

PRESERVING HABITAT AND NATURAL AREAS IN THE SWAN LAKE WATERSHED



To address land and water concerns, the Swan Lake Watershed Conservation District completed the Swan Lake Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP). Protection of natural areas is one of three key priorities in this plan.

Why are natural areas important?

Natural habitat is critical in supporting the health and integrity of the Swan Lake Watershed and provides a suite of critical watershed functions. Not only do these areas provide wildlife habitat, recreational value and climate change mitigation, but natural areas also protect water supply and quality and provide drought and flooding resiliency. Natural areas include riparian areas, wetlands, forests, grasslands and aquatic ecosystems. Awareness of the value of existing natural areas is important to their protection.

What affects natural areas?

Agriculture, industry and residential development may threaten natural habitat. In certain areas, under pressure to maximize development and economic growth, industry and residential development may come at a cost to the environment and natural areas of the watershed.

What can be done to protect natural areas?

Programming focused on the protection and establishment of riparian areas and wetlands helps to preserve the integrity of these important areas. Strong programming partnerships with conservation agencies, landowners and youth are vital to successful habitat protection in the watershed.

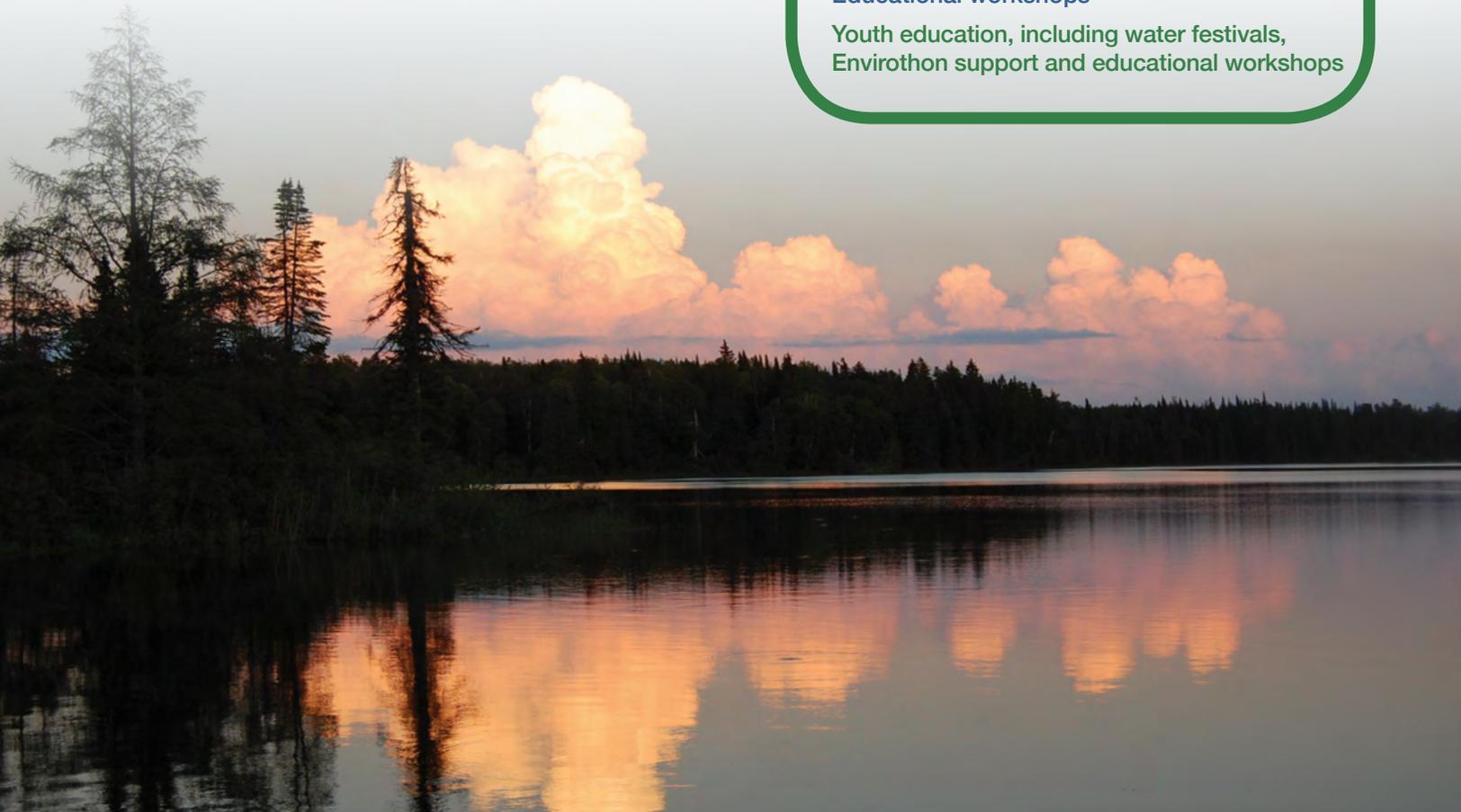
Natural area programming offered by Swan Lake Watershed Conservation District to residents:

Conservation agreement partnership opportunities

Riparian area and wetland preservation

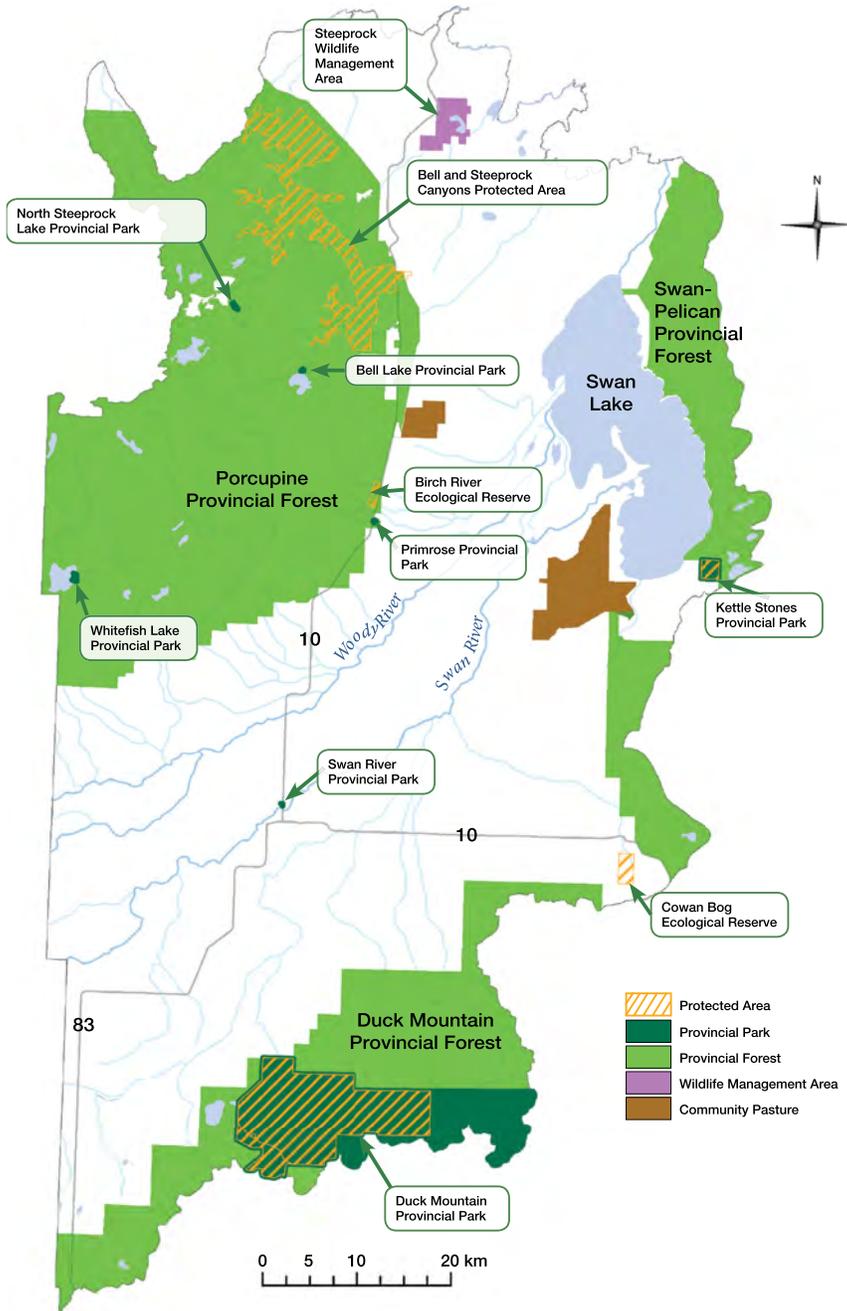
Educational workshops

Youth education, including water festivals, Envirothon support and educational workshops



GOAL

PROTECT AND RESTORE NATURAL AREAS AND ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION



Natural areas of the Swan Lake Watershed

Provincial parks, forests, ecological reserves and wildlife management areas make up most of the natural areas in the Swan Lake Watershed. Each are managed for specific purposes, including recreational opportunities, resource use, research, and species at risk protection.

In the Swan Lake IWMP, natural areas refers to terrestrial and aquatic habitat, including riparian areas, wetlands, forests, grasslands and aquatic ecosystems found on private and public lands. Awareness and education regarding the value of these existing natural areas is important in their protection and preservation.

What are the key natural area protection actions?

- Secure conservation agreements with private landowners
- Protect natural habitat
- Maintain and restore riparian areas, wetlands, woodlands and grassland areas
- Promote an ecological goods and services program
- Provide educational workshops and outreach activities to enhance public awareness of riparian areas



For more information on natural area programming, or for a copy of the complete Swan Lake Integrated Watershed Management Plan, please contact the Swan Lake Watershed Conservation District:

Swan Lake Watershed Conservation District

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