

THE MANITOBA WATERSHED DISTRICTS PROGRAM

Manitoba's Watershed Districts Program is a provincial-municipal partnership program that promotes and enhances watershed health and resiliency through land and water stewardship programs and the development of integrated watershed management plans.

The Program:

- functions as a partnership between levels of government and engages local citizens
- is cost-shared by provincial and municipal government partners
- is incentive-based and non-regulatory
- relies on local decision-making through boards with support from technical experts
- uses watershed management planning to develop programming and guide decision-making

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is defined as an area of land where water flows to a common downstream point or outlet, usually a river or lake. Activities that affect water in one part of the watershed may affect water or land downstream.



Watershed Districts: What They Do

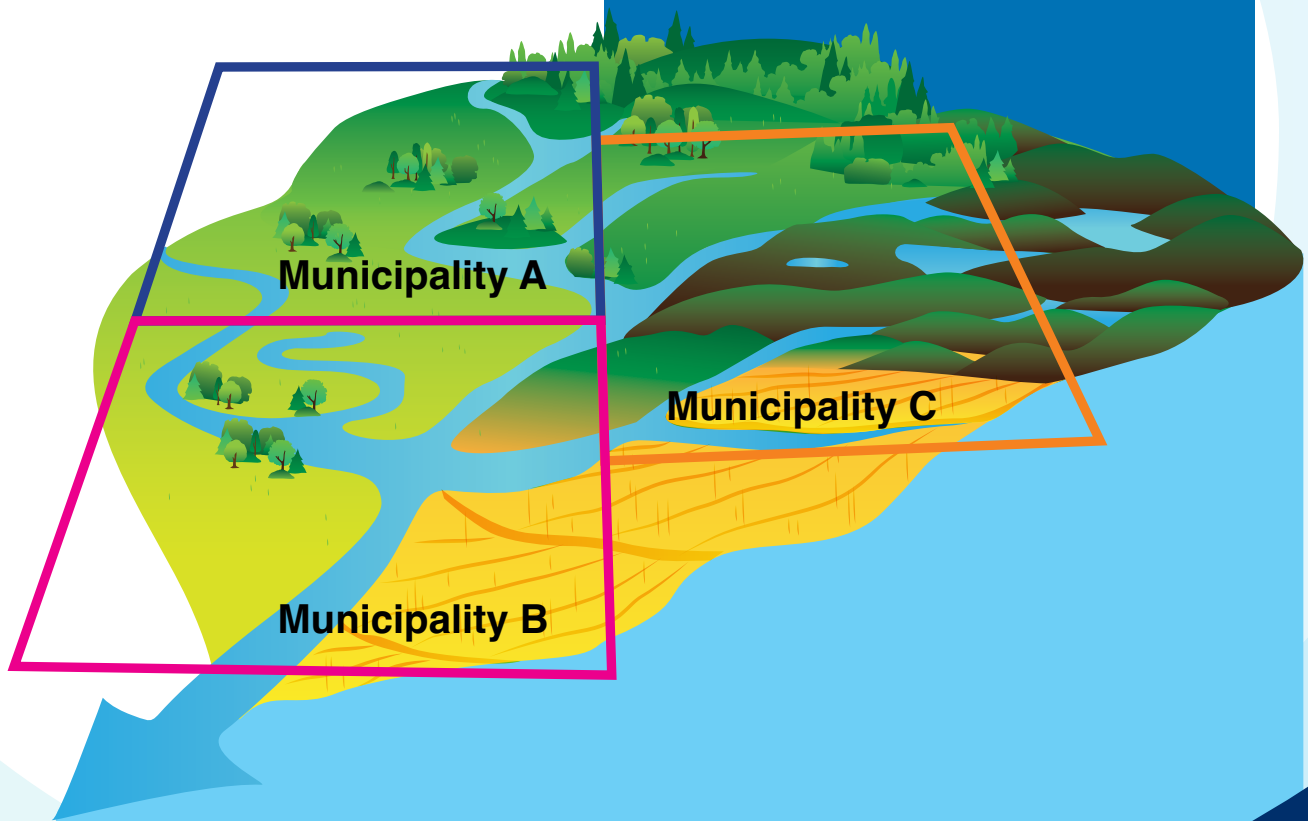
Water does not follow administrative boundaries. A watershed district encourages and promotes cooperation and communication among everyone in the watershed with the objective of improving watershed health.

