

Duck Mountain Provincial Park

Draft Management Plan



August 2003



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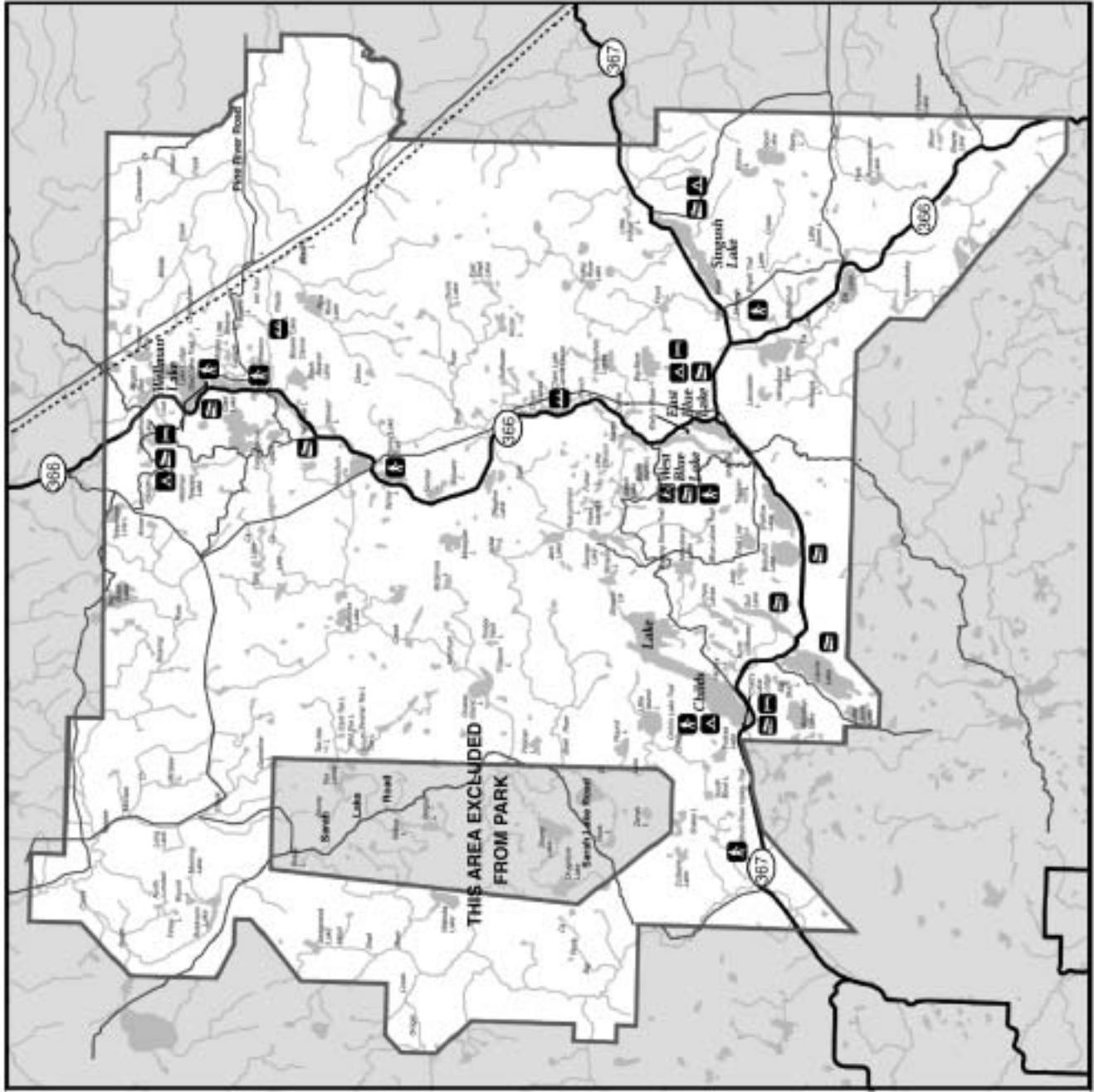


Duck Mountain Provincial Park

Recreation and Development

Legend

- Campground
- Accommodation
- Canoe Route
- Hiking Trail
- Self-Guiding Trail
- Boat Launch
- Road
- Trail
- Transmission Line



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Park Description*

Duck Mountain Provincial Park is an area of forested hills and interspersed lakes, encompassing over 1424 km². River valleys, wetlands and streams are characteristic of the region's glacial origins. Initially part of the Duck Mountain Forest Reserve, Duck Mountain was one of four original provincial parks established in Manitoba in 1961.

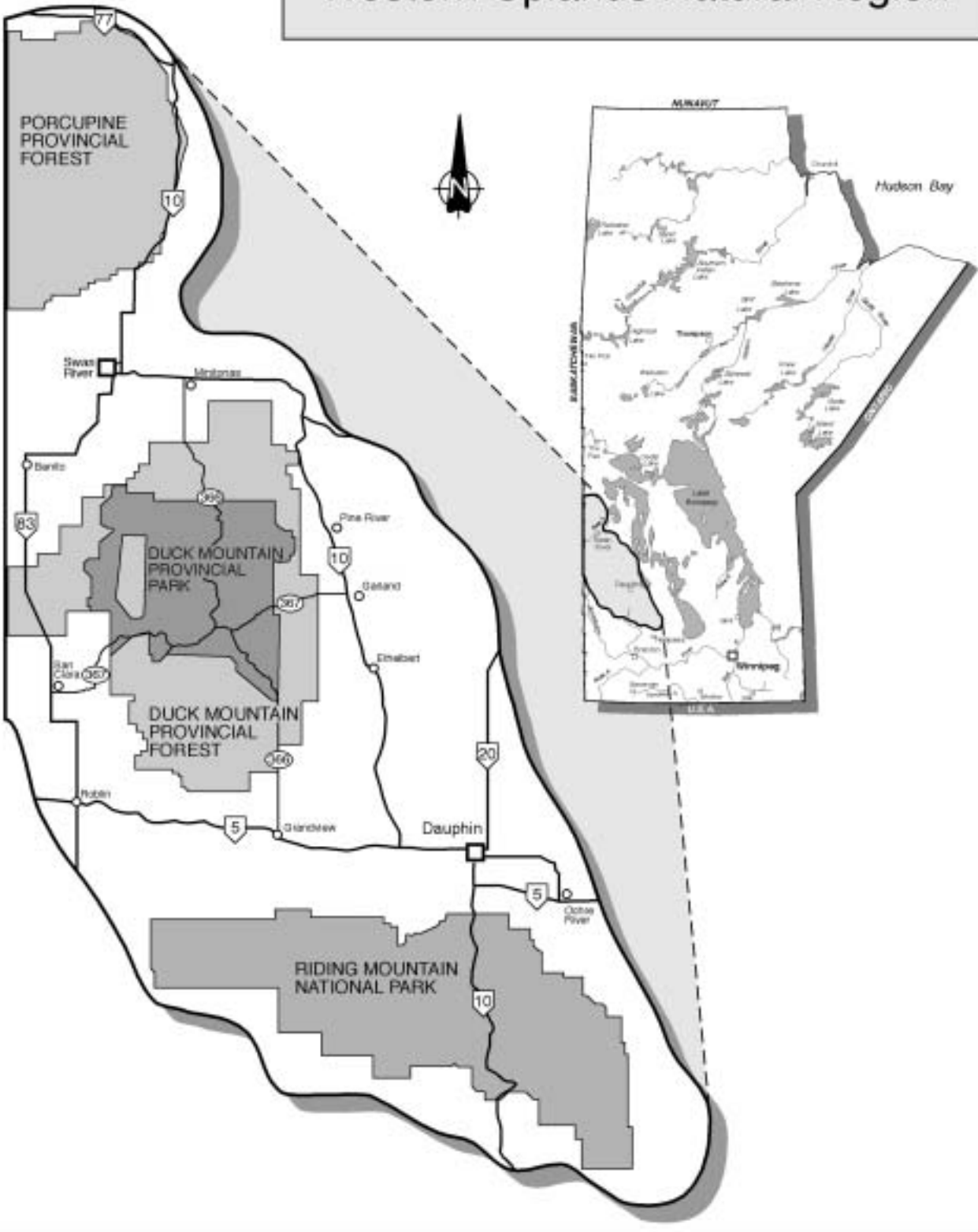
Duck Mountain is part of a long series of highlands in western Manitoba, known collectively as the Manitoba Escarpment. This terraced ridge separates the rolling western plateau from the lowlands of central Manitoba. The park's many lakes and ponds are remnant of glacial times, when meltwater filled depressions in the land forming many pothole lakes. Some of these have since filled in with vegetation to become black spruce bogs. Other lakes, fed by springs and spring run-off, have remained clear.



