



Nopiming Provincial Park

Draft Management Plan



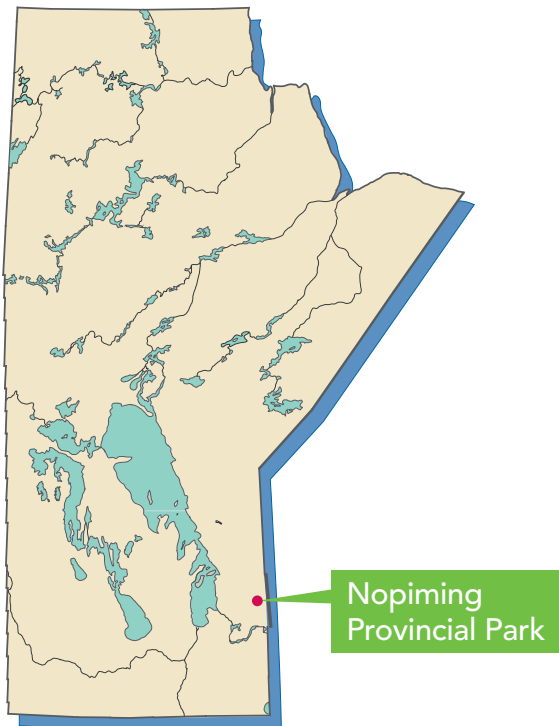
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This draft plan was prepared for Nopiming Provincial Park in consultation with park users under the authority of *The Provincial Parks Act*.

Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
Parks and Protected Spaces Branch

Fall 2015



1.0 Introduction

The Provincial Parks Act (2015) requires that a management plan be prepared for each provincial park. Management plans establish long-term direction for parks and address issues pertaining to resource protection, use and development of park land. The draft management plan for Nopiming Provincial Park is based on its role in Manitoba's system of parks and the participation of those who use and care about the park and people who wish to provide input into park management. The final plan is to be used in conjunction with park regulations, directives, and other departmental and government policies and legislation. The completed plan will replace the Nopiming Provincial Park Interim Management Guidelines (last updated in 1988).

Generally, the preparation of a park management plan is divided into five steps:

- Step 1: Identification of management issues and public consultation (Phase 1).
- Step 2: Distribution of a report on public comments.
- Step 3: Preparation of a draft management plan.
- Step 4: Public consultation (Phase 2) and review of a draft management plan.**
- Step 5: Revisions and finalization the management plan.

In fall of 2014, phase one of public consultation was held in conjunction with the Manigotagan River park management plan process. Approximately 300 responses in total were submitted for both Nopiming and Manigotagan River. These comments along with scientific data, academic resources, and current park policies and principles were considered during the winter of 2015. This document is the draft plan that was developed in steps one and two. With a draft plan complete, the second phase of public consultation will begin. After the consultation and review of the draft plan, the management plan will be finalized. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed in 2016. The process of preparing this draft management plan and co-ordinating the public involvement is the responsibility of a team involving staff from Parks and Protected Spaces branch and regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship.

Once finalized, the management plan will guide the work of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship over the next 10 to 15 years. In this context the plan will be used and examined on an ongoing basis. When an update or new direction on any matters described in this management plan may be needed, a process for publicly reviewing and updating the plan will be undertaken.

The Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected within the context of this draft management plan.

2.0 Background Information

Nopiming Provincial Park was established in 1976. Nopiming is the Anishinabe word for “entrance to the wilderness” and is indicative of the land, as until the 1970s, most of Nopiming was accessible only by water, bush plane or winter roads. Today, the park is situated in the middle of a series of parks along the eastern Manitoba border with two of the largest in the chain being Whiteshell Provincial Park to the south and Atikaki Provincial Park to the north. As well, there are very few major roadways in Nopiming Provincial Park – highway 314 runs north to south (and intersects with highway 304 at the northern edge of the park) and highway 315 which runs east in the southern portion of the park. Both highways act as dispersal points for activities in Nopiming. The remote nature

of the park makes Nopiming a transition area from the developed and populated Whiteshell into the more remote wilderness of Atikaki.

With over a hundred lakes and numerous rivers, the Nopiming area was a natural destination for the first peoples of the area, as well as an important area for wildlife. People were drawn by the lure of gold in the early 1900s; this was the impetus for later development. The history of the landscape on which the park sits begins billions of years ago with the formation of the Canadian Shield and has gone through many changes. The total area of the park is 1,429.1 square kilometres, which includes cottage areas, campsites and backcountry routes while also providing habitat for a variety of wildlife.



3.0 Park Purpose and Role

Under the authority of *The Provincial Parks Act* (2015) Nopiming is classified as a Natural Park. Natural parks are intended to both preserve areas of an ecoregion and accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses. *A System Plan for Manitoba Parks* (2015) describes the purpose and role of each provincial park in Manitoba. The purpose of Nopiming Provincial Park is to preserve areas representative of the Lac Seul Upland Ecoregion (a portion of the Precambrian Boreal Forest Natural Region) and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses.

In addition, the park will:

- preserve areas of habitat for the threatened woodland caribou
- provide nature-oriented recreational opportunities such as canoeing, hiking and mountain biking in a largely undisturbed environment
- provide high quality cottaging, camping, boating and fishing opportunities, and accommodate related facilities and services
- promote public appreciation and understanding of Nopiming's natural and cultural heritage
- accommodate commercial resource uses such as mining where such activities do not compromise other park purposes

Nopiming Provincial Park is divided into four land use categories (LUC) as shown on Map 1. These land use categories further define the purpose of specific areas of the park.

