

AUGUST 2023 | FISHER RIVER CREE NATION CONSERVATION AREAS INITIATIVE

# Community Voices

why do you love the  
southeastern Interlake?



For centuries, Indigenous people have utilized the southeastern Interlake region's resources while maintaining its well-being. The area has provided a home and livelihood to the Fisher River Cree Nation (FRCN) for many generations.

FRCN is leading the effort and neighbouring Peguis First Nation and CPAWS Manitoba are partners. The initiative has the support of the province of Manitoba and the government of Canada.

**These are the words of  
the southeastern  
Interlake community.**





# THE INTERLAKE IS OUR HOME, AND THESE ARE OUR VOICES.

**IN MANY PARTS  
OF SOUTHERN  
CANADA, PIECEMEAL  
DEVELOPMENTS HAVE  
ALTERED ENTIRE  
REGIONS LEAVING  
ONLY SCRAPS BEHIND  
FOR NATURE.**

**The result is dozens of  
endangered wildlife species  
and reduced opportunities  
to embrace outdoor  
lifestyles.**

While Manitoba's southern Interlake region landscape has been significantly developed, many natural areas and healthy wildlife populations remain. We have a time-limited opportunity to get the balance right by planning for the long-term now.

The traditional territory of Fisher River Cree Nation and Peguis First Nation within Manitoba's southeastern Interlake is part of the treasured Boreal forest ecosystem. It lies just a few hours north of Winnipeg on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg.

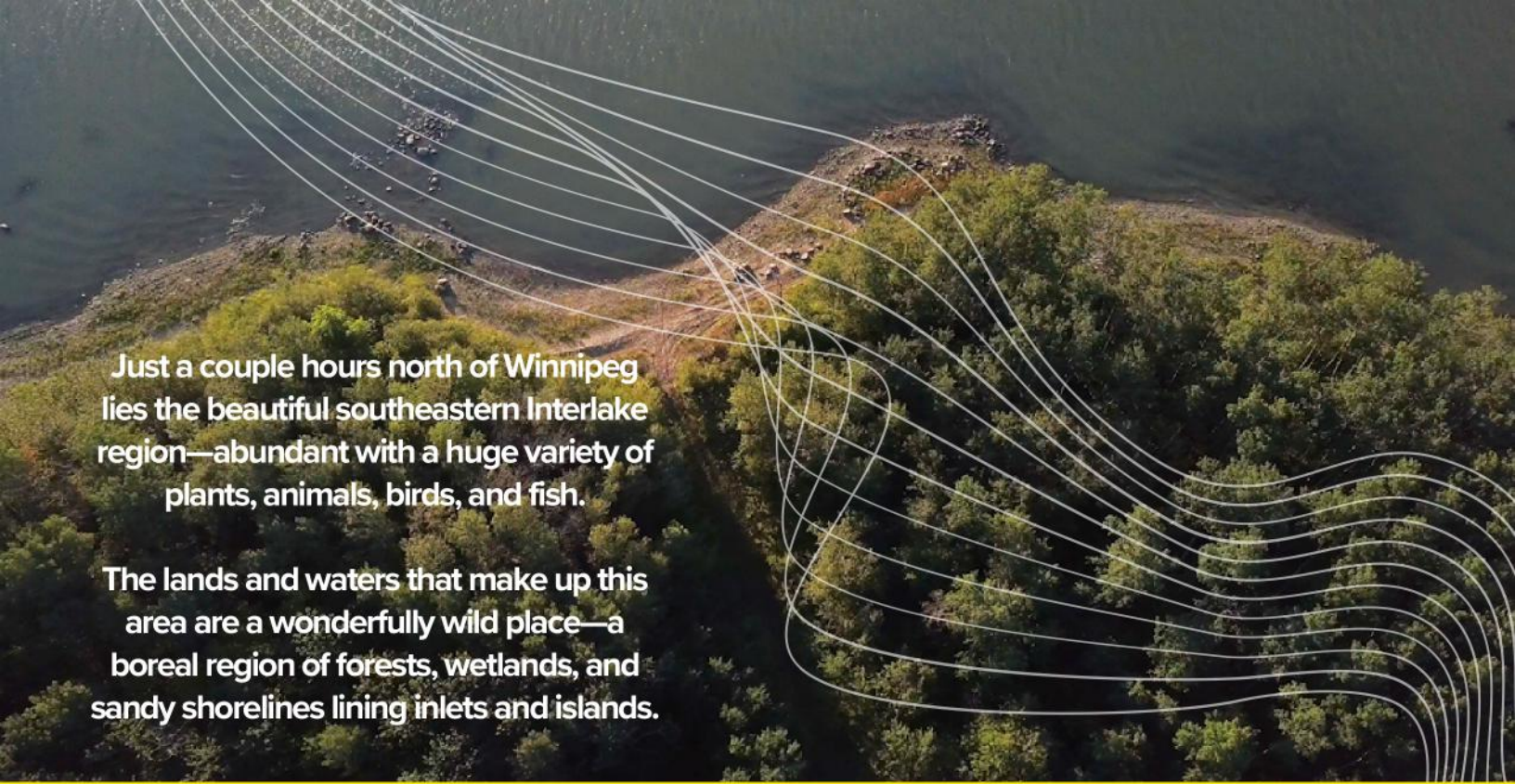
We need a long-term plan to balance industrial extraction interests with conservation so the forests are full of moose to hunt, the rivers are clean and teeming with fish, and Lake Winnipeg's shoreline is once again a place to build sandcastles and teach our children to swim.