Duck Mountain Provincial Park is located within the Duck Mountain Provincial Forest. In 1997, significant boundary adjustments occurred to enhance the natural areas of the park. An additional 325 km² of land was added to the park, and park designation was removed from 200 km² of park land to offset the impact of boundary changes on forestry activities. A total of 469 km² of the park was then designated as a protected area, where logging, mining or the development of oil, petroleum, natural gas or hydro-electric power are prohibited.

Due to the varying altitudes and soil conditions, there are three distinct plant communities in the park: boreal forests, deciduous forests and upland meadows. These communities provide a diversity of habitats for large and small mammals, fish, insects and birds. Large mammals include elk, moose, white-tailed deer, black bear, fox, lynx, coyote and timber wolf. A variety of raptors, waterfowl and songbirds nest in the marshes and forests, while the meadows are important elk habitat. Duck Mountain supports a wide range of native and stocked fish species, including walleye, northern pike, yellow perch, lake whitefish, lake trout, brown, brook and rainbow trout, splake, smallmouth bass, muskellunge and Arctic char.

DUCK MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK Western Uplands Natural Region



1.2 Park Purpose

The main purpose of Duck Mountain Provincial Park is to preserve areas that are representative of the Western Upland Natural Region and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses. The park will:

- Provide nature-oriented recreational opportunities such as hiking, canoeing and other trail-based activities in a largely undisturbed environment;
- Provide high-quality cottaging, camping, hunting and fishing opportunities, and accommodate associated facilities and services;
- Promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural features and cultural heritage;
- Accommodate commercial resource uses such as forest harvest, where such activities do not compromise other park purposes.

(Underlined portions of the park purpose statement are revised from the 1997 Provincial Park System Plan to provide a more accurate description of park purpose).

1.3 Classification

Manitoba's Provincial Park System is made up of almost 100 different parks and park reserves. Each of these areas plays a role in conserving ecosystems, preserving natural, cultural or heritage resources, and providing outdoor recreation or educational experiences. Provincial parks are classified as Wilderness, Natural, Recreation or Heritage depending on their main purpose in the provincial park system.

Duck Mountain is classified as a Natural Park. The main purpose of a Natural Park is to both preserve a natural region and accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses.

1.4 Land Use Categories

The Provincial Parks Act requires that all parks be categorized into Land Use Categories (LUCs) to identify the main purpose of broad areas within the park. Duck Mountain Provincial Park contains four of six possible land use categories:

- **Backcountry LUC**
- **Recreation Development LUC**
- **Resource Management LUC**
- **Access LUC**

The two remaining LUC designations, Wilderness and Heritage, are not represented at Duck Mountain. Please see Section 2.2 for additional information about Land Use Categories in the park.

Purposes of Provincial Parks

(5) In accordance with park classifications and land use categories, the purposes of a provincial park system include the following:

- (a) to conserve ecosystems and maintain biodiversity;
- (b) to preserve unique and representative natural, cultural and heritage resources;
- (c) to provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting.

Source: the Provincial Parks Act (Chapter P20).

2. MANAGEMENT PLAN OVERVIEW

This section, together with the accompanying General Land Use Framework, is intended to provide general direction for future park management initiatives and to assist in the resolution of park issues that are not specifically addressed in the management plan.

2.1 Introduction

Duck Mountain Provincial Park is an area of forested hills and interspersed lakes where the spirit of nature abounds. The park is a favorite destination for hunters, sport fishers and outdoor enthusiasts, and has a long tradition of resource use.

The park ecosystem is managed to maintain viable populations of all native species in natural patterns of abundance and distribution within normal ranges of variation. Forest harvest activities operate within a framework of sustainable forest management, and forests are managed as ecosystems to conserve ecological integrity, long-term forest productivity and biological diversity.

Recreational use is centered in the Wellman Lake, Singush Lake, Blue Lakes and Childs Lake areas of the park. These areas are designed to provide park visitors with adequate accommodations and services, while the remainder of the park is managed primarily to provide backcountry recreation opportunities in a natural setting. A park-wide trail system provides opportunities for trail-based recreation, with more extensive trail development near developed areas and fewer trails in more remote areas of the park.

The Pine River area and the Roaring River/Shell River areas are managed as predominantly unmodified natural environments. The Laurie Lake area is reserved to provide future public use development options for the park, beyond the scope of this management plan.

Duck Mountain has, and continues to be used by a number of First Nations communities for physical, spiritual, cultural and economic well being. Traditional uses include spiritual, social and recreational activities, as well as hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. The management plan acknowledges and respects the treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Duck Mountain Provincial Park.



General Land Use Framework Duck Mountain Provincial Park

	Backcountry LUC (Special Mgmt Areas)	Backcountry LUC	Recreational Development LUC	Resource Management LUC	Access LUC
Natural Values					
Environment	Predominantly unmodified natural environment.	Generally unmodified natural environment.	Predominately natural environment except in developed areas.	Predominately natural environment except in active forest harvest areas.	Natural looking environment except for road allowances.
Landscape Manipulation	Not permitted except to maintain natural vegetation regimes.	Not permitted except for trail development or to maintain natural vegetation regimes.	Some as required for recreational development.	Some as required for recreational development and forest harvest.	Site modification as required to provide access.
Protection Status	No logging, mining, gas, petroleum, oil or hydro development.	No logging, mining, gas, petroleum, oil or hydro development.	Managed resource harvest for park management purposes only.	Managed resource harvest may be permitted.	Managed resource harvest may be permitted.
Recreation Values					
Recreational Experience	High opportunity for solitude, tranquility and closeness to nature.	Moderate opportunity solitude, tranquility and closeness to nature.	Opportunity to get away from others but with easy access.	Moderate opportunity solitude, tranquility and closeness to nature.	Low importance.
Reliance on Outdoor Skills	High degree of self-reliance, challenge and risk.	High degree of self-reliance, challenge and risk.	Self-reliance of low to moderate importance. Little challenge or risk.	High degree of self reliance, challenge and risk.	Self-reliance of low importance. Little challenge or risk.
Incidence of Use	Low interaction between users and little evidence of other users.	Low concentration of users but evidence of other users on trails.	Moderate concentration of users and evidence of other users.	Low concentration of users but evidence of other users on trails.	Moderate to high evidence of other users.
Trails	Minimal trail development.	Low to moderate trail development.	Low to moderate trail development.	Low to moderate trail development.	As required to facilitate access.
Facility Development	None.	Limited facilities for sanitation, safety and convenience.	Moderate facilities for public use, sanitation, safety, and convenience.	Limited facilities for sanitation, safety and convenience.	Moderate facilities for sanitation, safety and convenience.

