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**The Canadian Heritage Rivers System -
Objectives, Principles & Procedures**

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THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM
OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES & PRCEEBURES

Sector: Tourism

11-40-9

Reference Material

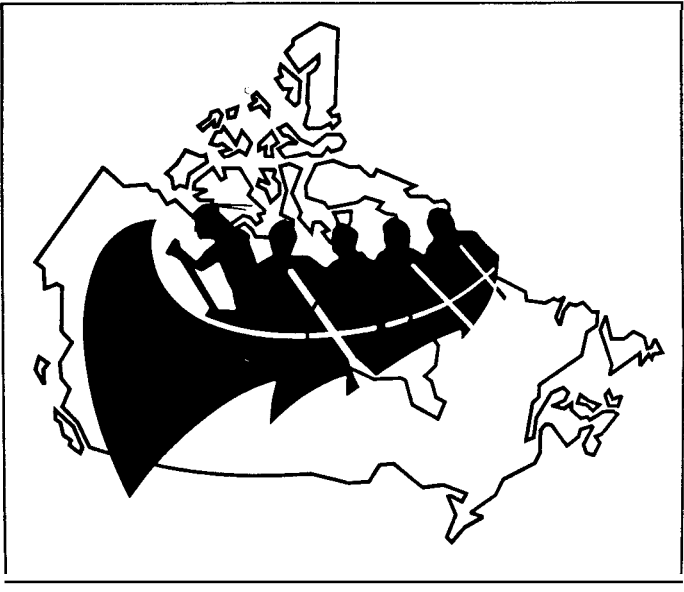


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Foreword

The rivers of Canada are a priceless and irreplaceable part of our natural and cultural heritage. They have always played and continue to play a large part in our lives, both in our working and leisure hours.

With seemingly endless supplies of fresh water, Canadians have not always treated our rivers with the respect which they deserve. But in recent years there has emerged a growing concern on the part of the public to ensure that our rivers are managed wisely.

In response to this concern federal, provincial and territorial parks ministers in late 1978 asked their officials to work together to prepare a joint proposal for a Canadian Heritage Rivers System for their consideration. A task force was accordingly set up early in 1979, with Parks Canada serving as co-ordinator. Discussions ended in July 1981 with completion of a task force report.

Review of the task force proposal by the federal Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and provincial and territorial parks ministers has resulted in majority agreement on establishing the system, with very few exceptions, in accordance with the recommendations of the task force.

This present document therefore outlines the objectives, principles and procedures which are to guide the Government of Canada and all provincial and territorial governments wishing to participate, in the establishment and operation of a co-operative Canadian Heritage Rivers System. In creating this System the governments concerned are confident that it will make a major contribution to identifying, conserving and encouraging public use and enjoyment of an important part of our national heritage which has hitherto not received the attention which it deserves.

1. Objectives and Principles of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Canadian Heritage Rivers* System are to give national recognition to the important rivers of Canada and to ensure their future management such that:

- the natural heritage which they represent is conserved and interpreted;
- . the human heritage which they represent is conserved and interpreted;
- . the opportunities they possess for recreation and heritage appreciation are realized by residents of and visitors to Canada.

1.2 Principles

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System will be created and operated in accordance with the following principles:

- The System will be a co-operative one in which federal, provincial and territorial governments, in participating in the establishment and administration of the System, retain their traditional jurisdictional powers, including ownership of land, the choice to nominate a river to the System and the right to continue to operate and manage designated rivers in accordance with the objectives of the System;
- . Parks Canada will participate in and encourage the establishment, growth and public awareness of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. Parks Canada may also financially assist nominating agencies in the

* River - Throughout this document the term "river" refers to either the entire length or a segment of a river and its immediate environment and includes the lakes, ponds, estuaries or other bodies of water through which it flows.

