

RIVER NOMINATION

- Whereas, the tributaries of the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers bring huge volumes of fresh water from the Rocky Mountains to the arid southern plains which sustained plant and animal life that attracted First Nations people to occupy the area some 10,000 years ago. These people used the cliffs along the South Saskatchewan River to harvest large mammals, some of which became extinct thousands of years ago.
- Whereas, the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers are of outstanding cultural heritage value because they were the battleground for a fierce rivalry for the fur trade between the Hudson's Bay Company, based at York Factory, and the North West Company, with headquarters in Montreal. These companies built trading posts that became the first permanently occupied sites (Fort a La Corne in 1753 and Cumberland House 1774) in what was to become the Province of Saskatchewan. There are at least 18 fur trading post sites, often with rival posts within sight of one another, along the 1000 km of river from the Alberta border to the Manitoba border.
- Whereas, the Saskatchewan River is of outstanding cultural heritage value because it was a gateway for Canada's most famous explorers searching for a route to the Western Sea; included in this group are Henry Kelsey, Alexander Mackenzie, David Thompson, and John Franklin.
- Whereas, exploration of the Prairies by John Palliser, Henry Youle Hind, John Macoun and others after 1850 provided contradictory reports about the potential of the region for agriculture. Eventually the Government of Canada introduced programs to encourage settlement. The need to transport supplies, equipment and settlers where railways did not exist led to a period when steamboats were an important means of transportation on the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers.
- Whereas, the decimation of the bison herds on the plains and the decline in the fur trade changed the lives of the First Nations and Métis people forever. The South Saskatchewan River is of outstanding cultural heritage value because it marks the transition of the region's Aboriginal population from a nomadic to a more permanently settled agrarian lifestyle. The Métis turned to farming and settled permanently along the South Saskatchewan River at St. Laurent, Batoche, Fish Creek, Halcro and Adam's Crossing, using a river lot settlement pattern. First Nations groups signed Treaties and settled on reserves.
- Whereas, the South Saskatchewan River was the focal point for the Northwest Resistance of 1885. Two battles between the followers of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont and the Government of Canada forces led by General Middleton took place at Tourond's Coulee/Fish Creek and Batoche. The Battle of Batoche on 9 to 12 May 1885 ended with the surrender of the Métis. Both battle sites are National Historic Sites, reflecting their significance in Canadian history.
- Whereas, The South Saskatchewan River Project, completed in 1967, created a 225 km long reservoir, Lake Diefenbaker, that provides water for hydro-electric power generation, agricultural irrigation, community water supplies, flood control, industrial development and recreation and tourism. This project was crucial to the future development of Saskatchewan.

- Whereas, the South and Saskatchewan Rivers are of outstanding natural heritage value because the natural features of the valleys are representative of the Prairies Physiographic Region of Canada which is underrepresented in the Canadian Heritage River System. The rivers and valleys also contain representative samples of the natural environments of six different ecoregions.
- Whereas, the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers provide opportunities for angling, canoeing, hiking, camping, wildlife and scenic viewing, hunting and a variety of winter recreation activities in close proximity to most residents. The reservoirs provide outstanding water-based recreational opportunities: sailing, angling, swimming and camping on Lake Diefenbaker and trophy fishing on Tobin Lake. The Cultural Heritage and Natural Heritage values enhance the recreational experiences and serve as tourist attractions to encourage local economic activity.
- Therefore, it is recommended by the Province of Saskatchewan that the entire section of the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers in the Province of Saskatchewan from the Alberta border to the Manitoba border be nominated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System for the purpose of recognizing, celebrating and conserving the river's outstanding cultural heritage values.



Honourable Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Province of Saskatchewan

Date