—to the youth and future generations of Pikangikum First Nation
Abstract

Canadian economic development is heavily reliant on natural resources in the north, which is home to many indigenous communities. Canada is facing increasing pressure to accommodate the cultural distinctiveness of indigenous peoples, and recognize their rights to self-determination within the boundaries of the state. This thesis investigates the customary land use system of Pikangikum First Nation in northwestern Ontario in the context of a community-led land use planning and resource management process, and explores the legacy and contemporary relevance of the Ontario trapline system which was introduced in 1947. Traplines represent the first intervention by the modern state in spatial organization of resource management by First Nations people outside reserves in northern Ontario. For this study, mixed methods were employed, including mapping, life history interviewing, observation in the field, and archival research. Results indicate that Pikangikum’s access to resources and decision-making authority has continued to operate according to customary institutions that pre-date the traplines. While traplines were found to reduce flexibility of movement which characterized the customary system, they secured fur harvesting rights for First Nation groups, buffering Euro-Canadian encroachment on Pikangikum’s traditional harvesting areas. Recent forestry activity on traplines held by Pikangikum residents indicated that traplines were no longer a sufficient buffer to intrusions. The planning initiative mandated the creation of novel community-level institutions. This process has in turn created new community-level management dilemmas, yet has had important consequences in terms of planning and management authority for Pikangikum vis-à-vis state resource management. The main theoretical contributions of this thesis relate to the commons literature, and pertain both to strategic territorial robustness to interventions of the state and outside intruders, and to moral economic dimensions of community-managed commons undergoing rapid change.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the people of Pikangikum, and especially the elders, for all my new understandings gained during this process. I am of course indebted to my advisor, Dr. Iain Davidson-Hunt, and to my committee members, Dr. Fikret Berkes, Dr. Michael O’Flaherty, and Dr. Scott Hamilton, and to my former committee member, Dr. Jennifer Brown for helping me along with such insight. I am extremely lucky to have been able to put together a committee with such diverse backgrounds, yet with such deep experience, and personal connections with Pikangikum First Nation, my field site. In Pikangikum, I owe my gratitude to Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation (WFMC) President, Mr. Alex Peters, and Land Use Planning Coordinator, Mr. Paddy Peters. In addition, I would like to thank the staff of the WFMC, Alec Suggashie, Marcela Keejik, Reggie Peters, Murray Quill, and Jake I. Quill for their support in translation, GIS, and other office work. Doug Gilmore and staff at the Red Lake Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), and Helen Miln, OMNR librarian in Peterborough have helped me along, finding maps, and shuffling through their own documentary record. Thanks to the many people whom I met on a daily basis at the Northern store or on my way around the community, and who shared their knowledge and understandings with me. And thank you especially to Paddy and Penny Peters, Larry and Donna Pascal, Sadie Quill, Gordon Suggashie, and Timmy K. Strang who took me into their homes, whether in Pikangikum, or at their hunting camps.

My wife, Catie Burlando, and I conducted our fieldwork together in Pikangikum, as the reader will find out by reading the thesis. We shared many ideas on many subjects and events. We produced (untangled, actually) two theses out of our work, in addition to two children, Hugo and Miriam. I am convinced that in order to fully benefit from this thesis, it is also necessary to take a look at hers (Burlando, 2012). In addition, a cohort of students working on various projects with Pikangikum have produced a very fine body of work which, in its entirety, fills out a corpus, including projects contributed to by Michael O’Flaherty, Iain Davidson-Hunt, Fikret Berkes, Peggy Smith, and Scott Hamilton, which bring diverse meanings to my own work. At the same time, it is somewhat perplexing that in spite of the outstanding work Pikangikum and their research partners have done, I have been witness to a natural resource management policy change and planning process that has been frustratingly slow. This can be partially attributed to poor knowledge in Canada, and internationally, of natural resource planning and management issues that Pikangikum and other indigenous groups face; a situation which this thesis tries to help along. Pikangikum people have endured this negotiation but their elders, “their primary capacity”, are leaving us before their White-
feather Forest Initiative has had a chance to take off. I hope that this thesis, however slow and delayed my own writing process has been, can translate into meaningful progress in terms of achieving future planning and management goals discussed at such great lengths by Pikangikum elders.

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Acronyms

CNR  Canadian National Railway
DPA  Designated Protected Area
FMP  Forest Management Plan
LUS  Land Use Strategy
NBI  Northern Boreal Initiative
OMNR Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
SFL  Sustainable Forestry License
SFMN Sustainable Forest Management Network
WFI  Whitefeather Forest Initiative
WFMC Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation
WFSG Whitefeather Forest Steering Group

Note on Language

There is no standard Roman orthography for the Ojibway language. In Pikangikum, the language is referred to as *Ahneesheenahbaymohween*. Pikangikum represents their language using spellings they feel best represent their localized dialect and pronunciation.
CHAPTER 1  Introduction

The Canadian economy has long been based on resource extraction, with increasing attention to the north. Land use for indigenous people in the north is thus embedded in a changing economy which is increasingly based on large-scale extraction and export of primary materials, and natural resources such as minerals and metals, wood, and energy including oil and hydroelectricity. Many First Nations are involved in struggles to garner autonomy to ensure their customary land use systems are respected, and not simply replaced or rendered rigid and inflexible by incorporation within government institutions associated with western systems of natural resource management. While resource industries are often understood as a threat to northern First Nations communities, certain new economic opportunities for First Nations are emerging around these industries, and include labour, services, resource royalties, but also full or partial ownership of resource industries through partnerships, and community enterprises (Anderson et al., 2006). An important example of this is indigenous or aboriginal forestry.

Working against the desire of indigenous peoples for decision-making autonomy is the considerable power of states to claim authority over people and resources through a combination of strategies aimed at transforming and incorporating them (Vanderveest and Peluso, 1995). Modern states historically took a variety of coercive approaches to the development of “peripheral” areas, often inhabited by indigenous groups (Solway et al., 1990; Wolf, 1982). Indigenous people have been brought into state institutions through a process of “internal colonization” by which dominant societies incorporate
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and subordinate indigenous societies (Rangan and Lane, 2001). Relations between indigenous peoples and nation states are sometimes deliberately discriminatory/assimilationist, and sometimes unintentionally so, as in paternalistic policies of government agencies taking decisions for indigenous groups without consulting them (Nadasdy, 2003).

Modern nation states are facing increased pressure to accommodate the cultural and territorial distinctiveness of indigenous peoples. This has been linked to the survival of indigenous peoples as culturally distinct within settler states (Glaskin, 2003; Nasr and Scott, 2010). Development and land use rights are understood differently by indigenous groups (Feit, 2004). For many indigenous groups, human activity on the land typically occurs within common property, rather than private property, relations (Berkes, 2008). Indigenous commons systems feature an approach to land use where mutual aid facilitates continuity of management customs through sharing of experience and knowledge (Berkes, 2008; Usher, 2000). As indigenous groups seek their own paths to deal with the powerful combination of state management authority and resource industry, they often become the subjects of scrutiny and pressure applied by the state, and by outsiders, who exercise influence on policies and resources available for groups attempting to achieve a degree of self-determination. In this context, it is important to understand indigenous articulations of the changes they have experienced, and the approaches they propose to address these pressures.

Struggles of indigenous peoples within nation-states are often expressed in terms of indigenous rights based on recognition of original occupancy of land prior to colonization. Rights in property and governance, and entitlement to land, water, and resources are at the heart of debates over self-determination. But for indigenous peoples, formal recognition, or bureaucratic acknowledgement by the nation-state of indigenous title (through treaty rights, or in other legal terms) may only minimally reflect First Nations’ own conceptualizations of their relationship with the land (Glaskin, 2003).
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Indigenous struggles in Canada are often framed around ideas about public land and resource ownership, which have historically overshadowed indigenous customs and authority in relation to land (Scott et al., 2004). First Nations are seeking innovative self-governance and resource tenure regimes on Crown lands (public lands), often in parallel to approaches based on rights of prior occupancy. Nadasdy (2003: 2) argues that “bureaucratic organization must be recognized for what it is: an essential aspect of the new structure of Aboriginal-state relations in Canada.” Shared jurisdiction and authority over lands offers a degree of autonomy to shape future land use (Rangan and Lane, 2001). Such discussions revolve around central questions, such as: Is it even possible to share jurisdiction with such differences in both power and worldview? Can customary land use figure into the relationship with the state, or is it destined to be stamped out, or practised in the periphery as a form of resistance to state control? Has the state come to terms with a new way of working with indigenous land use systems?

Some authors have noted a shift in attention being paid to indigenous approaches to development “designed accordingly”, grounded in indigenous customs of land and resource use (Anderson and Giberson, 2004; Berkes and Davidson-Hunt, 2007). Precedence for economic exchange with Euro-Canadians and the settler state is certainly not new to these northern communities, and can be traced back through the fur trade period. In northern Ontario, customary harvesting areas of northern Algonquian groups, including Anishinaabe people, played an important role in economic interactions in the fur trade. These areas were characterized through usage by extended family groups, harvesting for both commercial fur, and household needs, and leadership by a senior person, or elder with authority to make decisions regarding land use. In 1947, Ontario introduced new government regulations which effectively formalized indigenous hunting territories in the north through a process of delineating trapping area boundaries on government maps.

Registration of government traplines was not limited to northern Algonquian groups
in Ontario. Beginning in the 1920s in Canada, provincial and territorial governments registered parcels of land as traplines for the management of fur resources in-line with modern resource management institutions. Trapline registration was purportedly carried out to protect fur resources and Aboriginal economic interests—they were viewed by various provincial governments as a solution to the problems associated with encroachment on traditional First Nations lands by Euro-Canadian trappers, although some First Nations viewed them as a breach of their treaties (Notzke, 1994). The traplines also represented an attempt by the government to encourage assimilation into a distinctly western understanding of resource stewardship. Brody (1981: 90) described traplines from the government’s perspective as “the hunting equivalent to individual farms”.

The registered traplines can be understood as systems of spatial organization with a particular spatial form of authority in relation to land use. In northern Ontario, government traplines were delineated in 1947. They have since come to form the substratum of contemporary land use planning efforts, as First Nations communities negotiate planning and management processes with the state. The purpose of this thesis is to understand the processes by which traplines have acquired this role in the particular case of the community of Pikangikum First Nation, which was the first community in northern Ontario to produce a land use plan for public lands (Crown lands), and obtain a Sustainable Forestry Licence (SFL).

1.1 STUDY CONTEXT

Pikangikum First Nation is an indigenous community located on the Berens River in northwestern Ontario (see figure 1.1). The community lives predominantly on a reserve 120 km north of Red Lake, Ontario. The reserve is 1808 hectares in size. In contrast, the planning area for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative is 1.3 million ha in size. Pikangi-
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Kum recently completed a planning process to conduct land use management on their traditional territory, a term which was used in Pikangikum’s Land Use Strategy (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). Pikangikum describes the Whitefeather Forest Initiative (WFI) as a “community economic renewal and resource stewardship initiative” (http://www.whitefeatherforest.com, 2011). This initiative was primarily related to control of economic development, including commercial forestry, that was very visibly encroaching from the south, and to securing benefits from resource development on their traditional territory (see the checkerboard prophesy, box 1.1 in section 1.1).

The planning context emerged out of ongoing negotiation with the state regarding authority for management of resources. Pikangikum people have traditionally hunted, trapped, fished and travelled beyond the present planning boundaries, and so it is incorrect to associate the term traditional territory (used first in the previous paragraph) with the area encompassed within the Whitefeather Forest planning boundary. The social processes at the core of Pikangikum’s customary land use system, and the relationship between this system and the contemporary planning area are substantive research topics addressed at length in this thesis (see section 1.2).

When Pikangikum initiated their planning process in 1996, the collective area formed by the traplines held by Pikangikum people (see figure 1.2) was agreed upon by their leaders as the basis for identification of the land use planning area (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). The use of government traplines in defining the boundaries of the Whitefeather Forest is immediately relevant for this thesis as a major topic for investigation. It is important to note that the traplines included in the planning area are not as extensive as the spatial extent which Pikangikum refers to as their traditional territory, but constituted an area for which Pikangikum community members still held trapline licences. Pikangikum made agreements with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and other adjacent communities.
Figure 1.1: Location of the Whitefeather Forest in northwestern Ontario
to plan within an area outlined by the boundaries of eighteen traplines included in the planning process with consent from their trapping groups. This area does not represent a complete picture of Pikangikum’s customary land use area as it does not include land lying south of 51 degrees latitude, where other commercial tenures exist, nor land on other trapline areas held by members of other communities where Pikangikum residents have been active. Furthermore, there is not an exact congruence between trapline boundaries and the planning area, due to southern trapline areas being sliced by the southern boundary for Ontario’s north of 51 planning process, formerly the Northern Boreal Initiative (Ontario, 2002), which has since been replaced by the Far North Act.¹

As a result of First Nations’ pressure on the Ontario government, the Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI) was launched by the OMNR in 2002. This policy allowed First Nations located north of 51 degrees latitude in Ontario to lead commercial development of forests on provincial Crown lands surrounding reserves under federal jurisdiction (Ontario, 2001). Pikangikum entered into a land use planning process for forestry and other activities in 1999 with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) as a partner which supported development of the NBI policy.

In 2006, the community and the OMNR approved the Land Use Strategy (LUS), “Cheekahnahwaydahmungk Keetahkeemeenaan: Keeping the Land, a Land Use Strategy” (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). In addition to specifying designated areas for forestry, the LUS assigned 432,950 hectares (36%) of the WFPA to Dedicated Protected Areas (see figure 1.3). The WFI was estimated to potentially create 385 permanent jobs for Pikangikum residents. Pikangikum had their Forest Management Plan (FMP) approved in 2010.²

The period covered by the study was limited to roughly the last eighty years, or the period within living memory of Pikangikum elders. Major time periods within living

¹see Burlando (2012); Chapeskie et al. (2005); Smith (2007) for details and analysis of these processes.
²Further historical and geographical details relevant to the case study area are given in section 3.3.
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**Figure 1.2:** Pikangikum-held traplines included in the Land Use Strategy, and Focus Area for northern Ontario land use planning initiated under the Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI)

Map sources: The trapline boundaries shapefile was obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources with the help of the University of Manitoba Library. The NBI Focus Area shapefile was obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.
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Figure 1.3: Pikangikum land use planning area and dedicated protected areas adapted from the Land Use Strategy (2006)

Sources: WFMC GIS database, Land Information Ontario. The map shows the 2006 situation at the time of approval of the Land Use Strategy. As of the time of writing, the Whitefeather Forest includes the three adjacent areas (21 traplines in total)
memory have been used to organize the presentation of results in chapters 4 through 6. These time periods include a period before the trapline introductions (spanning from the 1930s to 1947); a period following trapline introductions and ending with the collapse of the fur market in the late 1980s; and a contemporary period which includes the Whitefeather Forest Initiative planning process.

