



Connecting for Conservation: Parks Over Profits



What is the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)?



- Founded in 1963
- Canada's only conservation organization dedicated solely to protecting wild lands and waters
- 13 chapters across Canada; headquarters in Ottawa
- Helped to protect a combined area of over 500,000 km² — an area larger than the Yukon territory

We are solutions-oriented. We get results.



What is the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)?



OUR GOAL:

Protect at least half of Canada's public lands and waters

OUR CONSENSUS-SEEKING APPROACH:

We work with Indigenous peoples, crown governments, local residents, industry and other stakeholders to develop conservation solutions



CPAWS Manitoba

- Chapter founded in 1991
- We've helped create
 - 22** parks and protected areas
 - an area larger than Lake Winnipeg (nearly 26,000 km²)
- Long-term goal: Protect half of Manitoba's wild lands and waters



- Federal government committed to protecting 25% by 2025
- Manitobans want rapid expansion of conservation

9 in 10 want more protected areas
(recent poll)

- CPAWS working on campaigns that can get Manitoba to over 25%



CPAWS Manitoba



Protecting Nature in Manitoba



How are we doing?

- Only [11%](#) of Manitoba is protected from industrial developments
- We can get to 25% by 2025!
 - Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area Initiative (7.8%)
 - Fisher River Cree Nation Conservation Initiative (1.7%)
 - Proposed Polar Bear Provincial Park (4.5%)

Visit cpawsmb.org to learn more

Protecting Nature in Manitoba



What is the province doing?

- The Manitoba government is committed to expanding and improving its parks system — 2017 Climate and Green Plan

10.8%

2015

11%

2020

We need parks more than ever.

- A refuge during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Being in nature bolsters our mental & physical health
- Parks clean our air, filter our water and help slow climate change
- Conservation scientists say we need to protect at least half our wild spaces to mitigate climate change and stem a staggering loss of biodiversity



What's In the Proposal and What's Not



What's good about it?

- A goal of improving services
- Surveying park users
- Learning from success stories in other jurisdictions

What's In the Proposal and What's Not



The proposal is highly concerning for 3 main reasons:

1. It is looking to identify “which assets should be divested.”
2. It is seeking opportunities to “decommission/transition parks to other models (i.e. other groups operate or own parks to service their local community).”
3. A primary aim is to “achieve greater financial sustainability.”

Parks are not for profit.

The Manitoba Provincial Parks Act has it right. In Manitoba law, there are only 3 purposes for provincial parks:



1. Conserve ecosystems and maintain biodiversity
2. Preserve unique and representative natural, cultural and heritage resources
3. Provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting.

What The Minister Said

“Our parks are not for sale.”

— Conservation and Climate Minister
Sarah Guillemard (12/7/2020)



Parks are a core government service that require investment.



The gap between park revenues and operating expenses is rightfully adopted by Manitoba's provincial budget because the social, cultural and environmental values parks hold are critical to our well-being.



What You Can Do

Send a letter



705 letters sent so far

Call your MLA

Share on social media



What's at stake?

Chris Smith, Parks Coordinator with CPAWS Northern Alberta, will give an update on devastating proposed cuts to park services in Alberta, which is to shed 175 parks.

