



# Caribou River Provincial Park

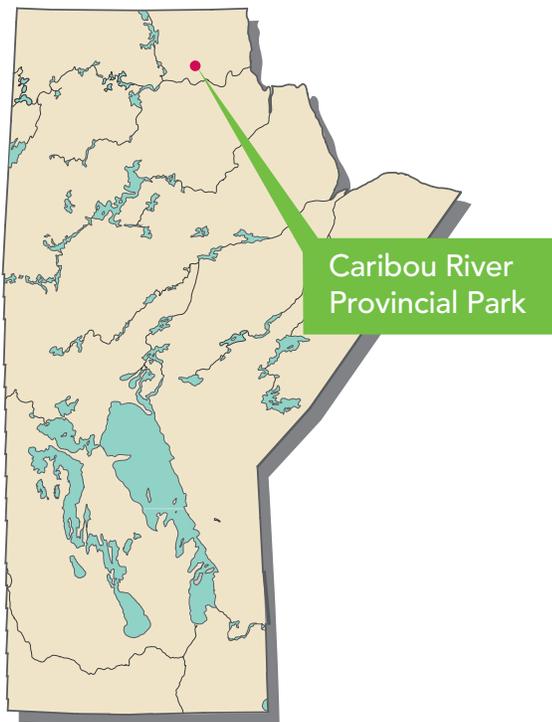
## Management Plan



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This management plan for Caribou River Provincial Park was prepared under the authority of *The Provincial Parks Act*.



## 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 management plan for Caribou River 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 plan is to be used in conjunction with park regulations, directives and other departmental and government policies and legislation.

The process of preparing this management plan and co-ordinating the public involvement process was the responsibility of a team involving staff from Parks and Protected Spaces Branch, and regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship.

Preparation of the management plan involved a number of steps. The first step was to review the current operation of the park, its attributes, and its history of use. Information collected through that process was used to prepare a draft plan. The public was invited to comment on the draft plan. Involving

park users was an important part of preparing the management plan. Public input was primarily collected through the Manitoba Parks website. Once the public consultation process was completed in October August of 2014, the plan was finalized based on planning objectives and any new information received through the consultation process.

This management plan will guide the work of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship over the next 10 to 15 years. In this context the plan will be used and examined on an ongoing basis. Where an update or new direction on any matters described in this management plan may be needed, a process for publicly reviewing and updating the plan should be undertaken.

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

## 2. Background

Caribou River Provincial Park was established in 1995, and is located in the north east portion of Manitoba along the Manitoba/ Nunavut border. The park is 7,640 km<sup>2</sup> and is characterized by the Caribou River system. This wild and pristine waterway is marked by rapids and waterfalls and is only accessible by aircraft or an extended canoe or snowmobile trip. The park landscape is a transition between the boreal forest and tundra regions. Permafrost restricts the growth of trees, while eskers and ancient glacial beach ridges dominate the landscape.

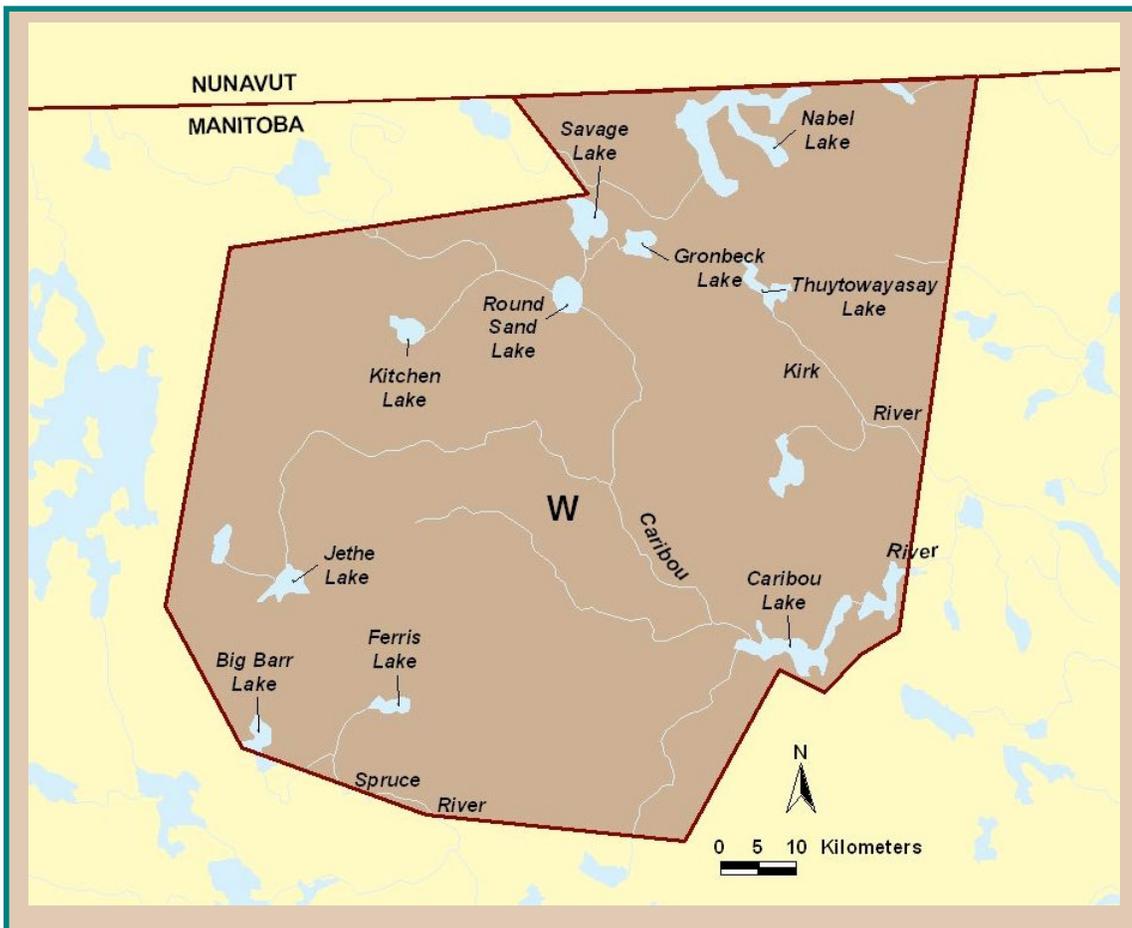
The park protects a portion of the fall and winter-range of the migratory Qamanirjuaq barren-ground caribou herd which travels along the eskers and ancient beach ridges. The area just outside the park boundary is also a known location of rusty blackbird which is listed as a Species of Special Concern by the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). Recently, there have been confirmed instances of the barren-ground grizzly bear (listed as Extirpated) outside of the park boundary.

