

# Manitoba PC Caucus Review

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## PROVINCE CREATES MILITARY MEMORIAL CONSERVATION FUND

*May 10, 2019*



The province is investing \$2 million for the creation of an endowment fund to ensure military memorials can be preserved and maintained for future generations, Premier Brian Pallister and Sport, Culture and Heritage Minister Cathy Cox announced this week.

“Today, on the 74th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, we are reminded of the immense contribution and sacrifice made by so many Canadians in defence of freedom and democracy,” Pallister said. “The creation of the Military Memorial Conservation Fund will enable us to honour our commitment to remember those Manitobans who gave so much so that we could be free.”

The Military Memorial Conservation Fund (MMCF) has been established with an initial investment of \$2 million. This fund will be managed by The Winnipeg Foundation (TWF) and through the fund, the province will offer annual grants toward war memorial preservation projects, statues, plaques and other tributes throughout Manitoba. The MMCF also aims to encourage private donations, which will make it easier for organizations, communities and veterans’ groups to ensure Manitoba’s military memorials are properly preserved for future generations. The fund is expected to generate about \$100,000 per year, which can be used to provide grants for restoration projects, the Premier noted.

“These tributes were meant to be a lasting legacy of the heroism of Manitobans and the horrors of war, and they need to be preserved and maintained so future generations remember the significant message they send,” said Minister Cox.

The fund is designed to be as inclusive as possible, the minister said, adding that definitions of what qualifies include a physical structure whose sole purpose is military commemoration, as well as other memorials such as cenotaphs, sculptures, plaques and cairns. Moveable objects such as scrolls, books and banners may also be eligible.

## CREDIT RATING AGENCY RECOGNIZES EFFORTS TO FIX MANITOBA'S FINANCES



Global credit rating agency DBRS Ltd. (DBRS) has confirmed Manitoba's credit rating and recognized the government's efforts to fix the province's finances and return to balanced budgets, Finance Minister Scott Fielding announced this week.

"As a result of our work, by the end of this fiscal year the accumulated provincial debt will be \$5 billion lower than it would've been if we continued down the misguided path of the previous government," said Fielding. "We will be saving Manitobans \$183 million per year in borrowing costs."

In its May 2019 report, DBRS notes the province's credit profile is stable and has improved in recent years with the government's efforts to address chronic deficit spending, and preliminary results for 2018-19 showing a significant improvement over the previous fiscal year.

While the province has made significant progress over the past three years, there is still important work to do to return the budget to balance in the government's second term, said the minister.

"Not surprisingly, our ratings agencies continue to express concerns over Manitoba Hydro's weak financial metrics, which continues to place significant pressure on the province's own credit profile.

"We are taking careful and measured approach to ensuring the spending decisions made are sustainable, because we know it is essential to protecting our long-term ability to invest in the services Manitobans value and rely on."

## PROVINCE INTRODUCES NEW MEASURES TO SUSTAIN LAKE WINNIPEG FISHERY

The Manitoba government has completed a successful round of quota buy-back from commercial fishers on Lake Winnipeg and based on the results of recent consultations, will implement new minimum mesh sizes for commercial fishers and new limits on the size of fish that can be kept by anglers to help ensure the long-term sustainability of the Lake Winnipeg fishery, Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires announced this week.

"Our government is committed to ensuring the sustainability of both the commercial and recreational fisheries while providing a strong foundation for shared management of our natural resources," Squires said. "In order to ensure the sustainability of our lakes and support long-term economic growth, we must recognize and respect the science as part of our decision-making process."

In March, the province announced the option of voluntary individual quota entitlement buyback for commercial fishers designed to relieve pressure on fish stocks in Lake Winnipeg. That buyback is now complete and the province was able to come to terms for the purchase of 126 individual quota entitlements from 90 fishers, representing almost 525,000 kilograms of fish.

The province has consulted with commercial fishers and will be implementing a new minimum mesh size of three and one-half inches (in.) in the South Basin and channel areas, beginning with the spring 2020 commercial fishing season. There will be no change to the current minimum mesh size in the north basin.

These changes will allow a greater proportion of smaller fish to grow to spawning size and increase the overall natural productivity of the lake.