

## Janzen, Heather

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**Subject:** FW: Email - Communication - Julia Adamson - Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – Natural Area Management and Conceptual Master Plans - CK 1860-1 X 1702-1  
**Attachments:** SPC EUC May 7 Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area.pdf

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

**Sent:** Sunday, May 5, 2024 10:29 PM

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

**Subject:** Email - Communication - Julia Adamson - Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – Natural Area Management and Conceptual Master Plans - CK 1860-1 X 1702-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [friendsafforestation@gmail.com](mailto:friendsafforestation@gmail.com) ---

Submitted on Sunday, May 5, 2024 - 22:27

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

**I have read and understand the above statements.:** Yes

**I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.:** No

**I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.:** No

**Date:** Sunday, May 05, 2024

**To:** His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

**First Name:** Julia

**Last Name:** Adamson

**Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name:** [REDACTED]

**Phone Number :** [REDACTED]

**Email:** [friendsafforestation@gmail.com](mailto:friendsafforestation@gmail.com)

**I live outside of Saskatoon:** No

**Saskatoon Address and Ward:**

**Address:** [REDACTED] Appleby Crt

**Ward:** Ward 2

**Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable):** Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas inc.

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

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** Standing Policy Committee On Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services May 7

**What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?:** ITEM7.2.1 Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – Natural Area Management and Conceptual Master Plans [CC2023-0406]

**Comments:**

Letter attached

**Attachments:**

- [SPC EUC May 7 Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area.pdf](#)192.95 KB

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



**Friends of the Saskatoon  
Afforestation Areas Inc.**  
Registered **Charity #777143876 RR 0001**  
***Come To Nature Come To life***  
<http://friendsareas.ca/>

Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas

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Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services May 7, 2024

[\*ITEM7.2.1 Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – Natural Area Management and Conceptual Master Plans \[CC2023-0406\]\*](#)

Councillor M. Loewen, Chair, SPC on EUC Committee members

On behalf of the Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas, I am writing to express our sincere gratitude for your attention to the Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area – Natural Area Management and Conceptual Master Plans [CC2023-0406].

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Jessie Best, Project Manager, and everyone involved in the City of Saskatoon Sustainability, Parks, Recreation, Watershed, Utilities and Environment departments for their dedication and efforts in compiling this report, consulting with EDI and WSP and engaging with members of the public who utilize these vital greenspaces.

The item which was stressed at the [2017 meeting of stakeholders](#) was safety. The ranking of safety is in the report, however not at a high level. Safety is needed for both biodiversity and humans at a time when the anthropogenic footprint is exponentially increasing. Perhaps barriers and signs have improved the community development and CPTED programme sufficiently in response to that meeting, however, it is imperative to monitor closely.

We would like to bring to your attention the omission of the West Swale formation from the Yorath Island Glacial Spillway in the management and conceptual master plans for the Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area. Larry Edwin Hodgins, in his Doctoral thesis titled "Morphology of the South Saskatchewan River Valley Outlook to Saskatoon" conducted extensive research, including boring soil samples, to confirm the presence of this geological feature. It is noteworthy that Dr. Ernie Walker, an esteemed Archaeology & Anthropology professor emeritus, has corroborated the existence of such glacial spillways, particularly in areas with sandy soil compositions. The findings of the Natural Screening Study by Environmental Dynamics Inc. further support this, as it identified sandy loam and loamy sand textures in the soil at RSBAA. Therefore, we believe that the inclusion of the West Swale formation is crucial for a comprehensive understanding and management of the area's geological heritage. This geological feature plays a critical role in the ecosystem of the area and should be duly considered in the management plans for interpretation alongside the Old Bone Trail, biographical, geological, cultural, historic Green Survival Program, and geographical features. Interestingly, on

speaking with other historians there were at times three different routes for the Old Bone Trail through this area.

Furthermore, the historical significance of the Gowen Sites, as researched by Dr. Ernie Walker, is paramount and should be incorporated into the interpretation efforts at the Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area. Dr. Ernie Walker's research on the Gowen Sites highlights their historical significance, and RSBBA serves as a unique opportunity to enlighten the public about this heritage. As the closest accessible location to the Gowen Sites without being within the Waste Management Centre, RSBBA serves as an ideal venue for interpreting the Palaeo Indian heritage. The proximity to the Ancient Glacial Spillway or river, along with the likelihood of animals following waterways and hunters tracing animal trails to the Gowen Site encampment, underscores the importance of incorporating interpretation for these sites into our plans. By doing so, we can provide visitors with a deeper understanding of the area's rich cultural history and its significance within the broader context of Saskatchewan's heritage and preserving our paleontological heritage in perpetuity. These sites offer valuable insights into our heritage and should be made accessible to the public for educational purposes.

