a valley-wide plan to guide new installations in coming years, and additional signage types to help with wayfinding, safety and interpretation.



CEO Andrea Lafond posing with one of the new Trailhead signs

Northeast Swale: Master Plan Update

Work undertaken by Meewasin in the Northeast Swale is based on an agreement between the City of Saskatoon and the Meewasin Valley Authority dating back to 2017, and relates to the implementation of Phase 1 and 2 of the Master Plan. Site maintenance is the responsibility of the City as the owner, while Meewasin provides ongoing site resource management and educational programming.

Phase 1 and 2 includes the development of primary and secondary trails including benches and trash units, interpretation and seating nodes, and wildlife friendly fencing and gates.

For 2019/2020 there were some significant projects undertaken, including:

- The installation of wildlife friendly fencing along the south and east edge of the Swale;
- The installation of access gates at key locations along the sections of wildlife friendly fencing;
- And development of the primary trail along Fedoruk Drive, from Zary Road to the Aspen Ridge Greenway. This project was started late in the year, and will be completed in 2020.

Work has been completed to date using our own forces for design and project management, and a combination of our own forces and contractors for construction. This important work has been possible due to the funding provided by the City of Saskatoon, and through an ongoing allocation of Meewasin resources which are funded by our core operating funds and donor contributions.



Resource Management Officer Renny Grilz installing wildlife friendly fencing tabs in the Northeast Swale

Development in the Meewasin Valley

In the last budget year, a number of projects were initiated throughout the Meewasin Valley, on the trails or at Meewasin facilities. The work involved Meewasin staff, consultants, suppliers and contractors working on a number of projects. These included:

- Installation of a new main gate and associated fencing at the Beaver Creek Conservation Area;
- A new well and water supply for the Beaver Creek Interpretive Building;
- Sign establishment in all stages such as: the design and development of new primary and secondary trailhead signs as well as installation of new trailhead signs on both sides of the Traffic Bridge;
- New suite of site furniture designed, including benches, chairs, interpretive sign bases and picnic tables. Prototypes are being built in 2020;
- Enhancement of a short section of secondary trail adjacent to Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan down to the Prairie Lily dock;
- Planting in available areas adjacent to enhanced primary trail in the Queen Street area;
- Preliminary planning and trail routing for new primary trail in the NE sector, from the Circle Drive North Bridge to the Chief Mistawasis Bridge;
- Detailed design and tendering of new primary trail and parking lot expansions at Chief Whitecap Park (for 2020 construction);
- Development of a new parking lot at the SW corner of Diefenbaker Park at the Meewasin trailhead;
- Installation of wildlife friendly fencing and new gate at the Peggy McKercher Conservation Area;
- Installation of wildlife friendly fencing and site access gates at the Northeast Swale
- Development of primary trail at the Northeast Swale, along the north edge of Fedoruk Road from Zary Road to the Aspen Ridge Greenway (to be completed in 2020).

Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @NutrienPlaza

Over the past 39 year of operations, the Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @NutrienPlaza has enhanced winter for residents and visitors of Saskatoon by providing them with an enjoyable place to spend time outdoors in the community during the cold months.

In the 2019/2020 season, Meewasin welcomed over 31,100 guests for leisure skating, lending skates by donation. Visitors were also able to experience more than simply skating, joining the community at our four major events, as well as partaking in our new guided skating program, which involves learning about winter ecology and basic skating tips with a Meewasin Interpretive Guide thanks to support from the Community Initiatives Fund.

A few of this year's skating parties included an added educational activity with a river painted on the rink where people could "skate through the river" and learn about conservation areas and fun facts about the species within them – it was a hit!

The 2019/2020 year included conceptual design of a number of trail enhancement projects to be implemented in the next few years including:

- o Primary Trail and Parking Lot at the Kinsmen Riverfront (Mendel Shakespeare area);
- o Trail enhancements from the Kinsmen Riverfront south to River Landing (downtown);
- o Trail enhancements along the section of Spadina Crescent from the Sanatorium site south to the Gordie Howe Bridge. This section of road is scheduled to be closed and the road will be converted to trail;
- o Enhancements (gaps) to trail in River Heights in Meewasin Park (off Capilano Drive, Sturgeon Drive and Skeena Crescent).

