

River Road Provincial Park

Draft Management Plan

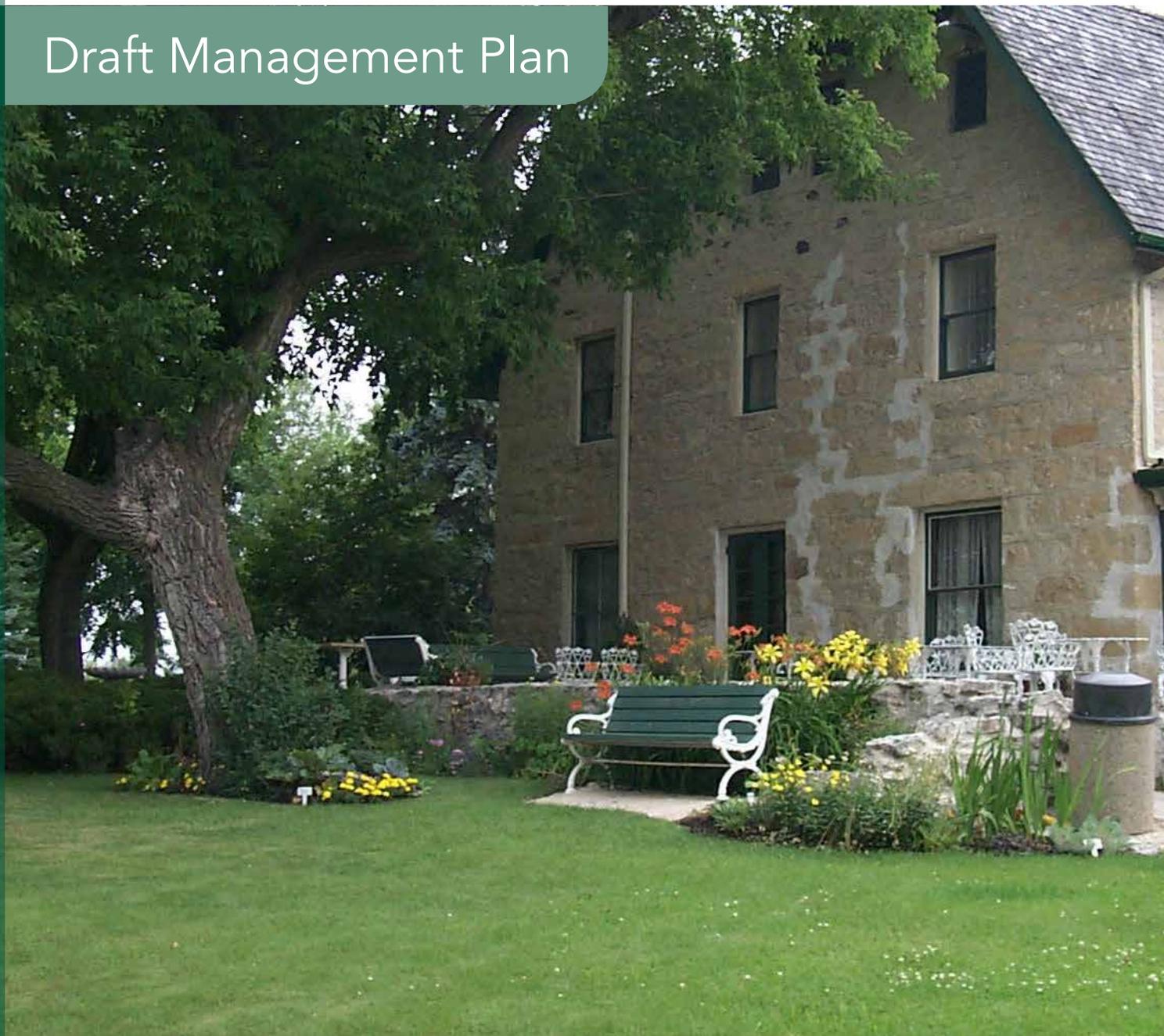
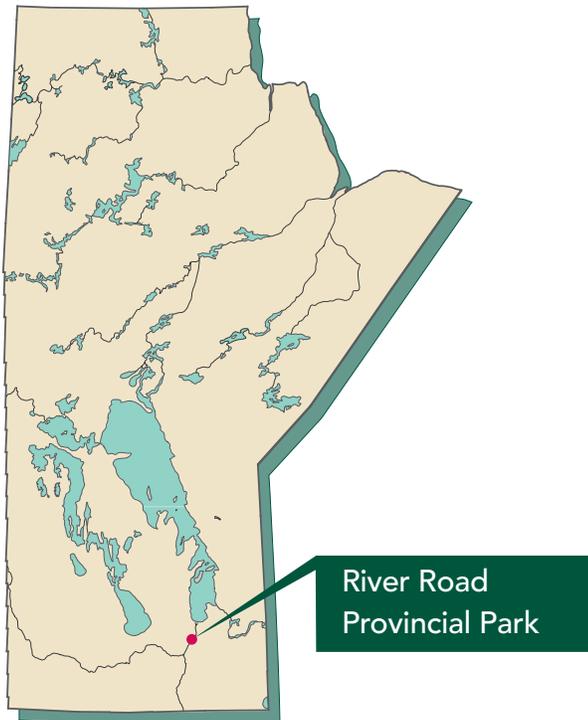


