

SEINE RIVER Meanderings

January 2014

Precinct K Development—A Challenge and an Opportunity!

You may have heard about the plans to develop Precinct K, a large parcel of land south of Island Lakes and Royalwood. It is bounded by Lagimodiere (east), the Perimeter Highway (south), and the Seine River (west). It is largely agricultural land with a few homes and businesses scattered along Creek Bend Road and the Perimeter. The major landowner, Genstar, has hired a consulting firm (MMM Group) to begin the discussion of the future of Precinct K. They have met with city departments and a few stakeholder groups including *Save Our Seine*, as well as the other landowners. Their goal is to rough-out an overall concept (*area structure plan*) over the next two months based on the input received, present this to a wider public audience (March), and seek approval from the Riel Community Committee at an official public hearing (April). This is a very aggressive schedule for determining the core elements that will shape how Precinct K is developed. More time is needed to produce a well-researched and collaborative plan.

Why does SOS care?

How this land is planned and ultimately developed will have

significant impacts on the future of the Seine River Greenway.

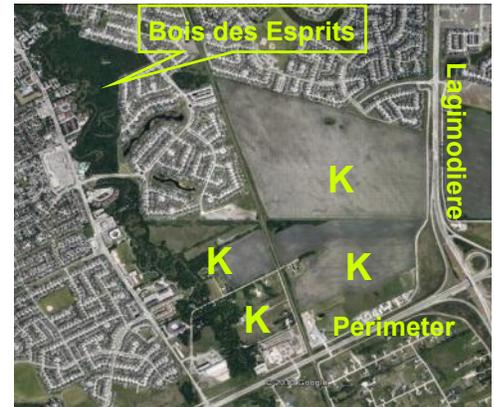
Greenway protection

Almost all of the remaining forest along the river is privately-owned. Some of it lies in the flood fringe zone and can be purchased by the City as a *waterway requirement*. Other parcels of mature forest lie beyond the flood fringe and along old shelterbelts. There may also be parcels of tall-grass prairie and wetland worthy of protection. An inventory is needed to identify the high-priority parcels.

Connectivity

Rivers, shelterbelts, and naturalized rights-of-way (rail and road) provide important corridors for the movement of people and wildlife. Paths and bike trails along these routes connect facilities within the new community (schools, rec centres, and parks) and link to nearby communities (Sage Creek, Island Lakes, Royalwood).

No one knows for sure how many deer use the Bois des Esprit forest and move freely along the river to feed in the farm fields of Precinct K. Development along the east bank of



Precinct K is roughly 650 acres. The Seine River Greenway (dark patch on the west side of the map) is a prominent feature.

the river may restrict the movement of deer. Loss of habitat throughout Precinct K may lead to over-browsing within the Bois des Esprit, habitat deterioration, and an increase in deer/car accidents in the surrounding area.

Water Quantity, Timing, and Quality

The entire precinct lies within the Seine River watershed. How the water from the land is handled will impact the amount, timing, and quality of the water entering the Seine River. This may negatively affect the use of the river for canoeing and education.

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LRSD Students Are Really “Getting Into” the Seine



Students from the Louis Riel School Division collecting invertebrates as part of SOS's Adopt-a-River program.

It was a beautiful day in October. Excitement was in the air. The grade 7/8 students from the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) were finally going on their field trip to the Seine River. They had prepared for weeks. Scattered around the classroom were the tools they would need for the day. Quickly they gathered the equipment and headed for the Seine. Upon arrival at the river, the students set up tables

with kits to test water quality. Using scientific methods, they collected water samples and tested pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity. Throughout the day, small groups of students put on chest waders and elbow-length gloves to enter the river. Gathered around a D-net, they stirred up the mud and gently brushed invertebrates off the rocks into the net. They emptied their catch into

buckets for later identification. Releasing a floating ball next to the upstream end of a 5-metre rope, they timed its journey to the other end and calculated the rate of flow. Between tasks, they soaked up the sights and sounds of the Seine River. Best of all, they had fun.

For more information about participating in the Adopt-a-River program (and fun), contact SOS or Harry Bell at the LRSD (204-257-7827).

2013 Green Team Report



Keeping the Seine River clean is an on-going annual job.

SOS was once again able to hire several strong, energetic, adventurous young people (Mike, Laura, Mitchell, and Kendra) to clean the Seine River. They spent the summer fishing—that is fishing debris out of the river. Along with the natural debris you would expect (such as fallen trees, log jams and branches), the team removed shopping carts,

bikes, furniture, shoes, clothing, plastic bags, and dozens of coconuts!

