

SELENITE POINT

Representative Area

-- Concept Management Plan --

**Saskatchewan Environment and
Resource Management
September, 2000**

Saskatchewan's Representative Areas Network Program

The Government of Saskatchewan, through Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM), is committed to the establishment of a system of ecologically important land and water areas across the province by the year 2000. This system is called the "Representative Areas Network".

Saskatchewan is made up of various landscapes. A representative area is a sample or piece of a particular landscape identified because of its important land-forms, wetlands, soils, plants, animal resources or cultural values. Representative areas are intended to allow for natural processes to occur. They can also serve as test sites that can be studied and monitored to measure how well we are managing natural resources and ecosystems elsewhere in the province.

As its name suggests, the Representative Areas Network must include lands and waters that represent a broad range of ecological diversity. Saskatchewan's landscapes have been divided into 11 distinct "ecoregions", each characterized by its geology, soils, climate, plants and animals. The proposed Selenite Point Representative Area lies within the Mid-boreal Upland ecoregion that is currently under represented within the provincial Network.

Just as the reasons for choosing a particular site vary, so too, do the uses that are acceptable within new sites. In some sites, human activities and access may be limited so that the area's ecological resources and integrity can be managed or restored. In the majority of sites, however, land uses that are compatible with the program's ecological objectives can be accommodated. Suggestions and needs identified by local interest groups and users will largely determine the kinds and levels of activity that may occur within a particular site.

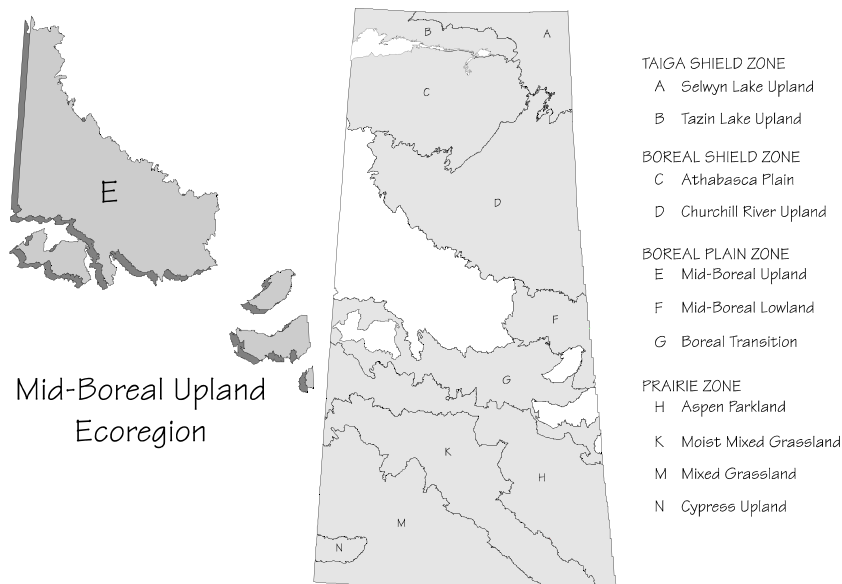
Consultation and input from local users helps to determine the best option for each site. Through these discussions, specific needs, concerns or issues can be addressed on a site-by-site basis and outlined in a management plan or strategy for the area.

For the past several years, representatives from SERM have been working with the Dore/Smoothstone Stakeholder's Advisory Board and the Dore Smoothstone Co-Management Board to discuss the merits of having representative areas established in the Dore, Smoothstone and Lac La Plonge Lakes areas that would protect and preserve important wildlife habitat and traditional lifestyles. These Boards have been very instrumental in providing information and support for these representative area initiatives. Recommendations made through these discussions form the basis of this Concept Management Plan and will help guide future management of the Selenite Point site as part of the Representative Areas Network.

Description of the Mid-boreal Upland Ecoregion

The Mid-boreal Upland Ecoregion includes the area in central and western Saskatchewan immediately south of the Shield, as well as several prominent upland areas known locally as the Thickwood, Pasquia and Porcupine Hills. This ecoregion occupies over 10 million hectares or 16 per cent of the province. It is characterized by a mosaic of forests, open and treed fens, bogs and water. In addition, an ascending sequence of steeply sloping, eroded escarpments, hilly glacial plains and level plateau-like tops are typical of the upland. Intervening areas are comparatively level, with large, sparsely treed peatlands being common. Most of the ecoregion is characterized by loamy, gray soils, although near the Shield the soils are sandy and often poorly drained.

The forest grows taller here than on the Shield and accounts for the bulk of the province's merchantable timber. Aspen occurs throughout the ecoregion and is dominant on the south-facing slopes of the major uplands. Where moisture conditions are favorable, white spruce is often mixed with aspen. Jack pine, in addition to its usual dominance in sandy areas, is found mixed with black spruce on the plateau-like tops of the uplands. Black spruce and tamarack dominate the low-lying peatland areas.