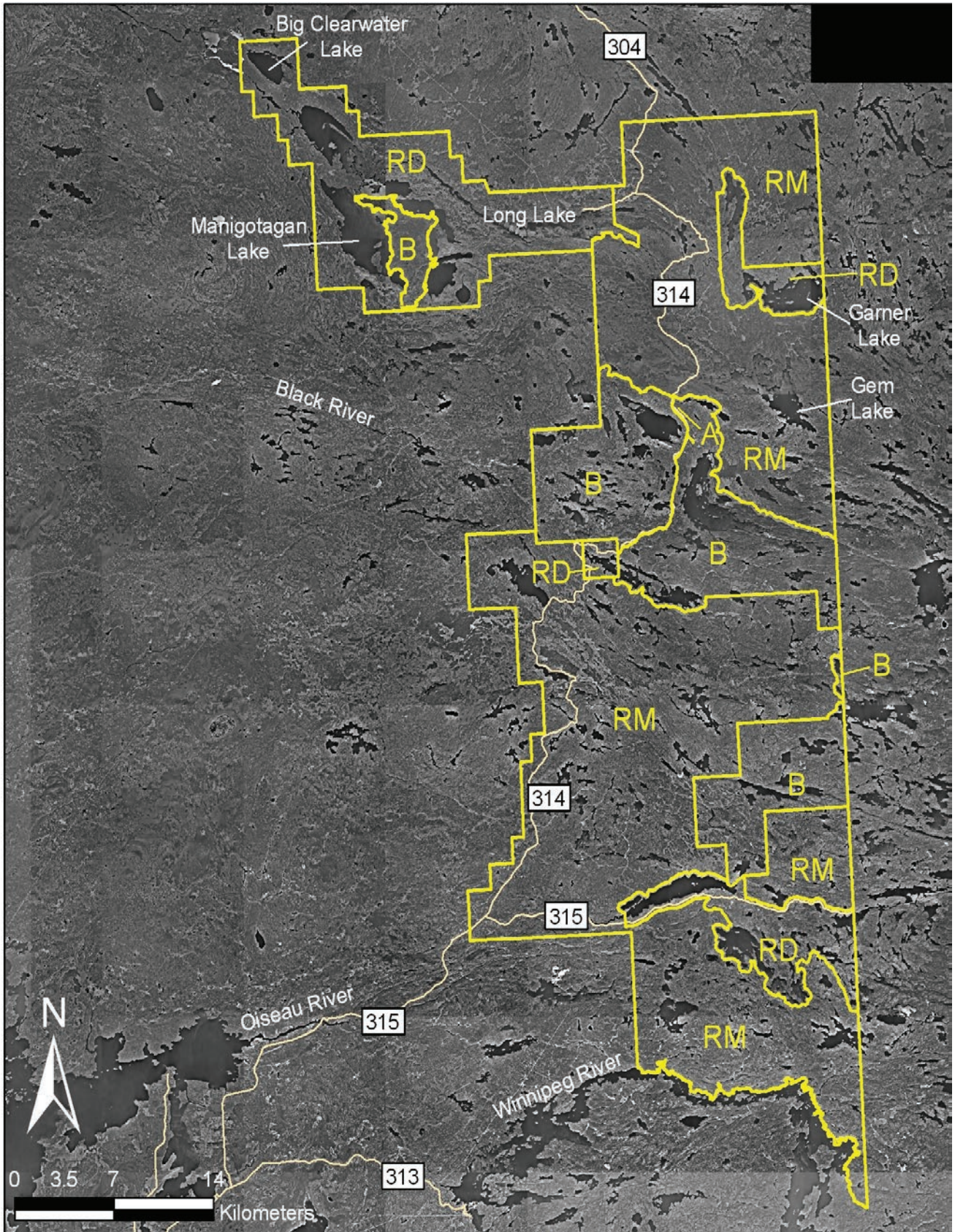
The Backcountry LUC (B) protects natural areas including boreal forest communities and woodland caribou habitat, including notable calving areas. It provides nature-oriented recreational opportunities such as canoeing, fishing, backcountry camping and remote hunting/fishing out camps. The Backcountry LUC comprises 27,301 hectares or 19 per cent of the park.

The Recreational Development LUC (RD) accommodates intensive recreational facilities such as campgrounds, commercial lodges, recreational staging areas, cottage subdivisions and special consideration organizations. Commercial resource use in this area is permitted while recognizing the recreational values of the park. This LUC comprises 27,526 hectares or 19 per cent of the park.

The Resource Management LUC (RM) permits commercial resource opportunities such as mining and wild rice and bait fish harvest. It also provides recreational opportunities including fishing, canoe routes, trails, recreational roads, interpretive signs and existing remote cottages. This LUC comprises 88,040 hectares or 62 per cent of the park.

The Access LUC accommodates PTH 314 through the Backcountry LUC, and consists of 43 hectares or less than one per cent of the park.

Map 1



Nopiming Provincial Park and Manitoba's Protected Areas Network

Nopiming Provincial Park contributes to Manitoba's Network of Protected Areas, which is made up of land, freshwater and marine areas that contain the tremendous biological diversity and unique features found in Manitoba's varied landscapes. Currently, 19 per cent of the park is classified as Backcountry LUC. Lands included in a Backcountry LUC contribute to Manitoba's network of protected areas and legally prohibit commercial logging, mining, hydroelectric development, oil and gas development, peat harvesting and any other activities that may significantly or adversely affect habitat.

Manitoba's goal is to create a network of protected lands that represents the biodiversity in each of its 16 ecoregions. Enduring Features are a collection of landscape types, each characterized by a unique combination of soils and surficial geology (landforms). They are used to identify broad areas of differing biodiversity throughout the province.

Nopiming Provincial Park lies in the Lac Seul Upland Ecoregion. This ecoregion supports boreal forest typical of the Canadian Shield which is dominated by bare granite outcrops, numerous small lakes, and peatlands that transition from fen to bog. Wave-built sand bars and beaches marking ancient shorelines of glacial Lake Agassiz can also be found throughout the region.

These lands provide ecologically significant habitat for a number of both federally and provincially listed threatened and endangered species. The southern park boundary lies along the interface between the boreal forest and Great Lakes- Saint Lawrence forest types. That means this area supports species populations living at the edge of their ranges. Edge populations can be engines of evolution – they maximize species' ability to live in multiple environments, making these areas important for biodiversity conservation.

Interprovincial Wilderness Area

Recognizing the value and ecological importance of this boreal wilderness area, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship have established the Manitoba-Ontario Interprovincial Wilderness Area. Manitoba and Ontario are committed to working together to conserve the ecological integrity of this area, which encompasses over 9,400 square kilometres and includes Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and the Eagle-Snowshoe Conservation Reserve in Ontario, and Atikaki Provincial Park and parts of Nopiming Provincial Park in Manitoba. By managing this cluster of parks and wilderness lands as a single land area, conservation of an integral part of Canada's central boreal uplands will be strengthened now, and in the future.

Map 2



4.0 Park Features: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following sections provide specific background information on the following features that make Nopiming Provincial Park unique in the park system: natural features, recreation and use by park visitors, commercial resource use, cultural features and interpretation. Each section contains the strategic objectives and specific guidelines to support those objectives. Once finalized, the guidelines listed in this section will direct park management actions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the next 10 to 15 years. The final plan will be used and examined on an ongoing basis. Where an update or new direction on any matters described in this management plan may be needed, a process for publicly reviewing and updating the plan will be undertaken.

4.1 Natural Features

Nopiming Provincial Park is characterized by the rock outcrops, lakes and rivers of the Canadian Shield. The exposed Precambrian shield shows the effects of intense glaciation, with the most striking features being the parallel rocky ridges separating the poorly drained depressions with a multitude of small lakes and rivers. Much of the park is dominated by either forests of jack pine and trembling aspen in upland areas and scattered marshes and black spruce/

tamarack bogs in lowland areas. Other boreal trees can be seen here as well, including balsam fir and white spruce.

