

Marchand 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, use and development of park land. The process of preparing this draft management plan and co-ordinating the public involvement process is the responsibility of a team involving staff from Parks and Natural Areas Branch, regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and a consultant contracted to work on the project.

The Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Marchand Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected within the context of this draft management plan.

2. Park History

Marchand Provincial Park is one of several provincial parks that were designated in 1974. These parks were designated to serve as wayside parks, or highway rest stops. The federal and provincial governments hoped that by establishing such parks, people would be encouraged to travel across Canada. Today, the park functions as day-use area and staging area for nearby recreational trails.

3. Park Attributes

Marchand Provincial Park is a small park, comprising only 1.78 hectares (0.02 square kilometres). It is located in the southeast corner of Manitoba, within the Sandilands Provincial Forest. The park is approximately nine kilometres east of the community of Marchand and about 80 kilometres southeast of the city of Winnipeg.

3.1 Natural

Marchand is located in the Lake of the Woods portion of the Manitoba Lowlands Natural Region. The park lies on a vast sand and gravel ridge that underlies the southern half of the Sandilands Provincial Forest. This ridge is one of many that were deposited in the area during the last period of glaciation (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011).

As is characteristic of the Sandilands region, the area in and around the park is dominated by jack pine forest. Common species of vegetation found alongside the jack pine include blueberry and bearberry shrubs, lichens and mosses (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011). This area also provides suitable habitat for a variety of wildlife, including white-tailed deer, black bear, ruffed grouse and other birds and small mammals (Smith et al., 1998).

3.2 Recreational

Visitors to Marchand Provincial Park can expect a natural-looking setting within a developed area, and the potential for interactions with other park visitors. The park is primarily intended to provide opportunities for day use recreation and to act as a staging area

for the network of trails adjacent to the park. As such, facilities are limited to picnic tables, a picnic shelter, fire pits and non-modern washrooms. Over time, the evolution of a number of highway access points to the park has created a safety concern. The park is regularly used by local people for picnics and family gatherings. A number of trail systems wind through the Sandilands area and are used for a variety of recreational purposes, including cycling, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and off-road vehicle riding (although use of off-road vehicles is not permitted within the park). The cross-country ski trails are maintained by the Sandilands Ski Club. Concerns have been raised in the past about the potential impact of all-terrain vehicles on the trails in the area, as well as on the local ecosystem.

3.3 Additional Features

Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship's Marchand Fire and Maintenance Base is located directly behind the park.

Also located within the Sandilands Provincial Forest and only a short distance south of the provincial park is the Pocock Lake Ecological Reserve. Ecological reserves are protected areas that are created to preserve unique and rare biological and geological features. Pocock Lake Ecological Reserve was designated to protect Pocock Lake and part of an ancient beach ridge. Generally, recreational activity within the ecological reserve is prohibited, however recreationists may not be familiar with that restriction or with the boundaries of the ecological reserve.

Marchand Provincial Park Map



4. Park Management Framework

4.1 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. Classification descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

Marchand Provincial Park is classified as a Recreation Park. The main purpose of a recreation park, as defined in *The Provincial Parks Act (1993)*, is to provide recreational opportunities.

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 Marchand Provincial Park is to provide outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting in south-eastern Manitoba. According to that plan, the park will:

- serve as a staging area for cyclists, horseback riders, snowmobilers and cross-country skiers using trails in and adjacent to the park
- provide picnicking and day use opportunities for residents of south-eastern Manitoba

4.3 Land Use Categories

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

All of the land comprising Marchand Provincial Park has been categorized as a Recreational Development (RD) LUC. The main purpose of this categorization is to accommodate recreational development.

5. Park Management Guidelines

The following guidelines will direct park management actions in Marchand Provincial Park.

5.1 Natural Values

1. The park will be maintained as a natural-looking area that is characteristic of the surrounding landscape.

5.2 Recreation

1. Basic facilities for day-use activities will be provided.
2. The park will be used to provide information to users of adjacent trail systems about recreational activities and environmental concerns in the area.
3. A plan will be developed to reconfigure the park road to provide one access point to the park from the highway.

6. Implementation

This management plan will be reviewed in 10 to 15 years, or as may be required. The management plan is to be used in conjunction with park regulations, directives and other departmental and government policies.

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.

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