

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 23, 2012

Provincial Government Budget Release – Announcement of Parks and Recreation Initiatives

The provincial government announced a number of initiatives that benefit the parks and recreation sector, at the March 21, 2012 budget release. In many Saskatchewan communities, the local ice rink is the center of activity and vital to a community's quality of life. In the budget, the government announced a new Community Rink Affordability Grant of \$2,500 a year which will be provided to approximately 750 municipally owned indoor ice surfaces in Saskatchewan to help with operating costs.

In an attempt to further reduce barriers, increase access and ensure all children have an opportunity to participate in activities that are vital to healthy active living, the government has extended the Active Families Benefit from children 6 – 14 to include all children under 18 years of age. A parent or legal guardian of a child under 18 will be eligible to receive an annual tax credit rebate of up to \$150 per child.

Recognizing the major role Saskatchewan's parks play in conservation, tourism and in providing economic benefits to nearby communities, the government has announced a further investment of \$2.5 million this year in maintenance and upgrades.

"Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) views these new provincial initiatives as a step in the right direction for parks and recreation. The majority of Saskatchewan's infrastructure is between 25 to 34 years old and is past their expected life cycle," said CEO Norm Campbell.

"Continuing to support maintenance and access to recreation facilities and parks is an important link to strengthening families and building healthy communities. Facilities are gathering places that bring people together and access to recreation facilities, like rinks and parks, encourages families to be active," Campbell concluded.

(30)

For media inquiries, please contact: Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, (306) 780-9268

SPRA is a non-profit member organization dedicated to enhancing quality of life in the Province. SPRA provides parks and recreation services and support to Saskatchewan communities and advocates on behalf of the recreation and parks field at the local, provincial and national level. SPRA is funded by the Saskatchewan Lotteries.