Along the shallow shores and bays of lakes several aquatic plants can be found including wild rice, cattails, bulrushes, horsetails and sedges. Herbaceous species that are characteristic of the black spruce/ tamarack bog in the park include Labrador tea, wild lily-of-the valley and raspberry. In addition to these herbs, sphagnum moss can be seen carpeting the boggy forest floor. Some familiar understory species in the jack pine and trembling aspen stands include fireweed, wild strawberry and spreading dogbane. In dense evergreen stands, where there is not sufficient light or moisture for thick bush undergrowth, lichen appears. This serves as an indicator species of forest age in Nopiming, and is also a major component in the diet of woodland caribou. Other plant species that are rare or uncommon in Manitoba can be found in Nopiming. These include rattlesnake grass and water lobelia (both very rare in Manitoba), running-pine, hooker's orchids, three-way sedge, tessellated rattlesnake plantain, water bulrush, dwarf bilberry and interrupted fern.

Wildlife that may be found in the park include black bear, boreal woodland caribou, white-tailed deer, timber wolf, lynx, river otter, mink, loon, barred owl and other birds, furbearers and small mammals. The numerous rivers and lakes within the park abound with many fish species, such as, northern pike, walleye and small mouth bass.

Moose and caribou were identified as important species in Nopiming during the public consultation in fall of 2015, and respondents suggested that these species deserve and require additional protection.





Nopiming and surrounding areas represent the southern-most habitats in eastern Manitoba that are still considered capable of supporting viable, self-sustaining populations of moose. Moose habitat is comprised of early-seral mixed deciduous /coniferous forests with wetland complexes and networks of creeks, rivers and ponds. Moose populations are influenced by an interrelated series of human and natural factors. The main threats to moose in the Nopiming area are those influencing mortality rates: hunting, wolf predation and the transmission of pathogenic parasites associated with white-tailed deer. Moose habitat in Nopiming has not previously been considered limited. However, a lack of wildfires over the last 25 years has created concerns that high quality moose habitats are not being regenerated in sufficient supply. While the habitat in these areas is favorable, most of the landscape disturbances in the park area over this period have been of logging origin.

While the habitat in logged areas is favorable to moose, these areas are associated with elevated threats from predation and hunting due to their extensive networks of roads and trails. Between 2000 and 2010, the moose population in Nopiming and

surrounding areas had declined significantly, which triggered a series of management actions in order to curtail the decreasing number of moose. A recent survey appears to show a stabilisation of the moose population. In light of recent concerns with moose in Nopiming, a regional moose management plan will be developed in collaboration with local communities and stakeholders in an effort to maintain a healthy and sustainable moose population in Nopiming and surrounding areas.

Nopiming provides important habitat for Manitoba's southern-most population of boreal woodland caribou – the Owl-Flintstone group – which consists of about 50 to 60 animals. Caribou face a variety of threats, including human developments and natural events which can cause loss of habitat or may alter habitat, exposing caribou to an increased risk of predation and disease. Some protection is provided to the Owl-Flintstone population, by limiting summer access to an area the caribou use for calving. These sensitive area restrictions located around Flintstone Lake in Nopiming were identified in the Nopiming Park Interim Management Guidelines in the 1980s and protection through the Backcountry LUC designation. In 2006, Manitoba developed a conservation and recovery strategy for the species. This was followed in 2011 by a draft action plan specifically targeting the Owl-Flintstone boreal woodland caribou range (as well as the Atikaki-Berens range). The Nopiming Provincial Park Management Plan will function alongside these and any future government policies relating to the management of boreal woodland caribou in Manitoba.

In addition to boreal woodland caribou, other animals that are listed as endangered or threatened under both the federal *Species at Risk Act* (2002) and the provincial *Endangered Species and Ecosystems Act* (2014) are the trumpeter swan, Canada warbler, whip-poor-will and common nighthawk. Other species listed under either act include, the barn swallow, olive-sided flycatcher, northern leopard frog, yellow rail and the eastern wood-pewee.

