




When a tree falls  
in the forest



What  
do  
you  
hear?

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## What do you hear?

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Talk to an environmentalist about the forest. Then talk to a logger, an Aboriginal family, an area resident, a visiting tourist. You will hear different perspectives on what the forest means to them. Each one is a valid viewpoint.

Now listen closely. You will hear something else – a shared belief that our forests are a precious resource. This is the common ground on which the Prince Albert Model Forest is based.

**“Armed with the latest science and technology, participants in Canada’s Model Forest Program ensure that Canada’s forests remain a source of economic wealth, community stability, biological diversity and national pride for years to come.”**

- Achieving Sustainable Forest Management Through Partnership,  
Canada’s Model Forest Program



## Common Ground

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As a resource, the forest has many uses: timber, hunting, fishing, trapping, First Nations lands, recreation, ecotourism, education, outfitting, wildlife and habitat protection. The key to equitable sharing of these resources is a healthy forest.

The Prince Albert Model Forest is a partnership that brings together industry, First Nations, local communities, parks, owners, landowners and federal and provincial agencies - all stakeholders in a healthy forest. Where once these groups may have stood toe-to-toe on issues of forest management, they now sit side-by-side as partners. The vision that guides the partnership is sustainable forest management: the responsible and sustainable use of our forest resources to conserve their biodiversity, productive capacity and ecological integrity, while maintaining the social, cultural and economic benefits we derive from them.

Accommodating the philosophies, cultural backgrounds, social values, management intents, legislation, policies and economic goals of each of the ten stakeholder-partners is a challenge, but the forest itself provides inspiration. When a tree falls – to logging, wildfires or simply old age – new growth takes over. It is up to us to ensure the natural process continues for the benefit of all stakeholders. We do this by working together and helping each other... ma maw wechehetowin.

**Against a rising sun, an eagle soars across the nation and forests, carrying the sacred pipe. For generations of Indian people, the pipe has been a symbol of peace, of joining together. Noted Indian artist Willard Ahenekew draws on this rich symbolism to represent the spirit of Prince Albert Model Forest. Ma Maw Wechehetowin ... Working Together, Helping Each Other.**



## A Living Laboratory

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If sustainable forest management is our vision, what better way to achieve it than to create a living laboratory? A place where new ideas, technologies and theories can be developed and tested ... and the results are on display for all to see.

The Prince Albert Model Forest is just that. As a member of the Canadian Model Forest Network, we are part of one of the world's largest forestry experiments. The solutions and innovations we develop here may one day benefit forests around the world. It is a global experiment controlled by local initiative. And it may change the way the world treats its forest resources.

**“It’s not just about timber. It’s about the human aspects of the forest – how it enhances our lives and impacts our communities. How we’re all affected by what happens in our forests. As a group, we look ahead to the future of the forest, for the benefit of everyone.”**

- Dale McLeod, Resort Village of Candle Lake



Increasing competition among forest uses led to the creation of Canada's Model Forest Program in 1992. Today it is a coast-to-coast network of eleven forests, each a working model of sustainable forest management.

## The National Model

At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Canada introduced its International Model Forest Program. Mexico was first to join, creating model forests in Calakmul and Chihuahua in 1993 and Mariposa Monarca in 1995. Russia followed with designation of the Gassinski Model Forest in 1994. The United States reclassified three Adaptive Management Areas as model forests: Cispus Model Forest in Washington, Applegate Model Forest in Oregon and Hayfork Model Forest in California all became members in 1995. Many other countries are either expressing interest or developing model forests, including Argentina, Australia, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

## Canada Leads the Way

**“We believe our participation will help ensure future generations keep the forest sustainable. One of our reserves, the Bittern Lake Indian Reserve, is located in the area, so we make sure Band interests are represented.”**

- Fred Charles, Lac La Ronge Indian Band



## **The Local Initiative**

The Prince Albert Model Forest is a not-for-profit organization established in 1992 and supported by direct funding from the Canadian Forest Service, as well as by contributions from its ten stakeholder-partners (listed below in alphabetical order).

**Canadian Forest Service**

**Canadian Institute of Forestry**

**Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations**

**Lac La Ronge Indian Band**

**Montreal Lake Cree Nation**

**Prince Albert Grand Council**

**Prince Albert National Park**

**Resort Village of Candle Lake**

**Saskatchewan Environment and  
Resource Management**

**Weyerhaeuser**

Each partner is represented on the Board of Directors, which meets regularly to discuss forest issues and projects. In the development of new ideas, local needs and interests are considered and decisions are arrived at by consensus. This way, the interests of one partner are never sacrificed to another.