2.2 Management Intent

The management intent for major areas of the park is summarized below.

2.2.1 Backcountry LUC

This 46,851-hectare area is protected from logging, mining or the development of oil, petroleum, natural gas or hydro-electric power. It is a generally unmodified natural environment that includes forests, prairie meadows and river valleys. The southern portion of the Backcountry LUC contains an extensive recreational trail system known as the Mossberry Trails.

Within the Backcountry LUC, two **Special Management Areas** have been created to protect unique natural features and to provide recreational opportunities that depend on an undisturbed environment.

The **Roaring/Shell River Special Management Area** is characterized by glacial spillways, hummocky stagnation moraines, and several prairie meadows, of which Jumper Plains is the best known. Associated features include salt licks, travertine deposits and mineral springs.

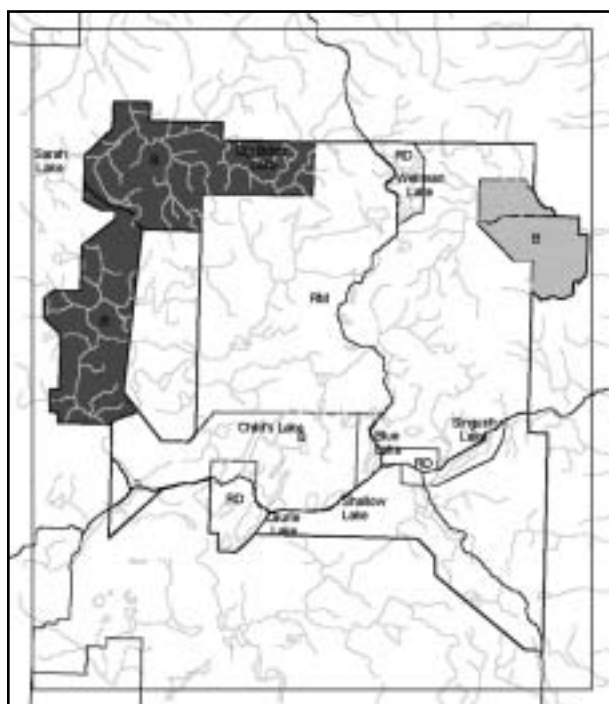
The **Pine Creek Special Management Area** is another largely unmodified natural area on the eastern edge of the Manitoba escarpment. Several tributaries merge into the Pine River to carry water down the escarpment to the surrounding lowlands. This scenic area provides important trout habitat.

Protected Areas Fact

The glacial spillway in Duck mountain Provincial Park is an important feature in Manitoba's protected areas network.

In the West Shell River valley, a unique combination of glacial deposits, regosolic soils and hummocky stagnation moraine can be found, the only one of its type in Natural Region 7.

Special Management Areas (SMA)



- B** Backcountry LUC
- Roaring/
Shell River SMA
- Pine River SMA
- RM** Resource
Management LUC
- RD** Recreational
Development LUC
- A** Access LUC

2.3.2 Recreational Development LUC

The Recreational Development LUC is comprised of four separate areas totaling 8,750 hectares. This area provides both extensive and intensive recreational opportunities. Campgrounds, lodges, cottage subdivisions and public facilities are focused in the Wellman, Singush, East Blue and Childs Lake areas.

2.3.3 Resource Management LUC

This 86,719 hectare area accommodates both backcountry recreation and managed forest harvest. Hiking trails, interpretive trails and canoe routes are located in road-accessible areas (near PTH 366 and 367). In more remote areas, fishers, hunters, hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts are the primary park users. Remote areas are accessed by both motorized and non-motorized means. Ecosystem based forest harvest strategies are employed in harvest areas and harvest is managed to minimize the impact on recreational activities and other resource values.

2.3.4 Access LUC

Road access through the Backcountry LUC and access to adjoining gravel pits is provided by this LUC. The Access LUC accounts for 110 hectares or less than 1% of the park.

3. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES & GUIDELINES

3.1 *Natural Values*

Duck Mountain Provincial Park is situated in the Western Upland Natural Region. The park includes representative examples of several different landscape units, and as well as a number of locally significant sites and natural features.

As part of a larger ecosystem, the natural values of Duck Mountain Provincial Park are influenced by factors both within the park and in surrounding areas. Manitoba Conservation recognizes the role that Duck Mountain Provincial Park plays within this larger ecosystem, and is committed to working with partners and land managers in adjoining jurisdictions to ensure the health and viability of the area.

The guidelines in the Natural Values portion of the management plan are directed at protecting the natural integrity of the park, while providing recreational opportunities and honoring existing resource commitments.



3.1.1 Wildlife Habitat and Special Areas

Duck Mountain supports a diversity of natural communities and wildlife habitat. Wildlife management in the park is primarily the responsibility of the Manitoba Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch. Parks and Natural Areas works in cooperation with Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection to manage and protect natural habitat and wildlife populations in the park.

OBJECTIVE

Protect the integrity of wildlife habitat and natural areas, and ensure that significant or unique natural features in the park are preserved.

GUIDELINES

Identify key natural areas

Key natural areas will be identified on a central Duck Mountain Provincial Park database. This database will be updated as new information is obtained.

Minimize human disturbances

Recreational and resource use in significant natural areas (e.g. wintering areas, prairie meadows, mineral licks, travertine deposits, springs, canyons and valleys) will be managed to avoid excessive disturbances and fragmentation of park landscapes.

Permit review

Prior to the issuance of permits and licences for developments or activities, the application will be reviewed by resource managers to ensure that the proposed activity will not cause undue stress to natural areas and/or wildlife populations, or that negative impacts can be mitigated.

3.1.2 Vegetation

Natural processes such as insects, fire and disease play an important role in the maintenance of natural areas. However, natural disturbances are often absent or suppressed in provincial parks due to the limited land base and the influence of human activities in and around the park area. To maintain the long-term viability of vegetative communities, strategies to enable or mimic natural disturbances under controlled conditions may be required.

OBJECTIVE

Develop a program to facilitate or imitate natural disturbances in areas of the park where these disturbances are known to be absent.

GUIDELINES

Vegetation Management

Vegetation management strategies such as controlled burns, vegetation removal or planting, and pesticide use may be implemented to maintain or enhance significant natural features such as rare or unique plant species, vegetation communities and natural landscapes. Initial focus will be on selected prairie sites in the Shell/Roaring River Special Management Area.

Review Requirement

All vegetation management programs will be reviewed by resource managers in consultation with appropriate technical resources to assess its potential impact on factors such as wildlife, vegetation, water quality, historic sites and recreational values, and to identify an implementation plan.

Control of Natural Disturbances

Where there is no immediate threat to adjacent forestry or property values, natural disturbances such as insects and disease may be permitted to proceed, subject to consultation with Manitoba Forestry.

Fire Management

Wildfires will generally be suppressed as per Manitoba Conservation's Fire Program **Primary Protection Zone** guidelines. Fire management plans may be developed to protect specific sensitive areas of the park.



