

TRADITIONAL LANDS PLANNING

- The UNESCO world heritage project nomination document requires detailed land-use plans to demonstrate how lands in the proposed area would be used and cared for. Land-use plans are used to determine what types of activities can or cannot occur in an area. They include an inventory of existing land uses, processes and plans for determining future uses, and establishing community priorities for the area.
- Two land-use planners will be hired by Manitoba Conservation to work with Pimachiowin Aki, the Regional Resource Management Board and the Pauingassi and Little Grand Rapids First Nations in developing their land use-plans.
- A dedicated GIS mapping technician will be hired to help prepare the high-quality maps required for proposed World Heritage Site nomination studies and plans.
- A consulting firm will be engaged to support community land-use planning in Pauingassi and Little Grand Rapids First Nations.

PIMACHIOWIN AKI WORLD HERITAGE PROJECT

- The Pimachiowin Aki (Pim-ah-chee-owe-in Ahh-key) Corporation is a non-profit corporation comprised of four First Nations: Poplar River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi and Pikangikum, Ont. The Manitoba and Ontario governments are provincial partners with the corporation.
- Pimachiowin Aki's goal is to achieve international recognition for lands that straddle the Manitoba-Ontario border as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The area under discussion is about 40,000 square kilometres. It includes the traditional territories of the Poplar River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi and Pikangikum First Nations, Atikaki Provincial Park in Manitoba and Woodland Caribou Provincial Park in Ontario.
- The UNESCO project has already generated considerable international interest since the site would fill an identified gap in the world heritage site system of protected areas because it proposes an innovative approach to land management that combines traditional Anishinabe and western scientific knowledge.
- The site combines natural and cultural features. It has exceptional ecological value with extensive undisturbed forests, lakes and wetlands that reflect unique geological processes and represent critical habitat for several threatened or endangered species including woodland caribou, bald eagles and wolverines.
- The site also represents an outstanding example of traditional Aboriginal life based on a close and enduring relationship to the land. Archaeological evidence in the area attests to over 5,000 years of habitation by the Anishinabe people.

- The nomination process will take three to five years to complete and will produce important outcomes including community-based land-use plans, a network of linked protected areas and an innovative management system that combines western and indigenous knowledge.
- If the nomination is successful, Pimachiowin Aki would be one of only a handful of sites on the world heritage list that are recognized for both outstanding cultural and natural heritage values.
- The UNESCO World Heritage Convention was established through an international effort to identify and protect sites of universally outstanding value so they would survive for the benefit of all humanity. Joining the list of well-known sites such as Pyramids of Giza, the Great Barrier Reef, the Taj Mahal and the Grand Canyon is expected to take considerable effort but produce great rewards. More information is available at whc.unesco.org/.
- One of the contributing documents for the UNESCO proposal is a study completed by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) with Pimachiowin Aki called the *Ecosystems Services Valuation Assessment*, which puts a dollar figure on the benefits nature and the environment provide people who both live on the land or people who visit it.
- The study, led by IISD's Stephan Barg and Vivek Voora, measured 21 different ecosystem services or benefits the area provides people. Using international and regional evaluation tools, IISD conservatively estimates the ecosystem benefits within the 40,000 square kilometre area have a value of \$120 to \$131 million a year.
- For the world, the Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Site would be a place where one could experience an ancient land-use tradition that continues today, a culture based on the intimate interaction between a people and their environment.