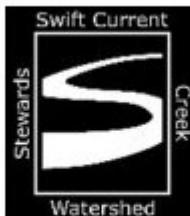


Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards

2023 Annual Report



Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards
Box 1088
Swift Current, SK
S9H 3X3
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www.sccws.com
kevin.sccws@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Board of Directors for their time and commitment to achieving the mission of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards.

Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards Board of Directors

Chairperson – Darren Fiddler - RM of Webb

Bernie Lemire - RM of Carmichael

Don Mathies – RM of Excelsior

Brian Hanel – RM of Swift Current

Raymond Pare – RM of Arlington

Pat Friesen – City of Swift Current

Bryan Cobb- City of Swift Current

Stacey Wiens- Member at Large

Frank Glenn- Member at Large

Thank you to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for their in-kind support of office, storage space and administrative assistance. Special thanks to Carla Lindquist for all her help with booking meeting rooms and administrative assistance.

Thank you to the Saskatchewan Fish and Wildlife Development Fund for funding the Invasive Fish Identification in the Swift Current Creek Project.

Thank you to TCEnergy Ltd. for their funding of the 2023 Water Quality Monitoring Project.

Thank you to SaskEnergy for their funding of the 2023 Invasive Weed Mapping project and Weed Removal Day.

Thank you to the City of Swift Current for their assistance with promoting the Weed Removal Day and helping to dispose of the invasive weeds collected.

Thank you to Shannon Sherk for all her efforts as Summer Stewardship Coordinator in 2023. It was good to have you on board to complete our projects and Froghopper presentations.

Thank you to Jim Spencer of Prairie Dog Websites for hosting our website and updating it as required.

Finally, thank you to all our stakeholders who have expressed interest in the work of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards in 2023.

SCCWS 2023 Annual General Meeting Agenda

Monday March 4, 2024

1:00 PM

Welcome and meeting information

Chairperson – Darren Fiddler

Presentation on Snow Surveys and Run-off Projections Alanna Howell -Water Security Agency

Approval of Agenda

Minutes of the March 6, 2023, SCCWS AGM

Reports

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| • Chairperson | Darren Fiddler |
| • Executive Director | Kevin Steinley |
| • Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds | Ryder Rutko |
| • SCCWS Projects | Kevin Steinley |

Financial Report

Nomination of Reviewer for 2024

New Business

Adjournment

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards March 6, 2023.

In attendance were Kevin Steinley (Executive Director), Darren Fiddler, Matthew Leibenberg, Pat Friesen, Raymond Pare, Frank Glen, Bernie Lemire, Jerry Shirke, Karla Wiens, Stacey Wiens, Don Mathies, Kevin Lester, Luke Rilling, Curtis Letkeman.

Darren called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM

Bridget Andrews, the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds, gave a virtual presentation about the restructuring of SAW and the Prairie Watersheds Climate Program.

Kevin made a presented a gift for Jolene Peters in recognition of her stepping away from the SCCWS Board after 12 years. The gift was a framed print of a photo of the creek at night. Unfortunately, Jolene was not able to attend due to work demands. The gift will be presented to Jolene later.

Moved by Bernie, Seconded by Don to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

Moved by Frank, Seconded by Pat to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2022, Annual General Meeting as presented. Carried.

Darren gave the Chairperson Report.

- Thanked Board Members for their service, especially Jolene Peters who has stepped away from the board after 12 years of service.
- Welcomed new board members Lee Schmidt and Brian Hanel.
- Thanked the Executive Director, Kevin Steinley for his work in being able to maintain the projects and work of the SCCWS.

Kevin gave the Executive Director Report

- Kevin accepted a contract with SAW to help deliver the Prairie Watersheds Climate Program starting in April 2022.
- Water Security Agency changed how they are funding watershed stewardship in the province by funding SAW and not Watershed Stewardship Groups like the SCCWS.
- Because of these changes, Kevin is now working as Executive Director in a part time role.
- Finished two ongoing projects in 2022 and started and finished one new one in 2022.
- Was part of Go Green and Foraging into the Future again in 2022.
- Thanked the 2022 Summer Stewardship Coordinator Matty Hagman for his work in the summer of 2022.
- Continued with newsletters and Facebook posts to educate residents about watershed health issues and solutions.
- With changes in funding and with the reorganization of SAW, the SCCWS will be delivering regional programming focusing on what stakeholders told us to work on in the 2019 consultations.
- SCCWS does have a financial reserve that will allow it some time to operate and find ways to deliver the regional programming.