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1. Introduction

The Provincial Parks Act (1993) requires that a management plan be prepared for each provincial park. Management plans establish long-term direction for parks and address issues pertaining to resource protection, land use and development. They are to be used in conjunction with park regulations, directives and other departmental and government policies. The process of preparing the management plan for River Road Provincial Park and co-ordinating the public involvement process was the responsibility of a team involving staff from the Parks and Natural Areas branch, regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, and a consultant contracted to work on the project.

The management plan for River Road Provincial Park is based on its role in Manitoba's system of parks and the participation of those who use and care about the park.

The treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within River Road Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected.

2. Park History

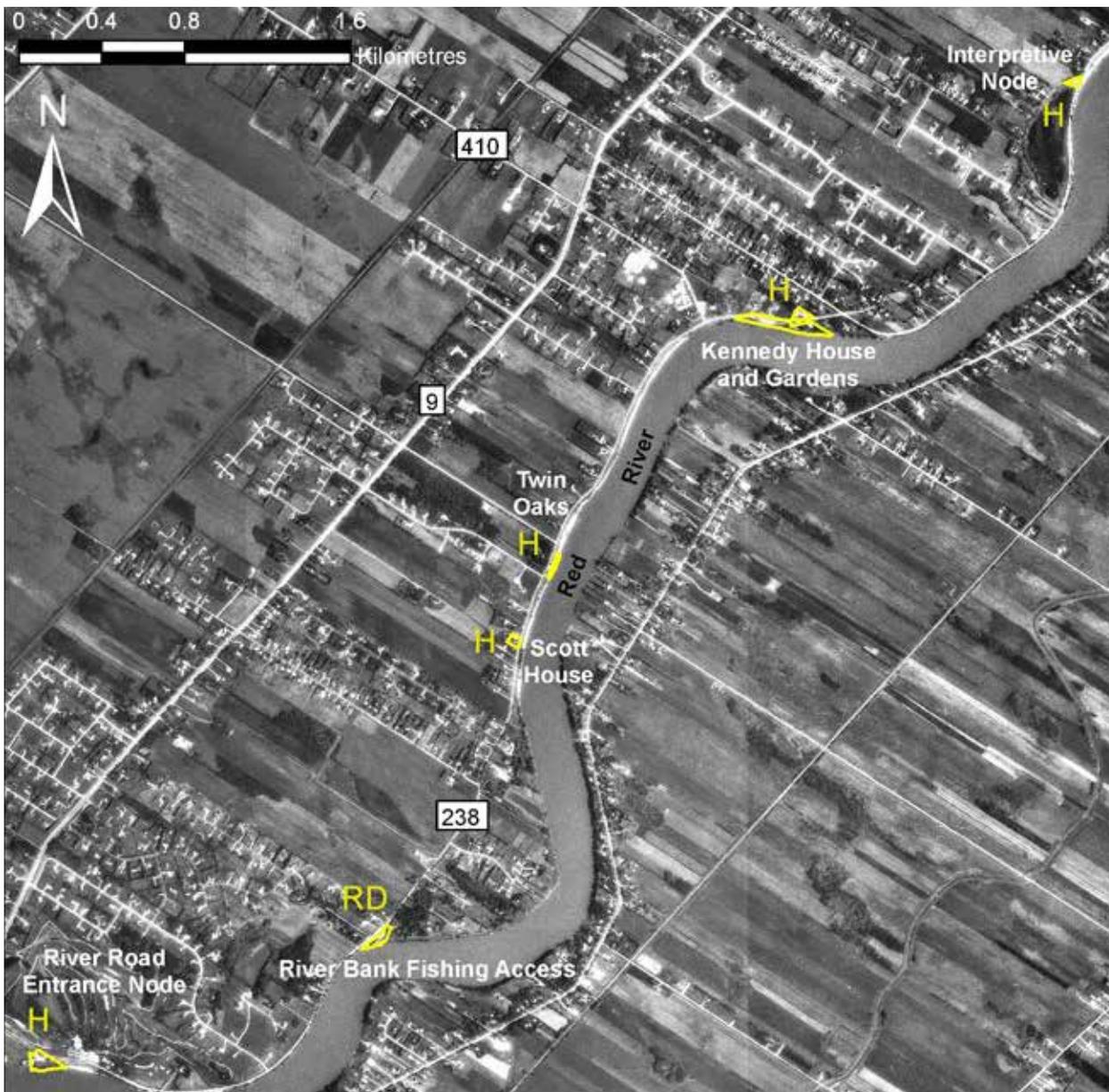
River Road Provincial Park is comprised of six small distinct parcels of land located along a stretch of Provincial Road 238 (River Road) south of Highway 44. This ten kilometre segment of road is a portion of the original route between Upper and Lower Fort Garry created by the Red River settlements of Parkdale, St. Andrews, Lockport and Little Britain. It is now a popular drive offering many scenic views of the Red River. The six parcels of River Road Provincial Park provide access to the Red River for fishing, feature houses and ruins of houses built of stone during the Red River Settlement, and provide information about the old quarry site from which much of the stone was excavated.

A highlight of the park is Kennedy House and its adjoining formal gardens, which was home to Captain William and Eleanor Kennedy in the 1870s and 1880s.

The River Road Parkway was developed under the Agreements for Recreation and Conservation (ARC) program in the mid-1980s and designated a provincial park in 1997.

