

Kettle Stones Provincial Park

Management Plan

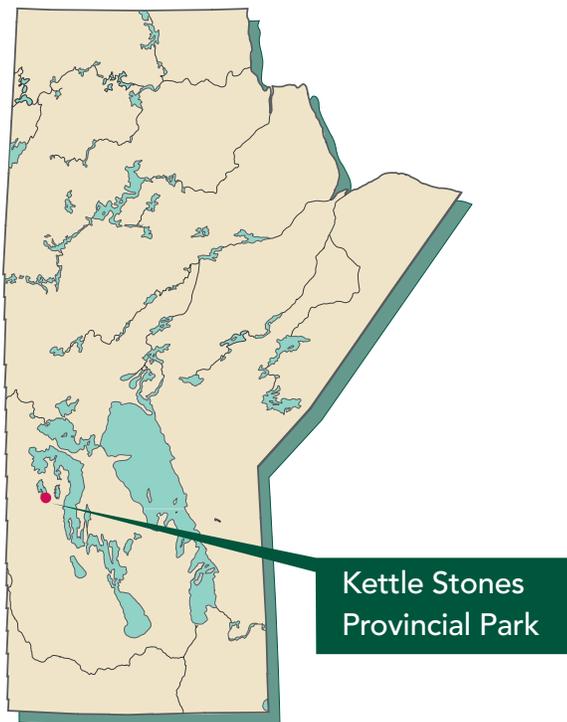


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This management plan for Kettle Stones Provincial Park was prepared under the authority of The Provincial Parks Act.

Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
Parks and Natural Areas Branch
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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. They also prescribe when public consultations may be required in making management decisions about the park. Certain management decisions may require a review of the entire management plan. Management plans are used in conjunction with park regulations, directives and other departmental and government policies and legislation.

The treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples to pursue traditional uses and activities within Kettle Stones Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected within the context of this management plan.

2. Background

Kettle Stones Provincial Park was established on February 28, 1997. It lies 70 kilometres northwest of Swan River on the north side of the Kettle Hills, in the Swan-Pelican Provincial Forest. The park is four square kilometres in area and is characterized by mixed-wood forest, small prairie areas and sandstone concretions called kettle stones. Kettle Stones Provincial Park is the only known location of such concretions in Manitoba. The kettle stones are concentrated in a 300 metre strip that runs from northeast to southwest in the park. The stones range in size from 45 centimetres to 4.5 metres in diameter, with most between 2.5 and 3.5 metres in height.

The kettle stones' long development spans millions of years. Scientists believe that the process began in the Cretaceous Period, between 70 and 135 million years ago when sand and other marine sediments were deposited in horizontal layers on a seabed which eventually became a layer of sandstone. Over time, regional uplift raised the layer of sandstone above the level of the sea. As this happened, percolating groundwater cemented loose bits of sand and sediment together to form concretions. Sand was cemented around some form of nucleus, possibly a fossil. The "glue" or adhesive was a lime solution, derived from the calcium carbonate of sea animal skeletons. In this process called chemical precipitation, the concretions maintained the layered appearance found in the original stratum. About 8,500 years ago as glacial Lake Agassiz was draining, beaches, sandbars and spits formed where the kettle stones were held in the soft sandstone. Wave action eroded the loose material and soft sandstone exposing the harder concretions or kettles.