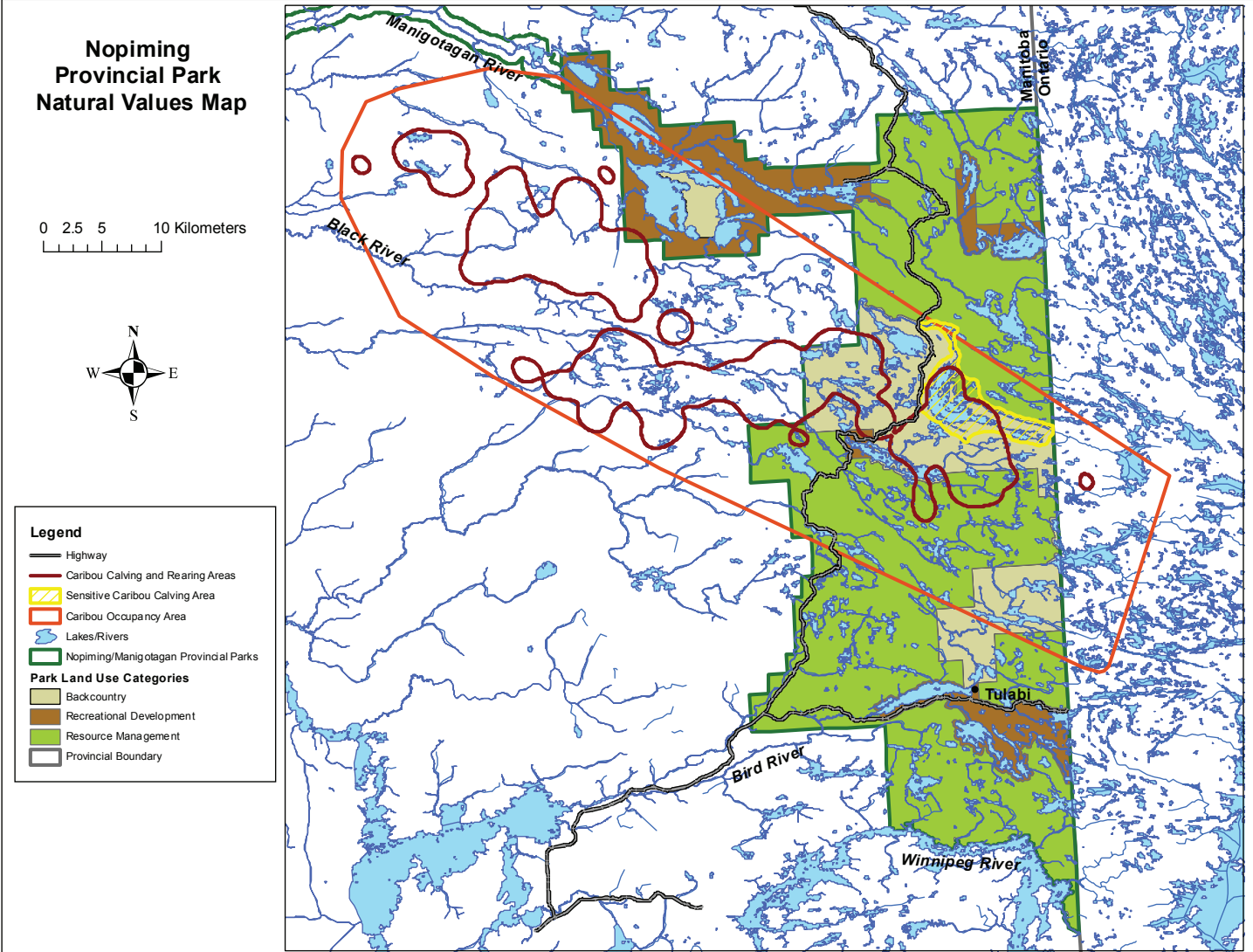


The area around Tulabi Fall Campground was identified as a possible location for an ecological reserve in 2012 due to the occurrence of several important boreal species of birds including the Canada warbler which benefit from the mixed woods along the sloped shorelines, the northern parula which makes use of the old man's beard type moss and the bay-breasted warbler which uses the old growth conifers in the area. This area was not considered suitable for an ecological reserve due to the presence of the campground and recreational infrastructure all ready in place and the location was removed from consideration in 2014. The management of this area will continue to consider the important habitat it provides for boreal birds and any impacts to these species will be considered in future developments.

Nopiming Provincial Park includes significant parts of several river corridors in eastern Manitoba. The Winnipeg, Bird, Black, Rabbit River and Manigotagan rivers are critical for wildlife and provide high quality opportunities for nature-based recreation. These rivers are currently relatively undeveloped in the park portions (with the exception of the Bird River at Bird Lake) but do see a significant amount of park visitors for fishing, hunting and ecotourism activities; all of which depend on their natural environment.

As with all of Manitoba, concerns regarding the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and the potential impact on both the natural environment and water based recreation opportunities are increasing. These concerns are currently managed through both federal and provincial legislation, and by providing information to the public on how to "clean, drain, dry and dispose", to reduce the risk of transporting and introducing AIS to new water bodies.

Map 3



4.1.1 Natural Features: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following guidelines and objectives will guide management decisions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the life of the management plan (10 to 15 years) regarding the park's natural features. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use, have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, or impact the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming, an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed and implemented.

Objective: To support the Wildlife and Fisheries branch's efforts in protecting moose and caribou populations, to minimize park visitor impact on those populations and to seek possibilities of expanding the protected areas of the park to provide additional habitat protection.

Guidelines:

1. Pursue rezoning portions of the Resource Management LUC to the Backcountry Land Use Category in order to provide increased protection. This should be centred on the middle block of the park between the Bird River and Black Lake.
2. Assess opportunities for park expansion along the western side of the park. Any new areas will be established with the purpose of long-term protection of moose and caribou habitat.

3. Work with the Wildlife and Fisheries branch to support initiatives to re-establish and maintain moose and caribou populations within and near the park; this includes the implementation of Recovery Strategies and Action Plans. New developments (including trails, campsites and portages) should be located to have minimal impact.
4. Management actions will be communicated with the Eastern Manitoba Caribou Advisory Committee and the Moose Management Committee; wherever possible, recommendations from the committees will be supported.
5. An updated Sensitive Caribou Calving Area will be used to facilitate the use of the area while protecting caribou habitat during calving (May 1 – July 31). This may include restrictions on motorists, general activity and shoreline use. The area designated and activity restrictions should be posted at access points, and any changes should be in place by March 31 of each year.
6. Work with the provincial wildfire program and the Wildlife and Fisheries branch to investigate long-term fire management options that reflect and support wildlife management objectives.

Objective: To provide additional protection for river corridors within the park.

Guideline:

7. Within 150 metres of the following river shorelines (Winnipeg River, Bird River below Bird Lake, Rabbit River and Manigotagan River), only the following new recreational infrastructure will be allowed: backcountry campsites and portages. No expansion of sites that currently exist will be allowed.



Objective: To provide management guidelines for the area that supports the features and species identified through the former proposed ecological reserve site at Tulabi Falls.

Guideline:

8. Tulabi Falls is an area that has been identified as important to Boreal bird species (including the Canada warbler, northern parula and bay breasted warbler); in the area around Tulabi Falls Campground, any new campground improvements or developments will minimize or avoid impacts to these species.

Objective: To document and avoid impacts on species of special concern.

Guideline:

9. Impacts on known species of conservation concern will be avoided or minimized, and any new developments or locations will be vetted through the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre (CDC) prior to establishment. Any sightings of rare species (gathered through the backcountry survey, regular patrols or personal conversations) will be tracked and shared with the CDC.

4.2 Recreational Use

Nopiming Provincial Park provides a wide range of recreational activities including hiking, camping, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, hunting and snowmobiling.

As part of the first round of public engagement for the park management plan in 2014, respondents were asked what recreational activities they participated in at Nopiming Provincial Park. The five most indicated responses were: camping, canoeing, fishing, walking or hiking, and boating.

Each year traffic counts show some 30,000 vehicles entering the park area – roughly 3,000 at the north boundary and 27,000 at the south. This represents approximately 105,000 people visiting the park annually.

Visitors have the opportunity to enjoy various hiking trails within the park including the Tulabi Falls Trail along the Bird River, the nine kilometre Black River Trail and two self guiding trails (Walking on Ancient Mountains and Fire of '83). Within the park the only

designated winter trails are for snowmobile use. These trails are part of the provincial SnoMan trail network and are located in the southern half of the park.

Overnight visitors to the park have the choice between four provincial campgrounds, one privately leased campground, designated backcountry sites, lodges or cottages.

The provincial campgrounds in the park are Tulabi Falls (36 sites), Black Lake (80 sites), Beresford Lake (28 sites) and Bird Lake (29 sites). From 2010 to 2014, an average of 5,140 camper nights were sold in the four campgrounds combined for nightly camping. All of the sites offer basic amenities with a natural setting and only Tulabi Falls offers electrical sites (19 sites). Plans are underway for construction of yurt sites at Tulabi Falls. Both Black Lake and Beresford Lake offer seasonal sites. The Black Lake seasonal sites have been completely occupied the last 12 seasons, and the Beresford Lake sites nearly so as well, with an average of 35 seasonal sites being sold from 2010 to 2014. For larger groups, Tulabi Falls has one group





use camping area. Currently, boat launches are available at Beresford Lake, Black Lake, and Bird Lake campgrounds to facilitate fishing and boating for campers. There is an unofficial boat launch with no facilities in the Tulabi Falls Campground on Bird Lake, and a canoe launch location on Tulabi Lake which serves as the starting point for the canoe route.