Bernie gave the SAW Report

- SAW continues to implement the Prairie Watersheds Climate programming and is hosting workshops around the province to promote this program.
- The Tree for Life program was a success in 2022 and SAW is running it again in 2023.
- SAW is running the Friends of the Watershed lottery; tickets are on sale on the SAW website.
- Staffing is an issue. There are two vacancies for District Managers in both the SW and NW Districts.
- SAW had completed a Sustainability Initiative Report that outlines the benefits of SAW, Watershed Stewardship Groups and what both can bring to WSA. The report will be presented to WSA on March 8, 2023.
- SAW is in the process of changing from a non-profit organization to a charitable organization. This will allow better access to funding.

Kevin gave a report about the Projects of SCCWS in 2022.

Froghoppers

- Matty gave 24 presentations to 313 students in 2022.
- Presentations were well received.
- Received with many glowing reviews.

Constructed Wetland Project

- 2022-2023 is the last year of the project.
- 2022 was mainly water sampling and wetland maintenance.
- Results show that for the most part the excess water generated by flood irrigation could be re-used for irrigation or other uses provided it is used in the right time, on the right soil and with the right crops.
- This is a positive for watershed management as this water could be re-used to conserve other water especially during a drought.

Identifying Grassland Fragmentation to Improve Species at Risk Habitat

- 2022-2023 was the final year of this project.
- Matty conducted surveys in targeted areas identified by the creation of maps in the fall of 2021.
- Using the maps and the surveys a Final Report was drafted that detailed how to increase the amount of grassland in the watershed to improve Species at Risk Habitat.
- A report including all the maps created is available on the SCCWS website.

Hunting for Prussian Carp in the Swift Current and Rush Lake Creek Watersheds.

- eDNA samples were collected at 10 sites across both watersheds to determine if Prussian Carp are in the waterbodies in the watersheds and where they are.
- Water quality samples were also analyzed to see if there is a link between water quality and Prussian Carp Presence.
- Prussian Carp eDNA was found at 3 sites in a stretch of the creek from north of the City of Swift Current to the South Saskatchewan River.

- The eDNA results also include Goldfish as it could not be separated from the Prussian Carp. This could also explain the presence of the eDNA in this area.
- A Final Report has been drafted and is available on the SCCWS website.

Moved by Ray, seconded by Bernie to accept the reports as presented. Carried.

Kevin gave the Financial Report

- The year ended November 30, 2022 showed a net loss of \$17,249 compared to the year ended November 30, 2021 which had a loss of \$5,565.
- Net assets as of November 30, 2022, are \$161,683 compared to \$178,932 as of November 30, 2021.

Moved by Stacey, seconded by Frank to adopt the Financial Statement as presented. Carried.

Kevin moved to appoint Stark and Marsh CPA, LLP as reviewers for the November 30, 2023, year end. Carried.

Don Moved to adjourn, seconded by Pat.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards Chairperson Report

Welcome to the SCCWS AGM.

It's definitely been another interesting year in the watershed. It's started with flooding in the spring due to the late spring runoff. This led to a meeting with the SCCWS and WSA and concerned citizens to discuss improving communication and forecasting runoff going forward. The wet spring lead into another summer of drought, and one of the warmest and driest winters in memory. These issues, along with the WSA announcing the possibility of new irrigation projects around the Duncairn reservoir, have provided no shortage of issues for discussion pertaining to the watershed.

As usual, I'd like to thank our board members for their time and input into the SCCWS. I would like to welcome Bryan Cobb onto the board who is replacing Lee Schmidt from the city. Also, I'd like to thank Shannon Sherk who was our Summer Stewardship Coordinator for this year. As always, I'd like to express our appreciation to our Executive Director Kevin Steinley, for promoting our watershed, and all the work that goes into finding projects and sourcing funding to help us achieve our mission statement: Enhance water, quality, and stream health of the Swift Current Creek watershed by promoting awareness and understanding among water users.

Thank you,

Darren Fiddler

Chairperson Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards

Executive Director Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards March 4, 2024.

