



Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System

Réseau des
rivières du patrimoine
canadien

2022 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS SUMMARY

Summary of Canadian Heritage River Annual Monitoring Reports

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2022 Annual Monitoring Reports Summary is a culmination of the key information and updates from Canadian Heritage Rivers across Canada for 2022. The information in this summary was extracted from the individual Annual Monitoring Reports collected* from Canadian Heritage River Managers for 2022.

A few common themes were found across the 2022 annual monitoring reports. These themes included a return of visitors following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, changes in water levels related to climate change (flooding, droughts), traditional harvesting and fishing, and the management of aquatic invasive species.

Common threats across several annual reports included mineral exploration, changing water levels and over-visitation. While these threats do not currently indicate a need to change any CHR nominations or designations, impacts from them should continue to be monitored and mitigated, where possible, in the years to come.

**Not every heritage river submitted their annual report for 2022. This report contains information from those who completed and submitted their report.*

ATHABASCA

The section of the Athabasca River inside of Jasper National Park remains in good ecological health as a headwaters river in the Canadian Rockies. In 2022, Parks Canada secured commitments to prepare new conservation and prevention actions to safeguard the river from the threat posed by aquatic invasive species (AIS).

BAY DU NORD

The Bay du Nord Canadian Heritage River remains in a condition that reflects the natural values for which the river was designated.

BOUNDARY WATERS-VOYAGEUR WATERWAY

2022 was characterized by extensive spring and early summer flooding along the water. The first half of the year was also impacted by an ongoing hold on the Remote Area Border Crossing Program by Canada Border Services, restricting American canoeists and boaters from accessing the BWVW until the second half of the summer when the program was reinstated. Recreational use of the BWVW within Quetico and LaVerendrye Provincial parks was very low in 2022 as a result of these two factors. Ontario Parks research and monitoring activities continued as normal along the Quetico section of the BWVW and dark sky park light pollution monitoring occurred throughout the BWVW to support IDA dark sky designations for protected lands along the length of the waterway.

CLEARWATER (SK)

No activity, events, or actions to report based on very little activity, lack of staff, and low budget.

DES NEDHÈ | SEAL

There were no major changes on the Seal River in 2022. Various wildlife surveys and studies were conducted in the river corridor and surrounding area by the governments of Manitoba and Canada, as well as other agencies and researchers. The Seal River Watershed Alliance received federal funding in support of its work towards the creation of an Indigenous Protected Area in the Seal River Watershed. In addition, the federal government, Manitoba government and the Seal River Watershed Alliance announced a commitment to work together on a feasibility assessment for an Indigenous Protected Area in the watershed.

DETROIT

2022 was another successful year in continuing to conserve, interpret, enhance and appreciate the values of the Detroit River as a Canadian Heritage River. The second 10 Years Monitoring report was completed, confirming that it is most worthy of continued designation as a river of national significance within the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. A significant wetland was donated into public ownership to ensure its perpetual protection, and the largest habitat restoration project on the Canadian side of the Detroit River was completed at Pêche Island. Significant progress was also made towards a proposed national urban park in Windsor, which is envisioned to be co-managed by local First Nations and other partners.

FRASER

Communities along the Fraser River continue to recover from the extreme drought, heat and rain events of 2021, which brought forest fires, warm waters, floods, and land slides to many Fraser River tributaries and spawning places, in British Columbia's Interior, Fraser Canyon, and Fraser Valley. However, the challenges have brought Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups together in collaboration to protect and preserve the river's ecological, economic and social values, in particular the salmon fisheries. Most notably this is seen in the efforts to clear and stabilize the Fraser's passage at Big Bar that essentially blocked fish migration to spawning destinations further upstream. The partners are now developing a predictive system to prepare for future slide events in the Fraser. Some runs of salmon, in particular some sockeye, Chinook and steelhead stocks continue to decline, while others remain strong. Commercial and recreational fisheries were closed or curtailed in 2022, as were some Indigenous Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) access to salmon. Fisheries managers and Indigenous groups continue cautious management on healthy stocks. While significant salmon and sturgeon spawning and rearing areas in the gravel reach of the Fraser are threatened by human activity, measures were taken to protect the critical areas. Throughout the Fraser River watershed, more Indigenous communities and leaders are taking their place in environmental, economic, and social management in matters related to the Fraser.

