

We Need to Show the World That We Look After Our River!

In preparing the designation document, the management of Red River heritage values will be addressed. Our designation document needs to explain what we, as citizens and government, do right now to conserve Red River heritage and recreational values. Also, what can we do better to enhance those values and ensure their continued use and enjoyment by future generations?

Cultural Heritage

What do you do to help conserve cultural heritage values along the Red River? Do you celebrate First Nation, Métis and fur trade histories? Do you promote the interpretation of more recent settlement history by various cultural groups in the Red River Valley? Do you preserve heritage buildings adjacent to the Red? Do you have examples of how cultural heritage has been conserved when new land uses or developments (e.g. road construction, urban housing) are proposed along the river route?



Lower Fort Garry

Do you have examples of how cultural heritage has been conserved when new land uses or developments (e.g. road construction, urban housing) are proposed along the river route?

Natural Heritage

What do you do to conserve natural heritage values along the Red River? How do you plan for future



developments along the Red - such as agriculture, river crossings and increased public use – so they might occur without having an adverse impact on the natural values of the River?

Recreation

What do you do to promote recreation values along the Red? Significant initiatives are currently underway by local, provincial and federal governments to improve Red River water quality, in turn improving future opportunities for water contact recreation. How do you balance promoting recreational access and use of the river and conserving river natural values and ecosystems?



Trophy Channel Catfish

DESIGNATING THE

Red River

As a
Canadian
Heritage River

January 2006

The Red River

The Red River, located in south central Manitoba, is the only major river on the Canadian prairies which flows in a northerly direction. From its headwaters at Lake Traverse in northeastern South Dakota, it flows for more than 500 kilometres across the Red River Valley – the broad, level clay plain that is the 8,000 year old remnant lake bed of the former glacial Lake Agassiz. The rich soils of the Red River Valley provide for a well developed agricultural industry and recognition as one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world.



As a northerly flowing river, the Red connects with a host of waterways that flow east and west, notably the Assiniboine River. As a result, the Red became a mid-continental link to an extensive water-based transportation network encompassing much of Canada and the United States. The "Red River of the North" is well known for the pivotal role it played in shaping and defining the history, culture and economic development of Western Canada. For thousands of years, Aboriginal peoples traveled the Red River and its tributaries,



followed by the voyageurs, explorers, York boatmen, loggers, steamboat operators, immigrant groups, and tourists, to list but a few.

Many significant historical events, structures, place names and architectural sites are identified in association with the Red. These values are unique to the River and representative of major Canadian historical themes.

Today, the Red River Valley region of southern Manitoba is the most populated region of the Province. Approximately 750,000 people inhabit the rural landscapes, villages, towns and major urban centres adjacent to the River. Cities

and towns such as Winnipeg, Selkirk, Ste. Agathe and Emerson to name a few – all with names of First Nation or European cultural origin – are testimony to the various cultures that have settled the region through history.

From 2003 to 2005, Rivers West - Red River Corridor Association Inc./L'Association du Corridor Rivière Rouge Inc. (Rivers West) conducted public consultations to inform local governments, stakeholders and citizens of Red River heritage and recreational values and potential for nomination to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS). The process yielded strong government and public support.

In 2005, the Red was nominated to the CHRS on the basis of the River's outstanding cultural heritage only. The portion of the Red River nominated to the system includes the entire stretch of the river in Manitoba, from Emerson on the international border north 175 kilometres to Lake Winnipeg at Netley Marsh.

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) is a cooperative program of the federal, provincial and territorial governments that gives national recognition to the important rivers of Canada. The aim of the program is to ensure that Canada's most outstanding rivers are managed to



conserve their distinctive natural, historical and recreational values and to enhance public use and enjoyment.

As a Canadian Heritage River, governments and citizens are expected to manage the outstanding heritage and recreational values of the Red River in ways that still recognize and accommodate existing and future land interests and other uses of the river. By recognizing and caring for these values, Manitobans will ensure that those values for which the river was nominated to the System are protected and preserved.

Share with us your success stories, your concerns and your plans for conserving the cultural, natural and recreational values of the Red. Together we can demonstrate that we look after the Red in a way that warrants a Canadian Heritage River Designation. Help us celebrate our river conservation by achieving Canadian Heritage River status for the Red.

