

THE CANADIAN HERITAGE



RIVERS SYSTEM

C H A R T E R

WHEREAS

freshwater is essential to life on earth and Canada is blessed with more than one-fifth of the world's freshwater supply; and

WHEREAS

rivers are a priceless and irreplaceable part of our national heritage and identity; and

WHEREAS

participating governments on the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board have agreed to renew and strengthen their participation in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System by operating the program through a strategic plan, which will take precedence as the principal operating document for the Board; and

WHEREAS

this Charter will be completely reviewed by all Ministers responsible for the Canadian Heritage Rivers System during the fiscal year commencing April 1, 2006, in regard to any required revisions, and its renewal;

THEREFORE, IT IS UNDERSTOOD

that the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, do, by this Charter, reaffirm their governments' commitment to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and by this Charter describe its main principles of operation, and its core officers, bodies, and responsibilities, as follows:



**The Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System**



Sandra Kelly

The Honourable Sandra Kelly
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador



Weston MacAleer

The Honourable J. Weston MacAleer
Minister of Economic Development and Tourism
Government of Prince Edward Island



Alan Graham

The Honourable Alan Graham
Minister of Natural Resources and Energy
Government of New Brunswick



Eleanor Norrie

The Honourable Eleanor Norrie
Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Nova Scotia

I VISION

This charter affirms the vision of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board that:

Canada's outstanding rivers will be nationally recognized and managed through the support and stewardship of local people and provincial, territorial and federal governments to ensure the long-term conservation of the rivers' natural, cultural and recreational values and integrity.

II PURPOSE OF THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM

This Charter defines a framework for co-operation between Canada and the Provinces and Territories (hereinafter referred to as "the parties") to recognize, protect and manage, in a sustainable manner, Canada's important rivers and their natural heritage, human (cultural/historical) heritage and recreational values.

III PRINCIPLES OF THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM

This Charter serves to emphasize the following principles, which form (or will form) part of the Strategic Plan of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board:

- i) Participation in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System is voluntary.
- ii) Participants in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System will retain their traditional jurisdictional powers over rivers included in the System including ownership of land, the choice to nominate a river to the System and the right to continue to operate and manage designated rivers in accordance with the objectives of the System.
- iii) All participants in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System will respect the rights and concerns of communities, Aboriginal Peoples, land owners and other stakeholders in the nomination, designation and management of Canadian Heritage Rivers.
- iv) Rivers, or sections of rivers, included in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System will meet the spirit of the heritage and recreational value selection guidelines as set out by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board.
- v) River nominations and designations will be jointly approved, on the recommendation of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board, by the Minister(s) of the nominating jurisdiction(s) and the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.
- vi) Parks Canada will continue to be the lead federal agency in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and will, through a Secretariat operated on behalf of the Board, provide support for the promotion of the System at the national and



international levels and co-ordination of the ongoing monitoring of designated rivers. Parks Canada will also provide assistance to provinces and territories for the preparation of studies and plans leading to the nomination and designation of rivers to the System.

- vii) Provincial and territorial governments will continue to make a substantial commitment to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System through assuming the long-term operational and management costs of having rivers within their jurisdictions designated to the System.

IV THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS BOARD

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System is administered by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board, comprised of members appointed by the federal, provincial and territorial governments and, as such, is responsible to the people of Canada. The parties hereby affirm the role of the Board in overseeing the development and operation of the national Canadian Heritage Rivers System program through the adoption and monitoring of a strategic plan. The Board may develop its procedures and carry out its operations as it determines, consistent with the Charter.

V EXPANSION OF THE BOARD

Within the timeframe of this Charter, the parties agree to expand the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to a maximum of fifteen members to allow for representation from the new territories of Nunavut and the residual Northwest Territories, once established. Composition of the Board will be made up of a maximum of ten provincial, three territorial and two federal government representatives.

VI DURATION OF TERM

Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the parties, the co-operation contemplated in this Charter shall be for a period of ten years, commencing on September 15, 1996, and ending on September 15, 2006.

VII SCOPE OF THIS CHARTER

- i) Nothing in this Charter is to be interpreted as establishing a partnership, joint venture, agency relationship or commercial association between the parties.
- ii) Each party shall retain exclusive responsibility for its undertakings.
- iii) This Charter shall not be interpreted to create any right or obligation between the parties.



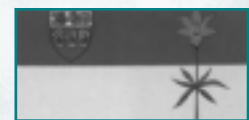
The Honourable David Cliche
Minister of Environment and Wildlife
Government of Quebec



The Honourable Chris Hodgson
Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Ontario



The Honourable Albert Driedger
Minister of Natural Resources
Government of Manitoba

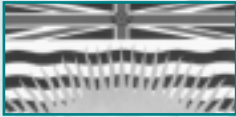


The Honourable Lorne Scott
Minister of Environment and Resource
Management
Government of Saskatchewan



Ty Lund

The Honourable Ty Lund
Minister of Environmental Protection
Government of Alberta



Cathy McGregor

The Honourable Cathy McGregor
Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks
Government of British Columbia



Eric Fairclough

The Honourable Eric Fairclough
Minister of Renewable Resources
Government of Yukon



Don Morin

The Honourable Don Morin
Premier
Government of the Northwest Territories



VIII MODIFICATIONS

It is understood that this Charter may be modified at any time by written agreement of all parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have executed this Charter by their Ministers' signatures, signed in counterpart, as of the day and year written below.

Sheila Copps

The Honourable Sheila Copps
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage
Government of Canada

Ronald A. Irwin

The Honourable Ronald A. Irwin
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
Government of Canada

April 22, 1997, EARTH DAY