GRAND

Many recreational and cultural heritage events resumed in the Grand River watershed in 2022, after 2 years of limited activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HARVAQTUUQ | ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ | KAZAN

Traditional use of the river and surrounding area by Inuit of Baker Lake continues in 2022, with residents of Baker Lake travelling and harvesting on the lower reaches of the river and surrounding area. The area surrounding the upper reaches of the river are commonly used for traditional harvesting activities by residents of Arviat, and other communities in the southern Kivalliq Region of Nunavut. The Harvaqtuuq/Kazan River was scheduled for its decadal monitoring report in 2010 as required by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (CHRB), but due to continued negotiations for the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA) for the heritage rivers in Nunavut this report was delayed until the IIBA was signed in 2019. The IIBA was negotiated and signed by the following organizations and governments: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KitIA), Kivalliq Inuit Association (KivIA), Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), the Government of Canada and Government of Nunavut. Hence the Harvaqtuuq/Kazan 20-year Monitoring Report for 2000-2020 was started in late 2021 and completed in mid-2022. This document reviewed whether the river possesses the heritage and integrity values for which it was initially designated and this report concluded that the river continues to maintain these values. The Kivalliq Inuit Association (KivIA) as per the IIBA has constructed an emergency shelter in 2022 with minor trimmings yet to be added to conclude this project and is in the process of finalizing a location where the shelter can be placed. The Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC), an Institute of Public Government in Nunavut held a series of public hearings across Nunavut and one in Thompson, MB with regards to the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan, which will include the Nunavut portion of the Harvaqtuuq/Kazan River. One public hearing was held in the Kivalliq region in Rankin Inlet; Sept. 19-21, 2023, and another in Thompson, MB, Sept 26-27, 2022 where input was heard from all different governments, groups, parties, signatories and individuals interested in land management in the region and territory. Mineral exploration of the surrounding watershed landscape by junior exploration or major mining companies has continued with the majority in search of either uranium or nickel, cobalt, copper, platinum, and gold.

HILLSBOROUGH

The HRA updated its COVID-19 field work protocol based on the provincial protocol for watershed groups and the changing situation with exposures. It also developed a vehicle and footwear cleaning protocol to address the Province's potato wart disinfection requirements. In addition, safety training and mentoring of eight students and three supervisors in the implementation of watershed improvement initiatives was conducted.

HUMBER

In the third year of COVID-19 global pandemic most of our engagement with communities continued in a hybrid format – in person and in virtual settings. That said, TRCA, alongside our partners and watershed communities continued to protect, restore, and celebrate the Humber River as a Canadian Heritage in new and innovative ways. A major highlight for 2022 was over 669,300 visitors were recorded TRCA conservation parks and lands. TRCA also engaged thousands of people through cultural heritage programs and events. In addition, updates to TRCA continues to the Humber River Watershed Plan are well underway.

KANGIRJUAP | ᐱᓐᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴᓴ | THELON

Traditional use of the river and surrounding area by Inuit of Baker Lake continues in 2022, with residents of Baker Lake, NU travelling and harvesting on the middle to lower reaches of the river and surrounding area. People from Łutsel K'e, NT continue to do the same in the upper reaches and headwaters of the river. The Kangirjuap/Thelon River was scheduled for its decadal monitoring report in 2010 as required by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (CHRB), but due to continued negotiations for the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA) for the heritage rivers in Nunavut this report was delayed until the IIBA was signed in 2019. The IIBA was negotiated and signed by the following organizations and governments: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KitIA), Kivalliq Inuit Association (KivIA), Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), the Government of Canada, and Government of Nunavut. Hence the Kangirjuap/Thelon 20-year Monitoring Report for 2000-2020 was started in late 2021 and completed in mid-2022. This document reviewed whether the river possesses the heritage and integrity values for which it was initially designated and this report concluded that the river continues to maintain these values. The Kivalliq Inuit Association (KivIA), as per the IIBA, has constructed an emergency shelter in 2022 with minor trimmings yet to be added to conclude this project and is in the process of finalizing a location where the shelter can be placed. The Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC), an Institute of Public Government in Nunavut, held a series of public hearings across Nunavut and one in Thompson, MB with regards to the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan, which will include the Nunavut portion of the Kangirjuap/Thelon River. One public hearing was held in the Kivalliq region in Rankin Inlet; Sept. 19-21, 2023, and another in Thompson, MB, Sept 26-27, 2022 where input was heard from all different governments, groups, parties, signatories and individuals interested in land management in the region and territory. Mineral exploration along the river and the surrounding watershed landscape by junior exploration or major mining companies has continued with the majority in search of either uranium or gold.

