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Leskiw, P.D., 2000: Mining sector participation in the Protected Areas Initiative; in Report of Activities 2000, Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines, Manitoba Geological Survey, p. 225.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of World Wildlife Fund Canada's Endangered Spaces Campaign (ESC) is to establish a network of protected areas representing all of Canada's natural regions. Manitoba was the first province in Canada to commit to this goal. Manitoba's Protected Areas Initiative (PAI), in support of government commitments to the ESC, aims to protect representative samples of each of the province's terrestrial natural regions. Designation for protection to the ESC standards, and under Manitoba's PAI, prohibits all resource-extraction activity within the protected area, including mineral exploration and development. Protected areas may be designated as provincial parks or park reserves, wildlife management areas, ecological reserves, etc.

Candidate sites put forward by Parks Branch for consideration for protection have been designed using enduring-feature analysis. These Areas of Special Interest (ASI) are examined by the mining sector for mineral potential. The mining sector technical review is co-ordinated through the Mineral Exploration Liaison Committee (MELC) and its land-use subcommittee. Since 1997, this working group has reviewed sites and ASIs put forward by Parks Branch and made recommendations based on a ranking system designed by industry participants. The working group consists of representatives from mining and exploration associations in Manitoba, Parks Branch (Department of Conservation), Mines Branch and the Geological Survey (Department of Industry, Trade and Mines), and World Wildlife Fund Canada.

Industry participation and consultation for the review of Areas of Special Interest and sites for Manitoba's Network of Protected Areas provides Manitoba with increased certainty related to land-use issues.

PROGRESS

World Wildlife Fund Canada's Endangered Spaces Campaign ended in mid-2000. However, Manitoba's Protected Areas Initiative program has been extended for three more years. An additional 200 000 ha

of the province were placed in protected status when Birch Island, Fisher Bay and Hudwin Lake Park Reserves were designated in the spring. Almost 40 000 ha of Wildlife Management Area lands were also placed in protected status. These actions bring to over 5.5 million ha the amount of land recognized under the Manitoba Protected Areas Initiative over the past decade.

The mining sector supported twenty-three sites for protection in May; in August, MELC ratified a further ten sites for protected status. Mineral rights within these new Rank One sites are under Withdrawal Pending status, while mineral rights within the designated protected lands are fully withdrawn. Rank One means the mining sector has confirmed the site for protection from exploration and mining.

The Manitoba Geological Survey provides technical support to the mining sector review of ASIs, by:

- providing regional and detailed geological and mineral-deposit information, as required, to gauge mineral potential in ASIs;
- performing mineral-potential assessments for all ASIs by summarizing relevant information from assessment reports, mineral-deposit and mineral-inventory reports, and other technical information;
- compiling and distributing digital geological and geophysical base maps on which mineral dispositions (e.g. claims, permits and leases) and mineral-occurrence information are represented; and
- representing the Department on the communications steering committee, whose purpose is to facilitate smooth operation of the mining sector review process.

In 2000, mineral resource assessments for 34 Areas of Special Interest, Wildlife Management Areas and proposed ecological reserves were generated by the Manitoba Geological Survey for review and potential protection.