Additionally, we emphasize the importance of preserving the diverse native flora species within the afforestation areas, especially in the face of challenges posed by invasive species such as Smooth Brome. The presence of indigenous flora species, such as the newly discovered Prairie Pasqueflower (*Crocus*) joining 90 other species of native forbes, underscores the ecological richness of these areas and warrants careful conservation efforts. These species show the resilience of our moist mixed prairie grasslands which are making a come back in the ecotone of RSBBA.

As we anticipate future environmental changes, including shifts in water table levels and vegetation composition, we urge for long-term planning that prioritizes the protection of native species and habitats. We are approaching a critical juncture where Saskatchewan may transition to years of high water table, given our current 13-year drought. This impending shift underscores the importance of recording and understanding the dynamics of temporary wetlands with ephemeral hydrology, as well as areas prone to flooding. It is imperative that we incorporate this knowledge into our management and planning efforts for the Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area, ensuring their resilience to changing environmental conditions and preserving their ecological integrity for future generations.

It is noteworthy to acknowledge the inclusion of mixed woodlands with evergreens in the action plan for the environment. However, it is essential to recognize that evergreens do not naturally thrive in lower elevations such as those surrounding Saskatoon without human intervention. Ecologists predict that without intervention, the afforestation areas may become dominated by non-native species such as Scots Pine and Colorado Blue Spruce within the next century. Therefore, it is imperative that our environmental assessment and long-term planning for these greenspaces during ecological restoration prioritize the protection and preservation of native trees, grasses, and flora species. Incorporating strategies to mitigate the encroachment of non-native species and promote the biodiversity of indigenous vegetation will be crucial in ensuring the resilience and sustainability of these valuable natural habitats. Human intervention will be crucial in maintaining the ecological integrity of these greenspaces for generations to come.

Where the report mentions only 36 species of concern, we would like to supplement this information by providing this [comprehensive listing of 60 species of concern](#). This list has been compiled using data from multiple reputable sources, including the Golder Associates West SouthWest Screening Study, the Natural Screening Study by Environmental Dynamics Inc. (EDI), the [WSP Natural Areas Management Plan](#) as well as research-grade observations on iNaturalist and eBird. These observations have been contributed by esteemed individuals such as Saskatchewan Birder Nick Saunders and distinguished birders from the Saskatoon Nature Society. Our environmental charity has been advised by the city and Meewasin that utilizing citizen surveys through iNaturalist could be highly advantageous. Volunteers have the flexibility to visit the afforestation area at any time of day and during any season. In contrast, ecological assessments are constrained by the time allocated within a budget. We believe that this expanded list offers a more thorough understanding of the biodiversity within the Richard St. Barbe Baker Afforestation Area and will be valuable for informing future management and conservation efforts.

The value of data inventories of flora and fauna to supplement ecological assessments cannot be overstated. Long-term, repeated observations provide invaluable insights into the direction and magnitude of change in species' phenology, allowing citizen scientists to track ecological shifts over time. With the proliferation of citizen science projects in recent years, there has been a surge in our ability to monitor the ecological and social impacts of large-scale environmental changes. Both amateur enthusiasts and professional ecologists now have access to a plethora of tools to explore changes in the phenology, relative abundance, distributions, survival, and reproductive success of organisms across time and space which are confirmed by University of Saskatchewan professors in biology, and the School of Environment and Sustainability as well as scientist specialists globally. Furthermore, initiatives such as the Recommendation on Open Science adopted by UNESCO underscore the importance of increasing collaborations between scientists and societal actors, promoting inclusivity and accessibility in scientific endeavors. Emphasizing the significance of citizen science, as advised by the city and Meewasin, acknowledges the invaluable contributions of volunteers who can be in the field at any time throughout the season, supplementing ecological assessments beyond the limitations imposed by survey budgets and biologist salaries.

In conclusion, we commend your attention to detail and commitment to recognizing the rich geological, natural, and cultural heritage of the Small Swale and Richard St Barbe Baker Afforestation Area. These areas serve as invaluable havens of biodiversity and semi-wildness within our city limits, and it is imperative that they are safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations.

Thank you once again for your dedication to the preservation and enhancement of our greenspaces. We look forward to continued collaboration in ensuring the sustainable management of these areas.

Sincerely



Julia Adamson, Chair

Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas

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