The park's historical significance is augmented by its proximity to some significant neighbouring features. The Red River is a Canadian Heritage River, St. Andrew's Church is a provincial heritage site, and St. Andrew's Rectory is a national historic site. Additionally, Lower Fort Garry is a national historic site located four kilometres north of the park on Highway 9.

River Road Provincial Park Map



3. Park Attributes

The total area of the six sites that comprise River Road Provincial Park is 4.9 hectares. The sites are located along a ten kilometre stretch of River Road (Provincial Road 238) along the west bank of the Red River south of Highway 44. There are six distinct parcels of land that make up the park. From the south, the parcels are: the River Road entrance node, riverbank fishing access, Scott House, Twin Oaks, Kennedy House and gardens, and the north entrance interpretive node. A maintenance yard is located across Provincial Road 238 from Kennedy House.

3.1 Natural

The dominant natural feature shared by this park's sites is the Red River, which has a large diversity of freshwater fish. The River Road entrance node is well situated to provide public access to view the river and the combination of natural vegetation and historic structures along the road also provide diverse and scenic views.

3.2 Recreational

The riverbank fishing access site provides access to the Red River for fishing. All the other sites offer interpretive and day-use opportunities, including some picnicking with minimal facilities. A tea room, formal gardens and modern washrooms are offered at Kennedy House. River Road entrance node is often used as a meeting and parking area for people travelling along River Road.

3.3 Cultural

The Red River settlement was a major development during the initial settlement of the Canadian West. Between 1820 and 1870, the Hudson's Bay Company granted land along the Red River to retired officers of the Company, who became the aristocracy of the community (Manitoba A.R.C. Authority Inc., 1982).

