



Saskatchewan River Delta Planning Area Proposed Protected Areas

Proposed Red Deer Wildlife Management Area

163 000 ± hectares

The proposed Red Deer Wildlife Management Area (WMA), located about 30 kilometres south of The Pas, captures a large, relatively pristine wetland landscape. Wetlands provide a range of ecological services to society including naturally regulating water flow, water quality, carbon storage and oxygen release.

A number of inland salt flats are found in this proposed WMA, one of which may be the largest in Manitoba. Inland salt flats are unique habitats and are rare both in Manitoba and globally. The salt springs that create these salt flats are home to dozens of marine invertebrates, provide a source of minerals for wildlife, and support plant species similar to those found in prairie salt pans.

The proposed WMA is home to the Bog Range boreal woodland caribou herd, listed as Threatened both provincially and federally. The shores of Red Deer Lake, located at the south end of the proposed WMA, provide habitat for the Endangered piping plover.

This outstanding, fragile landscape is proposed as a WMA to protect the relatively pristine wetland ecosystems. WMAs are Crown lands which conserve and enhance natural wildlife habitat and biodiversity, and provide opportunities for compatible recreational activities requiring little or no development.



Proposed Big Island Ecological Reserve

218 ± hectares

The proposed Big Island Ecological Reserve is made up of two raised forested “islands” of limestone outcrop surrounded by low lying marsh and fen habitat. These islands, located about 25 kilometres southwest of The Pas, have not been disturbed by a large forest fire for more than 130 years, and have seen very little human disturbance. This makes the site exceptionally unique, and an important reservoir of biodiversity for the region.

It contains pure white spruce stands rare to the area, and old growth forests made up of trees up to 150 years old. The abundance of standing dead trees are important for cavity-nesting birds, insects and other life-forms.

This proposed ecological reserve would be established for the preservation and protection of the old growth forest and locally rare pure white spruce stands. Non-destructive, observational uses such as walking and wildlife viewing would be allowed. All other activities would require prior ministerial approval.

Lake Winnipegosis Salt Flats Proposed Ecological Reserve Addition

4 010 ± hectares

This unique salt flat complex, located off Highway 10 along the west shore of Lake Winnipegosis, is the only known example of a long inland saline shoreline in boreal North America. The plant life found here is a unique mixture of boreal forest, meadow, inland saline, and coastal marine plants.

The halophytic (salt-loving) plants found here are typically found in prairie salt pans and along marine coastlines. They include: red swampfire, Nuttall’s alkali grass, seaside plantain and cosmopolitan bulrush. Other salt-tolerant species rare in Manitoba that occur here include: saltmarsh sand spurry, marsh alkali aster, Mistassini primrose and shooting star.

The proposed protected area addition provides important habitat for migrating birds, the Endangered piping plover, and the yellow rail, a species of Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

This proposed ecological reserve would be maintained for the preservation and protection of the salt flat complex and the several rare and noteworthy species found here. Non-destructive, observational uses such as walking and wildlife viewing would be allowed. All other activities would require prior ministerial approval.



Proposal

- To designate the lands within the Red Deer Lake Wildlife Management Area proposal under *The Wildlife Act*. The protected portions of this wildlife management area would contribute to Manitoba's network of protected areas.
- To designate the lands within the Big Island Ecological Reserve proposal and the Lake Winnipegosis Salt Flats Ecological Reserve Addition proposal under *The Ecological Reserves Act*. These ecological reserves will also contribute to Manitoba's network of protected areas.

Protected areas are land, freshwater, or marine areas where logging, mining, hydroelectric development, oil and gas exploration or development, and other activities that significantly and adversely affect habitat are prohibited through legal means.

The rights of First Nations and other Aboriginal people to access these areas for hunting, trapping, fishing and other traditional pursuits would be respected and would continue in these areas.

What is your opinion on these proposals?

We want to hear your opinion on the proposed designation of three new protected areas in the Saskatchewan River Delta Planning Area in western Manitoba.

Your comments must be received no later than **October 30, 2010**. You can e-mail us directly at pai@gov.mb.ca or you can send your comments to:

Saskatchewan River Delta Protected Area Proposals

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