I understood from the beginning of the research process that my work would revolve around the Whitefeather Forest Initiative, but the significance of the trapline system for original research was not immediately evident to me. In 2006, a meeting on a research funding proposal for this project (SFMN, 2006, P.I. Dr. Davidson-Hunt) was held between my advisor Dr. Iain Davidson-Hunt, President of the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation (WFMC) Alex Peters, and myself. The meeting was brief and to the point, and Alex Peters gave us support to write the grant proposal. I would be working on the trapline system of Pikangikum First Nation. I later came to understand that the context for my involvement had been set up at a Sustainable Forest Management Network meeting months before, when Pikangikum and Moose Cree First Nations mutually agreed that research on the traplines would help them in their planning processes. At first, writing the research proposal was daunting. How was a licensing system for regulation of an all-but-dead trade in furs related to contemporary efforts of the community to obtain a Sustainable Forestry Licence? I understood traplines to be tools for government management of natural resources. Did Pikangikum people share this perspective, or had they worked out a place for traplines within their own customary land use system and the land use planning process?

In one of my early conversations with the President of the WFMC, Alex Peters, I used the verb “negotiate” as I was attempting to phrase a question about authority in planning and management—a term that frequently surfaces in the Pikangikum’s Land Use Strategy (LUS) (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). Alex interrupted me and asked if I thought Pikangikum’s authority
could be negotiated. Alex referred to some of the things he viewed as not having been negotiated. For example the conibear beaver traps were introduced, not negotiated; traplines were introduced, not negotiated; Woodland Caribou Provincial Park was introduced, not negotiated (fieldnotes, August 7, 2007). I began to ask myself about processes and relationships I associated with negotiation (i.e. the trapline boundaries, relationships and partnerships with government agencies, and the LUS document itself). Questions about what indigenous communities held fast to, and instances in which they had tried to negotiate or compromise drove research to a large extent. These questions emerged through my early experiences at meetings with elders and WFMC staff. My interests began to revolve around the various ways customary land use systems encounter state regulation. These processes may in fact involve a combination of collaboration, negotiation, resistance, and (legal) challenges to state authority (Feit, 2004; Scott et al., 2004).

A closer look at the LUS reveals much about Pikangikum’s reasoning behind their approach to land use planning, the trapline system, and their logic for undertaking the process in the first place. One passage in the Land Use Strategy makes it clear that certain aspects of Pikangikum’s customary relationship with their traditional territory cannot be negotiated; in particular Pikangikum peoples’ responsibilities vis-à-vis the Creator with regard to stewardship of the land. This stewardship responsibility is so important to Pikangikum that it forms a sort of “line in the sand” which cannot be compromised in their relationship with the government:

Customary stewardship responsibilities derive from a sacred trust between Bee-kahncheekahmeeng paymahteeseeawahch and the Creator; they are a personal responsibility that cannot be delegated to others. To expect others to exercise stewardship of our ancestral lands on our behalf would be a denial of our sacred trust and a rejection of the gifts the Creator has bestowed upon us (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 9).

The context which led to Pikangikum’s push for their own forestry licence can be
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drawn from a narrative, the checkerboard prophecy, which is often referred to in meetings between Pikangikum elders and government agents and outsiders (Chapeskie et al., 2005) (see box 1.1).

Box 1.1. The checkerboard prophecy

Long ago, our ancestors brought a prophecy to us. We call it the “Checkerboard” prophecy in English. This is the prophecy where lines and boundaries would be put around everything that we had: all of our lands and all of our resources. Many generations ago, our Elders began to speak the prophecy. Our Elders said the time would come when others would come and occupy the land and that they would turn the land into a checkerboard. Fences and lines would criss-cross the land. Animals would not be able to move. Our people would not be able to move. The diversity and abundance of our land would be lost. In another part of the prophecy, it was said that the only things First Nation people would be given to own would be the possessions inside of the dwellings they lived in. Even the homes would not be ours.

We now see how wise our Elders of the past were. We see how the land west and south of us has been turned into farms. All of the animals have been pushed out. This has even happened in our forests. Others now have the rights to the trees that grow on the land in the Trout Forest to the south of this community. The biggest fear our Elders have about what non-native people are doing with forestry is that in the future we will not even be able to cut a stump outside of our houses. The prophecy said that we would have to pay for it. The prophecy also said that we would not be able to set a net in our lakes on our own. The prophecy said that if the non-native people are given the right to manage and cut down our trees, we will lose our forests. The white people will cut our forests and then plant trees that they have grown. Then they will claim ownership of every living tree they have planted. This is what is happening to us with other resources even on our lands to the south of Pikangikum, south of the Nungesser River.

Even to the north of the Nungesser River, our commercial fishing quotas were taken from us and non-native people were given tourist lodges with them. Even the Mahnohmin fields that our Elders planted long ago were taken away from us and licensed to outsiders. We know the names of our ancestors who brought Mahnohmin into our country to nurture more ducks and muskrats. Non-native people have even taken our lands and turned them into parks. First Nation people have had to go to court to win the right to continue to go into these parks and to build our cabins there. Everything that our ancestors prophesied long ago is coming to pass. Even the trees where there is logging are being planted by people. They are being planted in straight lines. The non-native people are taking seeds from trees that should be food for birds and squirrels. They are stopping the trees
Chapter 1 Introduction

The checkerboard prophecy reflects Pikangikum peoples’ observations of encroaching colonial land use, which has intensified in the last decades near Pikangikum, and highlights the differences they perceived between their land use system and that of the colonizers and the threat posed by encroachment of this foreign land tenure and property rights system. The differences can be further understood through consultation of the Pikangikum’s Land Use Strategy which makes a more subtle distinction between the systems in terms of Pikangikum peoples’ relationship with their traditional territories. The LUS describes Pikangikum peoples’ continuing relationship with the land as mediated through continued maintenance of access for customary land uses:

Supporting customary pursuits will…enable Pikangikum people, and especially our youth, to develop life skills that will allow them to survive while they are out on the land; it will provide a context for the future generations of Pikangikum Ah-nessheenahbek to be taught by our Elders to respect the land, thereby enabling Pikangikum people to maintain our Aboriginal relationship to the land, our language, culture and way of life (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 10).

At the same time, Pikangikum has expressed the continued importance of their customary land use system in approaching and supporting new land uses. The intersection between Pikangikum’s customary land use system and government resource management is introduced in the Land Use Strategy in relation to customary spatial authority:

The Land Use Strategy is a guidance document, providing a framework for future land and resource management in the planning area. In itself, it does not alter
existing authority, nor does it confer new authorities. Pikangikum First Nation’s relationship to the land and customary stewardship responsibilities will continue and are reaffirmed through the Community-based Land Use Planning process (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 13).

The Whitefeather Forest Land Use Strategy affirms the continued importance of their customary land use system in defining Pikangikum’s traditional land use institutions. In the following quote from the LUS, the customary system is explicitly linked to the government trapline system:

Pikangikum’s historical family trapping areas, that are represented today by the Ontario trapline system established by the province in 1946, continue to guide our use of the land, including our use of travel routes within the Planning Area. The trapline system is therefore an important aspect of our customary stewardship of wildlife populations (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 23).

I began to understand the study as an investigation of the intersection between a pre-existing customary land use system, and a government system of land use regulation. In this sense, this thesis aims both to capture “internal” dynamics of the customary system, and the relationship of the customary system with the state system. As this study emerges out of a land use planning context, efforts to understand the customary system and the registered trapline system emerge out of curiosity about how these are related to planning and management. I am unable to comment on the way the customary system interacts with forest management because forestry has not yet commenced at the time of writing. I have, however, examined the way the customary system has changed over time, and how past experiences with state management have figured into Pikangikum’s planning process.

1.2 **Scope and Objectives**

Pikangikum proposed traplines as a basic planning unit, and stewards with customary authority regarding land use are to guide decisions within the WFI planning process.
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The primary question I addressed in the thesis is: Why and how were government traplines selected as the basis for the planning process? Two secondary questions are also addressed in the thesis: (1) What was the process by which Pikangikum got their traplines—did First Nations people and the state find some sort of accommodation in the way traplines developed, or were they outright imposed by the government? And (2) what was the process by which individual traplines and their leadership became integrated within planning at the community level within the WFI?

The purpose of the research—to understand the process by which traplines have acquired their role in contemporary land use planning—was originally elaborated in the following two objectives set out at the research proposal stage:

1. Document the customary stewardship system as a commons system

2. Analyze change and continuity in customary stewardship institutions

Research was initially conceptualized to address two related fields of interests. These were: (1) interactions between the customary land use system and the trapline management system of the state; and (2) internal (community level) dilemmas of coordination of authority and access to harvesting areas as the community negotiates this relationship, and gains new authority vis-à-vis their relationship with the government for new land uses including forestry and protected areas management. These interactions can be conceptualized in terms of issues of access to land and resources, and authority to make decisions in relation to land and resources.

A more specific set of three research questions emerged through the stages of proposal writing, research, and validation and through which these fields of interest have evolved. These questions are organized along the thematic lines of trapline introductions, access and authority in relation to these areas, choice of planning area, and how decisions are taken for activities within the planning area, and organize the individual results chapters:
Chapter 1 Introduction

1. By what process were government traplines introduced in Pikangikum? Did the new trapline system alter customary access and authority with respect to customary land use?

2. How did rules related to furbearer harvesting and the government trapline system interact with relationships around other resource harvesting activities?

3. What were the dynamics of land use (including the trapline system) following the collapse of the commercial fur trade in the 1980s? How can the relationship between the family harvesting areas, the traplines, and the planning area be characterized in the recently completed land use planning process?

1.2.1 Theoretical scope and practical significance

In order to understand why Pikangikum has grounded land use planning and management in their trapline system, it is necessary to examine how this system emerged in the first place, and to try to understand the changes this precipitated in land use and resource management. This thesis aims to add theoretical depth around the relationship between indigenous customary land use systems and state management systems. This is especially relevant in the contemporary context, with growing interest in First Nations and indigenous land use planning as a way to capture decision-making authority and benefit flows from resource development on their traditional territories, and more broadly to work toward a new relationship with the state.

Common issues frequently faced in community-based land use planning include the resolution of governance issues, and dealing with issues of long-standing mistrust between the community and the state (Lane and Hibbard, 2005). This often involves a broader process involving disentanglement of customary land use and resource management systems from state administrative systems (Nadasdy, 2002). This disentanglement of western and indigenous systems may appear at first glance to be a fu-
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tile, and unproductive task, as others have observed that centuries of interaction have produced mixed management systems, or hybrid worldviews, seamlessly combining different knowledges and management technologies (Dove, 2002; Agrawal, 1995). This approach might also be perceived to hold questionable value, as a new generation of joint or co-management arrangements offer the possibility of combining local knowledge and management systems with regional, state and international institutions under power-sharing arrangements (Berkes, 2009). In contrast, Nadasdy (2002) has set out an agenda for looking at substantive historical differences in approaches to land use, and puts this at the centre of creating a new relationship between indigenous and western management authorities. I believe Nadasdy’s critique can be seen as productive because it places emphasis on resolving differences in approach, as also evidenced in a reading of Pikangikum’s LUS, and not merely on finding points of similarity or contact.

This thesis can be thought of as an examination of differences, and aims at productively constructing a narrative of processes of interaction and intersection with state management systems as they have emerged historically. These points of intersection are practical for understanding differences between local and government understandings of the intersections which were understood by Pikangikum people to have been both detrimental and beneficial. Thus, differences in understanding may prevail—and are of interest—even when outcomes of shared processes are understood by both parties in a positive light.

Perhaps the most important difference between the local customary land use system and the government registered traplines can be found in the understanding of land tenure (see box 1.1). While the indigenous customary land use system could be understood as a commons, in which individuals did not have ownership rights over harvesting areas, the state system attempted to introduce a concept of stewardship comparable to ownership of individual farms (Brody, 1981). This difference is understood in terms of a historical process, beginning with the introduction of the registered
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trapline system, and culminating with the recently completed land use planning process. Can the customary land use system survive encounters with the state, which aims to transform land tenure and fundamentally transform indigenous society? Can they be resilient enough to survive and to inform contemporary and future planning and management processes?

Theoretically, this thesis attempts to develop a detailed understanding of the customary harvesting system as a commons. In section 1.2, access to resources and customary land use areas, and decision-making authority were introduced as important issues for community-level process with regard to changing land use, as well as strategic engagement with the state in processes of planning and management. Access to land and resources, and collective decision-making institutions figure as prominent areas of research in the commons literature. Beyond this, however, there is much work to be done to understand what the commons literature can contribute to a better understanding of Pikangikum’s customary system, and its interaction with state regulation.

Attempts to identify the building blocks for successful, community level resource management systems have often relied on the investigation of rules, norms, and institutions associated with common property systems (Ostrom, 1990). It would be accurate to say that while the commons literature has contributed immensely to my thinking in terms of the critical place commons systems play in real-world cases of resource management, the theory derives from a model of individual decision-making behaviour which does not offer a fruitful departure point for thinking about continuity and change in Pikangikum’s customary land use system, nor for understanding their complex, historical process of interaction with the state. Indeed, commons scholarship has been previously critiqued for its over-simplification of individual and community processes (Mosse, 1997). Though many such critiques have been addressed over the years in the commons literature, commons and development scholars have often implicitly incorporated a theoretical blind spot in their assumptions about boundaries and the bound-
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edness of resources and social groups. It is important to consider how communities are constituted through government resource management policies and regulations, but also how communities mobilized to resist intervention in customary land use systems. Indigenous customary land use systems often incorporate a much greater degree of flexibility for which fixed spatial or social boundaries are incompatible.

The study begins with a look at a particular set of boundaries—the trapline system. It is necessary to look at how commons are strategically reproduced in order to resist state intervention, but also how their dynamics change in the process. As commons systems, customary land use systems must also function effectively to materially provision commons users. Dynamics and change must be understood within this perspective. A related theoretical issue involves the coordination of decision-making authority across scales, from the individual harvesting site, to the trapline area and up to the scale of the land use planning area (i.e. the Whitefeather Forest). This issue can be framed in terms of management scale. The theoretical issues addressed in the thesis are presented in table 1.1.

1.3 METHODS

My understanding of the Pikangikum commons emerged out of both direct observation of behaviour on the land, and through indirect accounts through interviewing, small focus groups, elders workshops and meetings, mapping with individuals, and archival research. My first fieldnotes were jotted down in late 2006 at a series of meetings and field trips with Pikangikum community members. Research began in earnest in the spring of 2007 with a field visit to two trapline areas. A final elders workshop was conducted in March of 2009.