3.1.3 Water

The waters of Duck Mountain Provincial Park are one of the park's most valued features. Activities such as forest harvest and recreational development must be carefully managed to protect water quality both within the park and downstream, beyond the park boundaries. Siltation, downstream flooding, and non-point source pollution are serious issues which must be considered into all resource management strategies. Nutrient loading from pit privies and septic fields, intensive shoreline development, inappropriate use of pesticides and fertilizers, and spills of fuels and contaminants can also affect water quality and must be handled with care.

OBJECTIVES

Maintain high standards of water quality and natural patterns of stream flow.

GUIDELINES

Water Quality Monitoring

Water quality sampling will be conducted at selected water bodies within the park to establish baseline water quality data. Initial testing will focus on lakes with cottage or recreational development. Monitoring to assess the impacts of other activities such as forest harvest may be conducted as needed or as issues arise.

Sewage Disposal

Pump-out sewage holding tanks generally provide the highest level of protection to surface water and groundwater. Conversion to septic holding tanks is planned as follows:

- Properties with an existing and approved sewage handling system will be permitted to retain their system until such time as upgrading is required.
- Properties needing or wishing to upgrade their sewage system will be required to install a pump-out sewage holding tank. The installation of new septic fields or the upgrading of existing fields will not be permitted.

Lake Water Levels

Lake water levels will be allowed to fluctuate naturally. Manipulation of water levels for recreational purposes other than fish enhancement will not be permitted. Flood control structures operated by Manitoba Water Branch are discussed below; structures for fisheries enhancement purposes in section 3.1.4.

Flood Control Structures

Manitoba Water Branch control structures at Beaver Lake, Pine River Lake, Shanty Lake and Pine River will continue to be operated for flood control purposes.

Public Education

In cottage subdivision areas, Manitoba Parks will work with local cottaging associations and other partners to promote responsible shoreline development strategies aimed at protecting water quality.

3.1.4 Fisheries

The lakes and streams of Duck Mountain host a variety of aquatic species, both native and introduced. Fisheries management in the park has focused on stocking programs to maximize recreational angling opportunities. While stocking will continue to be an essential part of this fishery, protecting the integrity of aquatic ecosystems is also an important priority. Manitoba Fisheries Branch oversees the fisheries management program in the park, and there is a high level of user involvement through local fish enhancement groups.

OBJECTIVE

Protect the integrity of aquatic ecosystems while providing a diversity of angling opportunities.

GUIDELINES

Stocking

Prior to implementing new stocking initiatives (i.e. lakes that have not been stocked for five years or more), resource managers will review the potential impact of stocking on factors such as wildlife, vegetation, historic sites, access, recreational and commercial use.

Special Management Zone

Stocking will not be permitted in the Shell/Roaring River Special Management Area.

Control Structures for Fisheries Management

Control structures for fisheries management purposes will not be permitted in the Backcountry LUC. In other areas of the park, control structures must not alter water quantities (flows and lake-levels) such that water quality or other uses of the lake or stream are impaired.




Use of Fish Toxicants

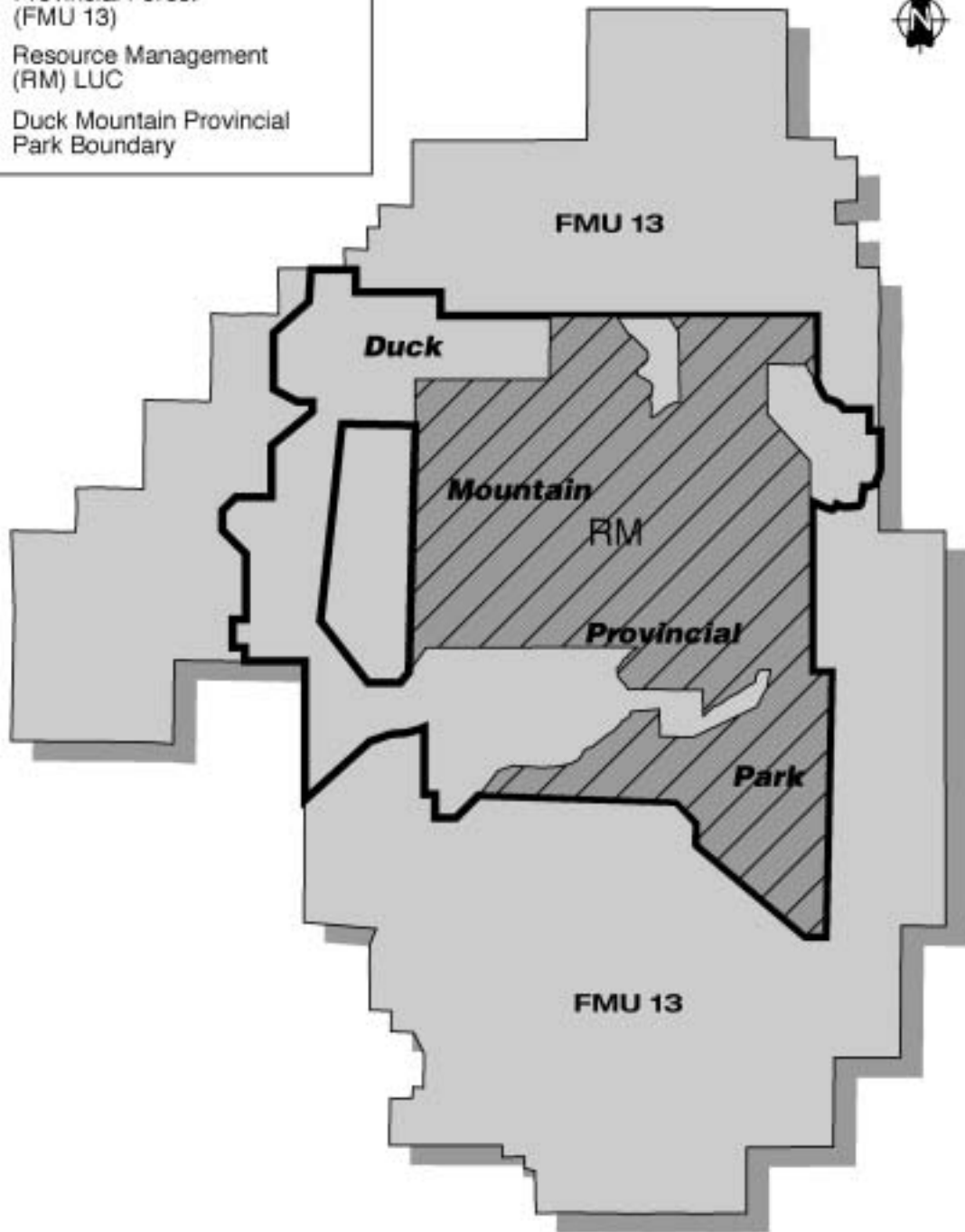
Use of fish toxicants for fisheries management purposes will not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to eradicate an unwanted species that has been introduced to a water accidentally or intentionally without approval).



DUCK MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK
Forestry Management Unit
(FMU 13)

Legend

-  Provincial Forest (FMU 13)
-  Resource Management (RM) LUC
-  Duck Mountain Provincial Park Boundary



3.1.5 Forestry

Duck Mountain Provincial Park is part of a larger forestry unit known as Forest Management Unit (FMU) 13, which is located in Forest Management License (FML) Area 3. Commercial logging occurs in the park in the Resource Management Land Use category (LUC). About 61% of the park lies within this LUC, but only a small percentage of this area is harvested each year.

