



Shared Values  
*in the Heart of the*  
Boreal

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# Shared Values *in the Heart of the* Boreal

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PROCEEDINGS *from a*  
FIRST NATION ~ CONSERVATION GROUP  
WORKSHOP

JANUARY 2005



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## Foreword

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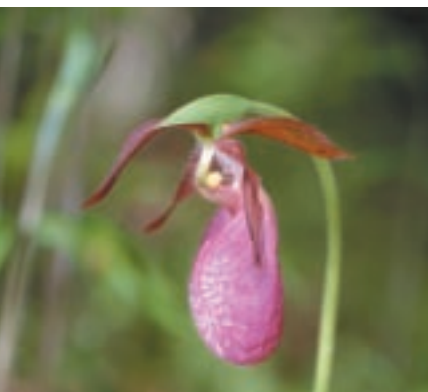
Canada's boreal region is one of the largest intact forests remaining on the planet. Conserving the heart of the Boreal region—the great northern forest in Ontario and Manitoba—is a tremendous opportunity for all Canadians. For the communities in the region, the stakes are particularly high: protecting the boreal region means protecting the lands they call home. Within the heart of the boreal is one of our last chances to conserve large expanses of habitat for species at risk such as woodland caribou and wolverine. It may also be a last opportunity to protect watersheds, to protect a way of life rooted in the land, and to ensure Aboriginal cultures in the region remain strong and vibrant.

CPAWS–Wildlands League and Manitoba Wildlands believe that the best way to protect this great boreal forest region is to work cooperatively with First Nations and Aboriginal people that live in the heart of the boreal. For the most part, the lands in this region are not yet licensed to forestry, roads, or hydro transmission projects. First Nations have a unique opportunity to decide the future for this boreal region through land use planning rooted in indigenous customs and conservation values. Here, perhaps like nowhere else in Canada's boreal, action can be taken to adequately plan and protect before development decisions are made.

Conservation groups and First Nations have much in common when it comes to caring for the boreal forest in Ontario and Manitoba. We both believe that we increase our chances of success when we work together. We both also know that we have common overlapping interests, as well interests specific to each community and group. We are respectful of these differences.

These proceedings are from an historic workshop, that brought together members and representatives from 17 First Nations and nine conservation groups to talk about ways to work together to care for the heart of the boreal. This first workshop was a tremendous success. Objectives were met, and even exceeded in many cases. The gathering was a 'watershed' moment in the history





of relations between Aboriginal people and conservation groups in Ontario and Manitoba. We hope it is the first of many such events as we continue to work collectively to achieve conservation and community objectives in this globally significant boreal forest region.

CPAWS—Wildlands League and Manitoba Wildlands wish to thank all the participants—including Elders, communities and conservation organizations—who brought themselves to Thunder Bay, Ontario, during a very cold January 2004. We especially wish to thank those who traveled long distances to share their community plans and products. Learning and listening dominated our time together. We look forward to gathering with you again!

Anna Baggio  
Director, Northern Boreal Program  
CPAWS-Wildlands League

Gaile Whelan-Enns  
Director  
Manitoba Wildlands

From a Workshop hosted by:



Pikangikum First Nation

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## Acknowledgements

The hosts would like to thank the First Nation Elders who shared their knowledge and provided guidance to the group throughout the workshop. We are grateful to Elder Caroline Bruyere for opening and closing the workshop with prayers. We would also like to express our gratitude to Peggy Smith and Peter Kulchyski for facilitating the event, and to Louis Young, Ed Hudson, Caroline Bruyere, and Alex Peters for volunteering as Ojibway/English interpreters.

We are indebted to the guest speakers and to all of the participants (many of whom traveled long distances) who made this workshop a success.

We also extend our thanks to the workshop organizers and helpers—Anna Baggio, Gaile Whelan Enns, Chris Beck, Kristin Bingeman, Jared Whelan, Julee Boan, Gillian McEachern and Carmen Cruz.

Appreciation also goes to Julee Boan, Kristin Bingeman, Jared Whelan and Gillian McEachern who took notes for the English version of each presentation.

Due to cost limitations, direct transcription of each presentation was not possible. However, we have tried our best to ensure these notes accurately reflect what was said in each presentation, and in particular for the Ojibway presentations for which notes were taken from translations. The ideas presented here cannot do full justice to their original delivery.

We thank all the writers of this report—Anna Baggio, Gaile Whelan Enns, Chris Beck, and Kristin Bingeman—and editor, Randee Holmes.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the financial contribution made by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, World Wildlife Fund's Conservation Science and Solutions Fund and Canadian Boreal Initiative in support of this workshop.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**M**ore than 70 people from 17 First Nations and nine conservation groups gathered in Thunder Bay, Ontario in January 2004 to discuss ways they could work together to care for the intact boreal region of Ontario and Manitoba. Key Aboriginal speakers and experts from across Canada, many of whom are leaders in land use planning and establishing protected areas, presented their experiences and lessons learned from their respective regions. Elders played an important role in sharing their knowledge and guiding the direction of the bilingual workshop (carried out in both Ojibway and English). Through an open and respectful dialogue, participants acknowledged past challenges in working together, but also recognized the urgency and opportunity for current and future collaboration between First Nations and conservation groups. The following is a selection of important themes that emerged in the workshop:

- People need to understand First Nation and Aboriginal land claims, as well as constitutional rights and treaties, and the fact that these vary across the country.
- Conservation groups need to increase their understanding and respect of Aboriginal rights and entitlements when negotiating agreements.
- A unique opportunity exists for the First Nation communities that gathered at the workshop; their lands have not yet been allocated by governments for forestry licenses, transmission lines, or roads. These communities still have the option to decide the future for their lands by implementing land use planning before development occurs. As compared to the allocated forest, there is greater potential in this northern forest region for communities to have a say in land use decisions.
- Community-based land use planning must be completed prior to resource development in the intact boreal region of Ontario and Manitoba.
- Elders have been taught on the land. Their knowledge of the land is learned through experience.

- Elders play an important role in guiding the land use planning processes in First Nation communities.
- First Nations must assert control over decisions about land use in their traditional territories. They need to decide if they want development on their lands and, if they do, the type of development they will allow, and where and how it can happen.



- Communities need adequate resources and funding for technicians, foresters, and legal council to properly engage land use planning and resource development initiatives.
- US consumption of resources is a driving force for forest region resource development in Canada.
- The boreal forest in Canada is of international significance; it is the largest intact forest in North America, and one of the largest left on the planet.
- First Nation and Aboriginal people are interested in sharing ideas about ways to protect, and defend the land for future generations.
- Ecology doesn't recognize borders. Conservation groups highlighted the importance of working in areas where animals such as caribou and wolverine travel and live.
- There is a need to work together on common interests and goals in this northern boreal forest region, and to build trust and relationships between First Nation and conservation groups.
- There is strength when many people speak with one voice. It is especially powerful when a collection of diverse groups speaks with one voice, as it is then very difficult for the government or developers to ignore what is being said. A unified message is also important in creating international influence.

These are the next steps identified in the workshop:

1. Establish a committee to create one unified message to deliver to governments from participants about the intact boreal forest. When many groups and nations speak with one voice, it is very powerful and difficult to ignore.
2. Hold a follow-up meeting to this workshop with Aboriginal peoples and conservation groups.
3. Recognizing the need for broader public involvement and increased awareness, take greater advantage of radio broadcasting as a way to get the message out about the importance of land use planning and the need to protect the boreal forest.



4. Continue to conduct future workshops in both English and Ojibway. This is important and allows fuller participation of Elders and Ojibway speakers.
5. Develop a glossary of terms to help in the translation of planning, protection, and other technical terms, especially given that some English words are not easily translated due to cultural differences. This will serve to continue to improve communication and understanding between First Nations and conservation groups.



# INTRODUCTION

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Canada's northern boreal region is one of the three largest intact forests remaining on the planet. The intact boreal forest of Ontario and Manitoba forms the heart of this great northern forest. On January 28 and 29, 2004 more than 70 people from 17 First Nations and nine conservation groups met at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay, Ontario at a gathering to talk about ways these groups could work together and care for this great northern forest in Ontario and Manitoba. The intention of the workshop was to dissolve the Ontario and Manitoba border; to build a dialogue and to discuss ways in which participants could care for this forest based on its unique ecology and culture. It was co-hosted by CPAWS–Wildlands League, Pikangikum First Nation, and Manitoba Wildlands.

Robert Morriseau welcomed the group to Fort William First Nation's traditional territory. This watershed gathering was the first time First Nations and conservation groups had come together to share experiences and perspectives, and to talk about opportunities for working together to protect Ontario and Manitoba's intact northern boreal forest.

The objectives guiding the workshop were to

- bring together members of First Nation communities in Ontario and Manitoba (located near or on the 51st parallel) with conservation groups to discuss land use planning and protected areas
- engage in a respectful dialogue about issues related to land use planning, protected areas, community interests, shared goals and concerns
- build relations among First Nations and conservation groups and learn from each other
- explore ways work to work together to care for the boreal forest.



Many First Nation Elders participated in the meeting and provided the group with guidance over the course of the two days. The workshop was bilingual, with participants speaking in English and Ojibway. This enabled a rich and respectful exchange of knowledge and ideas. While the workshop was focused on the intact boreal forest region of Ontario and Manitoba, speakers from other First Nations across Canada who have shown leadership in planning and protecting their lands were invited to share their experiences and lessons they have learned. These included representatives from the Deh Cho First Nations of the Northwest Territories, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation of British Columbia, and the Innu Nation of Labrador.

The workshop provided participants with a space to share experiences, and to explore common and disparate ideas and interests. The historic gathering served as a foundation. Many participants expressed interest in future discussions on ways to work together, based on the synergies and strengths of First Nation-conservation group collaboration and partnerships.

## ABOUT THE HOSTS:

### CPAWS Wildlands League

Wildlands League is a charitable non-profit conservation organization that works to protect wilderness in Ontario. We fulfill our mission by establishing parks and protected areas and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources in our forests.

One of twelve cross-Canada chapters of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Wildlands League:

- works directly and collaboratively with government, First Nations and industry partners as well as individual community members
- is respected for its science-based conservation approach, working with leading scientists and conservation organizations from throughout North America
- has a reputation for finding positive and workable solutions to broad conservation challenges through research, communications, outreach and consensus building.





Formed in 1968, the Wildlands League has been a chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) since 1980, though it retains independent charitable status.

### Pikangikum First Nation

Pikangikum First Nation is located in Northwestern Ontario on the Berens River (Kitchi Ziibii). More than 2,200 members of the First Nation live at Pikangikum and fewer than 50 members live “off-reserve.” The people of Pikangikum are Ojibway and are noted for their high rate of Aboriginal language retention. They treasure their ancestral lands as a precious gift of the Creator. They are determined to take care of these lands and nurture everything that the Creator has given them as a trust and duty to future generations ([www.whitefeatherforest.com/pdfs/accord.pdf](http://www.whitefeatherforest.com/pdfs/accord.pdf)). The people of Pikangikum First Nation are currently engaged in developing the Whitefeather Forest Initiative as a major community economic renewal and resource stewardship program within their Traditional Territories ([www.whitefeatherforest.com](http://www.whitefeatherforest.com)). The Elders of Pikangikum have been guiding the development of this initiative since its inception in 1996. Their strategy, and the strategy of the community at large, is to realize new business and stewardship opportunities for their youth—including protected areas and forestry opportunities—while retaining their Ojibway language and culture.

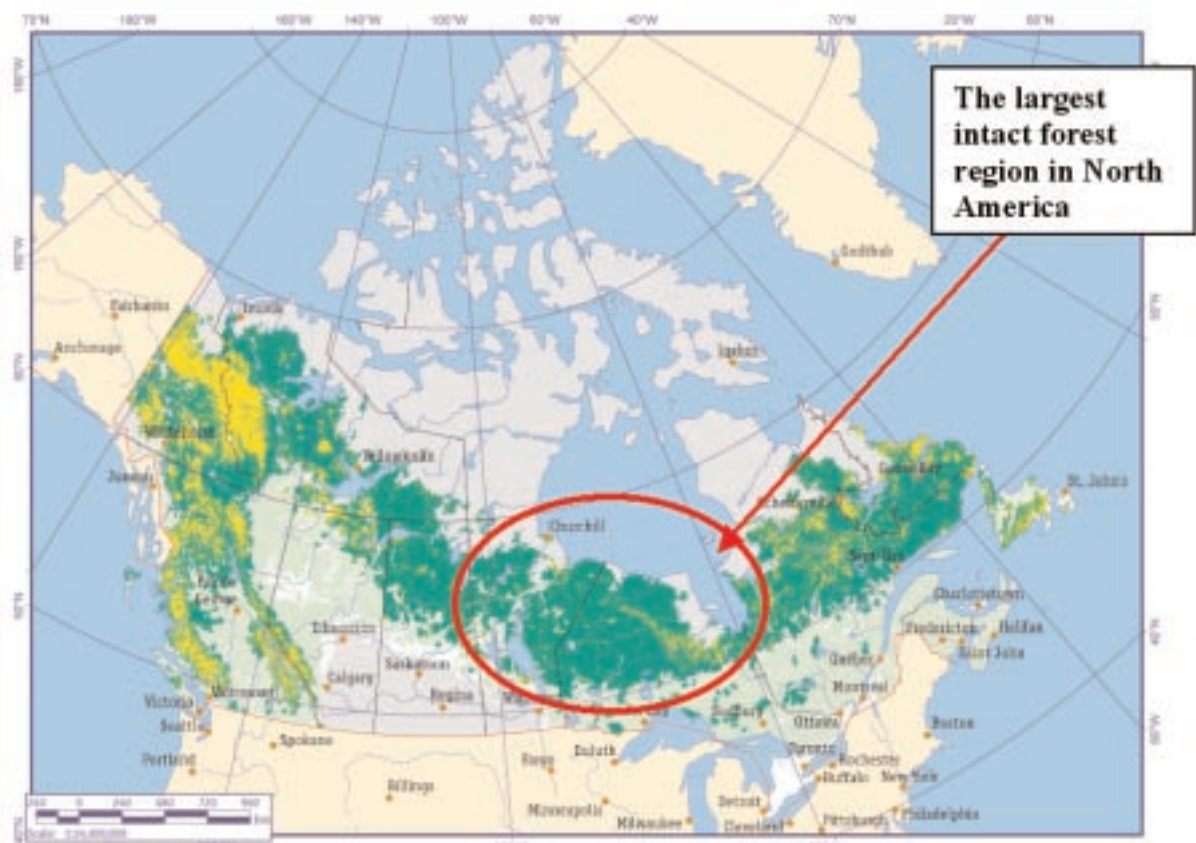
### Manitoba Wildlands

Manitoba Wildlands is a non-profit environmental organization in Manitoba that aims to complete a network of protected areas representative of Manitoba’s lands and waters in the province’s natural regions. Manitoba Wildlands continues the work of WWF Canada and the Canadian Nature Federation to establish protected areas in Manitoba. It works in partnership with, and provides support to, First Nations to achieve their goals in protecting their traditional lands. It also works with environmental organizations towards common goals, with a special focus on protecting Manitoba’s boreal forest, which is of international significance.

Manitoba Wildlands believes that providing access to information (technical, scientific, policy analysis) is critical to empowering communities and citizens and to

[manitobawildlands.org](http://manitobawildlands.org)

improving decision-making processes that are significant for the future of Manitoba's forest ecosystems and natural regions. To this end, it has established [manitobawildlands.org](http://manitobawildlands.org), which houses information about crown (public) land and water decisions, with technical information about Manitoba lands and waters. Manitoba Wildlands participates in environmental reviews and licensing processes for projects that affect Manitoba's lands and waters, including hydro developments. Visit [www.ManitobaWildlands.org](http://www.ManitobaWildlands.org) and [www.EnergyManitoba.org](http://www.EnergyManitoba.org).



**Figure 1:** The largest intact forest region of North America is located in Ontario and Manitoba—the heart of the boreal

### Intact Boreal Forest in Ontario and Manitoba

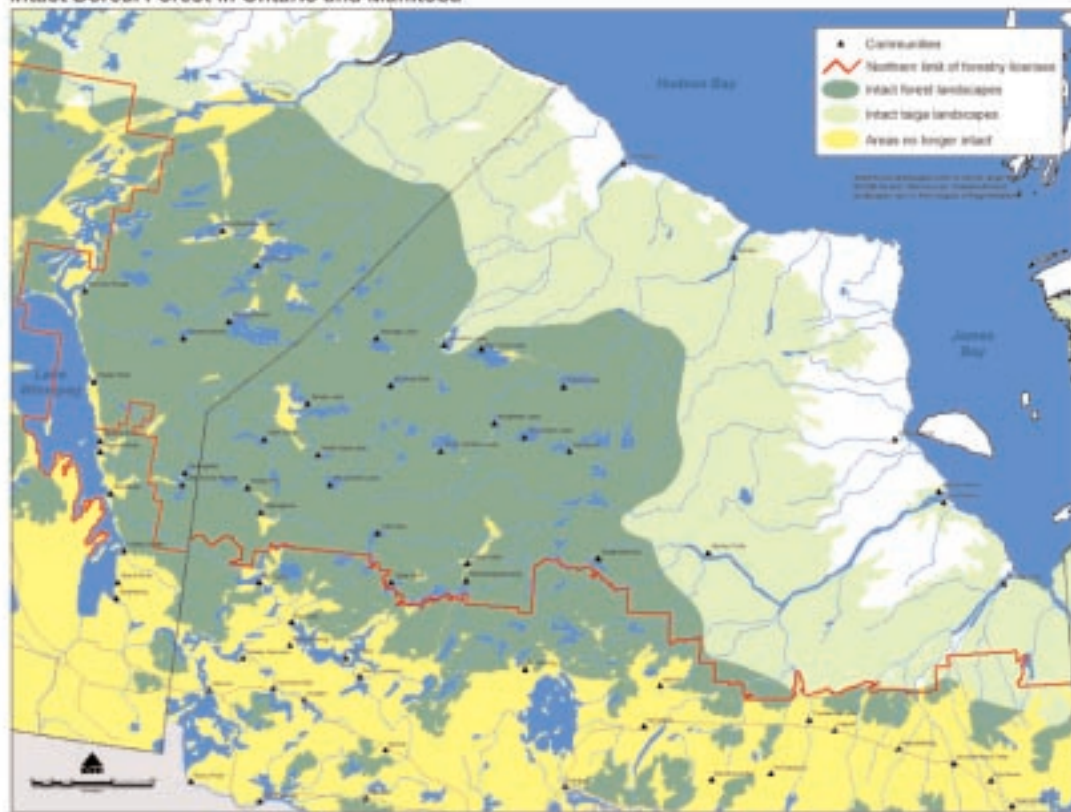


Figure 2: The intact boreal forest region of Ontario and Manitoba and the location of First Nations communities



## TALKING CIRCLE

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After the welcome and opening prayer, the workshop began with a “talking circle.” Participants had the opportunity to introduce themselves, to talk about their interests, and to outline their expectations for the workshop. The seats were set up in a circle to allow for a more personable exchange. The formation also acknowledged the significance of the circle for First Nations, representing the Circle of Life and symbolizing completeness. The participants spoke in English and Ojibway languages, with interpretation provided by volunteers.

A great deal of what was shared in the talking circle by participants was of a personal nature and those details are not included here. However many of the issues, concerns, and opinions raised in the talking circle have been included in the issues and themes section of the proceedings.

One of the central themes expressed by many of the participants was the desire to learn, listen, and share in the presence of the others in attendance. Many spoke of how they would take the learnings of the workshop home to their communities or organizations to share with others. The openness of the exchange and the desire to learn from each other as expressed in the talking circle set the stage for the respectful dialogue that characterized the remainder of the workshop.

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a dense forest. The river is dark and turbulent, with white rapids visible. The surrounding forest is lush green, with some areas showing signs of logging or disturbance, including fallen trees and cleared patches. The word "PRESENTATIONS" is overlaid in white serif font across the center of the image.

# PRESENTATIONS

Figure 3: Guest presenters and speakers came from across Canada to share their expertise and experiences in the workshop (red circles represent general areas)



## PIKANGIKUM FIRST NATION

### ALEX PETERS

*President, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation*

Alex Peters introduced himself and began by explaining a bit about his community. Pikangikum is located north of Red Lake, Ontario, and is a 10-hour drive from Thunder Bay. In the Ojibway community of 2,200 people, 75% of the population is under twenty-five years old.

Alex explained that, for many years, the Elders of Pikangikum did not approve of development. However, over the last ten years they have witnessed forestry and mining development in the south, and have seen that some people are benefiting from the resources. Alex stated that, if any resource extraction is to occur,

Pikangikum wants to be in the 'driver's seat', and control revenues from their lands and resources.

Alex recounted an experience that occurred five or six years ago when the Pikangikum Chief presented a proposal on the Whitefeather Forest Initiative (a community economic renewal and resource stewardship program) to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), and their Member of Parliament (also the INAC Minister at the time). The response from the MP was that INAC had already made plans for Pikangikum's traditional territory. This was the beginning of what has become an ongoing dispute between the Pikangikum and INAC. INAC removed Pikangikum's funding from their control and hired an 'Indian Agent' to deliver government services directly. Alex noted that the last Indian Agent<sup>1</sup> in Canada was appointed by (former Prime Minister) Jean Chrétien in the late 1960s, when he was Minister of Indian Affairs.



Pikangikum has not received any federal government assistance for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. Some funding has come from the province (Living Legacy Trust), the tribal council, and other sources identified by the Chief and Council. Aerial mapping of Pikangikum's area will be finished this year; and the young people have been making maps in the community with the help of the Elders.

The dispute with INAC led Pikangikum to take INAC to court. As Alex explained, the judgement found that INAC's decision to appoint an Indian Agent was invalid and that the only reason INAC gave for this was that they wanted to have a say their initiative. According to Pikangikum, INAC's desire to control decisions about resources in Pikangikum is the reason for the loss of INAC funding. Alex noted that the Indian Agent lives 2,000 km south of the community, and has never set foot in there. Alex explained that due to the imposition of Indian Agency on Pikangikum, essential services are not being delivered. The community was supposed to be connected to the hydro grid, but that has never been completed; the hydro poles are still sitting on the ground. The community is also lacking water and sewer facilities

<sup>1</sup> An outside administrator appointed by INAC to oversee the band's financial affairs. Pikangikum regained control of their financial affairs in the spring of 2004.

because projects to deliver these services never materialized. Washroom facilities are still located outside. Funding to build a new school was also cut; their school was built in the 1970s for 300 students, and there are now over 700 students in Pikangikum. Pikangikum's school is the only one in Ontario with a wooden foundation. Alex went on to say that the Minister also never approved CMHC housing for the community and that all of these things have happened because INAC wants to control resource decisions in relation to Pikangikum First Nation.

Alex explained that “these are some of the hardships that we have encountered because we wanted to lead this process, and didn't want anyone from the outside to tell us what to do.” He then stated that this is why Pikangikum wants to be “driving the train.” He joked that it used to be a pickup truck, then it was a bus, and now it is a train...

### ANDREW CHAPESKIE

*Consultant, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation*

Andrew Chapeskie began by describing his experience and relationship with the people of Pikangikum. He has worked with Pikangikum people for over 15 years, and the people there have taught him about their “bush.” There is great traditional knowledge held by the people in Pikangikum and they have something to share with non-Aboriginal people. Speaking to the conservationists in the room, Andrew noted that the Pikangikum people also know about the boreal, and understand that the boreal forest in Ontario is unique because it is part of the largest intact forest in the Americas, and is unique in the world.

Andrew pointed out that the Ojibway people of the northern forests have maintained a way of life based on the forest that remains today. Canada's northern forest area has the largest concentration in the world of people who live with forests. He then showed a map of the Canadian boreal forest area that was marked with the places where there are peoples who speak Aboriginal languages. He noted that the scale and convergence of intact forest, culture, and people living with the forests is unique in the world.



Andrew described the relationships between the people of Pikangikum and the forest. The forest is homeland to the people of Pikangikum. They have a strong relationship with the forest and are asking for it to be protected. Protection of their knowledge is important, and the people want it to guide the creation of protected areas. It is the Pikangikum Elders' wish to retain the land under forest cover so that it will remain unique in the world.

The Pikangikum people have used trapline districts as a guide for community-based land use planning. They have put out an invitation to partner with others, including international interests, where there is a unity of interest. Andrew indicated that the Elders are ready to do this, and the opportunity is there. The question is whether the invitation to act will be accepted.

Andrew stated that Elders elsewhere are also hearing the message. He noted that the workshop can be a place to share and build on ideas. He then told of a prophecy in the form of a dream of one of Pikangikum's Elders. In this dream, a stone came down, slapped the water, and sent ripples radiating out. This led the Elder to believe that something will come of their suffering. Andrew indicated that the Elders can guide decisions about specific protected areas and the creation of a network of protected areas.

He ended his presentation by asking the conservation community, "Can we form this new, deep relationship?"

# DEH CHO FIRST NATIONS

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## PETR CIZEK

*Lands and Resources Consultant*

Petr Cizek began by explaining that Deh Cho First Nations represent 14 communities located in the southern and western corner of the Northwest Territories. The area is 210,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which is comparable to the size of Great Britain or the state of Utah. Despite its vast size, only 7,000 people live here. Most live in Hay River, and the rest live in small communities. Even in the city of Yellowknife there are only 20,000 people. The main geographical feature in the area is the Mackenzie River, which is the largest river in Canada.



Petr explained that work has been completed, with the involvement of the Elders of the communities, on mapping cultural and burial sites along the river. It was important that these sites be documented as soon as possible, given that fewer and fewer Elders remain to share their knowledge of the areas. The Deh Cho have used Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to document all of these sites and have taken photographs to make sure nothing is disturbed to provide a benchmark should anything be disturbed. Petr told of the many smaller communities and cabins in the area that have been abandoned because people have had to move to larger centres for better access to education and health care.

After presenting a slide show of many important cultural sites and landscape features in the Deh Cho region, Petr explained that the protected areas work they had done involved lots of mapping of animals, plants, and cultural sites with Elders. This led to the identification of areas that are cultural and biological “hot spots.” The first protected area was set up two years ago, and it is almost as large as Vancouver Island. Nahanni National Park is in the area as well, but Petr’s opinion is that it is too small and narrow to achieve the protection objectives.

Petr indicated that traditional land use mapping is the foundation for aboriginal land claims discussions and aboriginal land use planning. The Deh Cho First

Nations now have a database of over 50,000 lines and points, coded by the person who provided the information, and by land use type. This work provided the legal base for land claims and land management, and this level of detail is required for successful negotiations with government.

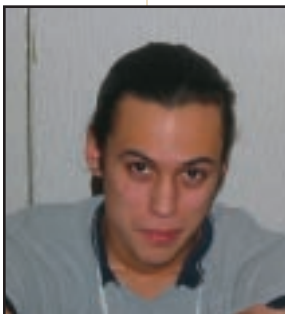
Petr's next topic was the Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis (such as 1 and 10 km<sup>2</sup> cell analysis) that was used to calculate activity levels on the land and watershed usage. This provided insight as to which areas are most important to the Deh Cho for protection. A new map was produced with "hot spots," or high usage areas. Petr pointed out that this level of statistical detail has a huge impact on government representatives because they know that the work carries legal weight.

The data that the Deh Cho collected were used to withdraw lands from development to create a mosaic of protected areas. This is coarse level land use planning, with interim protection, until land use planning is completed. Petr explained that it is important to find a balance between designating land as protected, available for resource extraction and development, and culturally significant. He noted that the World Wildlife Fund Canada gave the Deh Cho an award for this protected area work.

Petr closed by saying that the big challenge facing the area is the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

## WESLEY HARDISTY

*GIS Technician*



Wesley Hardisty made a few comments to add to Petr's presentation. He noted that the GIS and database work makes it easier to explain their work to government representatives, and that it also serves as a good education tool. The work is also important in the Environmental Impact Study for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

Wesley ended by thanking the Elders and participants for all their hard work.

# TAKU RIVER TLINGIT FIRST NATION

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## JOHN WARD

*Spokesperson for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation*

John Ward began by greeting the organizers and presenters, and saying that he can relate to all the hard work that goes on. He agreed that it's sometimes a struggle to believe in the cause, but that we need to do it for future generations.



John is the spokesperson for his people—the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. He introduced Michael Svoboda as their Lands Manager, and thanked the Fort William First Nation for allowing the workshop to take place within their traditional territory.

The Taku, John's people, were forced to do the work that they have done in response to government and industry wanting to continue on with their past practices. According to John, in British Columbia the regional governments are very hostile toward First Peoples, and have been for some time. In his opinion, the policies are set to maximize production and to benefit the government, with little benefit to First Peoples. Although things will never look as they did 500 years ago in Taku traditional territory, John's people must have a say in what goes on in the region in terms of forestry, mining and other resource extraction activities.

John had a message for the participants at the workshop. As scary and intimidating as it can be, they must have the courage to get involved in government processes, and let the government know what is important to them, even though it may feel really risky to step inside the government's "box" and to communicate using their rules and their way of doing things. It is important that First Peoples learn how to use consultants, lawyers and technical people, but it is also important for non-Aboriginal people to understand and thus respect the ways of First Peoples, and to ensure that government and other non-Aboriginal processes are expressed in ways

The environmental assessment confirmed their thoughts—past mining activity had devastated resources, and continues to erode traditional ways of living.

that will be clearly understood by First Peoples, taking account of language barriers and cultural differences. John pointed out that it helps when First Peoples get a formal education to help the community deal with the communication gap.

The Taku Tlingits made a commitment to deal with the lack of treaties in the west. Their councils and Elders got together and talked about how they were going to approach this issue, as they had not previously had experience dealing with treaties. John explained that the thing that kept coming to the surface was the idea of creating a plan for the land. While the Taku were trying to resolve the land question, industry was knocking at their door. A mining company wanted to build a road through their territory to a mine. It was at that time that the Taku decided to commit themselves to becoming involved in an environmental process. They wanted to find out if sustainability would be possible during the operation of that mine. The environmental assessment confirmed their thoughts—past mining activity had devastated resources, and continues to erode traditional ways of living. John explained that his people are very open and understand that many things have changed over the years. But he said that they also believe that traditional ways need to continue to exist as well. There was no process set up to address the concerns of the Taku about the mine, and yet the political leaders decided to proceed with the mine anyway.

John stated that government and industry tried to come in through the “back door,” promising jobs and benefits of development<sup>3</sup> to steer their minds away from protecting their lands and resources. His people became divided on the issues, and it became difficult for the leaders to maintain unity. The Taku were used to the government doing whatever they wanted to do and some community members thought that they couldn't stand up to them, but others thought that they could defend their rights. So the Taku went to court and won. The case is being appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada and is going to be heard on March 24 and 25, 2004.<sup>2</sup> This court case is about consulting, not just with the Tlingits, but with all Aboriginal people across Canada. John hopes that, when a win is announced, Aboriginal people will all be able to come forward with land use plans, and government will not be able to refuse. He said that it's not just about his generation; it's about the Elders and all they have to teach to our youth.

<sup>2</sup> In March 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada reserved its decision.

The Taku River Tlingit have developed planning documents that outline what they want for their lands. They have received funding for this work from foundations and environmental groups.

## MICHAEL SVOBODA

*Lands Manager*



Michael Svoboda explained that he had been asked to give some technical information about what they have done in the way of planning to be proactive instead of reactive in their struggle. Michael described the conservation area design and vision, and the planning document they have developed. He indicated that the document was developed through extensive community consultation. The Taku River Tlingit examined and summarized a host of previous studies, they formed technical working groups and citizens land planning and advisory caucuses, they undertook structured interviews, and held workshops and community meetings.

Michael said that the planning document affirms constitutional rights and title, describes how the Taku want lands and resources managed, and provides a basis for landscape and operational planning and sustainable economic development. The document also presents a summary of Taku concerns and perspectives on a range of resource management issues, and includes strategic direction for a range of values such as tourism, fisheries, forestry and so on. The information is organized into goals, objectives, and tasks that can be undertaken to reach these goals.

The Taku River Tlingit Planning documents: Conservation Area Design and Vision and Management Direction can be found at [www.roundriver.org/trt\\_conservation\\_main.html](http://www.roundriver.org/trt_conservation_main.html)

# INNU NATION OF LABRADOR

## RICHARD NUNA

*Environmental Officer*

Richard Nuna began by pointing out that archaeological evidence indicates that the Innu have been in Labrador for 8,000 years, despite the position of a former Newfoundland Premier that there are no Innu or Aboriginal people in Labrador. The Innu sought their rights to the land beginning in 1975, and filed their first land claims with the Canadian government in 1977.

Richard explained that, as infrastructure and industry grows on the island, resource development interests are turning to Labrador. The Innu began negotiating forest co-management seven years ago and in 2003 they signed an interim forest agreement with the provincial government to implement co-management for the next five years. Their approach has been to develop an ecosystem-based management plan and to hire Innu Forest Guardians to implement and monitor ecosystem-based planning. The interim forest agreement will provide the basis for other agreements with the Innu Nation regarding resource development such as the co-management of hydro, mining, etc. Richard clarified that the co-management agreement is separate from the land claims process.



The Innu Nation has a different approach than the one used for most forest management plans. The Innu approach is threefold and incorporates ecological, cultural and economic considerations. Planning is done at different scales in order to exclude important ecological and cultural areas.

At the ecological landscape scale, the Innu look at the district forestry planning unit as a whole. Richard used District 19 to illustrate the approach. They have a classification of vegetation cover types. Richard explained that the high quality stands are mainly white spruce. The Innu also focus on woodland caribou, as there

are two herds in District 19. They have set up monitored core areas for caribou, and have created a 750,000 ha caribou reserve.

The Innu have also mapped an initial protected areas network that covers about half of District 19. There are ecological, wildlife and cultural linkages between the different protected areas, and the proposed Mealy Mountain National Park is included in this network. A proposed highway that will run through the park to connect Goose Bay to the communities is in the hearing stage of the Environment Impact Study.

At the watershed scale, the Innu look at unique habitats like river systems, old growth trees, caribou, and linkages between lakes and riparian areas.

Richard noted that there is currently 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> /year of timber allocated for forestry on the north side of District 19. Once a highway is built, another 150,000 m<sup>3</sup> /year will be allocated for the south side. There is also a hydro development proposal for the area. Furthermore, NATO military flight training (based out of the Canadian Forces Base in Goose Bay) also takes place in the area.

At the watershed scale, the Innu look at unique habitats like river systems, old growth trees, caribou, and linkages between lakes and riparian areas.

At the patch or stand level, they have Forest Guardians who go out onto the land and ribbon off riparian areas, buffer dead trees, and look at dead trees still standing that can serve as homes for woodpeckers and other wildlife. They still argue with the province about an appropriate width for riparian buffers. For the past two years, the Forest Guardians have been doing the layouts of the cutovers, and buffering the streams and lakesides. In the past this was left up to the harvesters.

The Innu Nation's approach is to manage human activities, not the environment. Their philosophy is that the environment should not sustain the people, but that rather the people should sustain the environment as best they can. The Forest Guardian program was created to train other Innu people as guardians. Richard noted that he started as a Forest Guardian three years ago, then moved on to wildlife stewardship, and now manages the office. The Forest Guardians do workshops for the community on a number of issues such as forest practices and on what they see in the woods; how they are implementing the plan; how the har-

vesters are performing; and to what degree the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods (DFRA) is cooperating with them.

The DFRA has not collected data in past, however the Innu Forest Guardians are now doing so. A lot of Innu knowledge about things such as harvest areas, trail routes and cultural practices is now included in the planning process.

The Innu co-management plan is also a tool for other developments that may happen in Labrador in the future, for both renewable and non-renewable resources.

## POPLAR RIVER FIRST NATION



**ED HUDSON**

*Councillor*

Councillor Ed Hudson began the presentation by introducing Ray Rabliaskus to speak on behalf of Poplar River First Nation.

**RAY RABLIASKUS**

*Lands Management Coordinator*



Ray Rabliaskus introduced himself and explained that he works for Poplar River First Nation as the Coordinator of the Healing Program and also as the Coordinator of the Lands Management Program. He explained that he had been asked by the Elders to speak about what is going on in Poplar River. One of the reasons for this is that the Elders are very shy, and they don't like to speak at meetings such as this one. Ray explained that he tries to be careful when he talks about the messages from the Elders, and that he tries to write everything down so he can get it right.

Poplar River now has an active lands protection program, which includes their healing program and education program.

The people in Poplar River take the issue of their land and what happens in their land very seriously. One Elder (who had since passed away) told Ray that “the creator gave us life, and gave us the land. If the land is sick, and if the land dies, the people will die as well.” The Elders have also told the people that if they want to live and have life and heal from sickness, then they will have to go to the land to look for that health. Being healthy has physical, spiritual, and emotional elements. The Elders gave the people at Poplar River the strong direction to protect the land that they consider to be their traditional territory, for those who are there right now, but especially for future generations. Ray said that the people are finally starting to listen to what the Elders are saying, and to what the women of Poplar River are telling them.

There have been recent threats to their area from logging and hydro development from both the south and the north. Poplar River now has an active lands protection program, which includes their healing program and education program. Recently, the community completed land use and occupancy studies for their traditional lands, as well as three archaeological studies, showing occupancy by the Poplar River First Nation as early as 3,000 to 6,000 years ago.

The 800,000 ha Poplar/Nanowin Rivers Park Reserve is also in place, and encompasses most of their traditional area. For five years this area has been protected from hydro, mining, and forestry development. Poplar River First Nation is also finishing the first year of a two-year project to develop a lands management plan based on information from Elders combined with scientific knowledge. Their goal is to achieve permanent protection for the land and for the people to manage the land according to the management plan.

Ray told the participants that they feel lucky to be part of the Protected Areas Accord with Pauingassi, Little Grand Rapids, Pikangikum, and hopefully Bloodvein. Poplar River also signed the Canadian Boreal Initiative Boreal Framework. According to Ray, the most important thing is that his community is starting to heal and to be strong and the people of Poplar River are finding the life that the Creator gave them.

<sup>3</sup> Extended to 2009 as of June 2004.

The community has had lots of help in the form of financial assistance, legal and technical advice, and moral support. Ray noted that some of the people in the room have helped them (foundations like Metcalf, CBI, Whelan Enns Associates Inc. and Manitoba Wildlands, as well as their neighbours). He said that sometimes those people gave them money, even when they hadn't met them. Ray stated that the people of Poplar River are happy that they are trusted, said "megwech" and thanked them for their help.

Ray concluded the presentation by showing a video about Poplar River.

## FIRST NATIONS PROTECTED AREAS ACCORD

### POPLAR RIVER, PIKANGIKUM, LITTLE GRAND RAPIDS, PAUINGASSI AND BLOODVEIN FIRST NATIONS



\*Alex Peters (Pikangikum First Nation) is the First Nations Protected Areas Accord Coordinator for Ontario.

#### RAY RABLIASKUS,

*First Nations Protected Areas Accord Coordinator for Manitoba<sup>4</sup>  
Lands Management Coordinator, Poplar River First Nation*

Ray Rabliaskus began by informing the participants that the members from Little Grand Rapids First Nation were not able to make it to the workshop, and that they send their support.

Ray explained the basis for the Accord. The Creator gave the people the lands to watch over and use, and they will continue to do this. It is their land to live on and watch over. These lands are very much intact compared to other parts of the boreal forest, and are part of the largest intact section of boreal forest.

<sup>5</sup> The final report, Proceedings of the World Heritage Boreal Zone Workshop (Held in St. Petersburg, Russia 10–13 October 2003), was released in June 2004. The report recommends the Atikaki/Woodland Caribou/First Nations Accord Area for nomination as a World Heritage site.

<sup>6</sup> On April 30, 2004, David Anderson, Minister of the Environment, released Canada's updated Tentative List for World Heritage Sites. The Atikaki/Woodland Caribou/Accord First Nations – Manitoba and Ontario site was included on the list. See press release and links to background information at [www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release\\_e.asp?id=791&andorl=nr](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release_e.asp?id=791&andorl=nr)

The Accord communities have similar goals and objectives. Each community has the right to decide what happens on their lands and to be involved in decision making. Each of the communities intends to take a lead role in managing and taking care of their lands, with the Elders in a lead role.

One of the Accord goals is to seek an UNESCO designation for the lands of the signatory First Nations as a World Heritage Site. The communities have had several meetings where the whole community comes and takes part in the planning. Last year the World Conservation Union (IUCN) commissioned a boreal forest study to look for exceptional boreal forest areas to designate as protected areas. The Accord First Nations submitted a proposal to the IUCN about their lands. The governments of Manitoba and Ontario also submitted proposals. The idea of the proposal is to combine all the areas. The IUCN has held meetings with experts to review the proposals. The draft report from the last meeting in Russia gave the First Nation Accord proposal the highest rating.<sup>5</sup>

Ray explained that the next step is to work with the provincial and federal governments to move the proposal ahead.<sup>6</sup> He closed by saying that it has been an honour to work with the communities, and that the Elders have a lot of knowledge to share.

## OLIVER HILL

*Elder, Pikangikum First Nation*



Oliver Hill explained that Pikangikum First Nation initiated the process because they want to protect their lands. According to the Elders, the people used to travel down the Berens River to Lake Winnipeg, and they would take freight to Little Grand Rapids. They used to travel in all types of weather, carrying 1,000 lbs of freight. There would be nine people in each freighter canoe. All of the people of Pikangikum would go to Little Grand Rapids for treaty payments.

Oliver has heard many stories from his grandfathers about what they had to do to survive. This is the reason why Pikangikum looked for partners

on the Manitoba side, because they had known them from many years past. People in Pikangikum have relatives in the First Nation communities in Manitoba who live on the Berens River. Another neighbouring community on the Berens River is Poplar Hill. Pikangikum has invited them to look at the Accord proposal, and perhaps in the near future they will join the Accord group. Oliver finished by thanking all of the First Nations and non-Aboriginal people for coming.

## LOUIS YOUNG

*Councillor, Bloodvein First Nation*

Louis Young explained that Bloodvein First Nation decided to join the Accord because of encroachment from forest industry and hunting interests. Bloodvein First Nation has not officially signed onto the Accord yet, due to the signing meeting having been delayed.<sup>7</sup>

Louis has seen a document that indicates the province could build a road that goes within two kilometres of the Bloodvein River. The province will have to do an Environmental Impact Study of the road because it will cross a Heritage River. Louis mentioned that people use all-terrain vehicles, boats, and float planes to get to the Bloodvein River. Louis concluded by saying that Bloodvein has a close relationship with neighbouring communities, and that they want to protect the land for future generations.

## JERRY CROW

*Pauingassi First Nation*

Jerry Crow began by telling the participants that his grandfather is from Pikangikum. Until recently, Pauingassi was part of Little Grand Rapids, and without reserve status. The people at Pauingassi used to have to go to Little Grand Rapids for everything, but now they are better off because Little Grand Rapids gave them some reserve land. Pauingassi does not have its own airstrip, and the only time that they can get directly to the city is in the winter on the all-weather roads.

<sup>7</sup> Bloodvein First Nation formally signed the Protected Areas Accord in May 2004.



Developers have not yet approached Pauingassi. Jerry stated that the people of Pauingassi think that the Accord is a good idea. He closed by saying that the Chief gave him the responsibility to travel with the Elders, thanked everyone, and wished them a safe journey home.

## DAVID OWEN

*Pauingassi First Nation*

David Owen explained that the Chief of Pauingassi asked him to come to the workshop and that his job is to look after the land and the traplines. There are a lot of fishing lodges on the Pauingassi traplines. As a result of activity at these lodges, a lot of damage has been done to their trapline areas, and to their traps and cabins. The people of Pauingassi do not want people coming into their lakes and destroying them.

David's grandfather used to talk about the land and how beautiful it was. Now, many airplanes fly over their lands, and people come in planes and go after the trees. In the process of going after the trees, they destroy the land. Now, the people see that the Earth is being spoiled by the desire to cut the trees. David's grandfather used to talk about how the whole area was covered by trees. David also explained that there have been fires that have taken the trees in their area.

Now, the people talk of protecting the land for future generations. They want help to protect their land. The people need to write down what they want, and how they want to go about protecting their lands for future generations. David finished by saying that he had enjoyed listening to everyone speaking their native languages, and offered his greetings to everyone.

## ED HUDSON

*Poplar River First Nation*

Ed Hudson indicated that he wanted to say a few things concerning Poplar River's protected area. There had been a concern in the community about

The land has to be healthy for the animals and the plants, and the animals and plants have to be healthy for the land.

the tourism lodges in the east, and the Elders started talking to the people about protecting the area even before they had heard about “protected areas.” The government people were very cooperative with Poplar River about establishing the protected area. Ed’s people are seeing what peoples from the west coast, east coast and north are doing. It is not about whose land it is. At Poplar River, they are trying to protect the land from destruction. The land has to be healthy for the animals and the plants, and the animals and plants have to be healthy for the land. The people have to listen to the Elders who tell them that healthy land will keep them healthy in return. Clean air, he said, comes from the land and from the trees.

Ed clarified that they are not under the influence of anyone. Poplar River started working on the protected area a long time ago.

Ed thanked everyone for their presentations, and remarked that it provides him with courage to continue, and to work with other First Nations across Canada. He hoped the governments and other people will listen to them. Poplar River does not want to take the land away from anyone; they just want to protect it from industry.

Ed said that he hoped they can work with the government, and closed by saying that the people of Poplar River want to continue to use the land.

## ANDREW CHAPESKIE

*Consultant, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation*

Andrew Chapeskie began by reading a few lines from a draft report of the *Proceedings of the World Heritage Boreal Zone Workshop* (held in St. Petersburg, Russia, 10–13 October 2003):

This site is remarkable because of diverse boreal forest values in a cultural landscape where there are caribou herds. It is also unique because of the inclusion of traditional knowledge and science. . . . Recommend for World Heritage Site status.

He commented that these First Nations were the ones that pushed the World Heritage Site proposal forward in cooperation with Manitoba Conservation and Ontario Parks and the conservation community. He asked participants to think of the lands further east of Pikangikum in Ontario. The Accord First Nations hope to create something that other First Nations can use. Their work is an example to follow, creating an opportunity for other First Nations to do similar work.

**Atikaki / Woodland  
Caribou / First  
Nations Accord  
World Heritage  
Site Nomination**



Figure 4: The area proposed for nomination as a World Heritage Site in Ontario and Manitoba

# CPAWS—WILDLANDS LEAGUE

## ANNA BAGGIO

*Director, Northern Boreal Program*

Anna Baggio thanked Ed Hudson for translating, and began by briefly explaining what the Wildlands League is about. The Wildlands League works in Ontario and is a locally governed local chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS). CPAWS has chapters all across Canada as well as a national office.

The Wildlands League has been around since 1968, and its efforts are science based. Over the last few years, the Wildlands League has been learning a lot about traditional knowledge from Elders and learning how to work with traditional knowledge. The Wildlands League works in cooperation with other ENGOs, communities, First Nations, industry and governments. They care about protecting the land and seek out opportunities to protect wilderness through innovative means. Anna stated that she knows First Nations have a strong connection to the land, and the Wildlands League would like to work with them and support them in caring for it.



The Wildlands League has nine staff based in Toronto, with three main areas of interest: protected areas, forests, and the management of land outside of protected areas. In particular, Anna focuses on the northern boreal forest in Ontario. The Wildlands League works to establish protected areas in Ontario, and works to ensure that they are properly cared for. There is one staff member working on new legislation for protected areas because the legislation in Ontario is old, outdated, and doesn't work anymore. The Wildlands League also has staff that work on forest policy, to improve practices and make sure that communities benefit from forestry. Anna, and Thunder Bay office staff Chris Beck and Julee Boan, work with communities in the northern boreal forest. Part of the approach is to work directly with communities at the community level. The Wildlands League has technical expertise (Julee is the

Wildlands League GIS Coordinator) and is able to create and produce maps and provide them to people to influence decisions.

As part of the agreement both Pikangikum and the PPL have agreed to work together on community-based land use planning ahead of development, and to work with the Elders as they lead this initiative.

Anna also explained that they work with governments to give them advice and make sure that conservation is a priority. Anna described the Wildlands League's public outreach efforts: "We talk to the public in Toronto, and we spread awareness about the boreal forest." For two years, the Wildlands League worked with the National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) on First Nations and protected areas in Canada. Copies of the report entitled Honouring the Promise are available.

Last year, a partnership agreement was signed between Pikangikum and the Wildlands League, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and World Wildlife Fund Canada (the three groups together form a coalition known as the Partnership for Public Lands (PPL)). As part of the agreement both Pikangikum and the PPL have agreed to work together on community-based land use planning ahead of development, and to work with the Elders as they lead this initiative. A system of protected areas (where species like wolverine and all the little ones are protected) is a central component of the agreement. The Wildlands League has expertise in forestry and is going to work with Pikangikum on planning for forestry. Should Pikangikum decide to do forestry, they said it will be done to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) "plus" standards (meaning that trees are harvested according to the highest ecological and social standards). Anna ended by saying that she would like to work with many of the First Nations to use community-based land use planning to achieve a shared vision of protected areas and economic development for their lands.

Anna ended by showing footage from the CPAWS–Wildlands League Berens River canoe trip done in collaboration with Pikangikum First Nation during the summer of 2003, where high-profile Canadians paddled and experienced the beauty of the Berens.

For more information, please see [www.wildlandsleague.org](http://www.wildlandsleague.org)

# MANITOBA WILDLANDS

## GAILE WHELAN ENNS

*Director*

Gaile Whelan Enns introduced herself and began by telling participants that she came late in life to being an environmentalist. She worked for World Wildlife Fund in the 1990s on protected areas establishment, collaborating with communities and lobbying government. She provided a short explanation of the activities and goals of Manitoba Wildlands and described what occurs on a daily basis in their office in Winnipeg with regard to protecting land. She said that establishing protected areas in Manitoba also means working on forestry issues and participating in forestry licensing reviews. Establishing protected areas in Manitoba also includes reviewing highways proposals for the East Side of Lake Winnipeg, and spending three years getting ready for the assessment of the first hydro dam in 20 years. All of these decisions affect the natural regions and areas where protection of the land has yet to occur. Also all of these decisions have to do with First Nations and traditional lands. There are currently eight staff and contractors working with Manitoba Wildlands.



One example of new tools and activity in Manitoba Wildlands' conservation activity is the Web site ([www.manitobawildlands.org](http://www.manitobawildlands.org)). When Pikangikum First Nation signed the agreement with the Wildlands League, the next day there was a news story on [ManitobaWildlands.org](http://ManitobaWildlands.org). The same thing happened when Pikangikum and First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg signed the First Nations Protected Areas Accord. The Web site makes both documents available.

Gaile spoke about the First Nation Protected Areas Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). She said that there were problems in 1995 surrounding the establishment of protected areas in First Nation territory without consultation or consent. The Cree consortium from northern Manitoba—Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO)—and the World Wildlife Fund decided to work together to

Poplar River First Nation's lands management project has the potential to be a model for other First Nations who aim to protect and manage traditional forestlands.

She pointed out the importance of thinking and planning for “and,” adding that the option exists for communities to both protect land and choose their preferences in economic development.

avoid repeating these problems. The MOU is a result, and includes issues such as the obligation of government to engage in meaningful consultations with communities regarding protected areas, and respect for First Nations rights in protected areas (including the exercise of all traditional hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering). The continued selection of land inside protected areas for treaty land entitlement, and all agreements between First Nations and Manitoba about lands, waters and natural resources, are also to be respected under the MOU. Gaile noted there is a set of principles for conserving the natural world within the MOU as well.

Gaile stated that establishing protected areas in Manitoba is hard work but that everything she has learned from First Nations about their lands and Manitoba's forests makes it all worthwhile. Gaile has been working with Poplar River First Nation for six years. She told the participants that Poplar River First Nation's lands management project has the potential to be a model for other First Nations who aim to protect and manage traditional forestlands.

Gaile joked that when people ask her what she does for a living, she sometimes answers “government.” She told participants that she and her staff also review the intended activities and policies of government with regard to lands and waters decisions. For this work, she noted, it helps to have a Web site.

Gaile closed her presentation by emphasizing the following message: She talked about the myth of having to choose between a path of protecting the land and a path that focuses on economic development. She noted that when it comes to jobs, development, and protected areas issues, the assumption is often that environmentalists are only interested in one side of this—and that protecting land is the only priority. Developers (including government) often want communities to believe that they have to make a choice between the two paths. She pointed out the importance of thinking and planning for “and,” adding that the option exists for communities to both protect land and choose their preferences in economic development. She stated her belief that the ideal is to always have conversation that includes the

future of the forest environment and protected areas and development that is in keeping with the vision and goals of the community.

Gaile thanked everyone, and said she looks forward to the next workshop.

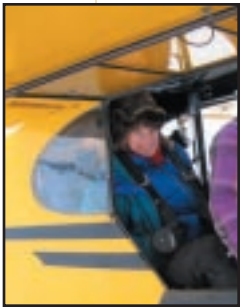
## WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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### JUSTINA RAY

*Associate Conservation Zoologist and Head of WCS' Canada Program*

Justina Ray began by explaining that Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is one of the co-sponsors of this workshop. While WCS is a very old organization, they are new in Canada. She said WCS has a lot to learn, but they also have some capacity to help in a way that is useful for people in achieving the common goal of protecting lands for future generations.



WCS used to be called the New York Zoological Society when it was created in 1897. The reason for its existence is the belief in the value of diversity of plants and animals to the Earth. WCS saves animals and the places they live by trying to understand the problems with Western and traditional knowledge that threaten the animals.

WCS currently has more than 350 projects in over 50 countries around the world. Justina explained the way they work: they focus on species and the threats to the species, and they apply Western science. She noted that WCS doesn't do it just with books; they go out into the field and learn to help integrate traditional knowledge and Western science. WCS does research, they help with capacity building, and they also hope that their work influences policy.

Justina described some of the North American projects that are focussed on animal diseases, animal-human conflicts, and the restoration of lands. WCS plays the role of

information providers in these areas. WCS has started some projects in Canada over the last two or three years. They are currently involved in the Northern Boreal Initiative and are providing a wildlife perspective as well as information and advice. She noted the gap that exists in Western science information about this part of Canada. Two animals that WCS is interested in are caribou and wolverine. Populations of these animals have been negatively impacted and reduced in the last 100 years. WCS is interested in trying to understand how this happened, and how to make sure the same mistakes are not made again in the future.

WCS is combining Western science and traditional knowledge.

One example is the project to count animal tracks from a plane. As part of this project, WCS researchers have visited six communities in northern Ontario to talk about wolverines, and what people know of them.

WCS is combining Western science and traditional knowledge. One example is the project to count animal tracks from a plane. As part of this project, WCS researchers have visited six communities in northern Ontario to talk about wolverines, and what people know of them. They are interested in how the wolverines are doing, and where they are. Justina explained that WCS is also learning about the relationship between people and wolverines. Justina herself has learned a lot of legends about wolverines. With regard to caribou, WCS is trying to find out how many roads are too many. They are trying to understand what the impacts are on caribou, in order to better understand what must be done to keep them on the land.

Justina concluded by saying that WCS wants to integrate traditional knowledge and Western science, and wants to work with communities to continue to learn.

# NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

## SUSAN CASEY-LEFKOWITZ

*Senior Attorney, International Program*



Susan Casey-Lefkowitz explained that the NRDC is an organization from the US that was started over thirty years ago. They work on a full range of environmental problems, such as air, water, energy, and lands management in both the US and Canada. NRDC is a membership-based organization, and most of their funding comes from individuals. They have almost 600,000 members, and are a large organization with 250 staff members in four cities across the US.

Susan works for the International Program of NRDC in Canada. NRDC has worked with First Nations in British Columbia and Quebec, and they are committed to the protection of wild lands, oceans and working with communities. One of their major concerns is how the use of energy and wood affects the forests in Canada. They see that energy use in the US is destroying the forest in Canada, including the boreal forest.

NRDC works by making partnerships with other conservation groups and communities. They then educate their members about activities, threats and work that needs to be done. Their hope is that their work in the US can help push the vision that communities and conservation groups have for the lands in Canada.

NRDC feels that the First Nations Accord is a very important initiative in the boreal forest. Susan articulated NRDC's wish to support and work with commu-

NRDC works by making partnerships with other conservation groups and communities. They then educate their members about activities, threats and work that needs to be done.

nities' decision-making processes around this. According to Susan, NRDC's Biogems Programs are one way NRDC can support such initiatives. Through these programs NRDC has identified 12 areas upon which to focus their efforts. They target companies from the US or activities where they can apply pressure.

After speaking with CPAWS–National, Manitoba Wildlands, CPAWS–Wildlands League and communities, NRDC decided to name the First Nations Accord region a Biogem for 2004. Susan explained that this means that NRDC will work with everyone in this region to raise support for protection decisions and community-based planning and development. NRDC will also support the World Heritage designation.

## MINING WATCH CANADA

### MEL QUEVILLON

*Coordinator of the Canadian Program*

Mel Quevillon began by explaining that Mining Watch Canada is a coalition of Aboriginal, environmental, labour, social justice, and development organizations from across Canada. The Innu Nation, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and the Canadian Nature Federation are among their 17 members. Mining

Watch Canada's mandate is to support communities affected by mining in Canada, and to support communities around the world who are affected by Canadian mining companies. The organization was created in response to the threats to public health, water and air quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and community interests posed by irresponsible mineral policies and practices.

Of all the mining and exploration in Canada, 80% is in the boreal forest. Mining issues touch many Aboriginal people. Mining Watch has placed great emphasis on supporting Aboriginal people in their strug-



NRDC works by making partnerships with other conservation groups and communities. They then educate their members about activities, threats and work that needs to be done.

gles with mining companies. The organization benefits greatly from the counsel given to them by their five Aboriginal board members and two Aboriginal advisors.

Mel discussed the impacts and benefits of mining, and ways mining can affect First Nations. Mining can bring with it some economic benefits such as jobs and new buildings for the community, but, as Mel explained, it can also bring with it negative environmental, social, and cultural impacts. It is important for First Nations to understand this.

Mining Watch believes that Aboriginal rights should come before mining impacts, and they respect the decision that any First Nation makes to go ahead with a mining development. Their commitment is to work with First Nations to make sure that they get the best agreement that they can, and that the potential negative impacts on the environment and culture are minimized.

Mining Watch can provide various kinds of support, such as the following:

- Facilitate networking opportunities
- Provide advice
- Supply names of technical people
- Set up meetings
- Broker relationships
- Conduct research
- Interpret data
- Draw public attention to issues

They also organize meetings to bring people together to share their stories, learn from one another's experiences, build capacity on mining issues, and find good technical resources.

Mel also spoke of a number of initiatives already underway. Currently, Mining Watch is working with Nibinamik First Nation to co-organize a meeting in

Summer Beaver about the impact of diamond mining and negotiating with companies. They are also working with Partnership Development Advisors and the Grand Council of the Cree in Quebec to organize a meeting about diamond mining and De Beers. Also, in response to requests from First Nations participants at the Western Mining Action Network conference last fall, Mining Watch is raising money to organize a conference this fall on Free Entry, Impact and Benefit Agreements, and Closure Plans.

Mel is also working with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation's Mining Coordinator, and with CPAWS– Wildlands League on mining issues and protected areas.

Their commitment is to work with First Nations to make sure that they get the best agreement that they can, and that the potential negative impacts on the environment and culture are minimized.

Mel concluded by encouraging people who have any questions regarding mining, or who require support, to contact Mining Watch in Ottawa at (613) 569-3439.



# THEMES DISCUSSED DURING THE WORKSHOP

This section presents many of the issues, concerns, interests, and challenges that participants raised during the workshop. They have been grouped into themes in an effort to synthesize those topics touched on in the talking circle, presentations, question periods, and discussions. Not all of the points raised during the workshop are captured here; however an effort was made to articulate most of the issues as best as possible.

## I. Relationship with the land — culture and way of life

“First Nation people have a strong connection with water, lands and forests. Destruction of these is part of cultural genocide. Land is part of the Anishinaabe.” — Chief Ronald Roundhead

“I love the land so much. My parents taught me everything I need to know about the land. We lived on a trapline, eating only what the land provided. The Creator gave us everything that we need. The Creator gave us our (Anishinaabe/Ojibway) language, which is the only one I speak.”  
— Ellen Peters (Translated from Ojibway to English by Alex Peters)



- Elders have been taught on the land. Their knowledge of the land is learned through experience.
- Hunting, trapping and traditional activities are spiritual activities. Spiritual activities are God-given.
- Knowledge about animals and the land cannot be learned from books and computers; it must be experienced.
- If language is lost, the way of life and culture will also be lost.
- Aboriginal people need to learn how to live on the land again. They are trying to live too much like non-Aboriginal people.

- Non-Aboriginal people are often disconnected from the natural world.
- The cultural value of land has to be distinguished from resource use and land use.
- Destroying homelands destroys culture. If land is destroyed, Anishinaabe people will become extinct.
- There is a need for public education to deal with racism and denial of what has happened over past century.

## 2. Aboriginal and treaty rights

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- Treaty areas encompass large areas of land, not just reserve lands.
- Treaty areas cross provincial boundaries.
- All people need to understand First Nation land claims, rights and treaties, which vary across the country.
- Environmental groups need to better understand and respect Aboriginal rights issues when negotiating agreements.
- There is too much government regulation of livelihood activities such as trapping.
- The ability to exercise Aboriginal rights such as hunting, fishing and trapping needs to be honoured in the legislation of all provinces regarding protected areas. Governments must make a concerted effort to communicate with conservation officers who have been improperly enforcing regulations within protected areas and inappropriately preventing the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights. Governments also have an obligation to communicate with First Nations and acknowledge that Aboriginal and treaty rights remain unchanged by protected areas designation.
- First Nations have concerns about the process and methodology of consultation; conservation groups agree with and support these concerns.

- First Nations have often not been properly consulted on forestry development in the past. Environmental groups have been part of planning that excludes First Nations.

### 3. Community-based land use planning and management



**"I would like to be part of a process that would lead to one strong voice for First Peoples in Canada to influence and change policies impacting their lands and resources, to be respected and supported so that they can manage their own lands by their own beliefs for future generations."**  
— John Ward

- There is a need for community-based land use planning prior to resource development.
- There is a unique opportunity available to the communities gathered at this workshop; their lands have not yet been allocated by governments for forestry licenses or roads. The communities still have the option to decide what the future will look like in terms of land use planning before development occurs; there is greater potential in this area for communities to have a say in land use decisions. It is a different situation than in the allocated forest.
- Elders should/will play an important role in guiding the land use planning processes.

- The knowledge of First Nation Elders should be recognized and valued as equivalent to scientific knowledge. In terms of the environment, Elders have vast amounts of expertise.
- It is important to share information about planning methods to assist other First Nations with their work.
- There are capacity constraints; communities often do not have resources or funding for technicians, foresters, or legal council.
- Communities protect, store and share data and information differently. Some communities keep sensitive cultural and traditional knowledge data confidential while others share it widely.
- A detailed geo-referenced database of indigenous knowledge provides the legal base for land claims, and land management. Detail is required for success in negotiations with governments. Government representatives know that the work carries weight in legal terms and with the courts.
- It is more powerful if First Nations represent themselves in negotiations (as opposed to hiring professional negotiators to represent them). First Nations can meet with government and/or industry as a people together and bring information back to their community for discussion. They can then document community values and return to the table for more negotiations.
- Problems exist with timelines for planning processes not driven by First Nations/communities. Governments are often working with one timeline and First Nations with another.
- There is a lack of clarity concerning “co-management;” the diversity of experiences with co-management processes has resulted in little coherence in terms of how people define the concept and how they think it should be or has been implemented.
- There is a difference between land use plans and resource management plans; resource management plans do not include protected areas, and don't create land use zones.

- Non-government and private funding should be secured to establish working groups that deal with grassroots views of what should be happening in traditional territories, but it is not clear how to accomplish this.
- Community members need to know what leaders are deciding for the community.
- Different kinds of coalitions are required for different kinds of strategies.

## 4. Resource development



**“Our southern brothers have lost their lands to clear cutting. That is why I took up the fight to protect our lands.”**

— Charlie Peters

- First Nations must assert control over decisions about land use in their traditional territories. They need to decide if they want development on their lands and, if they do, what type of development and how they want it to happen.
- US consumption of resources is a driving force for resource development in Canada.
- Aboriginal peoples have concerns about hydro-electric dam proposals spoiling their territories. Animals, fish and trappers are all affected by this development.
- Aboriginal peoples have concerns about the environmental impacts of roads.
- Pollution from pulp and paper mills is destructive and gets into water.
- The existence of good forestry certification standards (such as FSC) does not guarantee that standards will be properly implemented on the ground.

- Communities need to understand certification and decide for themselves whether the standards will work for them, and be applied to their satisfaction.
- Certification can be used as a way for a company to “come in through the back door.” First Nation land use studies must be completed before forestry using any form of certification takes place.
- Of all the mining in Canada, 80% takes place in the boreal forest.

## 5. Protecting the land



“We’re trying to protect the land from destruction. The land has to be healthy for the animals and the plants, and the animals and plants have to be healthy for the land. We have to listen to the Elders who tell us that healthy land will keep us healthy in return. Clean air, comes from the land and from the trees.”— Ed Hudson

“What happens on the land is not separated from the water. Activities on the land impact the water. Protected areas can play a vital role in water protection.”— Gregor Beck



- The boreal forest in Canada is of international significance; it is the largest intact forest in North America, and one of the largest left on the planet.
- The geographic focus of the workshop is the unallocated forest area in

Northern Ontario and Manitoba—the “Heart of the Boreal”—and the First Nations World Heritage Site proposal to the IUCN.

- First Nation people are interested in learning how to defend the land for future generations.
- Protection is important to prevent the land from being abused.
- The knowledge of Elders and traditional knowledge can help protect the environment.
- If Elders' knowledge is respected, it can guide protected areas decisions and help create networks of protected areas.
- There is a need to come to a common understanding as to what a protected area is.
- Conservation groups believe that Aboriginal rights need to be honoured in protected areas so fishing, spiritual activities, hunting, trapping and erecting cabins is permitted. There is also a need for monitoring of hunting and fishing to make sure animal populations are stable and not declining.
- Different tenure arrangements for protection exist (e.g., land trusts).
- Water can't be viewed as separate from the forest, as perhaps conservation groups have done in the past on campaigns and studies.
- Ecology doesn't recognize borders. Conservation groups see the importance of working in areas where animals such as caribou and wolverine live and travel.
- Aboriginal participants appreciated learning what other First Peoples from the west coast, east coast and north are doing about trying to protect their land from destruction.

## 6. Working together towards common goals



“What we say here, we need to put together, so we have one message to bring to government that is strong, and unbreakable.” — Sam Quill  
(Interpreted from Ojibway to English by Alex Peters)

“I want to commend the people who had the heart, the strength and the energy to bring people together over these days. It shows that there is willingness to work with us, and recognize the knowledge that our Elders possess. You have gone even further: You are asking how we will do this together, how far are we willing to go. We have come this far, we can carry on.” — Caroline Bruyere



- There is a need to work together on common interests and goals, and to build trust and relationships between First Nation and conservation groups.
- Sharing, listening and learning is critical for working together.
- First Nations acknowledge the power and influence of conservation groups, and point out that there is a need for them to dialogue more with First Nations.
- There is a need to develop protocols for working together.
- Relationships between First Nations and conservation groups have some-

times been strained due to different working relationships with provincial governments.

- There is a need to accommodate different languages and acknowledge and address the challenges of translation if we are going to work together:
  - For instance, problems exist with certain terms and concepts such as “wilderness.” It was pointed out that from a First Nations perspective, there is no such thing as wilderness; it is somebody’s trapline. The non-Aboriginal concept of wilderness provides justification for the crown to be doing what they are doing.
  - There is a need to hold a language workshop to develop a glossary of terms so we can ensure that communication and translation between English and Ojibway, Oji-Cree and Cree is more effective.
  - There is a need for capacity building to train interpreters to help in translation of specialized technical terms



- There is a need for conservation groups and First Nations to learn how to better work across political, cultural and provincial boundaries.
  - There is strength when many people speak with one voice. It is especially powerful when a diverse range of groups speak with one voice. It makes it very difficult for the government to ignore what is being said. A unified message is also important in creating international influence.
- Radio broadcasting should be used by First Nations and conservation groups to share information with other communities in Ontario and Manitoba.
  - All information from the workshop should be taken back and shared with communities.

## NEXT STEPS

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1. **ESTABLISH A COMMITTEE TO CREATE ONE UNIFIED MESSAGE** to deliver to governments from participants about the intact boreal forest. When many groups and nations speak with one voice, it is very powerful and difficult to ignore.
2. **A FOLLOW-UP MEETING** to this workshop should occur for the Ontario–Manitoba intact boreal forest with Aboriginal peoples and conservation groups
3. **RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR BROADER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND INCREASED AWARENESS**, conservation groups and Aboriginal people should take greater advantage of radio broadcasting to get the message out about land use planning and protecting the boreal forest.
4. **FUTURE WORKSHOPS** should continue to be conducted in both English and Ojibway. This is important and allows fuller participation of Elders and Ojibway speakers.
5. **TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING** between First Nations and conservation groups, a glossary of terms should be developed to help translation of planning, protection, and technical words, especially given some English words are not easily translated because of cultural differences.

## CONCLUSION

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The workshop was a tremendous success. More than 70 people from 17 First Nations and nine conservation groups met to discuss ways everyone could work together to care for, and keep intact, the boreal forest region in Manitoba and Ontario. This was the first time such a group gathered and was a “watershed moment” in First Nation–conservation group relations in Ontario and Manitoba. Through an open and respectful dialogue conducted in both Ojibway and English, participants discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with land use planning and protected areas in the heart of the boreal.

The heart of the boreal represents a global opportunity for Canadians and a unique opportunity for First Nations to have a say in determining the future of their lands. It is also an opportunity for Canadians to demonstrate global leadership in the boreal forest by balancing the needs of communities, conservation and industry before resource allocation. Above all, First Nations communities must be supported to undertake planning in their traditional territories before resource allocation decisions are made. The listening and learning from this workshop will continue. Through cooperation, innovation, creativity and perseverance, together we can chart a future that will ensure the protection of this great forest region for the present and all future generations.



## WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Allen, Sarah	Lakehead University	Student
Baggio, Anna	CPAWS – Wildlands League	Director, Northern Boreal Program
Baxter, Charles	Constance Lake First Nation	Councillor
Beck, Chris	CPAWS – Wildlands League	Community Land Use Planner
Beck, Gregor	Ontario Nature	Director, Conservation and Science
Bingeman, Kristin	Manitoba Wildlands	Research Coordinator
Boan, Julee	Ontario Nature/CPAWS – Wildlands League	GIS Coordinator
Brisket, Robert	Mishkeegogamang First Nation	NBI Representative
Bruyere, Caroline	Sagkeeng First Nation	Elder
Bunting, Fabian	Slate Falls Nation	Administrator and Program Coordinator
Capreol, Marilyn	Shawanaga First Nation	Medicine Gatherer
Casey-Lefkowitz, Susan	Natural Resources Defense Council	Senior Attorney, International Program
Chapeskie, Andrew	Pikangikum First Nation	Consultant, Whitefeather Forest Management Corp.
Cizek, Petr	Deh Cho First Nations	Lands and Resources Consultant
Crow, Jerry	Pauingassi First Nation	Band Member
Cruz, Carmen	CPAWS – Wildlands League	Volunteer
Fox, Mike	Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund	Partnership Development Advisor
Gray, Tim	CPAWS – National	Director, Boreal Programs
Green, Gabriel	Bloodvein First Nation	Band Member
Hardisty, Wesley	Deh Cho First Nations	GIS Technician
Hill, Oliver	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Hill, Sophie	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder

Hilty, Jodi	Wildlife Conservation Society	Assistant Director for the North America Program
Hudson, Ed	Poplar River First Nation	Councillor
Janssen, Anne	CPAWS – National	National Boreal Program Coordinator
Kulchyski, Peter	University of Manitoba	Professor and Head, Department of Native Studies
McEachern, Gillian	CPAWS – Wildlands League	Director, Forests Program
McKay, Gerry	Independent First Nations Alliance	Public Affairs and Advocacy
McKay, Jarvis	Manto Sipi Cree Nation	Councillor
McMillan, Ryan	Moose Cree First Nation	GIS Technician
Moar, Alice	Berens River First Nation	Elder
Morriseau, Robert	Fort William First Nation	Native Resource Technician
Nuna, Richard	Innu Nation of Labrador	Environmental Officer
Owens, David	Pauingassi First Nation	Elder
Peerla, David	Nishnawbe Aski Nation	Mining Coordinator
Peters, Alex	Pikangikum First Nation	President, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation
Peters, Charlie	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Peters, Ellen	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Peters, Gideon	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Peters, Jemina	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Quevillon, Mel	Mining Watch Canada	Coordinator of the Canadian Program
Quill, Louis	Pikangikum First Nation	Band Member
Quill, Louisa	Pikangikum First Nation	Band Member
Quill, Samuel	Pikangikum First Nation	Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation
Rabliaskus, Ray	Poplar River First Nation	Lands Management Coordinator
Ray, Justina	Wildlife Conservation Society	Associate Conservation Zoologist and Head of WCS Canada Program

Richardson, Ruth	Metcalf Foundation	Environment Program Coordinator
Ross, Daniel	Manto Sipi Cree Nation	Councillor
Roundhead, Ronald	Mishkeegogamang First Nation	Chief
Scott, Krista	CPAWS – Manitoba	Executive Director
Shakakeesic, Leann	Cat Lake First Nation	Community Land-use Planner
Sinclair, Irene	Berens River First Nation	Elder
Smith, Peggy	Lakehead University	RPF and Lecturer, Faculty of Forestry and the Forest Environment
Strang, George K.	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Strang, Marie	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Strang, Matthew	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Suggashie, Alice	Pikangikum First Nation	Elder
Suggashie, James	Poplar Hill First Nation	Economic Development Officer
Sullivan, Don	Boreal Forest Network	Executive Director
Sumner, Janet	CPAWS – Wildlands League	Executive Director
Svoboda, Michael	Taku River Tlingit First Nation	Lands Manager
Trapper, Lillian	Moose Cree First Nation	Lands and Resources Coordinator
Van Geest, Bill	Canadian Boreal Initiative	Consultant
Ward, John	Taku River Tlingit First Nation	Spokesperson
Whelan Enns, Gaile	Manitoba Wildlands	Director
Whelan, Jared	Manitoba Wildlands	Project Manager
Wilkinson, Cathy	Canadian Boreal Initiative	Director
Wilson, Terry	Nishnawbe Aski Nation	Forestry Coordinator
Young, Louis	Bloodvein First Nation	Councillor

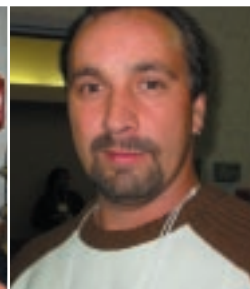
# APPENDIX I

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## INTERNET RESOURCES/SOURCES

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Manitoba Wildlands	<a href="http://www.manitobawildlands.org/">www.manitobawildlands.org/</a>
Whitefeather Forest Initiative (Pikangikum First Nation)	<a href="http://www.whitefeatherforest.com/">www.whitefeatherforest.com/</a>
CPAWS–Wildlands League	<a href="http://www.wildlandsleague.org">www.wildlandsleague.org</a>
Mining Watch Canada	<a href="http://www.miningwatch.ca">www.miningwatch.ca</a>
Taku River Tlingit Planning documents: 'Conservation Area Design' and 'Vision and Management Direction'	<a href="http://www.roundriver.org/trt_conservation_main.html">www.roundriver.org/trt_conservation_main.html</a>
CPAWS Boreal Program	<a href="http://www.cpaws.org/boreal">www.cpaws.org/boreal</a>
Poplar River First Nation	<a href="http://www.poplarriverfirstnation.ca/">www.poplarriverfirstnation.ca/</a>
Natural Resources Defense Council	<a href="http://www.nrdc.org">www.nrdc.org</a>
Wildlife Conservation Society	<a href="http://www.wcs.org">www.wcs.org</a>
Canadian Boreal Initiative	<a href="http://www.borealcanada.ca">www.borealcanada.ca</a>
Innu Nation	<a href="http://www.innu.ca/">www.innu.ca/</a>
Deh Cho First Nations	<a href="http://www.dehchofirstnations.com/">www.dehchofirstnations.com/</a>





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