I approached my objectives through the description of a range of harvesting activities and land uses, and their intersection with the government trapline system. I
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Table 1.1: Research framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory area</th>
<th>Hypotheses and research implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commons</td>
<td>The customary land use system of Pikangikum First Nation can be characterized as a commons system governed by a complex of local institutions. What are the enduring aspects of this system in relation to contemporary land use and management? How are new needs in terms of use, access, and decision-making authority being met?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and territorial authority</td>
<td>Government interference with customary land use practices may be resisted or negotiated by communities in complex ways. How did the customary land use system hold up in relation to the trapline system and related experiences with state regulation of land use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and management</td>
<td>Community based planning for forest management can be understood to emerge out of existing institutions for management of the commons through a process of reproduction of the Anishinaabe commons at the community level. At the same time, communities incorporate new approaches to engage in new land-based activities to deal with constantly evolving state requirements for management. How has Pikangikum “scaled up” their customary system to deal with new land uses at the community level?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

organized my interviews largely around questions about access to land use areas and harvesting sites, and ability of Pikangikum people to contribute to planning and management processes. Maps were used to obtain information from trapline leaders about the extent of their harvesting activities over their lifetimes. My research methodology and related field methods are discussed in detail in chapter 3.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized around exploration of land use and its intersection with government regulation. In this regard, the trapline receives special priority in terms of understanding this intersection. The literature review (chapter 2) contains three sections. The first section focuses on the Algonquian land use literature, and explores ethnographic and historical descriptions of customary land use during the fur trade, largely
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pre-dating the introduction of government traplines. It looks at the relationship between extended family harvesting areas, and central summer gathering sites and looks for ways to differentiate this system from hegemonic private property discourse and debate in the literature. The next section develops a discussion regarding the commons literature. Here I set up a “thick” perspective on the commons by drawing on the concept of moral economy. This helps me frame issues of access and authority in the Pikangikum commons within a broader historical and ethnographic context, both with regard to customary land use, and its intersection with government regulation. The final section looks at natural resource management and the state. The purpose of this section is to develop an approach to describing Pikangikum’s strategic engagement with the Province of Ontario and to set up my discussion of the recently completed planning process.

The body of the thesis is organized around a cadence of how did a process work in the customary system; how did it intersect with government regulation. This holds the data together over three results chapters looking at different aspects of this interaction. As described further below, I begin by examining the introduction of the government trapline system and its intersection with the customary system, then I consider the intersection of the trapline system with non-fur harvesting activities, and finally look at the role of the traplines within the land use planning process in terms of community level coordination.

The first results chapter (chapter 4), looks at family areas and intersection with the registered trapline system. The chapter presents results concerning customary seasonal organization around harvesting activities, results of my archival search and research with elders on the trapline introductions, and results pertaining to annual and inter-annual flexibility of individuals and trapping groups, and intersection with government trapline regulation. Parts of this chapter were published in the volume Planning Co-existence: Aboriginal Issues in Forest and Land Use Planning (Deutsch and Davidson-
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Hunt, 2010).

Chapter 5 unbundles results on non-fur-related commercial and subsistence harvesting activities in order to examine customary organization for these harvests and intersection with trapline regulation.

The final results chapter (chapter 6) examines contemporary land use. Access in the contemporary period (post 1980s fur trade collapse) is a jumping-off point to examine the new planning and management context around the WFI. I looked at contemporary activities on the land and how these were tied to new institutional contexts. The chapter begins by looking at which resources are valued in contemporary harvests, and how access to harvesting sites works in relation to the traplines. I then ask how people are involved in the planning process, and about decision-making authority at the community level. Parts of this chapter have been included in a book in preparation.

The results chapters are followed by a discussion and a final concluding chapter with a summary of major findings and theoretical contributions. I now turn to present a discussion of the literature which guided my thinking in the development of this thesis.
The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical basis for an analysis of Pikangikum’s approach to strengthening of access and decision-making authority over land use in the context of the WFI. This review of the literature proceeds necessarily from Pikangikum’s own need to differentiate their approach from that of the state, and protect their interests from outside interests. This review of the literature considers both internal dynamics of the customary land use system, and interaction with the state management system.

The first section of the literature review (2.1) delves into the ethnographic and historical literature on Anishinaabe land use. Due to broad environmental similarities, shared economic history of involvement in the fur trade, and linguistic and cultural similarities, this review of the anthropological literature is broadened to include other northern Algonquian groups. The purpose of this section is to offer a historical, ecological, and cultural context through which an understanding of changes in customary land use institutions can be understood. As such, the section begins by examining the literature on group origins, and multiple (and often confusing) identities of Anishinaabe peoples as they emerge in the Algonquian literature. This section develops the relationships through which the northern Algonquian land use system can be considered as a commons.

In the next section (2.2), this literature review searches the commons literature for indications as to how to analyze customary resource use, change, and interaction
with the management systems of the modern state. The review finds some areas in the commons literature which can potentially provide for an analysis of access and decision-making authority, but much of the literature is preoccupied with the rational pre-disposition of individuals to over-exploit their resource base. The literature review attempts to better draw distinctions between the way communities resolve their own “internal” commons dilemmas, while confronting management systems of the state.

The final section (2.3) is dedicated to the interaction of indigenous land use systems with state resource management institutions. I take a territorial approach to understand this interaction, which makes explicit a spatial reference to authority and control strategies of states over land and water within their physical boundaries. Finally, this section draws on the previous two sections to examine how collective action institutions scale to the appropriate planning and management level. This can help understand how communities—or the “local level”—are constituted, and how agency may be exercised through the delineation of planning and management boundaries, and how customary systems of land use and access fare in the process.

2.1 NORTHERN ALGONQUIAN LAND USE

2.1.1 Ecological and economic history

According to records left by early explorers, missionaries and Hudson’s Bay Company employees, early Algonquian land use systems could be characterized by a sort of “communal” tenure, with land and resources used by members of local bands. These bands were extended family groups that used specific areas, and through local use, developed detailed knowledge of their land and resources (Berkes et al., 2009).

The organization of these groups has continued relevance for understanding Anishinaabe communities, and their contemporary relationship with the land. In the literature, two levels of group organization have emerged in the analysis of spatial patterns
of Anishinaabe land use. These are summer gathering sites associated with larger groups of people, and extended family harvesting areas connected with smaller family groups. These different levels of organization are distinguished from each other both spatially and temporally. Larger summer gathering sites were associated with productive fishing areas. These were important sites of social and economic exchange, ceremonies, and marriages. During summer, feasts were held, and family groups would move between these gathering places to visit relatives, and friends (Rogers, 1983). From fall through spring, smaller extended family groups dispersed across smaller lakes and waterways. These groups were associated with harvesting areas, often referred to in the literature as winter hunting territories. These family harvesting areas have historically played a role in the organization of the bulk of an extended family’s subsistence and commercial needs over the winter season (Bishop, 1974; Dunning, 1959).

**The fur trade**

The historical point of reference in terms of major change in the north is the fur trade, which brought new cultural and economic exchanges at levels not previously seen (Hamilton, 2010). New commercial relationships with Euro-Canadians were sometimes mediated through other indigenous groups, but often also through direct contact. As the fur trade expanded, it drew in a succession of indigenous economies and trading networks (Innis, 1999). It follows that indigenous societies, even those distant from fur trading posts, were not isolated from the global economy as often assumed (Feit, 1991; Wolf, 1982). Although virtually all indigenous groups in Canada became somehow entwined in networks of exchange related to the fur trade, not all areas saw the same intensity of fur trade activity involving European explorers and traders.

While the fur trade constituted a major sphere of exchange, and was the primary vehicle of contact between Euro-Canadians and Anishinaabe people of the boreal region, fur must be understood to have been largely a by-product of a customary livelihood...
based on hunting and trapping of animals for food. Beaver and other furbearers critical
to the fur trade were also customarily trapped for their meat, which had an important
subsistence value even as pelts were prepared for exchange. Fish, as with furbearers,
were an important source of food, and were also traded with Euro-Canadian traders.
Fish could easily be preserved for winter by freezing, drying, and smoking (Tough,
1996).

For significant parts of the fur trade period, little contact was had between Euro-
Canadian traders and people on the Berens River, and further inland east of Lake Win-
nipeg, including at Pikangikum (Lytwyn, 1986). These people lived in the relative ge-
ographical isolation of an area known to traders as the “petite nord”, or little north,
with the exception of a brief period of competition between the North West Company
and the Hudson’s Bay Company (Lytwyn, 1986). The complex height of the land in the
petite nord, and the Berens and Bloodvein headwaters more specifically, were slower
to develop direct trade relationships with Europeans than areas further away from the
Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River and Hudson’s Bay due to their confusing geography
characterized by many small lakes and waterways, and numerous rapids (Hamilton,
forthcoming).

The little north experienced relatively light levels of contact with Euro-Canadian
traders until 1793 when four new trading posts were constructed on Lake Winnipeg.
At the height of the trade in the petite nord, before a merger was brokered in 1821
between the Hudson’s Bay Company and the North West Company, competition be-
tween companies had lead to a proliferation of small trading posts in this area (Lytwyn,
1986, 2010). After a crash in the beaver population followed by a merger between the
two trading companies, only major trading posts were maintained at mouths of major
rivers, and outposts were kept at only a handful of inland locations. After more than
seventy years, an outpost was established again at Poplar Hill in 1895, and in Pikangi-
kum shortly thereafter, re-initiating closer relationships between Pikangikum people
Chapter 2 Literature review

and fur traders after a long period of calm (Hallowell, 1992).

This brief early fur trade history makes evident the level of independence from Euro-Canadians experienced by Pikangikum people, even as other areas nearby, and further north came into close contact much sooner. As Hallowell recognized, the result of this history was that in the area east of Lake Winnipeg, fur trade exchange was at times only marginal, meaning that even as the trade penetrated into the area, people were still to a large extent not reliant on trade goods for day-to-day survival. Groups continued to move around in order to survive, generally only rarely associating with trading posts for extended periods of time, as travelling down-river to the main post required an arduous journey with many portages.

The seasonal round

Economic and social exchange, including, but not limited to the fur trade, constituted an important driver for group organization and dispersal. A key to understanding organizational dynamics of northern Algonquian groups, including Anishinaabe peoples, however, lies in the ecology of the boreal forest. The boreal forest is characterized by spatial and temporal heterogeneity of landscape dynamics. Animal and plant populations are in frequent flux, and some animals, such as woodland caribou, may travel over large areas. Dynamics are spatially patchy due to interactions between soil, and climatic factors, and fire is an important driver, creating landscape mosaics. Populations of furbearers may follow cyclical patterns; for example, snowshoe hare populations are known to have average population cycles of 10 years (Winterhalder, 1983). Hunting large animals, including caribou and moose, often required hunters to travel over wider areas, while different species of fish were known to be highly abundant at certain major lakes and waterways. Spatial patchiness and temporal dynamics in resource abundance meant groups at times had to travel widely in order to meet subsistence and trade needs (Winterhalder, 1983).
Chapter 2 Literature review

With regard to these ecological dynamics, there was no single and consistent pattern of harvest, or group organization. These were adapted to suit conditions. Some authors have noted how northern Algonquian land use could be described as adhering closely to optimal foraging theory; the adaptive articulation of harvesting effort with local ecological dynamics (Winterhalder, 1983). Individual behaviour was adjusted to harvest resources as efficiently as possible (Winterhalder, 1983). Dyson-Hudson and Smith (1978) noted that family groups dispersed and reunited seasonally in an adaptation to variability in abundance of resources. However, this analysis is somewhat problematic as variable ecology required harvesting adaptations at a variety of temporal and spatial scales, situations for which optimal foraging might poorly describe actual changes in behaviour.

Fish were generally a dependable source of food. Lake trout, tulibee, northern pike, walleye, sturgeon, and whitefish could be fished throughout the year (Rogers, 1983). People used snares, fish traps, and gill nets under the ice in order to fish during the winter. Whitefish were dried, pounded, and stored in birch bark containers during major runs (Rogers, 1983). Birds, including grouse and waterfowl were part of the diet, appearing in the earliest records of traders and explorers dating from the 1670s (Rogers, 1983). These resources became critical during periods when mammals were scarce. Rogers (1983) and Rogers and Black (1976) noted that during periods of extreme resources shortages, fish and snowshoe hare were eaten nearly exclusively when caribou, moose, and furbearers could not be found, even with extensive travel. In Roger’s (1983) record, a particular group, known to fur traders as the Cranes, increased their travel widely in search of large game in the vicinity of the contemporary Round Lake, or Weagamow First Nation, Ontario, but then were forced to settle more locally to focus on obtaining fish and hare. This occurred during the late fur trade period between the 1880s and 1920 (Rogers and Black, 1976). Rogers (1983) noted that during this period, groups moved primarily between lakes where different fish species could be found at
different times of the year. The Cranes stayed near deep lakes suited to trout fishing during late winter. At break up, these groups moved to sturgeon spawning areas if they were available. Snowshoe hare was easiest to catch in winter, along with grouse, and waterfowl was hunted during migrations, and throughout summer (Rogers, 1983).

2.1.2 Summer gatherings

A general picture of flexibility and movement in relation to harvesting sites is emerging. Summer gathering sites can now be contextualized within a seasonal round of movement, and within the larger variability of harvesting in relation to the ecology of the boreal forest. Adaptive movement, and informed decision-making were based on detailed knowledge about seasonal and spatial patterns of resource availability and regeneration following previous harvesting activity. The historical record points to large gatherings of people at productive fishing areas, yet these records, and their representation in the literature, do not always seem to mesh well with the flexibility of group organization developed through the sections above.

Anishinaabe peoples had a sense of themselves as members of small, extended family groups who wintered together, as well as a larger group of people who inhabited the same place during the summer fishing season. Early records left by explorers, traders, and missionaries characterized Anishinaabe socio-political organization by groups, or bands. In what Rogers (1983) characterizes as the early period of European contact (1670-1760), few traders actually ventured inland from the Great Lakes with the exception of Montreal Anglo-Scot and French traders. Not much has been left in the historical record from the early fur trade regarding group organization at summer or winter harvesting sites as the Hudson’s Bay Company did not venture much into the interior, and other traders left few records (Scott Hamilton, personal communication, May 5, 2013). Records point to the existence of large gathering sites or “villages” at locations
such as Sault Ste. Marie whose members identified themselves with animal names, or *nindoodemag* (Bohaker, 2006).

