

Water Infrastructure

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities



Investing in water infrastructure is essential for the long-term viability of rural Saskatchewan.



Improved water storage, conservation, and distribution systems will enhance drought resilience, support sustainable agriculture, and protect natural resources. Federal government support is vital for ensuring the future of rural communities and promoting economic stability.

Challenges

Drought increasingly threatens rural Saskatchewan, affecting agricultural productivity, water supply, and the environment. Insufficient water leads to reduced crop yields, higher irrigation costs, and soil degradation. As reservoir and groundwater levels drop, competition for water escalates among agricultural, industrial, and domestic users, worsening scarcity. This creates financial strain for farmers and raises food prices for consumers.

Drought also damages ecosystems and increases wildfire risks, further jeopardizing natural resources and communities.

Addressing these challenges requires effective drought management strategies and substantial investment in water infrastructure.

The Voice of Rural Saskatchewan

Advocacy Asks



The federal government can support rural Saskatchewan's water challenges through:

FUNDING FOR WATER

INFRASTRUCTURE: Develop and enhance water storage, conservation, and distribution systems.

COLLABORATION: Partner with provincial and local governments, agricultural organizations, and communities to establish effective drought management and conservation strategies.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Increase grants and low-interest loans for irrigation and water conservation technologies.

RESEARCH INVESTMENT: Support innovative water management research to boost agricultural productivity while conserving resources.

STREAMLINED FUNDING ACCESS: Simplify access to federal funding for drought mitigation projects.

DROUGHT TAX DEFERRAL EXTENSION:

Extend the federal drought tax deferral program for farmers recovering from drought impacts.

WATER RIGHTS RESOLUTION: Address water rights and usage conflicts with provincial governments for fair resource access.

ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION: Support initiatives that preserve natural ecosystems and biodiversity to ensure healthy water supplies and agricultural productivity.

THE LAKE DIEFENBAKER IRRIGATION PROJECT

is a generational opportunity to strengthen Saskatchewan's agriculture sector. Phase one of the project (Westside Irrigation Rehabilitation) has the potential to create 30,000+ jobs, and add \$5.9 billion to GDP, while increasing food security for Canada. Farmers and rural municipalities urge the federal government to prioritize direct funding for this project rather than relying on complex financing from the Canada Infrastructure Bank. Federal investment will fuel rural economic growth, support Indigenous businesses, and enhance prairie resilience, benefiting both local communities and the national agricultural sector.

**Thank you
for your time!**

SARM looks forward to working with the federal government on projects and initiatives positively impacting Saskatchewan's rural municipalities.