Check www.meewasin.com for opportunities for future engagement with these projects

Skaters enjoying the Nutrien Wintershines Skating Party at the Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @Nutrien Plaza.
Photo credit: Christian Kozak



Education

Despite having to postpone some school programs due to harsh weather conditions and the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2019/2020 year, Meewasin was able to engage over 4,420 students with industry leading approaches to experiential learning, displaying to students the value of the natural world in our school programs alone.

In the last year, Meewasin hosted school programs at three different sites: Beaver Creek Conservation Area, the Northeast Swale, and the Saskatoon Natural Grasslands. Students visited the sites to learn about the natural history, the ecology, and the success of these sites as conservation areas within and outside of Saskatoon.

Students learn about the importance of these ecosystems, how humans effect the environments around them, and what sustainable practices we can implement in our daily lives to aid in conserving these important habitats. Meewasin led the grade 2 program at Saskatoon Natural Grasslands again, where over 1,380 students were led through the

natural space. Over 1,180 grade 3 students were engaged and educated about the truly unique ecosystem that exists in the Northeast Swale, and 1,865 grade 5 students visited Beaver Creek Conservation Area for a tour and lesson about the natural spaces and native flora and fauna that call the site home. In addition, 14 classes attended the cross country ski and winter ecology program for a total of 386 participants. A total of 20 classes attended the winter program, with 6 school groups not able to ski due to lack of snow and 4 classes not able to attend due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, Meewasin was able to share stewardship lessons and efforts with 5,490 youth, students, organizations, and lifelong learners during tours of conservation sites, partnerships with organizations such as the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Nature Society, Saskatoon Wildlife Federation, Nature Saskatchewan, Royal Astronomical Society, Saskatoon Food Bank and events such as NatureCity Festival.

Sheep Grazing at Beaver Creek

Native prairie and grasslands are now one of the most imperiled ecosystems on the planet and are considered endangered. Pictured above is one of the resource management techniques that Meewasin practices to reinvigorate native prairie called targeted conservation grazing. The practice mimics natural disturbance regimes to promote biodiversity. This is done by targeting non-native grasses like Kentucky Bluegrass & Smooth Brome, noxious weeds such as Perennial Sow Thistle, Canada Thistle &



Over the year, more than 9,900 learners were engaged at Meewasin sites learning about the natural spaces in the Meewasin Valley!

Leafy Spurge as well as native shrubs that rapidly encroach on the prairie such as Wolf Willow & Western Snowberry.

Meewasin partnered again with shepherd Jared and his dogs to practice targeted conservation grazing at Beaver Creek during August, September and October of 2019. The demonstration sessions were open to the public and were used to allow people to learn about the program and the use of dogs as a tool in managing livestock including sheep for grazing operations.

“Our time at Beaver Creek was so memorable! Students, parents and teachers are still talking about feeding the birds, herding the sheep and learning about conservation. We loved our time with our guide, Jamie and Shepherd, Jared and his dog! They were both patient, knowledgeable and wanted us to have the best experience possible.”

- Shaunna Robinson – Grade 5 teacher





Beaver Creek Conservation Area

Beaver Creek Conservation Area (BCCA) is an outdoor oasis boasting natural beauty and intrigue for the public to enjoy nature and appreciate wildlife, with over 270 km of natural creek area. BCCA facilities are located where the prairie creek meets the prairie river, wherein visitors have a chance to learn about the hundreds of species of flora and fauna, and get to interact with some of them, including hand-feeding the Black-capped Chickadees that call the area home.

Total visitation to BCCA in 2019/2020 was 17,795, where visitors and school groups had the chance to engage with interpreters about the neat facts, findings, and conservation work present at Beaver Creek in all four seasons!

In the last year, the facilities at Beaver Creek have undergone significant improvements to better facilitate visitors and educational opportunities such as presentations, while balancing time where animals can have their space.

In June 2014 there was a total of 946 people that visited Beaver Creek. In June 2019 there was 1850, that's just about double the amount of people in 5 years!

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin (PFSRB) has a mission to promote awareness, linkages, stewardship, knowledge, and respect for the Saskatchewan River Basin ecosystem and heritage that will encourage sustainable use of the basin's natural resources and nurture cultural values. PFSRB has undertaken projects and programs that educate about watersheds and how they fit into the bigger picture on Earth. These projects focus on awareness and our individual and collective responsibility to modify our daily actions in order to improve our quality of life not only for us, but for everybody downstream from us.

