

## Lasby, Mary

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**Subject:** FW: Email - Communication - Stewart Coles - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40

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**From:** Web NoReply <[web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2023 11:34 AM

**To:** City Council <[City.Council@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:City.Council@Saskatoon.ca)>

**Subject:** Email - Communication - Stewart Coles - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40

--- Replies to this email will go to [scoles@cpaws.org](mailto:scoles@cpaws.org) ---

Submitted on Monday, February 20, 2023 - 11:32

Submitted by user: Anonymous

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

**First Name:** Stewart

**Last Name:** Coles

**Email:** [scoles@cpaws.org](mailto:scoles@cpaws.org)

**Address:** 226 20th Street West

**City:** Saskatoon

**Province:** Saskatchewan

**Postal Code:** S7M 0W9

**Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable):** Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Saskatchewan Chapter

**What do you wish to do ?:** Submit Comments

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** Regular Business Meeting of City Council

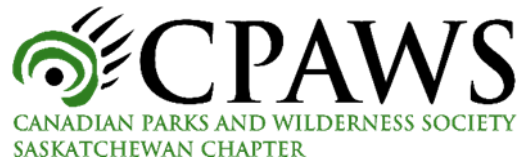
**What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?:** 9.3.1

**Comments:**  
See attached.

**Attachments:**

- [CPAWS-SK - Regular City Council Meeting - written submission to agenda Item 9.3.1 - Feb 2023.pdf](#) 181.96 KB

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



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20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council,

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – Saskatchewan Chapter (CPAWS-SK) wishes to comment in respect of agenda item 9.3.1 *'Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement'* of the city's Regular Business Meeting on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 09:30 am. In doing so, we wish to express our support for ensuring ecologically and culturally beneficial habitat is broadly protected and restored, and that ecologically focused connectivity across this region is prioritized through the concept planning process.

CPAWS-SK notes, from the Standing Policy Committee (SPC) on Planning, Development and Community Services (SPC-PDCS) – dated February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – that the boundaries outlined in 'Option 3', presented by Meewasin Valley Authority, were endorsed by the committee. While we welcome the committee's deliberations, additional requests, and their decision to support the best of the three options presented by the city and Meewasin Valley Authority (MVA), we remain keen to provide further thought on the need for greater protection of this critically important area of the city.

That, in part, is why we welcomed the additional proposal, moved by Councillor Gough, *"that through the concept plan development and review, the Administration work with all stakeholders to seek opportunities to establish greenway or other buffer spaces greater than 25m where feasible and ecologically beneficial."* We believe it is very clear from the studies already undertaken – and highlighted within the *Swale Watchers Vision Statement* submission – that ecologically beneficial habitat exists beyond the currently proposed boundaries. We believe this represents one opportunity for the city to address some of these areas not protected within the 'Option 3' boundary recommendations supported by the SPC-PDCS. In these deliberations, we would draw your attention to the requirements of the Official Community Plan (OCP), and specifically section E.2.5, with reference to objective (a) *"to identify and protect important ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and other natural areas and assets as part of the land development process"* and objective (c) *"To conserve the biodiversity of all species to support climate resilience in the city and region"*. We feel the city has set out a clear plan within the OCP more broadly to protect, sustain and connect natural systems. We, and many other stakeholders, will welcome the opportunity to work with the Administration and MVA to address these additional greenways, buffers, and additional ecological opportunities clearly noted by the committee as important to the functionality of the Small and NE Swale Complexes.

Protecting, restoring, and connecting our most prized and fragile ecological and cultural landscapes is critical to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, creating resiliency (inc., providing ecological services, i.e., flood mitigation, cooling cities, sequestering and storing carbon, etc.), and to supporting and maintaining space for people to access the land for the betterment of their wellbeing and cultural

needs. And urban centres can play just as central a role to addressing these key and universal issues, as we continue to witness biodiversity loss and species extinction at unprecedented levels globally.

As we stressed in our comments to the SPC-PDCS, the prospect of a National Urban Park in the region presents the ideal opportunity for the city to be part of the solution in halting and reversing biodiversity loss and using this designation process to support greater conservation measures across the city. The Meewasin Valley Authority has taken great strides over the decades to protect, restore, enhance, and manage many important areas of the city. With this greater opportunity and at such a time when action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss is critical, the city is well placed to take on this leadership role and show Canada and the world that protecting, restoring, and connecting urban ecosystems - like the Small and NE Swale - makes ecological, cultural, and economic sense.

The reward for leadership on this subject goes beyond the protection afforded such habitats and species. It goes towards inspiring future generations to learn about the value of protecting critical ecosystems and species, adding to the great work already entrenched in Meewasin's mandate. It also provides access to nature in ways many urban citizens are not always afforded, with many of our province's prized landscapes some distance from urban centres and out of reach for many. This is an opportunity to ensure our important ecosystems remain connected, ecologically functional and, where possible, intact, accessible, and a source of rich and flourishing biodiversity.

We again highlight recent national polling<sup>1</sup> by CPAWS that has shown a strong majority of Canadians (over 80%) support further government commitments to protecting land and sea in Canada, coupled with 90% of Canadians believing protected areas play an important role in addressing climate change, help prevent biodiversity loss, support a healthy sustainable economy, and support human well-being.

The recent agreements made at the Kunming-Montreal United Nations Biodiversity conference (COP15) again support our national poll findings adding, "*The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050*"<sup>2</sup> (Goal A – Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)). The goals and targets of the agreement clearly present a comprehensive plan to protect and restore biodiversity.

We have welcomed the opportunity to provide comment on this important topic and we hope this dialogue continues beyond this council meeting and that the best decision is made in the interests of ensuring the Small and NE Swale complexes and their associated and supporting ecosystems remain healthy, connected, and continue to support an abundance of biodiversity.

Should you have any questions regarding these comments please do not hesitate to reach out.

Yours sincerely,

**Stewart Coles**

Conservation Program Manager  
CPAWS-Saskatchewan

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cpaws.org/poll-shows-canadians-want-more-and-faster-government-action-on-land-and-ocean-protection/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/article/cop15-cbd-press-release-final-19dec2022>