Manitoba Conservation oversees forestry operations in the park. Planning and implementation of forest harvest activities in areas approved for harvest is primarily the responsibility of Louisiana Pacific Canada Ltd., under licence from the Province of Manitoba. In Duck Mountain Provincial Park, cut blocks are allocated annually to private quota holders who carry out the logging in the park. Forestry activities are determined through processes such as Forest Management and Environmental Licensing. Public input is achieved through Forest Management Plan and Annual Operating Plan Reviews.

OBJECTIVE

Accommodate environmentally sound forest harvest activities in areas of the park designated as Resource Management LUC.

GUIDELINES

Forestry Classifications

For the purpose of Manitoba's Forest Resource Inventory, Duck Mountain Provincial Park has been classified as follows:

- a) Backcountry LUC - closed
- b) Recreational Development LUC - restricted (park management purposes only)
- c) Resource Management LUC - open

Forest Management

Forests are managed to conserve ecological integrity, long-term productivity and biological diversity. Parks and Natural Areas will work with Manitoba Forestry, resource managers and the local forest industry to develop and implement ecosystem based management strategies for forest harvest and renewal and to manage forest harvest to minimize its impact on recreational activities and other resource values.



Special Conditions for Cutting in Park

Special conditions may be applied to cutting plans within Provincial Parks including, but not limited to:

- i) Hauling and operation restrictions (e.g. appropriate dates or times of day may be prescribed).
- ii) Access road limitations (e.g. road in and close out, no circle routes).
- iii) Road closure and crossing provisions.
- iv) Distances from identified natural features, historic sites and recreation areas.

Buffers

As part of standard buffer requirements, additional buffers or management strategies may be imposed to protect recreational and natural park values such as:

- i) Recreation areas and facilities.
- ii) Viewscapes from park roadways, trails, recreation areas, campgrounds, cottage subdivisions, viewing towers and viewpoints, including views which extend beyond the park (eg. Baldy Mountain).
- iii) Significant natural or cultural sites or features.
- iv) Wildlife and wildlife habitat, in consultation with the Wildlife and Ecosystems Protection Branch.

Forest Access Roads

Strategies will be employed to minimize new road construction and duration of operation. Where possible, existing routes of access will be utilized. Where necessary, roads will be gated to restrict public use of forest access roads. Entire roads, portions of roads or water crossings will generally be decommissioned when forestry access beyond these points is no longer required.



3.1.6 Non-Timber Forest Products

The harvest of non-timber forest products is a wide and growing sector of commercial use. On a small scale, the harvest of non-timber forest products may have little impact on the park landscape. On a larger scale, significant changes in species composition, disturbances to natural landscapes and conflicts with other park users can occur.

The term "non-timber forest products" is generally used to refer to marketable plant products, such as leaves, needles, branches, stems, bark, skin, sap, resins, oils, roots, fruit, mushrooms, cones, seeds and flowers of trees and plants. Other potentially marketable, but otherwise unregulated, animal and mineral products are also addressed in this section.

Harvest of non-timber forest products by aboriginal people for domestic purposes, and licenced activities such as logging, fishing, hunting, trapping, gravel and mineral extraction are administered separately by various pieces of legislation and are not part of this issue.

OBJECTIVES

Manage the commercial harvest of selected non-timber forest products in a manner that does not compromise recreational or other resource values.

GUIDELINES

Plant Harvest

Commercial harvest of plant products may be permitted in the Resource Management and Access LUCs only, subject to the following limitations:

- Harvest is limited to species ranked by the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre as "apparently secure" (rank 4) or "demonstrably secure" (rank 5) on a province-wide basis.
- Harvest of species found in low concentrations or non-continuous distributions in the park, and harvest that destroys the plant (e.g. seneca snakeroot, sarsaparilla, calamus), will not be permitted.
- Additional harvesting guidelines and/or assessment of royalties may be applied as determined by the Province of Manitoba.

Injury to park lands

8(1) Except under the authority of an Act of the Legislature or the written authorization of an officer, no person shall deface, injure, destroy or remove any object in a provincial park whether created by natural means or otherwise.

8(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1),

- (a) domestically cultivated flowers and vegetables for personal use;
- (b) annually picked wild fruits and berries;
- (c) surface water taken for personal consumption by means other than a plumbing system;

may be removed from a provincial park.

Source: Manitoba Regulation P20-141/96.

Permit Requirements for Plant Harvest

Parks and Natural Areas Branch will review proposals for the commercial harvest of qualifying plant products in consultation with the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre and Manitoba Forestry. If general requirements are met, the following minimum permit conditions will apply:

- Quantities and area to be harvested will be specified on the permit.
- Permits will be issued on a one-time or annual basis only (no tenure).
- Permits will be issued only for areas where there is no conflict with other park users.
- Harvesting methods must not cause physical damage to the park environment.
- No new trails, roads, access routes, temporary or built facilities will be permitted.

Propagation or Cultivation of Non-Timber Forest Products

Propagation or cultivation of non-timber forest products (plant or animal) is not allowed within the park.

Harvest for Scientific, Educational or Park Management Purposes

Applications for the harvest of non-timber forest products for scientific or educational purposes (plant, animal or mineral) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Harvest of non-timber forest products for park management purposes may be permitted.

Collection of Shed Antlers

Collection of shed antlers may be permitted throughout the park, however the written authorization of an officer is required to remove them from the park.

Harvest Restricted

Permits will not be issued for:

- Plants or plant products from species ranked by Manitoba Conservation Data Centre as rank 1 (very rare), rank 2 (rare) or rank 3 (uncommon) on a global or provincial basis, or species that are otherwise restricted or regulated.
- Animals or animal parts other than shed antlers.
- Animal species not protected by Legislation.
- Mineral products such as decorative rocks and stones.
- Bait fish.
- Wild rice.

3. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES & GUIDELINES

3.2 *Recreation and Historic Resources*

Duck Mountain Provincial Park offers a range of recreational opportunities including camping, hunting, fishing, swimming, cottaging and trail-based activities. It is a place where park visitors can experience solitude, tranquility and closeness to nature. Accessible backcountry areas provide opportunities for challenge and self-reliance in an unspoiled environment ... qualities that are valued and increasingly rare in today's world.

Over time, however, growing numbers of park visitors and an ever-expanding variety of recreational pursuits could change the character of the park as it is now known. Guidelines respecting levels and types of activities are needed to ensure that the park retains its character as a largely undeveloped but relatively accessible natural area for future generations.

The guidelines in the Recreation and Historic Resources portion of the management plan are directed at providing appropriate recreational opportunities, while protecting the natural integrity of the park and honoring existing resource commitments.



3.2.1 Trails

Duck Mountain Provincial Park has a well-established network of trails for both motorized and non-motorized use. These trails provide excellent opportunities for trail-based recreation and are an important part of the recreational experience at Duck Mountain. Trails are routed to avoid habitat fragmentation, damage to sensitive areas, and disturbances to wildlife and other park users.

In general, motorized trails have a more significant impact on the park environment than do non-motorized trails, although both can have an effect. Issues of soil compaction and displacement, noise, removal of vegetation cover, air pollution and aesthetic loss due to scarring of landscapes have been identified. Impacts on wildlife and nesting birds through destruction of habitat, direct harassment of animals and behavioral modifications associated with vehicle use have also been cited. Management strategies to minimize these disturbances are crucial.

OBJECTIVE

Provide a range of trail based recreation opportunities that will enable park visitors to view and appreciate the natural park environment.

GUIDELINES

Trail System Review

A park trails plan will be prepared which will incorporate existing trails or routes for hiking, interpretation, cross-country skiing, canoeing and ATV use, as well as snowmobile trails operated in cooperation with the Snowmobile Association of Manitoba. Opportunities for departmental, public and stakeholder participation in plan development will be provided.