Research projects reflect the Model Forest's two main goals: first, to ensure a sustainable and predictable supply of forest based on ecological, social and economic benefits; second, to raise awareness of and demonstrate commitment to the concepts of sustainability, integrated resource management and ecosystem management.

The Prince Albert Model Forest does not have jurisdiction over the area it occupies – its stakeholder-partners do. SERM, Prince Albert National Park, Resort Village of Candle Lake, Montreal Lake Cree Nation and Lac La Ronge Indian Band each control significant portions of the forest. It is their involvement as partners that ultimately leads to adoption of sustainable forest management practices within their individual lands.

## Leading By Example

**“The Model Forest has had very real benefits for our company. For example, it has helped us develop closer relationships with Aboriginal communities. That has led to new business partnerships like Wapawekka Lumber.”**

- Dave Lindenau, Weyerhaeuser, Saskatchewan Forestlands





## Partners

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In 1992, the Prince Albert Model Forest partnership consisted of people that hadn't spent much time working together. They joined forces to enter a nation-wide competition to become one of Canada's original ten model forests. With 50 other partnerships across the country competing for the same honour, making it to the final ten was an accomplishment.

One of the main criteria was the partnership itself. Were the main stakeholders involved? Was there representation from those who lived, worked and were impacted by the forest? When the answer was yes, Prince Albert Model Forest became Saskatchewan's representative in Canada's Model Forest Network.

**“The reason the partnership works is the diversity of interests represented. By doing things co-operatively, we ensure that the use of forest resources isn't dominated by one stakeholder. All stakeholders have input. It is an equal partnership, and that's how First Nations do business.”**

- Duane Hiebert, Forestry Department, Prince Albert Grand Council

### **Building the Network**

Pursuing sustainability has been the test of fire. Over the past eight years, the partners have learned to respect their different mandates and listen to different points of view. It has not always been easy. What has emerged is a strong partnership ... and a sense of trust.

**“Individuals are respecting the mandates of each partner, even if they do not necessarily agree with them. That's okay, we don't have to agree on mandates, so long as we agree on the need to sustain a healthy ecosystem.”**

- Norm Stolle, Parks Canada Agency, Prince Albert National Park

## **Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations**

**Committed to protecting the forest land base, which is used by First Nations people for subsistence, spiritual and cultural value, to ensure the forest continues to exist for future generations.**

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) is a political organization intent on furthering the economic, educational and social development of First Nations people. It represents 72 First Nations and five language groups, including the Cree, Saulteaux, Assiniboine, Dakota/Sioux and Dene/Chipewyan Nations.

The FSIN's involvement in the Model Forest will help ensure that local and provincial plans and policies for the forest sector are relevant to First Nations. The process also provides an opportunity to develop policies that could directly relate resource management issues during negotiations on traditional lands to enhanced health and welfare of First Nations people.

## **Lac La Ronge Indian Band**

The Lac La Ronge Indian Band is located in North Central Saskatchewan and has a population of over 7,000 members. The Band presently has 18 parcels of reserve land scattered over a wide area of their traditional territories covering approximately 42,392 hectares. The Band members reside mainly on six of the reserves. The other reserves are occupied seasonally by Band members engaged in traditional occupations of hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering of wild food. The native language is Cree. The Band's economic base includes agricultural permits, timber permits, commercial enterprises, commercial fishing, tourism and trapping.

## **Aboriginal Voices**



In 1997, the Prince Albert Model Forest expanded to include 6,950 hectares of land within the Bittern Lake Indian Reserve, giving the Lac La Ronge Indian Band direct involvement in the Model Forest. As a partner, the Band plays an important role in developing sustainable forest management practices and building economic benefits for First Nations people.

### **Montreal Lake Cree Nation**

**Committed to meeting the economic needs of the community, as well as protecting the environment, wildlife and cultural heritage of Montreal Lake region through participation in forest management.**

The Montreal Lake Cree Nation reserve spans 8,270 hectares, 6,350 of which are located within the Prince Albert Model Forest. As one of the founding partners, Montreal Lake has set a tone for leadership. Its involvement in the Wapus Lake Elk Re-establishment Project with Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management came about because the two partners shared a common goal – re-establishing elk in an area where they once flourished. That goal is now being realized.

