

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE WINNIPEG MAP SHEET AREA, 62H

The area covered by the Winnipeg map sheet comprises 6220 square miles in southern Manitoba between 49° and 50° north latitude and 96° and 98° west longitude. Metropolitan Winnipeg and the town of Steinbach, which have populations of 508,759 and 4,648 respectively (1966 census), are the largest centers. In the Red River Valley, drainage, cultivation, and roads around every square mile create a pattern characteristic of this highly settled landscape. East of the Red River valley, where soils are generally unsuitable for agriculture, landscape modification by man has not been as intensive, although fires and forest cutting have disturbed the native vegetation in many places.

The area is situated entirely within the Manitoba Lowland physiographic region. The western half is part of the broad, low-lying Red River plain, which slopes gently to the east and north from 900 feet above sea level at Winkler to about 733 feet at the Red River in Winnipeg. The glaciolacustrine deposits of Birds Hill, northeast of Winnipeg, form one of the few sites of significant relief in the Red River valley. In the eastern half, the land rises above the Red River valley past the end moraine of the Bedford Hills Escarpment to the Southeastern Lake Terrace at about 1200 feet above sea level.

The bedrock formations of the area vary from calcareous shale, limestone, and gypsum of the Cretaceous and Jurassic periods west of the Red River and around the lower Rat and Roseau rivers, to Ordovician limestone, dolomite, sandstone, and shale in the northern and eastern parts of the area. Precambrian bedrock is found in the extreme northeastern part of the area.

As the Wisconsin ice sheets retreated north from the Red River valley, the meltwaters formed Lake Agassiz, which covered the area until about 8000 years ago. In its early stages, glacial ice formed the northern and eastern boundaries of Lake Agassiz. As the ice sheet receded, the lake also receded. Along the shorelines the wave action of this gigantic lake eroded and sorted the finer particles from the ice-laid drift and deposited a layer of water-rounded gravel, cobbles, and stones up to two or more feet thick in the shallow parts of the lake, fine clay and silt sediments settled to form the deep, stratified lacustrine soils of the present Red River valley.

The glacial ice sheet did not retreat continuously north, but oscillated backward and forward. Sometimes the ice sheet advanced in the waters of the lake faster than it melted, pushing up the glacial till and lake sediments to form subaqueous moraines and lake terraces. Also, as the ice advanced the water deepened so that previous shoreline and shallow water deposits were submerged and fine-textured sediments were deposited over these coarser shoreline materials. This action, as well as erosion and re-sorting by wind and water after the lake receded, resulted in an extremely varied texture of surficial deposits in the eastern part of the area.

Overshielding the bedrock of the entire area is boulder till of varying depths. In the central, western, and southern parts of the area till is mainly composed of limestone rock, whereas in the northeast near the Precambrian Shield, the till is composed of igneous rock. North-south trending beach ridges of sand and gravel occur throughout the area, particularly in the east, and mark the successive water levels where the lake temporarily halted during its retreat.

The surficial deposits of most of the western two-thirds of the area consist of a lacustrine silt and clay plain. Two exceptions are the lower Assiniboine River, with its recent silt and clay alluvium, and many sandy lacustrine deposits in the southwestern part of the area.

The area lies in the Nelson River drainage basin. The Red River flows north through the center of the area and its valley extends about 35 miles west and 10 miles east. The Assiniboine River flows from the west to join the Red River in Winnipeg. The Rivière Sale, Morris River, and Rivière aux Marais drain the Red River valley in the west; whereas the Seine, Rat, and Roseau rivers drain the east. Many small creeks drain the Pembina Mountain in the west to the Red River plain. These creeks formerly ended in expansive brackish marshes, which have now been completely drained.

CLIMATE

The area has a continental climate. The mean temperatures range from 69°F in July to 1°F in January. The transition between seasons is short and occurs normally in April and October. The average frost-free period varies from 120 days in the southwest to 90 days in the east; the growing season (mean temperatures above 42°F) is about 179 days.

