

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE WEYBURN MAP SHEET AREA, 62E

The Weyburn map sheet area occupies four million acres in southeastern Saskatchewan. This area of the interior plains is made up of three physiographic divisions. The largest is the Souris Plain of glacial till, outwash, and lacustrine deposits. In the southwest corner lies the gently to strongly rolling glacial till moraine of the Missouri Coteau. In the northeast is the undulating to strongly rolling glacial till moraine of the Moose Mountain Upland. Drainage is provided by Moose Mountain Creek, Long Creek, the Souris River, and their tributaries. The main lakes are Gooseberry and Moose Mountain in the Souris Plain, and Kenosee and White Bear lakes in the Moose Mountain Upland. Elevations range from a low of 1,650 feet on the Souris River south of Glen Ewen to a high of about 2,700 feet in the Moose Mountain Upland. The predominant soil texture is loam, followed by clay loam.

CLIMATE

This map sheet area has a continental climate, characterized by warm summers and cold winters.

The mean annual temperature ranges from 35° to 39° F; the mean July temperature from 64° to 68°F. The average annual precipitation is 16 to 18 inches, with about 60 percent occurring during the growing season. The annual water deficiency is 6 inches except for a small area in the southwest corner where it is 1 to 2 inches greater. Moisture efficiency increases from southwest to northeast. This is reflected in the vegetation by the increasing abundance of shrubs and trees. The length of the growing season averages 169 to 179 days, from April 20 to 30 to October 11 to 16.

ECOLOGY

All of the Weyburn map sheet area was covered by the pleistocene glaciation. Five phases of ice retreat are recognized. The glacial history of the area explains the land forms; the most important are melt water channels and minor recessional moraines.

Two soil zones occur in this area. The Black Soil zone occupies about 20 percent of the area along the eastern side; the Dark Brown Soil zone occupies the remainder.

The natural vegetation is short grass and medium-tall grasses in the southwest, trending into parkland vegetation in the northeast. Fescue (*Festuca scabrella*) is the dominant parkland grass. Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and willow (*Salix spp.*) are common in lower and wetter areas.

Dominant grasses in the Dark Brown zone are porcupine grass and spear grass (*Stipa spp.*) and northern and western wheat grass (*Agropyron spp.*). The important sub-dominant is blue grama grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and to a lesser extent June grass (*Koeleria cristata*).

Pasture sage (*Artemisia frigida*) makes up 83.9 percent of the upland cover. Larger shrubs that occur are wild rose (*Rosa spp.*), western snowberry (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*), and wolf willow (*Eleagnus commutata*).

The following plants commonly occur in fresh shallow sloughs and wet meadows: horned, beaked, and some woolly sedge (*Carex spp.*), spikerush (*Eleocharis palustris*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), reed grass (*Calamagrostis spp.*), tall manna grass (*Glyceria grandis*), slough grass (*Beckmannia syzigachne*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria cuneata*), and water-plantain (*Alisma spp.*). Round stem bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*) and sprangle-top (*Scolochloa festucacea*) are found in the more permanent fresh sloughs.

Plants commonly found in saline sloughs are: wild barley (*Hordeum jubatum*), alkali cord grass (*Spartina gracilis*), three square bulrush (*Scirpus paludosus*), sea blight (*Suaeda erecta*), and red samphire (*Salicornia rubra*).

Common submergents are clasping leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton richardsonii*), water milfoil (*Myriophyllum exaltatum*), and bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*).

Duckweeds (*Lemna spp.*) and filamentous forms of algae are common throughout the map sheet area.

Surface feeding ducks nesting in this area are blue-winged teal, mallard, pintail, shoveler, gadwall, and widgeon.

On deeper water bodies, the common nesting diving ducks are canvasback, redhead, ruddy, and lesser scaup. Ringneck are found in the Moose Mountain area.

Other game species found in this area are: mule and white-tailed deer, sharp-tailed grouse, hungarian partridge, and ring-necked pheasant. Elk and moose are found in the Moose Mountain area.

Muskrat and mink are common in consecutive years of abundant water and beaver are present on the more permanent creeks. The Moose Mountain supports a larger and more permanent population of the above animals.

Agriculture is intensively practised throughout the area. Wheat is the main crop in the west and southwest; livestock and coarse grain production become more important toward the east and northeast, but wheat is still the main source of income. Strip mining of coal in the Bienfait area involves considerable acreage; oil and gas production, especially in the Steelman district, is an important source of income.

WETLAND CLASSIFICATION

The best waterfowl habitat (Classes 1 to 3) on this map sheet area is in the Missouri Coteau and the Wood Mountain Upland. Both areas are rolling morainic plains, well supplied with permanent and semi-permanent sloughs. Major limitations in the Missouri Coteau are aridity and dissected topography.

The central portion of the Moose Mountain Upland has a lower production potential than the Class 1 land, which nearly surrounds it, and has been given a Class 3 rating. Many of the water bodies in this central area are poorly vegetated and are subject to drawdown. The larger wetlands, including Kenosee and White Bear lakes, have little production value but wildfowl use them during migration.