Montreal Lake continues to work to ensure new forestry practices make use of the valuable traditional knowledge of First Nations people and to push development of economic independence through commercial activities. These activities support a growing population and more diverse economy.

Photo: Parks Canada/S.F. Martin/1998



Photo: Parks Canada/S. Heard/1974



## **Prince Albert Grand Council**

**Prince Albert Grand Council is a regional voice for 12 First Nations. It delivers programs and shares information with its members, and is dedicated to protection of First Nations rights and access to forest resources.**

The Prince Albert Grand Council represents twelve First Nations in an area extending from central Saskatchewan east to the Manitoba border and into the northern-most regions of the province. Its members include Montreal Lake Cree Nation and Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

In 1992 the Grand Council was just beginning its participation in the forest industry and saw partnership as an opportunity to network with other agencies. Since then it has worked to ensure that the knowledge and technology developed is relevant to First Nations communities, and that these communities are directly involved in the practice of sustainable forest management and reap some of the economic benefits.

## **Resort Village of Candle Lake**

**To represent the interests of local residents to ensure the human aspects of sustainable forest management and their impact on land-owners and the community as a whole are considered.**

The village of Candle Lake offers a wide variety of year-round recreational opportunities, including camping, golfing, hiking, fishing, skiing and snowmobiling. The beauty of the natural setting and close proximity to the city of Prince Albert make it a prime location for growth. Candle Lake joined the Model Forest in 1997 when the boundary was expanded to include 4,175 hectares of village land.

As the only municipal partner, Candle Lake adds a unique viewpoint. Village goals and objectives emphasize protection of the natural environment, while providing recreational opportunities and encouraging new development in an orderly manner.

## **Community Membership**

## Industry Participation

### Weyerhaeuser, Saskatchewan Forestlands

To develop, in participation with the public, Aboriginal people, government, environmental groups and forest users, a 20-year forest management plan that uses an ecosystem-based approach to sustainable forest management.

Weyerhaeuser is one of the largest forest product companies in Canada. Its Saskatchewan Forestlands division oversees the company's Forest Management Agreement (FMA) Areas, one of which includes more than 173,000 hectares in the Model Forest region. The company harvests timber in its FMA to supply its manufacturing facilities.

As the main industrial partner in the Model Forest, Weyerhaeuser is instrumental in the development and implementation of an Integrated Resource Management plan for the area, and the creation of new economic opportunities for Aboriginal people. It shares its expertise and resources to transfer knowledge and technology to other forest users, ensuring more widespread adoption of sustainable forest management practices.





## **Canadian Forest Service**

**To promote the sustainable development of Canada's forests and competitiveness of the Canadian forest sector for the well-being of present and future generations of Canadians.**

The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) of Natural Resources Canada is the originator and principal funding agency of the model forest concept. The CFS has provided leading-edge forest science and expertise for more than 100 years and wants to ensure our forests remain strong and viable for generations.

Through its research, the CFS offers innovative approaches to sustainable forest management practices, technologies for collecting and integrating information, and scientific, technical and policy advice for national and international initiatives. Its co-ordination of the Canadian Model Forest Program is one of the most comprehensive attempts to develop and implement practical and transferable approaches to sustainable forest management.

## **Canadian Institute of Forestry**

**To advance the stewardship of Canada's forest resources, provide national leadership in forestry, promote competence among forestry professionals and foster public awareness of Canadian and international forestry issues.**

Since 1908, the Canadian Institute of Forestry has been a national voice for foresters, scientists, academics, technicians, technologists and those with a professional interest in forestry. The Institute's long-time involvement in the development of standards of practice and forestry ethics has made it a natural for membership in Canada's Model Forest Network.

Sharing of ideas and information is a central focus. The Institute works with members, government, industry, research and educational institutions and consultants to promote the intelligent use of Canada's forests. It seeks to promote a balance of ecological, economic, spiritual, recreational and wildlife habitat values by advocating responsible forestry practices.

## **National Connections**



## Natural Perspective

## Prince Albert National Park

**To protect and present significant examples of Canada's cultural and natural heritage in ways that encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment, while ensuring long-term ecological integrity.**

Prince Albert National Park protects a slice of the northern forest, which contains many outstanding natural and cultural features. Through special events and extensive interpretive programming, the Park helps make this diverse natural setting come alive for visitors.