KICKING HORSE

There has been an increase to Park visitation with the lifting of Covid travel restrictions. Noted observations of overflowing parking lots for day use vehicular traffic at Takakkaw Falls and Emerald Lake.

HAYES | KISIPIKAMAWI SIPI | APIHT SIPI

There were no major changes in the Hayes River corridor in 2022 but the detection of zebra mussel veligers in the Echimamish River indicates the Hayes corridor as a whole is at risk of being invaded by zebra mussels. Visitation at York Factory National Historic Site returned to pre-pandemic levels. Various wildlife monitoring and studies were conducted in the river corridor and surrounding area by the Manitoba government and other partners.

KUGLUKTUK | ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ | COPPERMINE (NOMINATED)

Traditional use of the river by Inuit of Kugluktuk has continued in 2022, with residents of Kugluktuk travelling and harvesting on the lower reaches of the river. Roughly 120 canoeists paddled down the Kugluktuk-Coppermine river, after COVID-19 restrictions eased. The Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC), an Institute of Public Government in Nunavut held a series of public hearings across Nunavut with regards to the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. One public hearing was held in the Kitikmeot region in Cambridge Bay; Sept. 12-15, 2023, where input was heard from all different governments, groups, parties, signatories and individuals interested in land management in the region and territory.

KUUJJUAQ | ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ | SOPER

Traditional use of the river by Inuit of Kimmirut continued in 2022, with residents of Kimmirut and Iqaluit travelling and harvesting on the river and the surrounding valley. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the slow return of visitors from outside of Nunavut, visitation to the river and Katannilik Territorial Park are lower than normal. Only nine registered travelers travelled through Katannilik Territorial Park, although it is known that not all visitors register their visit.

LISTUGUJ | UPPER RESTIGOUCHE

This was a good year overall on the Restigouche for recreation activities. Trends of climate change observed over the past years seem to impact the river with high flow in spring and extreme low flow in August to October, but it was different this year with lower than average air summer air temperature and higher than average precipitation.

Because of this situation, the overall traffic on the river was higher than previous years. The amount of garbage to pick up on campsites has also decreased. Fishing activities resumed to normal for the camps following pandemic closures.

MATTAWA

Mattawa River connects the Ottawa River and Lake Nipissing. The river historically provided an important western link in the commercial fur trade network and for exploration further into the North American continent. The designated section of the river is mostly within the boundaries of Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain provincial parks, which are managed by Ontario Parks. In 2022, Discovery staff at Samuel de Champlain presented over 150 virtual school programs to 2502 kids across Ontario, including programming that supports CHRS objectives. Voyageur Adventure Tours returned in 2022. 21 immersive Discovery programs were successfully delivered to park visitors from across Ontario and beyond. The Mattawa River Canoe Race return in 2022, successfully running for a 45th year.

MISKWEWESIBI | MISKWEYAABIZIIBEE | BLOODVEIN (MB)

There were no major changes in the Bloodvein River corridor in 2022. The Bloodvein continued to be a popular destination for whitewater paddling, and the Pimachiowin Aki Corporation continued and initiated work on a variety of projects related to the area's UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

MISSINAIBI

On-going management of the Missinaibi River as a significant whitewater canoe route tracing the traditional routes of First Nations and the historic European fur trade from Lake Superior to Hudson's Bay. Regular park operations continued at the Barclay Bay campground and throughout the backcountry access points.

NAHŃA DEHÉ | SOUTH NAHANNI

The South Nahanni River forms the backbone of Nahanni and Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserves. Overall, the 2022 operational season saw a successful range of activities occurring in the park along the river corridor. Although there is no road access to the river corridor, the area saw 1165 visitors in the form of paddling trips, climbing trips and day flights. Parks Canada staff provided interpretation focusing on Dene culture and the natural history of the river at Gahnjthah Mje (Rabbitkettle Lake), Nájljcho (Virginia Falls) and Nahanni Butte. A range of maintenance activities occurred on park infrastructure

along the river supporting visitor experience and resource conservation. A variety of research and monitoring projects were also carried out to support the Park Reserves' goals of maintaining ecological integrity.

NORTH SASKATCHEWAN (BANFF NATIONAL PARK)

Day use visitation along the 93 North continues to increase. A short section of the North Saskatchewan river undercut the 93 North highway and required stabilization. Ongoing Species at Risk monitoring of wolverine, bats, and whitebark pine. Prescribed burn within Alexandra watershed which is a tributary river flowing into the North Saskatchewan. Infrastructure upgrades along the David Thompson, including new gate kiosk. Cultural resource condition monitoring of Owen creek patrol cabin.