The area lies within the Dry Subhumid moisture region and the northeastern half has a moister climate than the southwestern half. The mean annual precipitation varies from 20 to 21 inches. About 70 percent of the total annual precipitation falls as rain during May to October and the rest falls as snow from November to March. Mean annual snowfall ranges from 45 inches in the southwest to just over 50 inches in the northeast.

The area lies within the Great Plains snow cover region, which has an average depth of snow of less than 15 inches at the end of the maximum month, and a period of three to four months in which the average snow depth is greater than five inches. Generally, snow cover is shallow in the southwest and increases in depth to the east and northeast. The median snow cover values for February are 5.9 inches at Carman, 8.6 inches at Gretna, 9 inches at Winnipeg, and 14.6 inches at Sandilands.

ECOLOGY

Chernozemic soils have developed under the grasslands in the western two-thirds of the area, whereas a north-south band of Brunisolic soils have developed under the cooler, moisture climate of the wooded grasslands on the eastern border of the Red River valley. Luvisolic and Organic soils underlie the coniferous and deciduous forests of the east.

When white man arrived in the Red River valley, large, wet marshes occupied the poorly drained clay and silt soils, whereas lush, tall grass prairie had developed on similar, but better-drained soils. Aspen parkland developed on the soils east of the Red River valley as far as Steinbach, east of which mixed deciduous and coniferous forest predominated. Farther east, forests of black spruce (*Picea mariana*), white spruce (*P. glauca*), jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*), and aspen poplar (*Populus tremuloides*) dominated the glacial drift topography.

Drainage of the once famous Red River valley marshes began in the days of earliest settlement; today, drainage is complete and permanent. The great effect this drainage had upon the landscape, flora, and fauna is evidenced by the virtual disappearance of natural tall grass prairie wilderness. This type of vegetation was once so vast that Henry Youle Hind in 1857 likened it to a green, rolling ocean of grass. The Red River valley landscape is now characterized by a patchwork of cultivated fields, roads and their accompanying ditches on every mile-line, and by straight-line forests of telephone poles and electric power lines. The forests of American elm (*Ulmus americana*), ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), and Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*) bordering the large rivers have been cleared except for a narrow fringe.

The native vegetation of the clay plain of the Red River valley consisted of tall grass prairie and its species composition varied depending on the moisture regime. The characteristic plant species were big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), porcupine grass (*Stipa spartea*), and on wetter sites, cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*). Western snowberry (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*), saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), and prickly rose (*Rosa acicularis*) were the most common woody plants.

The breaking of native prairie sod has allowed plants introduced from other agricultural regions of the world to gain a strong foothold. Often the only vegetation apart from agricultural crops in large parts of the Red River valley is the disturbed associations of grasses, herbs, and shrubs along roads, railroads, and stream channels; often, it is only in these locations that remnants of native prairie are found.

In the grassland zone, trees grow naturally only as borders along streams. But oak and aspen poplar with an understory of snowberry, hazelnuts (*Corylus spp.*), and red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) grow on the well-drained sites above and adjacent to the river channels. The lower river terraces and floodplains covered by silty clay alluvium support a vigorous growth of American elm, basswood (*Tilia americana*), western cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), Manitoba maple, ash, and an understory of willows (*Salix spp.*), ferns and associated herbaceous plants. Shrubs, such as saskatoon and high bush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) are common to both the river bottom and upper riverbank plant communities.

The native vegetation of the Southeastern Lake Terrace and Bedford Hills, east of the Red River valley, ranges from wood-grassland in the west to boreal forest in the east. Almost all the forest in the eastern part of the area is in a state of secondary succession as a result of extensive disturbance by fire and cutting. Mature stands are isolated and rare. At the end of the 19th century, this upland was probably covered by forests of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and smaller amounts of white spruce and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*). White pine is no longer common in these forests.