- carrying out of studies and the preparation of plans related to the nomination and/or management of rivers proposed for inclusion in the System;
- . Each river to be included within the System will be jointly designated as a "Canadian Heritage River" by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the appropriate minister(s) from the government with jurisdiction over the river, upon the advice of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board;
 - . It will be a one-category System, "Canadian Heritage River", with no distinct classifications or categories. There will be three values recognized in the selection of rivers to the System, which reflect its "Objectives" as follows:
 - natural heritage of outstanding Canadian value,*
 - human heritage of outstanding Canadian value,
 - the provision of recreational opportunities** of outstanding Canadian value;
 - . A river which is outstanding for any one value may qualify for designation;
 - . The management of Canadian Heritage Rivers by the agencies concerned will address the conservation and interpretation of natural and human heritage and the realization of recreational opportunities in keeping with the objectives of the System;
 - . It is recognized that certain rivers which may be worthy of consideration form international boundaries or flow through both Canada and the United States. When the nomination of the Canadian portion of such a river to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System is being considered, appropriate consultations with U.S. agencies should take place in order to promote maximum co-operation between agencies in the two countries in achieving the objectives of the System.

* Outstanding value is defined in the "Guidelines for the Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers" in Section 4.

** Recreational opportunities could include activities related to tourism.

2. The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board

A Canadian Heritage Rivers Board will be established, comprised of members appointed by the federal and each of the provincial and territorial governments choosing to participate in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.

2.1 **Role**

The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board will, in carrying out its duties:

- Address the need to give national recognition to the important heritage rivers of Canada and ensure their future management;
- Have the following essential functions:
 - To develop a public awareness and appreciation of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System;
 - To encourage the nomination by the appropriate managing jurisdiction of Canada's prime rivers to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System;
 - To recommend to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and to the minister(s) of the nominating agency (ies) concerned, the designation as a Canadian Heritage River of each nominated river which, in the Board's opinion, meets the "Guidelines for the Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers", set out below in Section 4 of this document;
 - To periodically review the status of rivers within the System to determine if selection guideline values are being maintained;
 - To recommend removal from the System of any river which no longer meets the selection guidelines;

To periodically review the selection guidelines and operating procedures for the System and from time to time to make recommendations to participating governments for changes as the need becomes apparent.

2.2 Membership

The Board will consist of one representative appointed by the federal Minister responsible for Parks Canada, one by the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and one each by the provincial and territorial governments choosing to do so, from among senior members of their staffs*. The maximum potential size of the Board is, therefore, fourteen members.

2.3 Chairperson

A Chairperson will be selected annually by vote from among Board members, to be responsible for organizing and chairing Board meetings, for directing the operation of a Board Secretariat and for promoting an awareness of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.

2.4 Board Meetings

Meetings of the Board will be held at least annually and more frequently if required. They will take place at times and locations determined by the Board. A quorum for the formal conduct of Board business will consist of two-thirds of the filled positions on the Board.

Each participating government will have one vote. The vote of the Government of Canada will be exercised by the Parks Canada member, in consultation with the member representing the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs on matters concerning territorial rivers.

* Appointments are to be made in a manner and for terms set by each appointing government. Appointment of private citizens may be considered by participating governments at a later date.

2.5 Expert Advice

In order to assist the Board in making its recommendations the Board will be able to call upon independent technical advice, as required, both from within and outside government, for the carrying out of its responsibilities.

2.6 Annual Report

The Board will produce an annual report for submission to participating federal, provincial and territorial governments and to the public at large. This document will report on Board proceedings and expenditures, will record any additions to the System in that year and will present a status report on the System as a whole. Information on individual Canadian Heritage Rivers will be based on annual reports to be presented to the Board by their managing agencies.

2.7 Language Policy of the Board

The language policy of the Board will respect the equal status of French and English as the official languages of Canada. Practices to be adopted to implement this policy in the conduct of Board business are outlined in Appendix II.