Wildlife populations are high and diverse with moose, mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, black bear, timber wolf and beaver being most prominent, while woodland caribou occur but are less common. Great gray owl, blue jay, sharp-shinned hawk, broad-winged hawk, yellow-bellied sapsucker, common goldeneye, sandhill crane, many species of warblers, solitary vireo, western tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak and ruby-throated hummingbird are typical birds. Fish populations include northern pike, walleye, whitefish, burbot, white

sucker, some perch and scattered populations of lake trout.

A combination of cold climate, sandy soils and hilly topography has limited agricultural development to less than 10 per cent of the area. Forestry is the primary resource use for this ecoregion, and much of the region is currently allocated as timber supply areas under various Forest Management License Agreements with forest companies. Additional resource uses include mining, and oil and gas extraction. Hunting, fishing, trapping and outfitting are also significant resource uses for the region.

Selenite Point Representative Area

Important Features and Topography

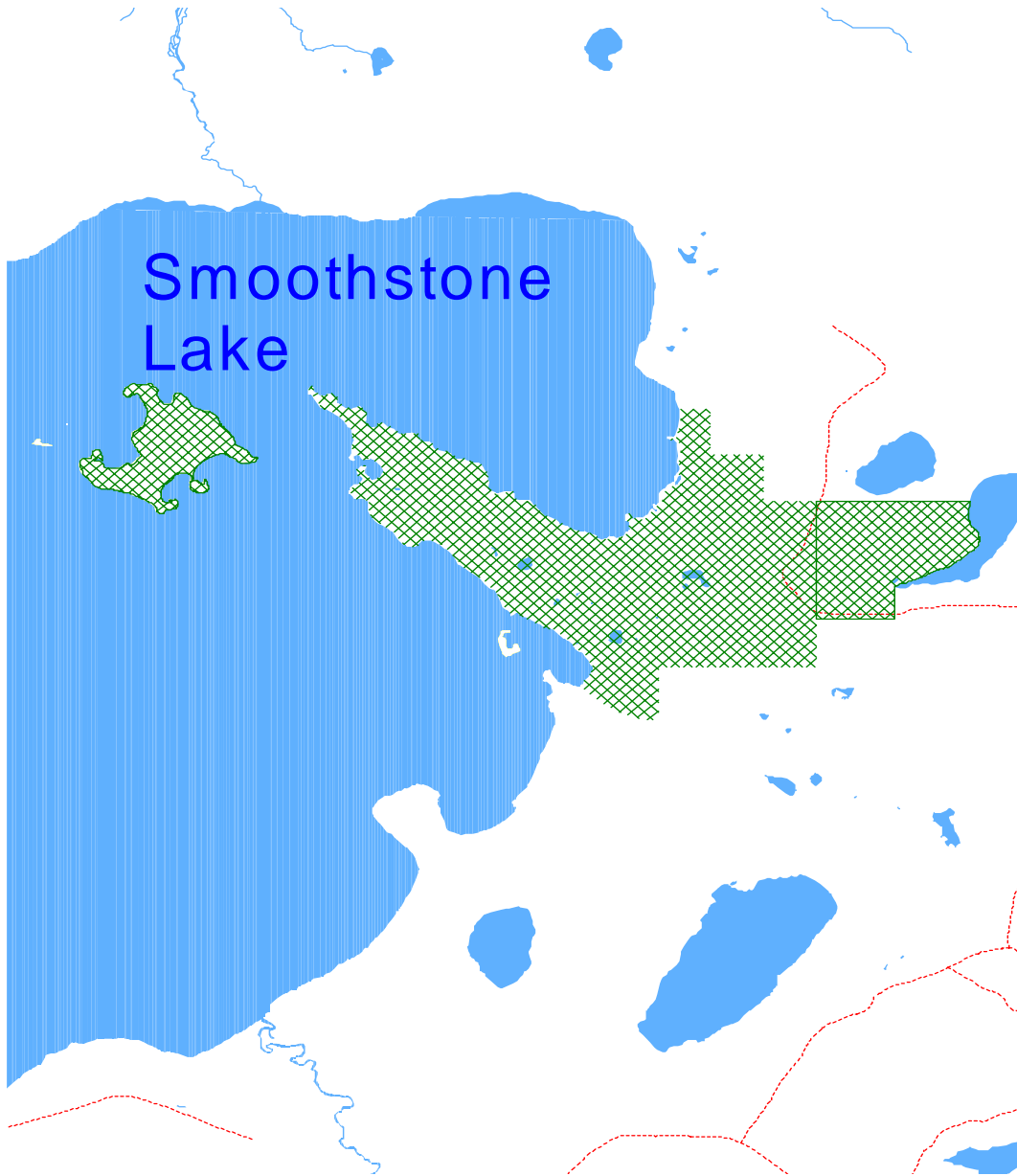
The Selenite Point site is representative of Canada's mixedwood forested region, containing a variety of different types of forest cover at various stages of growth. The surrounding landscape is relatively level, with the exception of several areas of high relief which include Dore Mountain and lookout point both at 2000 feet above mean sea level. Several large peatlands of both bog and fen origin can be found in the vicinity of Sled and Beaupre lakes. The Representative Area at Selenite Point contains a selection of geological features which support a variety of plants and animals adapted to the northern landscape and climate. Enduring features are used to guide site selections in the Representative Areas Network Program. Enduring features are specific rock, soil and land-form types that are very stable over long periods of time, and are likely to support characteristic plant and animal communities. Enduring features are defined based on four specific factors:

- < the origin of the parent material: this relates to the method by which material such as soil, gravel or rocks was deposited (i.e. wind, water, glacial melt water)
- < soil development: how soils were formed through various factors like climate, soil organisms, the nature of the parent material, the topography of an area, and time
- < surface form: physical landscape features such as eskers or potholes
- < slope: refers to the steepness or grade of the surface terrain

The site at Selenite Point, including Shelter Island, is nearly 4,000 hectares and is dominated by old growth spruce and aspen forest. Clear and treed muskeg are located on lower wet areas and support some black spruce and tamarack growth. There are two soil associations found in the area which produces the largely spruce aspen forest. The loamy soils of Selenite Point produces the best white spruce and aspen while the fen area along the northern edge of the site, in association with Little Mahigan Lake is dominated by black spruce and open muskeg.

The area is important to local people as a hunting and trapping area. Several trappers trap the area. There are several outfitters who outfit for deer and bear within the site. The

location of Selenite Point Representative Area is shown on the following map:



Site Condition

A few bush trails provide limited access to only a portion of the site, leaving most of the area largely undisturbed. The site is relatively intact and has high ecological integrity. The majority of the forests within the site are mature and have not been logged. Major fires have not been in the area since the 1960's which accounts for the old growth forest found here.

Current Uses

Selenite Point has been used for many generations for traditional hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering purposes. Several trappers from Fur Conservation Blocks P-88 and P-69 annually set traplines throughout the site. In addition, four outfitters are licensed to outfit for bear and deer within the representative area. The area is used by sport hunters to harvest white-tailed deer, moose and to a lesser extent elk.

Limited amounts of recreation occur in the area due to the remoteness of the site. There are no recreational cabins or leases in the representative area, although there is a quarry lease just outside of the site. The Swan Lake road cuts through the representative area and is used extensively by Weyerhaeuser Canada as a major forestry haul road. The road is in need of improvements to reduce a critical safety deficiency and approvals have been given to Weyerhaeuser Canada to relocate about 1500 meters of road south of the stream crossing on the Mahigan River. General upgrading of the road within the representative area is necessary.

Site Use and Management

Allowable Activities and Developments:

- U** exercise of treaty rights (hunting, trapping {including building and maintaining associated trappers' cabins}, fishing, gathering, including the harvest of medicinal plants)
- U** trapping
- U** hunting
- U** fishing
- U** outfitting
- U** mushroom picking
- U** berry picking
- U** walking, hiking, backpacking and nature observation and appreciation
- U** research and educational activities;

Carrying out of these activities is subject to normal licensing or permitting requirements, as may be applicable.

Activities and Developments Not Allowed:

- Y** commercial timber harvesting
- Y** new trails that could be used for recreational purposes by motorized vehicles
- Y** disruptive mineral development and/or mineral exploration
- Y** recreational cottage subdivisions
- Y** residential and/or recreational cabin leases
- Y** new hydroelectric projects
- Y** gravel pits
- Y** new or expanded outfitting base camps
- Y** fire salvage logging
- Y** new weirs, dams or control structures on or in streams
- Y** fish introductions of exotic or non-native species
- Y** new utility corridors

Advisory Board

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM) will establish an advisory board comprised of representatives from the Dore/Smoothstone area, and/or any other party recognized as having an interest or role in the ongoing management and use of the Representative Area.

The Advisory Board shall meet at the request of SERM to act in an advisory capacity to review and recommend specific activities, management tools, research and educational activities that may be considered for application within the representative area. Once the Board has been struck, a comprehensive Terms of Reference shall be established and adopted by the Board and SERM.

Site Designation

Formal designation of the surface area of the site is as a Representative Area, created by regulations established pursuant to *The Ecological Reserves Act*.

A representative area is a legally protected natural area that may serve as a benchmark for measuring environmental changes and the ecological health of this and other areas in Saskatchewan. Representative Areas can also be used to preserve ecological and geological features and provide opportunities for scientific research and study related to ecological health. The Selenite Point site contains features and resources that fit each of these ecological purposes, as well as supporting a variety of plant and animal communities.

The Crown minerals underlying the surface of the site will be protected by a Crown Reserve established by Saskatchewan Energy and Mines pursuant to *The Crown Minerals Act*. A Crown Reserve withdraws the minerals from disposition for exploration or development, thereby affording maximum protection for the site's full range of resources

(Appendix A).

Appendix A

Crown Mineral Reserve Description