Present forest habitats on the Southeastern Lake Terrace may be grouped into three categories depending on soil moisture regime. The well-drained sites on duned sands and sandy moraines with little soil profile development are characterized by jack pine with a ground cover of reindeer lichens (*Cladonia spp.*) and bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*). Much of the forest floor is barren pine needle cover over a thin layer of humus. Other characteristic plants include low sand cherry (*Prunus pumila*) and goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*). This habitat is locally dominant near Marchand and Sprague.

The second type of forest habitat is found on moderately well-drained sites and the forest varies from coniferous to deciduous. Growing on the better-drained sites in this habitat are jack pine forests with a herb layer of bearberry and twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*). On richer sites, white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) and aspen poplar with an understory of hazelnuts and a herb layer of twinflower occur. On very rich, moist alluvial sites, aspen poplar, ash, American elm, and an understory of hazelnuts with a herb layer of bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*), palmate-leaved colt's-foot (*Petasites palmatus*), and ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*) are characteristic. The vegetation on nutritionally poor, moist to very moist soil varies from jack pine with Labrador-tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*) and raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) to black spruce bog with a ground cover of feather mosses (*Hyalocladium spp.* and *Pleurozium spp.*) and sphagnum mosses (*Sphagnum spp.*). On intermediate drained Luvisols, the typical vegetation is jack pine mixed with white birch or aspen poplar, but pure stands of jack pine or deciduous trees are also common. Abundant shrubs include hazelnuts, snowberry, bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), saskatoon, red-fruited choke cherry (*Prunus virginiana*), and roses (*Rosa spp.*). The herb layer is diverse and dense and includes plants such as wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), broken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) and two-leaved Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum canadense*). On wetter, intermediate drained sites with sandy to clay loam soils, the characteristic forest is composed of isolated white spruce and abundant deciduous trees such as aspen poplar, ash, balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*), and white birch. The predominantly deciduous forest reflects the influence of past logging and fire. Typical tall shrubs on these moist sites include red-osier dogwood and speckled alder (*Alnus rugosa*). White cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) may occasionally become dense enough to suppress the otherwise lush herbaceous vegetation, resulting in an almost barren forest floor. Characteristic herbs are wild sarsaparilla, Lindley's aster (*Aster ciliolatus*), bishop's cap (*Mitchella repens*), and sweet-scented bedstraw (*Gaultheria shallon*).

The third forest habitat consists of poorly drained peatlands, where the cover ranges from nutritionally poor black spruce, feathermoss and sphagnum moss forest to nutritionally rich peatlands characterized by tamarack (*Larix laricina*), dwarf birch (*Betula glandulosa*), speckled alder, willows, bunchberry, sedges (*Carex spp.*), and marsh-marginal (*Caltha palustris*). Where fire has burned away the organic soils, aspen poplar, balsam poplar, and ash grow on the exposed mineral soil. Treeless sedge fens occupy large parts of the peatlands.

The wild ungulates historically native to the area are elk (*Cervus canadensis*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), white-tailed deer (*O. virginianus*), moose (*Alces alces*), woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*), pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*), and bison (*Bison bison*).

Settlement not only altered the land and its vegetation, but also destroyed large herds of wild ungulates, such as bison and pronghorn and their predators, the plains grizzly bear (*Ursus horribilis*), plains wolf (*Canis lupus*), and kit fox (*Vulpes velox*). The pronghorn, which formerly inhabited the dry grasslands of southwestern Manitoba, ranged as far east as the Red River valley and as far north as St. Francois Xavier and Fort Garry about the year 1800, but are no longer found in Manitoba. Similarly, bison, which originally passed south through the Red River valley in migration to wintering ground in North Dakota, are no longer found wild in Manitoba.

Els were once found in varied habitats from dry and wet tall grass prairie to riparian forests in the west and mixed and boreal forest in the east. Today, only scattered individual elk are reported in the more heavily forested regions; elk are gone from the Red River valley where they were found around the year 1800.

Mule deer were once abundant on the drier prairie and eastern forest of the area, but are now few in number. They are only occasionally sighted in the area, mainly in the eastern mixed and boreal forests. The white-tailed deer, considered to be a recent immigrant to Manitoba, has become the most common wild ungulate in the area. White-tailed deer live in a man-modified landscape, whereas the mule deer does not.