2.8 Board Secretariat

A Secretariat, headed by the Secretary* to the Board, will be created within Parks Canada to serve the needs of the Board in carrying out its responsibilities. At the direction of the Board through the Chairperson, the duties of the Secretary will include:

- . To assist the Chairperson in the organization of Board meetings and ensure that all material required before, during and after meetings is produced and disseminated to Board members;
- To operate a central repository for retention of copies of all documentation submitted by the appropriate jurisdictions with respect to the nomination,

* The Secretary and any other necessary staff will be provided by Parks Canada. Matters regarding the operation of the Secretariat will be decided through consultation between Parks Canada and the Board on an ongoing basis.

1
designation and management of Canadian Heritage Rivers;

- o To assist the Chairperson in the preparation of the annual report on the C. H. R. S.;
- To provide and promote exchanges of information on the C. H.R.S. and other heritage rivers programs among Board members and relevant federal, provincial and territorial agencies;
- . To respond to public requests for information on the C. H. R. S.;
- . To undertake information programs to promote public awareness of the aims and activities of the C. H.R.S.

3. Process for the Designation of Canadian Heritage Rivers

The designation of Canadian Heritage Rivers will follow a process which includes the following general steps and which is shown schematically on page 10:

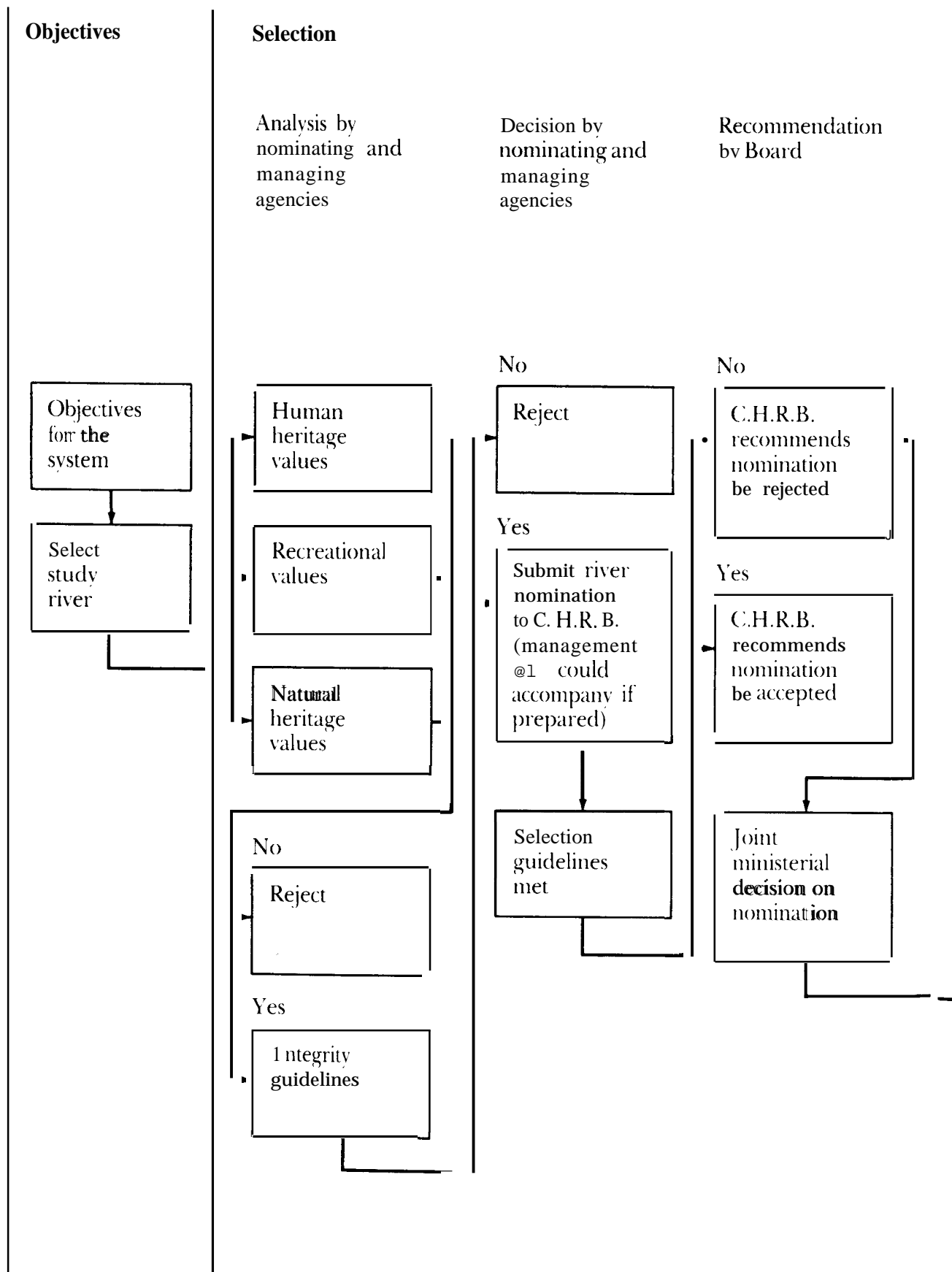
- . Federal, provincial and territorial agencies will carry out or co-ordinate research and analysis to determine if a particular river within the jurisdiction of their government is worthy of nomination to the C. H. R. S.;
- . Following procedures adopted for this purpose (see Appendix I), federal, provincial and territorial agencies* will nominate a river which they wish to have considered for inclusion in the System, through submission to the Board of a completed nomination form.** This document should contain all the information necessary to demonstrate that the river is of "outstanding Canadian value", as defined by the "Guidelines for the Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers";
- The Board will review the nomination document to determine if the nominated river does meet the spirit of the selection guidelines and will accordingly recommend to the ministers responsible for Parks Canada and the nominating agency(ies) either that the nomination be accepted or that the submission be returned to the nominating agency(ies);

