

The Redboine Watershed District (RBWD) is pleased to present Glen and Pam Lowry with the 2023 RBWD Watershed Award. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions and the impact that Glen and Pam have had and are continuing to have on our landscape.

The Lowry's are a fourth generation on a family farm north of Darlingford. Glen and Pam raised three boys, Duncan, Devin and Derek. The farm consists of 320 acres of rolling topography with bush and sensitive wetlands as well as airable farmland.

Glen was always intrigued by nature and how things all worked together. After he took over the family farm in 1984, it became evident that he enjoyed the cattle more than the grain farming. As a result, all the farm acres were committed to grasslands for grazing the cattle. Currently, the Lowry's have a commercial 80 cow calf pair operation, calving on grass from May to June.

In trying to stay in tune with nature, the Lowry's took a holistic farm management course and implemented those practices. They use an intensive rotational grazing system, often moving the cattle daily. The cows are never confined and are typically on grass throughout the entire year. Their winter feeding consists of bale grazing or depending on availability, hay feeding cows on the paddocks.

Lowry's have seen great improvement in their grasslands with the natural fertilizer. This in turn results in increased production, increased grass pounds per acre - healthier cattle - healthier soil. With Lowry's mindfulness, and implementation of their practices, Glen and Pam were also recognized and awarded the 2023 Manitoba Beef Producers Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) in February.

Through collaboration with Manitoba Habitat Heritage, Lowry's have also constructed five water retention sites for off-site solar watering systems that will be installed this year. These systems will provide fresh water for the cattle, energy free with the bonus of keeping the livestock out of the sensitive wetlands.

In 2019, Glen and Pam teamed up with Dr. Aaron Glenn from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to research carbon sequestration, methane and CO₂ emissions from the cattle. (This is one of three sites in all of Canada that is conducting this research.) According to Aaron Glenn, "As part of the AAFC Living Lab Eastern Prairies project I am thrilled to be working with Glen and Pam Lowry studying the carbon fluxes of their innovative rotational grazing system. Being early adopters of this beneficial management practice, the Lowry's are excellent stewards of the land and positive role models in the cattle ranching community. We hope the data collected during our time there will help them document and highlight the benefits they are having on the air, soil, water and biodiversity on their farm." Thus far, the results are showing that the carbon sequestration benefits from the grazing strategies outweigh the negative effects from methane emissions from the cattle.

According to Lowry, “We will continue working to improve the land, water, grasslands, environment, watershed and our awesome community!” Glen is a member on the RBWD Tobacco-Shannon Creek Sub-District (2020-present), a member of the Darlingford Fire Department (1995-present) and Glen and Pam are both members of the Darlingford Hall (1988-present).

The Redboine Watershed District would like to congratulate Glen and Pam on their commitment to the Redboine Watershed. They will be recognized at the Manitoba Association of Watersheds Annual Conference in Brandon, December 4-6th, 2023.