

The Purpose of a Park Reserve

A Park Reserve is established to provide an interim designation on a piece of land so that all interested parties may consider the implications of such a land designation in advance of a more permanent designation and land use allocation.

The public consultation process for Park Reserves is intended to assist in

- Establishing the Primary purpose for the subject area;
- Determining what type of provincial designation is most appropriate for the subject land;
- Reviewing boundary appropriateness; and:
- Establishing overall Land Use Categories for the area.

What Happens After the Public Consultation?

The provincial Cabinet reviews the process input and then determines a permanent designation for the subject area. The appropriate Crown agency (ie: Parks and Natural Areas) will then work through a specific management planning process to set out in detail the policies and regulations necessary to achieve the primary purpose statements for the area.

If you have any concluding comments on the recommended actions for South Atikaki Park Reserve, please contact us by September 23, 2002.

Thank you for your assistance in determining the future of South Atikaki Park Reserve!

For More Information Please Contact Us:

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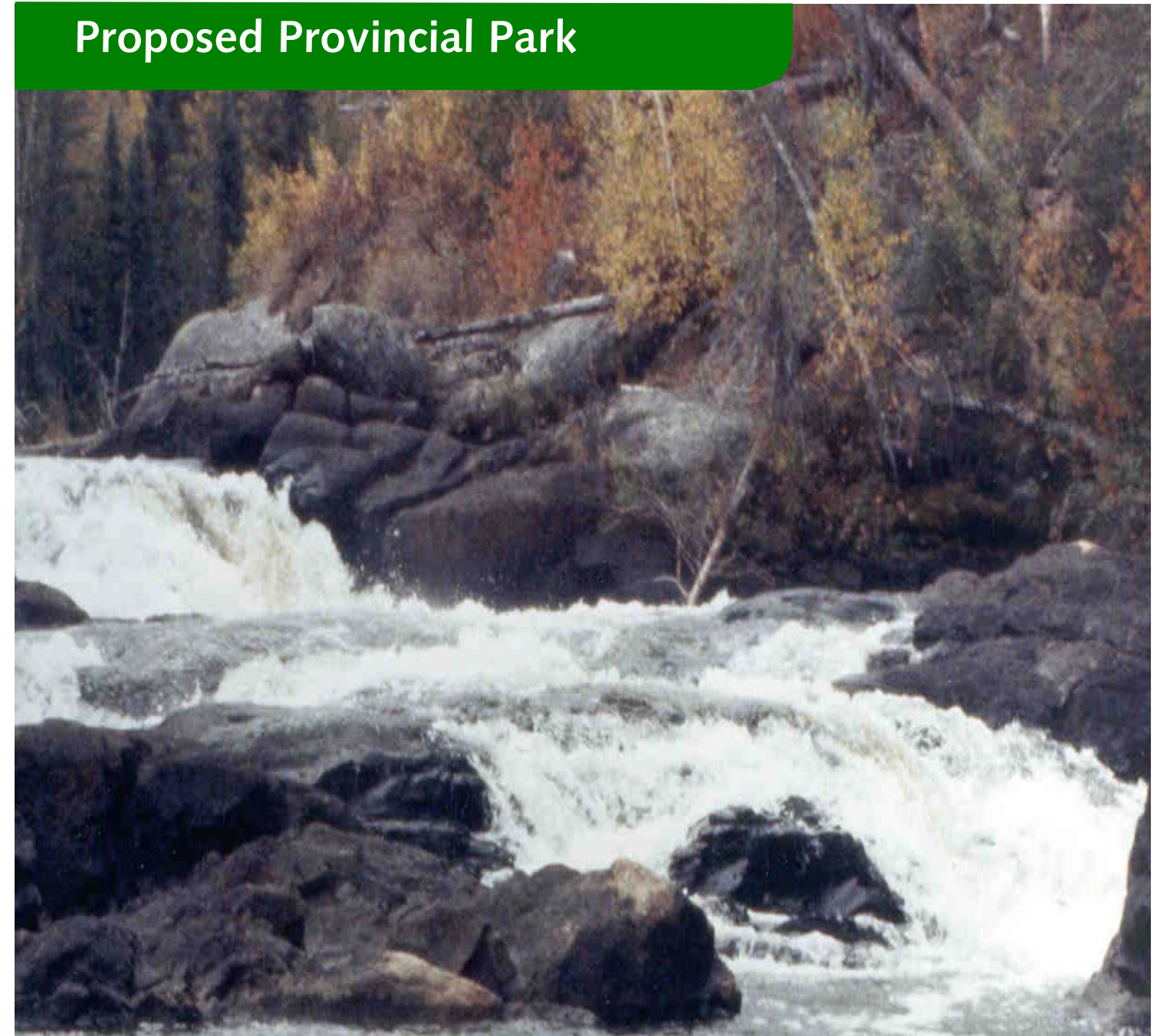
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South Atikaki Park Reserve