Team members spent:

- 715 hours removing garbage and debris
- 350 hours removing fallen trees
- 110 hours removing European Buckthorn
- 28.5 hours sprucing up the Gabrielle Roy trail for its re-launch

- 110 hours weeding

- 7.5 hours checking input structures

- 44 hours protecting trees from beaver

- 270 hours maintaining Vermette Park

- 51 hours installing culverts along the trails

Thanks to Coordinator Chris Pearce and Volunteer David Venema for providing their time and expertise.

Casera Receives SOS “Spirit of the Seine” Award

“Presented to Casera Credit Union for its environmental leadership and support of Save Our Seine, Inc. and the Seine River Greenway”

Save Our Seine's President Denis Gautron (right) presents a wood spirit carving to Dave Abel, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Casera Credit Union (left). The gift is in appreciation for Casera's sponsorship of two of Save Our Seine's leading programs - the Green Team greenway clean-up program and the Adopt-A-River

environmental educational program. The wood spirit was carved by Murray Watson, creator of numerous wood spirit and bird carvings in the Bois-des-Esprits, the Seine River's 'magical' forest. Casera's Southglen Branch is located close to the Seine River Greenway and Bois des Esprits.



Special thanks to Casera Credit Union from SOS.

Annual General Meeting

Over 65 people packed the room at the Morrow Gospel Church for Save Our Seine's Annual General Meeting held on October 22, 2013. The crowd was treated to presentations about the work that SOS has accomplished over the past year.

Councillor Brian Mayes was on hand to receive a special thank you gift in recognition of his support for the organization. SOS's new Executive Director was introduced. Michele Kading

started in September and is looking forward to working with the board, volunteers, and local community to protect and enhance the Seine River environment.

Erika Blackie was the special guest speaker. She is working toward a Master's degree in City Planning. This summer, Erika conducted detailed research into the natural and cultural value and

ownership of the Vermette-Seine River Forest along the river between the Perimeter and the floodway. Much of this high-quality forest is privately-owned, but it may be possible to acquire some parcels to add to the SR Greenway. Erika's report will be used to begin conversations with local landowners about the future of this unique and valuable forest.



Councillor Brian Mayes accepts a small token of appreciation from SOS.

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New Trees for Vermette Park



Thanks to David Venema for purchasing the trees and materials and organizing their delivery.

On a brisk October morning, 19 eager volunteers gathered at Vermette Park to plant 32 young green ash trees donated by Dillon Consulting. Volunteers carefully planted each tree and built wire cages to protect them from herbivores (deer, rabbits, beaver, and porcupines). Paul Mutch from City of Winnipeg brought a water truck to give the trees a good soaking before the snow begins to fly.



Putting the final touches on a newly-planted green ash.



Save Our Seine Board

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Denis Gautron (President) | Sisters of Our Lady of the Mission (Secretary) |
| Denis DePape (VP) | Sandra Stewart, Denise Kuyp, & Veronica Dunne |
| David Venema (Treasurer) | |
| Lia Abolit/Chris Penner | Chris Pearce |
| Kevin Boreskie | Cameron Regier |
| Alain Cenerini | Wilma Sotas |
| David J. Danyluk | Marc St. Laurent |
| Kristine Koster | |

Interested in Volunteering?

- ◇ Action: "Eyes on the River" (observers), riverbank and trail work, tree plantings, European buckthorn/weed removal, water quality testing
- ◇ Creative communication: Web site (design and updating), newsletter (writers), photo library
- ◇ Organizing: Bookkeeping, membership lists, volunteer management, events
- ◇ Planning: Board member, research, networking, community meetings, fundraising
- ◇ Special Projects: Rain garden committee, GIS maps, new ideas

Circle your interests, clip and mail this slip to the address on the back page or send us an e-mail

SAVE OUR SEINE

Box 83
Provencher Boulevard
Winnipeg, MB R2H 3B4

Phone: 204-794-3700
E-mail: saveourseine@gmail.com

**We're on the Web and
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Saveourseine.com

MISSION

Our vision is for a sustainable and protected Seine River Greenway that provides a healthy habitat for vegetation and wildlife and contributes to the quality of life of all citizens.

GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION

SOS depends on community volunteers and community contributions to help protect, preserve and enhance the Seine River Environment through education, awareness and hands-on participation. Your contribution assists SOS in enabling all citizens to reconnect with their local environment.



Volunteer-in-Action:
Ed Labossiere

GOALS

1. Preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment & heritage resources of the Seine River.
2. Restore & repair features of the environment that have been degraded.
3. Improve water level, flow & quality of the Seine River.
4. Raise the public's awareness of all aspects of the Seine River.
5. Improve the environmental behavior of private industry, governments and the public.
6. Improve appropriate public access along the Seine River (by low-impact nature trail & by canoe).

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- Donate on-line using credit card, Interact, or PayPal. Go to the SOS Web site, select donate, and click "**Canada Helps**"

Tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$10 (name/mailling address required)