

Wallace Lake Provincial Park

Management Plan

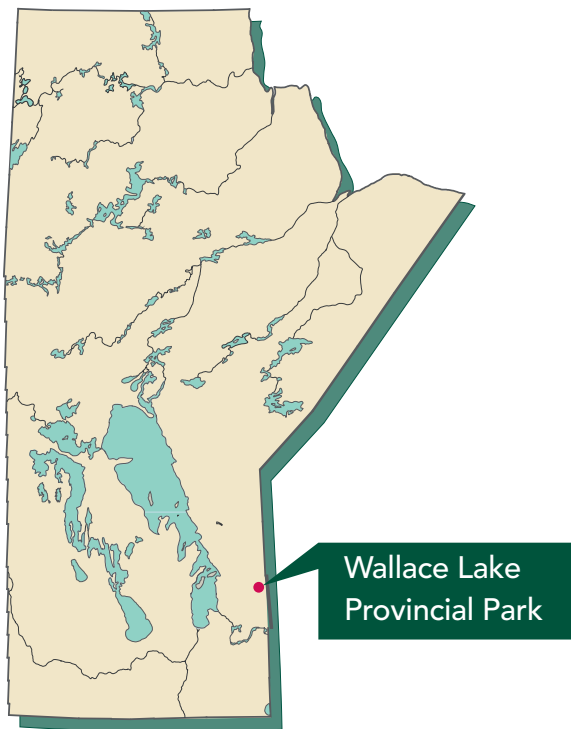


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This management plan for Wallace Lake Provincial Park was prepared in consultation with park users under the authority of *The Provincial Parks Act*.

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. The management plan for Wallace Lake 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 Natural Areas branch, regional staff of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and a consultant contracted to work on the project. 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 August 2012, 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 utilized 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 Wallace Lake Provincial Park are acknowledged and respected within the context of this management plan.

2. Park History

The area around Wallace Lake Provincial Park was first known for its mineral potential. Manitoba's gold rush of the early 1900s brought large numbers of prospectors to the Bissett area on the east side of the province where the lake is located. Many claims were staked and, in recognition of the area's mineral heritage, the lake was named after Dr. Robert C. Wallace, who was appointed first lecturer in Geology and Mineralogy at the University of Manitoba in 1910 (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011).

After a few decades prospecting activity died down somewhat, but it was not long before the area became popular again, this time for recreation. Several miners and area residents had gradually been developing cottages on the southwestern shore of Wallace Lake,

and the province began leasing cottage lots on the lake in 1959 (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011). A provincial campground, boat launch and other facilities were established at the lake by the 1950s. The area was designated a provincial park in 1961.

3. Park Attributes

Wallace Lake Provincial Park is located on the southwestern shore of Wallace Lake not far from the Manitoba-Ontario border. The park is roughly 25 kilometres east of Bissett and 175 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg. It is 23.78 hectares (0.24 square kilometres) in size. Wallace Lake itself does not lie within the park boundary, but is in fact part of South Atikaki Provincial Park. Wallace Lake Provincial Park is also located a relatively short distance north of Nopiming Provincial Park.

3.1 Natural

Wallace Lake is part of the Lac Seul Upland portion of the Precambrian Boreal Forest Natural Region. It is in an area of rock formations with high mineral potential. The majority of the park has been developed for recreation purposes. Forested areas adjacent to the park are dominated by jack pine as well as some black spruce, with ground cover composed of lichens and mosses (Smith et al., 1998). White spruce, balsam fir, balsam poplar, white birch and trembling aspen may also occur. False heather is a species that is uncommon in Manitoba and has been found in the park (Manitoba Conservation Data Centre, 2012). Forests in the region are prone to wildfires due to the high frequency of lightning strikes in the area. A wildfire in 1987 burned the Wallace Lake area destroying many of the cottages there.

Undeveloped areas around the park provide habitat for a variety of wildlife including woodland caribou, moose, black bear, wolf, lynx, bald eagle, furbearers and other small mammals and birds (Smith et al., 1998).

3.2 Recreational

Visitors to Wallace Lake Provincial Park can expect a natural-looking setting within a largely undeveloped area, as well as a likely opportunity for interactions with other park visitors. Despite its somewhat remote location, the park is often relatively busy. This is mostly due to the quality of fishing on the lake, as well as the popularity of the surrounding area for hunting in the fall. The main recreational activities in the park are fishing and camping. Anglers fishing on the lake regularly catch a variety of fish including yellow perch, northern pike and tullibee (Penziwol & Blahut, 2011). Facilities at the park include a picnic area, a playground, a boat launch and a privately operated leased campground. The campground includes 45 seasonal sites with 10 additional sites available for nightly camping. The boat launch, located outside of the leased area, provides public access to the lake.

