

# The Manitoba Water Strategy



April 2003



Protecting  
& Managing  
*our Future*

Manitoba   
*Building for the Future*



Dear Manitobans:

I am pleased to present *Manitoba's Water Strategy* for the future. It is a holistic approach to protecting our water - from watershed to tap. Our goal is to support and maintain our ecosystems while meeting the water needs of all Manitobans, today and tomorrow. Preserving our water is one of the most significant challenges facing our generation.

This strategy is part of a public process to engage Manitobans in creating a new approach to safeguard, manage, and sustain the use of our precious water resources. With the release of the water strategy discussion paper by my predecessor, the Honourable Oscar Lathlin, we started a process of engaging Manitobans to determine sustainable goals and techniques for the management of water within our borders.

The Manitoba government already has many initiatives in place to protect our drinking water. We have also acted to improve flood protection. By developing a broad and flexible water strategy to accommodate a variety of needs, we will be prepared for the future.

Public feedback at workshops has helped guide the water strategy development and ensure the province is on the right track. Public consultation will continue with renewed emphasis on Aboriginal and northern residents. Manitoba's water strategy must reflect all Manitobans' views and we will work hard to ensure you have an opportunity to tell us what you think. The development of the strategy continues to be a dynamic and flexible process.

We are proposing a three-pronged approach of new legislation, improved financial foundations, and integrated water planning and management on a watershed basis. There will also be further consultation with Manitobans on the implementation of this approach. Through this water strategy we will demonstrate our commitment to sustainable water management in Manitoba.

Your partnership in this exercise is vital to our success. Thank you for your continued participation.



Sincerely,

Steve Ashton  
Minister of Conservation

<b>Manitoba's Vision and Mission</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
Protecting our Water for the Future	4
Manitoba...The Land of 100,000 Lakes	5
Lake Winnipeg - A Prairie Ocean	6
Manitoba's Water - Working Together	7
<b>2. Discussion of Current Initiatives</b>	<b>9</b>
Water Quality	10
Conservation	12
Use and Allocation	13
Water Supply	14
Flooding	16
Drainage	18
<b>3. Implementation Framework for Manitoba's Water Strategy</b>	<b>19</b>
I. The Development of an Integrated Water Planning and Management System	20
II. The Review and Consolidation of Water Legislation	21
III. The Development of the Mechanisms for Financing Water Management and Planning	22
<b>4. Summary</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>24</b>
Manitoba's Watersheds	24
<b>Manitoba Water Policies Summary</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>28</b>

## **Manitoba's Vision**

An abundance of high quality water to support and maintain our ecosystems and provide for the present and future needs of all Manitobans.

---

## **Manitoba's Mission**

Manitoba has an abundance of lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater. Water is key to the economic and physical health of Manitobans. Wise stewardship of this natural heritage is critical to the well being of Manitobans and to the protection of this legacy for future generations. Manitoba will be a leader in integrated water and land use planning and management on a watershed basis. We will continue to build capacity for Manitobans to conserve our valuable water resources in partnership with all levels of government, industry, interest groups, and individuals. A key determinant of this vision is the degree to which we protect and enhance all of our vital aquatic resources.

It is up to all of us.