The Conservation Areas Initiative aims to develop a conservation plan for our region which will support watershed management goals – as defined by the plans of local Watershed Districts – and spur sustainable economic development.

The goal of the FRCN Conservation Areas Initiative is to protect the health of Manitoba's southeastern Interlake's thriving natural landscape so it can continue to provide sustainable economic opportunities and support cherished lifestyles and cultures. The aim is to establish a network of protected areas for future generations of people and wildlife.

We asked area residents to share their love for the Interlake with us on Facebook. These are their words.





Just a couple hours north of Winnipeg lies the beautiful southeastern Interlake region—abundant with a huge variety of plants, animals, birds, and fish.

The lands and waters that make up this area are a wonderfully wild place—a boreal region of forests, wetlands, and sandy shorelines lining inlets and islands.

### **ALEX BOGUSAT**

It is possible for humans to form climate positive relationships to the land that are centered around regenerative practices rather than extractive.

### **VERONICA THOMAS**

A lot of people love the land and waters by camping and commercial fishing. So these are very important to everyone, it's our way of life.

### **GREG DISBROWE**

Protect the land and water by practicing sustainable development. Mainly speaking of the forests, soil, biodiversity, fossil fuels, minerals and water. Educating on these are vital for the future.

### **ALYSSA PRATT**

We depend on the fertile land and having a source of clean water, not only to provide ourselves with sustenance, but also a source of income, and a way to provide fresh healthy food for our community.

### **MELAIN HOFER**

The Interlake takes you away from the hustle and bustle, and puts you straight back into nature. It's important the Interlake is protected for generations to come.

### **WANDA SPARKES**

Hiking and exploring the natural landscape and forests is important to us. Protecting the forests and wetlands is also important for the environment.

### **BROOKE SIGURDSON**

People hunt the land and water for food to survive. It's a natural cycle. People in this area rely on hunting and gathering, especially in the fall for the long winter months.

### **ANDREA MCKAY-MASON**

I am of Indigenous descent, learning that there is nothing more important right now than protecting our land and water for future generations. I just wish more people saw it this way as well and start making a difference to protect our land and waters.

## **WILLIAM BIRD**

I'm a resident of Peguis First Nation but have family in Fisher River & Jackhead & Fisher Branch. I prefer nature remains untouched for medicine harvest, berries & the like.

## **JEN ETTER**

We are losing so much wildlife / land and it's all to do with over development and pollution... we need to save these areas in order to keep some habitats and ways of life alive and not wiped out.

## **CHERYL LYNN MURDOCK**

We need to save our peat moss and stop removing the moss because an elder once said you take everything away and we will have nothing for Mother Nature.

We need to protect as much as possible because of the life it gives us.

Many things can be done as long as the laws of sustainable harvesting are followed.

I harvest medicines in many areas on that map. The medicines are abundant but mining, making dams, destroying the peat moss, over harvesting the forest are all so detrimental to the intricate balance of all of this, for fish, animals, medicines.

Our people have done it for thousands of years without leaving destruction.

