

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Margret Asmuss - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40
Attachments: RCE SK Letter Re Northeast Swale Feb. 2023.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 1:12 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Communication - Margret Asmuss - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, February 20, 2023 - 13:11

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

Date: Monday, February 20, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: She/her/hers

First Name: Margret

Last Name: Asmuss

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] 113th Street

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development - Saskatchewan

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: February 22, 2023

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Boundaries for the Small and Northeast Swales

Comments:

See attached letter

Attachments:

- [RCE SK Letter Re Northeast Swale Feb. 2023.pdf](#)265.28 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No



RCE REGIONAL CENTRE
OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
SASKATCHEWAN



February 20, 2023

To Mayor Charlie Clark and Saskatoon City Council,

We are writing to endorse the *Swale Watchers Vision Statement of January 23, 2023*. The document provides the scientific guidance required to put in place boundaries that will safeguard the Swales' long-term ecological functioning, while also allowing for appropriate neighbourhood development. Accordingly, we urge the City of Saskatoon to adopt the recommendations for the swale protected area and swale borders as articulated in the Vision Statement.

By way of background, RCE Saskatchewan is a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) acknowledged by the UN University in 2007.¹ Our RCE brings together scholars and community practitioners dedicated to researching and advancing ESD. The 170+ RCEs around the world work to advance the UNESCO Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP).² We see education for sustainable development as essential in achieving the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are intended to guide the global development agenda through to 2030.³ As part of our mandate, we share information and education about our local responsibilities in relation to Canada's global sustainable development commitments.

The SDGs of relevance to development of the Northeast Swale are Goal 13 on Climate Action, Goal 14 on Life Below Water, and Goal 15 on Life on Land. In addition, the 1976 (UN World Heritage) Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage⁴, to which Canada is a signatory, must be considered. Under article 5.4 of this Convention, Canada has committed "to take appropriate, legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, preservation, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this [cultural and natural] heritage."

Regarding the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and related SDGs #14 and #15 (see above), the work of the Meewasin Valley Authority has identified that the Northeast Swale is home to several rare, endangered, or culturally significant species of plants, birds, and amphibians, such as the Western Red Lily, the Horned Grebe and the Northern Leopard Frog. As well, the swale includes artifacts of our cultural history, including a remnant of the Moose Woods – Batoche Trail, tipi rings and the old town of Clarkboro, among others. If development on this landscape is not done with care, we risk losing thousands of years of natural and cultural history and the educational opportunities this affords for future generations.

¹ UN University, "RCE Vision and Mission," available from: <https://www.rcenetwork.org/portal/rce-vision-and-mission>.

² UNESCO, "Global Action Programme on ESD." Available from: <https://en.unesco.org/gap>.

³ UN, "Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World." Available from: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

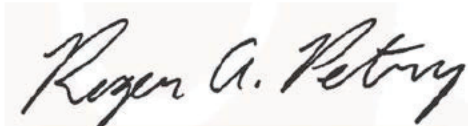
⁴ Canada accepted the Convention on July 23, 1976. See States Parties Ratification Status at <https://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=246>

Regarding SDG #13 “Climate Action,” development in the Northeast Swale must be evaluated through the lens of climate change. Both wetlands and grasslands have important roles to play in both climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition to providing natural drainage and flood control—something increasingly important with extreme weather events, wetlands are a recognized asset in carbon sequestration. Ducks Unlimited Canada estimates that Canada’s wetlands store approximately 150 billion tonnes of carbon⁵ and scientists have identified that wetland restoration in the prairie provinces could make a significant contribution to greenhouse gas mitigation.⁶ We’ve lost an estimated 70-90% of our wetlands and we continue to lose more. It is critical to protect those wetlands that remain. Like wetlands, grasslands are recognized as critical to carbon sequestration⁷, yet are severely threatened with less than 10% remaining intact⁸ worldwide. From the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) to the 2016 Paris Accord within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to commitments from all levels of government in Canada, the need to address climate change is irrefutable.

Given the cultural and natural heritage of the Swale, together with its potential contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation, any development must proceed cautiously with a view to a sustainable future. From our perspective, the approach proposed in *Swale Watchers Vision Statement* of January 23, 2023, does this by appropriately balancing the Swales’ long-term ecological functioning and neighbourhood development.

We will be sharing this letter and any updates with our RCE membership in Saskatchewan and our global RCE colleagues, along with relevant non-governmental, municipal, provincial and federal authorities for their information.

Sincerely,



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Cc Swale Watchers, Saskatoon
Dr. Charles Hopkins, Regional Advisor for RCEs in the Americas
Dr. Philip Vaughter, Research Fellow, United Nations Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)
RCE Saskatchewan Partners and Members

⁵ <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/01/31/1708736/0/en/Making-the-connection-between-wetlands-and-climate-change.html>

⁶ <https://cbmjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13021-018-0094-4>, <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/01/31/1708736/0/en/Making-the-connection-between-wetlands-and-climate-change.html>

⁷ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/ccrc/topics/grassland-carbon-management>

⁸ <https://www.popsoci.com/grasslands-disappearing-chart/>