Land and water stewardship programs offered by watershed districts focus on:

- reducing the impacts of flood and drought
- conserving and enhancing native habitat
- reducing nutrients in waterways
- improving water quality
- protecting drinking water
- increasing watershed awareness through education

Managing Watersheds

Commonly, watershed boundaries include portions of multiple jurisdictions and do not align with administrative boundaries. Effective and sustainable watershed management requires cooperation, coordination and partnership among all jurisdictions within a watershed.



Watershed Districts and Watershed Management Planning

A watershed management plan provides a 'road map' that outlines actions needed to manage the land, water and related resources in a watershed. These plans provide a decision-making framework for the protection, restoration and management of water, aquatic ecosystems, and drinking water sources.

As water planning authorities established by The Water Protection Act, watershed districts work collaboratively with watershed residents, environmental organizations, and local and Indigenous government partners to develop plans that reflect local watershed-based issues, goals and priorities. Plan implementation is shared by watershed districts, all levels of government, environmental organizations and watershed residents.

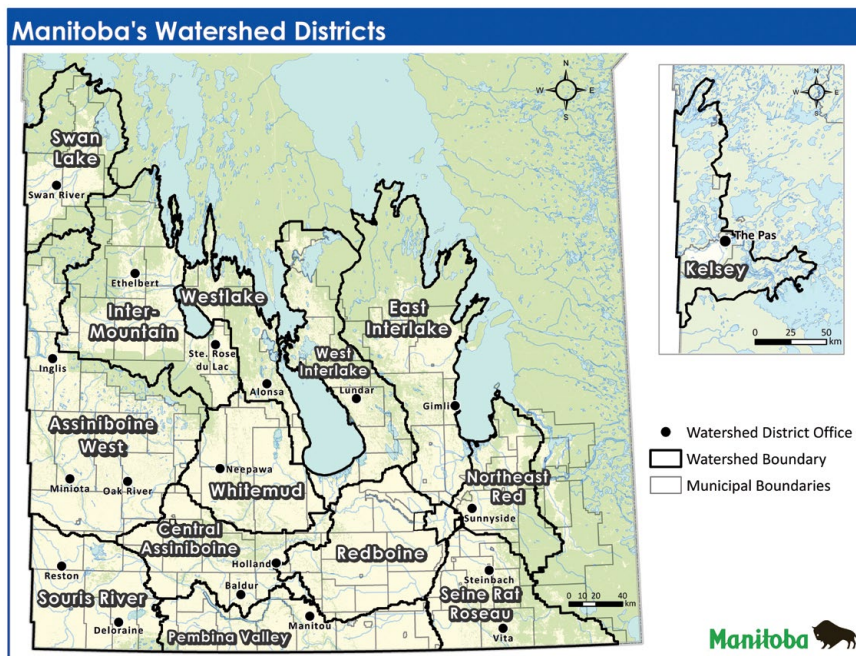


Implementing Watershed Management Plans

Watershed districts offer programming to landowners and promote water management principles that reflect the goals of their integrated watershed management plans. In Manitoba, watershed districts are just some of the many organizations that turn plans into action on the ground.

Watershed Districts: How They Operate

Watershed districts are established through provincial legislation. Representatives of participating municipalities are appointed to subcommittees or subdistrict committees. Each subdistrict elects a chairperson who becomes a member of the main watershed district board. The board of each district sets the overall direction and works together to improve the management of land and water resources in the district's watersheds. In addition, watershed districts can enter into partnership agreements with non-municipal entities such as Indigenous communities and government agencies to further enhance coordination on watershed-based issues.



Watershed Districts: How They Are Funded

The Manitoba government provides an annual grant to each watershed district to implement integrated watershed management plans. Participating municipalities are required to match the Manitoba government grant on a 1 to 3 basis, meaning that for every \$3 that Manitoba provides, participating municipalities in the watershed district are collectively required to contribute a minimum of \$1. Additional funding is obtained from a variety of sources, including environmental organizations, industry, and government programs.

Contact Us

For more information on Manitoba's Watershed Districts Program and the integrated watershed management planning process, please see

www.manitobawatersheds.ca or call **204-945-0002**.