SOS Elms News

Newsletter No. 27, December 2013
SOS Elms Coalition, 1618 9th Ave. N, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 3A1
Web Site: www.soselms.org

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President's Report

Doug Mitchell
President, SOS Elms Coalition Inc.

What a pleasure it is for me to again say hello to the dedicated and committed members of the Coalition. It was impossible for us to beat last year's 20th Anniversary but, none the less, 2013 has been a productive and meaningful year. At our AGM last spring we were delighted that Anna Leighton returned to our Board, bringing new energy and expertise.

SOS Elms maintained our focus on awareness, appreciation and care of trees in the communities of Saskatchewan. Dutch Elm Disease (DED) and its threat to the American elm continue to be important concerns for us. On the positive side, no new communities were reported to have had DED, as noted below in this year's provincial report. Also, see below for a very interesting and encouraging article from South Dakota on "the return of the American elm".

Excessive development in Saskatoon carries on unabated. We have continued to lobby City Council to establish a comprehensive long term Urban Forestry Plan as well as an Infill Policy that seriously takes into consideration the City's trees. Some progress has been made with the City's requirements for Contractors to protect trees during renovations, demolitions, or new construction. See page 8 below, which is from the Urban Forestry section of the City's web site http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/Infrastructure%20Services/Parks/Urban%20Forestry/Pages/ProtectSaskatoonTrees.aspx Call them at 306-986-0836 if you have questions or concerns about construction damage or other threats to City trees.

SOS Elms' four main outreach activities took place again in 2013 – we had displays at Gardenscape Expo, Seedy Saturday, and Students Plant a Legacy in Trees (SPLIT - see Terri Smith's report below). Thanks to the generous donations of many items from members and supporters, our Annual Yard Sale raised $725 this year. We intend to repeat all but SPLIT again in 2014, as the City will be hosting an Arborists' Convention instead of another SPLIT program. Many thanks to volunteers who helped out at the various events. I hope you will be able assist again next year.

Please visit our web site www.soselms.org and, for those who are into it, our Facebook page www.facebook.com/soselms to keep up to date on the Coalition's issues and events. Feel free to make suggestions or contribute content as you see fit. Do encourage others to join SOS Elms. For those of you wanting to become more involved, I would be delighted if you would consider joining our Board. Have a wonderful Christmas Season and all the best in 2014.

Saskatchewan DED Report for 2013

Government of Saskatchewan News Release, Oct.7, 2013

A 2013 Dutch elm disease (DED) survey conducted by the Ministry of Environment and participating communities shows the elm tree-killing fungus remains established in its traditional area – southeast Saskatchewan – but has not spread to any new areas in the province. Though the number of diseased trees is up from 2012, the increase is attributable to more communities surveying for DED.

"It's encouraging to see Saskatchewan communities working to protect the health of their urban forests," Environment Minister Ken Cheveldayoff said. "Finding and removing DED-infected trees helps limit tree losses in our communities by preventing the disease from spreading to healthy elms. This keeps our streets greener, and reduces tree removal and replanting costs over the long term."

Communities are responsible for their own surveys and for submitting samples to the Provincial Crop Protection Laboratory. A positive test result for DED means the infected tree should be removed and either buried or burned. Municipalities can designate their own disposal methods and locations.

The Ministry of Environment surveys seven management zones for DED: Estevan, Regina, Moose Jaw, Tisdale, Balcarres, Indian Head and Wolseley. A total of 214 trees in these zones were marked this year for removal, up from 162 last year. The ministry removes these marked trees during the fall and winter.

To help protect trees and communities from Dutch elm disease:

- Do not prune elm trees from April 1 to August 31, when the risk of spreading DED is greatest.
- Maintain trees to help ensure good health and greater resistance to diseases, including DED.
- Be sure the person hired to prune elms has completed a recognized training course.
- Do not transport or store elm firewood. Dispose elm wood promptly at a location specified by the local municipal authority.
- Be sure to comply with all provincial regulations concerning the pruning of elm trees.
- Call the ministry (toll-free: 1-800-567-4224) or the local municipal office for more information.

