

Manitoba



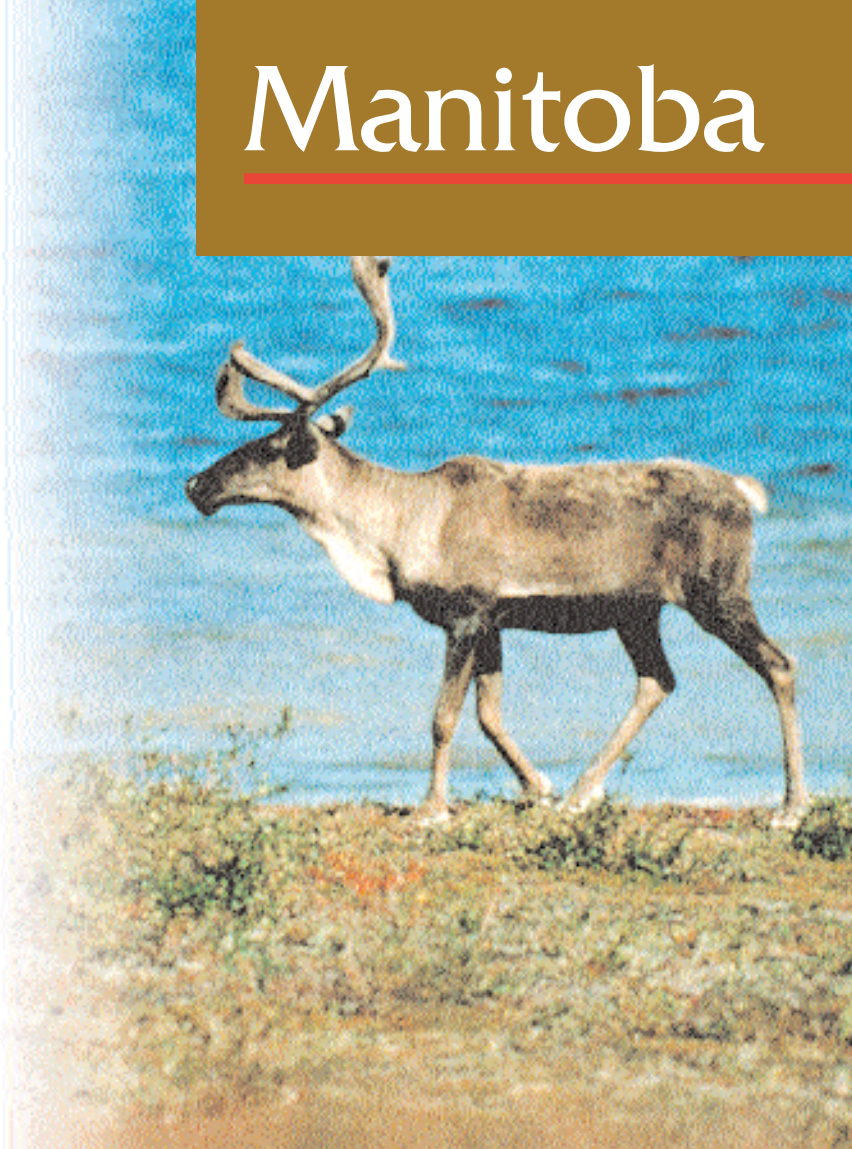
In 1990, in response to the *World Wildlife Fund Canada's Endangered Spaces Campaign*, and in advance of the multilateral 1992 commitment, Manitoba dedicated itself to establishing a network of protected areas. Following extensive public consultations, the *Natural Lands and Special Places Strategy* was formulated and in the process became the policy foundation for Manitoba's *Protected Areas Initiative*.

This policy statement re-affirmed Manitoba's objective to permanently protect a representative example of all the province's diverse landscapes. As a result of this policy initiative, *An Action Plan for Manitoba's Network of Protected Areas* was developed in 1993, updated in 1997 and revised again in 2000. It outlines how new protected lands are to be added to the existing network.

The *Action Plan* has been widely distributed throughout government and to various stakeholders, including the corporate sector, First Nations and northern communities, rural municipalities and conservation groups. The *Action Plan* and the recently created Manitoba protected areas website will help foster public understanding for protected areas and lead Manitoba into the next millennium.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES

Manitoba continues to make progress by designating new protected areas, consulting with First Nations, northern communities and industry and enhancing the



Caribou River Park Reserve, Manitoba

Reindeer Island Ecological Reserve, Manitoba

protection of parks and wildlife management areas. When Manitoba endorsed the *Endangered Spaces Campaign* in 1990, only twelve provincial ecological reserves and **Riding Mountain National Park**, totaling some 350,000 hectares, qualified as protected areas.