The river and lake system throughout Nopiming has been a valuable transportation corridor for thousands of years. Canoeists today have the opportunity to follow these routes, and experience a variety of backcountry campsites located along the rivers and lakes. A network of canoe routes through a diverse landscape offers a variety of canoeing experiences and links into Ontario's Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and Manitoba's Atikaki Provincial Park. These routes offer a way to enjoy unique areas in the park that many visitors would otherwise not get a chance to experience. Currently, most backcountry sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis, with a few select locations in the park available by reservation. Backcountry camping is only permitted at designated sites. First-come, first-served routes with 78 backcountry campsites include the Manigotagan River from Long Lake to Quesnel Lake, Beresford Lake to Garner, Gem or Long Lake the Seagrim's Lake Chain,

Rabbit River to Cole Lake, and Bird River to McGregor Lake. There are two locations where backcountry camping is managed through the Parks Reservation Service: the boat-in sites on Shoe Lake (seven sites including a designated group use) and the six hike-in sites at Tulabi Falls Campground.

Several companies offer guided canoe expeditions in a variety of trip lengths for people who want to experience the waterways with the help of an outfitter.

Many of the backcountry routes are very popular, especially the Bird River to McGregor Lake and any sites that are accessible by motor boat. The frequent use of these popular routes has led to concerns about garbage and the overcrowding of popular lakes, campsites and destination points. Along the Bird River to Elbow Lake Route there is one private cabin and one private fish and game club located directly adjacent to the canoe route. Both of these developments are issued an annual permit.

There are four private lodges in Nopiming. They are located on the Winnipeg River, Bird Lake, Long Lake and Quesnel Lake. The lodge located on Bird Lake provides a wide range of services for the camping and cottage community in the southern portion of the park (including boat rentals and a general store). The Quesnel Lake Lodge lease also includes a seasonal campground, nightly campground and backcountry campsites.

Organizations which lease areas in the park include a youth camp on Gem Lake and the Department of National Defence (DND), which has a training site at Springer Lake. The DND Springer Lake facility provides training in a wilderness environment and includes simulated exercises. Although these exercises are generally focused on more remote locations, park visitors and cottagers sometimes encounter training groups along PTH 314 and 315 and near the Bird Lake cottage subdivision.

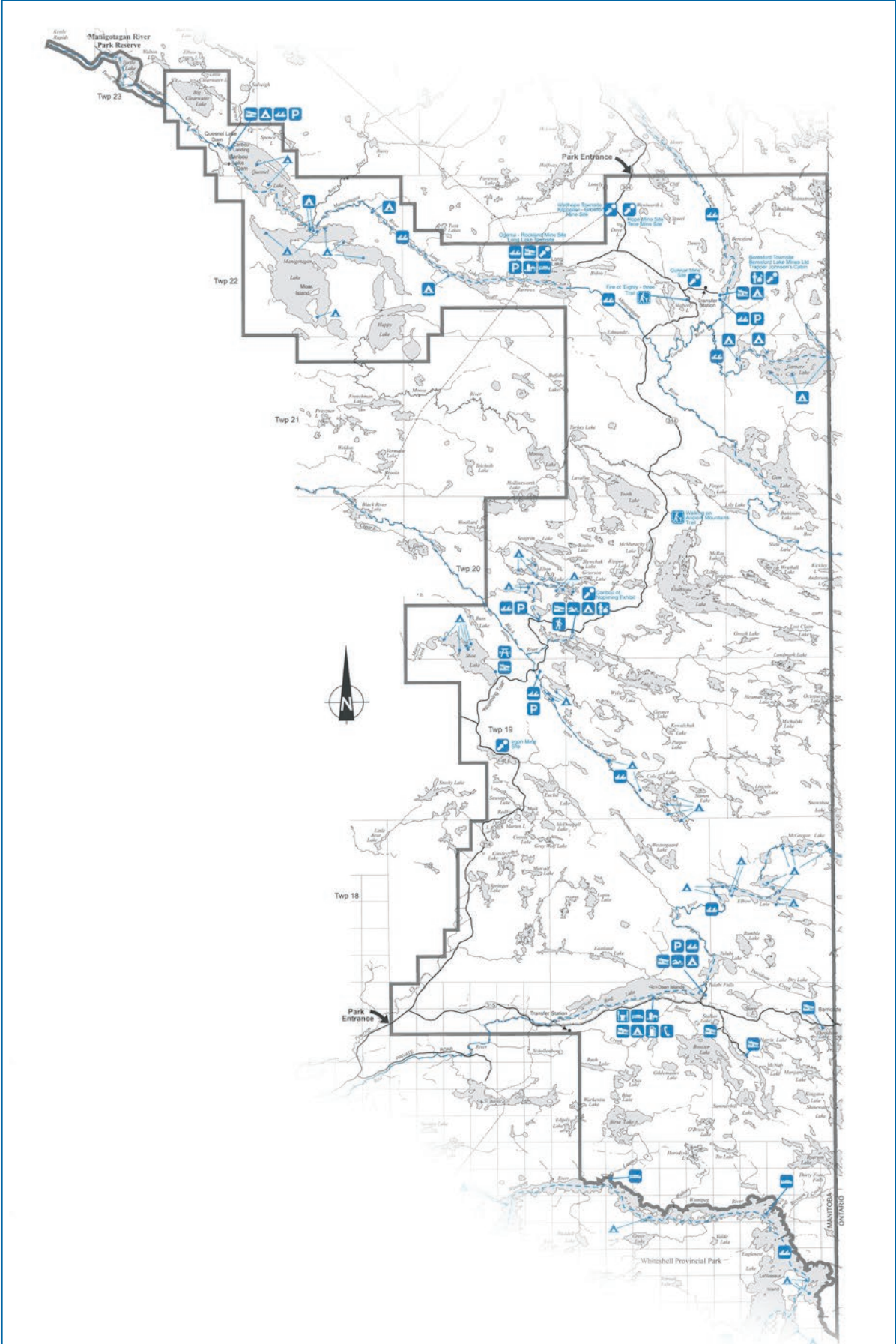
Other visitors to Nopiming Provincial Park include those who lease cottage lots. There are approximately 450 cottages located within the park. Cottage subdivisions are located on Bird, Booster, Flanders, Davidson, Beresford and Long Lakes within the park. Some of these subdivisions have ties to the area's original mining settlements, while others were developed in the 1970s and 1980s. There are also a small number of remote cottages scattered throughout the park, many of which predate park designation. Nopiming is unique in that most cottages are lakefront or lake view, with very few back-tier cottages.