Through its 44 offices across the province, the Ministry of Environment provides science-based solutions, compliance and mitigation measures aimed at protecting the environment, safeguarding communities and contributing to the province's economic growth.

For more information, contact:
Val Nicholson
Environment Saskatchewan
Prince Albert SK
Phone: 306-953-2459
Email: val.nicholson@gov.sk.ca
Cell: 306-91-5645

Tree Facts: American elm making a comeback

by Robert W. Drown, South Dakota, Natural Resource Specialist, Northwest Area Conservation Districts
July 19, 2013

For the first time in more than 40 years, the American elm tree is being sold in large numbers to homeowners and other retail customers. In the 1990s, researchers at the Department of Agriculture's National Arboretum research station in Beltsville, Md., identified several types of elm trees that were genetically resistant to Dutch elm disease. In 1996, several horticulturalists started growing the disease-resistant trees, a job that proved more difficult than expected. Now they are being sold at nurseries and big box stores.

The American Elm tree is native to the United States and Canada from the east coast west to the Great Plains. The American Elm once dominated the nation's landscape, but was nearly wiped out by Dutch elm disease. Elm trees once lined the streets of nearly every American town and still do in some South Dakota and North Dakota cities. The sturdy, fast-growing Y-shaped tree was exceptionally tolerant of city life, but it was felled by a deadly fungus.

Dutch elm disease arrived, probably on wood imported from China, in 1930. It spread from Ohio, where it was first reported, to the rest of

the nation over 50 years. The disease, spread by beetles, killed an estimated 100 million elm trees. The fungus is called Dutch elm disease because it was identified by Dutch researchers.

Federal, state and local governments spent millions of dollars in efforts to stop the disease from spreading but nothing worked. By the 1960s, the American elm had largely vanished from much of the nation's landscape, nurseries and garden stores.

Some tree species planted to replace the elm tree are now suffering their own disease calamities, a fact that may help restore the elm tree to the American landscape. For example, the emerald ash borer, an insect, has started to ravage ash trees. It is ironic that the situation has come full circle over the last 50 years. Elm trees are being planted to replace ash trees that were planted to replace the elm trees.

The American Elm has qualities that make it an ideal tree for use as either a shade tree or shelterbelt tree. It grows fast and can almost reach its mature height of 35 - 60 feet in thirty years. It is drought resistant and can survive drought conditions and several extremes in weather conditions.

Across the nation, horticulturalists are trying to increase production of other disease-resistant varieties of American Elm such as Valley Forge, New Harmony and Jefferson elms to add genetic diversity and make elms less vulnerable to disease. In the decades ahead the numbers of these trees will be increased and conservation districts and nurseries will make them available across the nation.

My sources for this news release were the USA Today and NDSU Extension Service. If you would like more information about “American Elm making a comeback,” call Bob Drown at the Conservation Office at 605-244-5222, Extension 4 or by e-mail at robert.drown@sd.nacdnet.net.

SPLIT Report 2013

Terri Smith
Urban Forestry
City of Saskatoon

Schools Plant Legacy in Trees (SPLIT) is a forestry education program and tree planting initiative that was co-founded in 2004 by the City of Saskatoon, Riversdale Kiwanis Club and SOS Elms Coalition. The SPLIT program has made a positive impact on ten schools and neighbourhoods – including this year’s participants at Fairhaven School.

The SPLIT program consists of three separate educational events: Forestry Education Day, Forestry Expo and Planting Day. Each event offers students a variety of information presented by industry professionals.

Education Day took place at Fairhaven School in March. Through active participation and classroom work, students learned about relevant issues concerning Saskatchewan’s forests, the benefits of Saskatoon’s urban forest, and the natural balance of our ecosystem.

In May, Fairhaven School took a field trip to the home of the City of Saskatoon’s Parks Branch to participate in the Forestry Expo. Students watched tree climbing demonstrations and walked their way through the life of a nursery tree – from tree seed to tree basketing operations. The City of Saskatoon’s Pest Management team explained their role in managing Saskatoon’s increasing urban wildlife population and the implications that urban sprawl has on wildlife habitat. Students watched a sheep herding demonstration and learned that conservationists use sheep as an invasive weed control method in Saskatchewan’s native grasslands and sensitive riparian areas.