In the decade since, Manitoba has made significant gains in creating new protected areas and enhancing protection of existing designated lands through legislation, regulation and practice. The result has been the addition of 5,200,000 hectares to the provincial inventory of protected lands.

The following table briefly illustrates the increase in Manitoba's network of protected lands over time and the milestones that led to these successes.

Year	% Prov. Protected	Area (hectares)	Milestones
1990-91	0.6%	350,000	Manitoba commits to a protected areas program
1991-92	0.6%	350,000	Policy framework developed on protected areas
1992-93	0.6%	350,000	Public consultations on protected areas
1993-94	2.2%	1,440,000	Protected part of <i>Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area</i>
1994-95	5.5%	3,590,000	Created four new protected provincial parks
1995-96	5.5%	3,590,000	Public consultations on changes to provincial parks legislation
1996-97	6.8%	4,390,000	Created ecological reserves and protected portions of provincial parks and wildlife management areas
1997-98	6.8%	4,420,000	Protected additional wildlife management areas
1998-99	8.1%	5,270,000	Created two new protected park reserves, one ecological reserve and protected a portion of <i>Canadian Forces Base Shilo</i>
1999-00	8.5%	5,550,000	Created three new protected park reserves and protected 21 additional wildlife management areas



*Birds Hill Provincial Park,
Manitoba*

There have been other notable accomplishments in Manitoba since 1990.

In 1996-97, new protected parks and wildlife management areas and the signing of the **Wapusk National Park** agreement all contributed to Manitoba being awarded a B+ from the *Endangered Spaces Campaign*, the highest provincial grade in Canada that year.

In 1997-98, Manitoba signed a *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)* with First Nations concerning the creation of a partnership in the identification, establishment and management of new protected areas. In the same year, excellent progress was made with the mining sector in Manitoba to gain their support on recommending protection status for numerous areas of special interest. In 1998-99, Manitoba's B- grade from the *Endangered Spaces Campaign* was the second highest in Canada. In the last year of the *Endangered Spaces Campaign* (1999-2000), Manitoba increased its grade, from the previous year, to a B with the creation of three new park reserves, protection of twenty-one wildlife management areas, a formal extension of the First Nations MOU for three years, the launch of a protected areas website — www.manitobaparks.com — and the preparation of a three-year *Action Plan* to 2003.

Presently Manitoba's network of protected lands is just over 5,500,000 hectares. About 23% of the enduring features of the province are represented to some degree (adequately or moderately) by existing protected areas. It is anticipated that while a majority (80 to 100%) of the enduring features in northern and central Manitoba could be adequately represented with protected areas, only 40 to 50% of the southern enduring features have reasonable potential for protection and representation



*Hecla/Grindstone
Provincial Park,
Manitoba*

due to existing development and private lands. A major effort is now being made to maximize the opportunities for new protected areas in southern Manitoba.

A CHALLENGING AND SOMETIMES DIFFICULT PROCESS

Compiling up-to-date information and maintaining an open, transparent and timely consultation process with diverse groups of competing and complementary interests are major challenges. For example, the *Memorandum of Understanding* signed with First Nations' organizations has been extended to 2003. The MOU commits Manitoba to work co-operatively with First Nations communities regarding the establishment of new protected areas. This involves sixty-four First Nation communities along with associated aboriginal groups and agencies that work with First Nations on land use issues. Maintaining contact, understanding the interrelationships between communities, being sensitive to First Nation values, and seeking First Nations' consensus on protected areas have been and will continue to be necessary in the establishment of new protected areas.

Within industry, the mining sector has been supportive of protected areas by identifying nearly 2,600,000 hectares of land for protection. It is now important to complete consultations on these areas with other sectors so that new protected areas can be created, to demonstrate results and maintain support from the mining industry.

Although less progress has been made with the forest industry than the mining industry, recent initiatives from forest industry representatives have shown a very encouraging interest in actively participating in the *Protected Areas Initiative*. They have formed an industry working group to liaise on the identification and establishment of protected areas. This bodes well for future discussions and additions to Manitoba's program.