As the pictures on the report cover show, the Swift Current Creek Watershed can go from flooding to drought almost overnight. This demonstrates the importance of water resource management to ensure that all users have access to a safe and sustainable supply of water. The rapid run-off this spring caused issues with flooding along the creek in both urban and rural areas, raising concerns among stakeholders that the rapidly rising water would damage the shoreline and infrastructure. While some residents did see damage to property along the shoreline, the actions of watershed residents, municipalities and Water Security Agency limited the damages. The flooding this spring shows the advantages of maintaining a properly functioning riparian area along the creek to help mitigate the impact of flooding.

The rapid run-off this spring was positive as it helped to fill reservoirs and dug outs that had been depleted during a number of consecutive dry years. This proved to be invaluable as the summer of 2023 followed the pattern of previous years of becoming hot and dry. This stored water allowed producers to irrigate grain and forage crops, providing feed for livestock and helping to maintain the sustainability of agriculture operations. The runoff seen in the spring of 2023 will allow for irrigation in 2024 despite the likelihood of reduced run-off this spring. Full dug outs gave producers access to a steady and safe supply of water for their livestock. Given the adverse growing conditions during the summer, having a good supply of water allowed producers to graze areas they might not have been able to without the full dug outs, allowing them to use all their pasture resources and extend their grazing season.

This year the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards (SCCWS) continued its monitoring and education programming to meet its mission of enhancing water quality and stream health of the Swift Current Creek. The Froghoppers program continued in 2023 in the capable hands of our Summer Stewardship Coordinator, Shannon Sherk. Shannon was able to present the message of watershed stewardship to approximately 400 students in 25 presentations to schools, summer camps and parks programs. This long running, very successful program of the SCCWS has been helping to create a new generation of watershed stewards since 2005 and we hope to keep this momentum going.

The SCCWS completed three projects this year. The water monitoring project, which looked at water quality along the creek. This project again showed that water in the creek is generally good for all uses, however caution needs to be taken to ensure a safe and sustainable supply of water for all users. Our second project was a continuation of a 2022 project. In 2023 we took samples to be tested for Prussian Carp eDNA at 5 sites from just south of Swift Current to the South Saskatchewan River. The results of this project showed the continued presence of Prussian Carp in the area north of the city and that they are moving upstream in the creek into sites within the city.

Our third major project in the summer of 2023 was the mapping of invasive weeds along the creek within the city of Swift Current. This project culminated with a small but dedicated group of volunteers removing weeds at two of sites in the city.

This year the SCCWS started working with several stakeholders at Lac Pelletier to form the Lac Pelletier Stewardship Council. The aim of this group is to maintain and improve the long-term

health and sustainability of the lake by educating stakeholders. The Council met 4 times this fall and is looking forward to working to meet its mission with several educational initiatives in the summer of 2024.

The SCCWS continued with the monitoring of adult Zebra Mussels at Lac Pelletier and Duncairn Reservoir in 2023. We are happy to announce that no adult Zebra Mussels were found in those waterbodies.

The SCCWS continues to educate stakeholders through our website, social media, and newsletter. The SCCWS would like to thank the members of our local media who have taken an interest in our work and published articles that highlighted the work of the SCCWS.

Thank you to Shannon Sherk for her work as the 2023 Summer Stewardship Coordinator. Shannon brought a lot of passion, enthusiasm, and new ideas to the SCCWS. We are excited to have Shannon coming back for a part of the upcoming summer to give Froghoppers presentations and assist with SCCWS projects.

Thank you to the SCCWS Board of Directors for their guidance over the past year. Thank you to Lee Schmidt, who stepped down from the SCCWS Board of Directors for his contributions over the last year and welcome Bryan Cobb to the Board of Directors.

In closing, I would like to thank all our stakeholders who have taken an interest in our work. I hope that your interest continues and grows to help ensure a safe and sustainable supply of water for all users in the watershed.

2023 Summer Stewardship Coordinator Report – Shannon Sherk

During the summer of 2023 I had the pleasure of working on many projects with the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards. My main duties included giving Froghopper presentations, writing articles, water quality monitoring, aquatic invasive species sampling, mapping the invasive plants along the creek, and planning the 2023 Community Invasive Plant Pull. As well, I created the new SCCWS Instagram account.



