



ALBERTA
CULTURE, MULTICULTURALISM AND STATUS OF WOMEN
Office of the Minister

January 29, 2021

Mr. Kyle Schole
Planning, Development, and Heritage Assistant
Smoky Lake County
4612 McDougall Drive
PO Box 310
Smoky Lake AB T0A 3C0

Dear Mr. Schole:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your application to have the North Saskatchewan River designated as a Canadian Heritage River.

The North Saskatchewan River, Rivière Saskatchewan Nord, *kisiskâciwani-sîpiy, omaka-ty*, is one of the great rivers of western Canada. From time immemorial, the river has been an essential conduit for economic and cultural exchanges among Canada's Indigenous peoples. In the post-contact period, the river remained a central travel route for Indigenous people, while also accommodating an increasing number of European explorers, traders, and settlers. Until supplanted by the transcontinental railroads in the late-1800s, the North Saskatchewan River was the primary transportation corridor through north-central Alberta, and some of Alberta's major urban centres were established upon its banks.

The North Saskatchewan River continues to be of great social and natural significance. It affords recreational opportunities to the many domestic and international visitors who enjoy the river valley's parks and trail systems, and remains an essential water source for agricultural, industrial, and municipal users.

Sincerely,

Leela Sharon Aheer
Minister