Proposed Provincial Park



Protecting
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our Future

Manitoba
Conservation



South Atikaki Park Reserve: Proposed Provincial Park

South Atikaki Park Reserve Public Consultation Comments Summary

The South Atikaki Park Reserve was established in 1997 after a province-wide public review of the Provincial Park system. The review confirmed that this area, the southern portion of the original Atikaki Provincial Wilderness Park, was the only Manitoba land access route to the main canoeing rivers in Atikaki. The area also had a long history of use by Woodland Caribou, listed by COSEWIC as a threatened species. The area also included mining claims, and so could not be classified as protected (Wilderness, Backcountry) under the Provincial Parks Act. As the approach of government is to honour existing land use commitments, clearly additional time and consultation were needed to review the situation. The area was designated as a Park Reserve in order to provide this additional time as well as to recognise the area’s high habitat and wilderness recreation values. In the interim, new interest in the Rice Lake greenstone belt for gold and platinum group elements has meant that mineral exploration and the number of claims in the area has increased.

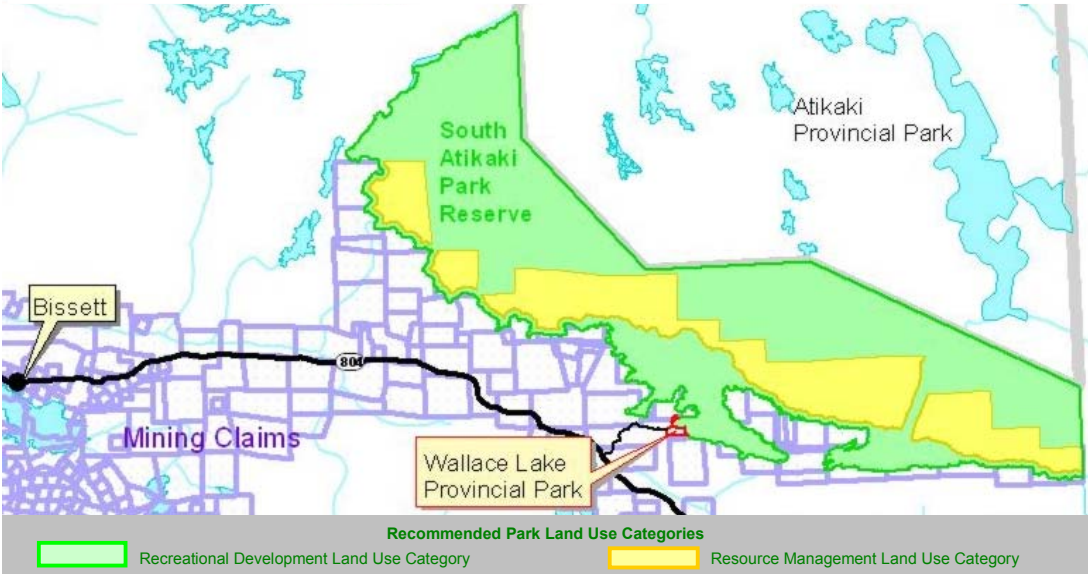
The Provincial Parks Act requires that all Park Reserves be reviewed through consultation with the public in order to determine the most appropriate provincial designation, boundaries and land use classification(s) for the area.

The first round of public consultation planned for the South Atikaki Park Reserve was intended to obtain public input into a vision for the park reserve area. This step in the process included public drop-in sessions in Lac Du Bonnet and Winnipeg, two community meetings in Manigotagan, telephone discussions and correspondence exchange with Bissett Council, two meetings with the Wallace Lake Cottagers Association and a meeting with the Manitoba Recreational Canoeing Association. Well over 100 people were in attendance at these meetings. Twenty-two written responses were received.

The public meetings provided the opportunity for those attending to present their views on the future of the Park Reserve as well as to develop an appreciation of the range of factors involved in river use and management.