In addition to the current programs we deliver (Yellow Fish Road™ and Caring For Our Watersheds), we spent time this past year developing a new Sanitary Sewer System program aimed at teaching youth about where our tap water comes from, what happens to the water in our homes after we are done with it, and things we can all do to take better care of it in order to ensure a healthy system and healthy water source. This program is called Prevent Irritable Sewer Syndrome and will be presented in classrooms beginning in Fall 2020.

PFSRB has been delivering programming, professional development, and has supported individuals and organizations in maintaining the health of the Saskatchewan River Basin for over 27 years. With this in mind over the last year the Board of Directors and managers of PFSRB have undertaken significant strategic planning to better serve our membership, the larger community, and ultimately the basin most effectively.

Caring for Our Watersheds Program - Plans in Action!

One of the biggest threats to watersheds is a lack of biodiversity. Through the Caring for Our Watersheds Program, a team from Saskatoon identified this threat and made a plan to help!

Congratulations to team 'Plan Bee' from Greystone Heights School in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for implementing their Caring for Our Watersheds plan with the help of Meewasin. These students helped support biodiversity by planting native species in the Northeast Swale in Saskatoon in order to attract more pollinators, including bees, in June 2019.

Dark Skies

The Saskatoon Dark Sky Initiative 'sheds light' on the negative effects of light pollution on nocturnal wildlife within Saskatoon through a monitoring and educational program. The program engages the public and students of all ages through in-class programming, Dark Skies public awareness events, and citizen science projects. These initiatives are aimed at collecting valuable information about local light pollution within the Meewasin Valley.

The annual Dark Skies at the Creek event was a success, hosted out at Beaver Creek! The interactive bat-box building activities and guest speaker made for a successful evening with just under 500 people visiting the site! Participants learned about the importance of dark skies for nocturnal wildlife, the negative effects of light pollution, what Meewasin is doing to actively monitor light pollution within the Meewasin Valley and what they could do at home to help out local wildlife.



Donation Community

Meewasin Brings Community Together at 40th Anniversary Gala

Meewasin celebrated its 40th year of making a difference through conservation, development and education in the river valley with a fundraising gala on October 22, 2019. It was a full evening, featuring a live art gallery of local artists, a champagne reception, a silent auction, dinner, musical entertainment from local band, the Garrys, and had speakers showcase the work done in our community and to share Meewasin's vision for the next 40 years. Attendees went home with native plants and seeds to carry forward Meewasin's conservation spirit to their personal lives.

The evening brought together the many people who support the Meewasin Trail network, conservation and education and showcased much of the great work that is taking place in these areas. Notable attendees included Roy Romanow, Peggy McKercher, and many City of Saskatoon Councillors and Meewasin Board Members, current and past. Peggy McKercher, who graciously joined us for the celebration, was an important founding member and was Board Chair of Meewasin for 16 years from 1979 to 1995. She was instrumental in the

development of Wanuskewin Heritage Park and many other projects during her time as chair. She was asked to describe what Meewasin meant to her and she remarked that it meant the world to her and it was truly rewarding, being one of the highlights of her life. It was challenging at the start to create Meewasin but through great cooperation it happened. She recalls the Meewasin Trail as an early win and place for the community to gather together. She is so pleased with what has been done and all of the wonderful improvements to the Meewasin Valley with the commitment of the funding partners and so many others.

The Meewasin Award was also awarded during the evening to Candace Savage who has made great contributions to the conservation of the river valley. CEO Andrea Lafond spoke of

the fall event, "It was such a great opportunity for folks to help us celebrate 40 years, for Meewasin to help showcase conservation in our community and to share a bit of our vision for the next 40 years. Meewasin is blessed with such a supportive community that continues to inspire us every day."



"With the help of many -- the Province, the City, the University, the people of the Region and local areas -- you have accomplished many great things to enhance the life along the South Saskatchewan River in the City of Saskatoon and in the surrounding areas. You are to be congratulated."

- Raymond Moriyama

Canadian Architect who led the Meewasin 100 year visionary plan



Nutrien

ASL

Chapman
Wealth Management Group



Meewasin Award

Congratulations to Candace Savage, the winner of the 2019 Meewasin Award.