* Rivers in the Yukon and Northwest Territories under the administration of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (D. I. N. A.) will be nominated jointly by D. I. N. A. and the Government of the Territory in which the river is located.

** A standard nomination form will be developed for this purpose.

Additional supporting documentation or material will be appended when necessary}.

Process for the Inclusion of Rivers in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System



Planning

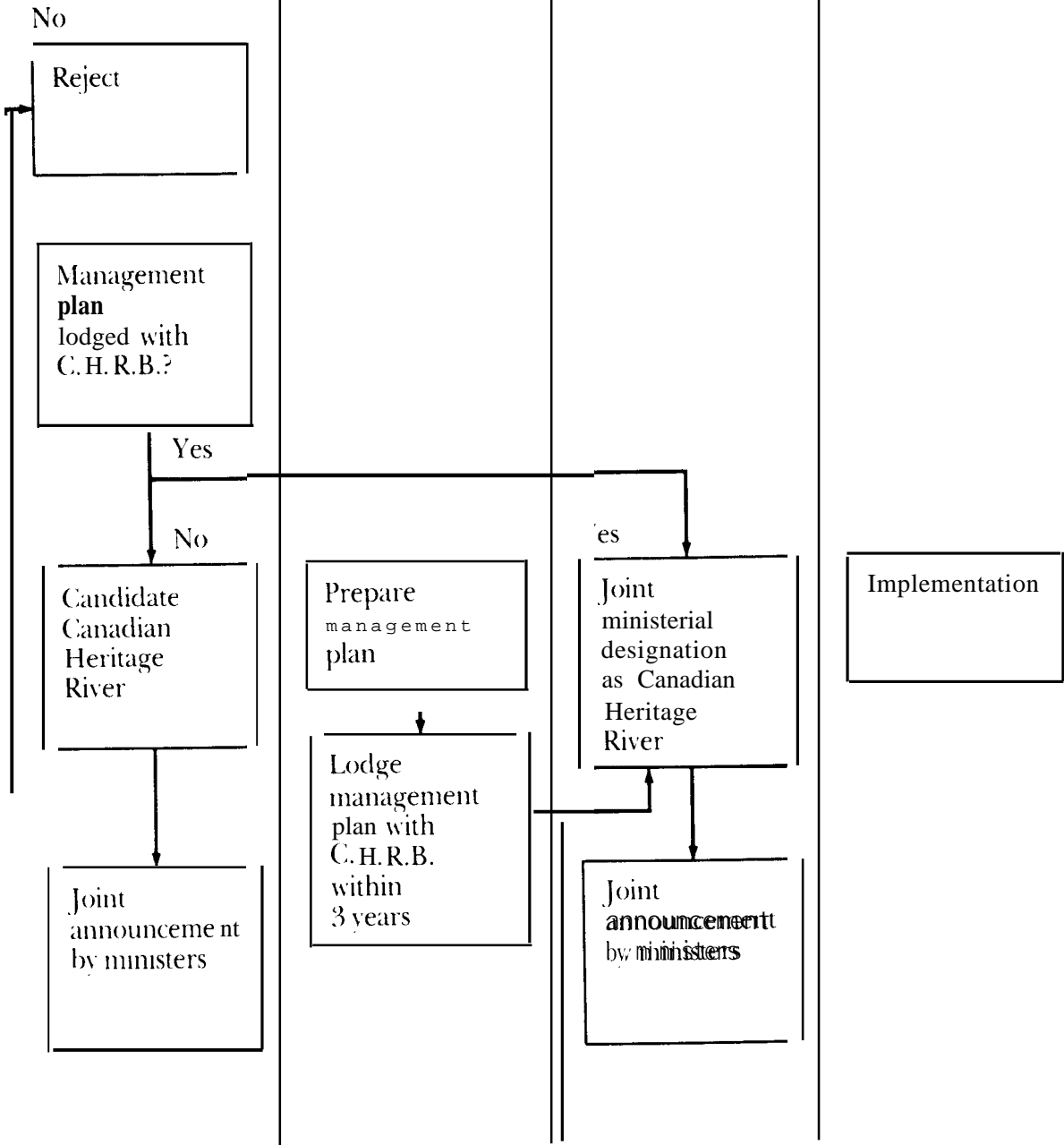
Designation

Management

Decision by ministers

Decision by nominating and managing agencies

Co-ordination and management by nominating and managing agencies



- . An agency (ies) of the managing jurisdiction* may choose to lodge a plan for a river either at the time of nomination or, if the nomination is accepted, at a later time within a period of three years, indicating how the river's "outstanding Canadian values" are to be conserved and enhanced;
- . A river whose nomination is accepted by the ministers and for which a management plan is lodged at the time of nomination will be designated a Canadian Heritage River jointly by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the minister(s) of the nominating agency (ies);
- . A river whose nomination is accepted but for which a management plan is *not* lodged at the time of nomination will be placed in a register of Candidate Canadian Heritage Rivers;
- . Upon receipt by the Board of a management plan for a Candidate Canadian Heritage River, the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the minister(s) of the nominating agency (ies) will formally designate the river to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System;
- . Public announcement of the nomination and designation of Canadian Heritage Rivers will be made jointly by the Parks Canada and the other minister(s) concerned.

Canadian Heritage Rivers which have lost their outstanding heritage values and thus no longer meet the selection guidelines or whose managing jurisdiction formally requests it, will be removed from the System.

More detailed operating procedures for the designation and de-designation of Canadian Heritage Rivers are contained in Appendix I.

* Management plans for rivers in the Yukon and Northwest Territories under the administration of D. I. N. A. will be jointly forwarded by D. I. N. A. and the Government of the Territory in which the river is located.

