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Attention: CD Consultation
Box 11, 200 Saulteaux Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3W3
Via email: watershedconsult@gov.mb.ca

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), which represents all of Manitoba's 137 municipalities, I would like to take this opportunity to provide some comments in regards to the provincial government's public consultation document entitled *Modernizing Manitoba's Conservation Districts Program*.

As water management affects all municipalities, AMM members overwhelmingly support improvements to water management and water quality in Manitoba's lakes and waterways. The AMM appreciates the proposed 'shared governance' program core principle as it further recognizes municipalities as a mature order of government that should receive a 'fair say' on all matters and programming that affect their jurisdictions.

Moreover, municipalities are front line stewards of the environment that have invested considerably in flood mitigation infrastructure. That is why the AMM has long advocated for increased provincial funding for Conservation Districts (watershed authorities) to support the implementation of water management plans due to the important and cost-effective watershed management initiatives they undertake. The AMM also believes there is significant value, both financial and environmental, in all the work done by Conservation Districts, and recognizes that every attempt must be made to maximize resources.

In addition, it is imperative that regulations should not be implemented without accompanying provincial funding since Conservation Districts are still feeling the effects of provincial budget cuts in 2013. The AMM feels it is essential to reinstate and, if possible, increase provincial operating funding for Conservation Districts, particularly if they are expected to fulfill new responsibilities under the auspices of *Growing Outcomes in Watersheds* (GROW). Core operational funding must remain strong if any changes to the cost-share ratio or transition to a tiered-funding model are being contemplated. Therefore, the AMM urges the Province of Manitoba to closely consult with the Manitoba Conservation Districts Association (MCDA), especially if the provincial government is envisioning changes to its respective organizational mandate.





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As the Province of Manitoba also intends to implement an evidence-based project evaluation framework to prioritize funding toward provincial outcomes, it is essential that application and reporting requirements are streamlined, efficient, and transparent. The AMM welcomes the provincial government's commitment to reduce red tape while our organization is also committed to identifying red tape barriers and sharing practical ideas to streamline provincial government processes to benefit Manitoba municipalities. Reduced red tape in reporting requirements for municipalities will be seen very favourably by our members.

In closing, thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments and we look forward to being further consulted on the modernization of the Conservation Districts program as it progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Masi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe Masi
Executive Director

