

Rivers protection issues are of prime environmental significance. For example, currently the campaign to protect the Tatshenshini River - which is considered to be North America's Wildest River - in northwestern British Columbia is a top profile international campaign. So too, the massive James Bay 1 & 2 dam projects and their western Canadian counterparts at Kemano (B.C.), Oldman (Alberta), and Rafferty-Alameda (Saskatchewan) have generated strong public concern. Clearly, any pristine areas plan must explicitly incorporate a systematic effort to protect intact drainages and portions of rivers and streams.

## COASTAL AND MARINE LANDSCAPES

Due to a combination of agricultural and urban development, coastal areas in southern Canada have also been significantly modified. For example:

- 65% of the Atlantic coastal marshes in Canada have been lost since European arrival.
- In the Lower Mainland portion of British Columbia's Fraser River drainage, less than 1% of the area has been reserved for wildlife or protected in some fashion, despite this being the single most important staging area for waterfowl and shorebirds in western Canada.

Coastal environments encompass high value marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Estuaries are among the most productive of biological habitats, yet the majority of these in the populated portion of the country have been heavily impacted by urban, port and log booming ground development. Beaches, sea bird and marine mammal colonies are particularly prone to tourism impacts. As for the underwater marine environment, commercial fishing (especially drag net fishing) has already caused extensive impacts. By contrast, efforts to preserve the marine environment are only commencing.

## OTHER LAND USE IMPACTS

Numerous other resource industries have affected substantial portions of Canada's natural lands and waters. Mining - including mine sites, exploration roads and seismic lines; power generation facilities and transmission lines; highways and secondary roads are some of the other man-made features that dissect and impact upon the natural features of the landscape. As industrial activity continues, the cumulative area of Canada that is claimed for resource use steadily increases. Even in the high Arctic there are growing risks from petroleum spills and waste disposal in an environment that once damaged, is very slow to recover.