



Seal River Watershed

Indigenous Protected Area Initiative

BRIEFING NOTE

We envision a pristine watershed where people, animals and fish are healthy, our unique languages and cultures are thriving, and there is hope and abundance for all future generations.

GOAL

Permanently protect the entire Seal River Watershed as an Indigenous Protected Area

SOCIO ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Create sustainable jobs
- Reduce income support and justice costs
- Spur regional investment
- Reduce health care costs
- Stimulate entrepreneurship

Indigenous Guardians programs produce AT LEAST

\$2.50
OF SOCIAL,
ECONOMIC,
CULTURAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL
BENEFITS
for every
\$1
invested

Source: [Study of Lutsel K'e & Dehcho Indigenous Guardians programs in the Northwest Territories \(SVA Consulting; 2016\)](#)

29
JOBS ALREADY CREATED
by the Seal River Watershed Alliance

STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT

83%
OF
MANITOBANS
support efforts to conserve the watershed as an Indigenous Protected Area

Source: [Probe Research Poll](#)

When asked about the best way to create jobs and grow the economy in the Seal River Watershed

78%
chose protecting the river & encouraging tourism

12,308
LETTERS OF SUPPORT
sent to the Premier of Manitoba & relevant Ministers

CROWN GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

\$3.2
MILLION

initial federal investment in the initiative

"I would like to congratulate the Sayisi Dene First Nation and their partners on their work towards the establishment of the Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area. By working with partners, on projects such as this one, we are making progress in protecting and enhancing biodiversity by conserving a quarter of Canada's land and a quarter of its oceans by 2025."

– The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Source: [August 2020 press release from ECCC](#)

With an additional
\$1.25 MILLION

invested in 2022

Land guardian funding secured to an amount of

\$400,000*

*two years guaranteed

JOINT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Governments of Manitoba and Canada announce partnership with the Alliance at a [press conference](#) during the COP15 UN Conference on Biological Diversity in Montreal in December 2022



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CONSERVATION BENEFITS

ADVANCE RECONCILIATION

THROUGH AN INCLUSIVE & COOPERATIVE INDIGENOUS-LED CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

3 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Dene, Inuit & Cree

4 FIRST NATIONS

Sayisi Dene First Nation, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, Northlands Denesuline First Nation, Barren Lands First Nation, and the Arviat Hunters & Trappers Organization

5 INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

LEGACY OPPORTUNITY

WILL BE ONE OF THE LARGEST PROTECTED AREAS IN CANADA

50,000
SQUARE KILOMETERS

of pristine tundra, wetlands and forests

8%

OF MANITOBA

nearly the size of

NOVA SCOTIA



INTACT WATERSHED

LAST WILD RIVER IN NORTH

HEALTHY LAND

THRIVING INDIGENOUS CULTURES



MASSIVE CARBON SHIELD

1.7

BILLION TONNES STORED CARBON

Source: [IISD](#)

that's the equivalent of

8 YEARS

OF CANADA'S CARBON EMISSIONS

or the equivalent of

70 YEARS

OF CANADA'S PASSENGER VEHICLE EMISSIONS



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CONSERVATION BENEFITS

ABUNDANT WILDLIFE



22

SPECIES AT RISK

including polar bears, belugas, killer whales, wolverines, olive-sided flycatchers & lake sturgeon

nearly

200,000

CARIBOU

winter in the watershed



1/3

of the world's



BELUGAS

migrate into the Seal, Churchill & Nelson river estuaries

SUPPORT FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

The project has support from:

**MKO
AMC
KTC**

THE TOWN OF CHURCHILL

Regional lodge owners:

**CHURCHILL WILD
&
GANGLER'S LODGE**

and **5** *NGOs*

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE REPORT

The initiative is informed by

305

members

of our

4

communities

DECLARATION

COMMUNITIES INVOLVED IN PROCESS OF PASSING RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THE INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA

CASE FOR CONSERVATION

The cultural, social, and environmental components are complete.

A 39 page report was [published by IISD](#) in December 2022.

It concluded that the Seal River Watershed provides important benefits to Manitobans and the world, ranging from habitat for threatened species to sustaining the cultures of Indigenous Peoples and promoting Northern tourism.

A Sustainable Economic Development Framework survey is underway.