The Souris Plain is limited primarily by flat topography and the absence of permanent sloughs. Most of this unit has been rated as Class 4, but the more rolling areas in the east central part of the map sheet area are Class 2 and 3. The very flat lacustrine clay (Regina Plains) deposits in the northeast of the map sheet area are rated as Class 5. Another limitation is low water-holding capacity on outwash deposits, especially on lands adjacent to the Souris River and Moose Mountain Creek.

The main lakes on the Souris Plain are Gooseberry and Moose Mountain; both are used as migration stops. Gooseberry Lake, though somewhat limited by depth and poor edge, is also a good producer.

The Souris River and Moose Mountain Creek are good production areas and have been placed in Class 2 and 3. Their major limitation is the absence of adjacent water areas, the west portion of the Souris River is also limited by steep banks.

Capability classification by C. A. Matthews and R. E. G. Murray, Canadian Wildlife Service.

DESCRIPTION DU TERRITOIRE DE LA FEUILLE DE WEYBURN – 62E

Le territoire qui représente la feuille de Weyburn couvre 4 millions d'acres, dans le sud-est de la Saskatchewan. Les plaines intérieures se composent de trois divisions structurales. La plus étendue, la plaine Souris, est formée de dépôts de délavage, de dépôts lacustres et de till glaciaire. Dans l'angle sud-ouest se trouve la moraine du coteau Missouri, till glaciaire plus ou moins fortement vallonné. Au nord-est, les hautes terres de Moose Mountain sont composées d'une moraine de till glaciaire ondulée à fortement vallonnée. Les ruisseaux Moose Mountain, Long Creek, la rivière Souris et leurs affluents assurent le drainage. Les lacs principaux sont: Gooseberry et Moose Mountain pour la plaine Souris, Kenosee et White Bear pour les hautes terres des Monts Moose. L'altitude va de 1 650 pi à la rivière Souris, au sud de Glen Ewen et à 2 700 sur les hautes terres des Monts Moose. Les sols sont à prédominance de loam, suivi de loam argileux.

CLIMAT

Le climat est continental: étés chauds, hivers froids.

Les moyennes annuelles de température vont de 35°F à 39°F; les moyennes de juillet, de 64°F à 68°F. La précipitation annuelle moyenne est de 16 à 18 po dont 60% environ, pendant la saison de végétation. Le déficit annuel en eau est de 6 po sauf pour une petite portion de l'angle sud-ouest où il compte 1 à 2 po de plus. L'humidité s'accroît du sud-ouest au nord-est et contribue à l'augmentation de la quantité d'arbres et d'arbustes. La durée de la saison de végétation est d'environ 169 à 179 jours, de la mi-avril à la mi-octobre.

ÉCOLOGIE

Tout le territoire a été recouvert par les glaces du pléistocène. On y a identifié cinq phases de recul glaciaire. L'histoire glaciaire de la région explique les formes de relief dont les plus importantes sont des chenaux de fusion glaciaire et de petites moraines de retrait.

Les sols noirs à l'est, occupent à peu près 20% de la superficie; les sols brun foncé, occupent le reste.

Passant à la prairie-parc au nord-est, la végétation naturelle consiste, dans le sud-ouest, en graminées courtes et moyennes. La fétuque (*Festuca scabrella*) est la graminée dominante du parc. Le peuplier faux-tremble (*Populus tremuloides*) et le saule (*Salix spp.*) sont communs dans les endroits bas et humides.

Dans la zone des sols brun foncé, dominent les stypas (*Stipa spp.*) et les agropyres dasytachum et de Smith (*Agropyron spp.*); viennent ensuite la bouteloue grêle (*Bouteloua gracilis*) et, en plus faible quantité, le koeleria accréte (*Koeleria cristata*).

Dans la plaine Souris, la principale limitation vient de la topographie unie et de l'absence de marais permanents. La plus grande partie de cette zone a été classée 4, mais la région la plus vallonnée, dans la partie centre-est de la carte, entre dans les classes 2 et 3. Les dépôts argileux lacustres complètement plats (plaines de Regina), dans le nord-est du territoire sont de classe 5. La faible capacité de rétention d'eau des dépôts de délavage, spécialement dans les terres touchant la rivière Souris et le ruisseau Moose Mountain, constitue une autre limitation.

Les principaux lacs de la plaine Souris sont les lacs Moose Mountain et Gooseberry; tous deux servent de relais migratoires; malgré une légère limitation due à sa profondeur et à ses rives peu accessibles, le lac Gooseberry est également une bonne zone de production.

La rivière Souris et le ruisseau Moose Mountain sont de bonnes zones de production et entrent dans les classes 2 et 3; leur principale limitation est l'absence de plans d'eau proches et, sur la portion ouest de la rivière Souris, la nature abrupte des rives.

Classement des possibilités par C. A. Matthews et R. E. G. Murray, Service canadien de la faune.