Its role in the Model Forest is to ensure the ecological integrity of the Park, while providing input into the development of sustainable forest management practices. Its participation is a unique opportunity to promote greater understanding of the value of protected areas, as well as to demonstrate the benefits of effective ecosystem monitoring.

## Provincial Involvement

## Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management

**To manage, enhance and protect Saskatchewan's natural and environmental resources for conservation, recreation, social and economic purposes, to ensure they are sustained for future generations.**

Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management, or SERM, is the provincial department responsible for sustainable management, protection and development of our renewable resources – including more than 355,000 square kilometres of Saskatchewan forest.

SERM is committed to creating employment and economic opportunities in the forestry sector; dedicated to contributing its technical knowledge and public involvement experience in land use planning; steadfast in upholding the essential components of sustainable forest management – planning, monitoring, reporting and adapting.

# Managing the Forest

Trees fall in the forest for many reasons - harvesting, insects, disease, wildfires, managed burns, old age. When they fall in Prince Albert Model Forest, every partner hears the echo.

A healthy forest provides long-term ecological, social, cultural and economic benefits. Maintaining these benefits for present and future generations is a shared concern. Through the participation of its partners, the Prince Albert Model Forest provides a framework for sustainable forest management.

**“One of the things that’s been so important about our participation in the Model Forest is the awareness it has created about forest use. We all use the forest for different reasons. In land planning, these different uses are taken into consideration.”**

- Chris LaPlante, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations



## Achieving the Balance

Balance - that's what sustainable forest management is really about. Balancing the need to maintain the long-term health of forest ecosystems with the need to provide economic, social and cultural opportunities. Balancing the needs of today's forest users with those of future generations. Balancing the viewpoints of different stakeholders - forestry workers, First Nations, cottage owners, tourists, hunters, trappers, fishers, government departments and a national park.

When significant portions of the forest lie within provincial and national park boundaries, First Nations lands, a resort community and a Forest Management Area, achieving balance becomes a work in progress.

**“The Model Forest is trying to achieve that elusive dream of sustainability - balancing economic and social interests while maintaining a healthy environment ... that's the legacy we'll leave for our children.”**

- Doug Mazur, Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management

Achieving balance begins with defining common objectives. The Prince Albert Model Forest has seven.

**Stay in shape.** Maintain the forest as a healthy ecosystem.

**Emphasize renewal.** Maintain all resources as a renewable, sustainable source of economic, cultural and social benefits.

**Have a plan.** Develop inventories and planning tools and processes for implementation of integrated resource management.

**Share information.** Exchange knowledge, technology and skills among resource managers, landowners and forest users.

**Keep in touch.** Transfer the latest technology, skills, land ethics and philosophies to forest managers, users and the broader public.

**Spread the good word.** Promote understanding of sustainable forest management and improve the credibility of resource management.

**See the forest for the trees.** Identify and apply local level indicators to monitor the health of the forest over time.

To allow for a broad range of users, the Prince Albert Model Forest applies the principles of Integrated Resource Management (IRM) to develop sustainable forest management practices. IRM looks at the forest ecosystem as a whole - trees, shrubs, vegetation, soil, water, animals, insects, birds, people.

## The Principles of Forest Management

The rightness of any proposed use is judged according to its fit with IRM principles:

- ..... the health of the forest ecosystem is paramount when making management decisions;
- ..... all forest values, whether economic or non-economic, must be considered when making management decisions;
- ..... everyone affected - local communities, northern residents and Aboriginal people - has the right to be involved in forest management planning in a meaningful way;
- ..... planning must be flexible enough to allow for changing circumstances/demands.

### Guidelines

Within the Prince Albert Model Forest, partners agree to operate within an IRM plan, to manage the forest resource and harvest according to concepts of sustainable development. - sustainable use of resources where appropriate, resource protection where necessary, resource restoration where indicated.





## Working Groups

The days of one agency dictating forest management policy are over. This is the consensus of the Model Forest partners. They point to the creation of the Prince Albert Model Forest Ecosystem-Based Integrated Resource Management Plan - the first of its kind in Canada - as clear evidence that a vastly diverse group of stakeholders can develop a common vision.

The Model Forest provides a land base in which this vision can be implemented; Working Groups provide the vehicle. Through them, volunteers from partner organizations engage in the real-world task of developing, testing and refining new technology, tools, methods and processes.

