

Walter, Penny

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: NUP letter June 7_2.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Sunday, June 8, 2025 5:10 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Sunday, June 8, 2025 - 17:09

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Sunday, June 08, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Candace

Last Name: Savage

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: [REDACTED]

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Albert Avenue

Ward: Ward 6

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Wild about Saskatoon

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: SPC Governance and Priorities June 11

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 6.3.4 National Urban Park Exploration 2024 – 2025 Update [GPC2024-0603]

Comments:

June 8, 2025

Re 6.3.4 Admin Report and Appendix 1: Ho hum. Discussions have been going on behind closed doors about the possible creation of a National Urban Park for the Saskatoon region, but don't worry. There won't be any new regulations and nothing much will change.

No! Let's try that story again. In August, 2021, Jonathan Wilkinson, then the federal minister of Environment and Climate Change and minister responsible for Parks Canada, chose Saskatoon as the place to announce an initial \$130 million investment in creating a network of National Urban Parks.

He chose Saskatoon because of the visionary work that had already been accomplished here, over more than 40 years, by the Meewasin Valley Authority. To quote the mayor of the day, the announcement was "a testament that the Meewasin Valley Authority model can become a national model for balancing conservation of crucial habitat with public access to natural spaces and carefully managed development." Saskatoon has been leading the way, and the City's involvement in this pathfinding new National Urban Park initiative deserves to be a source of pride.

As was noted at the time, "Expanding access to and protection of nature in urban centres pays real dividends. Nature-based climate solutions—increasing protection [of natural areas]..., planting trees, protecting and restoring wetlands and grasslands and other carbon pools -- have the potential to provide up to 30 percent of global climate solutions. Nature acts as a buffer against extreme weather events; it absorbs and traps carbon dioxide; protects against flooding; and can prevent the loss of biodiversity... in our urban centres where it is most at risk."

Since that initial announcement, the goals of the National Urban Park network have coalesced around three pillars: strengthening conservation and restoration of prized natural areas, ensuring public access to nature, and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous communities—goals that are shared by the City of Saskatoon. Recognition and support from Parks Canada through creation of a National Urban Park in the Meewasin valley promises to bring good energy and positive changes and to assist the City in achieving its stated objectives.

Parks Canada's National Urban Park policy includes a commitment to "meaningful, deliberate, early, and ongoing engagement with and collaboration amongst a wide range of communities." To date, there has been almost no opportunity for public or stakeholder input in the planning process, so we are pleased to hear that engagement (long overdue, in our opinion) will begin soon. The opportunities for input must be genuine and sincere, i.e. conducted with an open mind and with time for consideration and response. No tick-the-box exercises, please. We look forward to getting a fuller picture of what is being proposed and to offering constructive comments.

We can't wait to see Parks Canada's famous red chairs on the banks of kisiskāchiwani-sīpiy and for the benefits of conservation, restoration, education and inclusion to be enjoyed by the entire community.

Joanne Blythe
Chad Hammond
Candace Savage
For Wild about Saskatoon

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Wild About

Saskatoon

June 8, 2025

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Since that initial announcement, the goals of the National Urban Park network have coalesced around three pillars:² strengthening conservation and restoration of prized natural areas, ensuring public access to nature, and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous communities—goals that are shared by the City of Saskatoon. Recognition and support from Parks Canada through creation of a National Urban Park in the Meewasin valley promises to bring good energy and positive changes and to assist the City in achieving its stated objectives.

¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/parks-canada/news/2021/08/government-of-canada-invests-130-million-to-work-with-partners-to-create-a-network-of-national-urban-parks.html>

² <https://parks.canada.ca/pun-nup/politique-policy>

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