## **KATHY BIRD**



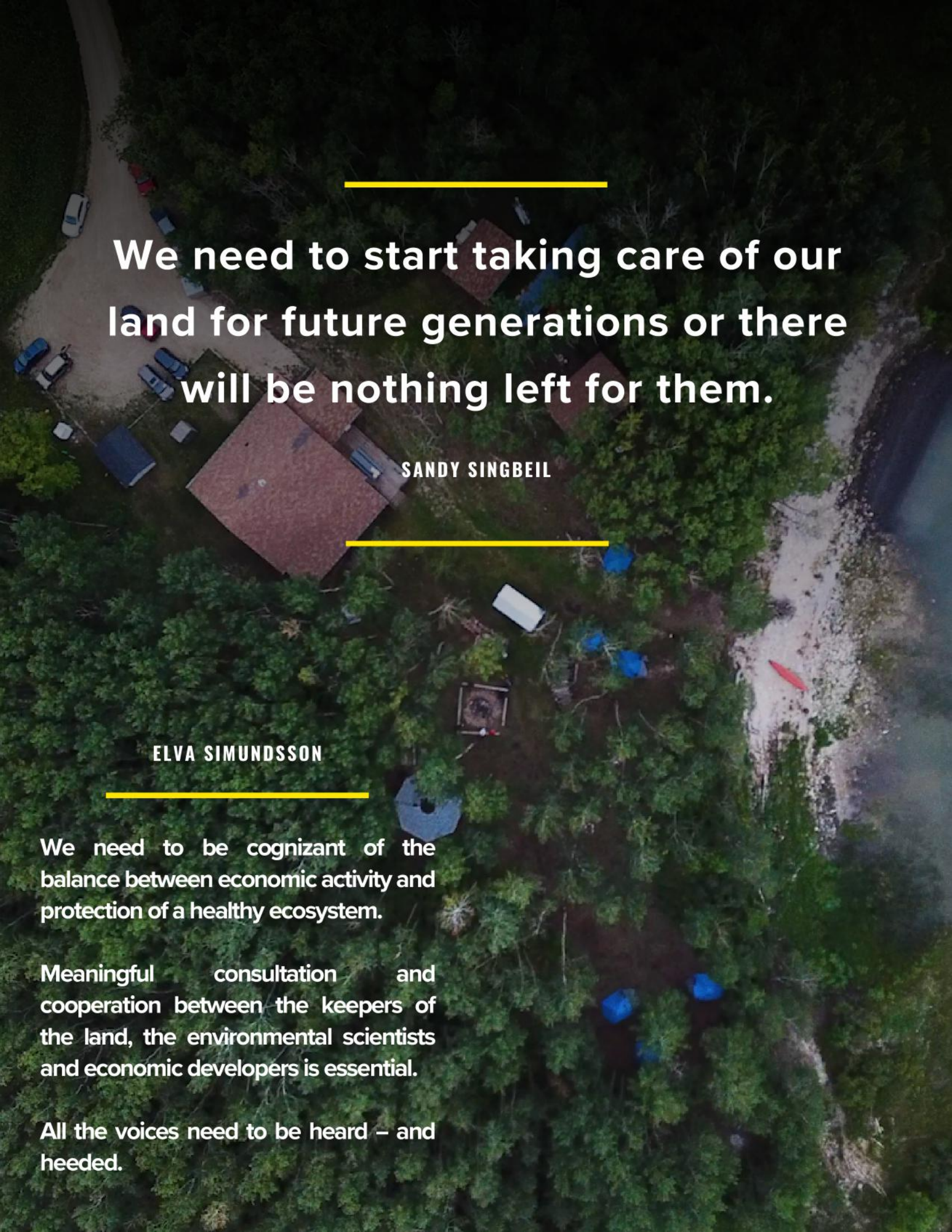
## **CLAIRE SUTTON**

Manitoba has still undeveloped boreal forests that should be allowed to flourish. Also wetlands must be protected as they guard our freshwater lakes.

## **ROD BERSCHIED**

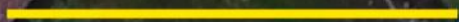
Wetlands are vital to this planet. We have two of the largest shoreline wetlands in North America here in Manitoba. Be proud of this. Protect this. Share it with the planet, but not at the cost of short term exploitation.



An aerial photograph showing a residential area with several houses, a road, and a large area of green trees. A yellow horizontal line is positioned above the main quote.

**We need to start taking care of our land for future generations or there will be nothing left for them.**

**SANDY SINGBEIL**



**ELVA SIMUNDSSON**



**We need to be cognizant of the balance between economic activity and protection of a healthy ecosystem.**

**Meaningful consultation and cooperation between the keepers of the land, the environmental scientists and economic developers is essential.**

**All the voices need to be heard – and heeded.**



**SHELLEY SPRING**

I love to watch the eagles. They are so abundant in this area we need to protect what is left. We love to eat the wild game (and only take what we need) as well as watch the animals in their natural habitat.

**CORRINA SINCLAIR**

Destroying lands and natural habitats for other animals only benefits humans, and it's important we ensure the stability of ecosystems for animals and insects.

**BROOKE SIGURDSON**

I love being able to live among the wildlife. Being able to see them in their natural habitat is wonderful. I would hate for development to ruin their homes.