On June 12th, Fairhaven School planted 21 trees, 24 vines and 14 shrubs on their school’s grounds. The landscape design was created by the Fairhaven School student leadership group with assistance from the City of Saskatoon Landscape Architect, Hrolfur Kristinsson. The student leadership group also selected the tree species and planting locations with assistance from City of Saskatoon’s Forestry Technicians. The entire student body, from pre-kindergarten to grade eight participated in the planting, mulching and watering of their trees and shrubs.

A ceremony and BBQ followed a morning of planting, hard work and fun. Students who started the morning feeling hesitant about their ability to plant a tree were beaming with pride and accomplishment at the ceremony. In attendance were Councillor Ann Iwanchuk, Parks Branch Manager Wayne Briant, TD Canada Trust Branch Manager David Schmirler, Tree Canada Representative Keith Dodge, Riversdale Kiwanis Club member Carl Hanson and Fairhaven School administrators and parents.

Fairhaven School's new landscape design provides wind protection around the community skating rink, shade for the playground area, a tree canopy for the pedestrians and cyclists using the park pathway, and a variety of fruit contained within a fruit bed. In addition, the chain-link fence surrounding the pre-kindergarten play area is now enclosed with grape vines and Virginia creepers.

Thank you to the following SPLIT contributors: Saskatoon Community Foundation, SOS Elms, TD Green Streets/Tree Canada, Riversdale Kiwanis Club, Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Sask Energy, City of Saskatoon.

Fairhaven School plant material

Shade Trees
American elm (*Ulmus americana)*
Amur cherry (*Prunus maackii)*
Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa)*
Hot wings maple (*Acer tataricum* 'GarAnn')
Nobility white ash *(Fraxinus Americana* 'Nobility')
Pink Horsechestnut (*Aesculus carnea* 'Ft. McNair')
Red rocket maple (*Acer rubrum* 'Red Rocket')
Spring snow crabapple (*Malus* x 'Spring Snow')
Thunderchild crabapple (*Malus x adstringens* 'Thunderchild')
White spruce (*Picea glauca)*

Fruit Bed
Honeycrisp apple (*Malus* 'Honeycrisp'*)*
Martin Saskatoon bush (*Amelanchier alnafolia* 'Martin')
Borealis haskap (*Lonicera caerula* 'Borealis')
Blue Belle haskap (*Lonicera caerula* 'Blue Belle')
Manitoba grapes *(Vitis riparia*)
Beta grapes *(Vitis* 'Beta')

Shrubs and vines
Globe caragana *(Caragana fruitex* 'Globosa')
Little princess spirea *(Spirea japonica)*
Summerwine ninebark *(Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Seward'*)*
Tinkerbell lilac *(Syringa* 'Bailbelle')
Virginia creeper *(Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

SOS Elms contributes to Saskatchewan Rivers Heritage designation process

Note: The following letter was submitted last spring on SOS Elms' behalf by Cliff Speer. In November the Draft Legacy Document for SaskRivers Heritage Designation was released by the consultants. They have expressed appreciation for our input and the Draft Legacy does, in a general way, address our concerns.

April 17, 2013

Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin
402 Third Avenue South
Saskatoon, SK. S7K 3G5

Attention: John Vandall and Ken Lozinsky,
Consultants for SaskRivers Heritage Designation

Thank you for the invitation to provide input into the Saskatchewan Rivers Heritage designation process. As a conservation organization, SOS Elms Coalition supports the concept of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and applauds the efforts to include the Saskatchewan Rivers in the body of nationally recognized heritage rivers.

The primary focus of SOS Elms Coalition over the 20 years of our existence is to promote the appreciation and management of urban forests in Saskatchewan, especially those involving the American elm. We strive for the prevention and control of Dutch elm disease (DED), which is fatal to the American elm. We undertake public education and action projects designed to involve individual citizens as well as provincial and municipal governments in the active care of community trees. A related concern of our organization is to monitor and help prevent the spread of DED from natural American elm forests in rural areas and its encroachment on American elms in Saskatchewan communities.

