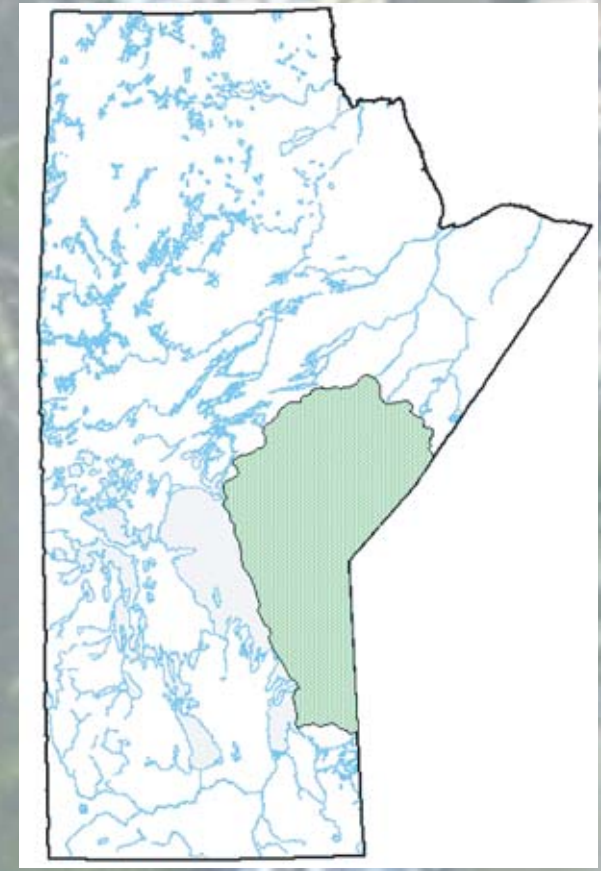


EAST SIDE PLANNING INITIATIVE

East Side Planning Framework



Components to be considered in the planning framework include:

1. a vision statement for the area;
2. a statement of key goals and objectives based upon the needs of the east side area;
3. principles and codes of practice to guide protection of the ecosystem, and land and resource use;
4. guidelines for reviewing future proposals in the area, including procedures for regular review of and changes to the plan itself.

This open house provides you with an opportunity to participate in discussions groups to be held throughout the day and completion of an exit questionnaire here or at home to send to us at a later date.

East Side Planning Context

Since the retreat of the last Ice Age, the environment east of Lake Winnipeg has evolved in which forests and bogs support a wide variety of plants and wildlife, ranging from lichens to moose. It is known as the taiga, or boreal forest.

Key elements in the area's ecosystem include:

- Decomposition of the forests into humus and duff, and development of peat in the bogs;
- Invertebrate animals feeding on the humus and duff, including insects, that in turn are eaten by larger insects;
- Small mammals fed on these insects and on a variety of plants, their populations fluctuated greatly as weather and humidity conditions changed; and
- Larger mammals also feed on abundant plant life; populations of migrating deer, moose and other species fluctuate in response to food supply, forest fires and weather conditions.

Woodland caribou have always migrated within and outside the area in response to the relative abundance of lichens around old-growth trees or in rocky areas.

Many other mammals, large and small, also populate the area. Some feed off other mammals, and populations fluctuate as species continually re-balance themselves in response to food supply, both animal and plant.

Aboriginal people largely settled where major rivers emptied into the Big Lake, Lake Winnipeg. Either near home villages, or farther away as the seasons changed, they lived off the abundant fish, wildlife and plant resources in the area. They have always felt a strong connection to the natural ecosystem of the area, even after changes in their lifestyles due to the arrival of European people and their culture.

Aboriginal people wish to maintain and strengthen traditional ties to the area's natural character, and many non-Aboriginals wish to reconnect with nature. Opportunities for both to meet this desire exist in the area and could offer important economic benefits, including the development of eco-tourism and the growth of renewable resource harvesting activities.

In addition, relatively slow-growth forest areas like the boreal forest in the east side area benefit the global environment by storing carbon. The conservation of the forest in the east side area has major benefits that can be felt outside Manitoba as well.

A sustainable economic future for the east side area is possible and will have important benefits both inside of and far from the east side area.

The Taiga Environment in Manitoba - Dr. W. O. Pruitt, Jr.