Candace has written dozens of books and magazine articles about the value and beauty of nature, all of which support Meewasin's mandate. From Wild Mammals of Western Canada (1981) to Hello, Crow! (2019), of all these works, *Prairie: a Natural History* (2004, with a new edition coming in 2020) dovetails most closely with Meewasin's mission of care and love for the wild creatures and places in and around Saskatoon.

Candace has been the chair of Wild about Saskatoon and a driving force behind the popular NatureCity Festival, working in partnership with Meewasin and dozens of other local organizations to nurture a culture of conservation in this city. Under Candace's leadership, the Wild about Saskatoon team has brought new ideas and connections to the local conservation community, always including Meewasin, on issues like regional environmental planning, protected areas, municipal conservation policy, nature and health, water and wetlands, and land and reconciliation.

In 2016, Candace and her team undertook an online campaign called "Stand Up" for Meewasin to rally public support. Most recently, Candace has been instrumental in pulling together partners to begin documenting the presence and behavior of wildlife in the urban landscape through an international partnership, the Urban Wildlife Information Network. In a time of accelerating losses of both natural abundance and biodiversity, she has attempted to be a voice for change, courage and meaningful action.

Meewasin extends thanks to Candace for all of her hard work and congratulates her for the well-deserved recognition.

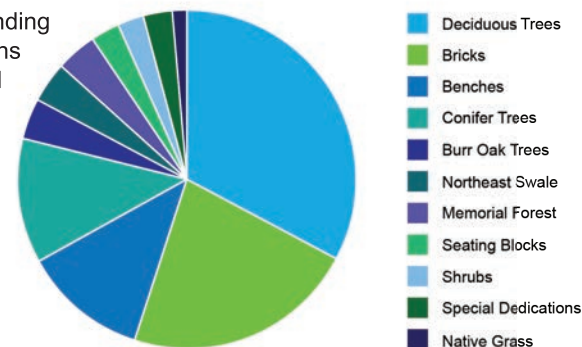
My husband Mikkell and I have always enjoyed walking along the trails and canoeing on the river in Saskatoon. We actually had our first date canoeing on the river because we realized we were both part of the Saskatoon Canoe Club. Since then we have gone on countless adventures and strolls in the valley. I thought that donating a brick was a great way to give money to a part of the city that we enjoy so much and I wanted to get it engraved to celebrate my husband and I's 1st wedding anniversary happening this July.

- Sara Thetland Participant in Meewasin's Dedication Program

Meewasin Dedication Program:

Recognizing Special People, Places, and Moments

The Dedication Program is a major funding source for Meewasin through which citizens can dedicate benches, trees, bricks, and a variety of other items in the name of a special place, person or event in Meewasin Valley. These items are not only special reminders of cherished memories but also provide amenities and greenery to the Valley for everyone to enjoy.