Groups represented “dynamic localized expressions of common *nindoodemag*” (Bohaker, 2006: 68). *Nindoodemag* are kinship identities passed from father to son and can be understood as kin obligations toward those who shared the same other-than-human progenitor being (Bohaker, 2006). The linguistic origins of this term have been used to link these identities to particular places. *Oode* is a Proto-Algonquian verb stem signifying lodge or household or, “to dwell together as a group/village” (Goddard, 1979 in Bishop, 1989; Peers and Brown, 2000). Two of its compounds signify *oodena* (village or town), and *nindoodem* (my clan) (Peers and Brown, 2000). The 17th century trader, Perrot, made note that “villages each bear the name of the animal which has given its people their being—as that of the crane, or the bear, or of other animals” (Blair, 1911: 37). Based on these sources, Hickerson (1970) made an argument for patrilineal, patrilocal totemic villages among the Anishinaabe, claiming that protohistoric Ojibwa were divided into autonomous territorial patrilineal totemic groups (Hickerson, 1960). This claim has long been much disputed (Richard Preston, personal communication, August 14, 2013) and a different perspective on group organization is developed below.

Anishinaabe peoples also had other collective identities besides their animal-named totems. People shared identities linked with particular places, as well as with kinship groups using the same harvesting areas. Bohaker (2006) gives the example of the *Kitchispirini* or Great River People who gathered annually around Allumette Island in the Ottawa River. These people signed the Great Peace of Montreal with a crane symbol. Early French missionaries and explorers saw these groups as nations, present at large annual summer gatherings grouped around their *nindoodem* identities (Bohaker, 2006). Through these summer gatherings, group identities could be tied to important places. For example, French Jesuit missionaries found about two thousand Aboriginal people at the rapids at the entrance to Lake Superior who they called the *Pahoüiting*
There is a debate as to whether Anishinaabe groups diffused to the north and west of the Great Lakes through movement and intermarriage in order to maintain their position within fur trade networks (Bishop, 1974, 1976, 1989), or whether the terms Ojibwa/Ojibwe/Ojibway/Chippewa were simply later applied to different groups with clan names occupying the area over the last two centuries (Greenberg and Morrison, 1982). There were three early attempts to classify and name groups with whom French Jesuits had contact with during the mid 17th century; two for lake Huron, and one for the area near Sault Ste. Marie (Bishop, 1989: 46). The classifications seem to have been extended in the 19th and 20th centuries to a large number of groups that were more or less politically and economically autonomous (Bishop, 1989). Likely, problems with early attempts at classification were linked to the equation of summer gatherings (thought of statically as villages) with particular clan groups (Bishop, 1989: 54).

Bishop (1989: 44) argued that following early fur trade contact, members of totemic clans dispersed from the great lakes north and westward, segmenting along lineage lines. This spatial segmentation would account for the widespread distribution of same-named totemic groups, the appearance of new totemic names in the record, and changes in the function of animal-named groups (Bishop, 1989). Peers and Brown (2000) noted that clans were broader kinship networks of non-localized patrilineal groups. The term nindoodem may have had a variety of meanings in different contexts and among different Algonquian groups, and these meanings may be more restricted than or different from meanings of the term oode (Bishop, 1989), denoting a settlement or “village”.

Although clans may have originated with animal-named villages in the 17th century, they seem to be associated with patrilineal family descent rather than specific “villages” (Brown and Peers, 1988), and this may have always been the case north and west of the Great Lakes. Bishop (1976) concluded that clans could have never really functioned as large clan territorial units in the northwest due to ecological conditions.
Following fieldwork with Pikangikum people in 1954-55, Dunning (1959: 80) concluded that “although clan divisions were indigenous in Ojibwa society, they were not territorial units.” Bishop supported the idea that the Great Lakes region, a varied environment with especially rich fisheries, could maintain such large gatherings whose members shared results of hunting, fishing and trapping, but this was not really possible to the north. In the early fur trade period, large communal hunting groups may have existed when large game was abundant, however, these groups then separated into smaller hunting units when large game was lacking (Rogers and Black, 1976).

How then did these group identities play out in terms of how people accessed resources? Summer gatherings formed one aspect of the cycle of seasonal dispersal which worked to ensure groups could rely upon a variety of resources and harvesting sites over the year. Individuals were associated with larger groups of people who summered together at major lakes and rivers, and smaller extended family groups who wintered together. Seasonal movement reflected the need for flexible group organization adapted to both changing ecological conditions, and trade relations. An implication for understanding the customary land use system is that movement across the landscape was facilitated by a multiplicity of identities in relation to different harvesting sites.

Anishinaabe peoples respected relationships of groups to particular places and resources. Degrees of access and claims to those places and resources were mediated through networks of relations (Bohaker, 2006). The dispersal of descent groups extended the network of relations across vast areas, making it possible to locate clan relations, which became especially significant during larger geographical movements. Because husbands and wives had different nindoodemag, every family and every gathering of people, even in winter camps would have included people belonging to separate nindoodemag (Bohaker, 2006). This broad-ranging, flexible network of kin and clan ties could be considered a social safety net in times large movements were necessitated, as well as the basis of exchange and diplomacy between groups and individuals. Fol-
lowing on this discussion of summer gatherings, the next level of inquiry brings us to smaller scale harvesting areas which tended to be exploited by smaller extended family groups.

### 2.1.3 Seasonal dispersal and extended family harvesting areas

The immediate extended family was a fundamental nexus of relationships (Peers and Brown, 2000) and a basic unit of economic production both in the family harvesting areas, and at summer settlements near productive fishing areas (Hallowell, 1992). Hallowell found this unit usually included “at least two married couples and their children united by kinship bonds between parents and children or between siblings” (Hallowell, 1992: 44). Family harvesting areas were large enough to fulfill seasonal needs of family groups for both trade and subsistence over the winter season. These areas were typically used by extended family groups numbering between ten and twenty-five individuals (Rogers, 1983).

The major resource of the fur trade, beaver, is relatively sedentary, spending the greater part of its lifecycle in one place. It could be effectively harvested by individuals or groups by blocking entrances to beaver lodges and opening them to expose the colonies inside, or by setting traps where beaver where known to travel (Rogers, 1983). Though trade needs could often be consistently met staying in a particular area, and harvesting fur from a series of lakes and waterways, flexibility was an essential feature of these harvesting areas as groups needed to adapt to changing subsistence conditions. Rogers and Taylor (1981) found that family harvesting areas were not rigid and movement of a family group onto another’s was not necessarily resented. Tanner (1979: 182) preferred to broadly define ownership of a harvesting area “as including a relationship between a man and undefined land within a defined region (such as a vague area around a given central point) of a size suitable to his needs, or an area of a size he has
occupied over a number of years.” When large animals such as moose or caribou were abundant, groups using these areas could remain together as a unit throughout the year (Rogers and Taylor, 1981). When they were not, harvesting shifted in strategy. Groups tended to split up in order to be able to search more efficiently for smaller animals, and exploited fishing areas for more extended periods of the year. At summer gatherings, flexible strategies of dispersal were integrated into decision-making for the following winter. Scholars have described elders and trappers gathering together in late summer to discuss their plans for the following winter (Berkes et al., 1989; Sieciechowicz, 1986; Tanner, 1979).

As the fur trade developed and trading relationships intensified with Euro-Canadians, leadership of extended family groups became formalized as the Hudson’s Bay Company insisted on dealing with prominent family heads as leaders of trading groups (Francis and Morantz, 1983). Leaders emerged from groups identified by animal names as described by early explorers. Groups of twenty to forty people led by a “trade captain” were common during the late 18th century, suggesting that during periods of relative ecological abundance and competitive fur trade, sizable groups controlled their local resources (Bishop, 1974). Rogers and Taylor (1981) described bands led by senior, elder males and married sons with male affines often included in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Some of these bands may have been named after the leader of the core family, for example, the Cranes of Weagamow Lake or the Suckers around Sandy Lake (Negaw-zaaga’igani Nitam-Anishinaabe).

Leadership positions appear to have been grounded in the ability of these leaders to secure trade goods, skill as a hunter, and power was often attached to a person’s spiritual knowledge. These leaders likely held responsibilities in terms of mediating market interactions with traders, but during the rest of the year, they were among a number of figures with authority whose leadership was oriented toward group organization for subsistence provisioning (Francis and Morantz, 1983).
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Extended family groups associated with particular harvesting areas maintained access through kinship relationships with group leaders. Although gender and kinship shaped the formation of winter hunting groups (Dunning, 1959; Sieciechowicz, 1986), the system was also generally flexible enough to provide for groups of fathers and sons-in-law (Bohaker, 2006). As such, kinship relations should not be taken as the primary factors accounting for movement within and between family areas. Mailhot (1986: 100) refers to this mobility with some structured constraints, or “structured mobility”, in terms of social negotiation, recognizing that the degree of variation in arrangements has been recognized by most authors to lead to “cumulative error” in attempts to summarize abstractly the connection of individuals and family groups to particular territories. As Mailhot has put it, social ties provide the “access key” to different harvesting areas (Mailhot, 1986: 102).

Confusion around Algonquian customs with regard to land use began with early fur trade history, but does not end there. Euro-Canadian understandings of the Algonquian customary system can often be traced revealingly to the land tenure systems they left behind in Europe (Morantz, 1986). For example, in 1824, an Abitibi Post trader wrote that “the limits of the territory which belong to each family are as well known by their neighbours as the lines which separate farms are by farmers in the civilized world so that very seldom do they encroach upon one another’s land to kill the beaver” (HBC Archives, B.1/c/4:1, in Morantz, 1986, 75).

Early records are not alone in their equation of Algonquian land use with western understandings of property and land tenure. Western scholarship on Algonquian hunting and trapping areas engaged in a long-running debate over the aboriginality of property rights in land (Bishop, 1974; Cooper, 1939; Leacock, 1954; Speck, 1915; Speck and Eiseley, 1939). While this debate has faded in significance, it is nonetheless necessary to dedicate some attention to it, as it has been broadly influential in the evolution of property rights theory in a larger debate over the origins of private property (Turner,
This scholarship, in turn, has historically altered Euro-Canadian perceptions of Algonquian land use and tenure, broadly influencing government policy directions, including the registered trapline systems, discussed in chapter 4.

The debate on Algonquian land tenure began with accounts by Speck (1915). It centred around the question of whether the family harvesting areas had evolved before the fur trade era due to some combination of cultural and ecological drivers, or whether they were a response to new economic forces from the fur trade, namely, the transition from production for subsistence use to production for exchange (Bishop and Morantz, 1986). Scholars debated whether land was communally held, as in primitive communism (key to the Marxist evolutionary perspective), or individually owned prior to the fur trade (Tanner, 1986). That is, whether private property rights as understood by these early scholars were aboriginal, or had developed through fur trade contact. Primitive communism is defined by the condition that nothing belonged to anyone, but as Godelier pointed out, it is a concept that has equally been taken to mean the absence of any kind of property (Godelier, 1988: 78). This theoretical treatment has led to pseudo-historical assumptions about social organization and dynamics of resource use in small scale societies, both in the past and in the present, with far-reaching implications in terms of First Nations rights in land, and natural resource management (Tanner, 1986; Preston, 1986).

Speck argued that contrary to his contemporaries’ understandings of aboriginal people’s relationships with land, the features of such family hunting groups “characterize actual ownership of territory” (Speck, 1915: 289), for which “owners” of hunting territories monitored and managed their harvest. This was received as a challenge to the Marxist evolutionary perspective that production at the hunter-gatherer stage involved communal tenure, and not private property. Speck later clarified that while these family harvesting areas existed before involvement in the fur trade, they were not effective in regions with a strong reliance on caribou as the most important re-
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source (Speck and Eiseley, 1942). This addition to the debate established an ecological rationale for the winter hunting territory system. Leacock (1954) soon after argued that no such individually-owned hunting territories existed in places where caribou were the primary subsistence resource prior to the fur trade. According to Leacock, territories “owned” by individuals were not aboriginal, but evolved out of fur trade relations. Further away from major fur trade centres, the system of family harvesting areas was less developed (Leacock, 1954). Leacock’s (1954) publication was very influential. Densetzk (1967), followed by others, took Leacock’s scholarship to be the starting point for a definitive case on the evolution of property rights (Krier, 2009). This outcome has played an important role in framing and informing wildlife management and conservation debates, putting a primacy on (private) property rights in land and resources (Berkes, 1986; Brightman, 1987).

From the beginning of this debate, Speck suggested that the hunting territory system was rigid and exclusive (Morantz, 1986). In anthropology, the major dispute has focused on the kinds of property rights that constitute Algonquian family harvesting areas, and how they evolved (Feit, 1991). However, a significant amount of scepticism developed surrounding analyses that squarely placed Algonquian family hunting territories into the realm of private property. Research had shown that individual rights to hunting territories were “part of systems in which ‘rights’ and ‘duties’ are predominantly attached to distinctive social forms in the larger communities, including multi-familial hunting groups, and to distinctive forms of egalitarian leadership” (Feit 1991, 110). The original debate quickly became untenable due to the complexities of distinguishing indigenous land tenure forms from those that arose throughout the course of varied colonial histories (Scott, 1986). As Scott emphasized, “The misidentification of Algonquian territories as private property or privatized usufruct, and their mis-attribution to commodity production, are based on an incomplete ethnological understanding of the institution and an unreasonably narrow emphasis on fur as opposed
to subsistence production” (Scott, 1986: 164). More critically, within the classic debate, family harvesting areas were theorized as manifestations of the transition from communal to private rights to land. In this sense, “they did not constitute an appropriate topic for the analysis of the place of land tenure and land utilization in a hunting social formation, but only for the analysis of presumed social disintegration of those social relations” (Feit, 1991: 224).

Fortunately, in most recent scholarship on Algonquian land use, the debate surrounding the origins of the system has since been abandoned as unproductive and interests have shifted (Bishop and Morantz, 1986). Simply put, Tanner (1979) indicated that the complexity of the territorial system prevents us from generalizing the origin or importance of such territories as a trend in the modernization of subarctic societies. Most scholars writing from the 1970s onward chose to leave the debate, and studies centred on the family harvesting areas, including those by Feit (1973, 1988, 1991), Berkes (1986, 1987) and Tanner (1979) have emphasized the flexibility and adaptability of the system, and have concluded that family harvesting areas are well suited for management of animal resources and other harvesting activities.

