



Is the Water Security Agency the greatest **threat** facing Last Mountain Lake?

1. The Water Security Agency (WSA) invited selected community groups to one of six meetings (with only a few days' notice) in regards to the Quill Lakes Flooding. No one was provided with any background information such as water quality reports of the Quill lakes or the 67 page Golder Report, detailing over a dozen options to address the flooding concerns. They informed us which diversion option they were "*proposing*" and then recorded a vote on whether we agreed - or just wanted "*uncontrolled flooding which would harm our lake*". This was an extremely loaded and unfair question. They had no other diversion options available for attendees to review and compare data on. Who made the decision to use this particular diversion option and when was this decision made?
2. The Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group was not invited to any of these six meetings despite being the volunteer group tasked with identifying and monitoring stressors for Last Mountain Lake, and the fact that the WSA even used graphics from our website within their presentation?
3. The meeting was billed as an information session, but it was abundantly clear that this carefully orchestrated and choreographed meeting was only to present "*The Project*" that WSA had already decided upon, being the Kutawagan diversion project. Incidentally, out of the nine diversion projects outlined in the Golder report, this one was the second least expensive project and diverted only 9% of the water away from the Quill Lakes, compared to 42% for some of the other diversion projects. More importantly, it will discharge the higher concentrations of saline water and pollutants downstream to Last Mountain Lake, when compared to other diversion options.
4. There are several other diversion projects outlined in the Golder Report that would divert fresh water tributaries away from Quill Lakes and divert them downstream to LML. These would substantially lower the water levels of the Quill lakes to eliminate flooding, and provide LML with fresh water rather than the proposed highly polluted saline water. Granted, the costs of these other options are considerably higher. It appears the WSA prefers the cheaper, ineffective and potentially hazardous "fix" over one that would protect an extremely valuable ecosystem that may never be repairable once damaged. It is also interesting to note here that no environmental charges were ever laid against the City of Regina for their recent discharge of 15 million litres of raw sewage into the Qu'Appelle River system. Apparently certain government agencies do not feel that our lakes and rivers are worthy of protecting. We do not agree!!!!

5. When faced with criticism at the Bulyea meeting about their recommended diversion project, the WSA stated that no decision has yet been made on which diversion project to proceed with. They again repeated this statement in the August 20th edition of the Leader-Post. However, unannounced at any of their six public meeting or in the Leader-Post was the fact that the WSA has already posted (and closed) tenders for "The Project". (July 8th to July 15th 2015).
<https://sasktenders.ca/content/public/print.aspx?competitionId=1df2d383-5d4e-45d3-8c85-ad1c145d7530>
6. Page one of the August 2015 WSA handout stated that the WSA is undertaking numerous studies and consultations to determine the feasibility of this project. (Yet construction tenders had already been requested by the WSA and no other diversion project was ever presented as possible option)?
7. The WSA report mentions that both federal and provincial environmental reviews would occur. When pressed about these environmental assessments, the WSA finally admitted that they have now requested to be exempt from obtaining either a federal or provincial environmental assessments (for discharging highly saline and polluted waters into Last Mountain Lake) citing time restraints. Yet they have known for a year or two that any diversion projects would require one.
8. There are a number of extremely important water quality parameters that could permanently alter the ecosystem of Last Mountain Lake and our neighbours downstream. However, the WSA chose to only mention one such parameter in their handout, being the TDS (Total Dissolved Solids). While this is a concern, there are a number of equally important parameters not even mentioned.

To mention a few...

- The normal MPN coliform count for Last Mountain Lake (at Regina Beach) is routinely between 500 - 1000 orgs/100mls of water. The coliform count for the Quill Lakes (July 2014) ranged between **44,000 to 200,000 orgs/100mls**.
- The chloride levels of Big Quill lake is **1600 mg/l** compared to 100 for Last Mountain Lake. (LML) The Canadian Water Quality guidelines on chloride for the protection of freshwater life is 120 mg/l for prolong exposure and 640 mg/l for short term exposure.
- What are the salmonella levels in the Quill lakes?
- The pH of Quill lakes have been recorded as high as 9.8 which is well past the value which will kill freshwater fish fry.
- Sulphate levels of Big Quill Lake are 15,000 mg/l compared to 650 for LML
- The ammonia level of Big Quill Lake is 0.80 mg/l, fourfold higher than the Canadian Water Quality guideline of .23mg/l (pH 8.5 @15C) It is 0.02 for LML.
- The levels for aluminium, lead, magnesium, iron, cadmium, manganese etc are all extremely high compared to LML.
- The nitrogen level of Quill Lake is three times that of LML. As nitrogen is a leading cause of eutrophication, this will surely increase the number and intensity of algae blooms on LML!

9. The WSA stated in their handout that the salinity of Quill Lake is around 10,000 mg/l. There are numerous reports/studies refuting this value saying the salinity is considerably higher. (24,000 to 53,000mg/l). Historical records produced by the WSA show salinity levels of **70,000 mg/l** (twice the saltiness of the oceans) with a water elevation of 520 meters. Recently, the Quill Lakes had a salinity of over **60,000 mg/l** at an elevation of 519 meters.
10. In the Golder report, commissioned by the WSA, (page 63) it states that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be presented **"in a manner that supports a positive decision for approval of the Project, while limiting the WSA's exposure to regulatory conditions that may be placed on the Project"** Isn't an EIS prepared to describe the effects for proposed activities on the environment, and to present the facts without bias so regulatory agencies and politicians can make informed decisions about whether or not to proceed? EIS should never be slanted one way or another and never presented to escape regulatory controls!
<https://www.wsask.ca/Global/About%20WSA/Quill%20Lakes%20Open%20House/Quill%20Lakes%20Flood%20Mitigation%20Report.pdf>
11. Please email or phone your MLA, Wayne Dybvig, the WSA President, 306-694-7739 and the Environment Minister Herb Cox (306) 787-0393 to voice your concerns over how the WSA has conducted themselves and to demand that environmental assessments are conducted. Your MP should be contacted to insist that the federal environmental assessments be undertaken.
12. Thank you for taking the time to read this document.

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