Moose have always been confined to the riparian forests and to the mixed and coniferous forests in the east, except when they followed the forested fringe of rivers west across the grasslands.

Woodland caribou at one time ranged the sandy, jack pine - lichen uplands and black spruce - tamarack bogs of the Bedford Hills, but are no longer found in the area.

LAND CAPABILITY FOR WILD UNGULATES

High-capability land for wild ungulates (Class 3 or better) constitutes 11 percent of the area. Class 4, 5, and 6 lands comprise 22, 12, and 55 percent of the area respectively. There are no Class 7 lands.

White-tailed deer is the primary indicator species over 90 percent of the area. Most of the high-quality white-tailed deer habitat occurs on the alluvial soils of the Red and Assiniboine rivers and their tributaries and on the better-drained gravel and sand soils of the uplands east of the Red River valley.

Ten percent of the area, in the eastern upland, has been rated mainly for moose. The best moose habitat occurs on the willow-covered peatlands and on the alluvial soils bordering the Whiteshell River in the extreme northeast.

Poor intercession of landforms necessary for optimum wild ungulate habitat (G) is the main limitation for 69 percent of the area. Low soil fertility (F) is a limiting factor for 16 percent of the area and excessive or deficient soil moisture (M) is a limitation for one percent of the area. Flat topography (T) is a limiting factor for 14 percent of the area. This limitation is especially common on the flat prairie soils of the Red River valley.

The part of the area with the greatest capability for white-tailed deer and moose lies east and southeast of Winnipeg, where large tracts of land have not been intensively developed.

Capability classification by V. H. Scott, L. M. Nelson, H. D. Goulden and I. J. Milliken, Canada Land Inventory Project, Department of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management, Winnipeg, riptive narrative by V. H. Scott.

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DESCRIPTION DU TERRITOIRE DE LA FEUILLE DE WINNIPEG - 62H

Le territoire représenté sur la feuille de Winnipeg occupe une superficie de 6 220 milles carrés dans le sud du Manitoba entre 49 et 50° de latitude nord et 96 et 98 de longitude ouest. La capitale, Winnipeg, et la ville de Steinbach, qui comptent respectivement 508 759 et 4 648 habitants (recensement de 1966), sont les agglomérations les plus importantes. Dans la vallée de la rivière Rouge, le réseau de drainage, les cultures et les routes qui délimitent le secteur en carrés d'un millier de côté donnent à ces régions densément aménagées une allure très caractéristique. A l'est de la vallée de la rivière Rouge, là où les sols sont habituellement impropre à l'agriculture, les transformations apportées par l'homme aux paysages sont moins importantes; les incendies de forêt et les coupes ont modifié en plusieurs endroits la composition du couvert végétal.

Tout le territoire appartient à la région structurale des basses terres du Manitoba. La moitié occidentale fait partie de la plaine de la rivière Rouge, une plaine large et basse qui s'incline en pente douce vers l'est et le nord, l'altitude y variant de 900 pi à Winkler à environ 733 sur les bords de la rivière Rouge, à Winnipeg. Les dépôts fluvioglaciaires de Birds Hill, au nord-est de Winnipeg, forment un des rares éléments de relief de la vallée de la rivière Rouge. Dans la moitié orientale, le terrain s'élève au-dessus de la vallée de la rivière Rouge, au-delà de la moraine frontale de l'escarpement des collines Bedford, jusqu'à la terrasse du lac Southeastern, à environ 1 200 pi d'altitude.

Les formations rocheuses du territoire vont des schistes calcaires, des calcaires et du gypse crétacés et jurassiques à l'ouest de la rivière Rouge et autour de la baie-Rivière Rat et de la rivière Roseau aux calcaires, aux dolomies, aux grès et aux shales dans l'est et le nord du territoire. Le sous-sol apparaît dans l'extrême nord-est du territoire.