QUW'UTSUN | COWICHAN

The Quw'utsun Cowichan River is central to the traditional and present-day lives of the Cowichan Tribes and others living, working, and playing along its 47km stem. This importance is reflected in the many groups and individuals working to preserve and steward this vital resource.

RED

There were no major changes in the Red River corridor in 2022; however, the Red River Valley experienced significant flooding due to high spring river levels combined with an unusually high volume of spring precipitation. Many annual activities and events on or near the river resumed following a hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a variety of fish studies, wildlife monitoring and water quality monitoring work continued. Notable improvements were made in municipalities and provincial parks along the river corridor to improve access and recreation facilities for Manitoba residents and visitors.

RIDEAU

In December 2022, The Rideau Canal and Merrickville Blockhouse National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan was tabled in Parliament by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and will serve as the strategic guiding document for the waterway for the next 10 years. Over the course of 2022-2023, work continued to conserve cultural resources including masonry locks, a timber swing bridge, and the commencement of cultural landscape studies; protect the freshwater ecosystem through NSERC research, a multi-species action plan, and shoreline assessments; and welcome visitors to the site through visitor experiences in historic accommodations, Otentiks, and learning to paddle.

ST. MARYS

The St. Marys River is a 112 km bi-national waterway that flows through several channels connecting Lake Superior to the North Channel of Lake Huron. The St. Marys River has been identified as Area of Concern and is one of the 43 Great Lakes Areas of Concern identified under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) between Canada and the United States. In 2022, significant progress was made in regards to understanding and implementing actions around contaminated sediments, contaminants and tumours in fish, and for fish and wildlife populations.

TÄGÀ SHÄW | THIRTY MILE

According to the contractor who maintains the campsites on Thirty Mile, paddlers and boaters were plentiful on Thirty Mile in 2022. During their weekly or biweekly site visits, they encountered between one and ten groups of paddlers. Numbers peaked around long weekends and during the hunting season. Between July 15 and September 26, there were 2-4 boats with 4-10 people on the river per maintenance trip. Besides the regular maintenance of the campsite facilities, the contractor also supplied free firewood at the sites which greatly reduced damage to the sites by wood scavengers.

TATSHENSHINI | SHÄWSHE CHÚ

Overall, the Tatshenshini River's Yukon portion retained its natural, cultural and heritage values for which the river was designated. No industrial land use permits were issued and the existing mineral claim is static with no new developments. The most recent Backcountry Recreation Impact Monitoring (BRIM) survey of the campsites on the upper Tatshenshini was conducted in August 2019. Among the sites surveyed, there were no discernible changes to sites and impacts are minimal. There are no significant threats to the heritage values on the river. With the onset of COVID-19, which resulted in tourist traffic restricted to BC and NWT residents, along with international border restrictions, there was a sharp decline in commercial paddlers on the Tatshenshini. The Yukon-based Tatshenshini Expediting conducts day trips by raft from Blanchard River to Tatshenshini River and experienced a 70% decline in clients in 2020, from the previous year. The 2021 season rebounded to within 80% of the 2019 season. Multi-day excursions along the length of the Tatshenshini to the Alaskan coast were completely shut down for the 2020 season but resumed in 2021 but with reduced traffic.

TSAIH TL'AK NJIK | BONNET PLUME

Implementation of the 2019 Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan began in 2020. However, there have been delays in advancing the park management planning due to other land use planning priorities that needed to be settled before proceeding with



protected area planning. With the land use plan and the establishment of the park, the Bonnet Plume River watershed is permanently protected. Very little activity has occurred in the Bonnet Plume watershed in 2022. The extent of recreational activity is not well understood, but given the very challenging paddling conditions and three portages, recreational use is typically no more than two or three parties per year.

TSIIGEHNJIK | ARCTIC RED

“Paddling the Tsiigehnjik”¹, a documentary that follows students from Chief Paul Niditchie School on a trip on the river, can now be viewed online. Chief Paul Niditchie School’s grade 9 science class is working on an erosion project on Vik’ooyendik (Church Hill). Traditional and local use of Tsiigehnjik continued with subsistence fishing and hunting. Other annual programs and events took place, including Canoe Daze and water flow and water quality monitoring. Directional drilling was completed underneath Tsiigehnjik as part of construction of the Dempster Fibre Project. The spruce budworm infestation of the forests along the southern part of the river continues to be severe.

¹ Spelling as it appears in the film title. Official spelling is Tsiigehnjik - see [Canadian Geographic Names Database](#).