The park commemorates the sites of 19th century culture including Scott House, Twin Oaks, and Kennedy House and promotes appreciation and public understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the Red River settlement in the area.

Constructed circa 1855, the Scott House was a small stone house typical of the homes built during the Red River settlement. No restorative measures have been taken and it currently exists as a picturesque ruin.

Formerly Miss Davis' School for girls, the Twin Oaks property is privately owned and not part of the park. The land that makes up this part of the park is located on the east side of the road and contains a small roadside stop with a cairn and sign that refer to the house.

Constructed in the Early Gothic style in 1866, Kennedy House was originally known as Maple Grove (Manitoba Natural Resources, n.d.). The house was carefully restored for use as a museum and was designated a provincial heritage site in 1985. The site also contains formal English gardens. An interpretive plaque and pamphlets describe the history of the house (Butterfield, 2003). Personal interpretation is provided through the summer as well.

The north entrance interpretive node is the site of the quarry that supplied much of the material for the buildings of the Red River settlement. It contains interpretive information about Duncan McRae, a stonemason responsible for building many stone structures during that time.

Interpretive signs at all sites describe the history of a Métis family living along the Red River during the time of the Red River settlement.

3.4 Commercial Operations

A lease agreement with the province allows for the commercial operation of a tea room within Kennedy House. The remainder of the building houses a museum, operated by the province.

Sites within River Road Provincial Park



River Road Entrance Node



River bank Fishing Access



Scott House



Twin Oaks



Kennedy House and Gardens



Interpretive Node

4. Park Management Framework **4.3 Land Use Categories**

4.1 Classification

Manitoba's provincial park system is made up of almost 100 different parks and park reserves. The role of an individual park within this system is identified by its classification. Classification descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

River Road Provincial Park is classified as a Heritage Park. The main purpose of a Heritage Park is to protect a unique or representative site containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value in accordance with *The Provincial Parks Act (1993)*.

4.2 Park Purpose

Manitoba's provincial park system was established to conserve ecosystems and maintain biodiversity; to preserve unique and representative natural, cultural and heritage resources; and to provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities in a natural setting. Within this larger framework, individual parks contribute towards the overall objective of the provincial park system.

A System Plan for Manitoba's Provincial Parks (1997) states that the purpose of River Road Provincial Park is to preserve several sites containing 19th century homes, promote public awareness and appreciation of these sites and provide recreational opportunities along the Red River. The park will:

- Commemorate the sites of 19th century culture including Scott House, Twin Oaks, Kennedy House and north entrance interpretive node
- Promote appreciation and public understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the Red River and the settlements along it
- Provide opportunities for picnicking, fishing and viewing of the historic Red River, a Canadian Heritage River

Land Use Categories (LUCs) identify the important attributes of broad areas within a provincial park. Land may be categorized in Wilderness, Backcountry, Resource Management, Recreational Development, Heritage or Access LUCs. LUC descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

Most of River Road Provincial Park has a Heritage (H) LUC, constituting 90% of the overall park area (see page 6). The main purpose of this category is to protect a unique or representative site containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value. River Road Provincial Park provides:

- Five sites including the River Road entrance node, Scott House, Twin Oaks, Kennedy House and gardens, and the north entrance interpretive node
- Kennedy House features a teahouse, museum and floral garden area. (NOTE: the tea house is commercially operated)
- Interpretive nodes feature interpretation signs providing information about cultural features and their significance

The riverbank fishing access site has a Recreational Development (RD) LUC, constituting 10% of the overall park area (see page 6). The main purpose of this category is to accommodate recreational development.

- This site provides access for Manitobans, including those with disabilities, to the Red River for shore fishing and picnicking

5. Management Guidelines

5.1 Natural Values

Erosion along the riverbank affects some of the sites and needs to be managed to ensure public safety and integrity of the sites.

Guidelines

1. The River Road entrance node, riverbank fishing access and Kennedy House sites will be monitored for shoreline erosion and appropriate mitigation measures will be taken.
2. Shoreline vegetation will be maintained as much as possible to help mitigate shoreline erosion.