Family harvesting areas began to intrigue scholars who were interested in changing land use and land use institutions through which indigenous hunting, value and knowledge systems continue to be reproduced (Berkes, 1987, 2008; Feit, 1991). Tanner (1979) and Feit (1973) described these areas as units of resource management, bringing the classic debate to bear on contemporary concerns, particularly the challenges related to hydroelectric development in the James Bay area. While the classic debate had a narrow focus on property rights to land and resources, scholars later realized these areas housed a great deal of complexity and flexibility to adapt to ecological change, and to subsistence crises, but also to changing economic conditions, social upheaval related to increased government presence in the north, and the emergence of new economic activities. This scholarship is the focus of the next section.
2.2 COMMONS

2.2.1 Common-pool resource dilemmas

Fur trade needs could be met by Anishinaabe groups through their system of flexible customary harvesting areas. Within this system, tenure of commercial fur resources could be negotiated relatively unproblematically between groups and individuals with reference to areas they used because furbearers were relatively sedentary. On the other hand, harvesting for subsistence purposes required much greater flexibility in order to accommodate the mobility of animals, and environmental variability. Survival required flexibility of access to harvesting sites, so people and family groups could move to areas with higher resource abundance during periods of scarcity. As subsistence and fur trade activities were intricately linked, extended family harvesting areas, which were linked to fur trade needs, also needed to be defined flexibly in order to accommodate variability and change.

With uncertain ecological dynamics established as a major driver of the Anishinaabe customary land use system (see The seasonal round above), this section examines the growing body of commons literature which increasingly underpins natural resource planning and management in theory and practice. Commons scholarship as a field of study is dedicated to resource management and land use systems tied to an abstract class of “common-pool resources” to which two fundamental characteristics have been attributed. For these resources, exclusion of potential users is problematic (excludability), and each user is capable of subtracting from the welfare of others by withdrawing from the resource (subtractability) (Berkes et al., 1989). Typical examples of common-pool resources include fish, highly mobile ungulates such as caribou or plains bison, pasture land, water resources, and the atmosphere.

Scholarly work in natural resource management was dominated until the last sev-
eral decades by the conclusion that common-pool resources were likely to be mismanaged unless they were somehow divided (or accumulated) into units of private property, or brought under coercive state bureaucratic management regimes. This thinking continues to be hegemonic in certain circles, particularly those associated with neo-classical economics and its underpinning philosophical worldview, methodological individualism—a philosophical worldview which treats individuals as rational actors and models their behaviour based on an economic calculus (Kjosavik, 2003). In this worldview, in the absence of well-defined property rights, markets fail to do their job of matching individual and social interests (McCay and Jentoft, 1998). A wave of institutional economists (e.g. North, 1990; Williamson, 1995) have tried to explain the development of property rules and institutions as a consequence of the need for efficiency in economic life. In turn, the wave of privatization of land and resources in the late twentieth century, advocated by international development institutions can be traced to these convictions (Barfield, 1997). The main implication for common-pool resource use is that with this understanding, common ownership of land and resources necessarily gives rise to over exploitation and disaster (Hann, 1998; Runge, 1986).

Virtually the entire theoretical case for successful collective common-pool resource management grew out of a response to a single powerful articulation of the aforementioned narrative by Garrett Hardin. Hardin (1968) wrote his most widely read paper based on the argument that the culmination of rational decisions, made by individuals withdrawing from a common-pool resource, resulted in a dilemma for the entire group. Individuals would have no incentive to restrain their harvest because even if they did so, withdrawal by others would deplete the resource stock, and lead to a “tragedy of the commons”. In Hardin’s thesis, the commons was characterized by the absence of governance, and incomplete or non-existent property rights. Common property, however, is not a natural or necessary condition which derives from characteristics of a resource; it is a social agreement about how humans relate to things (McCay, 1996). In the vo-
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cabulary of commons theory, “common property” was made synonymous with “open access” for all in Hardin’s famous argument (McCay and Jentoft, 1998). An academic counter attack was launched in response to Hardin’s tragedy metaphor, driven by the defence of common property as a distinct property regime that could be distinguished from open access through the empirical study of rules and institutions for managing the often unpredictable dynamics of common-pool resources.

In building commons theory, scholars have drawn heavily on case studies examining small, community-level common property regimes, featuring face-to-face interactions of members of a resource-using community. The basic starting point in the common property narrative, however, is a theoretical dilemma confronted by theoretical common-pool resource users. This dilemma is understood as the problem of free-riding: users must resolve a collective action dilemma in which they must choose whether or not to cooperate with other users in order to manage resource withdrawals (McCay, 1992). If the dilemma is not resolved, the outcome is inevitably a tragedy for all resource users, as users are motivated by self-interest to withdraw from the resource pool without limits on personal consumption. Even though individuals may act rationally to maximize personal benefits, all users end up worse-off if they exploit the resource on an individual basis, than if they had communicated and cooperated to form common rules to manage the resource (Ostrom, 1990).

The case-study literature on the collective management of common-pool resources has been successful in challenging the constrained thinking of the “tragedy of the commons” on the potential for individuals to jointly manage commonly held resources sustainably (Berkes et al., 1989; McCay and Acheson, 1987; Ostrom, 1990). Effective commons have been found to operate around sets of rules-in-use, or institutions, which provide for mechanisms of cooperative behaviour (Ostrom, 1990). A working definition of institutions in the commons literature provides more clarity on their operation within commons systems: “Institutions are enduring regularities of human action in
situations structured by rules, norms, and shared strategies, as well as by the physical world. The rules, norms, and shared strategies are constituted and reconstituted by human interaction in frequently occurring or repetitive situations” (Crawford and Ostrom, 1995: 582). Incentive structures for sharing responsibility toward common-pool resources with other users may be built up through collective action, and not only through some form of external process of control (Acheson, 2011). To this end, Ostrom’s *Governing the Commons* (1990) has had a radical influence in academic and policy circles alike because it has provided a useful foil for developing an understanding of how resource users and communities can generate effective management regimes. The problem for natural resource managers has now been framed as the development of appropriate governance regimes to manage the free-riding problem.

The dilemma is broadly accepted within the commons literature as a jump-off point for commons theory development, yet it does not necessarily reflect the problems common-pool resource users themselves may identify with most urgency. Likely due to Hardin’s legacy in the study of the commons, the literature has become more and more sophisticated with respect to the free-riding dilemma. This is understandable to the extent that the amount of attention received by Hardin’s tragedy narrative—and the disastrous consequences of its application in natural resource management and development worldwide—led to an immense scholarly effort to critique his approach. This critique has narrowed to a very specific incarnation of the “dilemma of the commons”. While admirable work has gone into this theorization, many commons scholars accept a fundamental premise that has become hegemonic in commons scholarship: The dilemma can be resolved through rational action of individuals who are themselves the resource users.

The main thrust in the study of the commons emerged out of new scholarship at the end of the 20th century in the rational choice tradition. This tradition resorted to methodological individualism—where communities are aggregate outcomes of strate-
gies of individuals, influenced by incentive structures—to explain cooperative behaviour (Acheson, 2011; Johnson, 2004).

A branch of commons scholarship has always been uncomfortable with this methodological approach, and has contributed to a large degree to a more historically and culturally sensitive commons literature. Aversion to the naive methodological individualism of economic models of social behaviour is visible in an emerging critique based on historical and anthropological approaches (e.g. Mosse, 1997; Leach et al., 1999; Mehta et al., 2001). Peters (1994) stressed the importance of being aware of from whom such narratives on the development of commons regimes originate. For a re-evaluation of the commons scholarship to take into account emerging historical approaches, commons systems must be comprehended as being constantly negotiated among a range of people and organizations (this requires understanding institutions as sites of negotiation); and processes of institutional change, uncertainty and complexity must be incorporated as analytical starting points (Berry, 1993; Davidson-Hunt, 1997; Mehta et al., 2001). In addition, these negotiated processes must also be investigated at multiple organizational levels, as commons scholars have been critiqued for thinking only at one (local, territorial) scale (Davidson-Hunt, 1997; Berkes, 2007; Goldman, 1997).

The critique of Hardin, developed in the commons literature, involved claims that when left to their own devices people would reach viable solutions to their dilemmas. This is as good a narrative, with persuasive powers and analytical problems as is Hardin’s narrative. Unfortunately it is not “thick” enough to deal with real world complexities of resource appropriation, maintenance of access, management authority, and specification of property rights at particular intersections of history, politics, culture, time and space (McCay and Jentoft, 1998). A “thick” versus “thin” approach must add concerns about interplay of conflicting interests and contested and agreed-upon meanings (Peters, 1987), and is developed in the next section.
2.2.2 A “thick” approach to the complexity of the commons

Commons often feature institutions which have evolved over long time periods. These historically evolved institutions can be understood as sites of historical struggles and competing interests. In this sense, collective action dilemmas can be understood to emerge not out of absence of social ties between individuals, but from competing claims to legitimate use of common-pool resources (Peters, 1987). The empirical conditions of the dilemma are theoretical, since common-pool resources are not often “found” in an institutional vacuum, i.e. in the absence of commonly held norms and values. In similar terms, struggles over common-pool resources regularly have more to do with the undoing of commons systems by powerful interests, including the presence of colonial state institutions, rather than some sort of internal community level free-riding dilemma which must be resolved. Institutions of private property, in collusion with the state, lead to the tragedy (O’Flaherty, 2003).

Struggles, or dilemmas in local commons, draw attention to wider social processes at work, where individual action must be understood to be embedded within wider social and economic processes. Perceived tragedies of the commons resulting from “community failure”—the failure of local commons regimes to overcome the free-riding dilemma—may be better explained through a process of “disembedding” whereby local communities lose critical points of control, a notion espoused by Giddens (1994).

It has been recognized for some time by anthropologists writing on the commons that property rights, rules, and institutions are “embedded” in historically specific social and cultural contexts (McCay and Acheson, 1987; McCay, 2002; Peters, 1994). Meanwhile, sociologists hold that economic action is socially situated—economic systems are embedded within social relations (Granovetter and Swedberg, 1992). These scholars, in striving for social, historical and cultural specificity, aim to understand the context of “situated choice” (McCay, 2002), referring to the notion that choices taken by individu-
ALS are embedded in larger cultural, social, and historical phenomena. As Peters (1987: 183) pointed out, “Without [a] keener sense of the relations in which individual users are embedded, we cannot penetrate the dynamic of a commons.”

Many observed patterns of interaction are based on the shared perception among a group of individuals of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, and of normative obligations (Crawford and Ostrom, 1995, 583). In a thick perspective then, institutions can be understood not only as rules, but also norms, values, and patterns of behaviour (McCay and Jentoft, 1998; McCay, 2002). An embedded perspective emphasizes the contingency of economic behaviour on social norms of appropriate behaviour. This appeal for a re-embedding of social relationships within the commons literature recalls the formalist/substantivist debate raised by Polanyi (1944); i.e. that the economy must be understood more broadly in the sense of economic “provisioning”, or the way societies meet their material needs, rather than more narrowly in the sense of the study of “economizing”. Interestingly, although embeddedness seems to be used in the same sense in recent writing on the commons, references to this classic debate appear to be absent from this literature.

A thick perspective grounded in the embeddedness of social action, however, only goes so far to position the commons within culture, history, and society. It does not necessarily help understand the dynamics of cooperation or confrontation with regard to common-pool resource management without further historical specificity.

Reference to the tragedy of the commons narrative continues to underlie commons research agendas. Specifically, the critique has been made that development practitioners continue to strive for development interventions at the community level according to understandings based on the “tragedy” paradigm, leading, as Goldman (1998) argues, to the real tragedy—linked to development failures—of accelerated loss of commons worldwide. In this perspective, development interventions frequently employ anthropological concepts to support community-based management, seeing tradition
as a comprehensive set of binding rules, deployed in policy contexts (Li, 1996). In many respects, the rational actor approach to the dilemma of the commons has contributed to the appearance of an idealized, well-managed and cooperative community in the literature (see especially Li, 1996). In such an idealized community, users, at worst, may shirk collective responsibilities by grazing their sheep where they are prohibited to do so, or stealing water from common wells or cisterns for their crops. They are not, however, theorized to be engaged within wider historical and political contexts, often at different scales.

To this end, Goldman (1998) levelled a serious critique at the commons literature, finding a rift within commons scholarship on issues of politics, livelihoods, and more generally the embedded economy. Goldman (1998) and Johnson (2004) took a step beyond the embeddedness critique of rational choice scholarship, and drew from moral economy and entitlement perspectives, to expose a growing divide within commons scholarship. In the process, they also point out a productive direction for a thick perspective on the commons. Whereas rational choice scholars are principally concerned with governance of resources whose attributes lend themselves to public goods dilemmas (Johnson, 2004), a moral economy and entitlement perspective in commons scholarship has sought to understand how social relations of a commons can be maintained in the face of management interventions of the state and international development institutions.

2.2.3 The moral economy

While the critique of rational choice presented in the section above is not necessarily new, interesting analytical possibilities may be explored by examining the intersection between moral economy, and the study of Algonquian land use. Thus far, I have been associating a thick perspective on the commons with social embeddedness. I am
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now interested in developing a thick perspective which addresses the moral economy literature, although I also briefly address entitlement in this section of the literature review.

The moral economy literature has at its base the study of prevailing notions of economic justice (Scott, 1976). In terms of norms and values, this has much to do with what is perceived to be fair and unfair. To this end, the moral economy has become associated with norms and values evolved around authority and control with regard to common-pool resources, and how groups of resources users negotiate, and respond to, resource management decisions. When critical points of control are lost, commons may be appropriated or “enclosed” by powerful interests.

Moral economy is not simply embeddedness in the sense that it has been used above to critique the commons literature. It is more than just the moral dimensions of individual action and economic exchange (Bernstein, 2007). Institutions understood in their social contexts incorporate a sense of justice, in which choices are mediated by shared understandings of justice, fairness, and reciprocity (Douglas, 1986). This is moral economy writ narrow, which, in the commons literature, seems to stop at recognition of the embeddedness of social institutions (e.g. McCay, 2002). Moral economy is rooted in a critique of capitalism: “Capitalism is an extraordinary economic system because it is not driven by the goal of provisioning so that people can live well” (Sayer, 2007: 266). Since E.P. Thompson coined the term with the *The Moral Economy of the English Crowd* (Thompson, 1971), moral economy has become a useful foil for the critique of the encounter of customary, “pre-capitalist” or “non-industrial” societies with capitalist forms of accumulation.¹

The moral economy was conceived to explain the ways in which communities buffered themselves against the risks and variability associated with subsistence provi-

¹The terms pre-capitalist and non-industrial society are problematic because the social groups moral economists are interested in often co-existed, and interacted, with market society in complex ways (e.g. Wolf, 1982).
sioning. It is manifested in a “subsistence ethic”: a shared sense of justice around limits of subsistence provisioning (Scott, 1976), through which community members seek to ensure a minimum level of subsistence security (Mosse, 1997). In this way, the moral economy can be explored as a shared sense of justice regarding the “challenges of capitalism” (Bernstein, 2007, 10). In *The Making of the English Working Class*, Thompson showed how old notions of moral right (not the same as rights) continued to co-exist within a new market society during a prolonged period of enclosures of common property (Thompson, 1963). Thompson (1971: 132) held that although the market economy had come to dominate transactions in land as of the nineteenth century (at least for England and its new world colonies), this did not not mean that old notions of moral economy had been replaced.

