

Dear _____

DATE _____

Re: Stakeholder Workshop on Water and Climate in Special Areas (Prairies), February 26, 2007 in Hanna, Alberta.

You are invited to attend a workshop where some of the latest global climate science and scenarios will be presented with a focus on the Southern Canadian Prairies, as presented by renowned research scientist Dr. David Sauchyn of the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative at the University of Regina.

This workshop is in conjunction with the research performed by Johanna Wandel and Gwen Young, of the University of Guelph, during the month of November in Hanna and Special Area 2. Johanna and Gwen will be presenting the findings from their research to seek feedback to confirm accurate interpretation.

Special Areas, PFRA and Johanna and Gwen are extending this invitation to you to attend a one-day workshop on Water and Climate in the Prairies, at the Hanna Community Center, on Monday February 26, 2007 (see attached agenda for details). The intent of the workshop is to bring a variety of stakeholders together to discuss water and climate issues (past, present, future), and institutional needs.

Water is an essential resource that affects all aspects of society in the Special Areas. There are increasing concerns being expressed about future climate change impacts as water resources are highly sensitive to climate variability and change. Dryland areas, like the Special Areas, are often challenged by the demands of existing climate variability and it can be expected that climate change will have further impacts on water resource availability (Frederick and Major, 1997). Schindler and Donahue (2006) state that "climate warming and human modifications to catchments" in Western Canada "will combine with cyclic drought and rapidly increasing human activity...to cause a crisis in water quantity and quality with far reaching implications."

Viewpoints range from water resources being under threat from environmental and societal pressures to using water development as an economic driver for the region. No matter what perspective you take, it is clear that present and future climate scenarios will affect our society, including communities, agriculture, industry, economic activity and the environment.

We would be very grateful if you would be willing to contribute to this workshop. Attendees will discuss questions, such as:

- What are the issues your operation/business/organization have dealt with related to water and climate? How are you addressing these issues?
- How will water issues change in the context of future climate scenarios as presented by Dr. Sauchyn?

- To address such issues:
 - What agencies and institutions do you need to collaborate with?
 - What additional support is needed from institutions now and in the future?

The key findings from this workshop will be used in the context of a current research project entitled "Institutional Adaptation to Climate Change." A summary of the report will be prepared and presented to attendees following the workshop.

*Please confirm whether or not you will attend by phoning the Special Areas Hanna office, **PHONE#**, before February 16, 2007.*

Institutional Adaptation to Climate Change (IACC) A Comparative Study of Dryland River Basins in Canada and Chile

Context

This Stakeholder Workshop on Water and Climate in the Prairies is being sponsored by Special Areas, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and the University of Regina. PFRA and University of Regina are collaborating with a number of universities and agencies to investigate "Institutional Adaptation to Climate Change." Most of the invited stakeholders participated in interviews.

This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The project includes study sites in the South Saskatchewan River Basin of Alberta and Saskatchewan and the Elqui River Basin in the Fourth Region of Chile, a region heavily reliant on irrigated agriculture (it is adjacent to the Atacama Desert).

An overview of the project will be provided at the workshop, along with some potential water and climate scenarios Alberta's South Saskatchewan River Basin (Special Area 2?).

For more information on this project, please visit the project website:
<http://www.parc.ca/mcri/index.php>

References:

Frederick, K.D. and D.C. Major. 1997. Climate change and water resources. *Climatic Change*, 37: 7-23.

Schindler, D.W. and W.F. Donahue. 2006. An impending water crisis in Canada's western prairie provinces. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 103: 7210-7216.

Available at: <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/reprint/0601568103v1>