### Local Level Indicators/Ecosystem Health

**“Local level indicators show the world that we practice sustainable forest management. That’s important because it can help gain Saskatchewan forest products acceptance around the world, especially Europe.”**

*-Steve Price, Canadian Forest Service*

How do you know you’re practicing sustainable forest management? You need to set benchmarks - water levels, tree diversity, soil erosion, road access, disease incidence, wildlife populations and so on.

You need to be able to attach measurable values to the natural processes that make up a healthy forest ecosystem. And you need to monitor them, consistently, over the long-term. Local level indicators allow partners to actually see the forest for the trees. The ultimate benefit is being able to manage forests more sustainably.




Local level indicators are based on Criteria & Indicators (C&I) developed and accepted by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers in 1995. The national framework defines six criteria for sustainable forest management: conservation of biological diversity; maintenance and enhancement of forest ecosystem condition and productivity; conservation of soil and water resources; forest ecosystem contributions to global ecological cycles; multiple benefits of forests to society; and acceptance of society's responsibility for sustainable development. The focus of the Local Level Indicators/Ecosystem Health Working Group is to take the national standard and apply it locally.

**“Local level indicators allow partners to compare issues from a common point. Despite different perspectives, we can talk the same language.”**

- Norm Stolle, Prince Albert National Park

The Working Group evaluates partner activities and needs, conducts research and implements pilot projects. For example, what are the songbird populations in a healthy forest? One project involved testing a new microphone capable of picking up more sound from all directions, in this case - bird calls. The enhanced range allows one person to collect more samples; the samples are used to monitor bird populations and relate them to changes in forest activities.

Another project involved testing sampling procedures for PESP: permanent ecological sample plots. PESP track natural development in post-fire and post-harvest stands of trees. Understanding these two developmental paths is the basis for the province's forest management program.



Ecosystem health management is integral to the process. It strives to reconcile the promotion of economic opportunities and liveable communities with the conservation of ecological integrity and biodiversity. It considers the basic components of air, land, water and living things - people included - in an integrated context that includes environmental, social and economic considerations.

### **Integrated Resource Management**

**“The goal of Integrated Resource Management is to show where you’ve been, where you’re going and how you’re going to get there.”**

- Dale McLeod, Resort Village of Candle Lake

Integrated resource management considers all facets and all stakeholders in the management of the forest resource. It is a holistic approach to land use, created with representation from all partners. It considers all areas of interest and actively seeks ways to accommodate different interests.

The Prince Albert Model Forest Ecosystem-Based Integrated Resource Management Plan has been two years in the making. The exhaustive process required partners to look at the Model Forest in relation to the provincial park, national park, Weyerhaeuser’s Forest Management Area, resort village, and First Nations lands.

The Working Group held more than 40 meetings with partners, members of partner organizations and the public. A first draft was hammered out, and a second and a third and so on. This spring, the Working Group presented its IRM plan to the Board. It was approved in principle and is now being formally approved by each of the partners.

**“To be able to achieve this consensus really says something about the people of Saskatchewan and their commitment to sustainable forest management.”**

- Doug Mazur, SERM

Instead of a “cookie-cutter” approach to resource management, the IRM plan is proactive in its response to social, economic and cultural needs. SERM is using the plan as a model for the development of future land use plans in other parts of the province.

## Communications & Knowledge Exchange

Development of new ideas and technologies is always worthwhile, but what makes the process especially valuable in the Model Forest is the ongoing communication among partners and exchange of knowledge and information.

The Communications and Knowledge Exchange Working Group promotes the exchange of knowledge and skills among resource managers, landowners and forest users. It also actively promotes awareness of the Prince Albert Model Forest and its objectives, and the importance in all our lives of sustainable forest management through Integrated Resource Management.

Partners expect the technical knowledge and experience gained through the co-operative nature of the Model Forest to provide a strong foundation for building long-term partnerships in much larger forests in Saskatchewan. The benefits of this co-operative management approach will be shared with the Canadian and international publics.

**“The Model Forest has opened lines of communication with the public and allowed us to work with different groups. Weyerhaeuser has a licence to harvest timber, but this provided an opportunity to keep in touch with those we affect.”**

- Dave Lindenau, Weyerhaeuser, Saskatchewan Forestlands

### Putting Ideas to the Test

Provincial policy currently restricts forestry activities in buffer zones along streambanks and waterways, called riparian areas. Ideas about how these critical areas should be managed are changing. Forest managers are beginning to explore ways that careful forest management can more fully utilize the available wood supply, while helping to maintain the long-term ecological health of riparian areas.

