



MAY 17 2017

Ray Orb, President
Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities
200-2221 Cornwall Street
REGINA SK S4P 2L1

Dear Mr. Orb:

Thank you for providing the input from your RM members on Bill 44, *The Water Security Amendment Act*, and for the further discussion with SARM.

The input from various RMs on Bill 44 varies from full support for the Bill to recommending detailed changes. We have reviewed this input as well as input from other stakeholders and taken them into consideration.

As we have discussed, the role of the previous Water Appeal Board is no longer relevant as the process for approvals has changed. However, we agree there is a need for a technical review board and an advisory board. A technical review board will be established that will review producer concerns if they disagree with a WSA decision.

In addition, an advisory board will be established that will be comprised of more than 50 per cent agriculture stakeholders, including SARM. This committee will provide advice and recommendations to me and WSA on agricultural water management policies into the future. This board will be critical as this file moves forward. I will ask this board to further review recommendations that came from your member RMs, including the cost to register a Request for Assistance, as well as input received from other producers and stakeholders.

I also agree that pre-1981 works should be reviewed before closures are issued, as should all drainage works. In many cases these are part of larger Conservation Area Authority projects and will already have approvals. In other cases, there may be issues such as land control that will need to be addressed in order to be permitted.

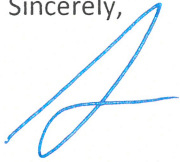
We also reviewed several concerns that dealt with legal matters. Bill 44 is consistent with standard provincial legislation in this respect.

I want to stress that Bill 44 is one step in this process for the Agricultural Water Management Strategy. It will reduce processing timelines for permits as well as help resolve disputes. Moreover, this strategy is about organizing and controlling drainage for the benefit of producers.

While Bill 44 will be passed in its current form, many of the concerns raised have either already been addressed or will be through regulation and policy as the Agricultural Water Management Strategy evolves.

In closing, I appreciate the work of SARM and your RM members on this file. I look forward to continuing to work together on the Agricultural Water Management Dstrategy in the futre.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Moe', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Scott Moe
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Cc: Susan Ross, President, Water Security Agency