

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
for the
DESIGNATION OF A WATER PLANNING AUTHORITY
and for the
DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN
INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN
for the
Arrow/Oak River Watershed (05MG)

UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN

The Province of Manitoba represented by the Department of Water Stewardship as empowered by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and

The Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District and Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District referred to as the **Arrow/Oak River Water Planning Authority (AORWPA)**.

UNDERSTANDING PREAMBLE

INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

The integrated watershed management plan (IWMP) planning process uses the watershed boundary and a local approach to protect and manage natural resources, ecosystems and the environment. The process engages all stakeholders and local leadership to address watershed issues and to work cooperatively toward a vision for the watershed. It is an ongoing, cyclical process that utilizes the latest knowledge and technology to deal with new and ongoing watershed issues.

The planning process adapts the standard four-step, repeating resource planning cycle (plan, implement, monitor, evaluate) to the requirements of the Water Protection Act. The process is designed to be stakeholder-driven and to provide a comparable level of planning for all of Manitoba's watersheds. Each IWMP is to be locally designed to meet local needs and to fit a standardized framework in order to support appropriate development and a comparable level of resource protection throughout the province.

VISION

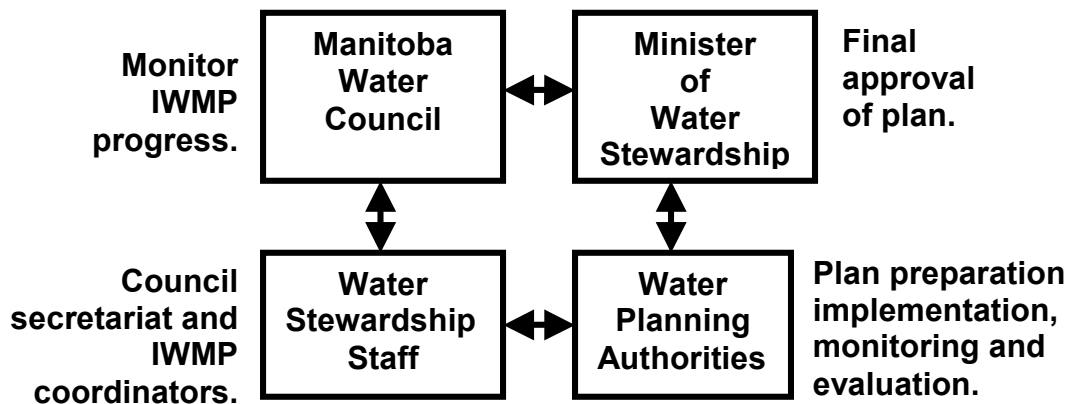
To have in our watershed the best possible water for all people, the environment, and our economy.

GOAL

To protect our water and ensure the social, environmental and economic health of our watershed is preserved. This will require the effective participation of all watershed stakeholders in a broad discussion of watershed issues and to define a plan of action to protect our water. In doing so, it is important to connect water and land planning, and to use local and scientific knowledge.

KEY PLAYERS

The three key players in the planning process are the local Water Planning Authority (WPA), Manitoba Water Stewardship and the Manitoba Water Council. The roles and working relationships of these three groups are displayed in the following figure.



PLANNING PROCESS PRINCIPLES

By this understanding, we agree to support the following IWMP principles:

- **Planning on a watershed basis:** The WPA will plan on a watershed boundary, consulting all those affected by the IWMP.

- **Empowered local water planning authority:** The most effective means of protecting water, aquatic ecosystems and drinking water sources is to empower those most directly affected. This process will be locally-driven by the WPA.
- **Public participation:** Active public participation and education will be sought throughout the planning process.
- **Provincial laws/policies/guidelines:** All provincial land and water laws, policies and guidelines will be adhered to in the planning process.
- **Science:** Science based information will be the foundation of our IWMP.
- **State of the watershed:** Planning begins by assessing the current state of the watershed. This information is to be shared with all watershed stakeholders with the goal of actively engaging them in the discussions and planning process.
- **Source water protection plans:** These plans are integral to the protection of our drinking water sources.