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**DEANNA PENNEY**

**Maintain  
diversity, protect  
species.**

**I care about wildlife and plant protection,  
keeping water clean.**

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**GERRY VERRIER**

I love natural nature. I want nature to be there for my grandchildren's grandchildren. I want them to be able to fish, to go camping, to learn about wildlife and to be able to enjoy it all. Our spirits connect with nature and without it, our spirits and our land will get sick.

**SVAVA SIMUNDSSON**

Absolute necessity to protect boreal forest. Home to innumerable species.





### **ALEXANDRA SHIER**



I love the Interlake, and grew up here, and still live in the Interlake and something I love about it is all the little wonderful nooks and special spots scattered everywhere for the public to enjoy, and the beauty of nature to be taken in and experienced!

### **DEVE PICO RICO**



I love the Interlake, I live here for 45 years. Close to everything, fishing, swimming, close to Winnipeg too.

### **DOLLY COCHRANE**



I enjoy all the outdoor activities and we should protect our lakes and land so that future generations can enjoy it as much as we did.

### **JOCELYN CANDACE COCHRANE**



We cherish the beaches, that our children get to enjoy by swimming. Our waters in my point would be the main focus of protecting, because we are still able to swim knowing the water is still somewhat safe and clean.

### **SHANNON STADNEK**



I live in the Interlake and have been a fisherwoman all my adult life and want to keep the peace and solitude I've enjoyed since childhood. I grew up along Lake Winnipeg and visit the lake often camping. Please keep the lake as it is for future generations to enjoy!



# Clean drinking water is a priority.

*Gord Frovich*

## **MARY JANE MCCARRON**

I am concerned about water management. We need better protection of the wetlands, and ensure any development uses top-notch technology and practices that protect our water.

## **JANET MAY-HEWSON**

I believe healthy wetlands are of the utmost importance. They sustain our ecosystem. Protecting them from runoff is vital.

## **HEATHER WESTOVER**

The ability to use the water for canoeing, paddleboarding and swimming is important to me. Keeping the waters as clean as we can, and water levels high enough for safe use are things I feel impact those activities.

## **IRIS GRIFFIN**

Water quality in Lake Winnipeg is important to me and protecting and restoring natural areas.





**“Eco tourism brings  
economy to the area and  
demands conservation  
of all things beautiful**

I love the uniqueness of frozen Lake Winnipeg...

This led my partner and I to build this ice cabin and place it on this stunning seasonal environment.”

Mark Myrowich, Riverton



### **CAROL SPENCE**

If we don't have land? What do we have? If we don't care for our land? What will we have? Land & water are our life! If we hurt it we endanger our lives!

### **KEA YORK**

Indigenous views on land and water are key to its importance.



### **SHELLEY SPRING**

I enjoy all areas in the Interlake. Love to swim, fish, go boating, hiking etc. It is a pleasure to be able to take the grandkids out on the land and show them nature at its finest. Can't imagine not being surrounded by this natural beauty.



### **JANET MAY-HEWSON**

Wetland protection from farming runoff is huge issue. You strip the land and waters, your wildlife cannot survive.

### **ELVA SIMUNDSSON**

The long-term economic viability of our lands and waters are important to me. Sustainable agriculture and a sustainable commercial fishery are key to maintaining decent standards of living for the people of the Interlake region as well as for all Canadians in their respective regions.

### **CLAUDINE SINCLAIR**

It is important to save our resources for generations to come, to teach and learn our younger generation.

### **SHERRY GAUTHIER**

I enjoy the water and land for its beauty and for hiking.

### **CAROL RADWAY AND PAUL CHORNEY**

We live in Winnipeg Beach, a short walk to the Lake and with Boundary Creek as our neighbour. The health of the Lake and the Creek are important to our quality of life as well as to the plants, animals, and birds that enrich our lives.

The future depends on the things we do now. We are responsible for those not yet born, we should try and get things headed in the right direction for the sake of those children so they will be prepared to take up the issue.

LINDSAY MCIVOR



## How You Can Help Protect the Southeastern Interlake



Send a letter to Manitoba's Premier using our easy letter-writing tool to express your support for the Fisher River Cree Nation Conservation Areas Initiative.

Take action to protect one of Manitoba's most popular destinations. Tell the government you care about the health of the Interlake.

[frcnconservation.ca](http://frcnconservation.ca)

Financial support for the initiative was provide by:



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada



THE  
CONSERVATION

A Manitoba Corporation, incorporated in the province  
of Manitoba, Canada, under the name of The Conservation Areas Initiative