4. Guidelines for the Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers

The Canadian Heritage Rivers System provides a vehicle for the recognition and conservation of those rivers deemed to be of outstanding Canadian heritage value. This value is obtained when it has been determined that a river is an outstanding representative of or unique in a province or territory. By the inclusion of such rivers in a single coast-to-coast system, they become representative of Canada's river heritage as a whole, thus reflecting a "Canadian value":

4.1 Principles

- . The outstanding value of Canadian Heritage Rivers shall be determined according to three sets of "Heritage Value Guidelines":
 - guidelines for natural heritage value,
 - guidelines for human heritage value,
 - guidelines for recreational value;
- . A nominated river shall be included in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System if it meets one or more of the "Heritage Value Guidelines", as well as a set of "Integrity Guidelines".
- . While no formal limit shall be imposed either on the total number of rivers included in the System or on the number of rivers any individual jurisdiction can nominate at successive stages for inclusion, the purpose of the System is not to provide for the conservation of all rivers of interest, importance or value, but only for the most outstanding of these from a Canadian viewpoint;
- . It is intended that the selection guidelines will be applied in a manner which will allow all of the provinces and territories of Canada to participate in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System;

- . Should a Canadian Heritage River have deteriorated to such an extent that it has lost those characteristics for which it was originally designated or when further research has shown that the river is not, in fact, of outstanding Canadian value, that river shall be deleted from the System.

4.2 Heritage Value Guidelines

4.2.1 Natural Heritage Values

Outstanding Canadian *natural heritage* value will be recognized when a river environment meets one or more of the following guidelines:

- . Is an outstanding example of river environments as they are affected by the major stages and processes in the earth's evolutionary history which are represented in Canada. This would include rivers which best represent the major periods of geological time in which the surface of the earth underwent major changes and stream modification;
- . Is an outstanding representation of significant ongoing fluvial, geomorphological and biological processes. As distinct from the periods of the earth's development, this focuses upon ongoing processes in the evolution and form of the river and its associated plant and animal communities;
- . Contains along its course unique, rare or outstanding examples of natural phenomena, formations or features, or areas of exceptional natural beauty;
- . Contains along its course habitats of rare or endangered species of plants and animals. This would also include areas where outstanding concentrations of plants and animals of Canadian interest and significance are found.

4.2.2 Human Heritage Values

Outstanding *human heritage* value will be recognized when a river environment meets one or more of the following guidelines:

- . is of outstanding importance owing to its influence, over a period of time, on the historical development of Canada through a major impact upon the region in which it is located or beyond; this would include its

- role in such significant historical themes as native people, settlement patterns and transportation;
- is strongly associated with persons, events, movements, achievements, ideas or beliefs of Canadian significance;
 - Contains historical or archaeological structures, works or sites which are unique, rare or of great antiquity;
 - Contains outstanding examples or concentrations of historical or archaeological structures, works or sites which are representative of major themes in Canadian history.

In every case consideration should be given to the state of preservation of the river environment relative to its visual appearance during the historic period in which the waterway is considered to be of outstanding importance.

4.2.3 *Recreational Values*

Recognizing the man-land relationship essential to recreation, outstanding *recreational* value will be recognized when a river environment meets the following general guidelines:

- . possesses an appropriate combination of recreational opportunities and related natural values which together provide a capability for an outstanding recreational experience;
Recreational opportunities include such activities as boating, hiking, swimming, camping, wildlife viewing, and human heritage appreciation;
Natural values include natural visual aesthetics, that is, diversity and quality of scenic beauty and physical essentials, such as sufficient flow, navigability, rapids, accessibility and suitable shoreline;
- . Be capable of supporting recreational uses without significant loss of or impact on its natural, historical or aesthetic values.

4.3 Integrity Guidelines

In addition to the specific "Heritage Value Guidelines", a river and its immediate environment must meet

“Integrity Guidelines” for designation to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System:

- . They should be of sufficient size and contain all or most of the key interrelated and interdependent elements* to demonstrate the key aspects of the processes, features, activities or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding value;
- . They should contain those ecosystem components required for the continuity of the species, features or objects to be protected;
- . The quality of the water should be such as to provide for the continuity and/or improvement of the resources upon which “value” to the system has been determined.

* Elements are defined as resources or groupings of resources identified as having values essential to the nomination of a river.