PARTICIPANTS CODE OF CONDUCT

By this Understanding, we agree to incorporate the following behaviors throughout the planning process:

- **Support:** We agree to support the vision and goals of the planning process.
- **Cooperation:** We agree to cooperate and constructively support the planning process.
- **Participation:** We agree to encourage the participation of all watershed stakeholders.
- **Equity:** We agree all stakeholders should have an equal opportunity for input to the IWMP and all voices and interests are to be heard and considered.
- **Integration:** We agree a successful IWMP is dependent on comprehensive planning with respect to the interdependence of water, land and ecosystems.
- **Honesty:** We agree to be honest in all aspects of the planning process.
- **Open and informed decision making:** We agree to an open public process.
- **Adaptability, caution, and transition:** We agree to be adaptive in the process, not rigid, to exercise the precautionary principle where there is uncertainty and to recognize that transition takes time.

UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS the authority agencies have submitted a proposal (Appendix 1) to act as the WPA and to develop and implement an IWMP for the Arrow/Oak River watershed 05MG as per the map displayed in Appendix 2; and

WHEREAS the authority agrees to the planning approach detailed in the understanding preamble; and

WHEREAS Manitoba has accepted, in principal, the request to develop and implement an IWMP for the Arrow/Oak River watershed; and

NOW THEREFORE the parties hereto agree to the following terms and conditions:

I Province of Manitoba

The Province, upon signing section V of this document, agrees to:

1. Designate the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District and the Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District as the WPA for the Oak River watershed as authorized by the *Water Protection Act* Sections 14(a) and 14(b).
2. To act as the IWMP coordinators.
3. Provide financial support from the Water Stewardship Fund to the WPA as authorized by Section 29(3) of the *Water Protection Act*.

II Authority agencies:

The authority , upon signing section V of this document, agree to:

1. Become the **Arrow/Oak River Water Planning Authority (AORWPA)**.
2. Submit to and endorse with Manitoba Water Stewardship a terms of reference for the preparation of the IWMP that covers the following information; reasons for preparing, objectives or desired outcomes, participants and their roles, process, timeline, and budget. Submit any other terms or conditions that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary.
3. Ensure that all provisions for preparing the IWMP, contents of the plan, consultation and public meetings, and plan review, revision and approval process are completed in accordance with the *Water Protection Act* (Sections 15-22).

4. Ensure all watershed stakeholders are provided the opportunity for input to the planning process.
5. Ensure that the IWMP reflects the provincial priority interests of drinking water source protection and a state of the watershed report.
6. Ensure that the following planning steps are completed:
 - a. Background/history/scope
 - b. Characterize the watershed (State of the Watershed)
 - c. Identify and prioritize Issues, (Challenges and Opportunities)
 - d. Watershed vision and mission
 - e. Action plan (goals and objectives)
 - f. IWMP approval, publication and distribution
 - g. Implementation
 - h. Monitoring, evaluation and public reporting
 - i. IWMP update
7. Seek to complete steps “a” through “f” and to initiate step “g” of the process by April, 2009 (maximum 3 year duration).
8. Complete an update of the IWMP by April, 2019. (10 years later)

III Both parties agree to the following target task schedule to complete the first generation IWMP.

IWMP Task Steps	Cumulative Time
Establish WPA	0 months
Form IWMP Project Management Team	
Form IWMP Planning Advisory Team	
Complete and Distribute State of Watershed Report	
Public Consult –Comment On & Identify Watershed Issues	Within 12 months
Complete and Distribute Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP)	
Complete Draft IWMP	
Public Consult – Comment on Draft IWMP	Within 24 months
WPA Assemble Final IWMP and obtain Provincial approval	Within 36 months
Implement SWPP and IWMP	
Monitor SWPP and IWMP	
Evaluate SWPP and IWMP progress and Redo IWMP	10 years

IV Duration:

The Understanding shall commence from the date of signing below. It is expected to be ongoing with an updated IWMP submitted at least every ten years.

V IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Understanding has been executed on behalf of the Province of Manitoba and the authority agencies.

Province of Manitoba
Minister of Water Stewardship

Date

Chair, Little Saskatchewan River CD

Date

Chair, Upper Assiniboine River CD

Date