

OUR DIVERSE PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE: SASKATCHEWAN IS NOT JUST FLAT!

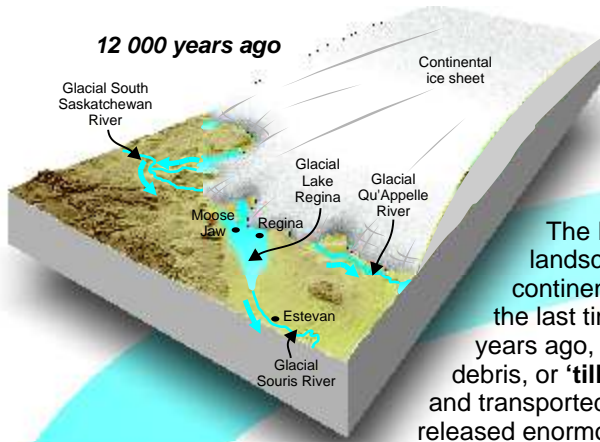
The Ice Age: architect of our landscape

The Ice Age glaciers shaped the landscapes we know today. As the continental ice sheet retreated for the last time between 17 000 and 8000 years ago, it left behind a carpet of glacial debris, or 'till', scoured from underlying materials and transported with the moving ice. Melting ice released enormous volumes of water that deposited extensive sands and gravels. Giant glacial rivers carved deep valleys, while depressions trapped waters in large glacial lakes.

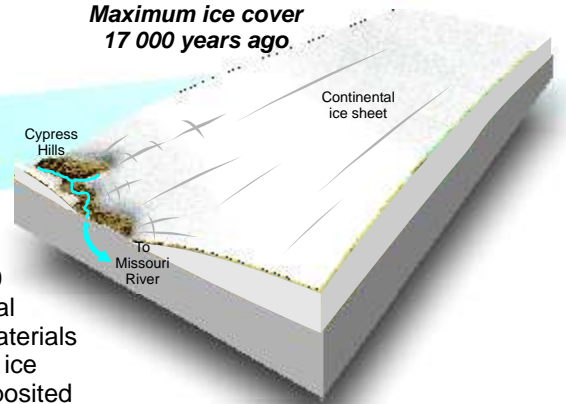
Different landscapes, different origins

Though many people might describe southern Saskatchewan as 'flat', it is a patchwork of diverse landscapes of different origins: rolling hills, flat plains, and long winding valleys. Rolling hills are sediments deposited in haphazard fashion from melting glaciers. Flat plains are the floors of ancient glacial lakes! The Qu'Appelle River valley and other major valleys were carved by great rivers that carried glacial meltwater towards the sea. Sloughs and potholes fill the depressions created by the melting of buried ice blocks that were left behind by retreating glaciers.