DED has been inexorably marching westward from where it was first detected in eastern North America in the 1940s. It entered Saskatchewan by the early 90s, infecting American elms in native wild stands, and in urban forests of towns and cities. A map, http://bit.ly/YLRw0W, from Saskatchewan Environment shows the native distribution of American elms and the rural and urban areas known to be infected up to 2007.

DED was found in Maple Creek for the first time in the summer of 2012, which is the furthest west that it has been detected in Saskatchewan to date. A stand of native American elm which is DED free extends along about 60 km of the South Saskatchewan River centred on Outlook. Decimation of these mature trees by DED would be a severe loss to the native habitat and esthetical values associated with the river. In addition it would have a serious impact on urban elms in the town of Outlook, and it would put potential sources of infection closer to Saskatoon, which is also DED free to date.

DED is prevalent along the Saskatchewan River from Codette Station downstream, through the communities of Nipawin, Tobin Lake, and nearby communities. To the northeast of Tobin Lake, the extensive native American elm forests are completely overcome with DED, including all of the Cumberland Delta.

In relation to the SaskRivers heritage project, SOS Elms would like to see information on DED included in promotional or educational materials dispensed to the public, including preventative measures. Such information, and current reports on the extent of infestation surrounding the Rivers should be gained from the Ministry of Environment (contact Jeff Gooliaff, phone 306-953-2987) and added to public information materials.

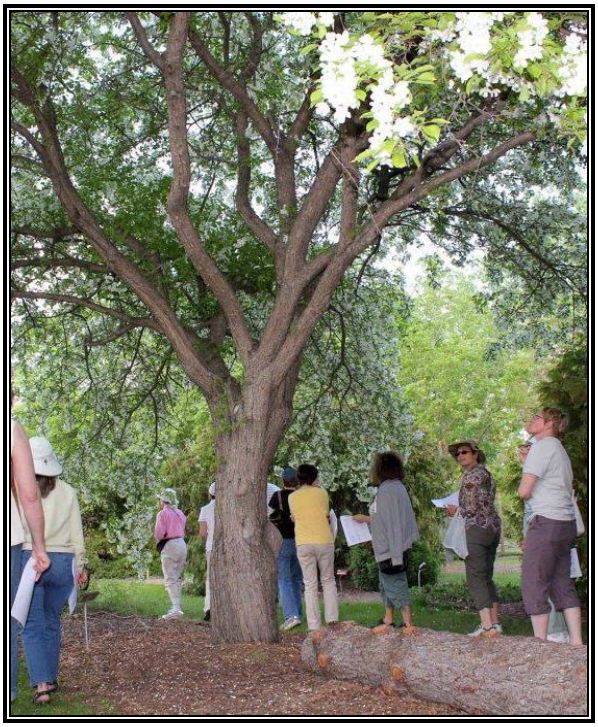
Preserving American elms in both native and urban forests which surround and beautify the river banks is certainly one of the significant values in river heritage conservation. SOS Elms believes that the Canadian Heritage Rivers program would concur and we trust that our concerns and recommendations will be incorporated into the management plans for the SaskRivers.

Sincerely,
Cliff Speer,
Board Member, SOS Elms Coalition Inc.

Saskatoon Tree Tour Booklet Update

Richard Kerbes

SOS Elms published the Saskatoon Tree Tour Booklet in 2002, with a second printing in 2004. A driving or walking tour and guide to the unique and unusual trees of the city, it proved to be quite popular with the public and helped to promote the appreciation and care of our urban forest. Since almost all copies have been distributed, our board has committed to publish a revised and improved version in 2014. The existing sites, texts and pictures were reviewed by Jim Wood and Richard Kerbes this past summer, and Cliff Speer is spearheading the effort to obtain sufficient funding to produce a full colour edition with updated trees, text, pictures and GPS links. Do you have a special favourite and important tree? Let us know and we might include in the new tour!



