

Natural Systems



Protecting Saskatchewan's Biodiversity: Progress Through the Protected and Conserved Areas Network (PCAN)



The Protected and Conserved Areas Network (PCAN) is a made-in-Saskatchewan program that recognizes and supports lands contributing to the long-term conservation of nature and biodiversity. This network plays a vital role in strengthening ecological resilience while reflecting the province's commitment to sustainability.

What's in the PCAN?

- **Protected Areas** – These are areas that have clearly defined geographical spaces that are recognized, dedicated and managed through legal or other effective means (e.g. policies and agreements) for long-term conservation. Examples are national and provincial parks, ecological reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. While people can enjoy these areas for recreation, their main purpose is conservation.
- **Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (called OECMs)** – These lands are not parks but still help nature thrive. These areas may be working pastures, lands with Crown conservation easements or private lands under agreements to protect habitat. While these lands are utilized primarily for socio-economic uses like farming or recreation, their management results in long-term conservation.

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How We Are Achieving This Goal

The Ministry of Environment is working to expand the PCAN by:

- Exploring conservation opportunities within woodland caribou management areas.
- Partnering with Indigenous communities, conservation agencies, private landowners and industry.

The PCAN is guided by principles of balance and inclusivity. It seeks to protect key ecological values while supporting sustainable development. Collaboration with First Nations, Métis communities, stakeholders and conservation partners ensures that conservation efforts are transparent and reflect diverse perspectives.

Why It Matters

In addition to conserving biodiversity, the PCAN contributes to the following:

- Adaptation and carbon management strategies: By maintaining healthy, intact ecosystems and enhancing ecological connectivity, protected and conserved areas help store carbon, regulate water cycles and support species adaptation to changing environmental conditions.
- Maintaining the integrity of biologically diverse areas.
- Protecting wildlife habitats and areas with important cultural values.
- Preserving areas of high scenic value and unique physical features (e.g. waterfalls, badlands and sand dunes).
- Providing recreational, educational and research opportunities.

Through the PCAN, the Government of Saskatchewan is taking meaningful action to protect the province's natural heritage and deliver lasting environmental, social and economic benefits for today's communities and generations to come.

Link to Related Information

[Overview of the Protected and Conserved Areas Network \(PCAN\)](#)

[Explore other resilience stories](#)

