

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2025

Exciting News for Oak Lake!

Oak Lake Aquifer is about to receive a province-installed real-time groundwater monitoring system at a well in the RM of Sifton (junction of Road 150W and 38N).

Currently, Grande Clairiere is the only real-time system, viewable online. The new system arrives by late fall, boosting local water data collection and resource management.

This update complements last month's \$95,000 grant for a new Oak Lake aeration system, which will improve water quality, enhance fish populations, and reduce algae.

The aeration project, led by SRWD and supported by Premier Wab Kinew and RM of Sifton, will raise oxygen levels in Oak Lake,

especially in winter. These investments will help safeguard healthy water and wildlife for generations, thanks to strong partnerships and dedicated stewardship in our watershed.

Meet the SRWD Board: Richard Schoonbaert, Board Vice Chair & Whitewater Lake Subdistrict Chair!



and celebrates the district's ongoing progress.

Richard's 36 years as a Southwest Horizon teacher and active community leader drive his passion for conservation and education. With 10 years at SRWD and deep local roots,

Richard enjoys nature, farming, and family. He's dedicated to supporting farmers and promoting environmental stewardship. Richard values collaboration

Animal of the Week:

Ferruginous Hawk

Manitoba's largest prairie hawk, the Ferruginous Hawk, boasts a 1.3m wingspan and striking rusty feathers. This vulnerable raptor relies on grasslands for hunting and nesting, helping control small mammals and signaling prairie health. SRWD's conservation efforts protect them and Manitoba's wild spaces—spread the word!



Place of the Month: Cherry Point Educational and Nature trail

Discover the 1.4 km Cherry Point loop trail near Oak Lake—a scenic spot for running, walking, snowshoeing, and year-round family picnics. Explore Manitoba's hidden gem with views, interpretive signs, and rich history: once a thriving bison hunting ground for Aboriginal Peoples, Cherry Point reveals 2,000 years of adaptation, community, and ecological significance.

We built a brand-new walking bridge at Canupawakpa Nature Trail

The Canupawakpa Nature Trail just east of Reston, Manitoba now features a brand-new wooden walking bridge, making it more inviting—and accessible—than ever. The 1 km trail, open April to November and free to experience, winds through lush riparian forest, home to elm, maple, and ash trees along the banks of Pipestone Creek.

Visitors can enjoy scenic views of rapids, beaver dams, diverse wildlife, and peaceful Oxbow Lake from the bridge—a perfect vantage for birdwatching or quiet reflection. Interpretive signs and brochures



reveal the area's rich ecology and deep Indigenous heritage, tracing connections to the Dakota Nation and centuries of local history.

Twelve marked sites tell the land's stories, blending insights into the people who lived here with the trail's unique habitats. Canupawakpa Nature Trail preserves local plant life and wildlife habitats, enhances water quality, and fosters community stewardship.

The trail is a prime example of how small public spaces can protect regional heritage while encouraging education and enjoyment for all. Whether out for a family walk, looking to spot birds, or eager to learn about the region's past, Canupawakpa offers a genuine, memorable encounter with Manitoba's prairie wilderness.



Did you know?

Did you know native prairie grasses have roots that reach over 10 feet deep? These powerful networks anchor soil, fight climate change by storing carbon, and help prevent erosion and flooding across our watershed. Canada has lost over 75% of its original tallgrass prairie. SRWD's native grass restoration sites, like Lyleton Orchard and Tilston, help preserve biodiversity, strengthen soils, and secure cleaner water for all.

Thinking about planting a shelterbelt? Start with well-prepared, weed-free soil and choose a diverse mix of trees and shrubs for maximum resilience. With proper care in the first few years—including mulching, watering, and weed control—your shelterbelt will offer years of protection and natural beauty. Interested in getting started? Contact our team for expert advice and support!



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