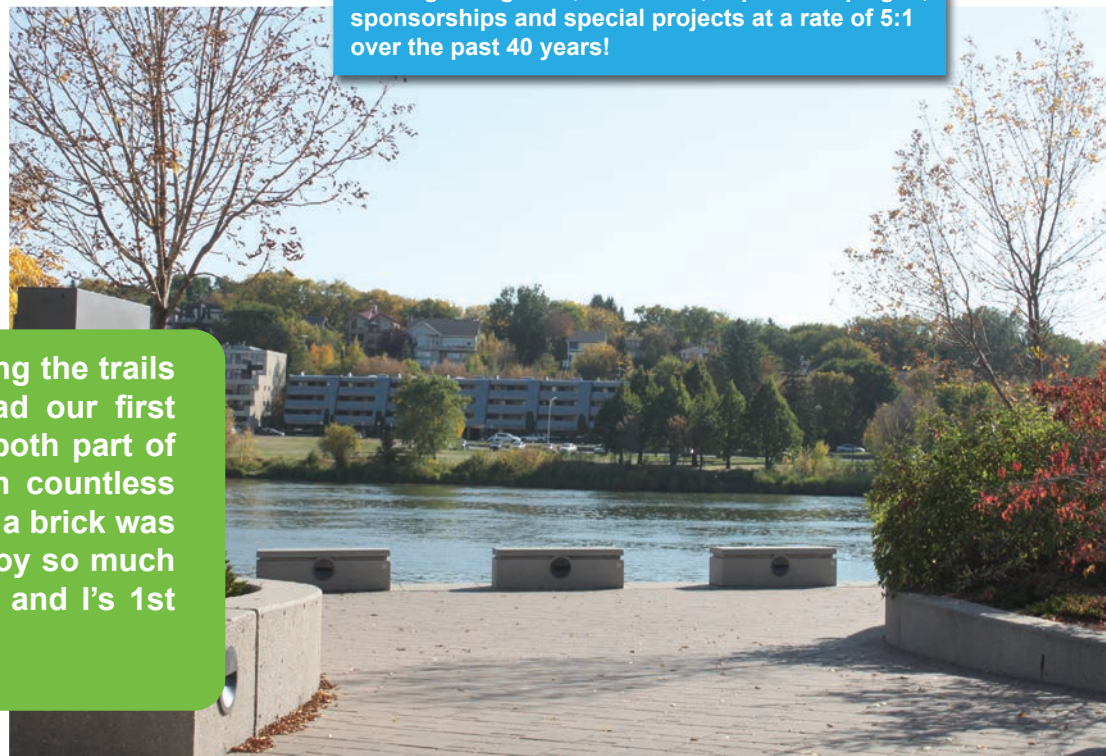


Items dedicated in 2019

Fundraising

Meewasin successfully continues partnerships to fundraise on our behalf such as the Saskatoon Road Runners Association who has given more than \$275,000 to Meewasin for trail development. Individual donors, corporations and associations' commitment to Meewasin is crucial in its success and we thank everyone who is so committed to the mission and mandate of our organization.

Meewasin is uniquely positioned to leverage core funding with grants, donations, capital campaigns, sponsorships and special projects at a rate of 5:1 over the past 40 years!



Operations

Financial Highlights 2019/2020

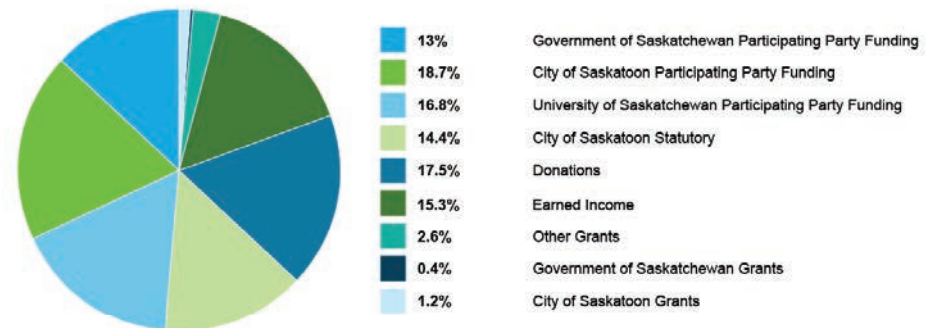
Statutory funding for Meewasin remained steady for the 2019/2020 fiscal year. This amount has seen an overall decline from \$36 per person in 1981-82 to less than \$7 per person in 2019/2020. Based on the growth in population within the Conservation Zone Meewasin has to increasingly rely on donations, grants and opportunities to generate revenue. This has been a major strength of Meewasin, especially in regard to capital projects and campaigns. There is a strong government relations strategy in place to support the continuation of consistent and predictable funding for Meewasin core operations and for additional investments into infrastructure.

Endowment Funds

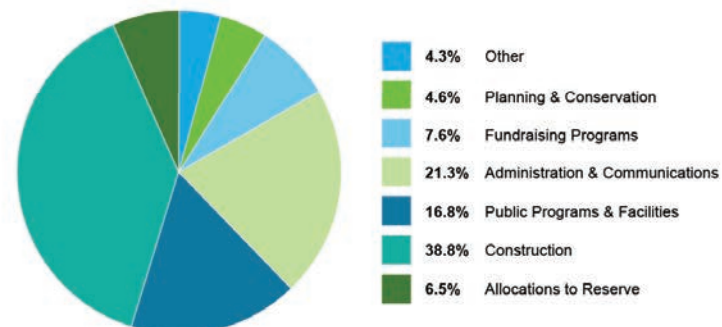
The endowment funds for the benefit of Meewasin, are owned and managed by the Saskatoon Community Foundation. At December 31, 2019, the endowment funds and balances were as follows: Meewasin Naturally Fund \$1,117,146, the Susan Lamb Fund \$29,973 and Wes Bolstad Fund \$23,455 for a total of \$1,170,574. These funds continue to grow through generous contributions from individuals and planned gifts. Revenue from endowment funds for Meewasin are currently being used to support strategic operations and priorities in our three mandate areas.