Nopiming is a popular destination for hunting and fishing activities. Nopiming is used by both Manitoba residents and visitors for hunting, and there are several hunting outfitters that operate in the park. In accordance with *The Provincial Parks Act*, hunting in all provincial parks is prohibited within 300 metres of any development (including backcountry campsites). Fishing is one of the main activities for park visitors. Walleye, northern pike, trout, tullibee, whitefish and perch are all common catches by anglers.

Several popular fishing lakes are difficult to access and over time private boat caches have developed along the shorelines. The practice of caching boats by individuals facilitates angling in those more remote locations. However it is currently a non-conforming use with *The Provincial Parks Act* and has often resulted in a build up of garbage and other environmental concerns. During the initial round of public engagement, many respondents indicated they would like the environmental concerns addressed while still having access to high quality lakes.

Due to the remote nature of Nopiming Provincial Park, off-road vehicle (ORV) use is currently a long-standing, non-conforming practice. For many years ORVs have been used to access parts of the park that would be otherwise difficult to get to for angling, mushroom or berry picking, hunting and other activities that have long been a part of the Nopiming landscape. This use has often occurred along roads and trails that were developed through forestry, mining and other resource uses. Due to the rising popularity of ORVs across Manitoba, there are increased concerns for safety, environmental damage and conflicts between park visitor's expectations. Under *The Provincial Parks Act*, any trails for motorized vehicles must be designated. Designated ORV trails within provincial parks that have management plans are listed as a Class II development and require an environmental licence under the *Manitoba Environment Act*. ORV use is prohibited on cottage subdivision roads in accordance with *The Off-road Vehicles Act*.

Map 4



4.2.1 Recreation: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following guidelines and objectives will guide management decisions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the life of the management plan (10 to 15 years) regarding the park's recreational uses. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use, have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, or impact the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming, an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed and implemented.

Objective: To set backcountry route standards (including campsite development levels) that minimize impact on the landscape and protect the integrity of the backcountry experience by addressing concern of environmental damage, garbage and overcrowding.

Guidelines:

10. Site inventory information including locations will continue to be communicated to help minimize impacts and reduce the creation of undesignated campsites. Route surveys will continue to be monitored to assess the number of backcountry visitors and impacts on the natural environment
11. New developments along designated backcountry camping water routes or hike-in backcountry locations will be limited to infrastructure associated with the backcountry campsites and be appropriate for the route type. All designated sites will be equipped with a fire pit, picnic table and pit privy or garden throne. Bear boxes for storage will be provided at high use sites. Portages will be marked and can include minor improvements (stairs, minor boardwalks, and signage). Conservation of natural features will take precedence over development of recreational facilities.
12. Damaged backcountry sites may be closed as necessary. Mitigation measures, education and enforcement will be used to avoid the creation of new sites. Sites should be assessed on an ongoing basis to identify environmental damage and missing or damaged infrastructure.
13. Designated campsites will be evaluated on an ongoing basis for number and location. Any new designation of backcountry campsites will emphasize the quality of experience and protection of natural features over quantity of campsites. Backcountry campsites, canoe route and hiking trail designations will take into consideration increased visitor impact on natural features, archaeological sensitivities, wildlife populations and other users prior to designating.
14. Development of a permit system to manage backcountry camping and mitigate concerns based on the number of available sites, protecting the integrity of the experience (moderate instance of encountering people but ability to experience solitude), and protecting the landscape will be investigated. If a phased approach is taken to permit system development, then emphasis should be placed on locations that have higher use. When developed, any new system should accommodate both guided and individual recreational opportunities.
15. Backcountry travel groups with more than nine people will continue to need a special event permit so that activities can be monitored and appropriate sites used for larger groups.

Objective: To set development levels (minimum and maximum) for each of the four provincial campgrounds.

Guidelines:

16. Bird Lake: Continue to provide sites with a low level of development, while assessing a long-term plan for the campground which may include improved site definition, the inclusion of day use facilities or seasonal sites. Investigate the possibility of offering electrically serviced sites.
17. Tulabi Falls: Continue to emphasize a quality experience over quantity of sites while providing a variety of camping experiences. Tulabi Falls Campground should serve as the Nopiming “Entrance to the Wilderness” main service point. Only nightly options will be provided at Tulabi Falls Campground. Any facility development should be linked to the wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities in the park (fishing, hiking, canoeing, boating, hunting) and provide opportunities for both novice and experienced wilderness users. Campground upgrades may include: additional yurts or hike-in opportunities, potable water and modern washroom/shower facilities. The campground should continue to be a staging area for the Bird River Canoe Route, offer group use camping and provide both basic and electrical service. When possible, opportunities will be pursued to diversify and improve hiking opportunities from the campground through minor trail developments. Any upgrades or improvements should maintain an emphasis on the natural environment, maintain the access and undisturbed view of Tulabi Falls, and protect the natural shoreline of Tulabi Lake. No motor boat launch will be provided on Tulabi Lake; boat launching facilities may be upgraded on Bird Lake.

18. Black Lake: Maintain the nightly and seasonal options in a rustic environment. Any upgrades or expansion to the campground will be done with the intent of minimizing impacts on caribou. Walk-in campsites may be investigated, as well as hiking trail upgrades or opportunities.
19. Beresford Lake: Assess the possibility of some electrification of sites for both nightly and seasonal options, as well as the ability to provide a remote check-in for campers. Emphasis should be placed on providing an experience for campers who want a more independent camping option in a rustic setting.



Objective: Establish guidelines on Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use in Nopiming that reflects ORV use as a long-standing non-conforming practice while addressing the concerns for safety, environmental damage, impacts on wildlife and conflicts between park users.

Guidelines:

20. ORVs are only allowed on trails designated expressly for their purpose. Trails may be designated for year-round or seasonal use, and should serve as access trails to accommodate other recreation. Trails may be managed through partnerships or agreements with stakeholder groups. Trails will not be designated in areas that are incompatible. This includes but is not limited to, areas included in the Backcountry LUC, along canoe routes, in locations sensitive to environmental disturbance and where wildlife populations may be adversely impacted. Trail standards will be developed prior to the establishment, designation and environmental review and assessment under *The Environment Act*.
21. ORV use may occur for licensed hunting purposes under the following conditions:
 - i. *for access to areas for the purpose of hunting deer, moose, or bear along marked identified routes designated in conjunction with Wildlife and Fisheries branch to achieve park and wildlife management objectives*
 - ii. *for retrieval of big game by the most direct route (valid big game hunting licence required)*
 - iii. *under park permits issued by the district to authorize the use of ORVs for hunting related purposes including but not limited to the maintenance of bait stations, and the set up and take down of hunting camps or tree stands*
22. ORV use may occur to access areas for the purpose of licensed angling along marked identified routes designated in conjunction with Wildlife and Fisheries branch to achieve park and fisheries management objectives.
23. ORV access may be authorized by annual park permits for travel to and from remote cottages when practical, when the trail and cottage(s) are not located in a Backcountry LUC and when the travel does not negatively impact other values in area. The permits will only be valid for travel to and from the location specified and will not authorize general park travel. These trails are not exclusive and may also be designated for public use under the criteria above.
24. Registered trapline (RTL) holders may use an ORV on their registered trapline for purposes directly related to their trapping activities. Possession of a valid RTL permit is required.
25. Commercial operators (including outfitters) and service providers may be authorized by park permit to use ORVs for purposes directly related to the provision of their operation or service.
26. Snowmobile access is allowed on frozen water bodies, designated SnoMan Trails, portages and generally used routes. Areas or routes may be closed by notice or sign to address wildlife concerns, unwanted access, environmental or other concerns. No trail clearing or development is allowed except under the authority of a park permit for winter access.