Au fur et à mesure que le glacier Wisconsin se retirait vers le nord en quittant la vallée de la rivière Rouge, les eaux de fusion formaient le lac glaciaire Agassiz qui a recouvert le territoire jusqu'à il y a environ 8 000 ans. Pendant les premiers stades de formation, les limites septentrionales et orientales du lac Agassiz correspondent aux rebords du glacier. Au fur et à mesure du retrait du glacier, le lac se retire également. Le long des rives, sous l'action des vagues de ce lac gigantesque, les particules les plus fines des matériaux déposés par les glaces furent érodées et triées puis déposées pour former une couche de graviers, de caillots et de pierres arrondies par l'eau et atteignant jusqu'à deux pieds d'épaisseur ou davantage dans les zones les moins profondes du lac. Dans les parties les plus profondes se sont déposées des argiles et des limons de texture fine qui forment les sols lacustres épais et stratifiés de l'actuelle vallée de la rivière Rouge.

Le retrait du glacier vers le nord est effectué de façon continue et la position du front a longtemps oscillé. Parfois, l'Inlandis s'avancait dans les eaux du lac plus vite qu'il ne fondait, poussant devant lui du till glaciaire et des sédiments lacustres qui formaient sous l'eau des moraines et des terrasses lacustres. En outre, au fur et à mesure que la glace avançait, le niveau des eaux s'élévait, ennoyant les anciennes lignes de rivages et les dépôts en eau peu profonde et entraînant la mise en place sur ces dépôts de rive grossiers de sédiments de texture fine. Ce phénomène ainsi que l'action de l'érosion et le remaniement des matériaux par le vent et par l'eau après le retrait du lac expliquent la grande variété de textures de formations meubles dans l'est du territoire.

Un till à blocs d'épaisseur variable recouvre la roche en place dans tout le territoire. Dans le centre, l'ouest et le sud du territoire, le till est surtout composé de roches calcaires tandis que, dans le nord-est, près du bouclier précambrien, il est composé de roches ignées. Il y a des levées de plage de sable et de gravier à travers tout le territoire et plus particulièrement dans l'est; elles sont de direction nord-sud et indiquent les variations de niveau du lac pendant sa période de retrait.

Les formations meubles de la majeure partie des deux tiers occidentaux du territoire forment une plaine d'argile et de limon lacustres. Deux régions font exception, celle du cours inférieur de la rivière Assiniboine recouverte de limon et d'argile alluviaux récents et celle du sud-ouest du territoire où on trouve un grand nombre de dépôts de sable lacustres.

Le territoire appartient au bassin hydrographique du fleuve Nelson. La rivière Rouge, qui coule vers le nord, traverse le centre du territoire et sa vallée s'étend sur une distance de 35 milles environ vers l'ouest et de 10 milles vers l'est. La rivière Assiniboine, qui vient de l'ouest, se jette dans la rivière Rouge à Winnipeg. Les rivières Sale, Morris et aux Marais drainent la partie occidentale de la vallée de la rivière Rouge tandis que les rivières Seine, Rat et Roseau drainent la partie orientale. Un grand nombre de petits ruisseaux drainent le mont Pembina, dans l'est, et aboutissent à la plaine de la rivière Rouge. Ils se jettent autrefois dans de vastes marécages aux eaux saumâtres qui, aujourd'hui, sont complètement drainés.

CLIMAT

Le territoire jouit d'un climat continental. Les températures moyennes vont de 69°F en juillet à 1 en janvier. La période de transition entre les saisons est courte et survient habituellement en avril et en octobre. La durée moyenne de la période sans gel varie de 120 jours dans le sud-ouest à 90 dans l'est; la saison de végétation (température moyenne supérieure à 42°F) dure environ 179 jours.

Le territoire appartient à la région sèche subhumide et le climat est plus humide dans la moitié nord-est que dans la moitié sud-ouest. La précipitation annuelle moyenne varie de 20 à 21 po. Environ 70% de la précipitation annuelle totale tombe sous forme de