Between May and August, I completed 25 Froghoppers presentations to approximately 400 students, most of these presentations occurred during May and June with school groups. I also worked with a few different programs in the City of Swift Current, such as Parks Play and Nature Plan, along with Camp Elim and Lac Pelletier. The presentations covered topics including “what is a watershed?”, watershed pollution, water conservation, plants and animals in the watershed, and invasive species. When

possible, I took the students to do pond dipping. When it was not safe or accessible to do so, samples of water from the creek were poured into a plastic kiddie pool to allow students to pond dip out of it with nets and buckets. I also found that the kids really loved looking through the sand for shells, so I would sometimes bring up muck from the bottom of the creek for the kids to sift through.

The groups I worked with gave positive reviews of the presentations, both from teachers and the students. During a presentation at Camp Elim three of the students had previously seen the presentation at their school. They were incredibly excited that I was there and were telling their friends about how “cool” my presentations were. After many of my classroom sessions, I often had teachers come tell me about how much their class enjoyed it.

This summer, I also assisted Kevin in the water monitoring project, helping to collect water and eDNA samples. We also set out Zebra Mussel samplers at seven sites in the watershed. They were last checked on August 15th, and I am happy to report that no Zebra Mussels were found. The Swift Current Creek Watershed remains a Zebra Mussel-Free zone! These projects were my favourite to work on this summer, as it felt good to be doing field work out on the land.

The largest solo project I undertook this summer was mapping some of the invasive species along Swift Current Creek in the city. Species were identified using iNaturalist and then mapped

using a mix of the iNaturalist mapping system and Google My Maps. The most prominent invasives were Hedge Bindweed, Absinthe, Dames Rocket, and Field Penny-cress.

I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to work with the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards this summer and have loved my time here. I really feel as though I have improved many skills that will be beneficial as I continue my career in environmental stewardship.



2023 Projects of the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards

Invasive Fish Identification in the Swift Current Creek

In 2023, the SCCWS built on the work completed in 2022 which determined the locations of Prussian Carp in the Swift Current and Rush Lake Creek Basins. In 2022, Prussian Carp eDNA was detected at 3 sites between the City of Swift Current and the South Saskatchewan River. In 2023, these 3 sites were sampled again along with a site within the city and one south of the city.

The 2023 results showed that Prussian Carp eDNA presence was similar to what was observed in 2022 at the sites north of the city. The site south of the city did not show any eDNA presence. The interesting results of the study are from the sampling site within the city. There was no Prussian Carp eDNA detected in the sample taken in June. In July, there was Prussian Carp eDNA detected at the roughly the same levels as the sites north of the city. The August samples from this site had levels of Prussian Carp eDNA higher than those detected north of the city.

One possible explanation for these results is that the Prussian Carp like to swim upstream looking for places to spawn and the increased flows during the spring flooding provided easier movement upstream for them. As creek flows decreased during the summer, the Prussian Carp got caught in shallow pools within the creek and could not move either upstream or downstream. Given the Prussian Carp's ability to rapidly reproduce, their numbers can increase very quickly in these shallow pools.

The results of the eDNA sampling also show that there is still a rich and diverse fish population in the creek which is a good indicator that the creek is in good health. This is also good news for recreational fishers who like to fish out of the creek. However, given that Prussian Carp are moving further upstream, residents must be diligent to slow their spread. If you do catch a Prussian Carp, please humanely dispose of it as soon as possible.

The next step for the SCCWS is to conduct a project to catch live fish to verify the results of the eDNA testing. The SCCWS will continue to look for funding opportunities to conduct this project.

The SCCWS would like to thank the Government of Saskatchewan's Fish and Wildlife Development Fund for funding this project.



Filtering water to be sent to the lab of eDNA testing.

2023 Water Monitoring Project

The SCCWS conducted water sampling at 7 sites along the creek 4 times during the summer to again investigate water quality of the creek. This year the SCCWS wanted to determine if the flooding in the spring of 2023 had any impact on water quality within the creek. The results of the testing did not indicate any major negative or positive impact from the flooding. However, the testing did show that a thunderstorm on July 22, 2023, with large rain and hail did impact water quality within the city and downstream of it. This shows the importance of urban and rural residents doing what they can to limit the impact of run-off events.

When the results of the 2023 sampling were compared to those seen in 2022 and prior projects, the water quality in the creek has not changed significantly. This shows that watershed residents are working hard to enhance water quality and stream health of the Swift Current Creek. The SCCWS will continue to monitor water quality of the Swift Current Creek and all waterbodies within the watershed.