It will also be a challenge to adequately involve the numerous other communities and interest groups in agro-Manitoba in the consultation process and establishment of protected areas. While some initial work has been done in agro-Manitoba, a renewed focus will occur in this region in the years ahead. With the recent addition of new staff for the *Protected Areas Initiative*, the province will now begin to tackle the complex issue of identifying the remaining areas of natural lands in the most developed portion of Manitoba.

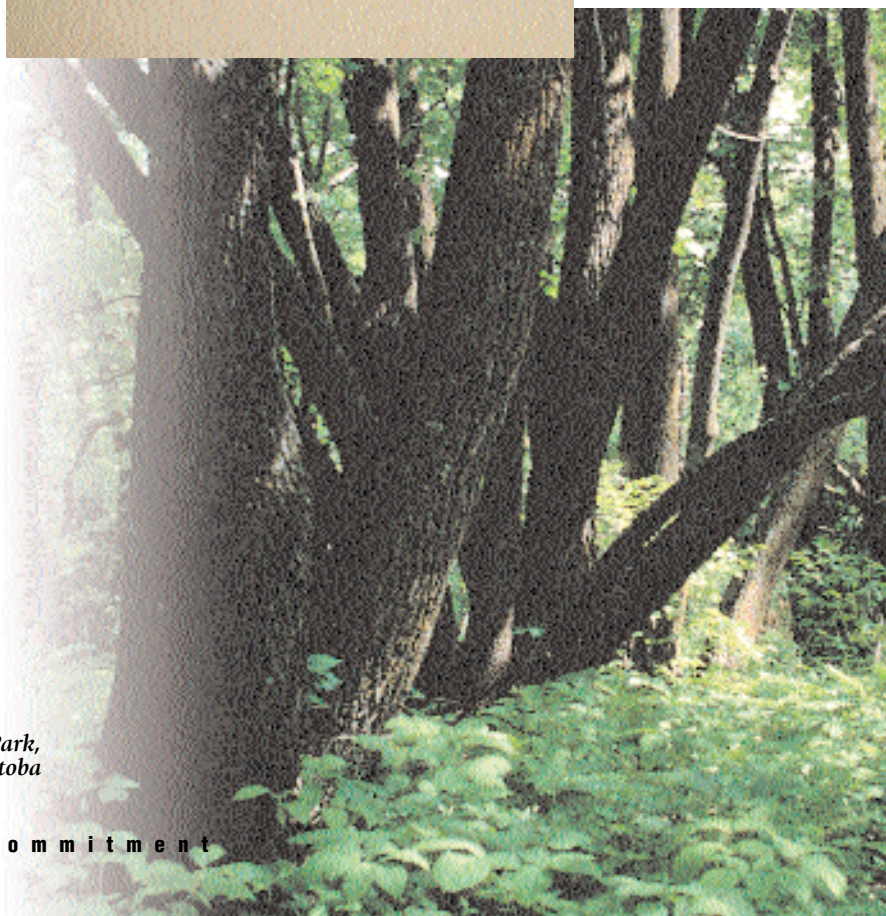
Over the last three years considerable effort has been focussed on assembling the necessary resources to conduct effective consultation and to create and manage protected areas. The ongoing work to collect resource information, conduct analysis, consult, produce documents, maps and information resources will continue to be a challenge. Also, once lands have been designated,

the province fully understands the importance of follow-up work with communities, industries and interest groups to develop reasonable and lasting management plans for newly designated protected areas.

