

***DRAFT* Heritage River Designation Concept**

**Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy Omaka-ty
The North Saskatchewan River (Alberta)**

for July 11, 2023



Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy

Omaka-ty

Acknowledgements



**Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System**

**Réseau des
rivières du patrimoine
canadien**

**ᑲᑕᑦᑕᑦ
ᐱᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
ᑲᑦᑲᑦ**



Environment and
Protected Areas



O2

O2 Planning & Design Inc.



KERR WOOD LEIDAL
consulting engineers



expedition
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

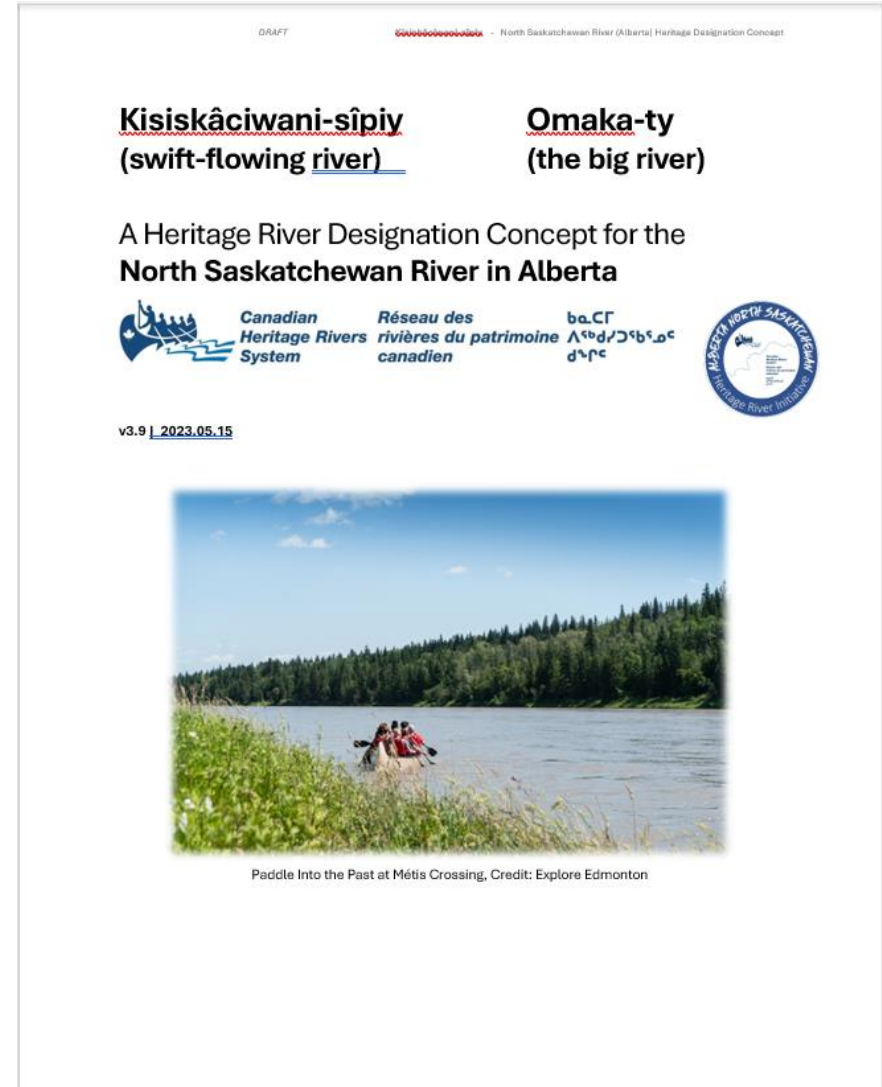
Know History
Historical Services





Presentation Outline

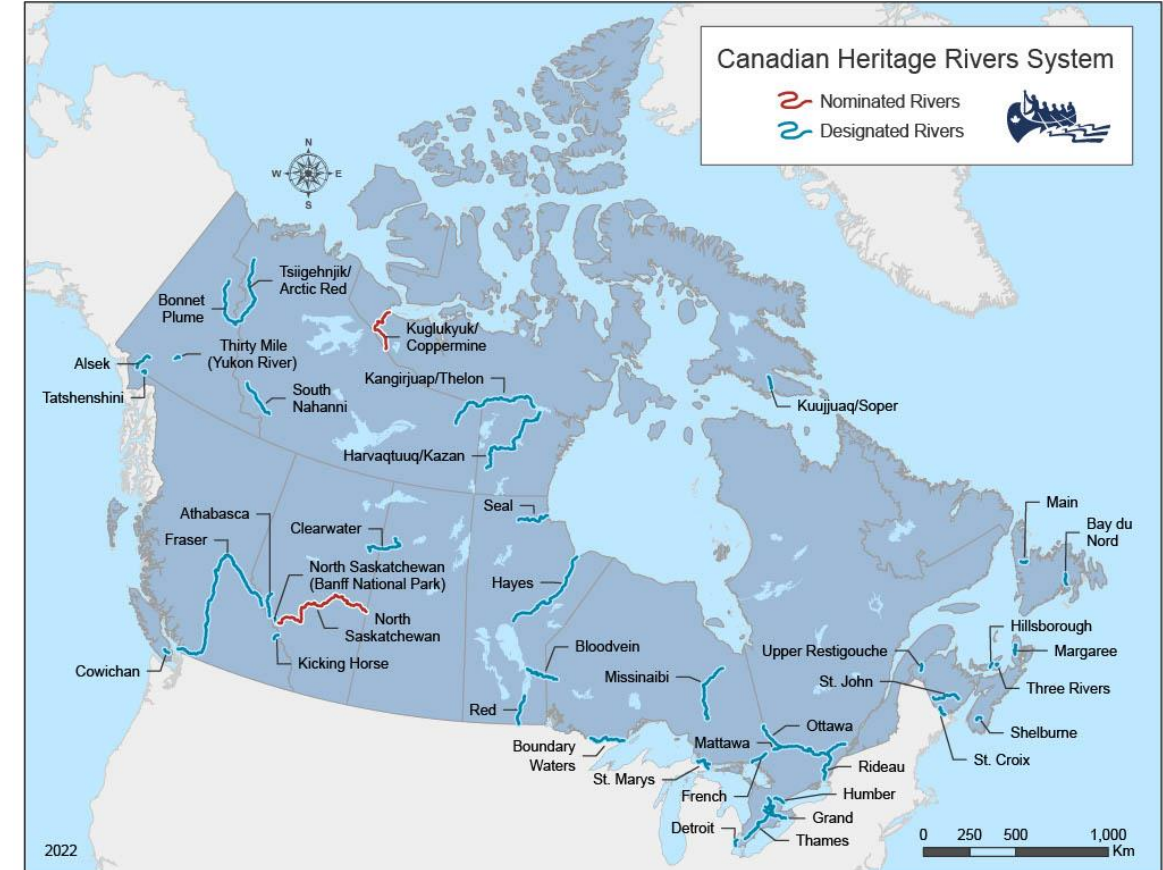
- Project Context & The Canadian Heritage Rivers System
- Engagement Summary
- Key River Heritage Values
- A Heritage Strategy: Vision, Principles, Goals and Actions
- Implementation & Monitoring
- Conclusion & Next Steps





