



A declaration of common values for the sustainable development of the Boreal in Northern Manitoba

The Boreal forest has sustained and comforted the people of Northern Manitoba for countless generations. We, the undersigned northern stakeholders and rights holders, wish to ensure that it be able to do so for the seven generations to come.¹

We welcome development that brings and sustains jobs and prosperity in our region. We believe that development and the conservation of the natural world can be compatible. This document, for political leaders, policymakers, conservation organizations, businesses, and investors, is a statement of our common values.

NEED

There is a need to plan for the sustainable development of the Boreal in Northern Manitoba.

While areas of the Boreal in the province have been developed by forestry, mining, hydro, and other industries, the vast majority of the Boreal region in the province remains intact.² Because of recent historic, economic and technological changes, pressure to develop the Boreal is increasing. We believe this presents both opportunities and challenges.

We believe it will take careful and deliberate planning to maximize the opportunities available to us while ensuring:

Prosperity, Balance, Cooperation, Community Benefits, Rights and Respect, Financial Attractiveness, Knowledge, and Clarity.

¹ The term 'seven generations' is to be understood as being perpetually renewing.

² The Northern Boreal in this document refers to the province from the 53rd parallel north, inclusive of Pelican Rapids and Dawson Bay, and contains the following five ecozones: the Boreal Plain, the Boreal Shield, Hudson Plain, Taiga Shield, and Southern Arctic.

Prosperity

The Boreal in Manitoba should be managed to provide long-term benefits for northern people and northern communities. These benefits must be defined by those people and affected communities, those who choose to invest in it, and the province at large.

To enhance quality of life, the Boreal should be managed to ensure prosperity for northern communities for the long term. Development should ensure community benefits throughout the entire cycle of development, and build local capacity at all levels.

Balance

The future of the Boreal in Manitoba needs to balance development and the conservation of the environment. It must bring together, in partnership, the leadership of Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments, and the public and private sectors.³

Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments, and the public and private sectors must work together to share leadership, in true partnership, based upon a foundation of the shared values of honesty, respect, mutual sharing and contribution in a manner that produces solutions that work to the advantage of all parties and also ensures sustainability of northern communities.

The Boreal can provide jobs and economic benefits through the use of natural resources and other economic activity, with development that is carefully planned and takes place within a context of conservation and sustainability for the long-term health of the environment, the integrity of the ecosystem, and viable populations of native species.

Any targets set for conservation or development should be viewed only as aspirational, with actual decisions on land allocation to be determined through regional and community based land-use planning.

Cooperation

All people in the north are served well by positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, governments and those who choose to invest in the Boreal region.

The Boreal region in Manitoba lies within the traditional territories of numerous Indigenous Nations. People from around the world have come to call this region home and the region prides itself in its cultural diversity. It is the challenge of all these peoples to work together to take advantage of economic opportunities, while addressing the challenges of ecological sustainability. We must apply science, traditional knowledge, influence and leadership to the protection of our environment to ensure its sustainability for our children and our grandchildren.

³ Consistent with section 35 of the *1982 Constitution Act* and the policies of the United Nations and its Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the term Indigenous as used in this document is inclusive of First Nations, Inuit, and the Metis Nation.

Community Benefits

The Boreal should be managed with local communities and for local communities, in constructive partnership with outside investors.

The development of the Boreal should benefit the people and the communities who live there. This includes ensuring that investment policies favour local job training, support local infrastructure, and the sharing of wealth and benefits. Planning for the Boreal should build upon work done by northern communities and be done in partnership with them.

Community benefits include ecological, economic and social services and ensure a sustained and improved quality of life.

Rights and Respect

All planning in the Boreal, both for conservation and for development, must respect the rights and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples and those of non-Indigenous peoples.

The Boreal region in Manitoba lies within the Traditional Territories of numerous Indigenous Nations. It is critical that all planning processes respect, and thus recognize, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to treaty rights, and the right to consultation and accommodation, as well as the various levels of Indigenous government, cultures and peoples. Indigenous Peoples and communities shall be involved in planning, as leaders and partners. This process will serve to complement and facilitate existing land use and resource management plans.

It is our hope that this process helps to advance relevant recommendations set forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Financial Attractiveness

Plans for the future of the Boreal need to be clear and consistent, ensure environmental sustainability and social acceptability, increase certainty, minimize risk, and work to reduce the long-term cost of operating in the region.

According to the Fraser Institute, factors leading to a favourable policy climate include: certainty concerning the administration, interpretation, or enforcement of existing regulations; a fair, transparent, judicial system; certainty of land claims; certainty concerning what areas will be protected as wilderness and/or parks; infrastructure; and the availability of labour.

The financial attractiveness of Manitoba and the north are also significantly defined by their vast untapped potential. Long-term and short-term certainty over resource tenure is needed to ensure financial attractiveness.

Knowledge

Communities need to be informed of the environmental values and economic potentials of the land.

Management plans should be based upon both the potential risks and rewards associated with development activities throughout the development cycle.

It must be recognized that knowledge is more than information and requires a synthesis that incorporates understanding, life-long learning, cultural exchange and mutual respect.

Clarity

A Boreal Plan needs to be clear, concise and easily understandable, with fully defined common goals.

Founding Signatories and Supporters*

Town of Churchill	Manitoba Chambers of Commerce*	Sayisi Dene First Nation
Churchill Wild	Mining Association of Manitoba Inc.	Town of Snow Lake
Community Futures North Central Development	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation	Town of The Pas
CPAWS Manitoba*	Northwest C.F.D.C.	The Pas Chamber of Commerce
Ducks Unlimited Canada	Norway House Cree Nation	City of Thompson
City of Flin Flon	Opaskwayak Cree Nation	Thompson Chamber of Commerce
International Institute for Sustainable Development*	Rocky Lake Birchworks	Thompson Unlimited*

For a detailed, current list of signatories⁴ and supporters⁵ and other information, please visit www.NorthernValues.ca

⁴ A **Signatory** is a First Nation, community, organization or business located north of the 53rd parallel that has passed a resolution or written submission to be a full decision-making partner in supporting the Northern Values document and initiative.

⁵ A **Supporter** is a First Nation, community, organization or business located in northern Manitoba or elsewhere that fully supports of the work of the signatories and the contents of the document. Supporters do not have a decision-making role in Northern Values but are kept fully informed of Northern Values activities.

Note: This document is a legally non-binding expression of the mutual intentions and goodwill of the Parties and is not intended to create, recognize, affect, or deny any rights, claims, positions, or obligations of any of the Parties. This document is without prejudice to any negotiations, consultations, or any current or future process in which any Party is involved.

Document last updated May 31, 2017