Assessments are being done before and after harvesting to monitor the impact on soils, vegetation, birds, insects, water and mammals. Findings will be shared with other partners to encourage adoption of sustainable forest management techniques in environmentally sensitive areas.

## The Forest in Action

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Forests cover more than 50% of Saskatchewan. In order to sustain this resource for generations to come, we have to understand two things - how forests work and how different users can benefit from the same resource.


Prince Albert Model Forest occupies less than 1% of the province's total forested area, yet it is making a big impact on the way forests are managed. It is a living laboratory where partners test new ideas and develop on-the-ground solutions to sustainable management.

Even more important, the Model Forest is a place where partners learn to understand the forest in action - its biological processes, its variety of resources, its ongoing needs, its many benefits. This understanding is the root of future forests.

**“Before, we always seemed to be reacting to each other. Since the development of the Model Forest partnership, there's better communication and better understanding between the partners.”**

- Ed Henderson, Montreal Lake Cree Nation





When you say ‘forest’, most people think of trees. But the forest is also shrubs, mosses, lichens, herbs, grasses, bacteria, fungi, animals, insects, birds, water, sun, soil, air and people. The ecosystem-based approach to forest management followed by the Prince Albert Model Forest recognizes the interdependence of all these things ... and lets us see the forest for the trees.

## Seeing the Forest for the Trees

### The Living Forest


Prince Albert Model Forest is located north of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in a section of the Boreal forest which contains a blend of hardwood and softwood trees. Hardwoods include trembling aspen, balsam poplar and white birch; softwoods include jack pine, white spruce, black spruce, balsam fir and tamarack. A wide range of shrubs, mosses and other plants make up the understory vegetation.

The climate is sub-arctic: short cool summers and long cold winters. The landscape is mostly rolling glacial terrain with some upland areas. There are a number of lakes, including several large ones - Candle, Bittern, Montreal, Waskesiu, Crean and Kingsmere.

Several distinct local environments thrive within the Model Forest.

**Aspen forest.** Stands of trembling aspen are found in many areas. It is more commonly called poplar or *mitos* in Cree. Aspen quickly reproduces after fire and accounts for the majority of hardwood volume in Saskatchewan. The trunks are long and cylindrical with rounded crowns and leaves that flutter. Aspen stands are characterized by a dense understory of shrubs and herbs such as hazelnut, twinflower, bunchberry and bishop’s cap. Commercial uses: pulpwood, veneer and plywood. Traditional uses: wood for bowls, tools, shelters, firewood for heating and smoking fish, meat and hides, ash for soap, bark for medicinal products.

**Jack Pine forest.** Its ability to thrive on sandy soils and rocky sites makes the jack pine a common sight in northern Saskatchewan. It grows 12-18 metres in height. Cladonia lichen, feather and club mosses, Labrador tea, Canada blueberry and green alder are found in jack pine stands, along with some



herbs, grasses and other soft and hardwoods. Commercial uses: pulpwood, railway ties, posts, poles, newsprint, lumber, fuel and Christmas trees. Traditional uses: canoe frames, sleds, fishnet floats, shelters, caulking, tanning agent. In Cree, jack pine is *oskahtik*.

**Black spruce forest.** Pure stands of black spruce grow 12-20 metres tall in poorly to moderately well drained areas. Low levels of daylight below the canopy create dark, cool conditions where feather moss and lichen thrive, but there is little understory vegetation. Tamarack and balsam poplar may grow on poorly drained sites. Commercial uses: the best wood for pulp because of its long fibres, also used in paper and newsprint, plywood and lumber. Traditional uses: canoe frames, paddles, arrow shafts, drying racks, pelt stretchers, tipi frames, fishnet floats, shelters, roofing, twine, glue, waterproofing and caulking.

**White spruce forest.** Though found in most areas, the best stands of white spruce are on well-drained sites. It is named *iyinahtik* in Cree. White spruce is more pyramid-shaped than black spruce and distinguished by its bluish-green needles. It grows between 20-25 metres tall. Understory vegetation includes feather moss, shrubs such as Labrador tea, twinflower, bog cranberry and dwarf birch and herbs such as dewberry, wild sarsaparilla, bishop's cap and horsetail. Commercial uses: white spruce is superior to black spruce for lumber. It shares many of the same traditional uses as black spruce.