This project was undertaken with funding from TC Energy Ltd.



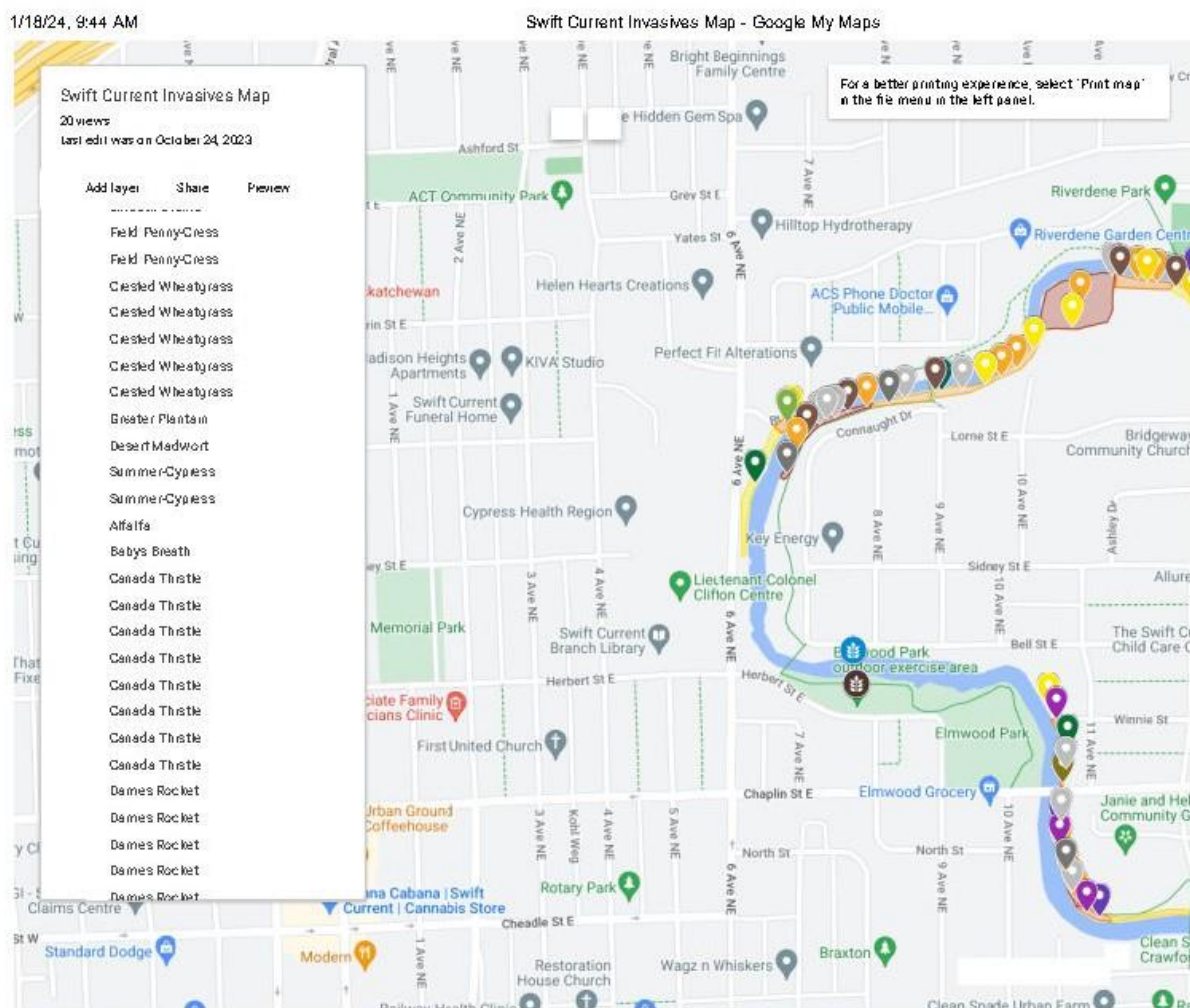
Water sampling supplies

Invasive Weed Identification, Mapping and Removal Day

During the summer of 2023, Shannon Sherk, the Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards Summer Stewardship Coordinator identified and mapped invasive weeds along the creek within the City of Swift Current. Shannon was able to map a stretch of the creek from the Rempel Community Gardens to just past the 13th Avenue Bridge. Several invasive plants were identified, including Field Bindweed, Dame's Rocket, Baby's Breath, and Common Burdock. The mapping effort culminated in a Weed Removal Day on August 15, 2023. A small but dedicated group of volunteers braved one of the few rainy days this summer to remove 20 large bags of invasive weeds from the creek's shoreline.