5. Management Plans

Before formal designation to the C. H. R. S., the agency(ies) which has nominated a river will lodge a management plan with the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board. This plan will be prepared and approved by the appropriate federal, provincial or territorial agencies which have responsibility for the planning and management of that river.

The specific contents of the management plan will be the prerogative of the managing agencies alone and will not be "approved" or "disapproved" by the Board.

The management plan will establish the boundaries of the river management area which is to be included in the C. H. R. S. and will set out the policies and practices to be followed by the managing agencies to ensure its development, management and use consistent with the objectives of the System.

The plan should be brief and should demonstrate the commitment on the part of the nominating jurisdiction to protect the river's heritage values.

6. Financing the Canadian Heritage Rivers System

Funding responsibilities for the C. H.R.S. will be shared in the following manner:

- . Parks Canada will assume the cost of staffing and operating a Secretariat of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board;
- . Parks Canada will also assume the cost of publicizing the C. H.R.S. both at the national and international levels;
- . At its discretion Parks Canada will provide assistance to managing jurisdictions for the preparation of studies and plans required to provide nomination documents and management plans;
- . The government responsible for managing a designated river will assume the cost of the development and operation contemplated in the management plan. However, the Government of Canada could, through other federal-provincial joint programs, share the costs of studies and developments identified in the management plan of the designated river which are consistent with the objectives of both those existing joint programs and the C. H. R. S., if it so chooses.

Appendix I

Operating Procedures for the Canadian Heritage Rivers System

The main body of this document has described general principles and processes for the inclusion of rivers in the C. H.R.S. and the responsibilities of participating governments. The purpose of Appendix I is to set out more specific procedures or steps which are to be followed, both for the designation of rivers to the system and for their removal should that ever be required.

A. Procedures for the Nomination and Designation of Rivers

The following procedures will apply:

- a) At least six months in advance of the annual Board meeting, the nominating agency (ies) will notify the Chairperson of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board of its intent to nominate a specific river; the item will accordingly be placed on the meeting agenda;
- b) At least four months in advance of the Board meeting, a completed nomination document and any supporting documentation (15 copies) will be submitted to the Board Secretary;
- c) The Board Secretary will review the nomination document for completeness and will, where necessary, request additional information or supporting documentation;
- d) At least two months in advance of the meeting, the Board Secretary will distribute copies of the agenda (prepared by the Chairperson), and all nomination documentation to Board members; additional copies will be placed in the files of the Secretariat;
- e) Board members will review all submitted documentation and will consult, where necessary, with other experts in advance of the meeting. In addition, members will inform the Chairperson of any additional agenda items;

- f) At its meeting, the Board will consider the nomination documentation and receive any presentations which the nominating agency (ies) may wish to make. The nominating agency (ies) at that time may also lodge with the Board a management plan (15 copies) for the nominated river or indicate its intentions regarding completion of such a plan within a certain period of time. The Board will evaluate the nominated river according to the "Guidelines for Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers" and will either recommend that it be designated to the System (pending receipt of a management plan if it is not provided at the same time), that a decision be postponed pending receipt of more information, or that the river not be included in the System;
- g) Board decisions, where necessary, will be made by vote of a simple majority. The Chairperson will vote only to break a tie;
- h) The Board recommendation regarding a nomination will be conveyed jointly to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the minister(s) of the nominating agency(ies), who will make the final decision on acceptance of the nomination;
- i) A river whose nomination has been accepted by the Ministers and for which a management plan was presented at the time of nomination, will be designated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and the plan lodged in the Board files;
- J) A river whose nomination has been accepted by the Ministers and for which a management plan was *not* lodged with the Board at the time of nomination will be placed in a register of Candidate Canadian Heritage Rivers. The managing agency(ies) will have three years within which to lodge a management plan with the Board; extensions will be granted in cases where reasonable progress is being made towards its completion. Upon receipt of the plan the Board Chairperson will recommend to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the minister of the nominating agency(ies) that the Candidate river now be formally designated to the System.
- k) Public announcement of the designation of a Canadian Heritage River or the acceptance of the nomination of a Candidate Canadian Heritage River will then be

made jointly by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the appropriate minister(s) of the nominating jurisdiction.