Objective: To mitigate concerns about private boat caches and the associated environmental concerns while still providing access to lakes for angling and recreation.

Guidelines:

27. Private boat caches will only be allowed where designated by signs. Any boats that are outside of designated cache areas are to be posted and removed as they are found.
28. Boat caches will not be designated on lakes that are road accessible, on lakes that have an official boat launch, where increased motorized traffic is a risk to wildlife populations or other natural features, or in a Backcountry Land Use Category. Partnerships may be used to maintain access trails to boat caches.



29. Boats in a designated cache must be clearly marked with owner's name and marked with an annual sticker (to be picked up at Lac Du Bonnet Office). The number of boats may be limited by available space, as decided by the district office.
30. The following lakes have a long-standing practice of private boat caches:

Tooth Lake and Gem Lake: Designate a boat cache at each lake as an interim measure while investigating and developing a plan for a vehicle access point and boat launch. Once the access point and boat launch is in place, the existing boat cache will be removed.

Flintstone Lake: Remove the current cache on Flintstone Lake and promote the lake as a walk-in or portage in (canoe, kayak, light boat) opportunity. Investigate the need for a small parking area off the highway.

Birse Lake and Ryerson Lakes: Investigate the possibility of designating an ORV trail to access the current boat caches at these locations. The potential trails will be assessed for environmental suitability and maintenance requirements. Signage for trail use and a staging area will also be developed prior to designation. Partnership opportunities may be used for maintenance, trail monitoring and trail stewardship. No trail will be developed beyond Birse Lake.

Objective: To provide guidance for any future boat launch developments that support angling opportunities in the park.

Guideline:

30. Any new boat launch development will minimize impacts on other park resources while providing access to angling opportunities. When possible boat launches should be located in a way that allows access year-round.

Objective: To guide development and maintenance of the non-motorized trail network in the park.

Guidelines:

31. Short day-use hikes that are already used locally may be upgraded or considered for official designation when they start from development hubs (campgrounds and cottage areas) where parking and staging facilities already exist.
32. Investigate trail options that encourage a variety of non-motorized uses in multiple seasons (ex: hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, backcountry camping and winter camping).
33. Investigate the possibility of the development of a multi-day hiking trail that is separate from current water-routes.
34. Encourage opportunities for user groups to help in maintaining trails through partnerships and volunteer opportunities.

Objective: To provide guidelines for any future cottage development.

Guidelines:

35. Any potential expansion of current cottage areas will only occur where available lake development capacity exists.
36. Any potential new cottage areas will have a lake development capacity model done prior to development, avoid backcountry camping or canoeing, avoid high quality caribou habitat and only be considered in the south or north portions of the park.
37. No new back tier cottage development.
38. The private cabin located on Elbow Lake, and private Fish and Game Club on McGregor Lake are not allowed any expansion or major renovation. These annual permits should not be reassigned beyond the original permit holders.

Objective: To provide guidelines for future development regarding commercial accommodations.

Guidelines:

39. New Lodges or Special Consideration
Organization facilities are to be only considered in currently developed areas (cottage subdivisions, campgrounds). Current lodges may be allowed expansion, however all developments should provide an atmosphere that is suitable to an outdoor, nature based experience and not duplicate experiences that are already available in the same area. Any new development or expansion proposal will only be allowed where there is sufficient lake development capacity available.
40. Seasonal Campsites on leaseholds are subject to the same guidelines as provincially run campgrounds. As site holders change, existing sites are to be brought into compliance by the leaseholder through direction provided by the district office and the Parks and Protected Spaces branch.

Objective: To provide guidelines for mitigating concerns regarding the Springer Lake Facility.

Guideline:

41. Work with the Department of National Defence (DND) to mitigate concerns around the environmental impact of training sessions while encouraging and facilitating DND to provide information to the public when training occurs and what visitor's can expect to encounter.

4.3 Commercial Resource Use

There are several different types of commercial resource uses that occur in Nopiming Provincial Park including trapping, wild rice harvesting, hunting and fishing outfitters and mining.

Nopiming Provincial Park is part of a registered trapline (RTL) area. This means that a person, or lineholder, is granted the exclusive opportunity to harvest (trap) furbearing animals in a certain area. There are four RTLs located entirely within the park and 12 RTLs that straddle the boundary, all of which are managed by Wildlife and Fisheries branch for sustainable harvest. There are some cabins associated with these lines.

There are several lakes in Nopiming with wild rice leases. Wild rice is not actually rice, but an annual grass that is harvested either mechanically or by hand toward the end of the summer or early fall.

Guided hunting and fishing is offered through licensed outfitters throughout the park. Facilities associated with outfitting include an outpost on Snowshoe Lake and several commercial boat caches. Outfitting along with its associated infrastructure (outcamps, commercial boat caches, lodges and private campgrounds) are managed through the Resource Operators Tourism Licences.

There are commercial boat caches located on several lakes throughout Nopiming Provincial Park including Snowshoe, Tulabi, Ryerson, Cat, Shoe, Gem, Flintstone, Tooth, Happy and Long lake. These caches are currently managed through an outfitter's licence which restricts both the number of boats and what can be stored with them. Generally, the commercial boat caches are not associated with the same garbage and derelict boat concerns as the privately cached boats.

There are multiple mining claims as well as mining exploration projects currently underway in Nopiming. Mining activities can occur legally in Resource Management and Recreation Development LUCs. Rehabilitation and remediation of selected orphaned mined sites in Nopiming is ongoing and done under the management of the Mineral Resources branch.

Extensive forest harvesting operations occurred in Nopiming in the past, but stopped in 2009, when logging was prohibited. There are many former logging roads still accessible in the park. These roads provide access to remote areas of the park and are used for recreational activities.





4.3.1 Commercial Resource Use: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following guidelines and objectives will guide management decisions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the life of the management plan (10 to 15 years) regarding the park's commercial resource uses. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use, have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, or impact the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming, an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed and implemented.