For more information on the
Canadian Heritage River System
visit www.chrs.ca



and
Manitoba

For more information on
Rivers West Red River Corridor Inc.
visit www.riverswest.ca



and
Manitoba

development, promotion and management of the natural,
tourism, cultural/heritage and recreational resources of
the Red River from Emerson to Lake Winnipeg.

Designating the Red as a Heritage River will not impose new legislation, restrictions or regulations to river use or adjacent land use. Adjacent land owners rights as well as Treaty Rights will remain the same as they are today. Resource development and other land use activities can continue along the river route.

Designating the Red as a Heritage River

For the Red to become fully designated as a Canadian Heritage River, a designation document must be prepared. Over the next year, Rivers West and the province of Manitoba will be participating with citizens, stakeholders and First Nations along the river to prepare a Red River designation document. The document must describe how the river is managed to conserve its outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values.

Preparing the designation document will include public participation, allowing citizens, river users, stakeholders and First Nations the opportunity to show how they care for the Red's cultural, natural and recreational values.

This will be an exciting and valuable process bringing citizens together to share their mutual interests in the future of the River and how it can be conserved for future generations. You are encouraged to participate. Meetings will be arranged with government representatives, stakeholders and First Nations in the near future.

Red River Heritage Values

The following identifies the cultural heritage values identified in nominating the Red to the CHRS. Significant Red River natural heritage and recreational values, not included in the nomination, are also identified.



Cultural Heritage

Key to shaping the cultural history of Western Canada, the Red has been a primary resource and transportation corridor for thousands of years for First Nation people, and over the past three centuries of European exploration, fur trade and settlement.

The Red River corridor contains many examples of outstanding cultural heritage values of both provincial and national significance including: Archaeological evidence of 6,000 year old First Nation river-oriented settlement; "The Forks" National Historic Site at the Junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers; European exploration in the 1700s by La Vérendrye; historic buildings and fur trading forts such as Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site (the oldest intact fur trading post in North America); Métis settlement and land use



history, Lord Selkirk and the Red River Settlement, 1812; River lot settlement patterns; Louis Riel and the Red River Resistance, 1869-1870; Steamboat travel and river transportation in the 1800s; Major events in immigration and settlement, including the Mennonites; Riverside roads, rail lines, bridges, and trails; Historical events such as the International Boundary Commission and the Northwest Mounted Police March West originating from Fort Dufferin (at Emerson), 1874, St. Andrews Dam and Lock, the largest 'Camere curtain' bridge and dam in the world; and, the Red River Floodway and major flood events including the 1997 "Flood of the Century".



Natural Heritage

The Red River, coursing through the level clay plain of the Red River valley region of southern Manitoba, is the only heritage river located in the prairie region of Canada. The natural features and habitat of this "prairie river" are characterized by a meandering channel pattern, adjacent land forms including levees and oxbows, connected wetlands and marshes and severe periodic flooding. The river corridor supports a diverse range of plant and animal species. Fifty species of fish inhabit the river including large populations of Walleye and Channel Catfish. The river and adjacent river bottom forest communities are home to populations of birds, mammals and reptiles. Various species include White-tailed Deer, Raccoons, Beaver, Pelicans, Grebes, Herons, Leopard Frogs, Red-sided Garter Snakes and Snapping Turtles. Local plant and animal species, recognized regionally or federally as "rare" or "of special concern", include Red Root Flat Sedge, Lake Sturgeon and Barred Owls.



Recreation

The numerous cultural and natural heritage values of the Red combine to provide for a wide range of recreational opportunities in urban, rural and natural settings along the entire River. The River is a major recreational and tourism destination in southern Manitoba and supports heavy recreational use and access by thousands of local and regional residents and visitors to Manitoba throughout the year. The river corridor provides excellent opportunities for water based and river related activities including: canoeing and power boating; walking, hiking and cycling on riverbank pathways and trails; winter activities including skiing, skating, ice fishing and snowmobiling; cultural and natural heritage appreciation; wildlife viewing; sport fishing including world class Walleye and Channel Catfish angling; and camping. Water contact activities – such as water skiing – are limited by water quality not suitable for contact recreation, especially waters downstream of Winnipeg.