

**History and Action in a Resource Planning
Relationship: Pikangikum's Whitefeather
Forest Management Corporation
and the Red Lake Ontario Ministry of
Natural Resources**

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
the Degree of

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Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree
Of**

MASTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

In 1996, Pikangikum First Nation approached the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources about discussing potential forestry related economic development opportunities. To date, the First Nation's Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and the Red Lake OMNR have worked together planning developments in Pikangikum's traditional territory. The community is negotiating a degree of control over their landscape, as control contributes to overall community health. There have been a number of resource based industries in Pikangikum, and forestry is the next strategy.

The context behind a community development initiative can determine the success of the initiative. The purpose of this study was to explore the history of interactions between Pikangikum people and the OMNR, the formation and maintenance of the working relationship, and some of the challenges.

The method was to interview key negotiators from both groups. Organizational, community, and individual narratives were collected in an iterative process. Theories on narrative and partnership are discussed in relation to Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Narratives are a basis for action in the negotiation process.

The findings show that numerous people from Pikangikum have been directly or indirectly employed by the OMNR since the Ministry first exerted authority over the Pikangikum area in 1946. Department policy did not include First Nations in land use planning, however, and the two groups tended to not communicate, other than in

regulated consultation settings. The community's experience losing their commercial fishing licenses to tourist developments is a motive for initiating the relationship. Other primary motives are the extension of the Nungesser road north through a sacred site, the creation of opportunities for Pikangikum youth, and the avoidance of a prophecy describing the advancement of industry and development into their territory.

The WFMC and the Red Lake OMNR have a viable contemporary relationship supported by the First Nation's drive, consistency in staff, a strong group of core Elders, and knowledgeable consultants acting as intermediaries. Whitefeather is based on a consensus building process which allows for the construction of creative solutions within policy. A terms of reference outlines goals, deadlines, the area under negotiation, and the delineation of authority. The Steering Committee, whose members are Elders, Pikangikum youth, OMNR negotiators, and technical advisors, is separate from Chief and Council.

One of the challenges of consensus building is that the OMNR and the WFMC have different requirements for the amount of time needed to make decisions. The community must reach a consensus internally and work towards specific ends, meanwhile avoiding the realization of certain predictions. The OMNR must meet funding deadlines, and has only a small group of core staff working on the negotiations. In addition, the consensus building process depends on both groups disclosing information, with the disclosed information feeding into separate Treaty and Aboriginal Rights discussions. Pikangikum people are affected in their day to day lives by fishing, hunting and trapping regulations

under OMNR jurisdiction, however. Groups outside of the immediate negotiating party, with jurisdictional or other measures of authority over the negotiated area present challenges to the planning process. The narratives of both groups show that trust is a major issue, and relates to the contemporary negotiation process as well as the older, more complex history behind the relationship.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Background

Pikangikum First Nation (PFN), an Anishinaabe community in northwestern Ontario, has worked in a planning relationship with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) to develop a land-use strategy for the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area (WFPA). The WFPA is a 1.3 million hectare area of land composed of traplines where Pikangikum Band members are the senior trappers. PFN initiated a community-based land-use planning process in 1996 when they approached the OMNR to discuss the possibility of undertaking forestry-based community economic development. In response, the OMNR and Pikangikum worked on a community-based, land-use planning policy to provide a legislative framework for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative (<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nbi2002>; accessed February 1, 2006).

The planning approach utilized by the First Nation is rooted in the wisdom of Pikangikum Elders while considering what western science could offer to the process. As part of the planning process, Pikangikum was able to identify which areas of the WFPA would be available for community-run commercial forestry, mining exploration and tourism. The land-use strategy also necessitated the identification of protected areas; places which would be kept from commercial forestry, mining and hydro development. As of yet, no commercial forestry and very few other developments have occurred in the area.

In Canada, First Nations are increasingly able to exert significant influence over policy concerning natural resources and land (Doyle-Bedwell and Cohen 2001). Under the Canadian Constitution, “legislative authority over natural resource conservation, development and management over non-renewable natural resources and forestry resources” in the provinces resides with provincial governments (Smith 2008).

Negotiated agreements between First Nations and provincial governments are a means through which First Nations can gain access to the appropriate tenures and permits they need to hold a sustainable forest management license (Ross and Smith 2002; Bombay 2005). Currently, First Nations in Canada, Australia and New Zealand are beginning to work directly with governments in order to secure permits over resources as opposed to litigating through the court system to attain rights (Lane 2005). OMNR documents like the *Northern Boreal Initiative Land Use Planning Approach* describe relationships with northern First Nations as partnerships. Other OMNR documents describe working relationships as ‘strategic alliances’ (OMNR 1995). There exists a large literature on co-management agreements as well (i.e. Berkes 1997; Cizek 1991). The term used here to describe the WFPA negotiating process will be ‘partnership’.

There is a vast literature on environmental partnerships (i.e. Poncelet 2004; Diduck et al. 2005; Mitchell 1997). The majority of the writings on partnerships address power differentials between parties, as well as the need to confront and work beyond misunderstandings which have taken place in the past (Poncelet 2004; Davies 2002; Johnson and Wilson 2000; McAvoy, Schatz and Lime 1991). Partnerships and/or co-management agreements between First Nations and government are complicated by post-

colonial power dynamics (Agrawal 2005, 2002; Nadasdy 2003; Simpson 2004). The act of engagement with government itself can be a charged subject, as some scholars advocate two parallel systems in Canada, with separate paths and separate structures (Stephenson 2006; Alfred 2005). In regards to resource development, engagement with a government entity can allow the First Nation much needed access to forums where decisions are made about their traditional territory. Building relationships with a government can also be a strategic, adaptive maneuver aimed at securing more influence and building a wider network of contacts (Natcher 1997). Many see the necessity of addressing Treaty and Aboriginal rights in negotiations and working partnerships between First Nations and government. Access to decision making forums on resources and influence within those forums should flow from Treaty and Aboriginal rights (Smith 2007; Ross and Smith 2002; Fernandes 2006). In the case of Pikangikum and the OMNR, the actors have built a working relationship outside of Treaty rights discussions. This research is an exploration of the history and workings of the partnership, from the perspective of both groups, using the narratives of both groups. It is also a look at how both groups use narratives within the partnership. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will be described as an organization, as will the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation. Given that Whitefeather is rooted in the community of Pikangikum, the narratives given by members of the Whitefeather Forest Corporation will also be considered in relation to writings on Aboriginal narratives (Cruikshank 1991, 2000, 2007; Riddington 1996; Wickwire 2005). Narratives are an integral part of negotiations between government and First Nations (Laforet 2004).

Narratives are part of the institutional memory of an organization. The creation and telling of a narrative is a sensemaking act which relates disparate events to each other, and usually attributes causality. Organizational change entails ongoing reflection and discussion of the past, present, and future of the organization. Narratives are indicators of change initiatives within an organization, as they are often re-told and reflected upon, sparking new solutions (O'Connor 2000). When two organizations work together in a partnership, narratives of the same events can be told by members of both organizations. These shared narratives can be indicators that an institutional memory of the partnership, as a new organization, is building between them. If the two organizations recount different narratives of the same events, the telling of the narratives can be an attempt to figure out the rationale and motives of the other organization, and to justify one's own motives (Boje et. al 1999).

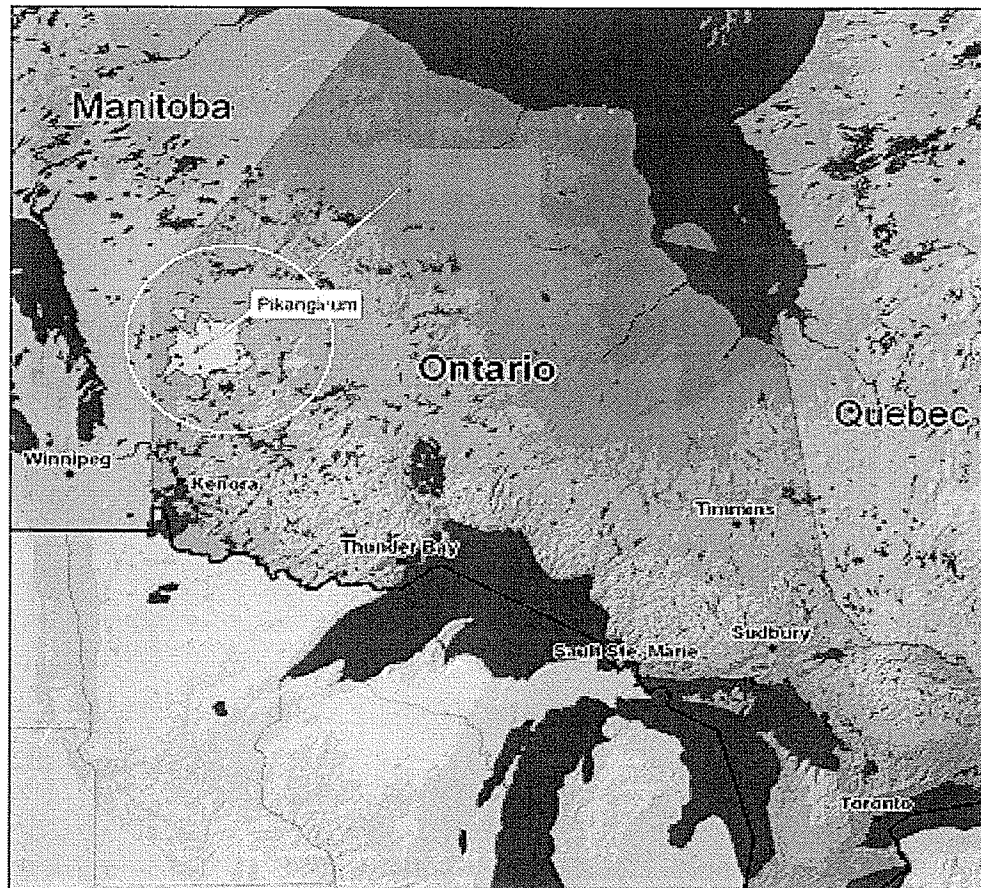
Narratives are both fluid and static, as they can spark creative solutions, but they can also outline expected behaviors and their delivery often demands that certain protocols are followed (Drummond 1996). Partnerships are also fluid, in that they are successful only in practice, not by following a pre-determined set of rules (Poncelet 2004).

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus is post-structuralist and can be applied to institutions which shift and change, and yet retain a consistency (Barley and Tolbert 1997 citing Berger and Luckmann 1967). 'Habitus', or milieu, is also especially useful here because it accounts for how history continually informs the present, and because it considers change within institutions and power dynamics.

Study Area

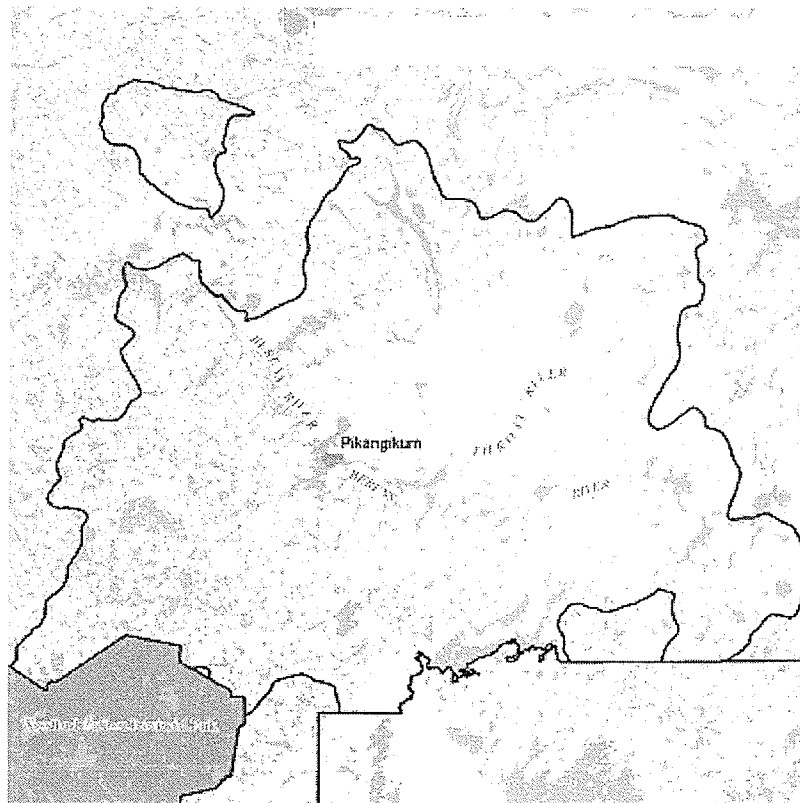
Pikangikum is located about 100 km Northwest of Red Lake Ontario on the shores of Pikangikum Lake, which is part of the Berens River system within the watershed of Lake Winnipeg. There are approximately 2400 people in the community and nearly 100% of them speak Ojibway. The Whitefeather Forest Planning Area (WFPA) is 1.3 million hectares of boreal forest and waterways surrounding the Pikangikum reserve. The boreal forest is prone to wildfires, which are important to the ecosystem as they periodically renew the landscape (Land Use Plan 2005). The forest cover is largely jack pine and white spruce mixed with occasional patches of white birch and trembling aspen. Animals indigenous to the area are woodland caribou, moose, wolverine, black bear, fisher, lynx, red fox, grey wolf, river otter, weasel and snowshoe hare. Trapping is an integral part of Pikangikum life and the boundaries around and within the WFPA are structured according to traplines, as they tend to follow natural flows of energy and matter on the landscape (PFN and OMNR 2005). While trapping has declined in recent years due to low fur prices, hunting is still an important source of food for the community. Fish dwelling in the many lakes and rivers of the WFPA include walleye, lake sturgeon, jackfish, northern pike and lake trout. Fishing was and continues to be an important source of income and food for the people of Pikangikum (Land Use Plan 2005).

Figure 1: Pikangikum in Northwestern Ontario



Source: www.whitefeatherforest.com

Figure 2: Close up of the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area



Source: www.whitefeather.com

Purpose

To understand the development, growth and functioning of the community-based planning partnership between Pikangikum First Nation's Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Objectives

1. To construct a history of interactions between Pikangikum and the OMNR, focusing on the key events beginning with contact in the early 1900s and ending with the Land Use Plan of 2005.

2. To explore the narratives of the individuals participating in the WFMC/OMNR planning partnership in regards to how the partnership functions.

Methods

The methods were theoretically informed by readings in ethnology, institutional ethnography, process evaluation, and narrative theory. The research was meant to be iterative and naturalistic, meaning that themes emerged in the field and were explored.

The first objective was met through a round of interviews with Pikangikum Elders, and OMNR staff, respectively, aimed at exploring personal and community interaction narratives between Pikangikum and the OMNR prior to the Whitefeather partnership. The interviews were semi-structured, and the participants were informed of the interview questions prior to the interview. The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder, and downloaded into SonicStage, software for managing sound files. Verbatim transcripts of the interviews were made. The Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation provided translation services in Pikangikum. The interviews were supplemented by archival research in the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada files at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa.

The second research objective involved a second round of interviews with key participants about their personal experiences regarding the Whitefeather partnership. These interviews were also informal and semi-structured, and recorded with a tape recorder if the participant permitted it.

Methodologically, the initial research generated questions which were pursued in a later phase of the research, in an iterative process. The interviews eliciting stories of historical events informed the interview schedule used in the second phase. Some interview questions were adjusted slightly during the interview process if they appeared confusing to the participants. (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996, 205 citing Glaser and Strauss 1967; DeVault and McCoy 2002; Smith 2005).

Plan of the Thesis

The thesis begins with the literature review, which outlines the theory guiding the research. Following the literature review is a description of the methods used, then two chapters present the research findings. The first findings chapter presents the data from Pikangikum, and the second chapter presents the data from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The concluding chapter discusses findings from Pikangikum and the OMNR together, within the theoretical framework described in the literature review chapter.

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter will begin with an overview of Ontario policies that structure and enable the WFMC/OMNR partnership. Following the policy description, there will be a brief review of literature on planning partnerships between government entities and First Nations showing two lines of thought: parallelism and negotiation. The second component of the literature review will discuss issues of trust, control and risk in a cross-cultural partnership, as well as components of successful partnerships. The third section will outline the ethnographic theory guiding the study: Pierre Bourdieu's habitus. Bourdieu's concept of habitus was chosen as the theoretical background because it is a post-structuralist framework which accounts for how history and institutions inform the present, and also how change is possible despite historical circumstances and institutional rules. The final section, on organizational narratives, informs the methods for this study. Looking at organizational narratives is one means of identifying protocols, expectations, trends and changes within an organization. Theory on First Nations narratives will be incorporated specifically into chapter four, the chapter about Pikangikum.

Policy Context

The partnership between the OMNR and Pikangikum is formally grounded in the OMNR's 2002 *Northern Boreal Initiative* (NBI) policy for community-based, land-use planning (www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nbi/ ; accessed February 1, 2006). NBI policy allows First Nations in Ontario residing north of 51 degrees to communally manage the

commercial development of forests near their respective reserves while planning for surrounding areas in conjunction with the OMNR and other interest groups. As part of the planning partnership the OMNR takes the lead for regional and provincial planning responsibilities while the First Nation leads within its community and territory. The First Nation and the OMNR work together within a Strategic Action Partnership (SAP) using a consensus-based process. The planning process and the land-use strategy is undertaken without prejudice to Aboriginal and Treaty rights (PFN and OMNR 2005; Chapeskie et al.2005; Terms of Reference 2003).

Planning in Pikangikum is led by the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and employs a consensus building process driven by the Council of Elders. The process of consensus building begins with community initiatives and ideas, and extends outward to the OMNR and other groups in the area (PFN and OMNR 2005). Pikangikum has stipulated that they must be ‘in the driver’s seat’ for the partnership. The expression ‘in the driver’s seat’ was the closest English translation to the Anishinaabe *kahohkiimahwich*, which means the head trapper. The *kahohkiimahwich* is a leader and a planner who others look to for advice, knowledge and medicine (PFN and OMNR 2005).

Given that Pikangikum is in the driver’s seat, the partnership requires that the OMNR acknowledge some basic principles. Namely, that the forests and waterways used by Pikangikum people constitute a cultural landscape and that Pikangikum people actively manage this landscape, not just passively harvest it. In addition, all economic activities undertaken by the community in the past, present and future arise from the economic

circumstances of an era, and new plans and ventures will continue to evolve and change with the times (PFN and MNR 2005).

The understanding between Pikangikum and the OMNR is relatively new. Over the past 50 years the people of Pikangikum have witnessed their rights to resources and lands given away to outsiders through the granting of licenses and tenures. There are very few published sources which describe the interactions specifically between Pikangikum and the OMNR. Ethnographers Irving Hallowell and Jennifer Brown, respectively, have written extensively on the Berens River Ojibway. They cover many topics, including contact with explorers, missionaries, and Indian agents as well as religion, cosmology, storytelling, trade, subsistence, kinship, resettlement, economics and material culture (Hallowell and Brown 1992). Neither has substantially covered the topic of interaction with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, nor Lands and Forests, the older name for the ministry.

R.W. Dunning (1959) is one of the few authors to describe some of the early meetings between Pikangikum and the OMNR. He recounts that the Fish and Wildlife branch of the Ontario government took over the administration of hunting and trapping in Pikangikum in 1947. The job had previously been the responsibility of the Federal Indian agent. Dunning says that disagreements and counterclaims regarding fur quotas occurred largely after the provincial government took over, as the quota was decreased from 10 pelts per trapper to one pelt per beaver house annually. The game warden visited once a year and was nicknamed the beaver-boss. At that time traplines were officially registered

to individuals or groups of individuals who were thought to be the most frequent users of an area during the winter season (Dunning 1959).

At the provincial scale there are a number of written sources on the policies of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources towards Aboriginal communities. In *Circles of Time*, author McNab (1999) states that historically, the OMNR has tended to ignore Aboriginal concerns and discussions of Treaty rights in favor of policies which support sport hunting, angling and tourism. McNab is of the opinion that agreements between the province of Ontario and Aboriginal groups around resources, development, and self-government which ignore Treaty rights are ultimately aimed at assimilation, and are the result of institutional racism. McNab's book calls for a return to Treaty discussions in Ontario; hence the title *Circles of Time* reflecting the need for retrospection.

A few papers were published during the Iperwash Inquiry which support McNab's thesis. Teillet (2005) and Nashkawa (2005) argue that the regulatory regime which guides Ontario resource policy evolved separately and without any input from Aboriginal groups, with the OMNR refusing to address Treaty issues. Traditionally, the OMNR has viewed off-reserve Aboriginal resource users as having *claims* instead of rights to resources. The preferred resource users were tourists. The end result of the OMNR's failure to address Treaty rights is that Aboriginal groups have been alienated from their traditional resource base in some areas. Smith's (2008) doctoral thesis is an analysis of Federal forest policy and Ontario forest policy in regards to Aboriginal peoples. Two case studies, at Pikangikum First Nation and Grassy Narrows First Nation, respectively,

examine the articulation of these policies at the micro level and include a comprehensive look at the various groups involved with the two First Nations. Her discussion addresses Treaty, and potential policy changes.

In *The Regulatory Role of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry's Relation with Aboriginal Peoples* (OMNR 2005), the OMNR provides a response to the Ipperwash papers. Failure to discuss Treaty rights comes, in part, from the difficulty of interpreting and applying Supreme Court decisions regarding Aboriginal rights arising in other provinces. The default policy on enforcement is to follow *R. v. Sparrow* (1990), where Aboriginal rights were held to be secondary to conservation concerns. As well, federal and provincial jurisdictions sometimes overlap, leading to administrative confusion and complication. Of late, the OMNR has tried a strategy of relationship building with Aboriginal communities and opening forums for discussion, primarily around the OMNR mandate for economic development. Ross and Smith (2005) write that the OMNR is largely guided by economic development objectives and that they have taken steps to improve business and employment opportunities, but have not made real progress towards protecting Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

OMNR forestry policy in regards to First Nations is guided by the *Forest Management Planning Manual* (FMPM) for Ontario's Crown Forests (OMNR 2004). Part A, Section 4 of the FMPM requires an Aboriginal background report in co-operation with First Nation communities addressing past resource use, Native values mapping, forest-related problems or issues over the past five years and records of the negotiations aimed at

achieving more equal participation of the First Nation. The resulting background report is then part of the management plan and is used when engaging with the Aboriginal group and with the public at large. In addition, Term and Condition 34 of the *Timber Class Environmental Assessment* identifies Aboriginal forestry related economic development opportunities. Term and Condition 34, as well as Part A, Section 4 of the FMPM apply to the Area of the Undertaking, however, not the WFPA, which is north of the Area of the Undertaking. Application of the terms and conditions of the *Timber Class Environmental Assessment* to the WFPA is a challenge for the OMNR, if it is to be applied, because the Class EA exempted the north (Smith 2008).

At the national level, OMNR policy is driven by Canada's *National Forest Strategy* (2003-2008): "Aboriginal participation in the forest sector has generally increased in recent years. Opportunities for employment, contracting and business development are more abundant, with the forest industry willing to enter into various forms of partnership" (<http://nfsc.forest.ca/strategies/strategy5.html#k>). Section 3 of the *NFS* on Aboriginal participation and rights, contains seven action items, however none directly address partnerships. The new *National Forest Strategy* in draft form as of April 2008 at http://www.ccfm.org/current/FINALPDFVision_March122008.pdf, identifies Aboriginal participation and innovation in the forestry sector (Smith 2008 unpublished).

Interactions

The relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR is a hybrid between a co-management arrangement and a planning partnership (Davidson-Hunt 2007, in

conversation). Pikangikum has identified the process as a “community-led economic renewal” (from www.whitefeatherforest.com). The OMNR, in interviews here, has referred to the relationship as a business partnership and the interaction has also been called a government-to-government relationship (Davidson-Hunt 2007, in conversation).

In examining partnerships between Aboriginal groups and forestry companies, Nelson and Hickey (2005), identify the role of government within these partnerships primarily as funding agencies with a fiduciary duty towards Aboriginal groups to develop resources in line with Aboriginal interests. Government should take a proactive role, instead of reacting to Supreme Court decisions and hasten the process of settling of land claims and Treaty Land Entitlements so as to fulfill their obligations and create more security in the forestry sector. Ideally, government should not interfere with the Aboriginal groups’ business partnerships, other than to help secure funding (Nelson and Hickey 2005). The National Aboriginal Forestry Association and the Institute on Governance Study (2000) identifies the need for government to make First Nations aware of opportunities and perhaps facilitate introductions to potential business partners, but otherwise government should not interfere with those alliances beyond the initial introductory stage. Thereafter, the government has the responsibility of ensuring that corporations comply with existing regulations (NAFA-IOG 2000).

Natcher (1999) has written that partnership agreements between Aboriginal groups and government are sometimes strategic alliances which allow the Aboriginal group access to decision-making forums about resources. Although the two groups may have been

antagonistic towards each other, the partnership is a coping strategy which also tends to result in a number of benefits for the First Nation. Natcher notes that Aboriginal societies, like all societies, are adaptive. Stephenson (2006, 1998) has written that co-management arrangements are structured by governments, and that First Nations must become fluent in the language and technology of government in order to be successful, which in the end reinforces the strength of the colonial governing power. Like Nadasdy (2003), Stephenson identifies a process whereby Aboriginal peoples' life experience and acquired knowledge get parsed into artificial Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) values, and are ultimately disembodied from their source. Stephenson sees differentiation as the only means of preventing Aboriginal societies from being co-opted by government. His example (2006) is the Iroquois two-row Wampum belt which symbolizes two societies, Canadian and Aboriginal, running parallel together but never intersecting. Alfred (2005) also advocates separate Canadian and Aboriginal systems, whereby development is owned and operated by communities and guided by communal reflection on traditional teachings. Development which is conceived and guided uniquely by Aboriginal communities should not have to confine itself to the field of government and be filtered through bureaucracy.

On the topic of resource alliances between Aboriginal groups and government in British Columbia, Willems-Braun (1997) maintains that colonial narratives are still present in the resource management field. No colonial system can be completely discarded or overhauled, but rather it reappears in localized, historically specific ways. Some institutions are endowed with the right to construct narratives about a landscape and the

methods of managing it while other institutions are not. Porter (2007) also writes of planning in a 'post' colonial era. Her view is that planning partnerships help break down historical barriers between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups because they involve continual discussion. Problems are discussed between the two groups until a solution is found. This process involves a great deal of learning about the other group. This type of partnership tends to be confined to the individual members of the Indigenous community who participate and the government employees who work with the community, however, and the overall relationship of the bureaucracy and Indigenous peoples does not change. Porter (2007, 388) comments that awareness of power dynamics are crucial in order to affect deep change within the bureaucracy and the planning process as a whole: "trust, learning and recognizing the operations of embedded power relations constitute the new planning literacies...". The only way to move ahead is to discuss and negotiate planning techniques with Indigenous groups. It is unclear whether Porter believes that the ideas and assumptions underlying the techniques should be discussed as well. Simpson (2000b) has also written of the capacity for planning partnerships to foster learning and change in a study of the mapping work done by academics and members of the Long Lake # 58 Anishinaabe First Nation. The project required a role reversal where the academics became the students of the Elders.

Lane and Hibbard (2005, 182) theorize that a certain degree of Indigenous resource sovereignty can be achieved within existing planning structures. They acknowledge that colonialism has alienated most Indigenous peoples from the resource base they traditionally used. Entering into a planning process, however, can be "...the deliberate

attempt to transform the institutional bases of indigenous subjugation and dependence.”

The Indigenous group must have the will to plan and to steer the process through management of resources and alliance building. The group should not turn away from conflict if a proposal or existing project infringes on their rights. Lane and Hibbard acknowledge that a ‘rough justice’ can be achieved through planning, which results in “shared jurisdiction over custodial lands and a degree of autonomy to shape community destiny.” (Lane and Hibbard 2005,182)

Stephenson (2006) and Alfred (2005) advocate relatively separate systems of planning for First Nations and the Canadian state aimed at freedom for the First Nation. Porter (2007) and Lane and Hibbard (2005) advocate working within existing structures to achieve reform within the level of government they are engaged with, and within the community itself. The framework of the partnership between Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and the OMNR has been structured by OMNR policy, therefore the route taken was one of co-operation as opposed to parallelism (Smith 2007).

Partnership

Partnership arrangements aimed at resource and environmental management can take many forms and there is no perfect template to follow (Stern et. al 2002). Mitchell (1997) defines partnerships in a broad sense:

A partnership is a mutually agreed arrangement between two or more public, private or non-governmental organizations to achieve a jointly determined goal or objective, or to implement a jointly determined activity, for the benefit of the environment and society.
(Mitchell 1997, 156)

Similarly, Wilcox (2004, 3) describes partnerships as “deciding and acting together.” Partners need not share the same goal(s) but they must at least be acting collaboratively. Many factors and issues must be managed in order for two partners to be working collaboratively, however. Some of the qualities of successful partnerships, as described by Mitchell (1997) are: tangible benefits for all partners, compatibility based on trust and respect, power sharing even in situations where resources and capacities are unequal, effective communication, adaptability and integrity, and finally patience and perseverance.

Partnerships have been identified as a means through which governments can help marginalized groups with social and economic development or non-governmental organizations aimed at social justice can attempt likewise. Some authors would argue that empowerment is the desired outcome of such partnerships (Voyle and Simmons 1999 citing Labonte 1993). Other writers identify partnerships as bridging solutions which allow governments to avoid fixing unjust policies and laws which create the circumstances contributing to impoverishment (Curtis 2003).

The OMNR has outlined a scale of ‘strategic alliances’ (cited in Mitchell 1997). The OMNR classification scheme begins with *contributory* alliances, which involve the provision of technical support and resources. Next are *operational* alliances, or the sharing of resources and work toward service delivery, followed by *consultative* alliances, which are advisory in nature and seek input for policy development, program and service delivery, and evaluation. The final OMNR alliance stage is *collaboration*,

which is shared decision-making between partners in regards to policy development, program and service delivery, and evaluation. In a collaborative 'strategic alliance', risk, power and resources are shared. In situations where different approaches inform the decision, consensus building is the best means of coming to agreement (Mitchell 1997 citing OMNR 1995). Although the Whitefeather partnership uses a consensus-based model of negotiation it is likely that the partnership is more of a hybrid between a consultative and a collaborative strategic alliance on the OMNR scale. The policy framework of the partnership is not debated and mutually decided; it is that of the OMNR. Pikangikum advises the OMNR about the content of pre-existing formats, such as the Land Use Plan, and the Indigenous knowledge portion of the environmental assessment for the mill in Red Lake, Ontario. The ability of a government department to truly 'share power' with a non-governmental organization of any type is questionable. David Wilcox (2004) has made the point that partnerships involving two or more organizations where one has the money, skills and administration, and consequently the power, should perhaps be called something other than a 'partnership'. The OMNR (1995) chart does label the relationships 'strategic alliances' as opposed to 'partnerships'.