**Wetlands.** More commonly known as muskeg, wetlands are wet, acidic environments characterized by three stages of development: open fen, treed fen and treed bog. Open fen is a depression filled with rainwater; treed fen consists of sphagnum moss and various sedges, grasses and herbs, with willows and shrubs in drier areas. Treed bog is found near small streams or in poorly drained depressions that derive moisture from rainwater. Treed bog supports black spruce, tamarack, Labrador tea, willow and bog laurel, as well as sphagnum and feather moss, sedges and grasses. Peat is partially decomposed organic matter, mostly decayed sphagnum moss. It can be used as fuel (it is the lowest form of coal), as raw material for industry (resin, waxes, paints, etc.) and for horticultural use.

## Coming of Age

Much like our human population, a healthy forest supports trees of many ages. Age has an impact on the size of trees and distribution of species and other vegetation. It is also a critical factor in forest sustainability.

Old age forests (over 80 years old) support wildlife and plant communities that thrive where there is an abundance of dead and decaying woody material. Middle age forests (between 30 to 80 years) provide a diversity of food and shelter for wildlife populations. Young forests (less than 30 years) have an abundance of ground level vegetation that serves as a vital food source for wildlife, but provides little shelter.

Within local areas, age structure is constantly evolving due to harvesting, wildfires and other natural disturbances. According to 1997 statistics, approximately 52% of the Model Forest is old forest, 38% is middle forest and 10% is young forest.

**“One of our contributions to the Model Forest was having a summer student go trekking through the woods to see what kind of forest is really there. We had a rough idea, but this helped us put it down on paper.”**

- Fred Charles, Lac La Ronge Indian Band



## Who's Using the Forest?

Forests not only sustain plants and animals, they sustain entire human communities. Timber production, gathering of blueberries and mushrooms, hunting and trapping, outfitting, commercial fishing, tourism, cultural identity - there are so many demands on our resources. To manage the forest effectively and ensure its continued health for future generations, every use must be considered.

**“We’re somewhat unique in that we are one of the few partners without a land base. Because of this, we can step back and see an issue from all sides. This allows us to bring some objectivity to issues being discussed.”**

- Michael Newman, Canadian Institute of Forestry

**Timber** is the second largest manufacturing industry in Saskatchewan and a major economic activity among partners of the Prince Albert Model Forest. The Montreal Lake Cree Nation, Lac La Ronge Indian Band and Weyerhaeuser's Saskatchewan Forestlands are actively engaged in timber harvesting and wood processing, but every partner is affected, either directly or indirectly. Key forest products include pulp, lumber, plywood, waferboard, fence posts, poles and paper.

**First Nations Lands** within the Model Forest include 6,350 hectares of the Montreal Lake Reserve of the Montreal Lake Cree Nation and 6,950 hectares of the Bittern Lake Reserve of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. The Prince Albert Grand Council and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations are



working with the provincial government and SERM to create new employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, particularly in northern communities, through expansion of the forest industry on First Nations lands.

**“Montreal Lake has always been involved in logging. Because of the better understanding created by the Model Forest, we’re now involved in the industry from beginning to end: harvesting, tree stand thinning, delivery, tree planting, even site preparation.”**


- Ed Henderson, Montreal Lake Cree Nation

**Traditional Uses** of the forest for subsistence, cultural and spiritual needs has continued for thousands of years. They include harvesting trees for shelter, fuel and tools and subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering of berries and medicinal plants. Economic activities such as trapping, commercial fishing, berry and mushroom picking, outfitting and guiding supplement many family incomes. First Nations partners are committed to protecting their right to use forest resources now and in the future.

**Protected Areas** in the Model Forest include Candle Lake Provincial Park and Prince Albert National Park. Candle Lake is a recreational park known for its excellent beaches, a unique formation of drifting sand dunes, pristine forests and watchable wildlife. Prince Albert National Park protects a unique transitional zone of prairie, deciduous forest and boreal forest landscapes. It is home to one of the last free-ranging herds of plains bison and the second largest breeding colony of white pelicans in Canada. The parks provide an example of how forest ecosystems function in their natural state, a valuable tool in the development of sustainable management practices.



Photo: Parks Canada/S.F. Martin/1998

An aerial photograph of a forest with a winding road. The road is a light brown color, contrasting with the green and brown of the forest. The road curves through the trees, and the overall scene is a natural, outdoor setting.