The moral economy literature partially overlaps—at least in terms of its main concerns—with the entitlements literature, which asks how different people and groups of resource users gain access to, and control over, resources (Leach et al., 1999). Entitlements are defined as alternative sets of utilities derived from environmental goods and services over which social actors have legitimate effective command, and which are instrumental in achieving well-being (Leach et al., 1999). Alternative sets of utilities include “direct uses in the form of commodities, such as food, water, or fuel, the market value of such resources, or the rights to them, and the utilities derived from environmental services, such as pollution sinks, or properties of the hydrological cycle” (Leach et al., 1999: 233). Entitlements do not necessarily refer to people’s rights (i.e. what people can do or should have), but a range of possibilities that people can have (Leach et al., 1999).
2.2.4 The Anishinaabe commons

Moral economy might seem an odd fit for the Anishinaabe commons because of this literature’s heavy commitment to peasant studies and agrarian change. But what are the possibilities for moral economy to be used productively to think about Anishinaabe land use? We have seen how commercial and subsistence harvesting mutually supported the customary seasonal round of northern Algonquian land use more broadly (see section 2.1.3). In turn, the customary land use system features a high degree of flexibility of movement, and a range of relationships tied to traditional identities over long distances (see section 2.1.2). The moral economy literature is interesting in its focus on material provisioning, the importance it places on buffering against subsistence crisis, and its use for thinking about the relationship between the state and communities of resource users.

In the Anishinaabe commons, what is just and fair is understood in terms of relationships with others. This has been amply documented and discussed in the Algonquian literature, and more broadly in literature on indigenous natural resource planning and management. This literature holds keys for setting up a discussion of the moral economy for northern Algonquian and Anishinaabe peoples. The key is that the moral economy emerges from people’s relationships with others, including a class of other-than-human persons (Brightman, 1993; Feit, 1973, 2004; Hallowell, 2002). These are sentient beings that share the ontological status of personhood, and include animals, plants, spirits, stones, and other inanimate objects or phenomena which would not be recognized as persons from a western worldview (Hallowell, 2002).

In addition to relations between individuals, personal relationships and reciprocity between humans and non-human persons characterize a person’s relationship with the land (Bird-David, 1999). Hallowell (1992) and Dunning (1959), referring to ethnographic knowledge obtained during their time spent with Pikangikum people, attributed
power and agency to non-human persons who are capable of influencing the success of the hunt. Some non-human persons have significant power at their disposal, so humans require their help in achieving their goals. Therefore, animals require proper respect when being hunted, or they will not return to the hunter. Killing a moose, for example, presents an opportunity to establish and re-establish gift exchange relations (Dunning, 1959). Through this pattern, the moral economy is extended both to human and non-human persons.

The notion of animals, plants and others as persons that hunters relate to in the act of hunting or harvesting forms the basis for morals, norms, and values which mediate behaviour. In understanding how norms of reciprocity translate into behaviour, it is necessary to understand that there are consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Uncertainty in the hunt is attached to the hunter’s activities, and lack of success can be associated with a hunter’s behaviour. The result of a hunt can be traced to decisions on the part of non-human persons (Hallowell, 1992). Algonquian hunters understood they were not supposed to kill more than they were given; and not to “play” with the animals by killing them for fun or self-aggrandizement (Feit, 1973). This has the additional significance that hunters have a considerable influence over the hunt. While hunters only catch what is given to them, in practice what is given is a function of what they have done before (Feit, 1973). Thus, maintaining good relationships with animals plays an important role in obtaining resources for subsistence or trade. In the absence of more recognizable sanctions on inappropriate behaviour such as outright criticism or punishment administered by a social group, Hallowell (1992) noted how the major social sanction in Ojibwa society was the fear of misfortune and disease, or bad luck in the hunt which could be brought about by inappropriate behaviour toward others (Hallowell, 1955a).

Atran et al. (2002) draw attention to the role of “non-economic” entities and values such as supernatural beings, and taboo trade-offs in behaviour. They stress that non-
human forest species may come to have intentions and act as negotiating partners. Rather than specifying the non-economic nature of exchanges between humans and supernatural beings, I am interested in the possibility to include these beings as participants in the moral economy. This is an important distinction, as it allows for the possibility of continuity of these relationships through commercial harvesting activities, and participation in market exchanges between individuals and outsiders including Euro-Canadians.

Anthropologists have shown that many contemporary peoples who are intimately engaged in meeting subsistence needs from their local environment continue to approach their environments through a “relational” stance (Bird-David, 1999; Ingold, 2000). Berkes (2008) refers to this relational worldview to point out the deep morality in indigenous human-nature reciprocity. An Anishinaabe worldview, with emphasis on personal relationships between humans and non-human beings, suggest a relational approach to the commons. This relational commons could be understood as a moral economy in which livelihood activities on the land are attended to with a level of respect and reciprocity in relationships between humans and other persons, whether resources are being harvested for household use, or for exchange on the market. In appropriating animals as food, for domestic manufactures, or as market commodities, attentiveness to appropriate behaviour and moral commitments of reciprocity are important for ensuring a continued ability to subsist and be successful in harvesting activities (Brightman, 1993).

As I continue to distance the Anishinaabe commons from the classic concerns of commons dilemma, there is scope for issues of access and authority to make decisions with regard to common-pool resources to emerge within a moral economy framing. In the Anishinaabe commons, participation in the moral economy is broadened to non-humans, enlarging the sphere of reciprocal obligations and decision-making authority.

In an historical context of periodic subsistence crises, the moral economy is ex-
pressed in moments of collective action in response to interventions of the capitalist state, as shown in terms of the English crowd rioting (Thompson, 1971) or southeast Asian peasant revolts (Scott, 1976). I would argue though that longer-term and more peaceful responses to state hegemony in natural resource management conflicts—such as through land use planning and co-management arrangements—constitute important topics for thought in terms of moral economy. The supply of (customary and novel) institutions to deal with multiple threats to existing, and dynamic, commons systems can be hypothesized to occur at the sites of emergent collective-action institutions. The intersection between community and state management is explored in the next section, and is key to the development of an approach to access and authority which helps build the thesis.

2.3 THE COMMUNITY AND THE STATE IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Historical transformations in indigenous communities cannot be analyzed in isolation from the impacts of nation states, over and above the impacts of world markets (Feit, 1991). Interactions between indigenous peoples and the modern nation state were characterized by the state’s modernizing imperative, driven by a strong development ideology. This set the background for resistance by indigenous groups, variously associated with processes of colonization and resource extraction. This section investigates spatial aspects of the relationship between indigenous peoples and the state, indigenous resistance, and finally possibilities for indigenous groups to transform their relationship with the state with regard to planning and natural resource management, and re-establish decision-making authority and autonomy with regard to land use.

Indigenous groups located far from centres of state power were progressively brought into state-regulated resource economies as nation states developed over the the course
of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Staples theory considers how states invent spatial means of organizing commodity production (Innis, 1999; Tough, 1996). Raw materials were moved from peripheral areas to trading centres in a process which underlay the production of Canada as a modern nation state. However, until relatively recently (i.e. in the post WWII period), many indigenous groups participated in the global economy with relative autonomy (see sections 2.1.1 and 3.3). Given that the establishment of government traplines in northern Ontario occurred in the mid twentieth century and that traplines form a central component of this thesis, I focus the discussion on this time period.

Development of aboriginal relations with modern states can be conceptualized as a continuing manifestation of the historical relationship with Euro-Canadians that started with fur trade (Scott, 1989). There are important discontinuities, however, between pre- and post-war interventions of Euro-Canadians in the north. In the post WWII world, development and modernization ideology was in its heyday (Escobar, 1995). The project of development is associated with the facilitation of the growth of capitalist relations (Goldman, 1997), and to a progressive loss of autonomy for populations located in geographically peripheral regions of the state. Since the war, centralized governments have asserted control in new ways over “hinterland” or “peripheral” areas which were previously largely ignored by nation states (Feit, 1991). This has had the effect of integration of indigenous communities within the nation state’s political economy where interaction with resource management agencies are increasingly unavoidable (Feit, 1988; Spaeder, 2005).

Interaction between indigenous societies and modern state agencies globally in the early post-war period was characterized by a high-modernist ideology (Scott, 1998: 4). This ideology was characterized by self-confidence about scientific, technical progress, expansion of production, growing satisfaction of human needs, mastery of nature (including human nature), and “the rational design of social order commensurate with
the scientific understanding of natural laws.” Part of this trend was an optimism regarding the possibilities of planning of human settlements and production, combined with an “imperial or hegemonic planning mentality that excludes the necessary role of local knowledge and know-how” (Scott, 1998: 6). Not surprisingly, Hardin was writing at the height of this technical-managerial optimism in the 1960s. The post-war period is also notable for First Nations in Canada, as it was characterized by a new drive for modern education, and a policy of full integration into Canadian society (Shewell, 1999). Indeed, factors such as schooling, food and commodities available for purchase on reserves, and state welfare programs constituted important “pull” factors encouraging First Nations people to move onto reserves as Dunning (1959) noted in the case of Pikangikum.

2.3.1 State rationalization of land and resource tenure

Understanding local land use customs was a fundamental problem in modern statecraft. To make local realities more transparent to state agencies, states engaged in processes such as standardization of permanent last names, surveying land use and tenure, registering populations, standardization of language, and legal discourse (Scott, 1998). States took “exceptionally complex, illegible, and local social practices, such as land tenure customs or naming customs, and created a standard grid whereby it could be centrally recorded and monitored” (Scott, 1998: 2). Legibility became a fundamental objective of the modern state.

What was new and different from previous experiences with Euro-Canadians was a process which could be described as internal territorialization—the establishment of state control over natural resources and the people who use them (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). States did not simply map out customary or indigenous societies within their boundaries. Maps enabled much of the reality they depicted to be re-made, and
categories of land and people were given the force of law (Scott, 1998). States made internal spaces legible for purposes of intervention, including cadastral standardization (Scott, 1998).

For further specificity in discussing the American experience with the modern state, Brenner (1997) makes the useful distinction of North Atlantic Fordism as a historical spatial arrangement. This was a distinct pattern of development that emerged during the post-war period when the focus was on evening out development within the boundaries of the state. The goal of regional planning was not merely the regulation of preconstituted national territory, but the production of spatial grids within which capital could be accumulated (Brenner, 1997, 283). This was accompanied by what Scott (1998) referred to as a state project of settling mobile peoples (sedentarization). For Canadian and American indigenous peoples, perhaps the most dramatic aspect of interaction with the state was re-settlement on reserves. Reserves had the effect of moving people who had not necessarily lived together for extended periods into communities with stable, year-round populations, as was certainly the case for most northern Anishinaabe reserve communities (e.g. Dunning, 1959). In the process, indigenous peoples progressively lost control over areas outside of the reserves and in this way, reserves became a tool for land appropriation and resource transformation by colonists (Tough, 1996; Natcher et al., 2012).

The use of territorial claims by the state and the settlement of mobile populations could be understood to characterize all modern states, and were concomitant with attempts to control people’s lives through surveying and registering land as property, mapping land and resource use, and exerting authority to guard and monitor forests and other natural resources (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). Soon, however, indigenous reserves themselves came under scrutiny of the state, which sought to do away with what was understood to be inefficient indigenous communal land use. An important example of this was the Dawes Act or General Allotment Act, adopted by American
congress in 1887. The Dawes Act gave the American government the power to survey Indian tribal land and divide it into individually owned allotments (McLaughlin, 1996). The Act allowed for sale of unallocated communal land to government, which seriously undermined tribal authority, and facilitate redistribution of land to non-indigenous Americans, easing development of individually owned farms and railroad construction (Stuart, 1977).

In pre-confederation Canada, the Bagot Commission of 1842-1844 recommended adoption of individual ownership of plots of land under a new Indian land registry system to encourage a market in property among First Nations people themselves (Canada, 1996, in Alcantara and Hall, 2003). Then, in 1869, despite opposition from First Nations leaders, Canadian Parliament passed the Gradual Enfranchisement Act, followed by the Indian Act of 1876, which contained conditions which were hoped to encourage First Nations to seek private property in land: “The great aim of the Government should be to give each Indian his individual property as soon as possible” (Canadian Parliament, 1873, A1879, in Alcantara and Hall, 2003: 402). Early assimilationist objectives of the state are apparent in these government positions: private land ownership was seen as an essential step in the integration of indigenous peoples into American and Canadian society.

Part of modernist discourse was typified in an understanding that national territory was only a passive container in which the state was situated (Brighenti, 2010). In contrast to this view, the literature reviewed in this section shows that states actively produce territory (in this case, in peripheral areas) which they then attempted to manage. Modern states divided land into complex and overlapping political and economic zones and rearranged people and resources within these areas. As such, modern cartography played a central role in legitimation of state territorial authority (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). Geographers have begun to realize this and have called on others to escape the “territorial trap” of viewing territory as a passive container (Brenner and El-
Territory is not simply a bounded space (Brenner and Elden, 2009) but must be recognized to be actively produced through state processes of mapping, law-making, formal education, resource management and extraction, and the creation of formal land tenure regimes. Indeed, state territory is made through a process of production of state hegemony within state boundaries. Even as this discussion has taken place among geographers, analysis of the relationship between territory and state power has received little theoretical attention (Brenner and Elden, 2009). Of related interest for this thesis is how indigenous societies within state boundaries are affected by processes of internal state territorialization, or the process of construction of state territory.

An important area for self-reflection in commons scholarship is that the commons literature at times implicitly or explicitly supports state rationalization and promotes legibility of poorly documented, indigenous customary systems which are largely opaque to outside observers. Natural resource management discourses in the commons literature tend to be compatible with pragmatic concerns of the state through attempts to meet requirements of generality and standardization in social life, including more precise specification of social and physical boundaries that can be subjected to administrative control (Mosse, 1997, 1999). In cases where local land use and management institutions are obscure or absent in the eyes of the state, community traditions might by invented, codified, and enforced through legislation by the state (Mosse, 1999). Thus the creation of local communities is often part and parcel of the creation of spatial management authority by the state.

2.3.2 Resistance to state resource management

Resistance to state practices of internal territorialization is especially visible in defiance by indigenous peoples of formal land tenure institutions introduced by the state, which constitute a principle source of resource conflicts (Spaeder and Feit, 2005). State
involvement in land tenure raises the risk of losing control over land use for indigenous populations and may occur through resettlement, regulation of harvesting activities, and awarding of resource extraction contracts to public or private corporations on state or public land (public land is designated as Crown land in Canada) (Hickey and Bracking, 2005; Driben and Trudeau, 1983). Resistance of this type is often associated with the defence of activities associated with livelihoods and material well being (Bebbington et al., 2008).