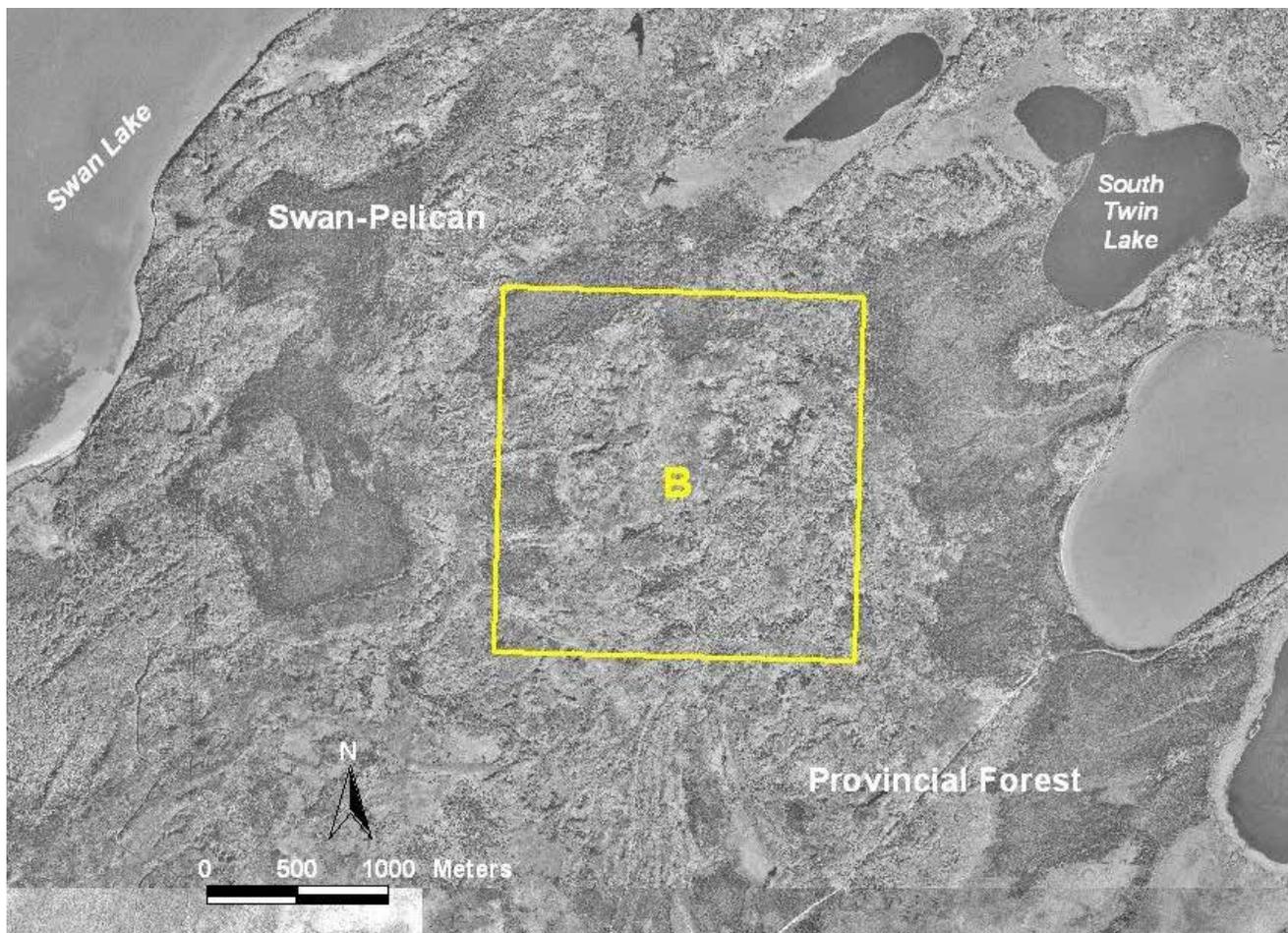
The park's open areas, or meadows, have Manitoba's and possibly Canada's, most northwesterly patches of big bluestem - a grass associated with the tall grass prairie of more southern areas.

Only a portion of the route to Kettle Stones Provincial Park is on improved roads. As one nears the park, the route becomes a complex network of bush trails with few prominent landmarks. This makes the park difficult to access for most people. One of the trails leads through the park and continues north. All-terrain vehicle use is permitted on this trail as it forms part of

the larger network of unmaintained trails in the area. There are no facilities in the park except for a sign along the main trail marking the park boundary. The park receives only occasional visitors coming to see the stones, to hunt, or to pick berries.

The park is surrounded entirely by the Indian Reserve lands of Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation. The kettle stones may be of cultural significance for First Nations. Camps and ceremonial events have taken place in the general area though not necessarily in the park itself.

Kettle Stones Provincial Park Map



3. Park Purpose

Kettle Stones Provincial Park is classified as a Natural Park. The main purpose of a Natural Park, as defined in *The Provincial Parks Act (1993)*, is to both preserve areas of a natural region and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses.

A System Plan for Manitoba's Provincial Parks (1997) states that the purpose of Kettle Stones Provincial Park is to preserve areas that are representative of the Interlake Plain portion of the Manitoba Lowlands Natural Region and to accommodate nature oriented recreational opportunities. According to that plan, the park will:

- **protect the kettle stones and preserve mixed wood and prairie habitats**
- **provide a largely undisturbed backcountry setting for nature oriented recreational activities such as hiking**
- **promote public appreciation and understanding of the kettle stones and the park's other unique natural features**

All of the land comprising Kettle Stones Provincial Park is categorized as Backcountry. This categorization is to protect examples of natural landscapes and to provide basic facilities and trails for nature oriented recreation in a largely undisturbed environment.

4. Park Management Guidelines

The following guidelines will direct park management actions in Kettle Stones 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 in the park. 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. Information about the park will be provided primarily through the Parks and Natural Areas website.
5. 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.
6. Should an activity or development 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.

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

Manitoba Natural Resources.

"A System Plan for Manitoba's Provincial Parks." 1997.

The Provincial Parks Act. C.C.S.M., c. P20. 1993.