**Ecotourism** presents an opportunity for growth for Model Forest partners. It is an increasingly popular form of tourism that emphasizes experiencing the wilderness through non-consumptive activities such as birdwatching, wilderness trekking and backcountry canoeing. Natural beauty, pristine environment and remoteness are major attractions.

**Commercial Fishing** occurs at Montreal Lake and Candle Lake. It is not a large industry within the Model Forest, but it does have the potential to diversify and expand local economies. Whitefish, walleye and northern pike are major species supplied to North American markets.

**Hunting & Fishing** attracts enthusiasts from across the province and around the world. Big game includes white-tail deer, moose, elk and black bear. Ducks, geese, partridge and grouse are harvested. Northern pike, perch and walleye are popular sport species in Prince Albert National Park, Candle Lake Provincial Park, Bittern Lake and Montreal Lake.

**Outfitting** operators in the Model Forest area cater primarily to non-resident hunters of big game. Hunters come from other provinces and throughout the United States to enjoy the wilderness experience of Saskatchewan's north. While the industry benefits from the enhanced access to wilderness provided by logging roads, it needs to sustain wildlife habitats to compete and remain viable.

**Trapping** has been a way of life for many people for generations and continues to provide a source of income for many families. Beaver, muskrat, mink, marten, weasel, fox, wolf, otter and lynx are major furbearers.

**Recreation** draws thousands of visitors to the area. Prince Albert National Park and Candle Lake Provincial Park are main destinations, but Bittern Lake and Montreal Lake are becoming increasingly popular. Activities include camping, canoeing, swimming, hiking, cross country skiing and snowmobiling.

**Wild Rice Production** is not currently a major economic activity in the Model Forest; however a number of shallow lakes and streams offer potential for industry growth.

## Prince Albert Model Forest

P.O. Box 2406  
Prince Albert SK S6V 7G3  
ph: 306.922.1944 fax: 306.763.6456  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca)



## Canadian Forest Service/ Natural Resources Canada Northern Forestry Centre

5320 - 122 St.  
Edmonton AB T6H 3S5  
ph: 780.435.7210 fax: 780.435.7359  
[www.hrcan.gc.ca/cfs](http://www.hrcan.gc.ca/cfs)



## Canadian Institute of Forestry c/o Canadian Forestry Service Saskatchewan Liason Office

1288 Central Ave.  
Prince Albert SK S6V 4V8  
ph: 306.953.8546 fax: 306.953.8649  
[www.cif-ifc.org](http://www.cif-ifc.org)



## Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Asimakaniseekan Askiy Reserve

Suite 200, 103A Packham Ave.  
Saskatoon SK S7N 4K4  
ph: 306.665.1215 fax: 306.244.4413  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/FSIN.html](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/FSIN.html)



## Lac La Ronge Indian Band

P.O. Box 480  
La Ronge SK S0J 1L0  
ph: 306.425.2183 fax: 306.425.2590  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/LaRonge.html](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/LaRonge.html)



## Montreal Lake Cree Nation

P.O. Box 106  
Montreal Lake SK S0J 1Y0  
ph: 306.663.5349 fax: 306.663.5320  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/MLCN.html](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/MLCN.html)



## Parks Canada Agency Prince Albert National Park

P.O. Box 100  
Waskesiu SK S0J 2Y0  
ph: 306.663.4522 fax: 306.663.4529  
[www.parksCanada.pch.gc.ca](http://www.parksCanada.pch.gc.ca)



## Prince Albert Grand Council

P.O. Box 2350  
Prince Albert SK S6V 6Z1  
ph: 306.953.7242 fax: 306.922.1710  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/PAGC.html](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/PAGC.html)



## Resort Village of Candle Lake Municipal Office

P.O. Box 114  
Candle Lake SK S0J 3E0  
ph: 306.929.2236 fax: 306.929.2201  
[www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/RCVL.html](http://www.pamodelforest.sk.ca/partners/RCVL.html)



## Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management Sustainable Lands Management Branch

3211 Albert St.  
Regina SK S4S 5W6  
ph: 306.787.1349 fax: 306.787.1348  
[www.serm.gov.sk.ca](http://www.serm.gov.sk.ca)



## Weyerhaeuser Saskatchewan Ltd. Saskatchewan Forestlands

P.O. Box 1720  
Prince Albert SK S6V 5T3  
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[www.weyerhaeuser.com](http://www.weyerhaeuser.com)



Prince Albert Model Forest



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working together/helping each other