Traditional resistance might seek to limit or oppose state involvement in resource management, and limit aspects of livelihood provisioning from contact with state institutions (Bebbington, 2007). For example, Feit (2005) observed that James Bay Cree sought to limit government regulation of harvesting to beaver management because there was an awareness on the part of the Cree that governments and fur traders sought exclusive governance of lands, tenure, wildlife, and conservation.

Resistance may be expressed through complex social movements, legal avenues of the state (including participatory processes), and more subtlety through everyday practice, although this may not be as effective in helping communities gain formal rights (Spaeder and Feit, 2005). Nonetheless on the peripheries of the state, resistance to rules in the everyday practice of harvesting can prove effective in allowing for the continuity of customary livelihood activities. Spaeder and Feit (2005) found in one case that hunters were content to resist in anonymous and informal ways even if this resistance did not advance formal claims to the land, while government managers were content to publicly assert unilateral management rights, even if they lacked the resources and political will to enforce them. This everyday resistance may allow state and customary management systems to co-exist in relative autonomy unless access to formal management regimes becomes a pressing issue (Spaeder and Feit, 2005).

As mapping remains a key means by which states formalize spatial management control, “countermapping” may become an important strategy for counteracting the
state’s authority. Countermapping, community mapping, or land use and occupancy mapping can aid in the defence of communities’ customary resource use and territorial claims (Sletto, 2009; Walker and Peters, 2001). Counter claims made through mapping, however, may introduce new problems, potentially propagating poor representations of customary harvesting dynamics, and of the extent of land and resource use (Kent, 2008; Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). Indigenous peoples may perceive a dilemma in participating in mapping through state planning or other processes in which they lack control.

Resistance to state-led resource appropriation processes have at times successfully slowed efforts by the state to claim property for itself as public or state land. State land management agencies are increasingly giving recognition to local land and resource rights deriving from local classification (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). With the number of such cases increasing, many scholars are attempting to move beyond local resistance as the primary mode of indigenous engagement with the state in order to understand agency of indigenous groups that may choose to collaborate with state agencies and other powerful actors in complex ways (Dove, 2006). A more nuanced view of indigenous peoples’ engagement with the state includes a discussion of indigenous territorial strategies, and what is gained and what is lost in the process.

2.3.3 Negotiation and strategic engagement with state resource management

As in the case of extended family harvesting areas, indigenous land use areas are often flexible and overlapping. As Godelier has pointed out, indigenous territories encompass a range of local resources for the provisioning of societal needs, both material, and invisible (symbolic) (Godelier, 1988: 88). For Godelier, territories encompass that space which guarantees social reproduction for a particular society (Godelier, 1988: 83).
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Indigenous territories, or traditional territories spring up often in discussions of indigenous land use. First Nations’ use of land certainly has concrete aspects tied to provisioning, however, land use areas cannot often be thought of *a priori* as bounded geographical units and provisioning in the northern Algonquian case may involve long-distance movement and trade (see section 2.1.2). It is also worth repeating a quote from earlier in this chapter in which Algonquian family areas were understood “as including a relationship between a man and undefined land within a defined region (such as a vague area around a given central point) of a size suitable to his needs, or an area of a size he has occupied over a number of years” (Tanner, 1979: 182). Indigenous territorial strategies, however, constitute an important tool in the anti-colonial toolbox. There clearly is a contemporary conversation on indigenous territorial strategy (involving historical treaties, contemporary treaty negotiation, land use planning and resource management) (Nadasdy, 2002; Scott, 2001; Rangan and Lane, 2001; Lane and Hibbard, 2005). Indigenous groups often focus on the extent of their ability to access, and exercise control over resources in their land use areas (Rangan and Lane, 2001) and in this sense, indigenous territorial discourse is directly related to state territorial strategy but also to meeting concrete livelihood needs. A discussion of indigenous strategic engagement, or negotiation, with the state must consider the linkage between the provisioning and strategic aspects of territory.

A precedent for a strategic approach to territorial authority by indigenous groups is well established in terms of legal co-management arrangements, and recently negotiated treaty settlements in Canada (often in combination). Both outcomes have brought legitimization or recognition of local-level (including locally developed) institutions by state actors (c.f. Berkes, 2002). Decentralization of management authority from the state to local groups is often positively associated with local empowerment when claims to political power are attached to identity and historical precedent (Berry, 1994). Consistent with the commons literature, indigenous groups have sought to expand rights
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of appropriation and resource tenure, rights to use, and rights to organize for resource management without being constantly challenged by government authorities (Ostrom, 1990, 90).

At the same time, an image of successful community level resource management systems has penetrated policy discourses, and has been frequently used as the basis to advocate for stronger de jure rules, and government recognition for community-based systems, and a shift in control of local land and resources from state and private capital to communities (Li, 1996). Thus, images of “successful intact resources-managing communities” have been used as advocacy tools to strengthen rights and government recognition of thus far invisible—illegible to the state—customary resource management systems (Li, 1996: 504), putting control in the hands of the people whose livelihoods depend on resources managed as commons.

Still, powerful community-based approaches to planning and resource management are not free of risks for indigenous peoples, as they often distort what was there before, disrupting customary institutions which may play an important role in provisioning, distribution of material wealth and decision-making authority. Participation by indigenous groups in co-management processes with the state has had impacts which are often difficult to apprehend in their totality. Co-management often entails a new way of communicating with the government through western notions of science, and carries with it its own bureaucratic infrastructure (Nadasdy, 2003). This combination has often introduced new notions of representation which diverge from customary ways of personally representing ones knowledge and authority. Knowledge and authority of the land is customarily tied to individual experience, and custodial responsibilities are understood to be given by the Creator (Davidson-Hunt and Berkes, 2003; Davidson-Hunt, 2006). The notion of personal responsibility means that delegation or representation is often considered inappropriate (Lane, 2002). Davidson-Hunt (2006) adds that delegation of one’s authority is further considered inadequate from an
indigenous perspective as knowledge required for natural resource management processes becomes disconnected from responsibilities to care for the land, and for living things, if it is distanced from the knowledge holder.

Delegation of indigenous land use authority to the community level has been conceptualized in terms of decentralization or devolution through the state’s legitimation of local institutions (McCarthy, 2005). Yet for Algonquian land use, the processes of “scaling up” to the community level, and of the constitution of the community itself, are perhaps more relevant, as decentralized spatial authority resides with customary leadership of family harvesting areas. This has not gone without observation, even outside the context of indigenous land use. The local, or community, scale is often assumed to be “already there” (Herod, 2003), but in fact needs to be made in practice (i.e. in development or management practice). Cox (1998) makes the distinction that scales should not be conceptualized as aerial units, but rather as networks of interaction. At a minimum, any particular scale needs to be substantiated according to the interactions that can be shown to constitute that scale. When management at some pre-defined local scale is devolved to a pre-defined community level sanctioned by the state, the question may be asked: is there anything local about the definition of either the local scale or the local level? The following section problematizes this question by examining the maintenance of local control over access to resources, and land use decision-making authority, and how these fare in processes of negotiation with the state. Does this negotiation simply invent (or freeze) customary land use institutions within state sanctioned territorial units, or can customary institutions of access and authority survive state territorialization?
2.3.4 Approaches to access and decision-making authority

Strategic territorial engagement with the state poses a new set of issues in terms of access and decision-making authority. Negotiation with the state can potentially move these from being flexible and decentralized, revolving around personal relationships, to being formal and centralized. This is a good moment to return to the commons literature (and its critiques). In the commons literature, access plays a fundamental role, yet often remains in the background from a conceptual perspective—subsumed under a discussion of bundles of rights with regard to bounded common resource pools—until reference is made to poverty, equity of distribution, and most importantly, the struggle for access through pre-existing customary arrangements (Johnson, 2004). With a focus on access, it is reasonable to contest the theoretical primacy in much of the commons literature of boundaries and well defined user groups. Similarly, decision-making authority is bundled under the right to participate in collective action institutions (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992).

A brief return to the commons literature shows how an approach to access based on rights of individuals in relation to a resource pool distorts the moral economic rationality of indigenous peoples’ relationship with others. The commons literature continues to conceptualize commons governance in terms of bundles of rights or entitlements that define an owners’ rights and duties, and the roles under which those rights and duties are exercised (Ciriacy-Wantrup and Bishop, 1975; Bromley, 1991; Schlager and Ostrom, 1992) (see table 2.1).

Rights to access are defined as “rights to enter a defined physical property”, and withdrawal defined as “the right to obtain the ‘products’ of a resource” (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992: 250). The way access and withdrawal rights may be obtained depends on the rules which specify how these are meant to be undertaken; for example, whether permission is required to harvest a particular resource in a particular area, or whether
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Table 2.1: Rights
Adapted from (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992: pp. 249-50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>operational-level rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>The right to enter a defined physical property or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>The right to obtain the “products” of a resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>collective-choice rights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>The right to regulate internal use patterns and transform the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resource by making improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>The right to determine who will have an access right, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how that right may be transferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation</td>
<td>The right to sell or lease either or both of the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>collective-choice rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

harvesters must hold membership for a particular group, or reside in a particular jurisdiction (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992).

Individuals with access and withdrawal rights may or may not have rights to participation in collective-choice arenas (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992), which include rights to management, or authority to make management decisions, and the right to decide who may partake in resource use.

A promising approach for this thesis would be to avoid the pitfalls of addressing the commons in terms of property rights, and indeed avoid the rights language altogether, which is useful for describing certain relationships, but limited in scope in terms of describing the range of everyday social practices of commons users. A contrasting perspective sees access in terms of the ability (vs right) to derive benefits from things (Ribot and Peluso, 2003: 153). In this way, access is conceptualized within a bundle of powers, rather than a bundle of rights (Ribot and Peluso, 2003). The issue is not
one of property rights alone, but of the reconciliation between property rights and access to resources held in common. Ribot and Peluso (2003) broaden the range of social relationships under consideration that can constrain or enable people to benefit from resources, as in their perspective property rights are conceptualized as one set of access relationships among others.

A persistent issue problematized in the commons literature has been the supply of institutions for collective action (McCay, 2002; Ostrom, 1990). Again, a conceptualization of collective action institutions in terms of rights fails to appropriately capture the scale-related dynamics of collective action in indigenous customary land use systems. Individual decision-making authority cannot simply be “scaled-up” to a new level of collective action through the sanctioning of rights of individuals to participate in the process. The nature of commons dilemmas may not only have to do with the supply of institutions for the governance of the commons, but may be more closely related to scalar influences, and to the intersection between customary systems and state institutions for resource management. This scaling-up process represents an important area to be addressed in this thesis.

2.4 LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

Algonquian groups historically became associated with summer gathering sites, and moved to flexible harvesting sites for winter. Movement across the landscape, and flexibility to enter another group’s area was facilitated by multiple layers of identity and relationships. A picture has emerged in which clan groups and kinship groups were not necessarily tied to territorial units, but central gathering places and harvesting sites. Fur trade contact extended the importance of winter harvesting areas and summer gathering sites in terms of participation in the fur trade. Even areas distant from centres of fur trade activity became involved in trading relationships. Throughout the
fur trade, subsistence harvesting continued to be critical in terms of provisioning for survival. Groups and their leaders took part in a decentralized customary system which was flexible, and based on joint decision-making. Ecological dynamics and variability continued to be a driver of this system, even as trade goods became available. This is evidenced in responses of Anishinaabe peoples to a series of expansions and contractions of the fur trade in the little north. The Algonquian land use section helps to clarify the different levels at which collective action is undertaken without forcing any one particular vision of community—this is up for investigation in the thesis.

Anishinaabe people’s relationships to hunting and trapping areas were characterized in terms of how far one needed to travel in order to meet subsistence and commercial needs for the household group. Europeans, however, began to think of these customary land use areas as rigid, bounded territories. By the early 1930s, Speck wrote that these areas were ‘owned’ by individuals. More recently, however, nuanced perspectives have emerged, moving scholarship of Algonquian land use in more productive directions, at least in terms of understanding their relationship to resource management in the north, and reproduction of indigenous customary land use. Family harvesting areas are now being written about as flexible territories which could jointly meet subsistence needs, and contribute to a livelihood linked to the commercial fur trade.

Studies of Algonquian land use were taking place in parallel with an emerging and vigorous commons scholarship which sought to understand the conditions in which common ownership might emerge in relation to a class of “common-pool” resources which were difficult to enclose and manage under private or state property regimes. This scholarship has been productive in describing the emergence and functioning of common property regimes, but in the process, has often poorly addressed social inequalities and external pressures on endogenous or customary commons systems.

In this chapter, I have sought to reconcile aspects of the commons literature, which I feel are important for understanding Anishinaabe land use, with a broader reading of
Chapter 2 Literature review

the literature related to the conversion and appropriation of commons globally. Generally, commons have been recognized as offering fixes to the moral hazards of privatization and resource accumulation. My hope is that this literature review can provide ways to move forward an understanding of the Anishinaabe commons which may help address the planning and management issues Pikangikum people have identified themselves. While the commons literature has helped scholars confront a particular dilemma of collective action associated with solving the problem of free-riding, it has not provided sufficient insight into negotiation of management authority, enclosure of resources by powerful outsiders, access to resources for livelihood provisioning, and interaction with the state.

I would suggest that useful paths can be traced through a consideration of the moral economy literature, and by drawing on a body of literature on territorial strategies of the state. Issues of access to customary harvesting areas, and management authority have been considered within the broadly defined literature reviewed. This study on Pikangikum’s traplines and customary land use institutions is usefully framed by questions about how Pikangikum can maintain flexibility of access and customary authority in relation to natural resource planning and management processes undertaken jointly with state resource management agencies. A moral economy perspective on the Anishinaabe commons helps understand access and decision-making authority within a constellation of relationships in which Pikangikum people are embedded, and a territorial perspective helps understand new kinds of relationships which they may form through strategic engagement with the state.
In the commons literature, economists, anthropologists, and interdisciplinary researchers have come together around what has been termed “the question of the commons” (Bardhan and Ray, 2006; McCay and Acheson, 1987). For many scholars of the commons, local commons, or small communities, have become anchors for cross-disciplinary research on collective action (Bardhan and Ray, 2006). Regardless of the theoretical orientation of these studies, commons theory is strongly grounded in, and associated with, community-level case studies (McCarthy, 2009; Ostrom, 1990). Examples of commons management at the community level abound in the literature, characterized by accounts of collective action and processes of formation of commons regimes (Berkes et al., 1989). In this respect, this study is no exception.