Along with power differences between groups, power differences between individuals, within each organization, respectively, must also be taken into account (Wilcox 2004, Walker 2007). Whitefeather negotiators need to be cautious of who is answerable to whom and who has final decision-making power. OMNR members directly involved in the Whitefeather negotiations do not necessarily have influence within the Minister's office in Toronto. The OMNR, of course, is also ultimately accountable to the public. In

Pikangikum, the division of labor and decision-making is more lateral, but nevertheless distinct.

In regards to the power dynamics between organizations, failure to acknowledge tensions and inequalities stunts the growth of the partnership by preventing innovation. When there is a history of disagreements between the groups, participants tend to act as though there was no disagreement in order to avoid conflict. Non-confrontation ignores the structural issues which cause problems in the first place. Progress may appear initially, but it will not last. As well, the goals of the less powerful group can become co-opted by the more powerful organization if they are not comfortable enough to express their real concerns (Poncelet 2001; McAvoy; Schatz and Lime 1991). According to Voyle and Simmons (1999), history should be considered carefully when building partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups, so as to avoid repetition of past behaviors, particularly if the partnership is meant to empower the group. Walker's (2007) case study about a partnership between a Maori legal organization and a non-Indigenous legal organization is based on certain shared understandings about the Treaty of Waitangi, so as to identify the roles of each group in relation to the other.

An agreement which is negotiated and put into writing at the beginning of a partnership is an effective means of setting out the responsibilities of each group, the negotiation process and guidelines, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms (Walker 2004, Dewes et. al. 1988, Voyle and Simmons 1999, Cobin and Hsu 1998). Cornell and Kalt (n.d.) also advocate having a code, written or unwritten, which describes the functioning of the

First Nations development enterprise and the rules to be followed, independent of changes in band government. The Whitefeather partnership has a Terms of Reference (TOR) (2003), which outlines the roles of various groups involved, the delineation of power between the groups, the objectives and deadlines to be met, the means of resolving disputes, and a description of the area under negotiation. The TOR was identified by some of the OMNR interviewees as a key ingredient in the partnership.

Another potential strategy for a cross cultural partnership is to have a cultural advisor and/or liaison workers who understand the values and norms of both the Indigenous peoples and the non-Indigenous organization (Voyle and Simmons 1999). The liaison person(s) should speak the Indigenous language and essentially be the public face of the process within the community and amongst the public at large.

The Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation has a president and a land use coordinator, respectively, who act as cultural and linguistic interpreters and initiative builders within the community. The president is also the spokesman for the organization. The consultants who work within the Whitefeather process, along with the WFMC president and land use coordinator, may also be cultural interpreters, as some have specialized knowledge which they use to critically inform the community about the OMNR and the actions of various other interest groups.

Whenever possible, the partnership should build capacity in the community (Cobin and Hsu 1998, Voyle and Simmons 1999). Through the Whitefeather Steering Group, whose

members are Pikangikum Elders and youth, opportunities emerge for the youth to learn from the Elders and also the planning process. One instance is joint Pikangikum-OMNR field trips to Elders' trapping areas, which can include children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, etc... who accompany the party and assist with translation and knowledge sharing. The technical resource team, which is composed of outside consultants as well as technical specialists from Pikangikum, also assists with capacity building initiatives such as GIS training. The Technical Resource Team supplies a variety of skills and services to Pikangikum essential for the negotiating process. Those capacities are things like interpretation of law and policy and project management (TOR 2003), as well as the creation of promotional materials, making connections, and securing funds.

The success of a partnership generally lies in the relationships that form between the members and the trust that exists between the partners. Members often do not enter a partnership knowing a great deal about the attitudes, outlooks or behaviors of the other group, and must learn about the other in the process of working with them. Partners may even suspect the motives of their counterparts (Wilcox 2004). Individuals working within a partnership often undergo transformations of perspective about the other and collectively produce new processes and meanings in the partnership (Poncelet 2001). These new 'narratives' of the partnership are generated by shared experiences in the course of a partnership. The entire process of a partnership can be seen as fluid, whereby the participants are constantly re-creating the partnership, their perception of their actions within the partnership, and their perception of others (Poncelet 2001).

Creating a new set of norms and values through consensus and shared experience, effectively a new culture, is a necessary part of social control to deal with risk in a partnership (Walker 2007 citing Das and Teng 2001). Risk is a significant factor in cross-cultural partnerships, with trust and control being the two factors which mitigate the perception of risk (Walker 2007). Risk itself has been divided into two different types: relational and performance. Relational risk involves the chance that a partner will act opportunistically at the expense of the other, or not in good faith. Performance risk is the capacity of a partner to handle the workload and meet the targets that were agreed upon. Trust is the subjective expectation that a partner will perform and act appropriately, based on the goodwill and capacity of the persons involved, the institutional arrangements in place, and the situation. As opposed to trust, control is a more applied, active means of offsetting risk in a partnership. Control has been divided into three main types: output, behavior, and social. Output control involves taking measured, methodical assessments of the performance of a partner. Behavior control involves the division of labor and the control of information and communication flows. Social control is the ability to influence the behavior of the other partner through shared values and a partnership 'culture'. Social control can be undermined by too many attempts at output control and behavior control (Walker 2007 citing Das and Teng 2001). Output control and behavior control may be more crucial at the beginning and early phases of a partnership. When a partnership is more mature, the two parties have likely shared many experiences, and have come to expect that the other party will behave a certain way. Over time, risk may diminish.

Habitus

The success of a partnership lies in the practice of it. There is no real prescription or structure which can be followed to build a solid partnership. The practical, action-oriented nature of partnerships allows them to be discussed in terms of Bourdieu's 1977 theory of habitus.

Central to Bourdieu's 1977 *Outline of a Theory of Practice* is the concept of 'habitus'. Habitus is the milieu or the circumstances that a person or a group of people inhabit. The habitus is not necessarily a geographical milieu, it is also the technological, economic, professional, generational, class, religious, and cultural qualities of a person or group of people. It is more than the social structures of the group, it is an underlying ethos which structures the group's structures.

The habitus of a group is the product of all events and circumstances which came before it, and is constantly being re-constituted. The habitus is fluid:

In short, the habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history. The system of dispositions- a past which survives in the present and tends to perpetuate itself into the future by making itself present in practices structured according to its' principles...

... is the principle of the continuity and the regularity which objectivism discerns in the social world without being able to give them a rational basis.

(Bourdieu 1977, 82)

Despite the fact that the habitus is the result of history, the habitus itself is not a deterministic force, nor are the structures which are established by it. The structures are

formed by people, employing the ‘sense’ of the habitus as a guide and the structures are subject to the innovation and creativity of the people (Bourdieu 1977; Drummond 1996). Bourdieu identifies structures as ‘fields’ which are in play. A ‘field’ is any sort of organization or activity undertaken collectively. People of similar habitus’ are drawn to the same fields. Each habitus engenders certain tastes, opinions, experiences and qualifications in its membership. These traits are known as ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu 1977). On a field, the players use their cultural capital to acquire power.

The players bring different degrees of capital to the field and those with the most capital have the greatest impact on the operation of the field. They can bring such capital as they are able to "enter into the struggles over the monopoly of power" They can ensure that their narratives dominate the field.

(Drummond 1996, 263)

However, repetition or mimicry of the affectations of the most powerful will not necessarily guarantee success on the field. Creativity and innovation also have a place. Each individual has a particular habitus of his or her own, which is a strain of the larger collective habitus. The individual habitus, combined with the particular place of an individual on the field, guarantees some difference of opinion and position. "...there is a dialectic interaction between a habitus and a field, the external circumstances in which an individual finds herself" (Reay 1995, 355). The strategy of the players on the field may lead to innovation. Different aspects of the habitus may be emphasized to achieve certain ends: "Like game playing skills, the structures of the habitus facilitate the pursuit of specified goals" (Crossley 2001, 84).

Deeper changes to the field and the habitus, respectively, occur in times of crisis. In Bourdieu’s terms, crisis occurs when subjective expectations of an individual or group no

longer coincide with the objective structure of the field. In times of peace or stability, arguments or crises preceding that time of peace are subsumed within the habitus, and the conditions and assumptions of the peace time become “doxa” or common sense.

What appears to us today as self-evident, as beneath consciousness and choice, has quite often been the stake of struggles and instituted only as the result of dogged confrontations between dominant and dominated groups. The major effect of historical evolution is to abolish history by relegating to the past, that is, to the unconscious, the lateral possibles that it eliminated.

(Bourdieu, 1998, 56–7; cited in Crossley 2003, 47)

When expectations are no longer met by the field however, the assumptions within the habitus are questioned and critically reflected upon. The habitus may even be suspended, and more radical, critical behaviors and actions may take over. Individuals or groups with unmet expectations may begin acting along the lines of their expectations. The changes in disposition and method that occur in the times of struggle become “doxa” when the struggle is over (Crossley 2003).

Through years of negotiations, the partnership ‘field’ between Pikangikum and the OMNR is becoming complex. Narratives are part of the communication and strategy employed by the two groups on the ‘field’. In some cases, narratives articulate the position of either group in regards to their respective ‘habitus’, in other cases, they show an agreement between the two parties to collectively emphasize certain sequences of events.

Narrative and Organization

Studying organizational narratives is one method of examining change, innovation and power dynamics within an organization (Stewart 2001; Drummond 1996; Czarniawaska 2002; Yanow and Cook 2004; O'Connor 2000). Bourdieu's theory of habitus seeks to reconcile structure with action, and narratives are a link between the two (Drummond 1996; Stewart 2001; Bird 2007). Organizational narratives are one indication of a shifting habitus, and studying them can show change and power within an organization or partnership. Narratives can also be part of the process of building trust, and exercising a control of communication, both aimed at lessening risk in the relationship. Narratives may also be 'techniques' which can lead to innovation on the partnership field if an individual's story contains a lesson or sparks a solution. They are a catalyst for action.

The narratives of an organization are part of the organization's institutional memory (Roth and Kleiner 1998; Boje 1991). Organizational memory allows an organization to retain and perpetuate changed processes and beliefs, even if the original innovators are no longer involved. An organization could undergo complete personnel restructuring and still produce the same product and service as it did before the restructuring.

Organizational memory occurs when changes are permanently embedded in the organization through training, record keeping, company mandates and directives, and unofficial narratives or stories circulated by staff at all levels (Easterby-Smith, Nicolini and Crossnan 2000).

An examination of organizational narratives over time may show change and learning taking place and the organizational memory shifting (Yanow and Cook 2004; O'Connor 2000). Narratives have power within organizations because they are the association of discrete historical events with each other and they imply or attribute causality (Drummond 1996; Stewart 2001; Tsoukas and Hatch 2001). They can also emphasize key points in the history of a group. Old narratives frequently act as guidelines for appropriate behavior in unknown, unpredictable situations taking place within an organization. Past stories of success are told and compared to recent events, so that past mistakes are avoided and successes hopefully repeated (O'Connor 2000). Within the organization, narratives circulate among members and new collective action can be generated out of the meaning that is gleaned from the stories. Re-examining linkages between certain events through narrative can trigger innovation (Roth and Kleiner 1998). The motivation or cause triggering an action within a narrative is often described in terms of the organization's mandates (Tsoukas and Hatch 2001). OMNR narratives in particular, tend to involve the narrator engaging with or acting on policy that was current at the time. Pikangikum narratives, in some instances, can be about the narrator's reaction to OMNR policy and a description of how they had to change to accommodate the policy.

The context of a narrative is particularly important (Yanow and Cook 2001; Boje, Luhman and Baack 1999). "*Context...* refers to the commonsense notion of audience and circumstances. But *context* has broader implications, for example, to understand how speech relates to purposes and outcomes requires the ability to follow that speech

backward and forward in time.” (O’Connor 2000, 175) Drawing on Weick (1995), O’Connor (2000, 176) proposes that organizational change is a sensemaking act of “dialogue” across time and space, namely across the organization’s past, present, and future. Narratives are mirror texts of the larger organization, as they are linkages between past, present and future made by members of the organization. Narratives can therefore indicate the “...temporal and spatial context of organizational change initiatives.”(O’Connor 2000, 176)

Very often, there are protocols and political decisions involved in the telling of narratives. Certain narratives can only be told by certain people, often those who experienced the events themselves, or have the authority to make statements about the events. At times, however, the person with the authority to tell a story is not powerful, and they can wield power at a small scale if their story becomes the version that people refer to and abide by (Boje et. al 1999). The ethnographer must be exceedingly careful about which stories are emphasized in a study, as the selection can harm less powerful players on a ‘field’ (Boje et al 1999). “The most vulnerable and fragile components are often those that are subversive in nature and are a direct threat to those who maintain their power as beneficiaries of the colonial system” (Simpson 2004, 376-377). On a ‘field’, managers tend to be people with a tremendous amount of cultural capital. The manager will often enforce narratives which reinforce their particular habitus. “Power, at least in part, involves the ability to impose metaphors on others” (Cresswell 1997, 333; cited in Stewart 2001, 150). However, there are stories which circulate at high levels within an organization, and there are also stories which circulate only at local levels

(Boje et. al. 1999). The research here will examine the local narratives of the Red Lake OMNR, and the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation in Pikangikum, Ontario, in an attempt to make those local stories more widely known.

In some cases, different groups can have different narratives of the same events. Their telling may be an attempt to rationalize the position and the motives of the other group:

...stakeholders also posit alternative stories with alternative motives and implications to the very same underlying historical incident. ...

In complex organizations, part of the reason for storytelling is the working out of those differences in the interface of individual and collective memory.

(Boje 1991, 107)

Alternatively, sometimes in partnerships the collective experiences between members of both groups can lead to the formation of new narratives, which reinforce the strength of the partnership by acknowledging their shared history.

There are limitations to examining narratives, however. It is recognized that narratives recorded during research are a collaborative production between the participant and the researcher. The participant chooses which information will be presented and the sequence of events. These choices are very often dependent on how the participant perceives the researcher; in terms of the researcher's capacity to understand the material and his or her empathy for the participant and the organization or culture to which the participant belongs. The material presented by the participant is further shaped by the questions the researcher asks and the issues which are elaborated upon. During most interviews, the researcher must come to understand what the participant is telling them, and the interview

becomes a text of the mutual understanding reached between the researcher and the participant (Baker 2002; Fontana 2002; Kohler Riessmann 2002). In some cases, however, the participant may use metaphors or nuanced stories which are not necessarily understood in their entirety by the researcher at the time they are told. Meaning may emerge later and be more personal to the researcher (Cruikshank 1991).

Summary

The emphasis of this study is the means by which historical context informs the current workings of the partnership between the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The history behind the partnership and the current workings of the partnership are explored with the narratives of both partners. The active use of narratives within the partnership will also be discussed.

Telling narratives and listening to them requires making sense of a sequence of events. Narratives often signify moments when the teller and the listener are engaged in changing, reforming, or reflecting on something. The partnership between WFMC and OMNR is at the forefront of Ontario's *Northern Boreal Initiative* policy, and has required change, innovation and flexibility on the part of both parties. The two share a complex colonial history. Pierre Bourdieu's 'habitus' appears to be appropriate as an overarching theoretical framework for the study because it is a theory of both institution and reformation within the active shaping and use of history. Narratives are one means through which the habitus is shaped, because narratives indicate power differentials, misunderstandings and also attempts at sensemaking between individuals and groups on a 'field'. The use of narratives within a partnership may also be part of social or behavioral

controls which can diminish risk. Social control is the expectation that a partner will behave a certain way due to the fact that the partners share certain values and norms. Within the collective 'field' of the partnership between Pikangikum and the OMNR, the telling of certain narratives is expected of Pikangikum by the OMNR and vice versa. The two parties have also made the decision to prefer some narratives within the partnership, an indication of the strengthening of alliance, perhaps.

Chapter 3 Methods

Introduction

This chapter will provide both an overview of the methodological approach and an explanation of the research procedure undertaken in the field.

The approach to the study was naturalistic and iterative. Methodologically, the study consisted of the collection and analysis of narratives from people in both the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation. The oral histories were supplemented by archival research in the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada record group 10 files. Due to the fact that the study is an ethnography of a partnership between organizations, it will also contain elements of a process evaluation. The presentation of findings and the method of analysis will also be addressed. The final sections of the chapter will address researcher reflexivity and the limitations of the research.

Methodological Approach

Naturalistic Research

A naturalistic study bases data collection techniques on the circumstances of the phenomena being studied, as opposed to allowing the methods of the study to determine what is found. When applied to ethnography, true naturalism implies a completely selfless analysis of a cultural occurrence which is generally foreign to the researcher. As an outsider, however, the capacity to understand and write about another in a wholly

unbiased manner is not possible (Hammersely and Atkinson 1995). This study will therefore attempt to follow a naturalistic line, although limited by the outsider status of the researcher.

Iterative Research

Iterative research stems from the grounded theory model of social research first elaborated upon by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 (Hammersely and Atkinson 1995). Essentially, an iterative study unfolds over the course of the research. Initial analysis of data helps structure research design and data collection. Data collection is guided by the theory which emerges through the research. An iterative approach can be applied to studies which are descriptive and exploratory, as well as studies aimed at formulating theory (Hammersely and Atkinson 1995).

Process Evaluation

Although this study is not meant to be an evaluation, there is an evaluative element, as the findings partially indicate what has worked and what has not worked in the WPMC/OMNR partnership.

Evaluation is considered to be applied research aimed at solving a problem within a program, service or policy. Recently however, researchers who conduct 'pure' research in the social sciences have admitted that many of their studies have implications for evaluation (Kelly 2005). Citing Rossi and Freeman (1993), Kelly (2005) states that ethnography often seeks to investigate how something works, which is crucial for

informing decisions about how the thing can be altered. Understanding structure and organization helps a great deal when deciding what needs to be changed.

In order to carry out an evaluation, the researcher needs to be well informed of the circumstances they are studying before they have an ‘official’ discussion with the participants. In evaluation, as in basic research, it is crucial that the participants collaborate on the study. In evaluation research, however, the more the participants collaborate, the more open they will be to the findings and suggestions which are made (Graham 2003; Kelly: 2005).

Given that this study will look at a partnership in progress, the type of evaluation it would most resemble would be a process evaluation, which “...describes what happens in the course of policy and programme implementation...” (Kelly 2005, 532). A process evaluation is about description; it outlines or documents the structure of a program.

Narrative

The study of narratives is common in ethnography and has been applied to organizational studies (Czarniawska 2002; DeVault and McCoy 2002; O’Connor 2000). There is also an overlap between narrative analysis, organizational studies, and the work of Bourdieu (1977) (Drummond 1996; Bird 2007; Stewart 2001).

There are several ways of applying narrative theory to organizations which involves either describing the organization itself using a narrative structure, or using narrative to investigate meaning within organizations (Tsoukas and Hatch 2001). One means of

studying narratives within organizations is iterative, and is employed in the sub-discipline of institutional ethnography. Narratives are followed as a means of ‘mapping’ a theme within an organization, not as a means of describing the entire organization. The ethnographer chooses a theme and interviews participants, then takes referrals and interviews other participants in a path which leads through different levels of the organization. Very often, the researcher has to conduct preliminary, informal interviews with the participants prior to the formal interviews, so that interview questions can be determined ahead of time. Referring to organizational products such as policy statements during interviews is common practice, as they can help focus discussion on specific organizational activities (Prior 2005; DeVault and McCoy 2002). Although the research here is not strictly an institutional ethnography, following narratives through an organization using an iterative process was the methodological tactic guiding this study.

Participant Selection

A snowballing technique of participant selection was used, both in Pikangikum and at the OMNR. Initially, four OMNR employees involved with Whitefeather negotiations were approached during the Whitefeather Land Use Plan Open House on November 5th, 2005, in Red Lake, Ontario. Recommendations by these employees led to a total of 10 OMNR employees considered initially for the study. Seven OMNR officials participated in the end. One employee was not included due to the individual’s relative inexperience with the community and the negotiations. Another employee was not approached for an interview, since the person was based out of Sioux Lookout and not directly involved with Pikangikum and the third individual did not keep the interview commitment. All

participants were given the interview schedule prior to the interview, except for one employee who was interviewed by chance. This person's answers are not included here, as they were asked different questions due to their more junior position. OMNR employees were interviewed over the phone, at OMNR offices in Red Lake, or OMNR offices in Thunder Bay.

Nine Elders involved with the Whitefeather Steering Group participated in the study. The Elders self-selected after a research outline was translated by Paddy Peters, WPMC Land Use Coordinator, and communicated within the WPMC. The participants arrived at the Whitefeather office in the community, or were visited at home. In addition, Paddy Peters provided numerous insights to the Elders' words, and to the negotiation process during the course of the research. Informal discussions with Peters took the place of a formal interview. Initially, the thesis proposal suggested that other members of the WPMC would be interviewed besides the Elders, as well as some of the consultants. I made several attempts to interview a senior member of the WPMC, however, the interview never took place. Time constraints, funding constraints and personal circumstances prevented an extension of the research in the community and with the consultants.

Data Collection

The data consists primarily of open-ended interviews which took place during four rounds of fieldwork. Participants were informed of the interview theme and questions prior to their interviews. Each round of interviews saw different iterations of the

questions, often pursuing themes brought up in prior interviews, or simply edited for clarity. A small amount of archival data is also included, to supplement the interviews.

After completion of the research proposal in early February of 2006, two separate meetings were held with two key members of the Red Lake OMNR, and Paddy Peters, the Land Use Coordinator for Whitefeather, respectively. The OMNR participants and Peters were given a synopsis of the project explaining the purpose, objectives, and methods of the study (Appendix 1). Approval for the topic was given; however, concerns were raised about the political nature of the project and about confidentiality, by the OMNR.

As per the research proposal of February 2, 2006, the fieldwork was to begin with a visit to the Red Lake OMNR office to look at archival records pertaining to Pikangikum. The fieldwork schedule had to be changed, however, when a bolt of lightning struck the office building housing the OMNR and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) in Red Lake on May 24, 2006. The archival material was damaged by fire, smoke and water and was removed from the building. During the move, some of the material was placed in frozen storage, changing the original archiving scheme. The Red Lake OMNR employees were relocated to other temporary offices. In lieu of examining archival records in Red Lake, the office of Chapeskie Corporation in Kenora was visited, so that background documents pertaining to the Whitefeather-OMNR partnership could be examined. These documents were primarily letters and communiqués passed between the two parties. They were not used as data and merely provided political context prior to

the fieldwork. A copy of the old *West Patricia Land Use Plan* was also examined in the company of Paddy Peters, who noted that it contained no Aboriginal consultation or participation at all.

In late June 2006, fieldwork began in Pikangikum. The theme of the open-ended interviews, Pikangikum's historical experiences with the OMNR, was discussed with Paddy Peters. Peters translated the request for interviews to the Elders and discussed the theme with them. Over the next two months, the Elders stopped into the Whitefeather office to discuss their experiences with the OMNR. The community was visited again from mid-October to mid-November, 2006, to discuss Whitefeather related negotiations with the OMNR. Prior to the second set of interviews, a list of questions was provided to Peters, who asked for clarification (Appendix 2). Peters translated the premise of the questions to the Elders, who again, returned to the Whitefeather office in the community for interviews. Paddy Peters translated all the interviews, save two; which were translated by Marlene Quill. All of the interviews, except one, were tape recorded. Transcripts of the interviews were completed in December of 2006 and January of 2007.

The fieldwork sessions in Pikangikum included attending negotiation meetings between Whitefeather and the OMNR when they took place in Pikangikum, and in one case, Thunder Bay. As well, the fieldwork included a fieldtrip to Barton Lake with OMNR personnel and Solomon Turtle and family in early August, 2006. The fieldtrip was aimed at assessing caribou habitat in the Barton Lake area, the trapline of Solomon Turtle.

Field notes from the meeting at Thunder Bay in the summer of 2006, were retained as data.

In late January of 2007, OMNR employees were visited for two days in Red Lake and interviewed at their temporary offices. They had been provided with the interview questions beforehand (Appendix 3). Another trip was taken to Thunder Bay, Ontario in early March 2007 to interview other members of the OMNR, absent during the Red Lake interviews. The questions from the previous round of interviews in Red Lake were modified slightly and distributed to the interviewees prior to the interview sessions (Appendix 4). As with the Pikangikum interviews, the OMNR interviews were also tape recorded and transcribed. The quotes provided by OMNR employees remain anonymous, as requested.

A trip to Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa was undertaken in February of 2007 in order to examine files related to commercial fishing and mercury contamination in the Patricia District of northwestern Ontario. The file names had been researched in the summer of 2006, and the list shown to Pikangikum Chief and Council, who approved the trip (Appendix 5). An Access to Information request was filed with the National Archives under an 82J research request. All of the data were provided to Councilor Alex Peters in late 2007 and early 2008, in the form of photocopies and digital images.

Analysis

According to Barthes and Duisit (1975), no detail is wasted or accidental in a narrative, all information is useful and was included by the teller for a reason. O'Connor (2000) has stated that narratives are mirrors of an organization, and that extreme sensitivity to context and detail is necessary. Editing is therefore a major challenge. O'Connor (2000) included the entire transcript of an organizational narrative in her study, followed by an analysis. The same approach will be used here, particularly in relation to Pikangikum data, because the Pikangikum interviews took the form of long narratives. The OMNR interviews involved more succinct answers to questions, although some participants included narratives to elaborate on a situation.

Due to the question and answer format of the OMNR interviews, OMNR transcripts were coded for major themes. The themes were found through continual re-reading of the transcripts over the course of several weeks. Initially, the transcripts were printed out and spread on the floor, and similar themes in the different interviews were noted in the margins. Passages with similar themes were cut and pasted together in one long Microsoft Word document. The context of the passage was included, as well as the details about the speaker. In some cases a passage contained several themes and was assigned several codes. In the end the themes that had been talked about most frequently and by the highest number of people were described in the OMNR chapter. Themes in the OMNR data which corresponded with themes in the Pikangikum narratives were also included, even if they were only mentioned once. The quotes found in the OMNR chapter and the descriptions of the circumstances surrounding those quotes are the

condensed version of much longer passages. Initially the OMNR chapter contained several lengthy quotes which were edited down to preserve some anonymity for the speakers. In Pikangikum, however, the individual Elders told narratives which appeared to collectively make sense in sequence, making coding irrelevant. Themes emerged through the reading of the narratives in the order they were told. The Pikangikum narratives are presented in their entirety, for the most part. In some cases, they were edited to reduce redundancy. The Elders did not raise concerns about anonymity, except for one individual.

Position of the Researcher

There are numerous limitations and ethical concerns with this study. The primary limitation, however, is the outsider status of the researcher and the participation of two different groups of people with a colonial history and dynamic between them. In Anthropology 101, students learn that they have to maintain a lifelong allegiance and loyalty to the people they work with.

What business does a researcher have looking at two sides of a relationship? The answer is to address the silence existing between the two groups on the landscape. As the child of immigrant parents in a small, single industry mining town in the interior of British Columbia, I grew up completely uninformed of historical and social context. I saw that we were engaged in the process of extracting ore, refining it, and shipping it to Japan for smelting. For the most part, we were too busy blasting and milling and making money to notice the reserves or the First Nations people neighboring us. Any attention given to our

First Nations people living near us tended to be negative. The frontier resource town next to the Indian reserve is a classic Canadian scene, repeated over and over across the country (Smith, 2006 draft). Red Lake and Pikangikum are an example.

Awareness of the First Nations surrounding my hometown came later, with work and friendships. I read Andrea Laforet and Annie York's *Spuzzum: Fraser Canyon Histories 1808-1939*, which explores contact with settlers and the gold mining history of the Fraser Canyon, told through the narratives of York, a Nlakaamux Elder. The book added a great deal of depth to the landscape surrounding my hometown. We were mining copper, but the Nlakaamux people in the area had dealt with gold miners before us; a deep history colliding with a more recent, utilitarian one. Where do they meet, and how? I began to understand a little, through the helpful words of friends who took me to places I had seen thousands of times out of a car window, but had never actually set foot in.

Aside from studying interaction narratives on the resource frontier, this research attempts to examine a group closer to my own; the government negotiators, to see how they relate to an Indigenous group. A conversation with Peggy Smith at the land use plan open house in Red Lake on November 5th, 2005, confirmed the idea that people who work with Indigenous groups such as government employees, consultants, and environmentalists should also be the subject of research. Part of my rationale for looking at the OMNR is a sense that I had no right to study an Indigenous group as an outsider, and that I should also try to turn the 'ethnographic gaze' on my own society.

Anishinaabe writer Leanne Simpson (2004) has pointed out that resource management literature tends to avoid discussions about colonialism. In a situation where a First Nation has approached a government body and agreed to work under the government's framework, addressing colonialism is a delicate task. The colonial dynamic is meant to be implied in this study, but is not the main focus. The obvious danger here is that colonialism will be pointed out but not addressed appropriately or adequately enough. Although can it ever really be?

Limitations of the Research

Ethnographic research itself is a western construct, based in the rather arrogant assumption that another's viewpoint, or way of thinking can be grasped and explained (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). Researchers, particularly outsiders, are known to extract information from a community and re-present it to the community in a manner which is unusable, faulty, or even compromising. Research tends to perpetuate oppression by enabling outsiders to become 'experts' on oppressed or colonized groups. The opinions of these 'experts' can stifle the real voices of people in that group (Tuhiwai Smith 1999).

A major ethical dilemma faced by the 'outsider' is the subject of language and translation. A researcher who does not speak the language is generally unaware of all sorts of deep cultural meanings embedded in the responses to their questions. As well, a translator can severely influence the outcomes of the research, depending on how that person is perceived in the community, and how they are representing the researcher in the community (Hammersely and Atkinson 1995). Here, the problem of translation was

mitigated by the strength of the translator, Paddy Peters. Peters translates negotiations between Pikangikum and the Ministry and is, therefore, acutely aware of the ideas, concerns and experiences of the Elders. What was translated by Peters may have been what was considered appropriate for me to know. Distributing the interview schedule to both Pikangikum and the OMNR prior to the interviews, in part, allowed both groups to craft a response and consider what they were saying, given the political nature of the research.

Orientation to the Findings Chapters

The next two chapters present the research findings. First, the Pikangikum narratives will be presented in their entirety, with little editing, in the same order they were told to the researcher during fieldwork. The narratives are linked by the researcher's observations and a brief summary. Subsequently, the OMNR narratives are presented thematically using quotes to illustrate the themes. Coding was used to arrive at the themes in the OMNR data. The main points are drawn out in a summary at the end of the OMNR chapter.

Chapter 4 Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation

Introduction

Building on prior learning and traditions is never a direct or linear path. Instead, Indigenous science pursues a rather meandering path around things and over obstacles...

...through fields of relationships and establishment of a sense of meaning, a sense of territory, a sense of breadth of the context.

(Cajete 2000, 81; cited in McGregor 2004, 405)

Time and knowledge are often described as circular, or at least as non-linear, in an Aboriginal world view. The past and future may be simultaneously acting on the present, or the future and the present may be acting on the past (King 1994; Robinson 2000; Cruikshank 2007, 2000). When speaking of the past, narrators can tell stories which take place in the present, and vice versa if the meaning is relevant to the situation in which the story is being told (Cruikshank 1991, 2000).

The meaning that a researcher derives from an interview is subjective. Narratives are conversations between the teller and the listener, whereby the researcher or listener can only hear what they are ready to hear, and what is appropriate for them to hear. The researcher must be wary of how their voice influences the narrative, and how they represent the oral in written form. Not speaking at all as a researcher is tempting, but not ethical. Everyone, even outsiders, have something to contribute and must speak from their place (Riddington 1996).

A chronological ordering of narratives from Pikangikum is likely inappropriate. Instead, presenting the stories approximately in the same sequence they were told to me in the community may reveal more of the narrators' intentions than fragmenting them and imposing a strict categorical scheme (Wickwire 2005; Robinson and Wickwire 1989). However, it can reasonably be argued that not coding and categorizing the texts is a form of ordering and partitioning in its' own right. In any case, presenting the narratives as they were told also inadvertently shows how I, as a researcher, was taught certain things about the OMNR over time. The Elders' narratives are in italics, and my observations are in plain text so as to differentiate the two.

The First Narratives

I asked about the history between Pikangikum and the OMNR. What emerges initially in the narratives is a working relationship between individuals from Pikangikum and the Ministry. Later, the theme of fear and enforcement of regulations emerges, as does the need to be able to access and exert control over regulating and planning processes.

Alec Suggashie, July 10, 2006
Paddy Peters translation

So starting off with the summer of 1966. That's when I began to work for the forest fire boss I call it in Ojibway. As an EFF, that's an extra fire fighter they were called back then and from there they moved into, began to work in a unit crew... We would be picked up when there was still ice on the lake. In the month of April, that's when we would be picked up in the community. On April the 20th of every spring. And we would be up in Red Lake working out of the fire base all summer and our jobs would end around September the 15th when we came back to the community. I moved my entire family to Red Lake so that my family would be with me out there. And some of the people that I worked for, the forest fire boss, his name was Ross, I don't know what his last name was, and there was another man called Round. The exact words that we used were Round Ass

Man. That's what they called him hey? And the other man that I recall, one of the MNR pilots, his name was Jake Seagull.

So, my role, my job was a crew boss. I worked as a crew boss in one of the units, there were five men to one crew, and I was the boss of four others that worked with me. It was very dangerous work, fighting forest fires, especially when the day consisted of a heavy wind, as a result the fire was very fierce when there was a wind which made a lot of smoke. And one of the reasons why it was dangerous was it was easy for people to get caught up in the middle of a fire especially when there was smoke all over. So we were advised never to be alone anywhere in a forest where there was a forest fire. In case somebody was alone they would rather than going away from the fire because of the smoke, you never know, maybe they would wander into the fire. So this was one thing we were always concerned about, people getting caught and wandering away in the smoke.

Another technique that we were taught is for fighting a forest fire... if it was way far out in a bush, where we couldn't reach the fire with a water hose we had to fight that fire using sand. The sand was used to cut off the fire line, to prevent the fire from spreading. But usually there was what was known as an underground fire that we could not detect, because it would burn underground, it would burn the roots. That's how the fire traveled, underground, and sometimes the fire would ignite on the other side of where they had cut off the fire and it would spread again from there. So we were taught to use the sand to fight fires, we were trained in that area. But when we began we didn't really know how to properly use the shovel. When you scoop up the sand in the shovel you are supposed to throw it in a particular way to put that fire out. We were not experienced at first in knowing to do that, it took some time for us to get the hang of that and after a while we became good at that using the sand to put the fire out.

How we were hired, it was during the time when they were in Red Lake fighting fires, there were about eight of [us] that were asked to work in the position as a crew boss and that's where it started from, some of the men that I worked with were from this community. James O. Turtle, Samuel Quill, Oliver Hill, Josef King, Alec Keeper, Jake Keeper, Tom Quill Senior. These were all the crew bosses, they all had a crew.

We were given training, in how to fight fires and use equipment and all that heh... So I guess out of that they were good, they passed the training. This is how we were selected, to take on the position as crew bosses.

There was myself that took my family, there was also a couple of other guys that took their family. Not all of them moved their families to Red Lake. There was one individual that I forgot. Josef Peters was also with our group.

I want to share another firefighting technique that was used. There was a fire way out in the forest, far from any water or a lake. It took a lot of hose to reach that particular area where the fire was. Sometimes just using one pump that you got at the lake, sometimes there was not enough water pressure so they had to put another pump half way, so that would increase the water pressure that would be needed to put the fire out. There was

also a lot of work to do then, after the fire was put out. And we have to collect all the hose that was used and bring it back.

Another area of fire fighting that we witnessed was the water bombers. This was another danger to the area of firefighting, especially when all that water is dropped on the fire area. I witnessed large mature trees break in half when the water was dropped on that certain area. There was a constant communication with walkie talkies where the water bombers were going to drop the water and where the areas were. We were told not to be there. But one time we wanted to watch a water bomber drop, attacking a fire we laid down on the ground. We wanted to have a good view. But we were advised right away not to hang around that area because of the danger, we had to move.

There were other areas of training. Another area that we were also taught was First Aid. How to treat accidents or injuries. Broken arms, broken legs, we trained how to work in those areas, even when someone is drowned or half drowned, mouth to mouth resuscitation. Other training, techniques of firefighting, even setting up camp and all that.

Another area that [we] were taught was safety, helicopter safety. The helicopter is known as the skeleton because you know how the helicopters were before? So we were taught different safety procedures, how to get in and out of a helicopter, what to do once you got out of a helicopter. Stay low, because of the propeller. Also to never go around the helicopter because of the back propeller too. We were given training how to take hose out of a helicopter, to lay the hose once you get out of a helicopter. Lots of different areas that we were taught. And I would be here telling you all of these things, we would be here for a long time. There's one particular thing that I always think about every now and then is I liked the helicopter rides, we would be picked up in the morning, taken to the fire and brought back in the evening by the helicopter. I always enjoyed those helicopter rides. The other thing that I think about in relation to the helicopter is the blade. We were always told that that was a danger. So I always kept that in mind. And we were always advised not to carry any loose items. Or even leave any loose items laying around, for instance your jacket or your gear items. Those would be sucked up by the blade we were told. They would create a hazard to us, a danger. I always kept that in mind.

This first interview clearly establishes a working relationship between Pikangikum people and the OMNR, or Lands and Forests at the time, which existed prior to the Whitefeather partnership. Alec and a number of others from Pikangikum took up the profession of firefighting and learned the necessary skills and safety precautions on the job.

In the next interview, Charlie Peters discussed his long career as a fur stamper. He described how the OMNR 'made official' the Pikangikum trapline boundaries in 1946. These boundaries are currently used in planning the Whitefeather forest. The head trapper of an area is the first one to be consulted if the OMNR has plans for that area.

Charlie Peters, July 10, 2006
Paddy Peters translation

So I began in 1956, began working for the MNR. 1956 began working for Lands and Forests as a fur stamper, and at that time, for each pelt that we stamped we made 10 cents. Before retirement it went up to 15 cents a pelt.

As far back as I can remember when trapping began, there were many people that trapped, there was a lot of fur that came in. The example that I want to use is Lands and Forests would give us metal tags to tag each pelt that came in. We received in the fall before the trapping season, 3000 tags. These metal tags. And these tags, 3000 tags would run out before Christmas in December. That's how much fur was coming in. But over the years, you know trapping has declined, there has not been much fur coming in over these past several years. Even this past year, there is very little trapping done, maybe there is four or five people who are trapping.

So there were other communities, trappers from other communities that would come in and sell their fur in this community. Little Grand Rapids, Paungassi, Poplar Hill. So they brought in their fur here for me to stamp. And the trapping was very heavy during those years, that was the economy in those days was trapping. Everyone had to trap, it was good money back then.

Charlie shows a tally sheet and points out the correspondence between the trapline numbers listed on the sheet and the trapline numbers on the map of the Whitefeather forest. The tally sheet has the names of the licensed trappers and the number of different species of fur they brought in.

And the other thing that I used to do is, I used to measure if I saw an extremely large pelt. So over the years I've seen the decline of certain species, then there'd be another specie that would be abundant that year. Like today there... very little, when trapping that year

there's no marten whatsoever, even the beaver, there's not much beaver that one year, but now today there's a lot of beaver, but it's the other way around with marten, there's very little marten today. And the other fur bearing animal I don't see much of is the mink heh? I don't know what's happening with the mink. So over the years it's been up and down for these fur bearing animals.

Before 1956, I recall that trappers did not have to get their fur stamped. They would just sell them like that. But one time, we had the treaty people visit our community and an MNR official came along at that time. That's when they wanted to talk with the people to introduce the trapline system. That's when the boundaries were established. The different trapline areas. And it was quite restrictive the way that they put it, no one could go into another area or cross a boundary. You would be breaking the law we were told. And people actually be charged heh? Some of the questions they asked at that time was they wanted to know how many the trappers were in each area, like in each boundary. And if they could get along, was some of the questions they asked, if this group could work together in this area? These areas existed long before the MNR introduced the trapping boundary areas. I recall that people were asked what areas they occupied. And a certain group would be occupying a certain area. And they were asked 'how far did you go in this area'? This is where the MNR established these trapline areas according to the information that they received from the people living in that area there heh? So that's how these traplines came into existence, it was based on the traditional... I guess... traditional... hunting areas of our people.

There was a... I remember doing a beaver count one year. I was asked to do a beaver count by MNR. And the way we did that was, I was asked to draw a trapline area and I did that for each trapline area and I asked the trappers to come and identify where there was beaver in their areas by indicating in red. So that's what they did and all of those maps that I made and MNR took those maps. That's the time when MNR came out of Sioux Lookout instead of Red Lake.

I was one day approached by a councilor Joe Moose is his name, he's deceased now. I guess Lands and Forests at that time was seeking for a person from Pikangikum to do this job stamping fur. So I accepted that, I felt I was qualified to do that job. I understood what needed to be done. But I can't understand why this stopped heh? There's no more stamping of fur in this community. MNR told me they had no more money to put a person to work doing that. I don't think people need to have their furs stamped now. The trapping is being run by Nishinaabe-Aski out of Thunder Bay now. ...I've worked out of my house all of these years. I've kept everything at my house, when I was not home, my wife worked on my behalf.

The Hudson's Bay Company handled all the fur buying. They were the only ones that could buy fur. Actually my Grandfather worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at an old outpost there so my Grandfather was the manager of that outpost. Many years ago. If he would have been still alive he would have been wearing one of those Northern Store green vests.

The first outpost that was here, it's just an outpost, HBC company. Actually my grandfather helped his father. Actually he was the manager and my grandfather would help him. My grandfather was the manager there and he wrote everything in English. Scribbling, it wasn't in syllabics, it was his own scribbling that he could read and understand. My great grandfather's name was Peter. He was the manager of that post, the store heh? So after my grandfather couldn't carry on anymore then someone else took over. The late Angus Comber at that time began working for the Hudson's Bay Company. So when the late Angus Comber is retired, couldn't carry on. That's when the man came from the outside to manage the Hudson's Bay store. Today you have the Northern Store there. When my great grandfather was working for the Hudson's Bay Company, he wasn't paid a salary. He never saw cash, all he got was a food ration. So before he retired, his final pay, he was told to come and pick it up in Little Grand Rapids in Manitoba. We went with him that time, we set off by canoe downriver to Little Grand Rapids to pick up his pay. And he was given a certain amount of food for his last pay. We paddled a large canoe to Little Grand Rapids. That time, there were three of us and a large canoe. So what he received was flour, lard, tea, tobacco, the main, main staple diet at that time. The canoe was just full, when we paddled back to Pikangikum. We were very capable of paddling all that distance heh? Even through all the portages. One of us could carry 400 pounds on our back.

One of the ways that Pikangikum knew the OMNR prior to the Whitefeather partnership was through the formalization of their kin-based traplines and the associated accounting systems. The populations of fur-bearing animals fluctuated and prices declined over time, eventually resulting in the loss of Charlie's job.

Norman Quill harvested rice on Prairie Lake through a permit issued by the OMNR in the mid-1970s. He ceased harvesting rice 10 years ago because he received a letter which may have informed him that the license was cancelled due to the incorporation of Prairie Lake into Woodland Caribou Park.

*Norman Quill, July 10, 2006,
Paddy Peters translation*

Regarding the wild rice harvest, the way that I got into this area of harvesting wild rice was I was asked by the Chief and council at that time, I don't know its' been how many years ago that was, to go to a certain lake west of Red Lake called Prairie Lake. I went

there for seven summers, seven seasons to harvest wild rice. It would be around the middle of September to the first week in October I would be there. And after I harvested rice I would come home and move out to the trapline.

The first summer we were there we really didn't know how to harvest the rice in large quantities. We used a small outboard motor with the boat and that didn't really work because the props on the motor kept getting snagged with all the weeds. The next thing we tried we paddled through the rice field with a boat. But that was a lot of work. We didn't get very far with that, so I think the following season Stanley Comber brought in a rice harvester. Someone had built a rice harvester machine. It had pontoons. Pontoon contraption with an engine at the back. You could sit up there it had a large bowl at the front, you could drive through the rice. The pontoon boat that Stanley Comber brought in didn't work too well. So about two summers later the First Nation purchased two rice boat harvesters. They had a prop at the back of the boat and a large basket at the front and they drove to the rice field. And those were really good, they harvested a lot of rice with those machines. The boats are still at Prairie Lake.

Shortly after that Stanley Comber brought me another boat harvester. This was powered by an airplane motor with a propeller at the back. And they told me this would work eh. But it didn't happen. It didn't actually work because the way that it was built because once you drove into the rice field it broke all of those rice stalks. It broke them in half. I guess the way that it was built it didn't serve a purpose.

Stanley Comber had several licenses to several lakes. One of the lakes was close to North Spirit Lake, and a large area by Trout Lake. Trout Lake east of Red Lake there. I recall Stanley Comber handed all these wild rice licenses on these lakes to the First Nation. Pikangikum bought these wild rice licenses off Stanley. Stanley used to have an airplane. He was a commercial pilot too. And during that time he used to go around planting wild rice in all the lakes. Stormer Lake here, that river that you cross, there's rice in that river there. Stanley planted all that rice.

Hugh Carlson out of Red Lake purchased the rice. I had offers from Dryden and Kenora. But what I told them was whoever would come to the lake and buy the rice there and give me cash I'll sell the rice to them. So Hugh Carlson came with his plane, landed on the lake and paid me with cash for every bag of rice that weighed about... I don't know about 60 pounds, 50 pounds, he gave me 80 to 100 dollars a bag. It was good money. Sometimes he'd take 10 bags at a time every time he came. Hugh Carlson, I think he owns Viking Outpost Camps. So the other thing that Hugh Carlson did, he brought in food for us every time he came. All kinds of food, lots of food.

Giving a little history of what happened after I accepted the First Nation's proposition of harvesting the rice on Prairie Lake. Prairie Lake has a long history. Some of our people used to go there many years ago. I remember Oliver Hill telling me that they went there. But I don't know who held the license at that time. The only history I know is when Pikangikum First Nation finally got access to that license at Prairie Lake. But I don't know who had the license prior to that. The rice was plentiful it just covered that whole

lake. That's the way it was. It was a good harvest every year. The rice was always there. But one summer I went there to check on the rice, there was no rice on that lake. Only just a little bit of rice in some of those bay areas. I don't know what happened, I've always questioned that to this day. See the last year that I went there there was a large forest fire all around that area. So I don't know if it was the fire that caused the rice to not grow back the following summer.

So about 10 years ago I received a notice in the mail from MNR. The person who read the letter at the time that I received it was the late Angus Comber. In that letter it was stated that I was not to go and harvest wild rice at Prairie Lake. That that had to cease. So I approached MNR just this past year and asked them about the letter. MNR didn't know anything about the letter, and MNR didn't know who told me to stop going to Prairie Lake to harvest rice. But the license was always issued to Pikangikum First Nation. Okay that letter that I received several years ago indicated that I was not supposed to go to the lake anymore. Prairie Lake. But I had a meeting with one of the MNR officials at one of our SAP meetings this winter. Prairie Lake is within Woodland Caribou Park so I talked to _____. _____ said there is no problem for me to go there, since I had a license to harvest in that lake there. _____ wrote a letter stating that I'm allowed to go there. If anyone wants to give me any hassles, I am supposed to show them that letter.

So MNR doesn't know why... why that letter stated that I shouldn't harvest rice there anymore. When I talked to the MNR they didn't have a clue. Whether that came as a result of when they made the Woodland Caribou Park. So they reassured me that I could go there anytime I wanted to.

In regards to the wild rice harvesting by our people they harvested rice. They didn't need a license to harvest rice a long time ago. And that's how it should be, anything that we do on our land we don't need a license. In respect of trapping, the same should apply. We travel within our own territory and we don't need a license to trap within our own territory. So way back then when people harvested for their own use it was for a reason... it was for their diet. They gathered as much as they could for them to use in the wintertime. Wild rice was part of their diet in the winter. They harvested a lot of wild rice in the fall. That's what I think. We ate a lot of rice and that was common food for our people. The other example I would use is the community... the people that have little stores in the community they don't need no license to operate. They are operating in their own land, their own territory.

In the case of Pikangikum people, some were directly employed by the OMNR, others were contractors, and others entrepreneurs who sought out their own buyers. Norman had dealt with Stanley Comber, a middleman between Pikangikum and the Ministry, who had bought a number of wild rice licenses, which were acquired by Pikangikum.

After Norman, Alec and Charlie had recounted their work experiences, Matthew Strang told the story of white officials with dog teams who used to show up unannounced in the community looking for fur. The account was also told by Charlie, during his interview about fur stamping, and later also by George B. Strang. Charlie identified a particular individual as “Sharpback” due to his hunched shoulders and vertebrae which jutted out. The recounting of the Sharpback story by three people indicates that it is probably a community narrative. The malevolent figure(s) characterize a period of fear. Notably, the story involves an official being disrespectful of a small child. Narratives where children are exposed to racism are some of the most grave (O’Neill 1994).

*Matthew Strang, July 18, 2006,
Paddy Peters translation*

In relation to MNR, the first encounter to our community, it was some time back. When they first made an encounter with our community they came by dog teams. That’s how they traveled. And something that I still remember, they didn’t come directly to the community. They would either camp away, two to five miles from the community. So the approach that they would use to come into the community would be they would come early in the morning when the community was still sleeping. And they would come into the houses, the homes. And the reason for that, these white men, were looking for illegal fur. And they wanted to surprise the individuals if they had illegal fur in the homes.

Paddy- These were white men he says eh? So I asked him what the people called him at that time. He says these were the fur bosses eh? Amik Ogema which translates to fur bosses, or another name that they used was Wiyaasiniwag the meat bosses.

So I’ll give you one instance, what these white men did. That came to our community and represented the government. One instance in one home, this white man came into this man’s home early in the morning. The man’s name was Abraham Keeper. In those days they had small log cabins, so people would, when they went to bed, their bedding was on the floor eh? Wherever space they could find on the floor. So when this white man came to visit that home early in the morning, he just barged in eh? And stepped on some kids that were lying on the floor. So Abraham Keeper got offended by that eh? By the white

man coming into his house like that eh? So he physically had to eh, threw this white man out of his house because of that eh? The reason I brought this up is Abraham Keeper would have had the right to evict this white man from his house, for coming in and showing no respect. He was never charged for that.

When you talk about trapping, this was our way of life, our livelihood, trapping was a means of survival for our people at that time. As a matter of fact we trapped all winter. But something I did not understand, why these white men, why did they look for illegal fur and yet they were the ones that established the trapping system?

You know when word came that these white men were coming to the community. You know, before they arrived in the community, the trappers would in advance burn their pelts. Burn all of the fur that they had, because they didn't want to be caught with any illegal fur. But the only buyer at that time was Hudson Bay Company. But I still question that today, why MNR went around looking for illegal fur when our people had the right to trap at that time under that system that was there at that time.

So many of the trappers were caught with presumed illegal fur by these white men and they said that they represented MNR at that time. But I don't know. Whether there just were certain individuals that went around presuming that they represented MNR. I don't know. So my question to this very day, I wonder, they seized quite a bit of fur too, I don't know what they did with all the fur they seized.

Another instance, when our women heard that these white men were coming to visit our community, a lot of our people use the moose hide, to prepare moosehide in the winter to, they had it on a large stretcher frame eh? And when these women heard that the white men were coming to the community, the women would cut the moose hide off the frame, they would just leave the remainder hide that was stringed to the frame, but they would also untie all the stings after they cut out the main hide area. They would hide all the remains of the string. They wouldn't be caught with even a moose hide eh?

So back then also the women had rabbit skins eh? Hanging outside, there would be a lot of rabbit, rabbit fur. Rabbit fur hanging outside when they cut them into strips eh? That was a way of preparing these rabbit fur, they were used to make rabbit fur blankets eh? Women had to hide them, take all those down and hide them someplace.

We heard and we seen these white men coming in the distance because they would have little bells on their dog harnesses and you would hear them coming from a great distance. We didn't pick them up but our dogs picked them up eh? Our dogs would bark before we seen them or heard them. And in that way, I was saying our people began to hide things, their fur. Their hides, their rabbit skins. People were burning pelts because they didn't want to be caught with illegal fur, you could smell the eh, I guess the smell of burnt fur in the community. So that's I guess they caught on, that's why they took another approach, they would camp out there and come early in the morning eh?

Hudson Bay Company was the only store in this area, they had an outpost there, that was many, many years ago. And they were the ones that bought the fur from our people. And I don't know how they regulated the fur. I recall, west of the community here, all the fur that Charlie's grandfather bought, Peter was his name, he would, he had a little log cabin in the bush area there. This is where he put all the fur that he bought on behalf of the Hudson Bay Company. I don't know why he had to build a little cabin out in the bush to keep the fur because the Hudson's Bay Company were the only ones that bought fur in this area, whether he was hiding that from the MNR people, I don't know why he did that.

I guess it was the fear, the presence of these white men that represented I guess the MNR I guess the way that they came, the way that they seized supposedly illegal fur. That feeling set into our people eh? Knowing that these MNR, the only reason that they're coming is to seize fur. So that was in the hearts of our people. They hid every kind of fur, even, our people used to have mittens with beaver trimming on them, you know they would hide those too. And I believe that even on their hats, they had fur trimming on their hats. I believe that's why Peter, the first outpost manager for the Hudson's Bay Company hid the fur. He didn't want to be caught with illegal fur.

Charlie Peters' version of events also includes hiding fur in order to outwit Sharpback, who was sometimes unaware of the 'infractions' occurring around him:

Back then, the only individual that was talked about was a game warden by the name of Sharpback. Somehow his back was shaped, he had an arch in his back that looked sharp. So he would pass by every now and then. Word got around that this Sharpback was a very tough individual who was always looking for trappers, that I guess he would seize fur eh? That was his job, so a lot of times the trappers had to hide their furs, eh? So my grandfather that was at the post there, received a visit from this man, Sharpback. Had him stay at his cabin and grandfather had some fur inside the house up there in the rafters, but there was something that was, you couldn't see the fur up in his rafters. So Sharpback never saw my Grandfather's fur that time eh? There's another story of this other Elder Wishwaa {sp?} from his family's side. MNR had managed a post on the Ontario and Manitoba boundary downriver there that you couldn't trespass, you couldn't take fur across. People had to report in there every time they passed through. So Wishwaa was apparently traveling downriver. He had to go to Manitoba. And along there apparently he had shot some otters. He had all of those otter pelts with him, and he had them around his waist, tied those pelts around his waist. So when he arrived at the post, those MNR people greeted him, pulled in their boat. So they said come in, sit down and eat with us. And after that I guess they had some fun, wrestling. And all that time that old man had his otter pelts around his waist eh? So it's amazing why he never got caught that time carrying those pelts. Even though they were wrestling one another.

Sharpback traveled from the south, probably from some area near Red Lake, probably out of Red Lake, would travel the area here, the region, would pass by through here.

Another story of this Sharpback, I guess they traveled from here to McGuiness Lake. He had a guide with him that time, one that directed them over there, but before they arrived at McGuiness Lake, apparently whoever that guide was, I guess Sharpback was just sitting on the sled or toboggan, was being pulled by dogs or that man pulling him. They stopped by a certain area with a beaverhouse eh? Course Sharpback's route was to go around and apprehend illegal trapping, that was his job eh?

They stopped at this beaver house and somebody had already set some traps there eh. And what happened, he wanted to I guess sit in a different direction eh? So that where they stopped, the beaver house was on his right side, he switched his position, he was looking on the left side, eh? Exactly where those traps were, eh? During his switch there, he didn't see those traps because he was looking the other way, he didn't see that, so he totally missed those traps, he never saw those traps. So these stories are amazing, the way that, I guess eh, people were preserved somehow, not being caught.

When he traveled he always had guides. Different Anishinaabe that came with him and drive him to here, then there would be another group that would go with him from Pikangikum to wherever he was going, maybe to Deer Lake.

Notably, Matthew's comments about the strict trapping regulations and the zealousness with which they were enforced reflect Norman's comments about wild rice licenses.

Licensing of resource harvesting activities is an imposition of someone else's law, and yet the people of Pikangikum have had to abide by those laws and live in fear of breaking them. The theme of regulations and enforcement comes up in later interviews.

Matthew proceeded to elaborate about how Angus Comber's arrival in the community about 60 years ago resulted in the clarification of trapping regulations. Angus Comber was a Hudson's Bay employee who lived in Pikangikum and married a First Nations woman from Little Grand Rapids. He often acted as an intermediary between people in Pikangikum and the OMNR.

Things began to change, I remember those times, there was another manager that came in. Angus Comber was his name. That's when things began to I guess, come out in the open, where you didn't have to think that you're doing something illegal. We felt that we were doing something that was accepted now, or legal. We no longer had to hide our

pelts. I guess Angus Comber helped with the system, being the next manager for the Hudson's Bay Company. He had to explain to the people the trapping regulations and also like when trapping would close and... I remember one time there's a plane landed that, towards evening, eh? That came to pick up the fur for the Hudson Bay Company which Angus sent out because he wanted to send out this fur before the closing of the trapping season.

All MNR did was, they would tell us when trapping season was open, November the first, and when trapping would close, May the 15th, but for them to come and tell us all their regulations or policies, that never happened. So all they went by was when trapping was open, and when trapping was closed. So in our hearts, we always had that constant fear of getting caught. There was always that constant fear, of us, we had to do this and this what this law requires. So the late Angus Comber, he began to do things out in the open. No longer did things in secret as you may say. You know MNR people came and would visit him and see the operation that was happening there. The Hudson Bay Company was buying fur. So it was good for us to see that.

Matthew's story underscores the importance of disclosure on the part of the OMNR.

Alec Suggashie's explanation of fire fighting safety procedures shows that the OMNR is an expert in certain 'fields', and in such cases, their laws should be followed. In cases where Pikangikum has historical expertise in a field, such as rice harvesting, the logic and justification of OMNR regulations appears tenuous. The chances of people accurately following those regulations are lessened significantly if they have not been given a full explanation of the rules in the first place. Matthew went on to describe how the relationship has shifted in the recent past:

I'll tell you another story, about 15 years ago we were on the Nungessor road looking for blueberries. I had my gun with me at that time. So we were picking blueberries in that area when MNR came. I guess, we had a conflict with an MNR official there. They checked out everything, they found my gun. They asked me, 'why are you carrying this gun?' I said I'm protecting just in case we encounter a bear. That's why I bring my gun with me, I told him. It was early fall when this happened. There were still blueberries on the ground. So the MNR official, after I spoke to him, he looked to the ground, probably thinking, and gave me a response 'I have to seize your guns' he said. That MNR official was from Ear Falls. So when moose season opened, we wanted to do some hunting, we asked the Chief to assist us to try to get our guns back. The Chief contacted MNR, to see if we could get our guns back. MNR refused to give our guns back. During the winter we received a call from MNR telling us to pick up our guns. We were never charged too,

don't know why they had to take our guns away. The only thing that, when we went to pick up our rifles, MNR person told us 'are you satisfied, do you have any questions?

Just want to make a comment in regards to our relationship with MNR, I believe we had a good relationship with MNR in the past, the reason why I say that is they, they told us, I guess, when you're out in the bush, you're trapping, you must always carry your gun with you. Even if you go fifty feet in the bush, always carry your gun for your own protection they said. But now today seems like everything's regulated and its really hard, it seems like you always have that fear you might break the law somehow. So when you go out fishing even near the community here, some are afraid to take their riffles in case they might see a game warden out there headed someplace and some people still take their rifles with them when they go out fishing. Seems like they were easier to work with before than now. Today they are very cautious of people respecting their laws. They don't want people to go around breaking their laws, but before it was not like that... in the area of hunting...they never bothered us when we were out hunting. But today you have that constant fear that you might meet up with them someplace. And another thing that they always watched for is that you don't carry a loaded gun. Because that's one thing game wardens always look is if your gun is loaded.

Matthew and Alec both point out that some OMNR regulations were rooted in concerns for their personal safety. Bringing a gun in the bush was for your own safety. Fighting fires required knowing and practicing a great many safety protocols. When the OMNR cared about the safety of Pikangikum people by allowing them to bring guns in the bush, the relationship was good. The fact that a newer conservation officer did not abide by the original statement about guns, shows a lack of consistency over time.

Matthew also gave an account of some of his experiences commercial fishing during his interview:

In regards to commercial fishing, the Department of Indian Affairs visited our community, and one of the reasons why they came to our community was to create economic development basis for our people. They didn't want our people to be on welfare. So they wanted to create commercial fishing for our people. They in fact gave us nets to begin commercial fishing. It was a good opportunity for our people. Something where we can, I guess, make money. And that created a livelihood for us. During the time when we were commercial fishing, there were two buyers. The first buyer was Shoal Lake Ben Ratusky, was his name, and the other, the Ojibway name,

Redneck was the guy's name, and these two were the only buyers at that time and they were in competition, who would give the best price. Shoal Lake Ben Ratusky was from Kenora, I don't know where Redneck was from. Redneck worked for Indian Affairs that time. So when we talk about Indian Affairs, the way they introduced commercial fishing, I guess every time we wanted to go commercial fishing, they would pay for the plane charters to the camps, to get our families out there, to get our gear out there. But we had to pay for the plane charters when they came to do fish hauls. We paid for those charters.

I recall I was about 10 years old when I helped do the commercial fishing. Twenty years old, and I'm seventy years old today, so it must have been about fifty years ago, commercial fishing. I wanted to get out because that was the only way of having income. During the time we were commercial fishing, we made good money. The fishermen made good money, because these two buyers were paying good price for the fish. So everybody was happy during that time because they were commercial fishing, I think pretty well everybody in the community was commercial fishing, they had their own lakes to go and they were having a good prosperous time.

It was Indian Affairs that introduced commercial fishing to us, eh? So, one day Indian Affairs came to our community and told us 'you cannot commercial fish anymore'. Because the fish are bad, they said that mercury, I don't know what mercury is, they said mercury was in the fish, nobody will no longer buy your fish. So people will become sick, those that will buy the fish will become sick if they eat them, we were told. Maybe it was over twenty, twenty-five years ago. We were never informed, we were never consulted. I don't know what Indian Affairs did, whether they sold the fishing quotas to these white men that began to build outpost camps in our lakes. We began to see camps in our major lakes, white men building fishing camps. We were never informed, nobody ever came to talk to us, about these, about this, there's nobody ever came to consult us. I don't know to this day who brought up the issue of mercury in the lake, whether it was MNR, or whether it was Indian Affairs, or maybe it was Indian Affairs working with MNR, I don't know. But somebody came and said something to our people, whether it was true, whether it wasn't true about mercury being in the lakes.

I'll tell you another story that happened one spring at Keeper Lake. We had commercial fished that lake. We had an encounter with MNR that one spring, we had gone ahead, another man, Charlie. The reason why we went ahead, we wanted to build some cabins where our families would stay. We asked for a plane charter over there. So early one morning while we were there, the plane landed, there must have been about ten MNR officials that came on that plane. They had all their brass buttons on. And the reason why they landed, they came to confront us. They told us we should not be there, we had no rights to fish there, there was no license to commercial fish at Keeper Lake they told us. They said for us to come back to the community. I don't know how MNR knew that we were over there. We had told the pilot that had picked us up in the community that Indian Affairs was going to cover the cost. Indian Affairs paid for that plane charter too that we went on. Indian Affairs helped for us to commercial fish that lake, but when MNR came it was a totally different story. I don't know what happened

during that time, whether INAC and MNR were working together at that time, but there was quite a few of us, men over there. So, we were picked up right away and brought back to the community. So we didn't stay there, we came back to the community. That's the only time I had a conflict with MNR, when they sent us home from Keeper Lake. Today I think I have a good relationship with them.

Working in various occupations on the land continues as a consistent theme in the narratives. The issue of OMNR regulation, surveillance and enforcement became more prominent in the Pikangikum narratives as I spent more time in the community. The need to work intersects on the landscape with concern about the OMNR's whereabouts and the likelihood of being caught. Inaccessible, invisible government processes have been known to end a livelihood without warning (McNab 1999)

George B. Strang's interview brought the relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR into the present. George is the head trapper of the Berens Lake area. He described his involvement in various projects in and around Berens Lake. The two examples I have included here involve sturgeon tracking and a consultation process involving buildings on Bak Lake. George discussed his views about why the Whitefeather process has been successful to date.

George B. Strang, July 18, 2006
Marlene Quill translation

I work with the MNR with their sturgeon studies. There's two hundred and three fish that I studied. Those sturgeon, and fourteen of them [we] marked. Track them. They've been out twice already, the MNR, to go check on those sturgeon they marked and tracked. But I didn't go with them. They're keeping track of those sturgeon to see if they come through this area. But none of them have come here yet. I guess they're still over there.

They know by number which sturgeon they are studying. I haven't went with them yet because I was sick early summer. They cut that sturgeon to put something in that's run

on a battery. They have a monitor screen thing and the sturgeon number shows up on the screen. That's how they know where that sturgeon is. They put it in the boat. The sturgeon wear that tag thing for ten years. I don't think anything bad of it... It's okay...I guess. The sturgeon don't die. I know that they're still alive by that tag. If they're looking for them in the day they usually find all of them. That whole day they're waiting around the boat. They track them down. They find all fourteen of the marked sturgeon. They try to track them down if they go that far, but they haven't really went out that far yet. They're still in that same area...That's why they did that. To see if they go that far...MNR told [us] that there are less sturgeon then before...The MNR put something in the rapid to see if there's no sturgeon, and there hasn't been any because it's a very big rapid.

[I did this work with] my grandson Lebious Strang. The MNR used four nets and I used one. And I caught four sturgeon with my net. Some were big and some were small. That's my trapline area. And I knew the lake where they would catch the sturgeon. I knew where they were. I told them where they could catch the sturgeon by me telling them where. A lot of people didn't agree to the sturgeon study and I thought it was for me to agree because when the MNR ask for something, they agreed and they did the same. I guess the MNR did the same by agreeing if we asked for something.

Further into the interview...

The MNR didn't draw the traplines, our ancestors, I guess they put out the map for them and they wrote it down, MNR just watched. I'm the head trapper for that whole area and I know what goes on in that whole trapline area (Berens Lake). I get a letter from the MNR if they want to come in and do something. They ask me first, they don't just do it.

Marlene-You know that area Bak Lake?

They approached Pikangikum and they approached me. See if we agree to build a cabin over there...They lied, after a while they only asked for two cabins and now there's some kind of hotel...They only asked for two cabins. I guess they broke that, what they were saying. There's different kind of MNR that planned that. We met at the band office. There's a big generator there too.

Me-And what did MNR say? What was their response?

Nothing, we just let them do it, whatever makes them happy. I didn't comment on it... They only made it on a little area. I have such a small trapline area, that's why I didn't comment. My area's so small. I probably would have said something if it were much bigger. MNR helps a lot, I don't look at them in a bad way because what they agreed to is nice, the trapline areas...When that whole area started, that's when they started a relationship with the MNR...The way it started, in a good way, I guess...I know how they work, I know them well now. And they know us well.

There's a good relationship between the MNR is why this Whitefeather works. Without their help it wouldn't be Whitefeather. The MNR taught us a lot, and the Elders they taught them the cultural knowledge. That's how we work together. And we understand each other by teaching one another. The reason why we did that land use was because of good relationship with MNR. If it hadn't moved ahead, the land use planning, it would have been a bad relationship with the MNR. It depends on the relationship you have with the person, people. It wouldn't work out.

George B. Strang emphasized the fact that Pikangikum has a good relationship with the OMNR and that it began well with the formalization of ancestral traplines in 1946.

Heads of traplines are consulted about new developments. In his case he made a decision counter to some members of the community regarding the collaring of sturgeon. In the case of the Bak Lake developments he agreed to two cabins as an exchange for favors the OMNR would have provided. The initial cabins became a complex. As with Matthew's gun story the OMNR employees who built the Bak Lake fire base were not the same individuals who held Whitefeather planning sessions with Pikangikum. The give and take nature of a partnership is evidenced here as is the difficulty of partnering with a small group of people employed by a much larger bureaucracy. George agreed to certain small developments at Bak Lake and to help with sturgeon population studies, knowing that the OMNR would return a favor later.

George also mentioned the completion and approval of the land use plan. Meeting objectives identified at the outset of a partnership is crucial to the survival of the relationship (Mitchell 1997). If objectives are not met, what is the point of continuing?

Whitehead Moose, the senior-most Elder in Pikangikum, brought the working stories around again by skillfully narrating an account of all the different ways he lived and ate

from the land during his life. He explains why Pikangikum people need control over their territory and their resources; so that the community can become healthy again, so that the mandate given to the people of Pikangikum by the Creator can be fulfilled.

Whitehead Moose's narrative ties the other narratives together and provides a past, present and future context to Pikangikum's place on the land and plans for the land.

*Whitehead Moose, August 4, 2006
Paddy Peters translation*

I was born in the Pikangikum area here. But I was raised, after I was born, on Stout Lake area. That's west of Poplar Hill. On the trapline area there, I was raised by my grandfather. My grandfather's name was Lynx, Lynx Moose, because a long time ago they used their original Ojibway names, nobody had any English names.

My grandfather Lynx had a very large garden on Stout Lake. It's still, the garden area is still visible to this day. The name of that place where my grandfather had the large potato garden, they call it 'the garden' and within that same area there he had large potato pits. Which he stored his potatoes for the winter. So we spent our winters on the land in that Stout Lake area. And my father taught me the teachings of the Creator. And those teachings were to respect the land, respect the animals that were on the land, that the Creator gave these things for us to use, so we had to honor what the Creator gave us. And so this is what we did knowing that we had to survive, survive and make a living on the land. And the reason why I say we spend all our time there living on the land is because we ate from the land, we ate you know, all the animals that we caught, we ate the moose, we ate the caribou, we ate the bear, we ate the deer, and all the waterfowls, the variety of waterfowls we ate all those too. This is what I mean that we were on the land and we lived off the land. This is what our father gave to us to eat, the diet that he showed us what to eat and after he showed us what to eat then he began to teach us to hunt on the land.

So when the Hudson Bay Company came in, our diet changed slightly, we were introduced to flour, to make bannock, our father bought the flour from the Hudson Bay Company. So everything that my father taught me, to hunt, to trap on the land I grew up with those teachings, those teachings were invetted in me, that this is what guided me. So the teachings that I got from my father to recognize and to understand the different animals on the land, you know I used those teachings to catch the animals. It's not just going on the land and you think you are going to catch all these animals, you have to know the animal, you have to know the... you have to have that instinct to know the animals. If you understand the animals it will be easy for you to catch these animals, so I had that expertise because I had that... I applied myself to understand the teachings of

my father. And this is what... this is how I was able to understand the animals on the land.

And when, there's another occupation that I did, I soon received too, that was to net fish at a certain lake, that was Moar Lake, I fished on Moar Lake for 25 years. I also fished Stout Lake. So when I talk about the net fishing, we had nets that were made by the women, they made their own gill nets and this is what we used when we went around hunting, we took our gill nets along. And that was my first occupation in setting nets was for our own consumption, but later on, I entered, we began to do commercial fishing. So another teaching that I received was the gill net was very important to our people. Because a gill net, if you set a... if you are traveling and in the evening you set camp after you set up camp you go and set your gill net out in the lake and early the next morning you go and check your net and you have fish in your net.

During my years of traveling on the land I've witnessed that there's fish in every, every lake area, every stream area where I've traveled and the only area I don't know if there's any fish is those ah muskeg lakes in the woods. I don't know if there's fish in those kind of lakes. This was the occupation of our people, that they traveled from place to place where they hunted and fished.

You see the map there? That's the territory of the Pikangikum people and all that territory is occupied by our people, not just today, from way back then. Every area is used by our people. It was used in the past and we will continue to use it. I am 92 years old today. The reason why I'm still in good health is the diet and the way that I was raised is what gave me the strength.

This Elder that is standing here (Charlie Peters), that's the way he was raised, that was his diet too, and all the other Elders in this community, Norman Quill, they were raised in that way that I was raised too. A lot of us Elders don't have those foreign diseases or sicknesses that people die from is because of the way that we ate off the land. So this is why we honor the Creator, respect the Creator, because of his blessing to us to live on these lands, on our territory. Knowing that through the Creator's blessing we can continue to maintain a livelihood from the land, we want to hold on to this land. We want to hold on to the land, we don't want to give up this land. So you know the teaching that is based on this land use strategy 'keeping the land'? This is what we want to continue to do, we want to continue to keep the land for our use, for our people. The Creator blessed us with the land and we have to show that we will continue to make a livelihood on the land.

So, in regards to the Beaver Boss, since I was a young man, I've always known the Beaver Boss to, they were already there, as a young man I've seen them, they came to our area and they communicated with us, where I think the trapline system was not put in place yet. So they told us, these men that, people that represented the Beaver Boss that one of these days you're going to have a piece of paper, and this piece of paper is going to allow you to trap, this piece of paper is going to allow you to have an area where you can trap. And that came about later on, what these men told us. The way that we were

taught to respect the land through the teachings of our fathers, you know there was, we were not careless when we traveled the land knowing that the land provided for us. With the respect that we had for the land, we did not want to destroy the land too. Even when we were told to build a fire, a campfire, we were told where to build a campfire near a shore, on top of a rock area, so the fire would not create a larger fire. So we were very careful, when we were out on the land.

At the camp where we were, we had cabins, they were good cabins, but when we went around our area we had spruce bough wigwams, this is what we used when we traveled from place to place. At the main camp we had nice cabins. So these spruce bough wigwams were very comfortable, you could build an open fire inside the wigwam, and you could hang up your wet clothing, your wet belongings, and in no time it would be dry. That's just how comfortable we were. In fact it was very comfortable inside the spruce bough wigwam, even we built a rack up there to hang our, to hang our pots, I guess they tied some kind of string and there was a hook up the end of the string where we put on our kettle or our pail to boil tea. And we roasted our meat around the campfire, putting the meat on the poles and in no time the tea would boil and our meat would be cooked. Even cooked our bannock by the campfire, we would put the bannock face towards the campfire, sometimes to even cook it faster we would put hot coals under the pan or under the bannock dough and it would really bake.

When I was a young man, I hardly seen the Beaver Boss, even the government people, Indian Affairs. So I witnessed when the trapping system was introduced to our people, even the commercial fishing, that was introduced to our people through Indian Affairs and also through the Beaver Bosses.

I was a young man, maybe I was thirty years old, or forty years old. I was thirty years old, I began commercial fishing. I commercial fished for a long time. I know that there was commercial fishing in Pikangikum Lake area here too. We had to build ice houses too. We had to harvest ice every springtime when there was still ice out on the lake and they would put all that ice into their ice houses and that ice would be preserved for commercial fishing in the summertime.

When the commercial fishing began I think that it was only allowed on the large lake areas. It was not allowed in small lakes. It was only allowed on the large lakes where our people went. MNR hasn't relinquished the commercial fishing that our people worked on, even to this day, they still allow commercial fishing, but when I look since the depletion of commercial fishing over the years, a lot of these large lakes have not been commercial fished, I believe its, there should be a lot of fish in those large lakes now.

I had, when I commercial fished on Moar Lake, there was a large lodge there, fishing lodge, and we were, I had a good working relationship with that lodge owner there, we never had any disputes, he did his business, I did my business, I was commercial fishing. In fact we helped each other out. When he wanted ice I gave him ice. And when they were short on gas I helped him out too. So the lodge owner had some kind of radio system and I would go to his lodge to get him to call on my behalf for him to come and

pick up my fish. So even when I ordered groceries, he would assist me in that area by calling in my behalf.

We began to see these outpost camps crop up in certain lake areas. And to my understanding, the people were never asked, they were never consulted, eh? We were never told who was building these camps er, we just began to see them, there's no consultation. You know, and I think about the words the Beaver Boss said to us when they introduced the trapline system, they told us that nobody can come and do whatever they want on your land, in your areas, they told us. That's why I question the fact where these camp, these people that built those camps on those lakes where they got the permission, because we never gave them permission.

Me-So when you talk about these things with the MNR now about the licenses and things... I guess I would have to ask you guys why you would bring this stuff up even though it happened a while ago?

So to answer your question, even to the present, these are unanswered questions. Because we don't know what the process was, what kind of process they followed because there's two people here, you have the MNR, and you have Indian Affairs, there were the people that made decisions on what happened on our land. So we were never involved in those discussions, or even when they made decisions, we were never consulted. So they were the ones that made the decisions on what happens on our land. We never had no part of that. So, I guess my concern about that, with the Beaver Bosses, even when they gave us the commercial fishing licenses, they told us nobody can come here and do whatever they want in this area. So I question that, you know what they said to us, we began to see these tourist camps being built on these lakes, I don't know who gave the permission to build these camps.

When you look at that map there of all of our territory, the reason why we're planning, we're doing that planning is we want to be able to have a say what happens within our territory, within our land area. Whatever that may be, when you look at forestry, want to be able to have a say in regards to forestry and even if any development wants to take place within our territory, we want to be able to have a say and control over that...I know us Elders have worked on this land planning strategy for several years now, and this is our, our intention that we have control over these lands and we have the decision making power to make decisions and to have a say in what happens in our territory.

When you look at the territory on that map of the Pikangikum People, I can say this for a fact that this is our land. We have lived on these lands and we will continue to live on these lands, we have made a livelihood on these lands. You know we have used the animals, the fishes, we will continue to use the land, and even if we have to move into new areas of livelihood, and you know we want to be able to control those new activities, as we have controlled the activities that we have done in the past. The same process will continue, you know, we'll always be here. Nobody can take this land away from us. It's our land, this is our right. This is our right, and we have to maintain that right. Nobody's going to, I'll just repeat, nobody is going to take this land away. So our people

still use the land, our people still move on the land. People still go out to their camps, spend time out on the land and go harvest the animals to eat traditional meals on the land, we still practice that.

The reason why we want to keep the land is the land has been very good to us. In fact the land gives us healing, like when we're in this reservation, there's a lot of people in this tiny area, and people, when one person gets sick, then passes the sickness on to a lot of people in the community. But when you go out on the land if you're sick, the land will help you heal rapidly. So this is why we have that teaching of 'keeping the land', because we know that the land heals us too. The land will help us. And when you talk about sicknesses, in my time, we never really knew of any sicknesses. Even the common cold, we never had those viruses or those colds. And when you look at the land, you know it's abundant with fresh meat, you know this is what our people lived on, fresh meat, all the blood was still on the meat, that's just how it was, what our people lived on. It's not like today you go to a store and you buy frozen meat, you don't know when that was packaged or how long that meat's been sitting in the store and all that, they're all frozen. And when you talk about good health, that's what the land did for us, it gave us good health through the animals that we ate eh? Fresh food all the time gave us strength, physical, we were in good physical condition all the time. Even the women that were pregnant, it helped them, it helped the child in the womb because the woman always had fresh food to eat. Nourished the child in the womb, even when the woman would boil the meat, would drink the meat, and also the fish broth, they would drink that. That provided vitamins to the baby in the womb.

So this is why we want to continue to keep the land, knowing that there's evidence there that our people have a knowledge, a deep knowledge and understanding of the land and how it helped our people. So we all know that what the mother eats, this is what the baby also eats, the baby that's in the womb.

These are some of the teachings that I received from the Elders way back then and I'm passing these teachings on to you.

See, there was a practice that our people followed way back then, a man had two wives, that was the practice, the custom of our people. The reason for that was to populate, there would be more people. That's the reason why they had two wives, but when the government came in, the government disallowed that, they didn't want our people to practice that custom anymore. So the Creator told man, populate the earth, he told the people this, so this is what the people did, populate it. And when you travel the whole northern area, there's a lot of people all over. So where did these people come from? How did they get to those areas? I believe they followed the Creator's process.

So this is part of the process that our people have followed under these teachings, is to keep the land, everything on the land, the animals, the forest, the fishes in the lakes. There's still a lot of fish in the lakes. So we have continued to maintain that teaching. So this is what I have to share with you and everything is the truth.

Me-I just have one last question. Are you trying to teach the MNR that? Like about keeping the land? Do they understand it?

In our many meetings with the MNR people, Wiiyaasiniwag, the Meat Bosses, we've had many meetings with them and in our discussions in these meetings this is what we discuss with them, these teachings that our people had of the land, and everything that our people practice, these are the things that we are telling the MNR, these are the teachings that we are passing on to them...I've done that many times in our meetings.

Me-Do you think they understand?

I do not know if they received the teachings.

Paddy-I asked him, maybe we will know later on.

Maybe we will know later on.

Government records

Whitehead and the other Elders' experiences with different livelihoods are reflected in correspondences and studies produced by federal and provincial governments¹. Fishing was a profitable enterprise for Pikangikum people, and part of their seasonal round. In the 1930s' and 40s', about four or five men were known to be commercial fishing by provincial authorities.² A letter from W.J. Harvey of Indian Affairs on August 12, 1954, cites Whitehead Moose as an individual license holder on Moar Lake³. In February, 1957, Clifford Swartman, Superintendent of the Sioux Lookout Agency requested a renewal of six commercial licenses for the Pikangikum Band on Pikangikum Lake,

¹ INAC RG-10, C-12928, RG-10 C-12929 and *Ojibwa Fisheries in Northwestern Ontario*, Commercial Fish and Fur Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, June 1974.

² *Ojibwa Fisheries in Northwestern Ontario*, Commercial Fish and Fur Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, June 1974.

³ RG-10, C-12928, v.6965, file 494/20-2 (pt. 2) 144/20-2-8 August 12, 1954 W.J. Harvey

Barton Lake, Roderick Lake, Berens Lake, Stout Lake and Moar Lake.⁴ The larger lakes in the territory, as Whitehead had described.

Commercial fishing in Pikangikum, according to a report written in 1960, was unsupervised by agency staff.⁵ However, some assistance with arrangements was provided by the Hudson Bay Post manager up until 1958, with the people making roughly \$1000.00 each in a season.⁶ Pikangikum people would fish individually or in small groups and sell their catch directly to buyers; sometimes when the buyer approached them in a time of high demand.⁷ License renewal was often paid for by Pikangikum people as well.⁸

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, INAC began to organize the First Nation commercial fishery on a larger, more complex scale to provide employment in place of dwindling fur revenues. In the words of Clifford Swartman "... It has been pointed out many times that the Indians in this area are one of the lowest income groups in the country. In recent years commercial fishing has replaced trapping as their major source of income and I feel that we should do our utmost to encourage and assist."⁹

⁴ RG-10, C-12928, vol. 6965, file 494/20-2(pt.2) February 1st, 1957 C. Swartman

⁵ RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2(pt.5) December 29, 1960, C. Swartman

⁶ RG10, C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 4 Commercial Fishing Patricia's 1960

⁷ RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2(pt. 5) April 20, 1961 F.Matters

⁸ RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2(pt. 5) January 17, 1961 Renewal of fishing licenses and RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2(pt. 5) April 6th, 1961

⁹ RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2(pt.4) October 14, 1959 C. Swartman, Supt, Sioux Lookout, Re: Winter Fishing at Trout Lake

In the early 1960s Indian Affairs policy was headed toward collective band licenses and having First Nations people fish in large groups under leaders, covering more lakes.¹⁰ This new structure would be taught through the placement of fishing ‘supervisors’ to assist the people. Part of the concern was that lakes were not being fished to their potential and that individual sales to buyers were not necessarily benefiting the band as a whole. In addition, buyers would sometimes not pick up the fish at all, or numerous buyers would arrive at a lakeside at once. In an effort to build a bigger market for the fish, INAC sought consistency of the product by insisting on having the fish dressed and iced. The Agency also attempted to organize buyers on behalf of the band and to tender the production of various lakes by units.¹¹ As with many Indian Affairs employment schemes, there was an underlying premise of “coercive tutelage” whereby it was believed that with enough supervision and teaching Aboriginal people would eventually learn to take over projects the way their colonial supervisors intended (Dyck 1991).

INAC was concerned as well that without a consistent organization of the fishery, the OMNR, or the Department of Lands and Forests at the time, would grant commercial licenses to non-Aboriginal people in northern Ontario. In a letter to F. Matters, Fur Supervisor D. H. Gimmer wrote that:

The policy adopted by the Department of Lands and Forests has been to restrict issuance of commercial fishing licenses to Indians, in areas where Indian Bands are located. Indians have not taken full advantage of this policy, primarily due to lack of organization and guidance... Unless immediate management plans are put into effect and organization of Indian Band Fisheries are carried out, the Indians are going to lose the opportunity of

¹⁰ RG10 C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 5 January 17, 1961 Renewal of fishing licenses and RG10, C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 5 April 7th, 1961 F. Matters

¹¹ RG10, C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 5 April 20, 1961 F. Matters

developing these fisheries... The Department of Lands and Forests will be forced to change their present policy and open these northern lakes for non-Indian exploitation.¹²

It is apparent that opening northern Ontario for tourism and non-Aboriginal commercial fishing was, even in 1958, a looming proposition for Lands and Forests.¹³

Planning between INAC, Lands and Forests and fish buyers tended to not include the people from Pikangikum or other First Nations, as Whitehead and Matthew had mentioned.¹⁴ Regarding conferences on First Nations commercial fishing held in Kenora, Ontario, W.M. Benedickson, the M.P. for Kenora-Rainy River wrote to H.M. Jones, Director of Indian Affairs on November 3rd, 1960:

I wonder what new arrangements have resulted from these conferences...my recollection is that the Indians were not represented at the previous conferences. Did Indians attend the recent conferences or were they represented solely by officers of the Indian Affairs Branch, etc...? ¹⁵

Jones' reply to M.P. Benedickson is that:

No Indians or other primary producers were invited to these meetings which were concerned mainly with administrative questions affecting the industry as a whole but officials who attend on behalf of the Department are conscious that they do so only as representatives of the Indian Fishermen. ¹⁶

As Matthew had pointed out, INAC and Lands and Forests policy regarding commercial fishing did not coincide in all instances. Pikangikum was excluded from a process whereby two government departments were planning and managing economic

¹² RG 10, C-12928, Vol.6965, file 494/20-2(pt.2) March 28, 1958 D.H. Gimmer, Management plan for Patricia West Fisheries

¹³ RG 10, C-12928, Vol.6965, file 494/20-2(pt.3) September 15, 1958 Ellen Fairclough, Minister, to Frank Bowman, Bowman Fisheries.

¹⁴ RG 10, C-12928, Vol.6965, file 494/20-2(pt.2) August 19th, 1958, J.H. Gordon

¹⁵ RG 10, C-12929, vol.6966, file 494/20-2(pt.5) November 3, 1960 W.M. Benedickson; M.P. Kenora-Rainy River

¹⁶ RG 10, C-12929, vol.6966, file 494/20-2(pt.5), December 19, 1960 H.M. Jones

development on their behalf and not always agreeing on a mandate, or even the means of achieving certain ends.

One source of discord between the federal and provincial levels was that Lands and Forests would assign lake quotas and sometimes the total harvest would add up to far less than the quota.¹⁷ Another issue which affected the management of fisheries was that INAC was of the opinion that the people needed a great deal of supervision and while Lands and Forests was willing to grant large quotas and issue licenses in the early days of the commercial fishery, INAC could not organize the necessary supervision and put intended improvements in place in time to take advantage of the quotas.¹⁸ As well, officials working for the Department of Indian Affairs were generally trying to urge the OMNR to take more of a direct, supervisory role in the Aboriginal commercial fishing industry. The OMNR officials did not necessarily share this concern. Documents from 1962 show that Pikangikum was resistant to having a fisheries supervisor and preferred to select their own buyer; Ben Ratusky.¹⁹

Lands and Forests eventually did assume more control of the fishery. A 1974 assessment of Aboriginal commercial fishing in northwestern Ontario identifies 51 Aboriginal men fishing in the Pikangikum region, with 25 licensed lakes; although the report does not specify whether these men were from Pikangikum. Notably, the report identifies some of

¹⁷ RG 10, C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 5 April 19th, 1961
R.F. Battle To C.M.D. Clarke, Chief, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Department of Lands and Forests

¹⁸ RG 10, C-12929, vol. 6966, file 494/20-2 pt. 4
January 20th, 1960 G. Swartman

¹⁹ RG 10, vol. 6967, 494/20-2 pt. 8

the fish in the area as having “been rejected because of mercury content.”²⁰ A section of the 1974 report is entitled “Views of the People” and discusses the future of commercial fishing in northwestern Ontario in light of mercury levels, the influx of tourists, and a decline in fish prices. Aboriginal fishermen are cited as having concerns about the government’s preference for the tourist fishery. Actions such as the closure of fish hatcheries, increasing the mesh size of nets, and increasing the legal size of fish caught commercially resulted in fewer fish being caught. In the meantime, the ‘coupon system’ for tourist anglers was removed, as was the legal size limit on sport fish, meaning tourists could catch their limit of large fish several times a day. The tourists would sometimes damage the Aboriginal fishermen’s nets as well. The report also describes the reactions of non-Aboriginal commercial fishermen, who were concerned about the closure of some lakes in northwestern Ontario due to mercury contamination, the setting of seemingly low mercury thresholds by American scientists and the continued allowance of a tourist fishery, independent of mercury levels. It appears that the prospective closure of the commercial fishery was discussed with both user groups, the Aboriginal fishermen expressing a fear of reliance on welfare payments, and also noting that there was a potential for undertaking their own economic projects. However, the report states that not having a voice in government, or a representative within the government, would affect the First Nations’ capacity to undertake such projects.²¹

²⁰ *Ojibwa Fisheries in Northwestern Ontario*, Commercial Fish and Fur Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, June 1974, 15.

²¹ *Ojibwa Fisheries in Northwestern Ontario*, Commercial Fish and Fur Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, June 1974.

Return to Pikangikum

There is risk involved in the Whitefeather process. The OMNR-which is known by several aliases, such as meat boss, beaver boss, fire boss-may rescind an agreement. The community had a prior experience with commercial fishing licenses which were granted and then, in some cases, reassigned to non-Aboriginal lodge owners through processes which Pikangikum did not have access to. Clearly, Pikangikum people have spent a lot of time educating the OMNR about their inherent right to make decisions regarding their territory.

Control is known to be tied to health. The capacity to make decisions about how a land base is governed and harvested can contribute significantly to community well being (Adelson 2000; Parlee and Berkes 2005). Planning directly with the OMNR for the next resource harvesting strategy will hopefully prevent unseen processes from canceling their forestry based livelihood. Community healing may also be tied to the process of negotiating survival (Augustine, 2007 in conversation). A sustainable forestry license would give Pikangikum more control, but the process of obtaining the license is dictated by the Ministry and other levels of government.

On my return visit to Pikangikum in the late fall of 2006, George B. Strang spoke again about the loss of the commercial fishing licenses. At this point in time Paddy Peters told me that the community's experience with commercial fishing was one of the main reasons why Pikangikum had decided to pursue a sustainable forestry license. George's narrative brings up the subject of control again...

*George B. Strang, October 30, 2006
Paddy Peters translation
Reggie Peters and Marlene Quill present*

So, during these times when we had a good prosperous commercial fishing, there was no MNR presence around whatsoever. We were waiting for MNR to come and check on the lakes, they were never around, they never came around. I don't know where they were during those times. But things changed and MNR came into the picture again. When they came into the picture they were told that they had control now, eh? They had control of the licenses and all the lakes that they were commercial fishing. And that's when things changed drastically.

When MNR began control over the commercial fishing, before that, we had no quotas. We could catch as much fish as we could. When MNR began to control, they put quotas on the lakes, how much fish to catch. It was very limited. So when MNR began to control commercial fishing activities, for a license they charged 25 dollars for a commercial fishing license. And this is when the families began to split up. I had mentioned before that whole family groups would go commercial fishing at different lakes, but now because of these licenses we had to only go to our respected lake areas. Like my family only went to commercial fish in Berens Lake, our area. So the quota I was given at Berens Lake was 2000 pounds of pickerel and 2000 pounds of whitefish, even though there was no whitefish at Berens Lake. So there was no whitefish in Berens Lake, and no quota was given for northern. And the price of fish in that day was not much. This was all after MNR took over eh, commercial fishing. I recall we would sell pickerel for seventy cents a pound. MNR I believe affected commercial fishing. It went down from there, when MNR took over.

Paddy-I asked him a question, when that mercury contaminant fish issue came in. It was in Cairns Lake he says, doesn't say the year.

Actually it was the first place that MNR said the fish were bad. They came and told us that the fish were bad, and that were going to close the lake to commercial fishing. They told us that the pickerel were not good in that lake. But we doubted that. We knew from experience, from fishing that lake that the pickerel in that lake were good, a good large size, when we caught the fish and we cut them, we knew the fish were fat. They were good fish, the MNR insisted that the fish were not good. Shortly after we were notified that Cairns Lake could not be commercial fished anymore. Shortly after that a tourist camp was opened up at that lake. No word ever came to our people, we were never consulted. I believe it was the tourist camp industry that killed the commercial fishing. So sometime after that, our people began to enquire, because we also wanted to build outpost camps or lodges in our lakes. But we were never given an answer right away. It took me seven years before I got an answer to build a camp on Berens Lake. I ah, when I commercial fished Berens Lake during those years, I began to see tourists arrive at Berens Lake. And they had very little respect for what we were doing over at Berens Lake when we were commercial fishing. With their large outboard motors, they ran over and broke a lot of our nets. So we finally had to quit commercial fishing. Slowly after

that is when they started on the outpost camp. In regards to Roderick Lake, I used to commercial fish that too.

When MNR took over the commercial fishing licenses, they regulated the mesh size of the net. They didn't want the net to have smaller mesh so they couldn't catch as much fish, they wanted the nets that were larger mesh size. And they were limited in the number of nets they could have out in the lake. One time at Berens Lake, there was a man that came to check the fish. He would set a net. And he would catch quite a number of fish. I don't know who he was working for, if he was working for MNR. But that was him, that was his mission at the time to check the fish population.

In the past, when you are talking about working with the MNR, they imposed certain restrictions. That's how they were. For instance in the trapping, they told us to do beaver surveys in our areas. So we would go and count all the beaver houses in our areas. And from the number of beaver houses they would establish quotas. And how much beaver you could trap in a season. So I was only allowed to trap twenty beaver in a season. And after a while they put restrictions on other species. Like lynx and fishers. I was only allowed to trap two lynx, two fishers. MNR had too much control on the trapping. When they imposed the quotas on us. Even today they are still controlling the trapping. And the way that they control trapping, is what the make or model of trap that they want you to use. So they say, the reason why they want the traps to change is because with the old traps, the animals suffer too much and they say it is inhumane to let an animal suffer too much.

I don't like the present system. Because the traps that they want the trappers to use today, they are too complicated. The traps that we used back then aren't the leghold traps, these were better, easier to use. And, in regards to marten, I know that marten don't die right away when they are caught in the trap. Marten, they survive up to two days in the trap, especially if the weather is warm. And mink, they die right away in the trap, because usually it drowns it... I visited a zoo one day in Thunder Bay, the conditions that I seen, the way that they treated the animals was very cruel. And they confined the animals to limited space in cages. And it creates no freedom for the animals. They are limited in those cages. Like the eagle, I saw an eagle that had no freedom to stretch out his wings to fly. Wolves were locked up, the bear was locked up, the deer, the moose, they were all locked up. They were all in these limited confined areas. And they were all dirty. I felt pity for the moose, I recognized that the moose was not happy. With my experience, the moose likes a clean open area. From this experience I came to the conclusion that they were the ones that were cruel to the animals, not the trapper. It's not the trappers that are cruel to the animals, it's these people that put the animals in these cages that are cruel. I also saw caribou in this zoo. I think the time I visited was the year 2002.

Seems that they are doing the same thing. What they were doing in the past. Would seem they are telling us what needs to be done in our land planning process. They come here to sit with us and you know they sit here telling us what needs to be done. Today, and yet at the same time it seems to me that MNR are more gentle today, easier to work with.

Like in the past they were very demanding, they were very strict. They were not easy to work with. ... What we tell them, today what we tell the MNR, they seem to write everything down, and I sense that they are listening, seems like they want to remember what we tell them, that's why they write things down. The first term that I actually heard MNR being called was wiiyaas gookooko'oo. That's the name that I heard. That translates to meat, wiiyaas, gookooko'oo means

Me-Owl?

Paddy-Owl, yeah, gookooko'oo is not an owl, but it's another term for a...

Reggie-Monster

Paddy-A windigo, gookooko'oo. You know what a windigo is? Wiiyaas windigo, in other words it's a flesh, a flesh eating windigo. Windigo is a cannibal eh? That eats people.

The Ministry does not understand that trappers cannot have sympathy for the animals they are killing. Being overly protective of an animal by enclosing it literally and figuratively within a system of regulations could actually be more hurtful to that animal. The trapper's relationship with the land and the beings on it could also be harmed from having to obey those regulations (Davidson-Hunt 2006, in conversation). Although Pikangikum explains their obligation to care for the land to Ministry officials who seem to be listening in meetings, the regulations persist, as does Pikangikum's inability to affect those regulations.

The Terms of Reference for the Whitefeather process (2003) acknowledges the role of the Creator in respect to Pikangikum people:

...The Whitefeather Forest Initiative is rooted in the acknowledgement of Pikangikum people that the Creator, the maker of all, placed us on our ancestral lands where we have lived since time immemorial...

The Creator has given us the responsibility to protect and care for the lands on which we were placed. As First Nations people, we are to take care of our land and nurture everything that the Creator has given us as a trust and duty to future generations of our people.

(Terms of Reference, June, 2003,1)

The OMNR is a secular, hierarchical bureaucracy, accountable to the public at large.

Changing regulations within such an organization, due to the spiritual concerns of one group within its constituency as a whole, may be very difficult. Negotiators present in Pikangikum may understand Pikangikum's need to keep the land, but those higher in the chain of command, away in the city, may not (Laforet 2007, in conversation).

Like George, Oliver Hill also spoke about trapping, but identified the limitations of earning a living that way.

*Oliver Hill, October 31, 2006
Paddy Peters translation*

Long ago, there wasn't any trapline areas like what you see on the map. They went all over the land and we had no boundaries. They didn't stay in one place. With the areas now where the place to trap, only the people that are listed can trap there now and it wasn't like that long ago. In 1946 they were given a trapline license. And that's when they made that. They were each group of families were given land where they can trap. MNR gave limited numbers of how many beavers you can kill in one year. When I first started trapping I was only given five beavers to kill in one year. That was the MNR rules. And it wasn't enough for me to live on for that whole year, on just five beavers. The other animals, they didn't have that rule placed on them like the beaver. And today there is fisher, lynx that have a limit on how much you can kill. And it wouldn't be enough for a whole winter if one family had lots of kids. If they were placed on a limit.

The MNR, the rules that they made, I saw that they were wrong. We only lived on trapping, there was no welfare. And there was family allowance which was only six dollars a month. And when you turn sixteen, that's when the kid was cut off from family allowance. Trapping was the only way that we survived. The other thing that was wrong about the MNR rules, trapping opened in November and it closed in May.

Solomon Turtle was the last Elder I interviewed in Pikangikum. He also described the strategies and different occupations he took up in order to feed his family. He kept working despite strict rules. One of the dangers of OMNR processes, controls and regulations is that they may appear to be fixed and understood at some points in time, but they can change suddenly. Are the Elders afraid this shifting tendency will continue even if, and after, the sustainable forest license (SFL) is attained? Will OMNR regulations continue to interfere with Pikangikum's relationship with the land after the SFL is negotiated, as they have with the trapper who must change his traps to appease the animals?

*Solomon Turtle, November 10, 2006
Paddy Peters translation*

Started participating in that when I was forty years old. And the type of fishing that we did was in late winter, early spring. From February on 'till March. We were given quotas. I was given a small quota, a thousand pounds of fish. Pickerel, a thousand pounds of pickerel. This was not much. Some of the lakes that they went to commercial fish on was at Trout Lake, Keeper Lake area, and Barton Lake, we would either fish early spring, and early spring I call that the winter fishing. In the summer time we would also commercial fish. The quotas at that time did not offer much in the way of supporting ourselves. The quotas were not enough to make a good living, but it was, we managed. I managed to support my family with that quota. Commercial fishing demanded a lot of our time, a lot of work. It was okay to commercial fish in the winter time, this was much easier. The work was not as much. In the summertime, it was a lot of work because we have to put up with the weather elements. When it was windy, we could not go out on the lake. The water was rough, so that was for a couple of days, and put us back for a couple of days. The weather was not permittable for us to go out on the lake. For one individual, for one man, I used six gill nets. And I had to work these six gill nets every day. So it was one man per boat, that's the system we worked with. So with all of this commercial fishing I got a lot of experience. How to properly account for everything that was required for the commercial fishing. So I was active in both summer commercial fishing and winter commercial fishing. Even though these were two different practices, I was experiencing these two processes. Another thing we did is we all helped each other. All the men helped each other. In the area of weighing the fish, that we weighed the fish properly because we had to use the fish scales, and I guess when we had an order of fish, each man had to mark down their names on the tub of fish so that they would be paid for

that, so you could not mix the names on the tubs. The quotas I understand were set by the MNR, but I don't know why MNR had to set the quotas because they never came to discuss these quotas with us. They never came to visit us. They never landed in our camps, fishing camps. In the winter or perhaps in the summer. The fish prices varied. Sometimes we have high prices, at times they were low prices. During the times of high prices, we were excited to fish. It was good then, but when the prices dropped, low prices, we were not excited to commercial fish. The fish buyers would come around to buy our fish right at the camp. The person that gave the best price was Shoal Lake, Ben Ratuski. Shoal Lake, he bought them eh? He was a good buyer, in fact he, I got three skidoos off him, three snowmobiles. He would, I guess, give snowmobiles to the fishermen to use. So that's one good thing about doing business with Shoal Lake. But the other thing that we experienced was, ah, we had to use ah, proper gill nets, the mesh size. The proper mesh size was four inch. Four inches. These nets were not free, we had to pay for them, we had to buy them. And I understand the MNR had particular, wanted these particular sizes in order to do our commercial fishing. Two sizes here, 30 inch, nets wide. Deep I should say, deep. And the other side was 28 inch mesh deep. These were the two sizes that we had to use, so that 28 inch mesh deep was good for Barton Lake because Barton Lake is a shallow lake. So we had to get used to those net regulations. So that's why our people fear the MNR this way, our people didn't want to have confrontation with the MNR, if they should come in and we were caught using the different nets. So we did a lot of moving around when we commercial fished the lakes. Once we were done with one lake, we would move to another area. The women and children traveled by airplane, while the men traveled by snowmobile to the different lake areas. If it was winter, we had to set up tent camp sites. This was what we often used. This was the only way for us to make money at that time to feed our families, even though the prices varied, this was the only occupation that we could work on that provided an income. During the summertime you had to make ice, it was more work for us. But in the winter, it was easier for us to commercial fish in the wintertime. We just buried our fish under the snow. We preserved our fish that way during the winter time. So commercial fishing provided an income for us. Especially when the fish prices were high. So when the buyer came, at times he would bring the cheques to us, right to the camp where he would pick up the fish. The commercial fishing was very good in the beginning, when it started. We were all happy to make money, but later on, after a few years it began to drop, so the prices were dropped. There was a lot of, a lack of interest from the men to fish. So when that happened, a lot of the men just gave up commercial fishing because it was not feasible to invest in that. So once the prices dropped, we were affected by that. So that's when my older brother, Simon, the late Simon Turtle, wanted to get out of the commercial fishing and go into an outpost camp. So that's what we did, I supported him. It took us about three years to get everything in place, to get all the necessary support from the community. So after that we started the outpost camp.

The reason why my elder brother wanted to start the outpost camp, he wanted to see if the outpost camp business would bring in a better income for our families. So that winter, when we began, we had been approved, and the supplies came in. We took the supplies to Barton Lake and we built two cabins at Barton Lake for the outpost camp. What me and my brother wanted to do in the Barton Lake area, I guess that whole

trapline area. What that business that we established, we did not want this to affect our traditional activities, or for this business to interfere with the fishing, the hunting, the trapping, etc... And with this business, it would not affect the decisions that we made on our trapline area. No one would come from the outside to tell us what to do in that area. This was our plan, this was our idea. So the outpost camp we had established, over the years we have witnessed tourists coming in there. And one of the things I have begun to understand, a lot of the tourists will not favor gill net fishing while they are there, so we try to accommodate that. We want to treat our customers with all of their wishes while they are there. So this is one area that I have begun to understand. I wanted to share with you, the commercial fishing.

I believe that the MNR people learned a lot from our people in the area of how our people lived, on the land, how they did things on the land, I guess one area for sure was the trapping. The trapping that was done on the land. I'm concerned that the MNR, even today, has not recognized how valuable our trapping is still to our people. When I was fifteen or sixteen winters old, I was given four traps by my older brother. The same brother, Simon. I followed him on the land. The reason why I'm saying this is just how trapping was done in those days. For instance mink was very plentiful on the land. It was just like squirrels, squirrels have trails on the land. So these minks, was, just how plentiful they were back then, they had their own trails on the land. We used to set our traps on the mink trails. The particular type of trap that we used was the leghold traps. We used these traps for many years. We would set these leghold traps on the land. So the number of traps we had, we would go and set all these traps on the land. And MNR made a mistake, they began to change what type of traps we would use. This is the mistake that the MNR did. With these new traps, it makes trapping difficult. The different methods. It creates difficulty for our people to continue trapping. This is how I see it. We were not created to have a kinship relationship with the animals. They talk about the animals suffering too much. So this is where our people stand, when people talk about animals, animals that suffered too much, I believe that this is why these new traps were introduced, is so that it causes the animals not to suffer. But when I say that our people don't have a kinship relationship with the animals, the Creator wanted it this way, that we would not, so that we would not be I guess to have ah, any feelings for the animals that were there for us. They were caught in our traps. That's the system that the creator has put in place. So with the introduction of the new traps, the square traps, I believe these are the conibear traps, we were not experienced with those. Plus, the square traps are very expensive. Back then you could buy twelve leghold traps for ten dollars. Depending on the size. There was size two, there was size three. But these were good traps to work with. But now with the new traps, the square traps, I was given four traps. These four square traps. So I tried them one winter. I did not catch anything. Not even one marten. And I believe this is the mistake the MNR people made. So with the decline of the fur, brought in by our people, no one was selling fur. Not many of our people were trapping. Referring to the new traps that were introduced by the MNR. There was a decline in the number of fur that was brought in. The decline of our people trapping. I still have a lot of my old traps, but I am afraid to use them. Afraid of MNR. I think this is why they call MNR gookooko'oo.

We again, are afraid of MNR, just like in the past. In the past there was no hindrances, our people felt free to trap, you know, even the whole land. Our people, the trappers walked the land. And the whole area, we use the whole area. Even in other areas, we would meet other trappers from different areas or from different communities. You know, the trapping back then brought our people together. The trapping system that was in place, the trapping practice was good. We went everywhere on the land. But now with the new practice, method of trapping that has been introduced, this is not happening. For example, even with the new trapping methods, the quotas are not the same. MNR also introduced quotas, for instance, one trapper has a quota of five beaver, you know, to me that's an insult. You know, what can you, for a whole season, what can you, the trapper is supposed to trap five beavers. What can you? That's not much. It's not even worth trapping five beaver. You can't make a living, can't afford your family with five beaver. With trapping in the past, it was a way for our people to survive. It brought in a good income. So today, trapping is, it's regulated too much now. I believe the Creator put a better system in place for our people to survive off. I believe what I am mentioning here, our people survived and supported their families. An example I used was commercial fishing. So this was another way that our people supported their families was through trapping. And another thing that I see is, why our people survived on the land, is we never heard of any quotas before. There's no quotas on hunting, it was also better for our people. I recall one time there was this MNR person that came to our community. He was a tall man, he had a bent nose. Didn't know what his name was, but I went to his meeting which was held in the school up the hill there. And this man came to introduce the trapping system to our people. And he started giving out pieces of paper to our people. I believe this was the introduction of the trapping license. That we were to use this piece of paper to trap and we were supposed to be recognized by the Hudson Bay Company, because the Hudson Bay Company were the only fur buyers at that time. So all these regulations that were introduced by MNR to our people, MNR maybe thought that they were doing a service to our people, but they actually were not doing a service to our people by introducing all these regulations. So when we went out on the land to check our traps, we would meet with the Poplar Hill people, Pikangikum would meet with Poplar Hill, and many times I used to meet old William Keeper on the trail. We would meet on certain areas, we would make camp, we would sit around the campfire, we would have a good time. This is how good trapping was back then. This is what I have to speak of.

In regards to the MNR, their working relationship with our people, it is very good. I see they are committed to helping us. In the past our relationship with them was quite different. What I have explained earlier. Today, it's very different, I see that they are helping, helping our people. I guess I can say from our planning, we have a good plan in place. Because of this good plan, I see that no one should be against our planning. No one should be opposing our planning. And what we are planning is for the future of our youth in this community. In regards to the enviros, I can see that our working relationship is not good. Why I'm saying that, is, I know they are in opposition. And when someone is not in position with what you are trying to do, when you are trying to do something positive, that opposition will only break up and divide the people. In the past,

pertaining to the MNR, in the past what they did, the year that they began to work with our people, maybe that was good, maybe that wasn't good, it still continues today, and I see today it has improved. The relationship with our people.

A last word on the MNR, I recognize MNR, for the working relationship they have with our people. MNR recognizes that our people are going to continue to survive on the land. Since they recognize this that is why they have continued to work with us. I also recognize that they are concerned with our youth. For our youth's future survival. This is what I recognize about MNR. And my closing comments are, on my vision that I had shared in our last meeting, this is the last word that I want to say. In regards to the enviros, I would like to meet with them, I would like to ask them these questions. All of the plant life that you see growing out of the ground, out of the aki, the earth, I'm not talking about the trees, or the high plants, I'm talking about these plant life that grows on the surface of the ground, all of these, you look at them and you think that they are all the same, but actually they are not. There is many, many different plants. Very minute, organic plants, these all have life, these all have their place in the earth. And these all have names that were given to them for how they should function on top of the ground. This is the plant life cycle. These all have a place, and all of these plants will become the aki, the earth, the aki. This is what the enviros need to understand, our knowledge of the earth. Knowledge can be possessed by how old you are. I'm old, I'm way up there in years and I possess a certain kind of knowledge. So when I see the enviros, I would like to ask them how old they are. And can they name all of the plants that grew on top of the earth, on top of the soil? And do they really understand what the caribou eats? Do they possess this type of knowledge for them to be able to answer my questions?

Charlie, who was present during Solomon's interview, added...

...Gaagigebag it's called. Translated to everlasting plant. But this particular plant grows on top the aki, on top the soil. This particular plant never fades, the color never fades on this certain plant. Nor does this plant ever decay. Plants after the summer they began to decay in the fall, but this plant never does. Even through the winter, this same plant stays green. It doesn't die. So our people know that the function of this plant is to keep the earth. Keeps the earth alive eh? It doesn't die when the other plants begin to die off. This plant never dies, it is always alive. So what this plant does, people understood it rejuvenates the earth each year. This is what this plant does. This is what the enviros need to understand. Gaagigebag, I don't know how you translate that in English...

Summary

The people of Pikangikum have a history of working with the OMNR and its predecessor, Lands and Forests. In some cases they were direct employees of the Ministry and in other cases they were entrepreneurs and harvesters whose livelihoods depended directly on the conservation quotas assigned by the Ministry. There appear to have been periods of time throughout Pikangikum's engagement with the OMNR, when there was more certainty within the community about the rules and regulations assigned by the OMNR. In some cases, middlemen like Angus Comber, who was able to communicate with both Pikangikum and OMNR officials, helped the community negotiate those regulations. At other times, regulations became more restrictive and Pikangikum people had to find other ways to eat and make money.

The enforcement of regulations has brought a great deal of fear to community members. The rules were sometimes not explained very thoroughly, and also, as Norman mentioned, the rules were part of a foreign system designed by a relatively inaccessible organization: a different 'field' as part of a different 'habitus'. Increased regulation and enforcement is one reason for the decline of some of Pikangikum's commercial endeavors. Low market prices, diminished markets and changed technology are other reasons. Community members still engage in many activities for personal sustenance such as fishing and trapping; however, their capacity to harvest and market resources commercially has been restricted in many cases.

Other OMNR rules, such as forest fire fighting safety procedures and the ability to bring a gun into the bush are seen as positive and reflect a good relationship between the two partners, because they have the safety and wellbeing of the person in mind. These types of regulations show a degree of goodwill trust between the partners, even outside the partnership field. It is also recognized that some requests by the OMNR can be honored, depending on their magnitude, even if they are unpopular within the community. Granting favor is part of the exchange which takes place in a relationship.

The uncertainty in which the OMNR has created and enforced conservation policy and assigned licenses and building permits to outsiders has granted the Ministry a degree of power. The OMNR has been *gookooko'oo*, a monster which has instilled fear in the people during certain periods of history. More recently the introduction of some different technologies such as 'humane' traps and sturgeon collars can interfere with the way that a Pikangikum person is meant to relate to the earth. That individual could be caught in a dilemma of having to adhere to the new rules, which contravene Pikangikum rules.

The Whitefeather Forest Initiative's *Terms of Reference* outlines the place of Pikangikum people relative to the Creator and the earth. However the secular, monolithic, regulatory nature of the OMNR, which passes rules down a chain of command, does not consider, or probably understand, the spiritual ramifications of the regulations. Having to defy rules binding the person to the land can cause fear, which is stronger and more complex than can be imagined by those responsible for passing the rules. How can Pikangikum people influence the fact that the OMNR will likely continue passing regulations of this manner?

Perhaps through the narratives they tell about the confinement of animals to zoo cages, or of the people to the reserve; both places where the occupants become unhealthy.

The fear of disrespecting relationships between beings became clear to me during my fieldwork. Throughout my summer in Pikangikum, I had been walking alone, through the woods north of the community along the lake. Late in the afternoon, on Saturday of the August long weekend, I saw a tall, thin, two dimensional, human shaped creature running up a hillside about 50 meters away. The black, opaque, shadow-like being was moving quickly, swinging its' arms and legs like a pinwheel and snapping branches. Prior to the encounter, I had a strong sense that something was watching me, and decided to leave the birch grove I was taking pictures in. Back in Pikangikum, I spoke with a few people about what I had seen, and saw a comment on a Pikangikum chat site, written by a woman who had seen the shadow-like figure a day later, and was wondering if it was a Sasquatch. Another woman told me over the phone that that particular being was seen often in the community. The experience left me frightened, agitated and completely unable to sleep, for fear that the creature was outside my window. I left the community abruptly, earlier than I had planned. In October, I returned to Pikangikum and explained what had happened to the Elders and the WPMC. One of the conclusions was that I had committed a transgression somehow, and the apparition was a warning. I had however, gained a limited understanding of the fear that is possible when a person is alone and unprotected in the bush

Paddy Peters stated that the community's experience with commercial fishing is one of the main reasons why Pikangikum is engaging with the OMNR to plan the Whitefeather forest. The telling of commercial fishing narratives indicate where change is rooted in the community. Planning Whitefeather with the OMNR is now an innovative tactic to prevent what happened with commercial fishing from happening to forestry-related economic development. Telling commercial fishing narratives to the OMNR and to others is possibly aimed at minimizing the risk that the new economic development plans will be lost or favor given to someone else.

The commercial fishing narratives, which seek explanation, may also be the community's way of trying to build a strong goodwill trust with the OMNR. If answers are found and explanations are given to a situation where the community was undermined it may be easier to trust the intentions and goodwill of the OMNR at large.

Indications of goodwill trust in regards to the OMNR people who participate directly in the negotiations are apparent, however. George and Solomon, for instance, say that the OMNR has the right intentions towards their youth, and their community. The people who make final decisions: who work higher up in the organization, or even laterally may not have the same intentions. Bureaucratic complexity figures in the commercial fishing narratives and other narratives.

Pikangikum Elders continually state that they have a good working relationship with the OMNR. As Elder George B. Strang mentioned "they teach each other". Through sharing knowledge, which can occur through the telling of narratives, the partnership becomes

tighter and more successful. These narratives likely contribute to social control or the ability to influence the other partner on the field. Sharing and constructing narratives together may be indicative of a new 'habitus' forming around the planning partnership. The current dilemma with the environmentalists is that they and Pikangikum are not 'teaching each other'. Likewise, neither group is able to exercise any social control over the other, making the environmental groups a risk to Pikangikum.

The next chapter will explore the OMNR's perspective of the partnership

Chapter 5 Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Introduction

The structure for this chapter will differ slightly from the Pikangikum chapter because the interviews given by OMNR employees followed by a question and answer format. The OMNR interviews were coded and quotes will be used to illustrate main themes found in the data. The sections in this chapter will describe interactions with Pikangikum prior to Whitefeather, the triggers to Whitefeather as perceived by the OMNR, the negotiating process, and the key factors which have enabled the partnership to succeed. The last section will describe critical incidents which have occurred in the partnership.

Pre-Whitefeather Interactions

The OMNR employees were asked to describe their experiences with Pikangikum and other First Nations prior to Whitefeather. The interviewees described letter writing and consultation meetings, as was the policy of the Ministry in regards to First Nations prior to the mid to late '90's (Smith 2007; McNab 1999). The input of First Nations in the granting of dispositions was requested, but not necessary:

"...in the past it has always been consultation based and it was, if you send something to a community, and you don't hear back, you just keep going with what you are doing. And you may even go further than that and try to touch base with a community, but unless a community was particularly organized to address that issue, it was really hard for them to get involved. And they would probably have a lot of those requests coming at them, so it would be hard for them. But we weren't in a, we had to keep moving forward with things so we weren't really in a position to address that."

Most, if not all of the letters communicating with a First Nation were written in English. The issue of translation could be a problem if the recipient did not speak or read English. One participant noted that First Nations often did not respond to these letters.

In the case of Norman Quill's rice harvesting license, it was found that he did not actually lose the license when Woodland Caribou Park was created. The letter he was sent had to do with landing aircraft in the park. A third party had mistranslated the letter from English into Ojibway.

“the way I understand it was, he got a letter, couldn't read it, and gave it to someone who could read it, who was an English person that spoke Ojibway and he read the letter in English, figured he knew what it meant and passed that information back... so it's like a he said, she said, you know you tell a person to tell another person... it was twisted, and he got it, he got it that he couldn't do it anymore...”

The misunderstanding about the license was later resolved during Whitefeather negotiations when Pikangikum made an inquiry and an OMNR employee checked back into the records and found that the letter had to do with landing aircraft.

It is interesting to note that Norman's narrative of the same event did not include the part about the mistranslation and the provisions for landing an aircraft. Norman's narrative instead gets at the underlying question about why he needed a license to begin with, since people had historically harvested rice, which was a staple of their diet. The two different versions of the narrative point to two different groups trying to work out the rationale of the other. The OMNR narrative underscores the need for better communication with First Nations. The interviewee was aware that the mishap with the letter had resulted in

years of speculative rumors, which could have been avoided if the recipient had been sent a letter he or she could understand to begin with.

Consultative work with Pikangikum prior to the Whitefeather era was also discussed.

Consultation was generally aimed at imparting information or gathering information as opposed to directly involving the First Nation in planning. One person recounted a meeting in 1996 regarding the conversion of the Red Lake district crown management unit into a company-owned sustainable forest license (SFL). Most of the planning for the company SFL had already been completed when the consultation meeting took place in Pikangikum. After the meeting, the OMNR employee was confronted by Pikangikum's technical consultant about why the government had even called the meeting given that there were no plans to involve Pikangikum directly in the new SFL. The confrontation led the OMNR employee to reflect:

"...it was very significant, for me it was a very salient point ...so what are you doing up there? There is always value in information exchange... What we didn't consider is, is there an opportunity to start a new economic development here for Pikangikum community? And if we had thought of that early, it would have been a whole different negotiation, and we would have engaged the community early to find out, is this something you are interested in or not? So we were too far down the road to even entertain that... resources are tight, capacity is tight, so certainly I learned from that experience. Think about, or be sure why you are developing a relationship, why you are consulting...if there are real opportunities we are trying to develop, then start early."

Potential opportunities for economic development within the community were lost because consultation took place at an advanced stage in the process. Furthermore, the community had pressing issues and could not participate in a process which would not really benefit them. Consultation aimed at informing or collecting information from a

community often increases the already strained workload of Aboriginal leaders (Fernandes 2006).

Consultation meetings could also take place within an individual's home, as was described by an OMNR employee who held a 'kitchen table' meeting in a trapper's home. The employee reflected on the challenges he faced during that meeting:

"...one of the first times for me to really getting an experience; I guess that would have been early nineties. Getting experience trying to explain the process of how the forest industry is operating, what kind of practices we do. It's difficult. I do remember that being difficult... realizing the complexity in the cultural divide of trying to explain this industrial process we go through, this intricate planning process, with the person that was born on the land and has a great affinity for the land, trying to, definitely learn from the kitchen table in his house discussions, we are coming from two totally different cultural backgrounds, and very difficult, in an hour meeting, to meaningfully engage in an issue. You know? Relationships require years to develop."

One solution the interviewee found was to engage another OMNR official in the consultation process who had a strong relationship with the community:

"I do remember, we had several other meetings back in the office, Ben Miron was a fish and wildlife senior technician, he attended all those meetings with me and helped, he knew the community and he knew the trappers and so... I think they had a name for him up there, so I think he had a good relationship with some of the folks...I purposely involved Ben because he had a relationship with people, so you could try and have some level of trust, you could have these open discussions."

Notably, both Pikangikum and the OMNR have employed intermediaries in some situations. These middlemen were instrumental in helping both parties interpret the intentions of the other. The middleman could also convey the intentions of the party they were representing in a manner which could be more easily understood by the other party. A cultural interpreter, or liaison, is one possible strategy in a cross-cultural partnership (Voyle and Simmons 1999). Given that go-between figures played major parts in pre-

Whitefeather interactions between Pikangikum and the Ministry, it may be habit, or even tradition, for a Technical Resource Team and other consultants to be involved in the partnership. The go-between bears a great deal of responsibility, however, and one would assume that the same issues around goodwill trust and competence trust would apply equally to the consultant, as it does to the partners. Further research could expand on the roles and responsibilities of the go-between party.

Beginning of the Partnership

Pikangikum first sent a letter to the OMNR about acquiring a sustainable forest license for the community in 1996 (Smith 2007). The letter was sent during the initial stages of a policy shift in Ontario. At that time, the Progressive Conservatives were in power and the standoff at Ipperwash Provincial Park had resulted in the death of Dudley George in the fall of 1995. The timing of Pikangikum's approach coincided with the formation of policy within the OMNR which was more hospitable to First Nations. OMNR policy and Pikangikum's resolve appear to have worked in tandem to form the Whitefeather partnership.

Prior to the election of a Progressive Conservative government in Ontario, the New Democratic Party, in power between 1990 and 1995, had opened up the possibility of a better relationship between the province and First Nations. The 1991 *Statement of Political Relationship* had affirmed the right of First Nations to self-government and the *Crown Timber Act* of 1849 was replaced with the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*, 1994 (Smith 2007). The OMNR had also conducted a class environmental assessment of

timber management on Crown lands, which resulted in 115 terms and conditions set down in 1994 (Smith 2007). Condition 77 acknowledged that Aboriginal peoples in Ontario had been excluded from forestry planning and also excluded from the benefits of forestry (Fernandes 2006). The *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*, the *Forest Management Planning Manual* and Condition 77 linked forestry with Aboriginal communities, self-governance and environmental assessment. NDP policy had acknowledged the status of Aboriginal communities as nations, with the capacity to negotiate as such (Peters cited in Smith 2007).

In 1995, the Progressive Conservatives took a different approach to First Nations. The Conservatives promoted First Nation economic development on reserve lands, and management for conservation, by the province, on Crown lands (Smith 2008). The PC government initiated the *Lands for Life* planning exercise which gave way to the *Ontario Forest Accord*, 1999. Under Section 24 of the *Ontario Forest Accord*, development of the north could occur if First Nations consented, protected areas were put in place, and an environmental assessment was undertaken before any development. The *Ontario Forest Accord*, 1999, and the *Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy* both provide the policy enabling the *Northern Boreal Initiative* (Smith 2007; Smith 2008 unpublished).

Pikangikum was among a handful of First Nations in Northern Ontario to approach the OMNR about economic development in the mid to late 1990s. Concurrently, the Ministry of Mines and Northern Development had been working on a policy called *North of 51* aimed at developing northern resources. An MNDM official had been out across

the north talking about potential resource projects, largely related to mining and exploration. Although *North of 51* did not succeed, the visits sparked discussion and excitement in some of the communities about potential projects (OMNR interviewee 2007).

There is some confusion amongst the general public about the status of forests north of the 51st parallel. The *West Patricia Land Use Plan* of the 1970s had allocated large tracts of northern Ontario to the Reed Pulp and Paper Co. However, there was no First Nations input into the West Patricia and the plan was met with protest by northern Ontario First Nations (Paddy Peters 2007). The protests triggered a Royal Commission on the Northern Environment. Maps showing the Reed tracts still circulate, leading to some uncertainty amongst the public about the status of forests in the north (OMNR interviewee 2007).

The reasons for the partnership vary, depending on the person interviewed. The OMNR people in Red Lake tended to emphasize Pikangikum's initiative and will to change the economic and social circumstances of the community. Two of the OMNR interviewees at Thunder Bay, who were closely involved with *NBI* policy development, spoke more of policy.

Specific triggers in Pikangikum were cited. One interviewee remembered the extension of the Nungesser Road north of Red Lake through a Thunderbird nest as a trigger event:

“The Nungessor Road, putting in the Nungessor Road, and going through a Thunderbird Nest was a huge deal, and I mean that did have, that is one of the biggest... When I went to that meeting in 1998 they told me about that...And that’s a big influence; it is, on them realizing that they needed to be part of the process...”

My first trip to Pikangikum involved traveling north on the Nungessor Road, right through the Thunderbird nest. The nest is sometimes there, sometimes not. Thunderbirds keep a cosmological balance by killing off the large aquatic snakes, Mishebeshu, which travel through the waterways and subterranean tunnels connecting lakes and rivers in Anishnaabe territory (Smith 1995). While we were driving through the circular depressions of rounded rock which mark the nest site, Paddy Peters pointed out that the road had been expanded through the nest without Pikangikum’s permission. Peters said that the OMNR’s expansion of the road northward was one of the reasons why Pikangikum initially approached the Ministry.

The story of the nest’s disturbance is now a narrative recounted by both parties in the partnership. It is an agreement between the two parties to emphasize the importance of a particular sequence of events. The event itself likely has different meanings and significance for the two parties, however.

The Checkerboard Prophecy was cited as another major trigger by OMNR employees.

The Prophecy foresees the extension of industrial clearcut logging into Pikangikum territory and a general division of the forests into swaths of private property, so that the landscape would eventually resemble a checkerboard:

“And of course they told us about the prophecy of the checkerboard...that whole checkerboard prophecy is a huge factor, based on what they have said, and my

experience over a bunch of years, big factor in them deciding whether they should have some influence over what happens in the future.”

The Checkerboard prophecy is a widely mentioned and re-told narrative. I attended a meeting in Thunder Bay in the summer of 2006 between Pikangikum, senior OMNR officials, and environmentalists, where the narrative was brought up and all parties were familiar with it. In response, a conversation ensued where the environmentalists made it clear that they wanted to avoid developing the north in the same manner as the south.

The Prophecy narrative is certainly also part of the shared meanings coalescing on the partnership ‘field’ between Pikangikum and the Ministry. The narrative has cultural capital. The expansion of the Nungesser Road through the Thunderbird nest was also mentioned at the same meeting, as a reason why Pikangikum chose to approach the Ministry and plan the future of their territory. The two narratives cited in combination have an ominous effect and invest authority in the co-operation and planning taking place between Pikangikum and the OMNR. There is little that an outside organization can say in response to the power of the two narratives.

It is possible that the spiritual significance of the Checkerboard Prophecy narrative and the Nungesser Road Narrative is not well understood by the OMNR or other non-Indigenous organizations. For them, the power in the narratives emerges through their repetition and alleged importance to the First Nation. The senior OMNR people at the Thunder Bay meeting were familiar with the narratives, testifying to the fact that the narratives had enough power to ascend to the top of the bureaucracy through strategic repetition, orally and in print. Telling such narratives may be a means of managing, or

attempting to exercise social control up the ladder of accountability. The OMNR people who work with Pikangikum are part of a much larger organization, and acceptance of their plans must ultimately be agreed to by people outside of the immediate negotiating party. Conversely, the narratives may grant Pikangikum a certain amount of power in ‘uncertainty’, the same way that OMNR’s capacity to make and enforce regulation is power in uncertainty.

Crisis within the community, and the future of Pikangikum youth was seen as another motivating factor for Pikangikum’s participation:

“I think a lot of it has to do with the commitment or the vision of these Elders, you know, we really need something for our younger generation, because I don’t think any of them really liked the idea of forestry, but they did see that they needed some economic renewal in their community and forestry was something that was going to do that for them.”

“I think they started realizing that this antagonistic attitude, this mistrustful attitude with government and stuff, was making things worse in Pik, and I think, I believe the suicide rates had picked up, and there was a lot of crisis up there, and there still are, but I think the Elders and community leaders came to the realization that, look, we have to change direction. We need something here, we have to change direction. It was a real, a watershed change in Pik’s community attitude.”

Another OMNR person briefly discussed the role of the Creator. The Creator has provided the people of Pikangikum with everything they need to survive, including the timber in their territory. They have a mandate from the Creator to take from the land in order to help their community. Whitehead Moose’s teachings appeared to resonate:

“...It’s the Elders vision, and ‘how can we help our community’. So then you begin to see this incredible respect for the land. The knowledge, you know they have been everywhere on the land, they know it extremely well, and I hadn’t, it just became clear how connected to the land they are, and so when you talk about trying to just, talk about how can they move forward, trying to create some economic development for their

people, it is just, it may be going against some of their traditional values, cutting timber, from one perspective, the Creator has given them everything, like they are one of all, The Creator has provided the animals on the land to allow them to live and survive and the forest is part of that, and I think they would rather not see cutting occur, but the forest is part of that, the forest is provided by the Creator, and they can use the forest as part of their success..., but it became extremely clear how well they know the land, they know it extremely well. Something that I learned...they really made it clear to me, that's their land, and they know it well. They are sincere about doing the right thing for their land."

Needing access and influence over government decision making processes which affect their territory and helping the youth of Pikangikum are perceived to be Pikangikum's main reasons for approaching the OMNR. The health of a landscape is intrinsically linked to community health and the ways that the community is able to exert control over that landscape (Parlee and Berkes 2005; Adelson 2000). Recovering community health through control over land and resources can include accessing arenas where decisions are made. Approaching the OMNR in order to start a forestry project was the path Pikangikum took.

The majority of the OMNR people interviewed emphasized the fact that it was Pikangikum which approached the Ministry. The phrase 'in the driver's seat' was mentioned numerous times during the fieldwork, by all parties. The OMNR employees seemed to respect Pikangikum for wanting to pursue economic development within their territory, employing a process constructed by government. The relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR was described as a business partnership.

"Their vision, was to be able to have tenured control of the forest resources around the community and use them for the economic betterment of the people, and so that was the whole point of the meeting. So, you know, this was huge, because prior to that, anytime we dealt with them with that sort of thing it was more like we would be saying, you know, we are writing a forest management plan, for the Red Lake area, do you have any comments?...and we would either receive no input, or I guess, slightly negative input, you

know we weren't consulted about this, and that isn't consultation. Sort of the usual line MNR would be getting across the province with First Nations groups. This was completely reverse of that, contrary to our earlier belief that First Nations folk were generally against forestry."

The will and initiative of the First Nation within the partnership appear to be organizational narratives told within the OMNR to substantiate the *NBI* and the *CLUP*. Given that the Whitefeather partnership is at the forefront of these policies, the narratives lend a kind of informal credence to the appropriateness of the policies. Such narratives emphasizing Pikangikum's drive and initiative also potentially downplay the fact that earlier policies prevented such a maneuver on Pikangikum's part. An emphasis on Pikangikum's drive and approach also acknowledges the fact that Pikangikum ended the long period of infrequent communication between the two groups.

The Negotiation Process

The Whitefeather Forest Initiative involves several groups of people, inside and outside the community. Alex Peters and Paddy Peters are the President of the Whitefeather Forest Corporation, and the Whitefeather Land Use Coordinator respectively. Andrew Chapeskie of Chapeskie Corporation out of Kenora Ontario, is a technical consultant for Pikangikum, along with two other major consultants; an anthropologist from the University of Toronto, and a former high level OMNR employee. The Steering Group for the WFI, members of which are the Elders and Youth of Pikangikum, provide the "core direction, input into planning components and decisions and plan endorsement" (TOR 2003, 17). The Steering Group and the Technical Resource Team plan within the community and work on capacity building. The Advisory Group, which is composed of the Steering Group, the Technical Resource Team, and the OMNR guide the

implementation of planning steps and act as an interface with outside groups. The entire structure is informed by provincial policy and regulations, and support from the OMNR. Pikangikum Band Council provides “day to day governance based direction to the process as required” (TOR 2003, 15). The Plenary Community Assembly has final power to confirm decisions, as does the Band Council (TOR 2003).

In regards to the roles of each group involved, the technical consultants were identified by the OMNR people as key components of the process. Chapeskie Corp. in particular, formerly known as Taiga Institute for Land, Culture and Economy has a long history of working with Pikangikum which pre-dates Whitefeather. Employees of the corporation are frequently in the community. They are able to pass information back and forth between the First Nation and the OMNR in such a way that helps both parties understand each other more:

“Andrew’s group, his company provided great support as far as being an instrumental middle man... because they tend to spend more time in Pikangikum than we do, the MNR, they are great for passing along information both ways. In most cases people don’t like having a middle man because the middle man can be a cumbersome person who can interfere, not in this case, they were a key link...”

Chapeskie Corp. also works on capacity building in the community. OMNR interviewees specifically mentioned GIS and school curricula aimed at training youth for forestry and mill management.

OMNR employees identified Pikangikum Elders as the main source of strength behind the Whitefeather. As mentioned above, the initiative is a plan for the youth:

"I tell folks that no matter what has happened between the beginning and now, the Elders are always good at sorting out their priorities and what they need to deal with. So at one point, their youth became a priority, or the Feds became a priority, so it is not that they stopped doing the land use strategy, they just re-set it in their list of priorities. But they never quit on it, once they dealt with what was top on their priority list to deal with, and there was time to bring the land use strategy back up on the priority list to work on it, that's what they did. They never became overwhelmed with anything to say, we are going to stop doing this strategy, forget that, we are just going to do that... At one point the strategy was bumped down because it wasn't their key priority, but they never dropped it, they never gave up on it. They are not quitters."

Working with a group of Elders meant that the OMNR was not working as directly with Chief and Council. As such, Whitefeather negotiations were not severely affected by turnovers in Band government. The negotiations also did not detract as much from the busy schedule borne by Chief and Council. The separation from the Band council election cycle grants the Elders and the community more leeway to control the timing of the Whitefeather process.

The consultants, the OMNR negotiators and the Pikangikum Elders and negotiators remained largely a consistent group throughout. Not many new people came into the project, and few people left. Members of the group were able to learn from each other over time and to develop a personal rapport. The consistency in the planning group and the fact that the OMNR district people live in Red Lake was also seen as a strong point. The OMNR Red Lake district people were interested in planning for the same landscape as people in Pikangikum. Everyone involved was knowledgeable in different ways about the bush in the Red Lake region. In addition, they would sometimes run into each other around town, for instance in the grocery store line.

The roles of the different players in the partnership are distinct, and each person appears to respect the realms of authority of the others. OMNR clearly knows that the impetus for the project; the drive to improve the community and help the youth, comes from Pikangikum. The OMNR is not directly responsible for solving social issues in the community, and does not pretend to.

The OMNR interviewees were asked to describe how the negotiating process works. The *Terms of Reference*, which were constructed early in the Whitefeather process and agreed upon by both parties, are seen as one of the strengths of the partnership (OMNR interviewees 2007). The TOR identifies ‘consensus building’ as the means of reaching decisions in the partnership. Consensus building is also identified in the OMNR (1995) ‘strategic alliance’ scale as part of a collaborative relationship. Additionally, consensus building is a practice used by Anishinaabe and other First Nations (Simpson 2000).

The first step of consensus building is identifying the opinions and philosophies of each side, then talking until both sides understand each other to a degree, and then having more discussions to determine how they should proceed given that opinions may differ. The OMNR people largely described consensus building as having rounds and rounds of talks. Sometimes they would reach agreement, and then disagree, and then have to talk their way back to agreement again. Being forthright about all the factors that might affect the decision is critical, including the certainty that the decision falls within existing legal frameworks (OMNR interviewees 2007).

The overarching policy framework for the Whitefeather process is described as being loose enough to allow for a degree of creativity (OMNR interviewees 2007). The pressure of meeting planning deadlines, coupled with the allowance for creativity, created a tension which ensured that things got done in a timely manner or else an interim solution was found (OMNR interviewee 2007). To illustrate how consensus building and the creative use of policy works, one of the interviewees described the process that occurred around protected areas. The Whitefeather process requires the identification of protected areas under Section 24 of the *Ontario Forest Accord* 1999, which stipulates that protected areas be created in the development of the north (Smith 2007). Pikangikum has been resistant to the placement of parks in their territory, so the category of dedicated protected area was created so that Pikangikum could have more time to decide what they were going to do:

“the first dialogue might be, Pikangikum will say, we don’t want to have protected areas, our whole area is protected. So that would involve many, many sessions to find the common interest in protected areas. And well, that might be a foreign concept to them, when they were proposing forestry as a new activity, we would find the reasons, we would have to spend a lot of time explaining the reasons why having a dedicated protected area is a good balance when you have forestry on the landscape. You may not have needed them before, because you didn’t have forestry, but now you’ve got this new activity, therefore you should have protected areas, so it would be fine. Same as any negotiation process, where you’ve got potential disagreements at the beginning, you work to find the common interests. And if MNR brought forward substance and material that resonated with Pikangikum, that would build consensus. We brought forward information from an ecologist, his name was Terry Noble...that had looked at an area and said this is an important wetland, it has a lot of conservation value, it has a lot of values that are important and then Pikangikum would look at that area and say, yeah, we know that area, we know it’s important. And suddenly we got a common interest to build on. And that’s how we got common interests, both mapped common interests and philosophical common interests...that dedicated protected areas is an option that we came up with to ensure that they are still in the lead, they are still making the decision on those protected areas. We knew they weren’t ready to complete that dialogue in the time, in the three year land use planning time frame, so we said, we are just going to put that in a holding pattern right? So that’s what that meant to us, we weren’t going to insist

that they make a decision on that area being a park or a conservation reserve or whatever. But we told them clearly, that you are not going to get approval for your strategy unless you get approval for your dedicated protected area... So it's basically an interim protection category. And it can't stay there forever, but there is no set time frame on that. So ideally, we said okay, we will place them in this interim protection category, we are calling it a land use assignment, so it is a dedicated protected area, so we will spend the next few years having more dialogue between Pikangikum and the Parks people to see if we can find the right expression of how management should take place."

When tackling a large issue like parks and protected areas, an OMNR employee said it was better to break the subject up:

"you might break a large subject into elements. The critical elements of that subject, and build consensus on those elements first. And then back to the larger subject. They say therefore, so, this is important, this is important, now let's take that and talk about why we have that policy then"

The consensus building process also has to take into account the variety of opinions within Pikangikum. Often the community representatives and the government negotiators would meet together and then separately to figure out how to move forward:

"You know, Pik does not speak with one voice. You make a connection with this 6 or 8 group of Elders here, but there might be another camp that really doesn't agree with that viewpoint. So invariably there is going to be discussion, that there's not just with the MNR that there are these two viewpoints, so don't make the mistake of assuming that Pik speaks with one voice because they clearly don't. There's always some of that going on, as with any community... we would recognize that if it was a really important issue that needed to be resolved, then we would point that out to Paddy or Alex that these were our perceptions, and we think that really, you know, you guys need to go off and talk about this stuff amongst yourselves. And come to some, try to gain consensus in your community. And sometimes they did, and sometimes they didn't. But you'll never get full consensus on any of the issues with any community, will you?"

Paddy and Alex translate the words of the Elders, consider what their words mean, and incorporate the Elders' advice into their decisions. Translation from Ojibway to English and back again is a critical part of the process, as the Elders communicate predominantly in Ojibway. The Peters brothers have been translating the Elders' words since the

beginning of the initiative and retain a vast understanding of the Elders' teachings, concerns and motives over the span of the project.

"There were meetings with us, but then there were meetings with Andrew and Alex and Paddy, or Peter and the Elders afterward. Like if we had a meeting, for a day or two days, they spent at least that much time back in the community going over the stuff. And so the meetings that we had were sort of a combination between building and creating stuff with Alex, Andrew, Paddy, or Alex and Paddy translating stuff from the Elders all the time, hearing some stuff from them, and sort of reaching, okay, we are doing this, this, and this. Our product looks like this. And they would still take it back and talk more about it. So that, sometimes at the next meeting you would go over the same ground again, because they would have developed something, or had some discussion. Or you know, five meetings later you go over the same ground because some people were there that weren't there or whatever, they wanted to have some discussion about it. But because everything with the Elders needed to be translated, we needed to rely on Paddy or Alex to say we are going to push ahead, or no, we need to spend more time on this."

Consensus building can, therefore, uncover the philosophies and assumptions held by both groups, and within both groups. Through discussion they learn why the other group holds certain opinions. It means constant learning and trying to figure out which course of action to take and how to adapt. It is a deconstruction of the other's narrative, and the cobbling together of a new one to fulfill requirements of the partnership. The 'dedicated protected areas' are an interim category, and a collective narrative in the partnership. The new solution must fit within regulation and policy, however, meaning that the implements of change used on the partnership 'field' ultimately stem from the 'habitus' of the OMNR.

Part of consensus building is figuring out how to use legislation and policy to one's advantage. OMNR employees described legislation and policy as enabling the process, rather than constricting it:

"I think Pikangikum recognizes provincial legislation and authority as tools to get where they want to go, rather than as being a what's the right way to say it? You could think of the provincial stuff as okay, this is telling the First Nation this is what you are going to do. We've got it figured out in this legislative piece and this is how it's going to happen. And instead we've gone into it and said these are tools, you can certainly lead the discussion and bring your interest using these tools, and we certainly have to meet them. That is the other side of the story. We have always been clear to say these are our provincial obligations. And at some point in the future, if there are political, like other, co-management or more directions on revenue sharing or co-management, that this work, it doesn't mean that this work has to change, this work would be adapted to whatever happens in the future, if there is new legislation, new tools available. So I always think of our legislation and policies as tools that can address both Pikangikum's interests and meet our obligations."

Consensus building is an Anishinaabe practice as well as an OMNR strategy. Given that Anishinaabe or Pikangikum law does not structure the Whitefeather process, however, the OMNR employees were asked how it is possible for Pikangikum to be in the lead.

The answer that was given is that Pikangikum controls the *timing* of the process, and the *goals* of the relationship, which involve economic renewal:

"Well, them being in the lead, meant to us...you've come to us saying you want to do forestry, and part of that is doing land use planning, so therefore we are doing a land use strategy. If you decide that you don't want do forestry, that's fine. That's your decision. And with them being in the lead it also meant a timing thing. So Pikangikum was saying we want to move forward as fast as possible. It meant that we would do everything we can to support that. So we would work like crazy to make sure that we had the right information available for the meetings. But that if Pikangikum didn't want to address all of that, if they weren't ready to do that, fine. We could come back to it at another meeting. But it also meant that we were facilitating it...And saying, okay, maybe we need more time to talk about this. But you don't want to take a lot more time, because if you do that, you are going to lose your funding. You've got this window of opportunity to do this, so I think it was saying, you are in the lead, it's up to you but we are here now, so let's be creative to try to make it work to suit your time frame...They were in the Driver's Seat according to what they wanted to do, they were also in the Driver's Seat in terms of the time. It was their time frame. They said, we want to do this, we need this for our economic renewal. And we would say, well yes, our urgency here is that you have a three year time frame in which the public are expecting to engage in planning decisions, and you don't want to slow down on that. So I guess there was this healthy tension that made us get things done, then there was also the funding part of it. Right, you've got to deliver or you are not going to get your funding."

That the First Nation controls the timing is a key feature of the *Community Land Use Planning* (CLUP) component of the NBI. The CLUP allows First Nations to move forward at their own pace:

“But the whole idea with CLUP is that communities move forward when they are ready to do so. And same with the other communities... We are not coming in top down and saying okay, we now want you to do a land use plan in three years, start now.”

The consensus building process, however, which requires input from a number of Elders and translation of their words, was identified by one person as not being very efficient:

“There is certainly, there is capacity issues, it is frustrating. We love working with Pikangikum, but it is frustrating that you are trying to work through things in such a large group. It’s thirty people. It’s all the Elders, with such a large group, and everything needing to be translated. Which is very, which is nice, but it’s a luxury. It’s very inefficient. I think if they had greater capacity to subdivide things, that would really, that would, it’s not the relationship that needs improving. It’s the efficiency of getting things done. You know, if they had a forester assigned to work with us on this EA thing, and if they had someone to work on the dedicated protected areas that, if they were set up to work on numerous things at the same time, without having everybody involved in every discussion, it would help. So, the logistics could be better.”

Interestingly, compartmentalization of different issues with the input of experts on certain topics was seen as a potential way to make the partnership more efficient. Pikangikum must contend with compartmentalization and hierarchy, while the OMNR is faced with broad scale collective reflection and decision making.

Trust

Trust was a major theme in the OMNR interviews. One OMNR interviewee said that there was some suspicion in the early Whitefeather meetings about Pikangikum’s motivations. It is not uncommon to suspect the motives of the other partner at the

beginning of a negotiation process (Walker 2007). Time and group consistency allowed the community's drive and motives to become apparent.

As negotiations progressed, the complex knowledge held by Pikangikum Elders about the landscape contributed to what appears to be a trust in the Elders' competence in regards to their knowledge of the territory under negotiation. The Elders thereby had the ability to be a strong partner in a land use planning relationship. In time, it was apparent that the Elders' knowledge could be checked with biological theory:

"I went in, a little mistrusting, thinking wait a minute, these guys probably have some other political agenda, and this and that, but as we got to know these folks better and listen to them, they've sort of learned about the land a totally different way than I learned about it right? So I went through formal western education, I would get the basic theories drilled into my head, and then spend the rest of my career observing how those theories seem to work on the landscape. Whereas they go at it exactly the opposite. Their collection of information would just be from observations on the landscape, and developing theories out of what they see on the landscape...So we are actually coming at the same information from at the ground level and us from sort of the theoretical level down."

There is a difference in scale between the two groups which has to be reconciled.

Pikangikum has far more precise knowledge of specific areas than does the OMNR:

"Now, fitting it into final products is tough. Grassroots knowledge, those so-called trivial details that you would have them, these guys are imparting, usually our documentation doesn't go down to that level of detail. You know, trying to make prescriptions to fit the entire Whitefeather area, whereas these guys...rather see the prescriptions go right down to the...lake. Because it's grassroots up. Rather than top-down...government always likes to do one size fits all. But they don't see it that way, they say no, no, this is this situation, and it needs to be handled this way, and you know this other lake, which may look the same on the map or an airphoto, well, either they will say, no, I don't want you to paintbrush it and treat it the same as this lake, or, you know what, no rush, put it off, we'll decide that one when we go visit that lake."

The precision of Pikangikum's knowledge about each landscape feature, likely coupled with the spiritual associations of that place, requires time for proper decision making. As well, the depth of the Elders' knowledge means a strong sense of tenureship, in particular over family trapline areas. The need to have trapline heads speak for their own area requires time as well:

"I don't see any of them try to make a broadbrush assumption, they will quickly defer to, they will say for example, this is what is best on my trapline for these lakes, or rivers on my trapline, they won't dare to make the inference that those would be good for the trapline next door. Because there is a real sense of tenure there. Which you know, can cause problems when writing a land use plan, because you say, well, geez, you know, if you were writing it you would say, okay, come on, one size has got to fit all at least at some scale. So there has been some issues there. But again, it's the two different ways of coming at the same end."

The challenge was to find a way to fit the intricate, highly specific information the Elders gave about their trapline areas into the land use plan. The process of bridging two different philosophies appears to have contributed to building trust:

"I always remember a quick salient story around the Elders one day, on remoteness, one day one said we want to maintain remoteness on Whitefeather. And [me] the forester, the kind of build roads forester guy, in his mind, he's going okay, we are done, this is over, you can't have remoteness and be doing forestry. So they are talking, and we are listening...Anyway, I said...that for myself and many MNR people that were likely at the table, that we are not on the same page on this issue, and that we will need to talk about it more when we come back. We will need to listen to you some more, and see if we can develop a common understanding. ...So what is the real strength of this land use strategy? It's the remoteness theme... our jobs are to brainstorm through and gain an understanding of what is their real interest? They want to protect waterways, they want to protect water, and look at how in the processes and systems that we deal with can we maintain remoteness? And remoteness is a great thing for caribou. There are different benefits, and there are different ways, we came up with some unique ways around waterway design. Again, these EMA's, they are sheathing the protected areas, so it is a huge piece, in the end came from the Elders, brainstormed through, working through the project, the Elders, MNR people, We had to come up with a way of describing remoteness, so a real testimony of that style of consensus, working together."

Trust and respect may have come through hard work. Trust in the people they were working with, and trust in the soundness of the plan they came up with together. They are building a tenuous, mutual history of sharing information.

As mentioned, full disclosure is necessary in order to achieve consensus. It was brought up that the OMNR in particular must be as upfront as they can about possible future dispositions on the landscape, as well as any new law or policy that would affect Pikangikum's territory. Pikangikum also discloses a great deal of their bush knowledge to the OMNR for planning purposes. Sometimes, however, information may be of too sensitive a nature to discuss with the OMNR, certain spiritual matters for instance.

Aside from bush knowledge, Pikangikum Elders also discuss historical information about interactions with the OMNR prior to Whitefeather. To some of the OMNR people, these accounts were thought to be indicative of trust building.

There were a number of opinions about why Elders and negotiators in Pikangikum talk about past circumstances. One OMNR person recounted how he was told at his first meeting in Pikangikum that the community was not consulted when Woodland Caribou Park was established. He had been notified by his colleagues in the OMNR that Pikangikum people would likely bring the issue up:

"I was told before I went to the first meeting in Pikangikum that they are likely going to bring up the fact that Woodland Caribou is regulated as a Park, without any consultation, because they have mentioned that to us, the Whitefeather people, so they are likely going to mention that to you...It was more of an information item to me, more of just a business item, it was just a bit of history, a reminder of history... just so you

know, that you are new here, you weren't here when that happened, here's what happened."

He saw the recounting of the incident as a possible reminder that present day OMNR employees should be forthright and not withhold information. The people telling the narratives in Pikangikum need to speak out in order to work through their own sense of having been wronged by the OMNR and be able to trust them enough to sit at the table with them:

"...[if] something happened to me ten years ago, twenty years ago, thirty years ago or it happened to my family by a group or individual and now I'm faced to go into negotiations and deal with that person, I might still be holding some sort of a grudge...I might still have a feeling that I don't like this group, or this individual, or I don't like what they did...so now I have to sit down face to face and negotiate some things, yeah, I think it would have an effect...And I don't think of it as a roadblock... but it certainly is something that would have to be worked through, not by the person that did the wrong, if you want to call the incidents doing somebody wrong, but I guess that's how it would be interpreted on that side... definitely ...they have to work through a barrier in order to probably obtain some sort of a trust, that yeah, I can work with them, the person that did this thirty years ago, although I'm not looking at the same person, I'm looking at the face of government. And are they going to do it again?... we, as the new faces of government, would have to prove ourselves..., maybe we do have to prove ourselves, I don't know. We certainly have to demonstrate that we are being up-front and forthright...we don't have a hidden agenda, we don't have any secrets, you know we are not holding back."

The telling of stories was seen by another interviewee as a test of openness. The fact that there was space and time in meetings for the stories to be told was crucial:

"I think that it is part of the test of trust and openness [talking about history]. It's hard to know, because of the translation with Ojibway. I sometimes, I did have that sense that they were sort of testing our reaction to things. Maybe you would go away for a month, have a month or so between meetings, and you would have to make sure that you could be optimistic at the end of a meeting that it was a good meeting and everybody understood each other, then maybe over the course of a couple of months Pikangikum may need to come back and get that re-assurance again that the trust was there and was true. So, but that was just something that you get from sitting at the meeting, and that feeling that you get that maybe it wasn't so important to address that particular item, but it was that openness to address this that was important."

The telling of the story appears to be an indicator of Pikangikum's trust and willingness to negotiate, and the forum for the telling is important, however the content of the narrative itself appears to be less important. By and large, stories were seen as guidelines for how the OMNR should act in the current negotiations by way of highlighting the errors of the past. The narratives are rules of conduct so to speak:

"...you know, they have the table in a horseshoe, and us, and some of the Elders are around the table and a bunch of other people, so somebody, you know, Solomon Turtle or Norman Quill, or somebody will stand up and talk about something, and you know, you just acknowledge, listening, right? And let them know that when Alex is translating the stuff that you are listening and paying attention. You know, some of it, you don't necessarily need to respond to. Some of it, I would say, you know, thanks for telling us about that, or maybe ask them to clarify something. But just try to understand how that relates to what we are doing. But, you know, put it somewhere so that you know about it. But you know, generally speaking they are not expecting you to respond, it is kind of a rhetorical story, kind of like we want you to hear what we have to say, and know that you listened and paid attention."

"They would tell us, I heard a number of times, the story about how MNR flew into the community one day, who knows when, so you know, yellow plane, everybody knows its' Lands and Forests sort of thing, Ministry of Natural Resources, flies into the community, and everybody went and burned their furs, because they thought that MNR was coming to take them, or to get them in trouble for having too many, or the wrong ones. As far as I know, that's not what whoever it was was coming to do, those kinds of things. So people would be telling us those kinds of stories to try to get across to us how we need to operate together."

The OMNR interviewees all recognized that there was a certain amount of protocol involved in the telling of stories, depending on the audience and the listeners. The visit of a senior government official may prompt certain narratives, or a newcomer, as instanced above. Selectively telling a story to a visiting senior government official on Pikangikum's part, is likely a means of trying to mitigate risk in the relationship by controlling communication flow upwards, knowing that the OMNR is a hierarchy. The

senior official may remember the narrative and associate it with the community at an important juncture later.

Elders visiting the negotiating table who normally do not attend meetings may also trigger stories of past wrongs. Beginning a relationship with narratives may be necessary:

“What seems to happen is depending on when there is these big community meetings, two things happen. One, the Elders who haven’t been working on the Whitefeather project, and maybe haven’t developed the relationship that the rest have with myself, or other MNR staff, so they’ve got questions....[And] sometimes when political people within the government, such as our Minister or other people may be there, that definitely, I think it will be admonishment for the past... We are still dealing with that, and maybe they are saying, how can we completely trust you when all these things happened in the past? So I think there is definitely some strategy... They would like to see something fixed that I can’t fix.”

The OMNR negotiators are the present day representatives of past government officials and policy which have seriously impacted the lives and livelihoods of people in Pikangikum (Laforet 2004).

“...every time you end up in these big community forums and there is a question that is like that, 50 years ago, this happened and a conservation officer came into our community 25 years ago and did this...a lot if it is about consultation. You know, these outposts were put on the land and no one consulted with us...many times I’ve had to say, I can’t speak to the process that happened there, our current process is this, and definitely there wouldn’t be new proposals happening on the land without...meaningful dialogue, meaningful consultation. It is very difficult, in the position that I’ve been in, when you develop these relationships with these people, and clearly, I don’t blame them, some of the Elders still harbor a lot of mistrust for a lot of things that have happened in the past, and there is no easy way for me to rectify the past. I can definitely move forward in a much better way. If there are misunderstandings about the past, we can correct those, and that has happened many times, Norman feeling that he was stopped commercial fishing in Woodland Caribou Park. That was a misunderstanding. It had been a misunderstanding for thirty or forty years and it got cleared up...we didn’t meaningfully engage face to face. We were a letter writing ministry for many years with First Nations. And meaningful dialogue is early.”

Misunderstandings, such as the rice harvesting license in Woodland Caribou Park, can sometimes be corrected. If the injustice felt by Pikangikum was the result of past policy carried out as intended by OMNR employees, the results of those policies apparently cannot be fixed by current OMNR employees. OMNR narratives often recount the carrying out of policy during a particular period of time, as many organizational narratives do.

Narration itself is a necessary protocol of a relationship. However, the more time a negotiating group spends together, the less frequently that certain narratives will be told (Laforet 2004). A couple of participants mentioned that they have only heard narratives pertaining to early interactions, such as the arrival of a yellow Lands and Forests plane in the community, and the subsequent burning of furs, a few times during their years of work with Pikangikum.

Treaty

Pikangikum was a signatory to Treaty 5 in 1875 (Smith 2007). A major component of the partnership between Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and the OMNR is the fact that it is outside the realm of treaty negotiations. Pikangikum First Nation addresses Treaty issues separately through Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). Stories told during Whitefeather negotiations by people in Pikangikum may pertain to Treaty rights, but the OMNR negotiators stated that the Terms of Reference clearly indicates Pikangikum's treaty rights would not be dealt with directly in the partnership:

"I know we had issues with hunting violations, or trap cabin things, or tourism establishments or whatever with Pikangikum but that never interrupted what we were doing with them on the planning front, because they were able to set those things aside..., they would like to see treaties interpreted in different ways, or they would like to have different benefits but they have always seen that if they could land the forestry opportunity, and create a company and all those kinds of things, then the jobs and the opportunities and the wealth will flow from that, rather than you know, if only we could prove that we own the land and we own the resources, and that you should pay for extracting the resources."

The emphasis of the Whitefeather negotiations is on creating an economy through resource allocation and development as opposed to revenue sharing and resolution of Treaty and Aboriginal rights. The OMNR maintains that it does not have the capacity or mandate to deal with Treaty issues (Fernandes 2006; McNab 1999). As an institution, the Ministry of Natural Resources in Ontario has no memory of Treaty obligations, as the Treaties were signed by federal authorities; subsequently the responsibility of managing land and resources was handed over to new provincial authorities (Smith 2007).

"Ministry of Natural Resources doesn't have a mandate. Pik never forced that on us, they never pushed that button. They are out there in the world pushing that button on things, but not with us... we were able to say from the beginning, that if we are able to get down this road successfully together, then we will allocate the forest resource to you. ...Of course they would be interested in that, right? That's what they wanted, and we were able to say, yeah, we can give that to you, provided you do all this other stuff to ensure that we reach that point successfully. And fairly early on, they said, we want that in writing from your minister or your deputy minister or something. So we put it in writing from the Deputy Minister and really that guided our whole thing."

Although the original treaty would not be discussed in the Whitefeather planning process, there was a letter in 2000 from the Deputy Minister to Pikangikum which served as an important document marking a new relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR (OMNR interviewee 2007).

"it doesn't mean that we won't address those other items [treaty and revenue sharing], or that those other items might influence this in future, but we are on a path that we are separating those. So when I explain to people why it has been successful, I always say that the focus that Pikangikum has had, and the separation of larger issues with what is here, has always been critical to move forward."

Pikangikum would not let treaty issues slow down the negotiations. However, at times, someone in the community would bring infractions and regulations potentially relating to treaty into Whitefeather discussions:

"So right away in the Terms of Reference, I think both parties realized that up front that we had to set a scope for this thing and work towards it... And it was necessary all the way through to make sure that we kept those lines, because little issues would pop up, like maybe we were having a Whitefeather meeting, and just the week before an individual may have been charged by one of our C.O's for shooting a moose illegally or something, and you know, the community generally would be upset about all that. It brings in treaty rights and whose moose are they, and wait a minute, we were here first... See because it's MNR that charged us, that's you guys. Well, or course it's our enforcement branch, they have their own mandate, they enforce the fish and wildlife laws and this Whitefeather thing really has nothing to do with that... So sometimes we would have to settle things down and say, look, that's a separate issue, it is not going to be dealt with at the table. I understand it has caused some hard feelings, but please deal with those in another venue."

One OMNR employee was glad that there was an arena independent of the Whitefeather process where issues relating to regulation enforcement could be dealt with: the courts.

"...some of those things that involve First Nations are resolved through the courts, and in one way, that's a good thing, we are not passing judgment as partners on whether that activity was right, wrong, legal, not legal, inappropriate, we have a relationship to deal with, and if that is the question for the courts, and the courts will decide the outcome, then both parties would have to live with the outcome and move on. So maybe in one respect, that is maybe a good thing."

Personal relationships were not affected by perceived infractions and subsequent court cases because no one at the table had to make a judgement. Nor was the business relationship between the OMNR and Pikangikum affected:

“I think that’s where there’s a separation from business, Whitefeather business, and the incident. And the incident didn’t come from Whitefeather, or wasn’t part of Whitefeather, it was separate. Even though an individual might be at the table that was part of this incident.”

Despite the lack of treaty discussions in Whitefeather, Pikangikum’s presence at the table with the Ministry was seen by the OMNR as an indirect mechanism with which the community was able to look after their treaty rights. They would know if a proposed action or interpretation in the land use planning process was an infringement:

“Pikangikum, by virtue of being at the table and a full partner to work, meant, to my view that they are looking after their treaty interests. Right, so, they would immediately know when there would be subjects that were treaty infringements or would require, and the consultation side of things would be done because they were at the table, so really, they are looking after their treaty interests...they were just by virtue of being there, they were comfortable that they weren’t missing something or dealing with something inappropriately.”

The older relationship, enshrined in the treaty, is enormously complex and is perceived differently by the two parties. Through the new relationship, Pikangikum may be able to work on the old one, to a degree, if only because they are closer to the processes and agencies which affect their Treaty and Aboriginal rights. Also, further articulation of treaty rights may result from the planning agreement, as Pikangikum has the forest resource allocated to them and begins associated commercial ventures.

Alliance

The tight working relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR is not necessarily understood by other branches of government or elements of the private sector. During the fieldwork session, many of the participants mentioned the opposition voiced by

environmental groups. Both Pikangikum and the OMNR have defended each other against groups with objectives counter to the planning partnership.

Environmental organizations have exerted influence over the development of northern Ontario for a number of years. The *Ontario Forest Accord* of 1999 was signed by the province, forest industry interests and the People for Public Lands (PPL), a coalition of environmental organizations. The Accord underscored the need for Aboriginal consent in the planning of northern resource development and identified the necessity of creating protected areas in the development of the north. The emphasis of the Accord was on Aboriginal participation and consent, however, not leadership. The later *Northern Boreal Initiative*, which grew out of the Accord, allows for Aboriginal leadership at the local community level, but renders the OMNR responsible for planning at the regional and provincial levels. Pikangikum asserts primary authority over their traditional territory (Smith 2007).

In regards to protected areas planning, Pikangikum signed the *Protected Areas Accord* with Pauingassi, Poplar River and Little Grand Rapids First Nations in 2002 (Smith 2007). The *Protected Areas Accord* was initially supported by the PPL, and the coalition negotiated a letter of agreement regarding a planning framework with Pikangikum in 2003. The relationship between Pikangikum and the PPL was challenged by philosophical differences, however. The environmental coalition maintains a conservation agenda that does not favor highly localized, First Nation directed land use planning allowing for resource extraction. The ENGOS have tended to prefer segregated

commercial and conservation spaces in the forest, rather than an integrated model (Chapeskie cited in Smith 2007). In December of 2003, some members of the PPL reaffirmed their conservation mandate, by signing the *Boreal Forest Conservation Framework*, which strived to enclose 50% of Ontario's northern boreal within protected areas (Smith 2007).

OMNR interviewees recounted a critical meeting and a series of events which tested the alliance between Pikangikum and the Ministry. The story of the meeting and the fallout from the meeting is an organizational narrative within the Red Lake and OMNR, and those who work with Pikangikum in Thunder Bay:

"We are all at Thunder Bay, it was either November or early December, say it was 2003 or 2004, we had done our first, it was actually markings on a board, on a wall, with the Elders and the planning group and the consulting team, were asked for some potential ideas around the first cut on protected areas. So there's lots of debate about in January we are going to be at this POG meeting, should we have a night meeting with these Environmental Groups that they were in partnership with? Partnership for Public Lands, show them early? We haven't rationalized these boundaries. Here's our first thoughts and we will tell you why...And so we did that, and it just exploded...the environmental representatives were very, very rude...believing, I'm not sure, believing they have been purposely cut out of the process, and the purpose of that evening meeting was to include them in the process...this was an in-between meeting, before we would all meet again. So it was the first time some lines had been put on a map, or in that case put on a white board...and that was our first kick at it..."

The initial boundaries proposed in the meeting were not approved by the environmentalists:

"_____ ended up getting up and leaving. _____ took the brunt of the rudeness, so this is my story, from what happened from there, the MNR people were cast out of the room... And what resulted was, almost the next day or two days later, higher directors in several environmental groups tried to meet with our minister, Minister of Natural Resources in Toronto, they weren't able to, but they were able to meet with his aide. Big blow up over what is going on here...we explained what was going on, and there was no issue, so they

weren't satisfied with that. The leadership of these environmental communities then set up a meeting in Pikangikum, in very short order flew up to Pikangikum... and basically the environmental people's message was you gotta stop what you are doing with the MNR, start over with us. You cannot trust them... what they are going to do is lead you down the garden path and then give this forest license to a large company."

The meeting in Pikangikum took place without the OMNR present:

"And so, we didn't know all this was going on, we had a meeting, we heard about, two or three days later we had our next meeting with the Elders and...they all go around the table, and they have to say, the issue they want to describe what happened. And this went on for many hours about the things that were said and the stories that I'm describing to you. And we didn't know what it all meant, and as it's getting near the end, someone said and we were very, very disappointed in what these people were saying, and we have a relationship with you people and we believe you wouldn't do that to us. And so at the very end, we got the sense that they'd thought about things, and it was a juncture for them. They were comfortable moving on with us...That's a big critical incident."

The importance of the event, as described by the OMNR:

"...And so, the significance of that, is the work, obviously a lot had gone into that over the years, so there was trust, there was a working relationship so that it could withstand that. These are people that they had a partnership agreement with, to work together in a partnership. They also had one with us, but, so, again, relationship is everything. Trust, openness, to weather something like that took a lot, and I think you brought up the next key point is, incidents like that do help to cement a relationship, and it's kind of a critical milestone, so we will never go back below that."

The critical incident with the environmentalists tested the goodwill of Pikangikum towards the OMNR. The partnership survived a very risky situation. The narrative, which is known internally by OMNR staff, is a reminder of the trust between the two organizations, and may be re-told as a reassurance that Pikangikum's goodwill can extend through other future, risky situations.

The relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR cannot really accommodate positional negotiators with one stance which is not malleable (Chapeskie 2007; Davidson-Hunt 2007, OMNR interviewees 2007). Furthermore, the PPL, and other

environmental organization does not have the same consultation duties to First Nations, as does the OMNR.

The ENGOs were not the only body to voice opposition against the Whitefeather process.

The OMNR defended Pikangikum's interests to INAC:

"The Feds were unbelievable to deal with in this, in that they just said well, this will never happen. These people don't know what they are doing, it will never happen, so why are you wasting your time? Well, in my view, if you don't do something, nothing is going to happen for sure. And if we just let them monkey around on their own, then that will be a problem for us ultimately too. We had to do it together..."

"One of the very first times I had to talk to somebody from INAC, was because Andrew phoned me, I didn't know him too well, it was '98, probably. And he told me that the INAC guy told him, that the INAC guy had said to Pikangikum, that if the MNR guy told you that there was any hope that you could ever be involved in logging, in the Whitefeather area, that he was lying. So I had to phone up this guy and say "I don't know what you think and I don't know what your mandate is, but here is what my mandate is, and here is what's possible under what our scenario is, and this is what we are going to work towards."

The Federal government also had problems separating treaty issues from the land use planning partnership:

"They [Pikangikum] were able to separate what we were doing over here, and what that goal was, with all these other things. Now, according to them, and according to what they say, the Feds had trouble with, well, separating those things. But I know we had issues with hunting violations, or trap cabin things, or tourism establishments or whatever with Pikangikum but that never interrupted what we were doing with them on the planning front, because they were able to set those things aside."

One interviewee pointed out that eventually, the Department of Indian Affairs became more supportive and gave substantial amounts of money to support Pikangikum's endeavors.

The Progressive Conservative government in power during the genesis of Whitefeather was not particularly supportive of First Nations either. Being in a remote corner of Ontario and planning for a small territory may have helped the Whitefeather go unnoticed during critical early stages:

“Now we were out on a limb pretty seriously with what we were doing, but, ‘cause for most of the time we had a government that their policy wasn’t exactly favorable to First Nations, and so we were kind of under the radar and planning on our own. We developed policy and we did what we needed to do.”

The potential of opposition from elected governments introduces a major element of risk into the partnership. Although the Whitefeather partnership is probably past the early critical stages, if a provincial or federal government is elected which is unsupportive of the initiative or unwilling to grant funding, all the work could be shelved. The possibility of unsupportive future governments and/or policy was mentioned when the interviewees talked about the next stages of the partnership:

“How do you keep it going? You make sure that this is not a one time thing, that we continue to build on this relationship and work with the people of Pikangikum to see the successes and economic renewal. How do you keep working with them and a lot of it will be the province recognizing that the districts need some sort of capacity to deal with these communities. Like through the Northern Boreal Initiative, we had good funding to support this initiative, and now the next big step in this is to get an EA to allow forestry to occur in the Whitefeather, and we’ve got money to work towards an EA, and then, forest management planning, when they start to do forest management planning, there still needs to be that commitment. So yeah, the government needs to recognize, and there will be money that deals with forest management planning, and will this district have the capacity to continue to work with Pikangikum on these different initiatives, whether it is forestry, or whatever, so you know, if we can’t physically work with them because we don’t have enough staff or money, then we would just be providing lip service. If we say yes, we agree, we want to do this, but we don’t, we can’t do it, then we are not going to, trust, is just you give up on us. It would be frustrating for them, because they will want things done, and we can’t provide the support, I don’t know. That would be worst thing. So in order to make this work, we the government needs to support the local district offices, so whether it is more staff, or more money dedicated to First Nation initiatives, I

don't know. I'm sure there's some little or big things that we could improve on in the relationship, but I think it's all about being able to continue to support them in resource development projects."

The work put into the Whitefeather could be sidetracked. That risk appears to have been identified by Pikangikum as well. As strong as their relationship appears to be now, outside forces threaten it. Trust between the groups has to remain strong to withstand risk (NAFA/IOG 2000). Trust in the goodwill or trust in the capacity of the other partner cannot overcome the threat of a change in government which is unsupportive. The best defense is perhaps communication up the Ministry's hierarchy of the importance of the partnership and the work that has already been done. Part of that communication may be narratives which illustrate the strengths and successes of the partnership.

One member of the OMNR cited another external factor which could have a negative influence on their partnership with Pikangikum: racism. In particular, racism amongst members of the public. Racist opinions could harm the partnership when plans are submitted for public scrutiny under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

"...part of the issues that people don't understand, well, first of all people don't understand, or don't want to know what goes on in the northern communities...I guess I'm thinking about the racism...there certainly is a lot of racism... and there is a lot of envy, a lot of misinformation that is out there about First Nations people and what they get from the government, and the typical quote handout un-quote, there's really a lack of understanding about what life is like in the community."

Public disapproval owing to deeply imbedded racism cannot really be controlled by either partner. The employee quoted above went on to say that he would defend his new friends from Pikangikum when he heard derogatory remarks.

The fallout with the environmental groups was a critical incident which tested the partnership between Pikangikum and the OMNR. When asked about other critical incidents, a situation involving mining exploration was mentioned. This was a potential resource conflict which developed due to a misunderstanding between the Ministry of Mines and Northern Development, the OMNR and Pikangikum. Essentially there was a sort of an oral agreement between the OMNR and Pikangikum that there would be no new developments going on during the land use planning. However, a mining company was found to have been staking on the Berens. The stake was pulled out and taken into the OMNR office in Red Lake to make a point. The situation was resolved. People in both Pikangikum and the OMNR recounted the story. The following is a compilation of different people's accounts:

"Verbally [some people] had said, we are not going to be doing new developments. Like, you know, putting a proposal in for a tourism establishment. MNR approved things where we normally consult, we are going to avoid while we are doing this land use plan. And I don't know about the clarity of the discussion. I imagine it was discussed, but I know that the Mining Act is a whole different ball game. We have no approvals on exploration, so that is one activity we could not control. So, it wasn't written into the agreement, it was verbal understanding, there was misunderstandings. People that were at the table may have had a clear understanding, [but] does the community understand that? You know, the general philosophy being okay, while we are working on this land use strategy, there is not going to be new things going on, well, what is going on, someone had cut right down to Berens River and they have a claim post right on the river. That's a development, so again, there's one critical incident."

When a community member removed the stake and took to the Red Lake office:

"I was called out into the front entrance way.... _____ had cut and brought this claim post, that's illegal to do, into the office. And plopped it down on the counter, so we had some years of developing a relationship, _____ and I, we weren't having our normal relationship. He had a bunch of political things he had to say. He wanted to say them and leave. So he said, 'you told me there would be no new developments'... 'This has to stop'... That's I guess the key things I got from all that. Didn't want to talk about it, didn't want to go anywhere. Wanted to be loud, make a statement, and leave...and that's not the relationship we have. From a relationship point of view it definitely was a

critical incident. So, very quickly, how we tried to deal with it... was we tried to get as involved as we could to facilitate some resolution... so we tried to find out who was involved, try and link up some people for communication...there's an exploration firm working for Goldcorp...and you know, Andrew Chapeskie's consultants, they worked to get some community support flowing and get some things happening here. The difficulty for me was, I hadn't been there from the beginning and we had nothing written in our Terms of Reference about no new developments".

"So I called up to the community... _____ said that he was rounding up a bunch of guys and they were headed out in a boat to confront the mining camp and stop all this. Now again, openness of relationship, I clarified all this, and said _____, you can't do that, and you telling me that, I'm going to have to tell the O.P.P. And he said well, we all have things we have to do, and we'll be going. Loading up the guns and heading down the lake to confront the mining camp. So anyway, it didn't blow up into an ugly issue, they went down, there was no one at the camp, definitely an interesting conflict."

The conflict turned into a potential opportunity for Pikangikum:

"...definitely some communication with Goldcorp. There was some meetings held shortly after that, and at least there was, that was one of their objectives I'm sure, was to properly engage who the heck is doing this, and do you understand what project we are going into and try to develop a relationship with that enterprise."

"I think mining is...one of the things they think there is opportunity with...they always joked that the Elders know where the diamonds and the gold is, and I'm not 100% sure how much of a joke that is...lots of them are pretty good entrepreneurs so, I'm sure they would have known what to do if they really did know. ...getting upset and taking action, they ended up with an understanding with the company, the impact was negligible, marginal. Another aspect of it was we didn't really pry into stuff like that."

A certain amount of facilitation was provided early on between Pikangikum and Goldcorp by a few OMNR employees and Chapeskie Corporation. However, the OMNR did not interfere with the actual business dealings between Pikangikum and Goldcorp, a strategy which is recommended for governments planning with First Nations.

(NAFA/IOG 2000, Nelson and Hickey 2005). The conflict itself arose because an oral agreement was understood differently by Pikangikum and the OMNR. The OMNR maintained that it does not have jurisdiction over the Mining Act.

The OMNR appears to have a goodwill trust with Pikangikum, which has been tested by some fairly risky situations, such as the mining stake incident, and the falling out with the environmental groups. Individuals working with the Red Lake OMNR appear relatively confident that Pikangikum will not act in its own self-interest and undermine the partnership. The other major type of trust in a partnership is capacity trust, or the trust that the other partner will be able to perform and meet goals (Walker 2007 citing Das and Teng 1998). This second type of trust was discussed in terms of the extensive nature of the Elders' knowledge about their territory, and also in the ability of the community to prioritize and keep Whitefeather going despite internal crises and changes in government. One OMNR employee, however, did mention that the community's capacity to work within a planning framework could be challenging, and that compartmentalization of responsibility would make things more efficient.

Summary

The OMNR is moving out of a consultation and letter writing phase into more active planning with First Nations, and narratives reflect that transition. The narratives from the OMNR tend to emphasize the fact that Pikangikum initiated the current planning partnership with the OMNR. Various events triggered Pikangikum's approach: crisis in the community, the Nungessor road going through a Thunderbird Nest, and the checkerboard prophecy in particular. Both parties agree on these triggers, and those stories have become collectively agreed upon narratives of the partnership, which are known by officials high up in the OMNR, and outside interest groups. These narratives lend support to the emphasis on community based planning in the *NBI* and the *CLUP*, and are typical of organizational narratives which reflect the policy of a time. The Thunderbird Nest narrative and the Checkerboard Prophecy are likely understood differently by the two groups, but both groups have simultaneously invested with them with power, to influence each other, outsiders, and people higher up the OMNR hierarchy.

Pikangikum also cited their commercial fishing experience as a trigger, but this was not reflected in the OMNR interviews, possibly because the OMNR is implicated in the loss of commercial licenses. An informal discussion with OMNR employees about Pikangikum's commercial fishing licenses found that in some cases, people from the community sold their licenses to non-Aboriginal peoples. Commercial fishing could be a contentious issue between the two groups. Pikangikum, by telling commercial fishing narratives, is looking for answers as to why their licenses were re-assigned to non-

Aboriginal lodge owners. They told me about the experience, and I did subsequent archival research to look for some answers. I found only a small number of documents covering the early period of the industry, however. Searching for explanations about commercial fishing may be a means through which Pikangikum is trying to build goodwill trust with the OMNR. At the time of writing, a consultant for Pikangikum and an OMNR employee had been looking through OMNR archives for information about commercial fishing in Pikangikum territory.

The structure of the partnership and the rules regarding it were made by the OMNR. Within the framework, Pikangikum must negotiate their opportunities. Middlemen can be effective in helping one side understand the other and assist with technical advice and capacity building. The role of the middleman could be a topic for future research.

The Terms of Reference were identified by the OMNR as being critical to the success of the partnership. Two other factors are the consensus building approach and the allowance for creativity within the policy structure. The policy structure has been defined by OMNR, therefore Pikangikum controls the timing of when things happen, and the goals of the partnership. According to the OMNR, another factor contributing to the success of the partnership is the differentiation of Whitefeather discussions from discussions of Treaty Rights and issues. No institutional memory of treaties exists within the OMNR, and current employees state that they do not have the mandate or capacity to address Treaty issues (Smith 2007). However, Pikangikum narratives which discuss fish and game quotas and livelihoods may indicate that they have a more difficult time

separating Treaty rights in their everyday lives from the Whitefeather negotiations than does the OMNR.

Both parties recognize that each party has separate roles, and they respect the roles of each other. Minimal staff turnover amongst the players has helped build a tight working group. The mutual respect and knowledge of the landscape held by both Pikangikum and the OMNR has helped the OMNR negotiators trust in the capacity of the Elders and community members to plan for the landscape. Elders' knowledge is often reflected by biological theory. This mutual concern for the landscape can work within consensus building, where both parties use different kinds of knowledge about the land to arrive at the conclusion that the same or similar places need protection. On the part of the OMNR, respect and possibly trust has evolved through a lot of work with Pikangikum bridging philosophical gaps.

The OMNR identified capacity, within the framework of OMNR structures and measurements, as one of the challenges facing the partnership. Chapeskie Corporation has been assisting with capacity building in the community and providing technical advice. A downside to the consensus building process is that it requires a great deal of time, as it hinges on the input of all the Elders. Compartmentalizing responsibility was seen as means of making the process more efficient. Another challenge identified by the OMNR is the continued need for funding and political support. The partnership requires ongoing work and funding in order to continue to be successful.

The relationship was tested and affirmed through pressure brought on by environmental groups. In addition, the Ministry and Pikangikum have supported each other in the face of other entities or levels of government which were unsupportive of the partnership. In the case of a potential resource conflict, Pikangikum voiced objection, and the Ministry as well as the consultant were able to provide early facilitation so as to avoid future conflict.

The final chapter is a further reflection on the theory outlined in the literature review and the data.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

Within resource management literature, it has been found recently that the contextual circumstances leading up to a community development initiative influence the viability of the project (Chuenpagdee and Jentoft 2007). This thesis is an ethnographic, iterative study of a twelve year planning relationship between the Red Lake branch of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Pikangikum First Nation's Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation. The method is an analysis of narratives, as narratives are an important part of negotiation processes between First Nations and governments (Laforet 2004). The purpose of the study is to understand how negotiators from both groups perceive the history of the relationship, the workings of the relationship, and some of the challenges. The findings show that there are underlying issues of trust stemming from past interactions. The negotiation process is also affected by different perceptions of time, complications presented by outside groups and questions about the First Nation's ability to influence other 'fields'.

The narratives are those of key negotiators in the planning process. To start, representatives from both groups gave permission to proceed after they had seen a synopsis of the research intent. OMNR representatives initially voiced some concern about re-examining historical incidents in Pikangikum, but gave permission nonetheless. Participants self-selected after they were informed of the interview questions. As the research process was iterative, the initial data collected in the field shaped the format and

theoretical basis of the research. The Elders arrived at the Whitefeather office and began recounting narratives of their past and present experiences with the Ministry, as opposed to answering questions in an interview format. The OMNR employees also tended to use personal and organizational narratives to illustrate points. Narrative theory then became the main methodological approach.

The primary ethnographic concept underlying the data collection is Bourdieu's habitus (1977). Habitus is the set of common understandings and ideas held by a group, which form the basis for the group's action. The habitus is informed by, and part of, the cumulative sequence of evolving ideas and actions carried out by the group over time, and is therefore useful when examining organizational or community histories. The 'field' on which the group acts is the concrete institutional structure. Narratives articulate the ideas and expectations of a habitus, and are used by players to affect change on the field in numerous ways. Narratives spark action on the field by providing contextual information, by teaching, by asking questions, and by attempting to make sense of a situation in attributing causality. Narratives which articulate the particular habitus of a group of players on a field can seemingly be used on a similar field, as a means of influencing that field.

Examining the historical trajectory of the relationship between the Red Lake OMNR and Pikangikum's WPMC through narratives enables a partial re-construction of the respective habitus of both groups prior to the formation of the relationship. The narratives also describe the new habitus which has formed on the partnership field

between the two. In addition, the narratives of each group address outlying groups and other 'fields', or institutional contexts in which Pikangikum and the OMNR participate.

Prior to entering the Whitefeather planning relationship, the two parties did not communicate much. OMNR employees recall sending out letters and receiving no reply, as well as facing communication challenges while fulfilling consultation requirements in the community. As employees of the government, they were largely carrying out policies which did not include active planning with Aboriginal people. On the other side, Pikangikum people would be confronted in the bush by Conservation Officers, receive letters in English they could not read and had no access to decision making forums where policies and regulations affecting their livelihoods were formed.

In the 1990s, policy began to shift. Supreme Court Cases were defining consultation requirements with Aboriginal groups. Economic development in First Nation communities was becoming a focus, and policy was beginning to recognize First Nations as governments. In the mid 1990s, Pikangikum sent the Red Lake OMNR a timely letter.

Along with policy evolution, the authority of both Pikangikum and the OMNR over the same landscape north of Red Lake, Ontario, drew them into a planning process. For Pikangikum people and some OMNR employees, the land is harvested, measured, experienced, studied, and taught to others. However, even though there is an overlap in the habitus of both groups in regards to their authority on the landscape, the partnership

itself is structured by OMNR policies and regulations, and is therefore on the institutional 'field' of the OMNR.

Over twelve years of working together, a new habitus, or collective set of ideas and understandings, formed between the negotiating parties. Consistency in staff, the capacity of key people in both groups to dedicate most of their energy and creativity to the process, and the help of various intermediaries with strong skills needed for the negotiations, keeps the process moving. The simultaneous writing of supportive policy, as well as achieving goals and meeting deadlines indicates to both parties that the partnership is vital. However, the strength of the Whitefeather process lies in the consensus building process, where the ideas and assumptions of both parties are uncovered, and solutions are constructed jointly. In addition, the place-based co-construction of ideas and shared experience which occurs around consensus building (Davidson-Hunt and O'Flaherty 2007) contributed to the new habitus. This new habitus is articulated in narratives which support the relationship, such as the story about the staking incident on the Berens which resulted in a potential opportunity for Pikangikum, instead of a confrontation. As well, the narrative about the expansion of the Nungesser Road through a Thunderbird Nest emphasizes the First Nation's will to take initiative within the partnership, as the incident was a catalyst for early meetings.

Within the relationship however, the two parties have their own collective and individual narratives which are presented in different styles and address different issues, given the obvious fact that Pikangikum is a community and the OMNR is a job. For instance,

Pikangikum Elders recount narratives about past experiences prior to the ‘partnership’. The Elders are looking answers about why a particular event or series of events happened. They may also be asking about the decisions behind the policies which severely affect their lives, or the even rationality of those policies. The lives of the Elders and the history of Pikangikum people spans a long period of time. OMNR narratives, however, tend to be individuals describing the difficulties and successes of implementing policy, or reflections on policy and their place within the institution. OMNR employees tend to view the narratives of Pikangikum people within the trope of policy, as well.

Pikangikum’s narratives can be spiritual in nature, whereas the OMNR’s narratives are secular, even though both are informative. Pikangikum Elders may tell narratives which contain teachings and are meant to impart knowledge to the listener, and collectively lead the listener to understand the place of the people on the land in relation to the Creator, the animals, plants, beings, and the economy of the time. Part of Pikangikum’s insight about the landscape is predictive. OMNR narratives impart information about how the land is managed for conservation, and how forestry and economic models are used. Individuals from both groups speak as experts, however, and protocols about who speaks on what topic are rigid.

OMNR narratives, can be understood in a chronological and evolutionary fashion.

OMNR employees describe the partnership with Pikangikum as adaptive management. Adaptive management allows for experimentation within management, and for reforms to the process. Techniques that do not work are eliminated from policy and procedure.

Pikangikum, however, needs a lot of time to consider the possible outcomes of a proposed action and whether that will take them closer or farther from a prophecy. Adaptive management may prematurely eliminate a desirable course of action if not enough time is allotted. Decisions in the community can take a long time if different groups of Elders disagree about the potential outcomes, and the amount of knowledge they will disclose on a topic. There is a discrepancy of opinion between the two groups about the time it takes to reach a decision. The secular nature of the OMNR likely makes it difficult for the employees to handle spiritual matters which do not have an apparent 'fit' into the planning structure, so as to be manageable. In addition, deadlines must be reached in order for funding to be secured. The consensus-building process was cited as not being very efficient by one OMNR employee. The influence of prophecy and spiritual matters on the working relationship may be an avenue for future research, and would likely be drastically different from one negotiation context to another.

Despite differences inherent in cross-cultural relationships, Pikangikum and the OMNR negotiators are at a point in their relationship where certain narratives are told only when new people arrive at the negotiation table, or senior officials outside the immediate group visit. The infrequent telling of these narratives is another sign that a habitus of partnership has formed. These informative and instructive narratives outlining expected behaviors are no longer needed for established group members, as the players already know what the others expect. The members are able to exert a degree of social control over each other, which in turn diminishes the perception of risk in the relationship.

Social control within the immediate partnership habitus is different from the more complicated, historical issue of trust. OMNR narratives address the subject of trust openly in relation to the current partnership. Pikangikum has a longer view of trust, however, and the Elders address it indirectly through stories about policy enforcement in the past and present. For Pikangikum, and for many First Nations engaged with governments, the issues of risk and trust are tremendously complex and very often extend back to different perceptions of the Treaties, and even the circumstances before the Treaties.

It became apparent through this research that the Elders' experience with the decline of the commercial fishing industry and the loss of their licenses was an instance where trust was undermined. The Elders were engaged in an economic activity as producers as opposed to owners, planners and managers, and were not given a full explanation about why the industry closed down in favor of tourist developments. Hence, the Elders and community members approached the Ministry directly to plan forestry related economic development. Both parties agree on the other narratives which describe how the partnership was triggered, such as the Checkerboard Prophecy, the extension of the Nungesser Road through a Thunderbird Nest, and the need for economic development options for Pikangikum youth. The OMNR, however, did not cite the community's commercial fishing experience as a trigger, possibly because the issue involves Aboriginal and Treaty rights, INAC policies, and national strategies relating to mercury contamination, thereby implicating numerous other parties and 'fields'.

Aside from commercial fishing narratives, there were other Pikangikum narratives collected in the field which concern Treaty and Aboriginal rights. It appears that the Elders consider hunting, trapping, fishing, fire management, and other jurisdictions of the OMNR in relation to the Whitefeather process. OMNR employees have stated that stories concerning Treaty and Aboriginal rights are told occasionally, but not often in planning meetings. There seems to be a discrepancy between the OMNR's perception that Pikangikum can use regulations and legislation as 'tools' to get what they want within the Whitefeather context and Pikangikum's experience with the restrictive nature of OMNR legislation in other jurisdictional 'fields' managed by the Ministry.

In the words of the OMNR, it is advantageous that Pikangikum deals with Treaty issues and Aboriginal rights outside of the Whitefeather process, and that judgment takes place in the law courts when so-called infractions are committed. According to the OMNR, the Whitefeather process feeds into larger Treaty and Aboriginal rights discussions because OMNR disclosure about upcoming developments allows Pikangikum lead time to make decisions about whether or not a new development is infringing on their rights. The OMNR also has to let Pikangikum know as much as possible about policy and regulations which might affect them. Such knowledge may be considered 'cultural capital' which translates onto the Treaty negotiation 'field', if one is willing to separate the planning relationship from Treaty and call it another 'field'.

In time, it will become apparent whether or not it is possible for Pikangikum to acquire strategic 'cultural capital' through the Whitefeather process which is transferable to their

other 'fields' of negotiation. Such 'cultural capital' might be personal relationships with government employees in different departments and knowledge of alliances and information dissemination within government.

A number of factors complicate the transfer of cultural capital onto other negotiation and business fields, however. An obvious one is the involvement of different players who are unfamiliar with the Whitefeather process and people. Another is that the field of land use planning may be working at a different pace than the federal-level fields which deal with Treaty issues and Aboriginal rights. This difference in pace could cause problems for Pikangikum if proposed land use developments infringe on Treaty rights, and no time is allotted for the community to consider the possibilities.

The arrangement that Pikangikum and the OMNR have entered into is new, there is no guideline or 'meta-narrative' to follow. The narratives with themes of underlying trust may be attempts by both groups to understand the rationale and motives of each other, both in contemporary and historical settings. The two groups have to work out how they perceive each other in their new roles. The emphasis on trust in the OMNR interviews may arise, in part, out of the need to inform Pikangikum about changes, developments and dispositions. The success of the relationship depends on the OMNR being forthright, and to trust that Pikangikum is being forthright as well. The disclosure of information to Pikangikum as a working partner, as opposed to the disclosure of information to a First Nation out of duty to consult, is unusual for the OMNR. Likewise, Pikangikum must disclose a certain amount of sensitive knowledge in order to plan accurately and

respectfully for their land. Such knowledge is generally used in sound-bites or short clips, to support specific objectives. There are underlying issues of trust involved in disclosing such information, however, and opinions may differ within the community. Examining disclosure and trust more closely may be useful, as more First Nations enter voluntary relationships with different government branches.

Through the Whitefeather process, the two groups have the ability to grant a degree of hindsight to each other. At times, the telling of a historical narrative at the negotiating table may explain circumstances or motives which were previously unknown. An example is the investigation into the mistranslation of Norman Quill's letter. Clarifying such events may draw the partners closer together on the field when the event was a misunderstanding. However, when policy was the reason for the injustice, the telling of a narrative may only highlight colonial coercion, and different logic.

Depending on the individuals involved in a negotiating party, the willingness to engage in a relationship may be strong despite certain historical experiences and distrust. Largely, the Pikangikum Elders maintain that their relationship with the OMNR is good because it is clear that the negotiators they work with care about their youth and community. Perhaps they have a goodwill trust in the contemporary relationship. Investigating the circumstances of the narratives told by a First Nation may be one means of working towards a more elaborate, historically significant goodwill trust, even if it serves only to make those who do the research and hear about the outcomes understand how policies impacted peoples' lives. Government employees may ultimately think of their

predecessors as doing a job, however, and they may conclude that explanations are not necessary, or not their personal responsibility. Emphasizing the commercial fishing experience to me, as a researcher, may have been a means of stressing the need for an explanation.

The tight contemporary working relationship between WFMC and the Red Lake OMNR appears to be difficult for other groups to access. The environmental organizations involved with boreal planning do not have the same 'cultural capital', or lived and studied knowledge of the Red Lake north landscape as do Pikangikum and the Red Lake OMNR. The ENGOS are not a level of government either, and lack the 'cultural capital' of the Ministry and the First Nation to act as governments. As such, the ENGOS have difficulty participating in the highly localized consensus building process which takes place between Pikangikum and the Red Lake OMNR. Urban based environmental organizations may share more of a political habitus with senior level OMNR officials at Queen's Park in Toronto, however. The influence of the ENGOS on the partnership, at present, appears to be predominantly an outside force causing reactive, defensive action. A means of including urban based ENGOS in the Red Lake negotiations is a challenge, and could be an avenue for future research. Mutual interests, such as maintaining remoteness in the north, and methods of undertaking extremely low impact developments could be a starting point for consensus building.

OMNR officials and Pikangikum community members who are not involved in Whitefeather negotiations are also outsiders. The OMNR is a laterally and hierarchically

complex department, and Pikangikum's WFMC shares a partnership habitus with only a small number of people at the Red Lake branch office. Pikangikum people have stories of regulation enforcement and planning in their territory by OMNR employees who are not negotiators. Influencing these OMNR employees may prove to be difficult, and may only occur if an organizational shift takes place which recognizes Aboriginal people as planners and owners in their homelands. As well, the approval of senior OMNR officials outside the Red Lake area is critical, and influence can sometimes be exerted through the telling of narratives at regional meetings which illustrate the strength and necessity of the partnership. There is evidence that news of the partnership has spread through the Ministry laterally. Red Lake staff mentioned in their interviews that they were contacted often for advice by other OMNR officials working under the *NBI*, or with Aboriginal groups. Educational, organizational narratives regarding the partnership are likely circulating through the OMNR. In Pikangikum, anecdotal evidence suggests that some people are unaware of the decisions being made through the Whitefeather process. One interviewee in Pikangikum said that a certain Elder would talk for long periods of time on Pikangikum's radio station, spreading the word about Whitefeather, so as to build consensus within the community. Consensus building through teaching narratives is another possible topic for further research.

Regardless of the level of support amongst employees of the Ministry and the general populace in Pikangikum, however, a change in political parties and a new policy regime in Ontario could end the Whitefeather process entirely. Both parties know this and are

leery of it. Passing aspects of the policies supporting Whitefeather into law may be one way of counteracting such a turnover.

Members of the public, neighboring First Nations, and other government departments are outsiders to the Whitefeather habitus as well. Such groups, particularly the later two, have jurisdiction over the same landscape, and could take action which unintentionally or intentionally undermines the meticulous planning which has taken place. Informing these groups about the partnership and building spin-off partnerships involving them in the developments may be one possible means of avoiding conflict.

New 'fields' involving new players may emerge out of the original Whitefeather partnership 'field'. One example here involves the 'incident' with the mining stake on the Berens. In Bourdieu's terms, Pikangikum had expectations of the partnership which were not met and suspended the 'habitus' of the partnership they share with the OMNR. The community had expected no new developments to occur within the Whitefeather forest, and the OMNR, with no jurisdiction over the MNDM, had not informed Pikangikum that mineral exploration was taking place. Pikangikum took action in a way that was more in line with their expectations by pulling up the claim stake, bringing it into the OMNR offices and voicing their discontent. Pikangikum got what they wanted, in that the staking was stopped, and an understanding was reached with the company doing the exploration.

The mining stake crisis on the Berens did not change the structure of the Whitefeather planning field, although it may have affected Pikangikum's habitus, and the habitus of the OMNR. Pikangikum asserted authority, stopped the process and proclaimed their interest in developing the minerals in their territory. The crisis was a warning that Pikangikum was capable of meeting their goals outside the planning field and opened the possibility of planning in another 'field': mining. If the Pikangikum negotiators had not acted with the expectation of economic development and were looking to simply stop the staking, the outcome might have been different, however. The narrative indicates that for the relationship to work, the groups have to share certain core values, if not certain goals.

As the partnership 'habitus' between the Red Lake OMNR and Pikangikum achieves more goals and grows stronger, the 'cultural capital' of the players appears to increase. Other groups may want to profit directly or indirectly from the enterprises being planned. The partnership between OMNR and WFMC has become less about exerting social control over each other, and more about managing outsiders.

Although the relationship is the planning 'field' of the OMNR, Pikangikum is at the table, and their narratives can inform the actions taken on the field. Outside the relationship habitus constructed by the First Nation and the Ministry Branch, it is up to everyone else to listen and answer, which can make the relationship vulnerable, but also strong.

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Appendix 1-Initial Research Outline

The Growth and Development of the Planning Partnership Between Pikangikum First Nation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Heather Nikischer , M.N.R.M Candidate

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

Thesis Advisor: Iain Davidson-Hunt

Thesis Committee: John Sinclair, Stephen Augustine, Peggy Smith, Alan Diduck

Summary

My research seeks to understand how the planning partnership between Pikangikum and the OMNR came about, and the factors that sustain it in the present. To provide context to the relationship, the historical interactions between the two parties will be explored, with an emphasis on key events such as the creation of Woodland Caribou Park and the replacement of commercial fishing licenses with fishing lodges. A historical narrative of key events will be created which traces this relationship from “first contact” in 1947 to the signing of the land-use strategy in June of 2006. The stories of Elders and retired or experienced OMNR officials will be sought, as well as documents pertaining to the events.

Once the historical context has been established, the present day planning relationship will be explored through interviews with key participants. The participants will be asked specifically about the factors that brought about the partnership, what drives it, how the past is or is not dealt with, and how it functions at present. Participants will also be asked about what they have learned as individuals working within the partnership, and whether or not the objectives of the partnership will be, or have been embedded in the organization or community at large.

Purpose of the Research

To understand the development, growth and functioning of the community based planning partnership between Pikangikum First Nation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Objectives

3. To construct an overview of the relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR focusing on the key events beginning with first contact in 1947 and ending with the signing of the Land-use Strategy in June of 2006.
4. To explore the personal stories of the individuals participating in the partnership in regards to how the partnership functions and what people have learned through their participation in the process of the partnership.
5. To develop a practical product relating to the research with can be used by PFN and OMNR to show to interested parties.

Itinerary

June 2006-Red Lake/OMNR

I will be looking for key documents pertaining to historical interactions between Pikangikum and the OMNR in order to construct a timeline. Then I will interview knowledgeable OMNR staff, some retirees perhaps, about these interactions. The interviews will be open-ended and informal, aimed at allowing the participants to talk about their experiences. If time permits, some interviews aimed at meeting the second objective will be conducted with key OMNR participants in the partnership during this month.

July-August 2006-Pikangikum

In the months of July and August I hope to interview Pikangikum Elders about key events that highlight their interactions with the OMNR since 1947. Work with Paddy Peters to clarify interview objectives, identify elders to interview and to undertake research in the community. The interviews will be informal, and some may be in the form of workshops with two or three participants, if circumstances permit. During this period, I also hope to undertake second stage interviews with key participants in the partnership from the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. These interviews will be semi-directed, and follow the interview schedule below.

Fall 2006

Any interviews which did not take place over the summer will be completed during this time period.

Interview Schedule

Preliminary Archival Research

Review records and talk with key people about the activities of OMNR that have had an impact on Pikangikum people. Review of background materials suggest some key events are: establishment of trapline system; commercial fishing licences, land-use permits for lodges and other uses; Woodland Caribou Park; Whitefeather Forest Initiative, Conditional SFL letter from Ontario Government.

Stage One-Informal Interviews

Key event list will be established in stage 1. Using events as topics the following probes will be utilized as necessary to have the person describe the event in terms of interactions between Pikangikum and OMNR.

Are you familiar with _____?
(name each event one by one i.e. first contact with “beaver boss”, institution of fishing licenses, fishing lodges, writing of 1996 letter by Pikangikum to the OMNR etc...)

Were you directly involved in the _____?

Can you describe this event to me in more detail?

Do Pikangikum/OMNR people talk about the event?
(if so, what do they say?)

Stage 2- Semi-Structured Interviews

In your view, why did the Whitefeather partnership come to be?

What are the main factors driving the partnership?

Would you say that the past has influenced the present?
(if so, how?)
(if so, how is the past dealt with?)
(if not, then why do you think past issues are not problematic in this relationship?)

What does 'Pikangikum is in the driver's seat' mean?

How does that philosophy play out in negotiations and planning sessions?

Have there been any major conflicts?
(if yes, how were these worked through or dealt with?)

How did you figure out the best way to communicate with the other party?

Did you have prior experience with this type of planning relationship?
(if yes, did you apply this prior knowledge? how?)
(if no, did the lack of experience help or hinder you or both? How?)

Did you learn anything from the other party during the process?
(if yes, what specifically did you learn?)
(if yes, was this learned or re-affirmed?)
(if yes, how did you learn this, or what enabled you to learn this?)
(if yes, do you think that what you learned has been absorbed by your organization at large in terms of policy change?)

Do you think that the other party learned during this process?
(if yes, how and why do you think they learned that?)
(if no, please elaborate)

Do you think the relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR will continue if the objectives of the partnership are met?
If they are not met?

What are some of the problems with the partnership? Do you think these can be fixed?

Appendix 2-Questions Second Round Pikangikum

Questions for Lucy, Matthew, Oliver, Solomon, George, Whitehead, Norman, Alec:

I've been asking about the historical interactions between Pikangikum and the MNR, as well as some of the contemporary ones, i.e. the seizure of guns and moose meat on the Nungesser road. Do these historical relationships and instances impact current Whitefeather negotiations with the MNR? If so, how?

Why are stories of past instances told at Whitefeather meetings with the MNR?

Over time, do you think yourself, and Pikangikum as a whole has learned certain things from dealing with the MNR, or as a result of dealing with the MNR? If so, how and what?

I've been told in the last set of interviews that Pikangikum has been teaching the MNR, or passing teachings onto the MNR, can you comment on this?

What does Pikangikum being 'in the driver's seat' mean?

How does 'consensus building' work?

How could Pikangikum's relationship with the MNR be improved?

Special Question for Whitehead:

Last time you talked to me about the land healing, and the need for Pikangikum to have control over the land. Can you elaborate on this? (Is there a connection between the land's healing power and Anishinaabe people having control over their land?)

Appendix 3-Questions for Red Lake OMNR

The purpose of my research is to look at how a First Nation and a government are able to work together constructively. The first three questions are meant to establish how historical and contemporary issues and/or conflicts between the two parties are dealt with. The middle set of questions explore how the negotiations work. The final set of questions ask the negotiator what they learned, and how that knowledge is applied to the WFI planning process and to the MNR in general. At the end, there is room for suggestions about how the relationship could be improved.

How long have you been working with Pikangikum and/or other First Nations?
(If a long time: Over the course of your career, has the MNR's relationship with Pikangikum and other First Nations changed? If yes, how?)
(If a long time: did you apply knowledge gained from your prior experience to the planning process with Pikangikum? How?)
(If a short time: did the lack of experience help you or hinder you or both? How?)

Would you say that past incidents between Pikangikum and the MNR (prior to the Whitefeather era) have an influence on the present planning relationship?
(If so, how?)
(If so, how is the past dealt with?)
(If not, then why do you think past issues do not influence the present in this relationship?)

Have there been any critical incidents between Pikangikum and the MNR during the WFI planning process?
(If yes, how were these worked through or dealt with?)

What does 'Pikangikum is in the driver's seat' mean to you?

What is the MNR's role in the relationship if 'Pikangikum is in the driver's seat'?

How does this approach play out in negotiations and planning sessions?

How does 'consensus building' work?

Did you learn anything from Pikangikum during the WFI process?
(If yes, was this learned or re-affirmed?)
(If yes, how did you learn this, or what enabled you to learn this?)
(If yes, how do you apply what you have learned to the WFI process?)

(If yes, how do you take what you have learned, package it, and move it up or laterally within the MNR?)

Do you think that the other party learned during this process?
(If yes, what do you think they learned?)

How could the relationship between Pikangikum and the MNR be improved?

Appendix 4-Questions for Thunder Bay OMNR

The purpose of my research is to look at how a First Nation and a government are able to work together constructively. The first three questions are meant to establish how historical and contemporary issues and/or conflicts between the two parties are dealt with. The middle set of questions explore how the negotiations work. The final set of questions concern individual and organizational learning as a result of the Whitefeather process. Finally, there is room to suggest helpful tips or ways the process could be improved.

How long have you been working with Pikangikum and/or other First Nations?
(If a long time: Over the course of your career, has the MNR's relationship with Pikangikum and other First Nations changed? If yes, how?)
(If a long time: did you apply knowledge gained from your prior experience to the planning process with Pikangikum? How?)
(If a short time: did the lack of experience help you or hinder you or both? How?)

Would you say that past incidents between Pikangikum and the MNR (prior to the Whitefeather era) have an influence on the present planning relationship?
(If so, how?)
(If so, how is the past dealt with?)
(If not, then why do you think past issues do not influence the present in this relationship?)

Have there been any critical incidents or crisis points between Pikangikum and the MNR during the WFI planning process?
(If yes, how were these worked through or dealt with?)

What does 'Pikangikum is in the driver's seat' mean to you?

What is the MNR's role in the relationship if 'Pikangikum is in the driver's seat'?

How does this approach play out in negotiations and planning sessions?

How does 'consensus building' work?

How do you handle traditional knowledge from Pikangikum?

Did you learn anything from Pikangikum during the WFI process?
(If yes, how did you learn this, or what enabled you to learn this?)

(If yes, was it learned or re-affirmed?)

(If yes, do you take what you have learned and move it up or laterally within the MNR?)

Do you think that Pikangikum learned during this process?

(If yes, what do you think they learned?)

How could the relationship between Pikangikum and the MNR be improved? Or, what are some helpful things that keep it running as is?

Appendix 5- Letter to Chief and Council re: archival research

Heather Nikischer

Pikangikum First Nation
Pikangikum, Ontario
P0V 2L0

October 12, 2006

Dear Chief and Council of Pikangikum First Nation;

I am a student with the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba undertaking research with the Whitefeather Forest Corporation under the Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative Agreement. My research concerns the historical and contemporary relationship between Whitefeather and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

There are a number of files at the National Library and Archives of Canada, in the Indian Affairs record group, which concern Pikangikum's commercial fishing activities. Some of the files are restricted, and require an application to view them under the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. I would like to let you know that it is my intention to view and transcribe relevant files, in the interest of finding documents pertaining to Pikangikum's commercial fishing licenses. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns, questions or objections to this research. You may also contact Alex Peters or Michael O'Flaherty of the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation or my advisor Iain Davidson-Hunt of the University of Manitoba for more information.

The files in question must be viewed in Ottawa, at the National Library and Archives of Canada, or ordered and shipped to Winnipeg. The file lists are available on the internet at: http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/02010502_e.html through Archivianet, Government of Canada files, and then by selecting Indian Affairs Record Group 10 and searching for 'Pikangikum' or 'Sioux Lookout Agency' and 'fishing'. The records pertaining to mercury were found by conducting a general search in the Archivianet Government of Canada files.

A list of the files and their status as either restricted or not restricted is attached. If I locate documents relevant to my research I will deposit a copy of the documents in the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation archives.

Sincerely,

Heather Nikischer

Cc Alex Peters
 Paddy Peters
 Michael O'Flaherty
 Andrew Chapeskie
 Iain Davidson-Hunt

Attachment

List of Files:

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6965 , Reel C-12928

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 14 -open

Parts: 1

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA. .

1939-1952

Finding Aid:10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6965 , Reel C-12928

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 2

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA. (MAP)

1953-1958

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6965 , Reel C-12928

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 3

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.

1958-1959

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6965 , Reel C-12929

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 3

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.

1958-1959

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6966 , Reel C-12929

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 4

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.

1959-1960

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6966 , Reel C-12929

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 5

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.

1960-1961

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6966 , Reel C-12929

File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 6

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.

1961-1962

Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6966 , Reel C-12929
File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 14 -open
Parts: 7
SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA
1962-1963
Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6967
File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 31- Restricted
Parts: 8
SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA.
1963-1964
Finding Aid 10-28

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 6967 , Reel C-12929
File : 494/20-2 , Access code: 20 -open
Parts: 9
SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - COMMERCIAL FISHING BY INDIANS IN THE AREA. (PLANS,
MAP, PUBLICATION)
1964-1966
Finding Aid 10-28

RG29 , National Health and Welfare , Accession 1996-97/706 , Box 6
File : 8726-3-1 , Access code: 90 -open
Parts: 1
[General and Consolidated Reports] Environmental Contaminants and Pollutants-Specific
Environmental Contaminants - Mercury - General
1975/03/07-1977/05/03
Finding Aid 29-229

RG29 , National Health and Welfare , Accession 1996-97/706 , Box 6
File : 8726-3-1 , Access code: 90 -open
Parts: 6
[N.W. Ontario vol. 1] Environmental Contaminants and Pollutants-Specific Environmental
Contaminants - Mercury - General
1973/12/12-1975/03/31
Finding Aid 29-229

RG29 , National Health and Welfare , Accession 1996-97/706 , Box 6
File : 8726-3-1 , Access code: 90 -open
Parts: 7
[N.W. Ontario vol. 2] Environmental Contaminants and Pollutants-Specific Environmental
Contaminants - Mercury - General
1975/02/14-1975/05/02
Finding Aid 29-229

RG29 , National Health and Welfare , Accession 1996-97/706 , Box 6
File : 8726-3-1 , Access code: 90 -open
Parts: 8
[N.W. Ontario vol. 3] Environmental Contaminants and Pollutants-Specific Environmental
Contaminants - Mercury - General
1975/05/06-1975/07/03

Finding Aid 29-229

RG29 , National Health and Welfare , Accession 1996-97/706 , Box 7

File : 8726-3-1 , Access code: 90 -open

Parts: 17

Environmental Contaminants and Pollutants-Specific Environmental Contaminants - Mercury - General [National Indian Brotherhood Material]

1975/04/21-1976/03/30

Finding Aid 29-229

RG10 , Indian Affairs , Volume 8420 , Reel C-13834

File : 494/21-1 , Access code: 20 -open

Parts: 1

SIOUX LOOKOUT AGENCY - ONTARIO REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING THE PLACEMENT OF INDIAN LABOUR (MAP)

1955-1957

Finding Aid 10-28

Sioux Lookout District Office - Community Employment Program, CEP - Sioux Lookout District

Former archival reference no.: RG10 Access Code: 32- Restricted

BAN no.: 1999-01431-6

1961-1967

Textual records (Box) 213 File no. (creator): 494/21-7-2

File Part 1

Finding aid **10-379**

MIKAN No. 2306240

Sioux Lookout, Ont. - Study for the Use of Land

Former archival reference no.: RG12 Access Code 32- Restricted

1966-1973

Textual records (Box) 19 File no. (creator): 5151-C172-2 Other accession no.: 1985-86/607 GAD

Finding aid **12-23**

MIKAN No. 1218374

FIND012/26139

RG10 , Indian Affairs , BAN 2001-00959-3 , Box 3

File : WIN-E-5032-3-C1 , Access code: 32 -Restricted

Parts: 1

Environmental Protection - Contaminants - Mercury - Canada/Manitoba Agreement on the Study of Monitoring Mercury

1981/04/01-1988/09/30

Finding Aid 10-479

Grassy Narrows and Islington Bands Fonds

1970-1989.

80 cm of textual records.

Access Code: 90 -open

BIOGRAPHY/ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY: The Grassy Narrows and Islington (Whitedog) Ojibway Indian Bands on the Wabigoon and English river system in Northwestern Ontario, were involved in the publicity concerning the mercury pollution of fish. The pollution was caused by mercury losses from the

Dryden Paper mill owned by the Reed Company. The Indians in the area lost an important food source, commercial fisheries and work in the tourist industry. Health concerns of neurological damage as at Minimata Japan were also a worry. Japanese environmental scientists visited the area in 1975 to do tests and Canadian Indians visited Japan at the invitation of the Minimata Victims Association. Federal and Provincial authorities were involved in pollution control research, and compensation.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Fonds consists of textual records including correspondence, memoranda and notes; and publications concerning mercury pollution. Textual records are divided into two series as follows: Correspondence, Memoranda and Notes; and Publications.

Also included in fonds are photographs depicting: a visit of a delegation from the **Grassy Narrows** and White Dog Indian Reserve to Minimata, Japan, July-August 1975, to discuss and publicize the problem of mercury pollution; views of meetings, discussion groups, and visits to sites in Japan and informal occasions.

Also included in fonds is the film *Hands across polluted waters* (1975), a documentary about the **Grassy Narrows** and White Dog Indian **Band** representatives visit to Minamata, Japan, in 1975, in relation to mercury pollution of the Wabigoon and English River systems in Northwest Ontario, *which ended the fishing on which the band depended*.

FONDS CONSISTS OF: MG31-K33 — Correspondence, memoranda and notes [textual record] (Series)
MG31-K33 — Publications and talks [textual record, graphic material] (Series)
REFERENCE NUMBERS: NEW: R5345-0-7-E FORMER: MG31-K33

FINDING AID: Paper - Textual records: The finding aid is a descriptive file list. No. MSS1756
Electronic - Graphic material: Refer to MINISIS for item-level descriptions.
Paper - Object: Medal Serial Nos. 14016 to 14019.
Electronic - Moving images: Refer to MINISIS for item-level descriptions.
Paper - Graphic material: Refer to the Photography Accession File for the Report of the final meeting in Tokyo, July 31, 1975.
Electronic - Textual records: Finding aid. No. MSS1756 [p000000355.pdf](#)
Material acquired from anthropologist Jill Torrie between 1988 and 1990.

Sioux Lookout District Office

[textual record]

Series Consists of: 7 lower level description(s)

Volume: 13075

Series Part of: Indian and Inuit Affairs Program sous-fonds

Accession: 3 record(s)

1943-1982

0.185 m of textual records

Access Code 32-Restricted

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Series consists of records created and/or maintained by the Sioux Lookout District Office and its predecessors - the Kenora and Clandeboye (Pikangikum) agencies. The series contains records dealing mainly with sawmills, revolving fund loans and fishing.

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY: Sioux Lookout Agency was established on June 23, 1938. This agency brought together under one administrative unit the responsibility for a number of bands previously administered by the Kenora Agency as well as the Pikangikum Band which had previously been the responsibility of the Clandeboye Agency (Manitoba). Following the creation of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 1966, agencies were joined to form larger administrative units called districts. The Sioux Lookout Agency became known as the Sioux Lookout District, effective 1 April 1969.

Finding aid 10-130 is a computer generated boxlist. 10-130 (Electronic)

Reference Numbers

Former archival reference no.: RG10-C-V-33

Archival reference no.: R216-73-5-E

Volume: 13075

MIKAN No.

133576

Out of this file make a request for:

Reference: w-95-96/120

Box 005

File: 494/19-10-208

Industrial and business development-Pikangikum vol. 1
1977-1981