

# Managing Water Scarcity in the Prairie Region: The Role of the IJC in a Changing Climate

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Prof. Tim Heinmiller

Department of Political Science

Brock University

# The Prairie Transboundary Rivers

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- ❑ Scarce and highly variable water supplies
  - ❑ Largest user of water is agricultural irrigation
  - ❑ Three major transboundary rivers:
    - St. Mary
    - Milk
    - Souris
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# The Prairie Transboundary Rivers



# The Political Economy of the Prairie Transboundary Rivers

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- ❑ Farmers and riparians have long been the dominant water interests in the region
  - ❑ Their basic water management objectives:
    1. Control
    2. Beneficial use
  - ❑ International rivalries threatened to swamp these objectives
  - ❑ IBWT and IJC have facilitated international water management regimes to achieve control and beneficial use
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# Prairie Transboundary River Management Regimes

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1. Inter-jurisdictional Water Apportionments
  2. Drought and Flood Provisions
  3. Intergovernmental River Management Boards
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# Emerging Interests in Prairie Transboundary Rivers

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- ❑ Starting in the 1960s, environmentalists, recreationalists and Aboriginals have emerged as major interests
  - ❑ They are confronted by an entrenched institutional status quo geared towards control and beneficial use
  - ❑ Reforms have occurred at the margins
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# Prairie Transboundary Rivers and Climate Change

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- ❑ Many Prairie rivers have now reached the point of full allocation
  - ❑ Two problems with full allocation:
    1. Institutionalized water shortages
    2. Environmental degradation
  - ❑ These problems may be exacerbated by climate change
  - ❑ Can the transboundary river management regimes be adapted to deal with such problems?
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