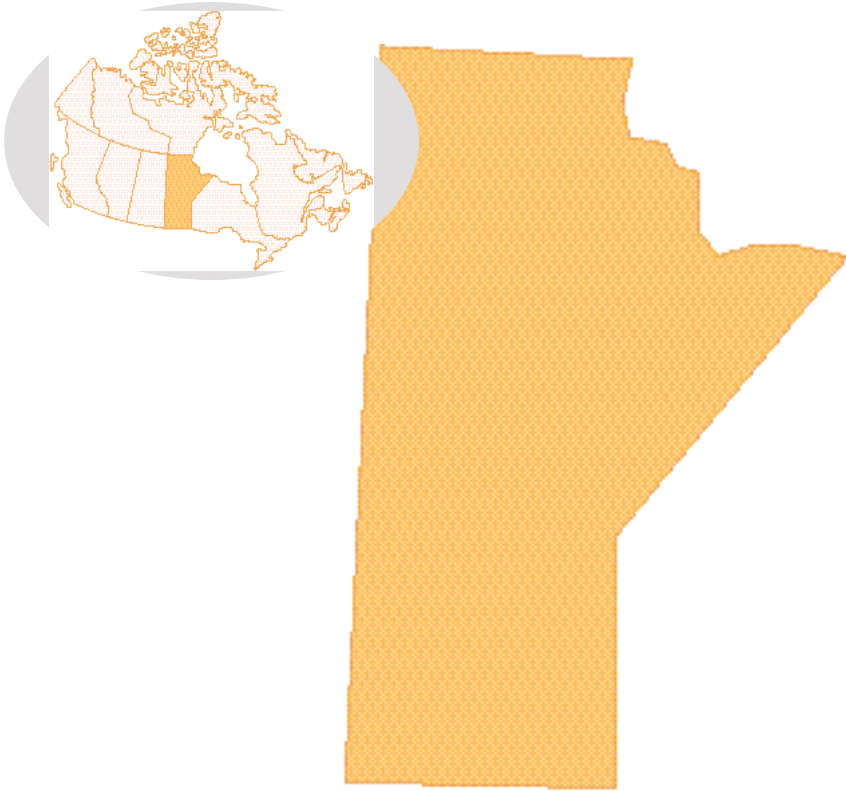
*Red-sided Garter Snake Mating Ball,
Narcisse Wildlife Management Area, Manitoba*



Spruce Woods Provincial Park, Manitoba



*Beaudry Provincial Park,
Manitoba*



Over the last five years, Manitoba has made significant advances in conducting computer-based broad scale landscape analysis to identify areas of interest for protection. Additional work and study is required to merge these new techniques with current biological inventories of areas to ensure important ecological information is not left out as long-term land use decisions are made.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

To date, most of the effort to protect Manitoba's biodiversity has focused on the province's landmass. In the years ahead, the opportunity for marine protected areas must also be examined. The establishment of one or more protected areas in Hudson Bay, in particular, has much potential. Manitoba has identified areas with potential along the coast of Hudson Bay. A co-ordinated approach will be sought with Nunavut, the federal government, industry and communities on the nature and scope of marine protected areas.

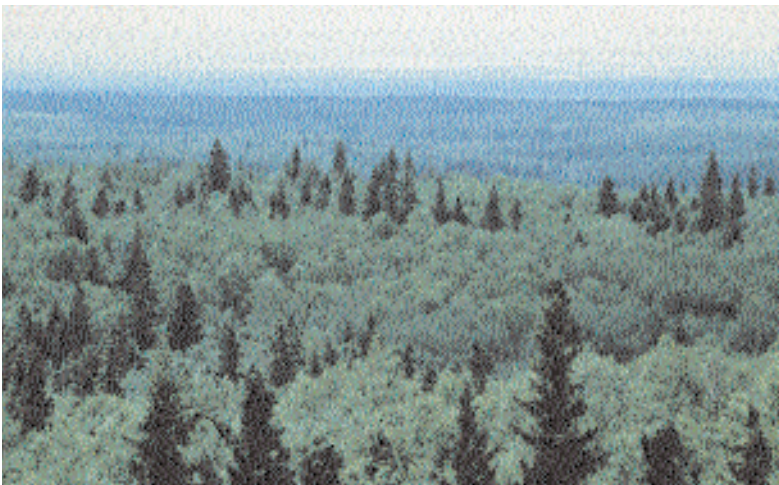
ONGOING COMMITMENT

An Action Plan for Manitoba's Network of Protected Areas has recently been revised. It lays out a course of action for the creation of new protected areas over the next three years. Owing to the complexity of the consultation process, it is difficult to predict exactly where and when the next new protected areas will be established. However, Manitoba is confident that the groundwork of the last ten years will yield exciting results. The co-operative and productive work that has been done with industry, First Nations, various communities and interest groups will, without a doubt, lead to the creation of many new protected areas in northern and central Manitoba over the next few months and years.

The work that has recently begun in Manitoba with the many conservation groups and agencies in rural Manitoba to identify areas for protection in the most developed part of the province also holds significant promise.

Work on marine protected areas and First Nations' involvement in the identification, establishment and management of protected areas will continue to be major thrusts of activity over the next three years.

Both the World Wildlife Fund's *Endangered Spaces Campaign* and governments' 1992 Statement of Commitment motivated Manitoba's protected areas initiative. While 2000 marks the close of both the campaign and the 1992 statement, their ideals and objectives will endure as Manitoba is committed to continue the task of achieving adequate representation in new protected areas by building on the First Nations', industry and community support established so far. ■



Duck Mountain Provincial Park, Manitoba



Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, Manitoba