

July Newsletter

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Volume 13- Issue 4

Know Your Watershed

July 2019

SCCWS Welcomes New Board Members and Chairperson

The Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards (SCCWS) Board of Directors met June 20, 2019 and welcomed new Board Members, elected a new chairperson and committee members.

Darren Fiddler is the new chairperson of SCCWS. Darren has been involved with SCCWS since its inception representing the Rural Municipality of Webb and brings a wealth of knowledge about the operation of SCCWS. Darren farms and ranches along Duncairn Reservoir and has a unique knowledge of the challenge of agriculture stewardship along riparian areas. The board and staff of SCCWS look forward to working with Darren as we set the direction of our organization for the next number of years.

Joining the SCCWS board for 2019-2020 is Danny Spenst who is the representative for the Rural Municipality of Excelsior, Bruce Deg who is the representative for the council of the City of Swift Current and Frank Glen who is representative for the Rural Municipality of Swift Current. Bernie Lemire is the SCCWS representative on the Board of the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) replacing Don Mathies who was also the representative for the Rural Municipality of Excelsior. SCCWS thanks Don for his work on both the SCCWS board and as our representative for SAW.

SCCWS would also like to thank Dan Runcie who has been chairperson for the past 8 years, Dan has been involved with SCCWS since the start, serving as chairperson for many of these years. Not only has Dan served as a board member and chairperson he has been a source of invaluable technical information to aid in the operation of

has been a source of invaluable technical information to aid in the operation of SCCWS. Dan will stay on the board as a member at large for 2019-2020.

The Board of Directors of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards, the committees they are on and the groups they represent for 2019-2020 are:

Darren Fiddler – Chairperson – Rural Municipality of Webb

Bernie Lemire – Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds Representative-
Planning Committee- Rural Municipality of Carmichael

Bruce Deg- Human Resources Committee – City of Swift Current Council

Jolene Peters – Human Resources Committee- City of Swift Current

Riley Kornfeld – Planning Committee – Town of Shaunavon

Wilf Legros- Budget and Finance Committee – Rural Municipality of Lac
Pelletier

Frank Glen –Budget and Finance Committee- Rural Municipality of Swift
Current

Danny Spent – Member at Large – Rural Municipality of Excelsior

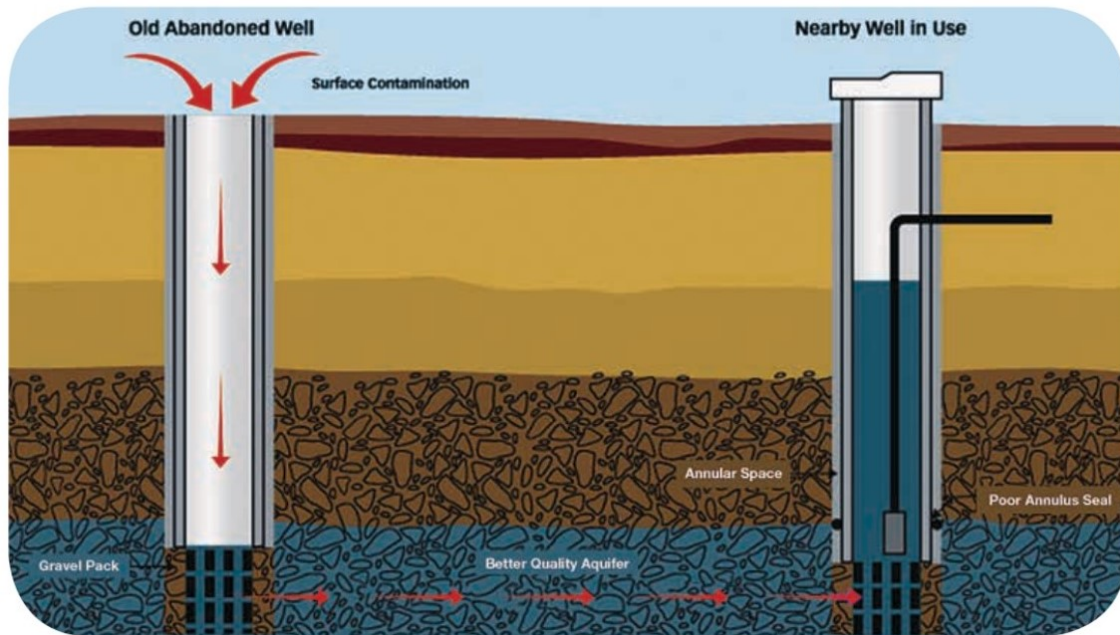
Dan Runcie – Past President – Member at Large

Decommissioning Abandoned Water Wells Improves Water Quality

As farms sizes have increased and the number of people living in the rural areas decreased, many farm yards are no longer occupied. Many of these yards have one or more wells that are no longer in use. In addition many occupied farm yards may have wells that are no longer in use. These old and abandoned wells pose many dangers. If they are not marked or covered properly they pose dangers of livestock, pets, people or vehicles falling into them. In many cases the old wells and the ground around them have started to cave in, increasing the dangers these old wells pose. Probably the biggest danger that abandoned wells pose is contamination to ground water especially during times of higher than average moisture and the increased run-off from heavy rain events.

Abandoned wells provide a direct pathway for water from the surface to get into the aquifers from which most of our drinking water is taken from. When a well is abandoned and not maintained the risk of contamination from surface water

increases. Once an aquifer is contaminated it is difficult and costly to fix the water supply and may limit development as the only water supply is not suitable for agriculture use or human consumption.



How surface water getting into old and abandoned water wells can contaminate water in wells being used for drinking water..

Picture taken from Decommissioning Abandoned Water Wells Fact Sheet published by Water Security Agency

Well decommissioning of large diameter wells is not difficult once the proper process has been learned. The Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards can come out to your farmyards to help you with the process and guide you as to what materials and how much of each are needed. We can also help you find a qualified person to help guide you through the process if you want to decommission the well yourself. For small diameter or bored wells a certified well driller is required to decommission the well.

A fact sheet on how to decommission your abandoned water wells can be found on the Water Security Agency web-site at wsask.ca or you can contact the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards at 306-770-4607 or stewards@sccws.com.

If you are an agriculture producer with at least \$50,000 in gross farm income in Saskatchewan you may be eligible to receive funding to decommission wells on land you own or rent. Land owners who do not meet the income requirement may be able to apply through their Rural Municipality, please contact your RM office to see if they would be willing to work with you to decommission abandoned wells. For more information on funding to decommission wells under the Canadian Agriculture Partnership Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure

Program please visit saskatchewan.ca and search for FRWIP.

If you are looking to decommission an abandoned water well and are looking for assistance with the well decommissioning worksheet and applying for funding to decommission the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards are available to help. Please contact Dallas Peters, the AgriEnvironmental Technician for SCCWS at 306-770-4606 or dallas.sccws@gmail.com.

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Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards
Box 1088
Swift Current, SK S9H 3x3
Canada

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