This brochure provides all respondents with the complete range of comments made to date, and outlines the direction that has been recommended as a result of the review of information and responses received.

South Atikaki Park Reserve and Surrounding Area



Summary of Responses to the Specific Questions Asked:

What activities\experiences does your vision for the future of this area include?

Strong representations were made to maintain the complete range of present activities and values, particularly for canoeing, Woodland Caribou habitat and the Taiga Biological Research Station.

What related issues need to be addressed to ensure your concept for this area can be maintained over time?

Respondents were unanimous on resource extraction being the central issue in the Park Reserve. Some wished all resource extraction to end in order to protect the area’s natural and wilderness recreation values, while others suggested the present range of uses, especially mining exploration, be continued.

Should the park include both banks of the Wanipigow and Broadleaf Rivers?

The option to include the rivers in the Park to better protect the riparian environment and the canoeing experience was raised. Concerns were expressed that this might lead to restrictions on present motorized use of these rivers for fishing and hunting.

Should Wallace Lake Provincial Park be included in a combined park area?

While both points of view were presented, all respondents wished the present difference in use intensity between the cottage area and the Park Reserve to be recognised.

Should the land & portage between Wallace and Siderock L. be included in the park?

There was a limited response to this question; both points of view were expressed with little elaboration.

What type of park classification or Land Use Category best suits the values and commitments found in the South Atikaki area?

Responses here ran from Wilderness Park to open Crown land. There were also suggestions to include the area in Nopiming, and to designate portions of the area as Heritage to commemorate mining in the area. Many respondents were looking to strike a balance between mining and wilderness recreation interests. Interest in maintaining the existing natural values and range of recreational opportunities for cottagers at Wallace Lake was also expressed.

Recommended Management Framework:

Recommended Designation: Provincial Park

The response to the vision expressed by most respondents involved specific management of lands at a provincial level for recreation, resource use and protection of natural values. Provincial park designation enables use and values conservation while providing the opportunity for public involvement in management.

Recommended Classification: Natural Park

While **respondents shared the concern** to protect the area’s natural values and recreation experience, the consultation clearly reflected the need for a balance between the desire for protection of provincially significant natural and wilderness recreation values and the mineral potential of the Rice Lake Greenstone belt. A Natural Park designation provides overall direction to land management and signals the importance of the included recreational and natural values while accommodating mineral exploration and development.

The park is also recommended to remain closed to logging. Alternative logging areas were provided to the forest industry for the park area when the original Atikaki Provincial Wilderness Park was created in 1985.

Recommended Boundaries: Retain Existing

The responses to the boundary questions respecting the rivers and the Wallace – Siderock portage seemed to indicate these issues were not of primary concern to most respondents. Further, the general consensus on the question of inclusion of Wallace Lake Recreation Park was that this park should be considered as a separate entity from the Park Reserve land area. The boundaries of South Atikaki Provincial Park are therefore recommended to be those of the present Park Reserve.

Recommended Land Use Categories: Recreational Development; Resource Management

A Recreational Development Land Use Category is recommended for much of the park area, Wallace and Siderock lakes, and a buffer of 200 metres along the major water access routes and on each side of the Obukowin portage.

A Resource Management Land Use Category is recommended for all claim areas outside the buffer and lake areas. Important factors in these recommendations were:

- ❖ All the Enduring Features occurring in the park area are identified as being adequately represented elsewhere in the provincial network of Protected Areas; and:
- ❖ The current claims and mineral potential of the area.

A proposal to add a small area of unburned forest just West of Wallace Lake Recreation Park to South Atikaki, and suggestions from the forest and mining industries to consider protected areas potential north of the claims area and greenstone belt in the park were made during the consultation. These issues will continue to be examined.

Recommended Primary Park Purpose Statements:

In order to provide land use management direction and guide decision-making in advance of a management plan, the following primary park purpose statements are recommended:

Park Purpose:

To maintain habitat for Woodland Caribou and the intact natural condition of the canoe route access to Atikaki, and accommodate a variety of nature-oriented recreational opportunities while respecting existing commitments to the mining industry.

The park will:

- ❖ Provide a natural setting for nature-oriented recreational activities and the important canoeing access routes to Atikaki that depend on a largely undisturbed environment,
- ❖ Protect undisturbed habitat for the Woodland Caribou throughout their annual cycle, and:
- ❖ Accommodate mining in a manner that does not compromise other primary park purposes.