5.2 Recreation

Each site along the River Road Parkway offers varying levels of day-use facilities.

Guideline

1. Day-use facilities will continue to be provided at each site. Kennedy House and gardens will provide high level facilities. Riverbank fishing access site will provide universally accessible basic facilities for interpretation, picnicking and fishing. The River Road entrance node, Scott House, Twin Oaks and the north entrance interpretive node sites will provide basic facilities for interpretation.

5.3 Cultural and Heritage Resources

River Road Provincial Park preserves and celebrates several cultural features that depict the Red River settlement. Scott House has cultural significance as a remnant of the Red River settlement. Over the years the structure deteriorated significantly and it was eventually fenced off for public safety reasons. Minimal intervention has been undertaken to slow the deterioration of the house ruins. Kennedy House is also a stone building, though in much better condition than Scott House, and is subject to a more intensive maintenance program to retain its structural integrity. Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship regularly consults with the Historic Resources branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism on matters pertaining to the historic structures in the park.

Guidelines

1. A plan for reutilization of the Scott House will be developed in collaboration with the Historic Resources branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism that will:
 - Celebrate and interpret its cultural value as a house typical of the Red River settlement,
 - Represent the form, scale and mass of the original house with appropriate character defining elements,
 - Minimize the need for specialized maintenance of the walls and structure while ensuring it does not present a risk to public safety.
2. In consultation with the Historic Resources branch, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will continue to monitor Kennedy House and carry out maintenance and restoration work to retain its cultural value and structural integrity.

5.4 Interpretation

Providing outdoor educational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting is one of the purposes of provincial parks as stated in *The Provincial Parks Act*. Interpretive information is available at each site in the park and focuses on the Red River settlement through the years 1850 to 1900. Personal interpretation, provided by staff from Birds Hill Provincial Park, has been available at Kennedy House through the summer although attendance has been very limited at times.

Guideline

1. Interpretive information will continue to be provided through signage and publications such as maps, brochures, and the Parks and Natural Areas website. Live interpretive programming will focus on special interpretive events at Kennedy House, other sites in the park, and Lockport Provincial Park on a regular basis through the summer operating season as well as pre-booked programs such as school tours.

5.5 Commercial Operations

Commercial activity within a park has the ability to enhance or detract from the park experience and must be managed to best suit the park environment and user needs. River Road's historical setting is of particular value to the park experience.

Guideline

1. Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will continue to provide a commercial opportunity within Kennedy House that is consistent with park purpose and respectful of the site's historical and cultural setting.

Appendix A – Park Classification and Land Use Categories

Park Classifications

In accordance with section 7(2) of *The Provincial Parks Act* (1993), all provincial parks are classified as one of the following types:

- (a) a wilderness park, if the main purpose of the designation is to preserve representative areas of a natural region;
- (b) a natural park, if the main purpose of the designation is both to preserve areas of a natural region and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses;
- (c) a recreation park, if the main purpose of the designation is to provide recreational opportunities;
- (d) a heritage park, if the main purpose of the designation is to preserve an area of land containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value;
- (e) any other type of provincial park that may be specified in the regulation.

Land Use Categories

In accordance with section 7(3) of *The Provincial Parks Act* (1993), all provincial parks are categorized into one or more of the following land use categories:

- (a) a wilderness category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect representative or unique natural landscapes in an undisturbed state and provide recreational opportunities that depend on a pristine environment;
- (b) a backcountry category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect examples of natural landscapes and provide basic facilities and trails for nature-oriented recreation in a largely undisturbed environment;
- (c) a resource management category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to permit commercial resource development or extraction in a manner that does not compromise the main purpose of the park classification;
- (d) a recreational development category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to accommodate recreational development;
- (e) a heritage category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to protect a unique or representative site containing a resource or resources of cultural or heritage value;
- (f) an access category, if the main purpose of the categorization is to provide a point or route of access in a provincial park or a location for a lodge and associated facilities;
- (g) any other category that may be specified in the regulation.

Bibliography

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