



# MWF ADVOCATES FOR HUNTING AND ANGLING ACCESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN MANITOBA

Manitoba Wildlife Federation

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FOR THE SEAL RIVER WATERSHED IS NOW OPEN!

**DEADLINE TO COMMENT: AUGUST 23, 2024**

The Provincial and Federal government are contemplating turning over management control of a vast area in Northern Manitoba called the Seal River Watershed (the size of Nova Scotia) to First Nations as a new national park. This Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area initiative (IPCA) is one of 9 proposed for Manitoba. Of the 62 IPCAs currently planned for Canada by the federal government, the Seal River IPCA is the largest, comprising 50,000 squared km. These protected areas will contribute to a global conservation targets establishing goals of protecting 30% of Canada’s lands and waters by 2030 (“30X30”).

While the MWF supports the conservation of our natural spaces and the value of fishing, hunting and outdoor recreation to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitoban’s, we are firmly opposed to the establishment of a national park in the Seal River Watershed, given the historical and ongoing exclusion of licensed hunters from public lands designated as national parks. For example, in Wapusk National Park, located south of Churchill and near the proposed Seal River IPCA, only hunting by indigenous communities is allowed. Unless allowances for licensed hunting and angling are included in the Seal River Watershed planning process, it puts 50,000 squared km (8% of Manitoba’s land mass) in jeopardy regarding access by licensed hunters and anglers.

In other parts of Canada, such as in B.C., the establishment of IPCAs led to the federal and provincial governments ceding control of the designated land area, and subsequently non-indigenous hunting was limited. For example, the Ashnola IPCA in the southern Okanagan region confirmed, “with the IPCA declaration, we are confirming the current moratorium on non-sməłqmix (non-Indigenous) hunting in the area”.

While there are many alternative legal mechanisms available to conserve the Seal River Watershed while maintaining public access, designation of this area as a Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is the preferred option. Preserving public access for all to enjoy these activities, aligned with protected area goals, would foster a greater sense of cooperation and social support for these protected areas.

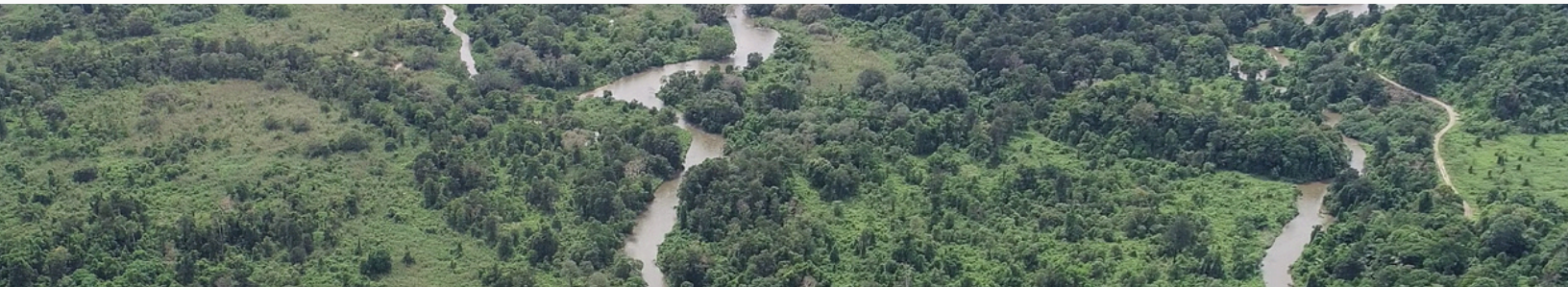
The Seal River Watershed Alliance (SRWA), Parks Canada and the Government of Manitoba have opened a public consultation period from July 22 – Aug 23, 2024, to obtain public input and feedback on the feasibility of establishing this area as a protected area, including making it a National Park and an IPCA. Your participation and engagement in this survey can help shape the future direction of the Seal River Watershed. The MWF has submitted our position to the Seal River Watershed Alliance (full letter attached), and have provided some key messaging below that you can consider in your responses.

**Access to**  
[Public Engagement Survey](#)

**In addition to the survey, more detailed comments and letters of support can be emailed to Parks Canada at:**  
[rivere-seal-river@pc.gc.ca](mailto:rivere-seal-river@pc.gc.ca)

# Key Talking Points to Include in the Survey and Letters to Parks Canada:

- Preserve public access for angling, hunting, and outdoor recreation activities for all Manitobans.
- For many licensed fishing and hunting are not simply recreational activities but also deeply rooted in culture, tradition, and livelihoods that must be respected.
- Revenue generated from hunting and fishing license sales and tourism supports local economies and conservation efforts, which in turn are used to support fish and wildlife management activities like habitat restoration, monitoring, and enforcement.
- Sustainable use activities, such as hunting and fishing, can coexist harmoniously with the conservation objectives of protected areas.
- Engaged, responsible anglers and hunters are strong advocates for conservation. Our direct experiences in nature foster a deep appreciation for fish and wildlife and the habitats that support them.
- Impose harvest restrictions only where necessary when harvest threatens the long-term sustainability of a population.



## We Need Your Help:

It takes a team to defend our outdoor lifestyle and the MWF seeks your support for its campaign to defend public access for licensed hunters and anglers.

### Here is how you can help!

- Participate in the [Public Engagement Survey](#) or write a personalized letter to the The Seal River Watershed Alliance (SRWA) at [rivere-seal-river@pc.gc.ca](mailto:rivere-seal-river@pc.gc.ca).
- Sign up for the MWF newsletter to get informed and stay up to date. Please ask all of your hunting and angling friends and family to do the same. Knowledge is power.
- Join the MWF as a Supporting Member or through one of our many Affiliate Clubs! There is strength in numbers. If you hunt or fish in Manitoba, please join up and be counted. For the cost of a box of ammunition (\$40), you can be part of the solution.
- Donate to the MWF. We need immediate financial support to sustain our campaign and to cover our legal costs. This is the fight of our lives, so we all need to be in this to win. Any size of donation helps. Tax deductible receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more (Charitable Reg. No. 1190308 RR0001) and donations can remain anonymous.
- Every membership sold or contribution made will help us influence the government to reconsider this decision, avoid future bad decisions, and to uphold their responsibility to safeguard hunting and angling access and rights for ALL Manitobans.

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Sincerely,  
The Manitoba Wildlife Federation Team