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

A prescribed ATV trail system will be phased in as development and maintenance funds permit. The trails will provide opportunities to tour the park by ATV and will be designed to minimize impact on the park environment. In prescribed trail areas, ATVs will be required to travel on prescribed trails. In areas of the park where prescribed ATV trails have not been implemented, ATVs will be restricted to existing well-traveled trails.

- Trail development will be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and review.
- Implementation will begin in the Recreational Development LUC, followed by the Backcountry, Resource Management and Access LUCs.
- ATV use will be focused in appropriate areas of the park. Trails will not be designated in sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian areas, river banks and soft terrain.
- Routes in remote backcountry areas (e.g. the Shell River/Roaring River and the Pine River Special Management Areas) will be minimized to provide a non-motorized atmosphere in portions of the park.

New Trail Development

New trail development will be minimal and will be routed to minimize impact on natural areas. Proposals for new trail developments or activities will be reviewed to assess potential impact on factors such as vegetation, wildlife habitat and populations, erosion and environmental damage, existing trail density, distance from recreation areas, cultural or historic sites, and potential for user conflicts. Existing trails will be utilized where possible.

Trail Use Restricted

Use of off-road vehicles other than ATVs and snowmobiles will not be permitted in the park. Secondary non-motorized activities such as cycling, horseback riding, or travel by horse and wagon may be accommodated on the recreational trail system at the discretion of the Park Manager.

ATV Use for Work Purposes

Manitoba Conservation may authorize travel off trails for park operation and maintenance purposes or under authority of a permit issued to a commercial operator or registered trapline holders, or for educational purposes, scientific research or reason deemed to be in the public interest.

ATV/Snowmobile Derbies

Requests for special events such as ATV and snowmobile derbies will be assessed based on potential for environmental damage and disturbance to wildlife and other park users. ATV derbies will generally not be permitted in the park; winter snowmobile derbies will not be permitted in the Special Management Areas.

Public Education

Manitoba Conservation will work with ATV and snowmobile organizations to promote environmentally and socially responsible motorized recreation in the park.

Decommissioning of Trails

Manitoba Conservation may close trails to enable rehabilitation of natural areas, reduce trail density or ensure public safety.

Definitions
<p>ATV An all-terrain vehicles (ATV) is defined under <i>The Off-Road Vehicles Act</i> as an off-road vehicle that operates or travels on three or more low-pressure tires; has a seat designed to be straddled by the operator of the vehicle; and has handle-bars for steering the vehicle (<i>The Off-Road Vehicles Act, section 1(1)</i>).</p> <p>Well-traveled trail A well-traveled trail means an existing trail that is well established and regularly used by all-terrain vehicles, but does not include roads used by licensed vehicles such as cars and trucks.</p>

3.2.2 Hunting and Fishing

Duck Mountain Provincial Park has long been a popular destination for elk, deer, moose and black bear hunters. Seasons for upland and migratory game birds and gray wolf are also held in the park.

Fishers are offered a wide diversity of angling opportunities in the park for native and non-native species, both natural and stocked. Motor prohibitions, applicable to all park users, are in place on a number of these lakes to provide a non-motorized angling experience.

The Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch and the Fisheries Branch manages hunting and fishing in the park, in accordance with provincial regulations and policy. To enhance the recreational experience for hunters and fishers, the following park-specific guidelines respecting camping and boat caching are in effect.

OBJECTIVE

Accommodate hunters and fishers in the park by designating backcountry camping areas for licenced big game hunters, and a boat caching area for sport fishers and other recreationists.

GUIDELINES

Camping by Licenced Big Game Hunters

Licenced big game hunters may be permitted to camp adjacent to:

- Designated routes*
- Provincial road right-of ways
- More than one kilometre from an improvement or development such as a road-accessible lake, interpretive trail, site or facility, or active timber harvest area.

Camping will not be permitted adjacent to campgrounds, boat launches or in locations deemed inappropriate by a Natural Resource Officer. Vehicle access to backcountry camping areas is subject to Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch regulations regarding vehicle use in a designated route area.

* *Designated routes are roads and trails specifically identified for hunting purposes as Designated Routes as outlined in the annual Manitoba Hunting Guide.*

Camping Dates Restricted

Camping by licenced big game hunters will be permitted during the period commencing 2 days prior to the opening of the hunting season until the Sunday following the close of the season for which he/she is licenced. Roadside camping adjacent to provincial road right-of-ways will not be permitted until the Tuesday following the September long weekend.

Camping in designated areas

(37) No person shall camp in a provincial park except in an area designated for that purpose by the minister.

Source: Manitoba Regulation 141/96.

Camping Restrictions

The following conditions will apply:

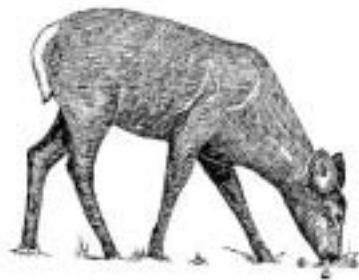
- No-trace camping principles are in effect; no services or facilities will be provided.
- Campers may not cut new trails or obstruct existing trails or roadways.
- Open fires are prohibited.
- Additional conditions may be specified at the discretion of a Natural Resource Officer.

Private Boat Caches

Cached boats will be permitted in designated locations on non-road accessible lakes. Caches must not obstruct paths or impede launch areas or shorelines. The name and address of the owner must be permanently displayed on the boat. Boats with no identifiable identification or stored improperly may be removed by Manitoba Conservation.

Strategy Subject to Revision

If warranted by environmental conditions, high levels of use or other concerns, alternative management strategies such as limitations or permitting requirements on motor use, boat caching or backcountry camping may be implemented at a future date.



3.2.3 Outfitting

Commercial outfitters operate within the park to provide a variety of recreational experiences, including hunting. Duck Mountain Provincial Park has long been a popular destination for elk, deer, moose and black bear hunters. Seasons for upland games, migratory game birds and gray wolf are also held in the park. Duck Mountain Provincial Park is located in Game Hunting Area 18.

The Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch manages commercial outfitters operating within the park, and outfitters are subject to applicable provincial regulations and guidelines. In addition, the following park-specific guidelines respecting outfitting in the park are in effect:

OBJECTIVE

Accommodate commercial outfitting activities while keeping remote areas of the park in a natural and undisturbed state.

GUIDELINES

Outcamps and Tent Camps

The establishment of commercial outcamps will not be permitted in the park, and no new commercial tent camps will be permitted. Existing commercial tent camps may continue to operate subject to the conditions below. Relocation of tent camps to an area outside of the park may be investigated should an appropriate opportunity arise.

Existing Tent Camps

Tent camps held under the authority of an existing licence may be erected two weeks prior to the season for which it will be used. Tent camps must be removed within two weeks of the season's end or when no longer being used on a continual basis (i.e. after two weeks of disuse). Tent camp permits will be issued on an annual basis.

Outfitters' Equipment Left in Park

Equipment such as tree stands and blinds may be set up in the park not earlier than two weeks prior to the season for which it will be used. Equipment must be removed within two weeks of the season's end or when no longer being used on a continual basis (i.e. after two weeks of disuse). Permanent structures will not be permitted.

Identification of Equipment

Equipment left in the park must be clearly identified with the name and address of the owner, and may be removed by Manitoba Conservation if in contravention of these guidelines. Manitoba Conservation is not responsible for loss or damage to equipment.

Commercial Boat Caches

Commercial boat caches may be permitted.