Objective: To provide guidelines for development of remote commercial facilities, including wild rice leases, out camps, commercial boat caches, mining camps, access trails and road developments.

Guidelines:

42. Future Infrastructure applications (outcamps, commercial boat caches) associated with these operations may be considered in locations that do not negatively impact the experience of other users (ex: no cottage subdivisions or canoe routes) and where there is sufficient lake development capacity available.
43. No new infrastructure permits associated with Wild Rice Licences will be granted. Any new allocations should use existing access when possible. Any new access should have an emphasis on avoiding or minimizing trail development.
44. Work toward an inventory of existing roads and trails. Trails that are no longer passable should be removed from the list. Any applications to use or reopen those trails that have been removed from the active list should be treated as new developments.

Objective: To guide the remediation of quarry pits within Nopiming Provincial Park.

Guideline:

45. Any exhausted quarries should be remediated as soon as possible.



4.4 Cultural Features

Archaeological research in the vicinity of Nopiming has provided evidence that various groups of Indigenous peoples lived in the area for at least 8,000 years. One archaeological location produced evidence of a workshop, where tools were fashioned from copper some 4,000 years ago. Some of the cutting and scraping tools were made from local white quartz, while some of the other tools found, crafted from special rocks, are from more distant places like South Dakota and Lake Superior. Since about 1800, most of the east of Lake Winnipeg was the land of Anishinabe (Saulteux), a branch of the Objibwe Nation, who migrated westward from Ontario.

The rich cultural values and heritage of Nopiming Provincial Park are commemorated primarily through different historic sites located in the park. Nopiming Provincial Park is used for rights-based activities by members of several different First Nations. Rights-based hunting and gathering are common and occur in many areas of the park at different times

throughout the year. The park has extensive natural lands where traditional medicines and foods can be found. This management plan acknowledges and respects the exercising of Treaty and Aboriginal rights in the park. Within provincial parks across Manitoba, off-road vehicles may be used when hunting, trapping or gathering for food or traditional ceremonial purposes on lands where there is a right of access. As well, First Nation people who are engaged in traditional pursuits of hunting, fishing or trapping for food, gathering or ceremonial activities do not require park vehicle permits. Park vehicle permits are required for access to services and facility areas and the conducting of commercial activities (with the exception of wild rice harvesting). When possible, accommodation for camping is made available outside of a designated campground providing there are no issues with safety, conservation, environmental or other significant concerns. If concerns about wildlife populations or environmental damage require additional protections that would impact Treaty and Aboriginal Rights, a dedicated consultation process will be undertaken with communities prior to any changes.

It was the fur industry that first attracted Europeans to the area over 200 years ago, but a larger influx came with the discovery of gold in 1911. Mineral claims were staked in areas that are now part of northern Nopiming including, the Long, Beresford and Halfway Lakes areas. After the 1930s, and towards the end of the gold rush, most mining towns in the area were abandoned, and all that was left were remnants of old buildings, abandoned power lines, the tailings and piles of waste rock. Some of this waste rock has disappeared, having been used to construct the Nopiming roadway. Other sites have been reclaimed through Mines and Mineral Branch in recent years. Visitors to the park may find remnants of long-ago mining activity in several areas, and can stop to see the old trapping cabin known as Trapper Johnson's Cabin.

4.4.1 Cultural Features: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following guidelines and objectives will guide management decisions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the life of the management plan (10 to 15 years) regarding the park's cultural features. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use, have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, or impact the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming, an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed and implemented.

Objective: Provide guidance for Trapper Johnson's Cabin and historical mining sites that have onsite interpretation.

Guidelines:

46. No conservation efforts will be considered for historical sites within Nopiming, where possible staff will document significant changes. Trapper Johnson's Cabin will be occasionally monitored. Restoration work will not be undertaken at the site.
47. When historic mining sites are rehabilitated, interpretation will continue to be provided as to the history of the site. When this information is updated it will include any modern rehabilitation efforts. An effort will be made to continue to display onsite any unique artifacts that help to tell the history of the site.

Objective: To provide acknowledgement and guidance for archeological sites within the park boundaries.

Guideline:

48. Disturbance of culturally and/or archaeologically significant sites in the park will be avoided. Information on specific archaeological sites will not be made available to the public if there is a significant risk that increased access or visitation could pose a threat to the sites. Prior to public release of any specific site information, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will confer with Historic Resources branch. Where loss of, or damage to archaeological values due to natural causes is unavoidable, artifacts will be documented and salvaged wherever possible in co-operation with Historic Resources branch.

4.5 Interpretation

Providing outdoor educational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting is one of the purposes of provincial parks as stated in *The Provincial Parks Act*. A Strategy for Interpretation (Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, 2015) outlines the following specific goals for interpretation in Manitoba's provincial parks:

- to provide a range of thematic programs, based on research and planning, to personally connect the visitor to our natural, cultural and historical resources
- to encourage respect, appreciation and a keener understanding of our park resources
- to help make visits rich and enjoyable experiences for all traveller types
- to promote the principles of Leave No Trace to minimize negative human impacts
- work co-operatively with stakeholders and interest groups, aboriginal peoples and other organizations to develop partnerships in the development and delivery of programs, services and facilities
- to encourage and promote the concept of environmentally responsible development and integrated resource management
- to promote public understanding and support of the goals, programs and messages of the Department of Conservation and Water Stewardship

The interpretive program at Nopiming is comprised of interpretive signs, two self-guiding hiking trails and an interpretive park map. There is also a display at Black Lake Campground that highlights Woodland Caribou in the park.



4.5.1 Interpretation: Strategic Objectives and Proposed Guidelines

The following guidelines and objectives will guide management decisions in Nopiming Provincial Park over the life of the management plan (10 to 15 years) regarding the park's interpretation. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use, have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, or impact the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Nopiming an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed and implemented.

Objective: To provide direction for the interpretation in Nopiming.

Guidelines:

49. Develop an Interpretation Concept Plan for the park which will include a resource inventory and identify priority themes to guide development of interpretive products, and include messaging identified in the park management plan. Emphasis will be placed on self-guided products. Opportunities to upgrade and modernize information presented will be through self-guiding trails, onsite signs, visitor led activities (geocaching, borrow bags) and the interpretive park map.
50. Investigate the possibility of development of a south entrance interpretive node to provide an introduction to park interpretation and information to help orient park visitors.
51. Opportunities to provide live interpretation programs will continue to be assessed as part of the implementation of the parks interpretation strategy.

Objective: Provide direction for ongoing conversations about the park with communities and help to provide information about Nopiming as a multi-use park.

Guideline:

52. Look for opportunities to share information and engage local communities and stakeholder groups in the park interpretation, specifically in messaging that focuses on the multi-use nature of Nopiming (camping, canoeing, cottaging, hunting, fishing, trapping) and how all park visitors can share the park.

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