



Meewasin's Conservation Efforts Find Digital Future Supported by RBC Tech for Nature

April 30, 2021

In a year where we cannot gather, an ability to engage the community in conservation activities in both digital and outdoor environments is becoming increasingly more important. Meewasin is proud to be partnering with RBC through their Tech For Nature initiative on *Building A Digital Conservation Community program*.

Together, RBC and Meewasin are bringing solutions to the most pressing environmental issues. Through the partnership, Meewasin will receive \$75,000 in funding from the RBC Foundation to support conservation initiatives, including the *Building a Digital Conservation Community program*. This program will engage volunteers through an enhanced online reporting tool to provide a better understanding to the ecological systems in the South Saskatchewan River valley. The information gathered will be interpreted through a traditional ecological knowledge lens and will be shared with the public through numerous methods. The grant will also continue to support Meewasin's grazing program as part of its multi-pronged invasive species management program.

The Meewasin Valley-wide Monitoring Framework, which is currently underway, identifies a need for locally collected monitoring information to feed into a larger network of regional, provincial and national ecological knowledge. This project provides increased access to land managers, researchers, policy makers, planners and the public to a wider range of ecological knowledge.

"Meewasin is honoured to have received this important funding from RBC, and must recognize the forward thinking organization for their care of our environment – both locally and globally," says Andrea Lafond, Meewasin CEO. "Meewasin's conservation practices are often complex and require many people, partnerships, and resources to successfully drive real change, so this funding will truly assist our organization in providing safe and accessible stewardship opportunities in the future."

“We’re excited to be working with Meewasin to tackle one of the most pressing issues of our time – climate change,” said Valerie Chort, Vice-President, Corporate Citizenship & Sustainability, RBC. “Using our more than money approach, we will leverage the assets in our ecosystem to proactively bring together charitable partners, along with the required experts, to build the type of multi-partner coalitions that are needed to address and solve our shared environmental challenges.”

The Monitoring Framework is easily repeatable and Meewasin hopes to expand the model provincially and nationally with our partners. Meewasin will integrate new technologies into its monitoring program to improve ecological knowledge of the South Saskatchewan River valley. The work will engage the public and conservation community to share their knowledge and expertise and will engage members of the Indigenous community to help interpret data with a traditional ecological knowledge perspective.

Learn more about RBC’s commitment to sustainability at www.rbc.com/techfornature.

For more information, contact Meewasin at 306-665-6887 or meewasin@meewasin.com

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About Meewasin Valley Authority

The Meewasin Valley Authority exists to ensure a healthy and vibrant river valley, with a balance between human use and conservation by:

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

for the benefit of present and future generations.

There are 67 square kilometers of land and over 90km of established trail, which has seen up to 1.87 million trail visits per year, in the Meewasin Valley. The area also features sites that help people to connect to nature through experiences such as Beaver Creek Conservation Area, the Northeast Swale, Saskatoon Natural Grasslands, the River Landing Spray Area, and the Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @Nutrien Plaza. Meewasin is a non-profit organization that relies on donations and volunteers for sustainability. To get involved or learn more visit www.meewasin.com