There are no facilities located in the park, and the park receives a small number of visitors who use the park for hunting, fishing or canoeing. The park is designated for wilderness camping; there are no designated campsites and visitors are asked to camp at locations that show signs of previous use.

The park is used by the Sayisi Dene First Nation and the Inuit of the Kivalliq region of Nunavut for traditional uses.

Within the park there is a historic building which is described as having local significance. This building was brought over from England in the 1920s to serve as a Hudson Bay Company Post on Caribou Lake. Although the building is locally interesting and might have some significance, its remote and inaccessible location make any conservation impractical.

### Caribou River Provincial Park Map



### 3. Park Purpose

Caribou River is classified as a Wilderness Park. The main purpose of a wilderness park, as defined in *The Provincial Parks Act (1993)*, is to conserve representative areas of a natural region.

*A System Plan for Manitoba's Provincial Parks (2015)* identifies the purpose of Caribou River Provincial Park as being to preserve physical features and biological communities representative of the Kazan River Upland Ecoregion. According to that plan, the park will:

- protect winter range for barren-ground caribou in an undisturbed state
- provide opportunities for a range of outdoor recreational experiences that depend on a pristine environment
- promote public appreciation and understanding of the park's natural features and cultural heritage

This park is part of Manitoba's network of protected areas, which was designed to represent the biodiversity found in each of Manitoba's 16 ecoregions. It helps maintain the overall ecological integrity of the Kazan River Upland Ecoregion by capturing a representative sample of the biodiversity found within that ecoregion. Nearby, Nuelin Lake Provincial Park provides additional protection of this ecoregion.

Large protected areas such as this park help conserve biological diversity including natural gene pools by allowing the environment to maintain its natural cycles and processes; reducing the potential for future costs of species recovery by maintaining intact habitat; and allowing migratory species to have access to various life-stage habitat across their range (ex: caribou calving grounds and overwintering grounds). They also serve as ecological benchmarks for measuring environmental and climate change over time, and provide the opportunity to ensure that management practices of existing and future developments employed in the north are sustainable.

All of the land comprising Caribou River Provincial Park has been categorized using the Wilderness Land Use Category (LUC). The main purpose of this LUC is to protect representative or unique natural landscapes in an undisturbed state and provide recreational opportunities that depend on a pristine environment.

Lands included in a Wilderness LUC contribute to Manitoba's network of protected areas and legally prohibit commercial logging, mining, hydroelectric development, oil and gas development, peat harvesting and any other activities that may significantly or adversely affect habitat.

## 4. Park Management Guidelines

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

1. Monitoring of natural and cultural values of the park will be accomplished through observations during patrols by departmental staff and through investigations in response to specific reports.
2. Negative impacts on known species of conservation concern will be minimized or avoided.
3. Facilities for recreational use will not be provided by Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship. Traditionally used trails within the park will not be maintained or improved and will be allowed to regenerate naturally. Information about the park will notify people of the challenges in accessing it.
4. New commercial boat cache locations in the park will be reviewed by the Northeast Region Integrated Resource Management Team (IRMT) on a case by case basis to ensure the placement and number of caches are managed to preserve the natural landscape of the area and maintain the wilderness experience. No private caching of boats will be permitted.
5. Information about the park will be provided primarily through the Manitoba Provincial Parks website.
6. Developments which might adversely impact the ecological, geological or cultural values of the park will not be permitted. Activities that might have a deleterious effect on the park will be managed through the department's normal permitting process.
7. Should an activity or development arise that would constitute a change in land use or have the potential to affect the natural, geological or cultural values of the park, an appropriate review and consultation process will be designed to consider concerns from First Nations, stakeholders, interest groups and the public at large.
8. Management actions will be communicated with the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board. Where ever possible, recommendations from the Board will be supported by Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship.
9. Disturbance of culturally and/or archaeologically significant sites in the park will be avoided. Information on specific archaeological sites will not be made available to the public if there is a significant risk that increased access or visitation could pose a threat to the sites. Prior to the public release of any specific site information, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will confer with the Sayisi Dene First Nation and the Inuit of the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. Where loss of or damage to archaeological values due to natural causes is unavoidable, artifacts will be documented and salvaged wherever possible in co-operation with Historic Resources Branch.
10. The Prefabricated Hudson Bay Building on Caribou Lake will be occasionally monitored through patrols, which whenever feasible will document the general condition and any changes to the site. Restoration work will not be undertaken at the site.

## 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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