The SCCWS will continue to map invasive species and look for opportunities to work with community groups to help with the removal process.

The SCCWS would like to thank SaskEnergy for helping to fund this project and the City of Swift Current for their help promoting this event and assisting with weed clean up.



Map with locations of Invasive Weeds along the Swift Current Creek within the City of Swift Current.



SWIFT CURRENT CREEK WATERSHED STEWARDS INC.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 30, 2023

SWIFT CURRENT CREEK WATERSHED STEWARDS INC.

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NOVEMBER 30, 2023

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COMPILATION ENGAGEMENT REPORT

To the Directors of Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards Inc.:

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards Inc. as at November 30, 2023, the statement of operations and net assets for the year then ended, and Note 1, which describes the basis of accounting applied in the preparation of the compiled financial information ("financial information").

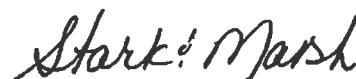
Management is responsible for the accompanying financial information, including the accuracy and completeness of the underlying information used to compile it and the selection of the basis of accounting.

We performed this engagement in accordance with Canadian Standard on Related Services (CSRS) 4200, *Compilation Engagements*, which requires us to comply with relevant ethical requirements. Our responsibility is to assist management in preparation of the financial information.

We did not perform an audit engagement or a review engagement, nor were we required to perform procedures to verify the accuracy or completeness of information provided by management. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion, or provide any form of assurance on the financial information.

We assisted management with the preparation of adjusting journal entries.

Readers are cautioned that the financial information may not be appropriate for their purposes.



CPA LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

Swift Current, Saskatchewan
February 16, 2024

SWIFT CURRENT CREEK WATERSHED STEWARDS INC.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at November 30, 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 130,239	\$ 159,195
GST receivable	1,122	974
Prepaid expenses	<u>1,829</u>	<u>1,515</u>
	<u>\$ 133,190</u>	<u>\$ 161,684</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Net assets	<u>\$ 133,190</u>	<u>\$ 161,684</u>
	<u>\$ 133,190</u>	<u>\$ 161,684</u>
Approved on behalf of the Board		
_____ Director		
_____ Director		

SWIFT CURRENT CREEK WATERSHED STEWARDS INC.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS
For the year ended November 30, 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Revenue		
Foraging Into The Future	\$ 10,037	\$ 4,500
Prussian Carp project	8,300	8,500
Habitat Stewardship Program	6,062	25,875
Water sampling	5,000	-
Weed project	4,500	-
Constructed wet land project	4,331	17,325
Tree for Life	500	4,025
Other	100	930
Water security core funding	-	26,075
Sponsorship	-	5,000
Government programs	-	4,408
SAW aquatic invasive project	-	2,375
EcoAction Herbert water use	-	1,071
	<u>38,830</u>	<u>100,084</u>
Expenses		
Advertising and promotions	417	1,295
CAP - AETS	10	46
Constructed wetland	-	17,108
Corporate	10,143	14,226
Executive director expenses	2,503	1,998
Foraging Into The Future	10,046	-
Frog Hoppers	1,481	2,672
Habitat Stewardship Program	-	4,642
Miscellaneous projects	-	38
Prussian Carp project	5,502	17,332
Tree for Life	-	520
Wages and benefits	32,641	55,969
Water sampling	4,449	-
Watershed kits	-	1,500
Weed day	132	-
	<u>67,324</u>	<u>117,346</u>
Loss from operations	(28,494)	(17,262)
Other income		
Interest income	<u>-</u>	<u>13</u>
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	(28,494)	(17,249)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>161,684</u>	<u>178,933</u>
Net assets, end of year	\$ <u>133,190</u>	\$ <u>161,684</u>

SWIFT CURRENT CREEK WATERSHED STEWARDS INC.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL INFORMATION
November 30, 2023

1. Basis of accounting

The financial information has been prepared on the cash-basis of accounting, which includes the following:

- Accounts receivable and other receivables
- Accounts payable, loans and other liabilities
- Prepaid expenses