3.2.4 Commercial Development

Commercial facilities such as rental cabins, stores, restaurants and gas stations are located at Wellman, East Blue and Childs lakes. These three centres are in proximity to the most heavily used recreational areas in the park. This level of development is considered appropriate and no additional development centres have been identified in this plan.

OBJECTIVE

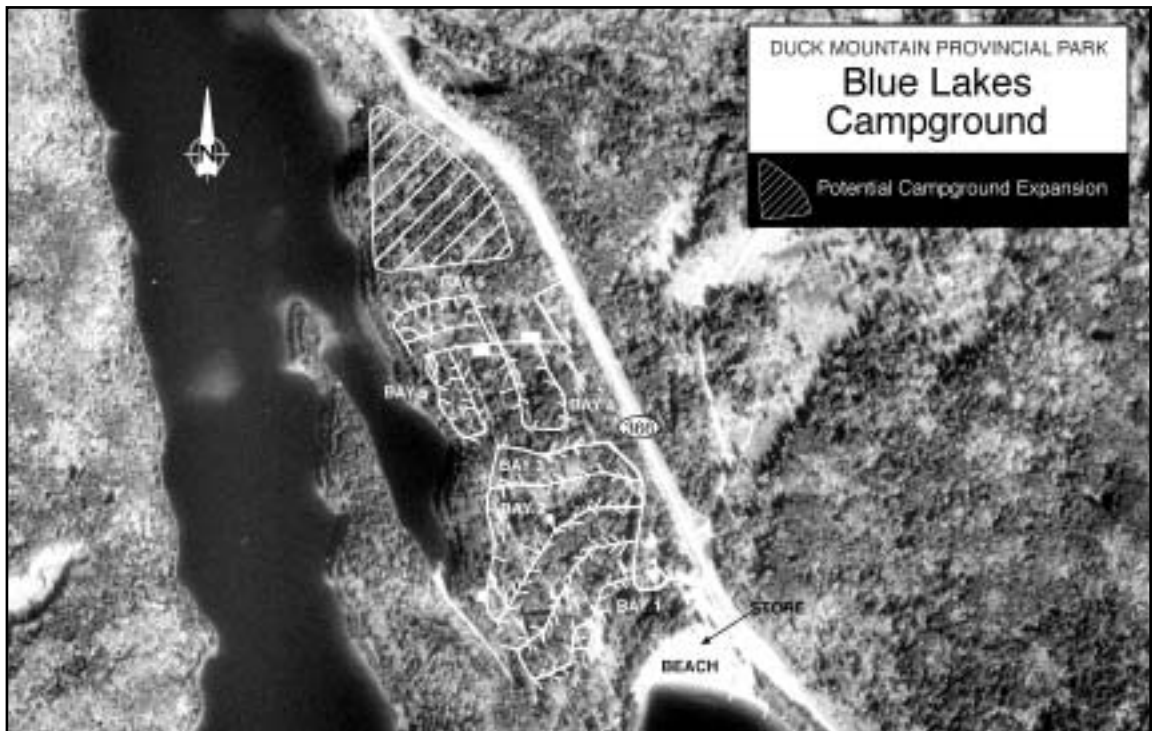
Accommodate commercial development at existing development nodes in the Wellman, East Blue, and Childs Lake areas.

GUIDELINES

General Development Criteria

Proposals for additional development within existing development nodes will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- a) Development proposals must be presented as part of an integrated overall development plan for the site and must demonstrate suitability for a park setting.
- b) Proposals must be consistent with the natural and cultural values of the park.
- c) Proposals must demonstrate a direct benefit to the park and park uses, and must be compatible with existing and adjacent site use.
- d) Proposals must demonstrate economic viability, and will be subject to appropriate review and applicable environmental assessment.



3.2.5 Camping

Occupancy rates at transient campgrounds in the park are generally high, with average weekend occupancy at Wellman Lake in the 50-80% range or higher. Campground occupancy at Blue Lake is also high and is projected to increase.

Backcountry camping is permitted at designated campsites only, except as provided for licenced big game hunters as outlined in section 3.2.2 of this plan. Designated backcountry camping sites are located on the Mossberry Trail and on the Chain Lakes canoe route.

OBJECTIVE

Provide additional camping opportunities at Wellman and Blue Lakes.

GUIDELINES

Campground Expansion

Sites for future campground expansion will be identified at the following two locations:

- Wellman Lake (near northeast shore of Glad Lake)
- Blue Lake (north of existing campground)

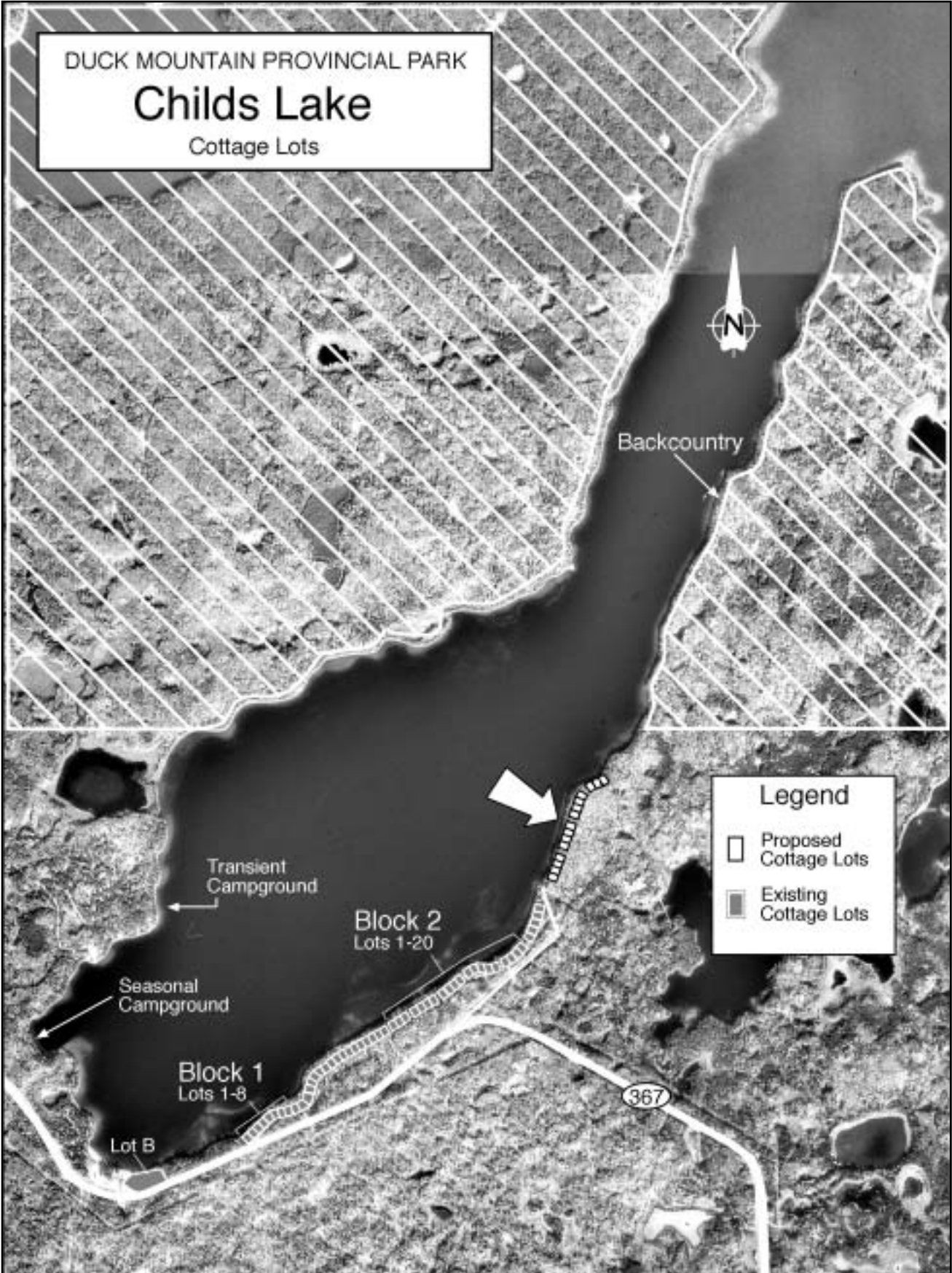
Group Use Area

A site for a new group camping area will be investigated at Wellman Lake (east of existing campground).

