

## BRIEF: April 2007

### From Poplar/Nanowin Rivers Park Reserve to: Poplar River First Nation Asatiwisipe Aki Protected Lands

- The Poplar/Nanowin Rivers Protected Area covers 777,270 ha (1,920,680 acres) of Manitoba Boreal forest lands and waters on the east side of the province, near the top of the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg
- As part of Manitoba's Boreal regions (2/3 of the province) the dominant landscape feature within the Protected Area is stands of spruce, pine, tamarack and fir. Muskeg (a mat of sphagnum moss and water), peat bogs, rivers, cold lakes and wetlands abound.
- Lake Winnipeg provides the western border of the Protected Area – important as the fifth-largest freshwater Lake in Canada and 10<sup>th</sup> in the world
- The lands within the Poplar/Nanowin Rivers Protected Area are an example of an intact Boreal ecosystem where natural processes such as fire, wind and insects plus climate determine species' cycles as well as functions of the boreal ecosystem. Due to large size and intactness, the boreal forest here provides ecological services that benefit Poplar River First Nation members, Manitobans and the world:
  - clean water through water filtration
  - clean air through oxygen production
  - rebuilding of soils and restoration of nutrients
  - holding back floodwaters and releasing needed water into rivers and streams
  - carbon storage through absorption of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere into the soil, trees, and water systems
  - maintaining biodiversity by providing habitat for countless species
- Logging, mining, and development of oil, petroleum, natural gas or hydro-electric resources are legally prohibited within protected areas in Manitoba, as are activities that risk significant impacts on habitat. Hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering are permitted and Aboriginal rights and agreements are respected in protected areas.
- The protected portion of the 'Park Reserve' covers an area of 748,370 ha (1,849,263 acres) – 96% of the whole. The lands encompassed by the Poplar/Nanowin River Park Reserve are 150 times the size of Manhattan Island. See chart for comparisons.
- The Poplar River First Nation reserve (federal *Indian Act* lands), where the town site is located, and an existing winter road access corridor make up the unprotected portions of the Poplar/Nanowin Rivers Park Reserve.
- The park reserve was created and protected in 1999 at the request of Poplar River First Nation. The 'Park Reserve' is a temporary designation to allow for a lands management plan to be developed and community consultations to occur, prior to permanent protection. Since 1999, Poplar River First Nation has completed its lands management plan and is awaiting enactment of the regulation for permanent protection for the Asatiwisipe Aki Protected Lands.

<b>Area Size</b>			
Acres	Square Miles	Hectares	Square Kilometers
1,920,680	3,001	777,270	7,772.70

<b>Main Comparisons of Protection Area</b>	
US	Canada
2X the size of Rhode Island	3X the size of Riding Mountain National Park
150X the size of Manhattan Island	12X the size of Toronto
bigger than Everglades National Park	bigger than Banff National Park
almost as big as Yellowstone National Park	almost as big as Jasper National Park