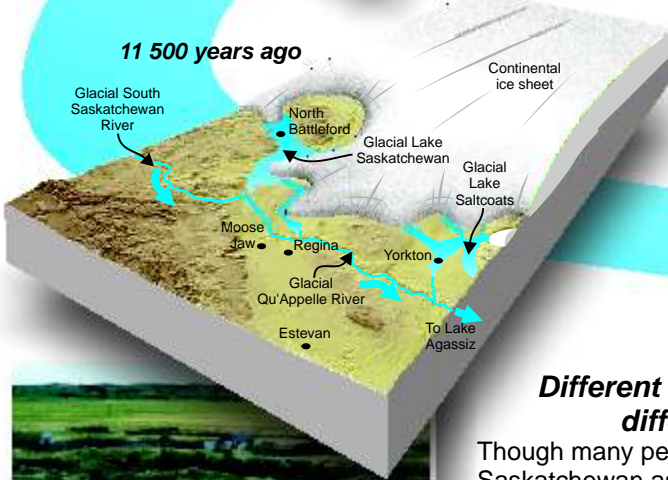
12 000 years ago



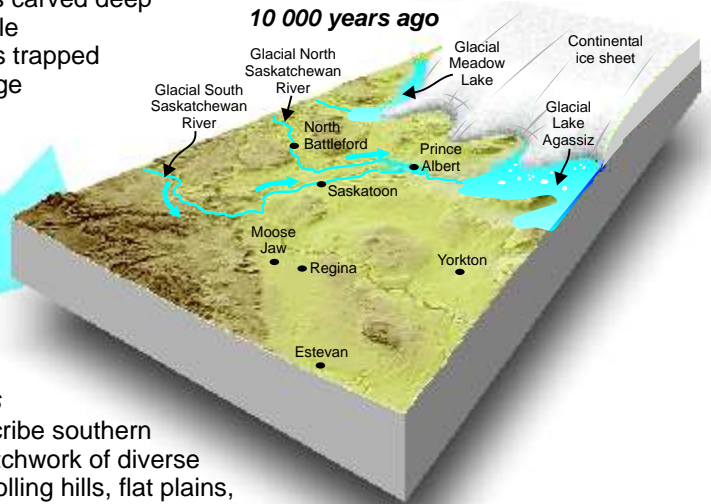
Maximum ice cover
17 000 years ago



11 500 years ago

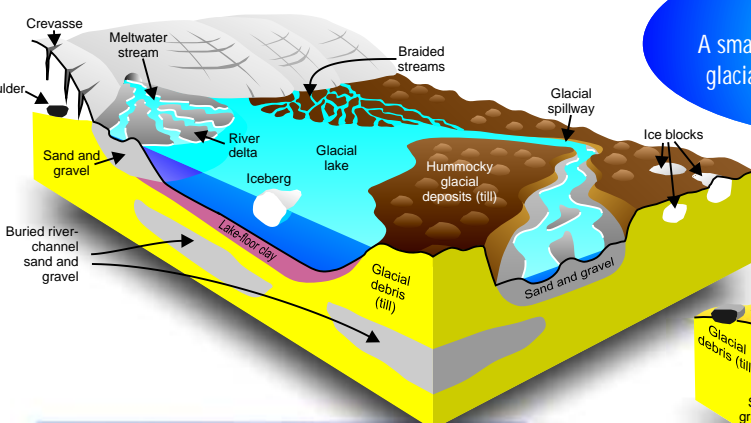


10 000 years ago



S. A. Wolfe (GSC 1995-065)

As the glaciers melted...

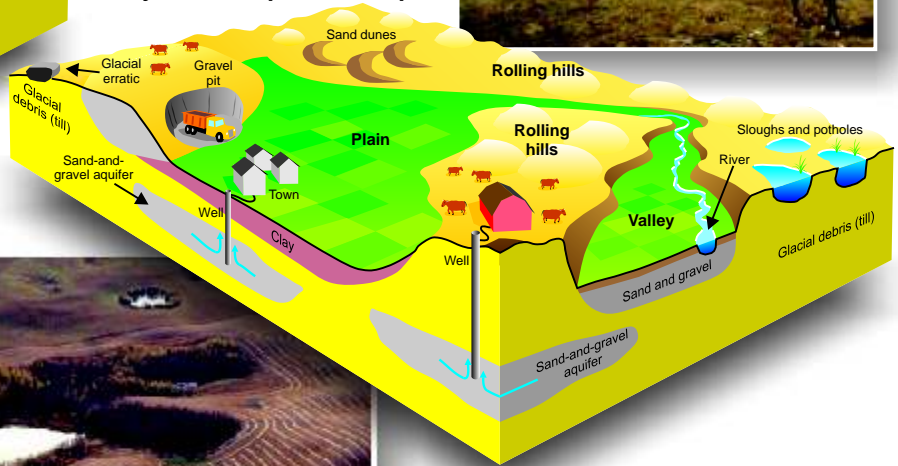


Untouched by glaciers
A small part of Saskatchewan was never glaciated. Do you know where this is?



Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration

...today's landscape took shape



L. Penner, J.D. Millard & Associates Ltd.



Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration