

# **Best Practice**

## **Old Wives Lake Interpretive Area**

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### **THE PRACTICE**

Old Wives Lake is the fourth largest saline lake in North America and is designated a Migratory Bird Sanctuary and part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. The Mossbank Economic Development Office worked to develop Old Wives Lake into a tourist attraction through the building of an interpretive centre.

### **THE PROCESS**

The Town of Mossbank received a grant from Saskatchewan Environment called the "Sustainable Communities Grant" to develop the Old Wives Lake Nature Area. The nature area was finished with a 2.4 km of trail designed to highlight the natural attributes of Old Wives Lake. 12 interpretive signs were situated along the trail and they focus on native wildlife, vegetation, conservation and local history. A gazebo was designed to hold school groups for educational seminars, activities and to be used as a picnic shelter. The viewing platform is a rest stop along the trail that overlooks Old Wives Lake.

### **THE RESULTS**

The nature area is a fantastic asset to the regional and will benefit the community and local environment. The goal for the Old Wives Lake Nature Area project is that the area will be recognized as an educational, eco-tourism destination focusing on conservation and preservation. The grand opening of the interpretive centre is scheduled for June 2009.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

The Town of Mossbank and RM of Lake Johnston learned that promoting existing amenities is a beneficial method to preserving the local environment and attracting tourists. Old Wives Lake and surrounding area is a relatively secluded area, but with hard work and determination the communities were able to access a grant and develop the area into an educational centre for future generations.