B. Procedures for Monitoring the Status of Canadian Heritage Rivers

In order to ensure that all Canadian Heritage Rivers continue to possess the outstanding heritage values for which they were originally designated and thus continue to merit this designation, the Board will periodically review the status of rivers within the system. This monitoring will take place in the following manner:

- a) Yearly monitoring of Canadian Heritage Rivers will take place by the managing jurisdiction and the Board through the production and review of annual report submissions;
- b) The Board will review each designation at least every ten years, in conjunction with the responsible agency, if at all possible, but having the capacity to undertake an independent assessment if deemed necessary;
- c) The Board Chairperson, at the direction of the Board, will convey any concerns regarding loss of Canadian Heritage River values to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and the appropriate minister(s) of the managing jurisdiction(s).

C. Procedures for the De-Designation of Canadian Heritage Rivers

Two **situations** may require the removal of a river from the System: 1) where the managing jurisdiction has formally requested that it be de-designated, and 2) where the river has deteriorated to a point where it no longer meets the “Guidelines for the Selection of Canadian Heritage Rivers”.

2. *At the request of the Managing Jurisdiction*

In cases where the managing jurisdiction, for whatever reason, makes formal notification to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada of its intention to remove one of its rivers from the System, removal is automatic. The Parks Canada Minister will duly inform the Board of this action.

2. *Loss of Heritage Values*

Where the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board has information that a Canadian Heritage River is threatened or no longer appears to possess the values for which it was designated and may no longer meet the "Guidelines for Selection", the following procedures will apply:

- a) The Board will undertake a special investigation, in conjunction with the responsible agency, if at all possible, to determine the validity of the concerns;
- b) If investigation determines that Canadian Heritage River values have deteriorated seriously or been lost and the managing jurisdiction is unable or declines to undertake appropriate remedial action, the Board will recommend to the Minister responsible for Parks Canada that the river be removed from the Canadian Heritage Rivers System;
- c) If the Minister responsible for Parks Canada concurs with this recommendation, the Minister will inform the appropriate minister(s) of the managing jurisdiction concerned that the river has been de-designated.

Appendix II

Language Policy of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board

The language policy of the Board will reflect the equal status of English and French as the official languages of Canada.

A. Board Meetings

Simultaneous interpretation of Board meetings will be provided when required.

B. Submissions to the Board

Written submissions will be presented to the Board Secretariat in either English or French or both according to the language policy of the originating jurisdiction. Where it is submitted in one language only, the Board Secretariat will be responsible for ensuring the translation of all documents essential to the proceedings of the Board into the other official language before submission to Board members. In the case of supporting or background documentation or other material provided in one language only, the original version will be accompanied by a summary which will be translated by the Secretariat into the other official language.

C. Communications from the Board

Communications from the Board, such as its annual report, will be provided in both of the official languages of Canada.

Where it is the policy of any of the participating governments to provide services in other languages, it will be the responsibility of that government to provide a translation of Board communications in those languages within their region.

Appendix III

Lead Agencies Participating in the Development of the C.H.R.S. Proposal

Provincial Agencies

Newfoundland Department of Culture, Recreation
and Youth

Prince Edward Island Department of Highways and
Public Works

Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests

New Brunswick Department of Tourism

Ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche du
Quebec

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Manitoba Department of Natural Resources

Saskatchewan Department of Tourism and Renewable
Resources

Alberta Recreation and Parks

British Columbia Ministry of Lands, Parks and
Housing

Territorial Agencies

Yukon Territory Department of Renewable Resources

Northwest Territories Department of Economic De-
velopment and Tourism

Federal Agencies

Department of the Environment, Parks Canada

Federal Agencies Consulted

Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Northern
Program

Department of the Environment, Inland Waters
Directorate

Interdepartmental Committee on Water