Source of Funds \$3,854,982



Expenditures & Allocations \$3,854,982



Donors, we thank you!

Participating Party Funding

City of Saskatoon
Government of Saskatchewan
University of Saskatchewan

Corporate Sponsorships

Cameco Corporation
Downtown YXE
SIGA
Tim Hortons

Grants

ASUPCA
City of Saskatoon
Saskatoon Nature Society
Service Canada - Canada
Summer Jobs
SK Community Initiatives Fund
TCT
TD Friends of the Environment
Tourism Saskatoon
Tree Canada Foundation
Western Economic
Diversification Canada

2019-2020 Donors (over \$250)

Darwin Anderson
G.N. & Janice Arnott
Yuguang Bai
Scott & Tracy Banda
Darlene Bessey & Ken Pontikes
William Black
Anne Blakeney
Doug Borrowman
Wilson Brenna
John Brockelbank
Caitlin Brown
Dr. Nola & James Romanow Buhr
Samuel Butler
Hal Carnago
Randall Chapman
Robin Chapman
Eric Cline & Pauline Melis
Yvonne Cuttle
Dillon Consulting Ltd.
Bev Dubois
Lorne & Laurel Duczek
Amy Ehman
Jane Elliot
Fable Ice Cream
Robert Finley
David Forbes
Kelli Fredlund
Janice George
Glenda Halyk
David Forbes
Karen Heise
David Palmer & Janet Hill
Stuart Houston
Insightrix Research
Ian Judd-Henrey
Jim Kellis
Christopher Kent
John & Myrna King
John & Doretha Kowalishin
Andrea Lafond
Malcom B. & Marilyn Leggett

Terri Lemke
Stephen E. Levy & Carolyn
Weeks-Levy
Daryl Lindsay
Dr. Christine Manning
Andrew McKinlay
Janet McVittie
Shayne Meggs
Rita Mirwald
Lawrence Mitchell
Cindy Moleski
Moriyama & Teshima Architects
Howard Nixon
Nutrien
Leanne Nyirfa
Alan Otterbein & Clair Burkitt
Vetha B. Paine
Estate of Patricia Parnell
Louise Pelletier
Glen Penner
Prairie River Cruises Ltd.
Judy Purdy
PWC Canada
R.M. of Corman Park
Frances Rank
Raymond James Ltd.
Robyn Reist
John Riggs
Roy & Eleanore Romanow
Rotary Club of Saskatoon Nutana
Saskatchewan Outdoor &
Environmental Education
Society
Saskatoon Road Runners
Association
Sandra Schultz
Mark Seniuk
SEPW Architecture
John & Ann Sheard
Tim Sirois
Kelly & Fern Stockdale Winder

Murray Taylor
The Saskatoon Community
Foundation
Dorothy J. Thomson
Ken Tickner
Patrick Timmons
United Way Community Funds of
Saskatoon
Ryan Walker
Cathy Watts
James Werbicki
Lloyd & Shirley Widenmaier
Dr. Sharon Wiens
Kevin Wilson
Thomas Wilson
Fern Winder
Estate of Harry Zacharias
Gail Zink

Special Friends & Planned Givers

Dr. Darwin Anderson
Ina and the late John Brockelbank
Gwen & Guy Charman
Susan & Ronald Lamb
Anita & Graham Langford
On Purpse Leadership Inc.
Terri Lemke
K. W. & Dora Nasser
Paul Lavoie & Bill Paterson
Frank J. Roy
Saskatoon Road Runners
Association
Jack & Sylvia Vicq



Meewasin Valley Authority

402 Third Avenue South

Saskatoon SK S7K 3G5

T: 306-665-6887

E: meewasin@meewasin.com

W: meewasin.com



Government of
Saskatchewan

Meewasin