Patterson Garden Tree Tour during NatureCity Festival 29 May 2013. Photo by Paddy Tutty

It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air, that emanation from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit.
Robert Louis Stevenson

Tree Tour at NatureCity Festival

Richard Kerbes

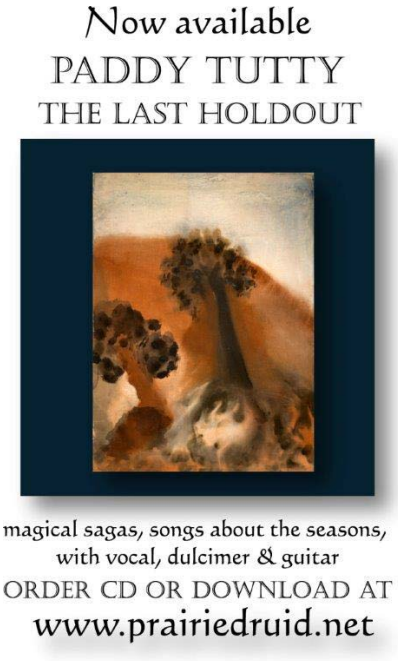
Late last year SOS Elms became involved with ***Wild About Saskatoon***, a brand new collective of nature-minded individuals working to connect culture and nature in the city of Saskatoon. Its first major event, the ***NatureCity Festival,*** took place over the last week of May, 2013, coinciding with the blooming of saskatoon berry trees. SOS Elms was one of many groups which participated, including Nature Saskatchewan, Meewasin Valley Authority, EcoFriendly Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Nature Society, Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan, Permaculture Research Institute of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Environmental Society, CHEP, Prairie Master Gardeners, Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation, Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Mendel Art Gallery, the Northeast SwaleWatchers, City of Saskatoon Naturalized Parks, Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council, and Prairie Conservation Action Plan. Each group hosted or presented one or more event.

A walking tour of the Patterson Garden Arboretum was SOS Elms' event. Sponsored by the Department of Plant Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, it was led by Jackie Bantle from Plant Sciences. The Arboretum consists of over 700 living trees and shrubs. Participants were shown some of the oldest, most unusual, and most unique specimens. They were surprised by the wide range of woody plants that can be grown here in the urban forests of Saskatchewan. Enjoyed by over 30 people who came out for the tour, it was a beautiful evening, with many of the trees and shrubs in bloom. We are grateful to Jackie and her Department for their sponsorship and participation. Plans are underway for another NatureCity Festival in 2014 for the last week of May, and SOS Elms will be there. Candace Savage, who conceived and co-ordinated the Festival last year is again taking the lead role. She has invited everyone to check out the exciting plans for 2014, and to volunteer to help out. Contact :

Candace Savage for Wild about Saskatoon
email - wildaboutsaskatoon@gmail.com
Web site - www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org
Facebook - www.facebook.com/wildaboutsaskatoon

"The Last Holdout"

Longtime SOS Elms board member Paddy Tutty has released a new CD entitled "The Last Holdout". It is a "bare bones" recording of mostly traditional British Isles folk music, featuring vocals, fretted dulcimer, guitar and concertina. She has included several narrative ballads, instrumentals, and songs about the seasons. There is a song entitled "Oak, Ash and Thorn" which originated as a Rudyard Kipling poem "A Tree Song", set to music by England's Peter Bellamy. Also included is "Alf Browne's Jig" written in honour of Saskatoon's Alf Browne, who planted and supervised the planting of Saskatoon's elms for the first forty-five years of their lives.



SOS Elms Coalition Inc. Board of Directors

President: Doug Mitchell	244-3082
Treasurer: Cliff Speer	653-5693
Secretary: Rae Hearn	244-3082
Membership/website: Paddy Tutty	665-0864
Member at large: Linda Moskalyk	
Member at large: Jim Wood	373-6007
Member at large: Richard Kerbes	653-4209
Member at large: Anna Leighton	665-6074

This newsletter edited by
Richard Kerbes and Kathy Meeres

Construction site of the Gordon Oakes-Red Bear Student Centre U. of S.

LEFT: 8 Nov. 2011, photo by Cliff Speer. RIGHT: 12 Dec, 2013, photo by Richard Kerbes.