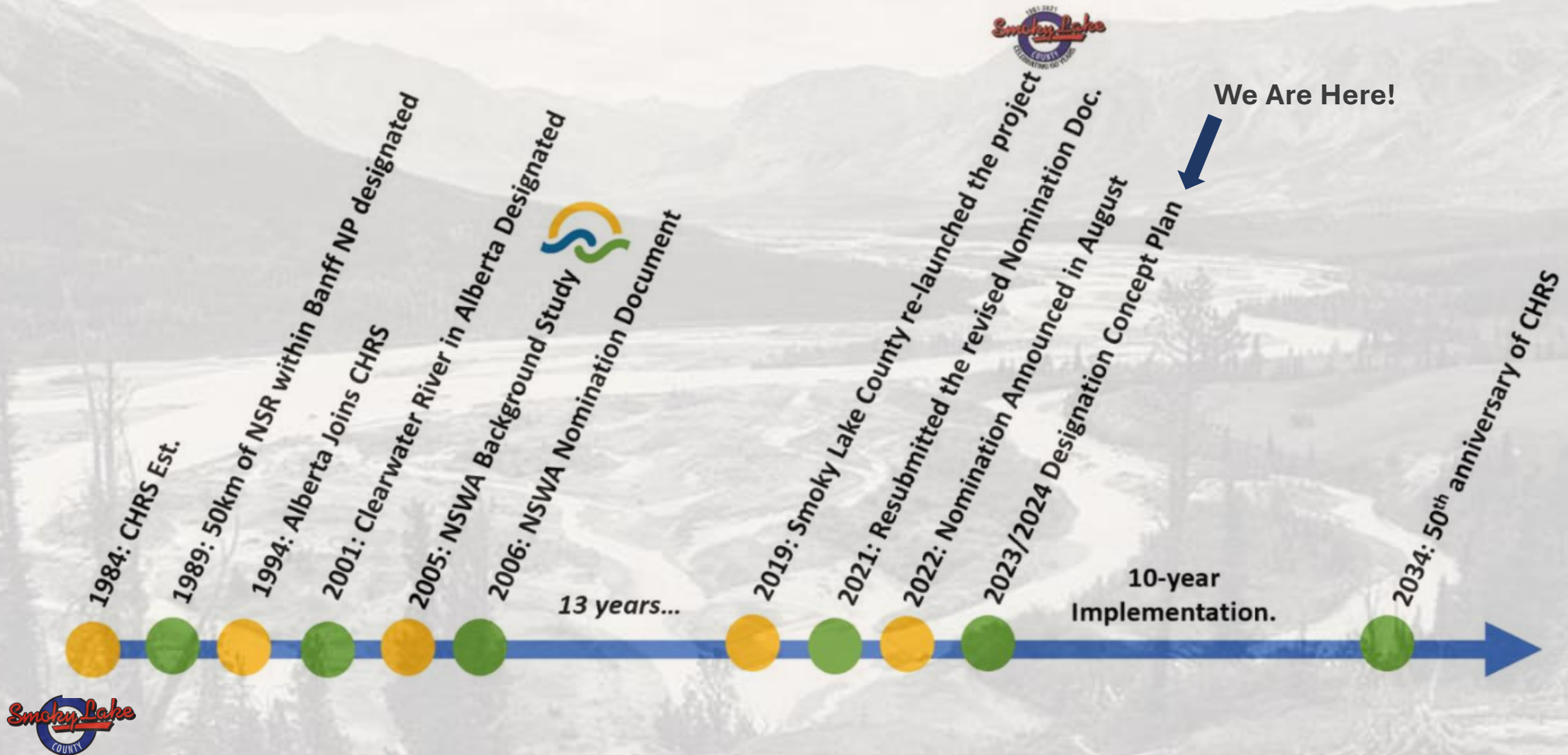
Context & Summary

- 718 km long river
- Banff National Park → Saskatchewan
- Part of Canada's 2nd longest river system (Nelson-Saskatchewan)
- Outstanding heritage values:
 - Indigenous heritage
 - Western heritage
 - Indigenous - European conflict & cooperation
 - Large river in the Boreal Plain & Prairies
 - Proximity to urban populations





A Long Time Coming





Engagements

DISCOVER RIVER STORIES FALL/WINTER 2022	DEVELOP DRAFT PLAN SPRING 2023	CELEBRATE PROGRESS & INSPIRE STEWARDSHIP SUMMER 2023	SUBMISSION TO PROVINCIAL & FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS FOR APPROVAL FALL 2023
---	--	--	---

Indigenous



Visited **15** communities

Engaged **68** participants



Public



Online Survey: **28**



Online Portal & Web Map: **235**



Public Workshops: **14**



Discussion Guide: **3**



Meetings: **6**

Tourism Industry



Online Survey: **22**



Digital Workshop: **9**



Interviews: **11**



Indigenous Heritage

- Creation Stories
- A Trade Route
- Ceremonial Sites
- Women & Water
- Plants & Medicines
- Hunting & Fishing

“The river needs us, and we need the river”

Western Canadian Heritage

- The Fur Trade
- Early Expeditions
- Settlement Patterns
- Steamships
- Industrial Heritage
- Regulations & Agreements

“The Story of this River is the Story of the West”

-James Gordon, ‘Roll on North Saskatchewan’ chorus

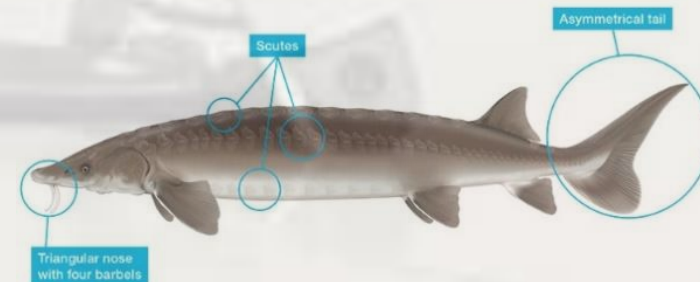


Recreational Heritage

- Boating
- Fishing & Hunting
- Nature Appreciation
- Dark Skies/Northern Lights
- Cultural Tourism
- Events/Celebration