Time Frame

Development of expanded facilities is subject to annual budget allotments and will proceed when feasible.





3.2.6 Cottaging

Over the past several years, there has been demand for new cottaging opportunities in the park. New cottage lot development can be accommodated in a number of ways. One is by providing additional cottaging opportunities of already-developed lakes, and another is to open currently undeveloped lakes to development. By focussing new development in existing developed areas, recreational opportunities on accessible, undeveloped lakes can be preserved, and the generally undeveloped character of the park will be maintained.

OBJECTIVE

Provide additional cottaging opportunities at Singush and Childs lakes.

GUIDELINES

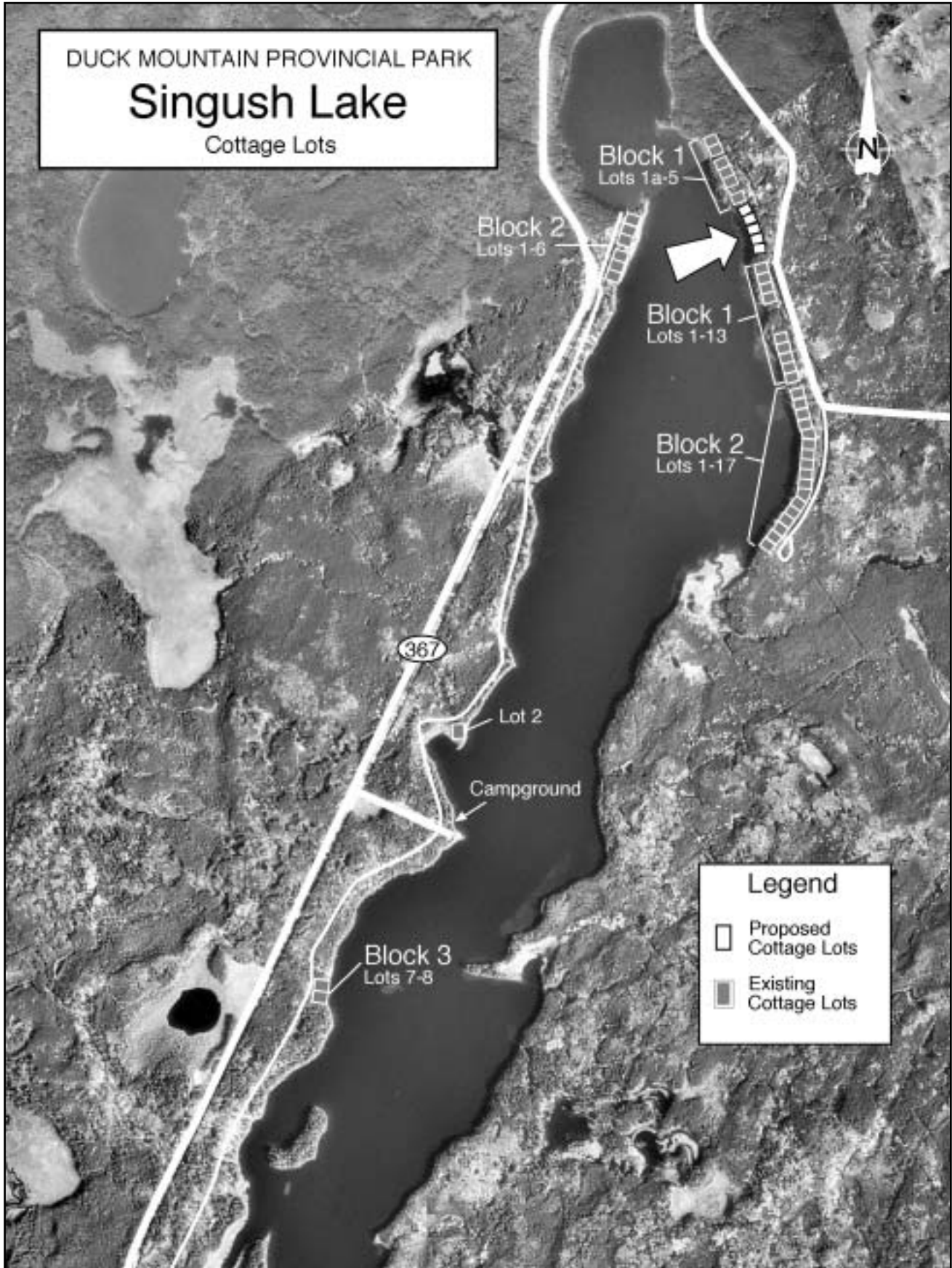
New Cottage Development

New cottage development will be permitted on existing developed lakes only. The feasibility of additional lake-front cottage lots on Singush and Childs lakes will be investigated. Existing back-tier cottage lots at Wellman Lake will continue to be made available.

Development Criteria

New cottage construction will be in accordance with existing guidelines, policies and regulations respecting cottage development. At Singush Lake, hydro development costs incurred by existing cottage owners will factored into new development costs. See section 3.1.3 regarding water quality monitoring and sewage disposal requirements.





3.2.7 Historic Sites

Duck Mountain Provincial Park has a long history of human use by indigenous people and later by trappers, hunters, loggers and recreationists. Duck Mountain's role in the history of western Canada is evident in the remains of historic buildings, logging and work camp sites, fire towers, historic trails, tent rings, arrowheads, poles and Indian campsites. Most of these sites remain unmarked. The Baldy Mountain Hiking Trail, which follows the historic Central Trail from Grandview, leads to an old cabin and stable. Interpretive signs at Baldy Mountain portray the use of Duck Mountain's resources through the ages.

Various inventories of these sites have been compiled, but no one source contains all available information. To ensure that these areas are not inadvertently damaged by recreational or resource use in the park, and to facilitate the recording of newly discovered artifacts in the park, a process for information collection and review is required.

OBJECTIVES

Develop a process to address the potential impact of recreational and resource use on culturally and historically significant areas of the park.

GUIDELINES

Identify Key Historic Sites

Key historic sites and culturally significant areas will be identified on a central Duck Mountain Provincial Park historic sites database. The database will be coordinated with archaeological site information compiled by Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism and will be updated as new information is obtained.

Permit Review

Prior to the issuance of permits and licences for new developments or activities, available inventories of historic sites will be consulted to ensure that known sites are not inadvertently damaged, or that negative impacts can be mitigated.

Minimize Human Disturbances

Recreational and resource use in key historic sites and culturally significant areas will be managed to avoid sensitive areas and to minimize site degradation and disturbance. Where practical, historic trails and routes will be utilized in areas where new trail development is proposed, as a means of providing new interpretative opportunities.



For further information please contact:

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