Note the loss of many mature American Elms.

YES! I WANT TO JOIN SOS ELMS!

http://www.soselms.org

☐ $10.00 Annual membership per household

☐ $_____Donation

$_____Total - (tax receipt will be mailed to you)
Money order or cheque enclosed
(Payable to SOS Elms Coalition)

☐ Yes! I wish to help out as a volunteer

Name_____
E-mail (optional) _____
Address_____
Postal Code_____ Telephone_____

Mail to:
SOS Elms Coalition
1618 9th Ave. N,
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 3A1

Protect Saskatoon Trees

URBAN FORESTRY

Tree Protection Required When Working Near City Trees

Equipment and vehicles can injure tree trunks, break branches, tear bark, cause soil compaction or damage roots.

If you are planning any work near a City tree you are responsible for providing tree protection measures as determined by the Urban Forestry Section of the Parks Branch.

Any unauthorized excavation, removal, relocation, pruning, or damage of City trees may result in a fine or penalty as per City Council Policy #C09-011.

Damage to City trees will be assessed on the value of the plant material as well as the cost of any removal or repairs.

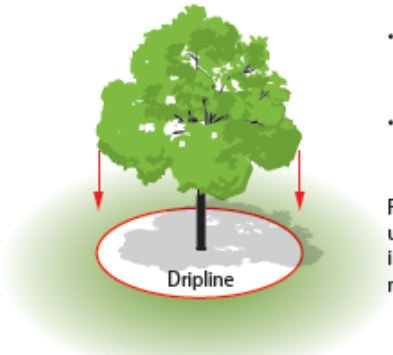
Plan Ahead - Contact Urban Forestry at **306-986-0836** before you proceed with any construction near City trees.

When working near City trees the required protective measures include the following:

Protect the tree roots

Severing tree roots, compacting soil, or changing the grade in the critical root zone of a tree can impact both the health and stability of a tree.

- You will only be permitted to excavate on one side of a tree.
- If construction takes place when soil moisture levels are high, it increases compaction within the drip zone.
- All exposed roots must be pruned with a sharp pruning tool to provide a clean severance of the root.
- Exposed roots must be protected from drying during construction and exposed roots must be backfilled as soon as possible.
- To prevent compaction 150mm (6") of woodchip mulch must be placed on any area under the drip line of a protected tree if it is not fenced off.



Provide Protective Fencing

The best way to avoid tree damage at construction sites is to set up a protective fence to act as a physical barrier to keep vehicles, equipment, and materials away from trees.

Protective fencing must be constructed of either:

a) Solid wood frame with orange snow fencing securely stapled to the outside;

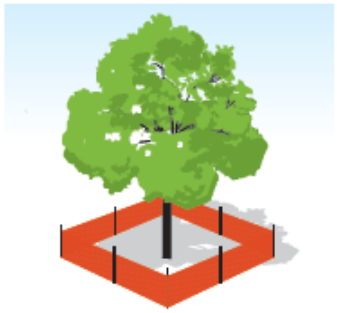
or

b) Snow fencing fastened securely to metal stakes spaced no more than 1 meter apart.

Protective fencing must:

- Be 1.2 meters high measured from the ground;
- Not interfere with access to fire hydrants or obscure intersections or traffic signage;
- Be sturdy with vertical posts driven firmly into the ground to keep it in place;
- Stay in good repair for the duration of the demolition or construction project.

For safety reasons an underground utility check must be completed before installing the fence to ensure you do not hit any buried utilities.



Protective Fencing

Construction of the protective fencing will be inspected and must be acceptable to Urban Forestry.

Tree Protection Zone Radius Requirements
(measured from base of tree)

Trunk Diameter @ 1.2m	Good Protection	Better Protection
1 – 20 cm	2.0 m	3.0 m
21 – 50 cm	2.5 m	4.5 m
50+ cm	3.5 m	6.5 m

City of Saskatoon

http://www.saskatoon.ca/go/forestry

From:
http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/Infrastructure%20Services/Parks/Documents/UF/Tree%20Protection%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf