

August 31, 2023

**Ron Thiessen, Executive Director  
CPAWS Manitoba Chapter  
Manitoba Provincial Election Questionnaire**

Like all Manitobans, the PC Party of Manitoba cares deeply about the environment and the conservation of our natural landscapes, wildlife habitat, and fisheries. We're proud to have pioneered protections in the 1990s, and proud that over the past seven years we have designated three new provincial parks, designated the first-ever provincially significant peatlands, and signed a partnership with the federal government to plant an extra million trees every year in communities across Manitoba.

Manitoba comprises roughly 6.5% of Canada's land and water mass, and with just over 11% already protected and conserved, we believe the province has already made great progress. This includes 93 provincial parks, 90 wildlife management areas, 30 ecological reserves, three protected areas in the City of Winnipeg, two national parks and two national wildlife areas, as well as other provincially protected forests and privately protected lands. When we set priorities to protect new lands and waters, it is essential we consider both conservation and economic needs as we guide efforts in support of Canada's national objective.

While we believe more needs to be done to protect lands and improve the health of our waters, committing to a timeline of protecting 30% of Manitoba's lands and waters by 2030 could harm economic development, particularly in northern communities, and disrupt various sectors across the province that rely on land use. It's important that any aspirational targets consider people and Indigenous communities, and the need for economic reconciliation. We must both protect our environment and conserve natural areas while growing our economy and helping communities thrive.

If re-elected, the PC Party will continue to collaborate with Manitoba communities and conservation partners to protect critical habitats for polar bears, caribou, ducks, and other endangered wildlife, while also preserving essential ecosystems like our peatlands, wetlands, and forests. Our approach will focus on science-based

decision-making, adaptive and shared management, and targeted conservation efforts. We will bring community, industry, stakeholders, and all Manitobans together to develop strategies that benefit the environment and conserve our natural areas. We will actively engage with efforts led by First Nation communities, such as Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas or Traditional Land Use Planning Areas, and support proposals in a way that aligns environmental progress with results for economic reconciliation.

We will also ensure the process of designating Areas of Special Interest is transparent, consultative, and based on the most up-to-date scientific assessments while including local perspectives. This will allow Manitoba to make informed decisions that contribute to land protection goals without rigidly adhering to arbitrary targets and timelines. We will work with communities and conservation partners to access federal funding available to grow our human resource capacity to help set provincial priorities.

The PC Party wants to ensure both the protection of our lands and waters in Manitoba, while ensuring prosperity for all Manitobans. We will make informed decisions that conserve natural areas while considering economic realities and respecting the rights and knowledge of Indigenous communities. By taking a flexible and collaborative approach to land and water conservation, we can achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes for our natural heritage and our economy.

**Political Party:** Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba

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