Natural Heritage

- Represents the Boreal Plain & Prairies
- Many unique natural features
- Supports rare & threatened species
- Water quality improving in recent decades
- Core habitat for lake sturgeon





***DRAFT* Heritage Concept Strategic Framework**

VISION

Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy's diverse heritage values are recognized and stewarded, strengthening thriving communities connected by the river's landscapes and history.



PRINCIPLES

- Recognition
- Respect
- Reconciliation
- Integrity
- Sustainability
- Voluntary Participation
- Leadership
- Collaboration & Partnerships



GOALS & ACTIONS

Culture

Recreation/
Tourism

Nature

Water
Quality



***DRAFT* Cultural Heritage Goals & Actions**

GOAL: Recognize and steward the diverse cultural heritage associated with Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy

KEY ACTIONS

Unveil a commemorative historic plaque during a joint public ceremony in Smoky Lake County.

Open [kihcihkaw askî \(Sacred Land\)](#) in Whitemud Park, Edmonton. This site will host spiritual ceremonies, sweat lodges, cultural camps, talking circles, and learning.

Promote, steward, and enhance diverse cultural heritage attractions and interpretive opportunities, linked in a river-wide thematic framework.



***DRAFT* Recreation & Tourism Goals & Actions**

GOAL: Promote kisiskâciwani-sîpiy as a diverse recreational amenity and destination, compatible with the natural and cultural heritage values of the river.

KEY ACTIONS

Establish a River Tourism Development Task Force for kisiskâciwani-sîpiy, focused on the core areas of water-based tourism, outdoor adventure tourism, nature-based tourism, cultural tourism, and Indigenous tourism

Inventory river access points, prioritize key locations, and invest in targeted improvements while ensuring safety

Develop signature/epic multi-day river heritage tours



***DRAFT* Natural Heritage Goals & Actions**

GOAL: Maintain or improve the natural heritage of kisiskâciwani-sîpiy, including its watershed, greenways, flora, and fauna.

KEY ACTIONS

Implement the Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) and monitor progress over time

Update the State of the Watershed Report for the North Saskatchewan River Basin (Alberta)

Complete the update of lake sturgeon population status throughout the river (GoA, 2023)



***DRAFT* Water Quality Goals & Actions**

GOAL: Maintain or improve water quality

KEY ACTIONS

WaterSHED water quality monitoring program implementation and communications

Implement the [Surface Water Quality Framework](#) for the North Saskatchewan basin

Integrate water quality outcomes in the Designated Industrial Zone (DIZ) pilot, Industrial Heartland

Implement the Source Water Protection Plan for Edmonton (EPCOR, 2020)

Implement the Stormwater Integrated Resource Plan (SIRP), including \$1.6 billion of investment

Upgrade wastewater treatment systems at Goldbar to include advanced membrane technologies



Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy

Omaka-ty

The North Saskatchewan River (Alberta)



CO-CREATED OUTCOMES

Implementation & Reporting

INDIGENOUS
INVOLVEMENT



REPORTING TO
CANADIAN HERITAGE
RIVERS BOARD

Watershed initiatives
Community initiatives
Relationship building
Co-creation
Internal Learning

FOUNDATIONAL WORK





Implementation: We Are All Stewards

- All Albertans have a role in river stewardship
- Heritage river designation is commemorative & symbolic *not* prescriptive
- There will be no changes to legislation or policies if designation is approved
- The NSWA and provincial and federal governments will **promise / guarantee** designation will not and cannot create additional red tape or bureaucracy
- **Designation complements stewardship** at all other levels:
individual, grassroots, industry, municipal, provincial, Indigenous

What actions will YOU or your organization take, to experience, conserve, or restore the heritage of Kisiskâciwani-sîpiy?



Conclusions & Next Steps

- The heritage significance of this river is important & growing
- Designation will support place-based heritage stewardship
- The River connects us to our past & enriches the present
- **It is time for designation as a national Heritage River**
- Plan to proceed with submission to Provincial & Federal governments for approval in **Fall 2023**



Questions?