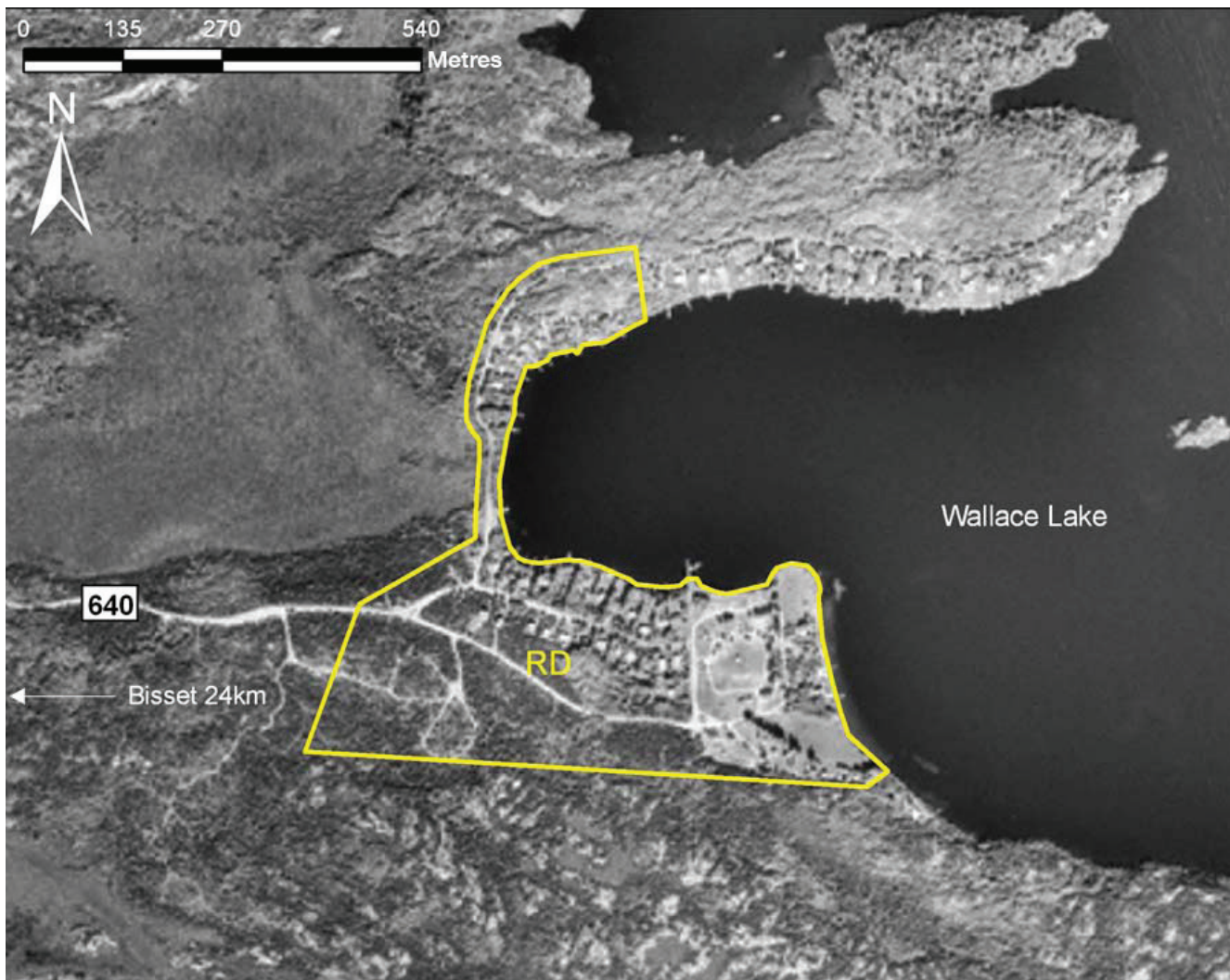
There is a private lodge located within the park. The lodge offers canoe and boat rentals, as well as self-guided fishing and hunting trips away from Wallace Lake. It also operates four fly-in outpost camps located in nearby Atikaki Provincial Park (Wallace Lake Lodge, 2011).

Wallace Lake is used by canoeists as a jumping-off point for extended canoe trips. Canoeists can get onto the Wanipigow River via the lake and then paddle to Lake Winnipeg. Wallace Lake provides an important access route for canoeists into South Atikaki and Atikaki provincial parks.

These parks are not road-accessible – to reach them visitors must either fly in or drive to Wallace Lake and begin their trip there. This route is used by many to access the Manitoba-Ontario Interprovincial Wilderness Area, which includes Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and the Eagle-Snowshoe Conservation Reserve in Ontario, as well as Atikaki Provincial Park and part of Nopiming Provincial Park in Manitoba. This wilderness area was established to conserve a significant portion of Canada’s boreal forest and a high quality wilderness recreation area.

Wallace Lake Provincial Park contains a cottage subdivision, within which there are 41 leased cottage lots. There are also cottages located within a Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs subdivision along the lake outside of the park boundary.

Wallace Lake 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.

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

- provide camping and beach opportunities
- serve as a staging area for canoe routes into Atikaki Provincial Park and South Atikaki Provincial Park
- provide access to Wallace Lake for fishing and boating
- accommodate an existing cottage subdivision and maintain opportunity for lodge operation

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 Management, Recreational Development, Heritage or Access LUCs. LUC descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

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

5. Park Management Guidelines

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

5.1 Natural Values

1. The park will be maintained as a natural-looking area that is characteristic of the surrounding landscape.
2. Ecological values in undeveloped portions of the park will be maintained and these areas will remain free of development other than that necessary to meet safety or operational needs.
3. Negative impacts on known species of conservation concern, such as false heather, will be minimized or avoided.

5.2 Recreation

1. The operation of the campground will continue to be managed through a commercial lease agreement to provide seasonal and nightly campsites.
2. Access to Wallace Lake will be provided through a boat launch.
3. The park will be used to provide information on South Atikaki Provincial Park and the Manitoba-Ontario Interprovincial Wilderness Area.
4. No new cottaging areas will be developed in the park.
5. Any expansion of the lodge will be limited to its current commercial lease 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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