In spite of commonalities in the subject matter (commons), the dominant institutional economics approach in the commons literature is driven by the epistemological stance of methodological individualism. In this approach, individuals’ rational choices under a set of constraints must be explained (Bardhan and Ray, 2006; Mosse, 2006). This I have characterized as the thin perspective in the literature review chapter. Within this approach, the possibility for individuals and groups to change their behaviour according to morals, norms, and values in response to historical situations are not well explained. In order to address collective action in Pikangikum, I have sought a different approach to answer questions pertaining to the intersection of Pikangikum’s customary system with government regulation. In particular, I have asked a series of questions
leading to a perspective on the historical, social, and cultural roots of collective action institutions at the community level which I repeat below:

1. By what process were government traplines introduced in Pikangikum? Did the new trapline system alter customary access and authority with respect to resources and harvesting areas?

2. How did rules related to furbearer harvesting and the government trapline system interact with relationships around other resource harvesting activities?

3. What were the dynamics of land use (including the trapline system) following the collapse of the commercial fur trade in the 1980s? How can the relationship between the family areas, the traplines, and the planning area be characterized in the recently completed land use planning process?

Following Creswell (2009), I have roughly divided this chapter according to nested layers of research design, including philosophical worldview (theoretical approach), strategy of inquiry (the case study), and data collection procedures (specific methods). I begin with an overview of my theoretical approach, and move toward procedures used in the field. This is followed by a section on data-handling procedures (analysis), and finally, a section on representation and presentation of results, and analysis.

3.1 PHILOSOPHICAL WORLDVIEW AND STRATEGY OF INQUIRY

My difficulty with the dominant approach to commons research is grounded in old debates over the study of human culture and society, but also in particular problems which have surfaced more recently around the study of indigenous societies and their interactions with the modern state. Decades ago, hopes for a “natural science of society” were challenged by theories of interpretation that held people and society must be treated differently from nature (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). This challenge derived
from an interest in representing social reality in a rapidly changing world, in relation to the role of the state, and its tendency toward totalizing knowledge (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). At the same time, indigenous peoples were calling for a voice in academia, arguing they were being shut out as a result of this tendency. In response, indigenous methodologies have been viewed as necessarily constructivist or interpretative in that they must strive to articulate indigenous ontology and epistemology against the backdrop of colonialism, including the colonial history of academic institutions (Kovach, 2009). My research approach is derived from this philosophy in that I give attention to Pikangikum people’s own explanations of their customs, and their interaction with state resource management institutions.

Addressing exclusion of indigenous voices is recognized to take more than inclusion of indigenous knowledge in academic texts. A fresh interest in traditional knowledge did not necessarily address the critique regarding power distribution between researchers and communities (Agrawal, 1995). Colonial anthropology works on the assumption that traditional knowledge can be extracted from its context and used in global colonial contexts.

In my approach to the commons, I suggest that qualitative case study research must contain an attempt to understand people’s own explanations of the dilemmas they face for collective action. An important critique in the commons literature is that case studies are only useful to the extent that they can contribute to the specification of conditions under which groups of users may self-organize for sustainable natural resource governance. This approach is described by Agrawal (2001) as the enterprise of generating lists of conditions for sustainable governance of the commons. Inclusion of indigenous knowledge would contribute to the generation of conditions for successful commons management, but would not influence the research agenda. The aim in this study is not to add to such a list. I am not suggesting that important questions around collective action be ignored, but that there is value in offering a critical perspective on
Chapter 3 Methods

This thesis aims to broaden thinking regarding the dilemmas faced by indigenous communities and their customary land use systems. My methodological approach revolves around questions of access to land and resources, and authority to plan and manage. Access to resources of local commons cannot only be understood in terms of distributional rights (Bardhan and Ray, 2006: Appadurai, 1989 in), but as relational, embedded in the maintenance of personal relationships. Understanding access to land and to common-pool resources is not simply a matter of understanding how resources are divided up among users—this is the outcome—but involves understanding the processes through which relationships change over time (Bardhan and Ray, 2006). With a focus on giving Pikangikum people a voice, and taking seriously what they say about their relationships around common-pool resources, it seems to me unfit to abstract these relationships to the institutional level by expressing them only in terms of norms and rules for efficient commons management.

While I am interested in what Pikangikum people have to say about these relationships, I also understand I have a pragmatic agenda grounded in the reality of access and concrete decision-making authority, and their relationship to government regulation. This is to take seriously Pikangikum peoples’ claims about their ability to maintain control in some cases, but not others. An interpretive approach does not seem entirely sufficient for this task. Access and authority are analyzed through interpretation of interview and workshop texts, but also through direct observation in the field, and mapping of individuals’ land use, and life histories. Research questions are also approached through use of the documentary record, which may yield both concrete and interpretive analyses of access and decision-making authority. I make ample space in the thesis to understand Pikangikum people’s constructions of their dilemmas, but I also attempt to understand concrete control of resources and decision-making authority, and conditions of access to land use areas (i.e. processes by which land use decisions
In an attempt to reconcile interpretive and concrete approaches to reality, I refer to what Creswell (2009) has gathered under the philosophical worldview of pragmatism. Pragmatism as a philosophy is oriented at problem-solving, and aims at a pluralism of research methodologies (worldviews) and particular research methods (data collection procedures) which can be harnessed for practical results (Creswell, 2009). In drawing from these multiple methods, data are not necessarily understood as objective measures, but as sets of lenses through which alternative viewpoints can be gleaned for interpretation (Doolittle, 2008). This is considered to be multi-method research in the sense that it is an iterative interaction between different ways of collecting and analyzing data. Doolittle’s multi-method approach involves a mix of mapping, archival research, and ethnographic detail which is well suited to case study research of the type I have proposed. Each of my chosen methods (e.g. mapping, life histories of senior trappers and elders, field observations) was used not so much to be able to establish representativity and generalize findings, but for contextualization of results from different research activities (Madsen and Adriansen, 2004). It is still possible to generalize findings, and draw causal relationships, but these are contextualized through my interpretation of reasons people express for their actions and their observed practices and values (Madsen and Adriansen, 2004). Data is treated as complex sets of relations that are not measured, but assessed qualitatively through analysis. In doing so, it is possible to progressively contextualize results (Vayda, 1983), and find intersections with theory. The entire research process can be described as a problem-solving approach tailored to the case at hand.

As stated above, my strategy of inquiry can be best characterized as a case study. Single case studies can make important contributions when they describe unique events, or reveal particular relationships that are difficult to find in other contexts (Yin, 1994). In my case study, it could be claimed that there is intrinsic interest in a study of the
place of the government traplines in Pikangikum’s land use planning process. This study could then be characterized as an intrinsic case study design (Stake, 1995).

3.2 GUIDING THEORY AND METHODS OF THE WFMC

While this case study has been tailored as interpretive, qualitative, and problem-oriented does not mean it (or its author) has been able to overcome the colonial context in which it is embedded. In order to partially address power issues in academic inquiry, the entire research process has been framed within a formal agreement between Pikangikum First Nation and the university: the Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative Agreement. According to this agreement, the WFMC takes an important lead in terms of steering research objectives toward agreed-upon community needs. Working within this agreement has shown how a more grounded interpretivism is possible through the process of understanding, and working to address community needs in the planning process.

When I started my fieldwork, Pikangikum had already experienced involvement of several partners and had already established ongoing relationships with researchers. My research questions and objectives emerged out of a continuing relationship between the community and researchers. As a participant in this cooperative research process among many others, I understand that I can claim to have been involved, and perhaps to have moved forward certain approaches, but cannot take ownership of the research process, or of the knowledge that came out of it. Pikangikum is aware of the need to safeguard their knowledge so that it does not become alienated from them.

There was a history of work with the research cooperative which led into the work I have done. Prior research projects identified important issues which I build upon in this thesis. Among this work was research conducted by Heather Nikischer Senyk (2008), Janene Shearer (2008), Michael O’Flaherty, and Iain Davidson-Hunt. This work
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has provided a starting point for understanding the interest Pikangikum elders contributed in doing a study on their land use system, and how this may contribute to a holistic management approach grounded in customs.

Regarding Pikangikum’s research methodology as a philosophical worldview (methodology) in itself has been instructive in examining post-colonial and indigenous methodologies, as well as conventional ethnographic case studies. I have come to understand that the first step was to learn to recognize an indigenous research methodology when you’re looking at one. Emerging in large part out of their research relationship with Pikangikum, Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty have articulated some of the lessons learned in constructing and indigenous research methodology:

Research on indigenous knowledge has suggested that inclusion of indigenous knowledge products in resource management is not a solution; rather, we need to re-frame the problem so that new approaches consider how to create knowledge-producing processes that include both indigenous people and researchers as agents working on mutually agreed upon goals (Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty, 2007, 295).

These authors characterized such research sites as place-based learning communities, where each research situation is understood as unique, and it is up to each researcher to establish a relationship with community (Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty, 2007). In this sense, the intrinsic character of the case study could be understood to be grounded in the community research process and desired outcomes derived from this process.

For the most part, this community research process was put into action simply by talking to the appropriate knowledgeable person, but the multi-level dynamics of the customary land use system meant that addressing my research questions involved research activities both in the community and on the land at particular sites. Significant understandings were often built when encounters took place at harvesting sites for which people had specific knowledge. Place based learning as a process of knowledge production was perhaps most effective at elders’ workshops, during which elders
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gave statements on research topics, and were able to cross-examine researchers. Elders’ workshops were also processes by which decentralized land based knowledge could be brought together in a community context.

3.3 THE CASE STUDY: PIKANGIKUM FIRST NATION

Research was undertaken almost exclusively with Pikangikum First Nation in their traditional land use area. People living in this area refer to themselves as Beekahncheekameeng paymahteesewahch (the people of Pikangikum) (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). The language spoken is predominantly Ahnesheenabaymohween1 (Ojibwe), with English also spoken by the majority of the population with the exception of a number of elders. Neighbouring First Nations include Poplar Hill (38 km northwest of Pikangikum) and McDowell Lake, 98 km northeast of Pikangikum. Poplar Hill First Nation gained band and reserve status in 1978 when it separated from Pikangikum First Nation.

Pikangikum First Nation has a reserve population of 2,400 (Mamow Sha-way-gi-kay-win: North South Partnership for Children and Pikangikum First Nation, 2009). Since 1990 the population has grown approximately 50%, giving the community one of the highest population growth rates of any community in Canada (Mamow Sha-way-gi-kay-win: North South Partnership for Children and Pikangikum First Nation, 2009).

The Whitefeather Forest overlaps with Treaty areas (Treaty #5 and Treaty #3), although Pikangikum people claim not to have been signatories. The Treaty #5 adhesion was signed by the Berens River Bands in 1875 at Berens River, and ostensibly included a group from up-river now known as the Pikangikum Band (Chapeskie et al., 2005). The reserve was surveyed in 1888 (Hallowell, 1992), but settlement at the reserve in

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1See note on language
anything resembling a permanent community was a process that began much later. Early interactions with government personnel were largely limited to the annual visit of the Indian Agent at summer gatherings at Pikangikum Lake.

This comparative autonomy and infrequent contact with government agents, and outsiders more generally, lasted to the 1940s (Hamilton, forthcoming). The period immediately following the Second World War featured strongly in Pikangikum’s history of contact with outsiders, not least due to the introduction of the Registered Trapline System in 1947. Prior to trapline registration, the community received global attention in the anthropological literature for its characteristic remoteness which was described by the American anthropologist, A. I. Hallowell (1955b), who characterized the Pikangikum band as extremely isolated by geography. Limited incursions by outsiders onto land traditionally used by Pikangikum people did not necessarily lead to the conclusion that Pikangikum people were isolated socially and culturally. Dunning noted in the 1950s that a few older members of the band knew the Cree language as a result of their earlier occupation freighting for the Hudson’s Bay Company through Cree territory (Dunning, 1959: 15, note 5).

Relationships between Euro-Canadians and indigenous peoples have existed in this area since the arrival of the fur trade, but the nature of these relationships has changed through time, perhaps most dramatically with settlement in permanent reserve communities, and the growing presence of government bureaucracy (Driben and Trudeau, 1983; Dunning, 1959). Though Pikangikum people were involved in the fur trade as their primary commercial activity, there was only sparse Euro-Canadian fur-trade presence in the area, with the exception of outposts of the HBC, which were sometimes managed by Anishinaabe people. Thus, although engaged profitably in trade, close contact with settler society was infrequent (Hallowell, 1992; Dunning, 1959).

It is important to note that trapline registration marked only one of many important changes experienced by indigenous people throughout the north during the post-war
period. Dunning noted that the early post-war period also marked changes in Pikangikum’s relationship with the HBC, Indian Affairs, and church missions: Pikangikum people became eligible for government social assistance, and the HBC outpost was upgraded to a full post meaning greatly increased supplies of goods; and schools were upgraded (Dunning, 1959). Anthropological studies of northern Anishinaabe peoples from the post-war period generally concur that there was a drastic increase in migration of people from their traditional harvesting areas into reserve communities (Rogers, 1963).

Although the fur trade was perhaps the most significant economic interaction between Pikangikum people and Euro-Canadians, other forms of economic activity and development processes were also moving northward as the modern Canadian state was developing. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) came in the 1880s, bringing new settlers and increased access to northwestern Ontario. The Canadian National Railway (CNR) was constructed north of the CPR in the 1920s. Shortly thereafter, the arrival of the airplane made interaction more dynamic, and was used extensively just south of Pikangikum during a mining boom around Red Lake during the 1920s and 30s.

Until the late 1980s, the primary commercial activities in Pikangikum included trapping and fishing, which provided the economic support for a wide range of subsistence activities carried out on the land. Another land-based commercial activity was the wild rice harvest, which provided a seasonal income for some Pikangikum residents (Chapeskie et al., 2005).

In the late 1980s, international fur markets collapsed as a result of pressure from international anti-fur campaigns. As of 2009, low prices paid for fur relative to the high cost of living in the north provided little economic incentive to trap, and subsequently, little incentive to go out to trapline areas as they can be difficult to reach from the com-

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2The airplane also facilitated the inland commercial sturgeon fishery during this period (O’Flaherty, 2009).
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This was compounded by the high cost of transportation. In effect, commercial harvesting of fur was not considered a viable economic option for the community at the time of study, while commercial fishing licences had been lost due to a combination of factors (Senyk, 2008). In spite of this trend, the registered trapline system has received renewed interest from aboriginal communities in relation to customary land use. The project which funded this research was initiated in 2006 to examine this relationship (SFMN, 2006, P.I. Davidson-Hunt).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

A pragmatic mix of methods allowed me to look at harvesting norms in terms of how they were negotiated in everyday harvesting activities. The reason for this approach came out of a need to deepen my understanding of individual processes within a changing institutional context, and to explore individual agency in changing institutions which influence their relationships with the land and environment.

I primarily drew from ethnographic methods, including field visits to trapline camps, participant observation, and interviewing. Interviews with small groups and larger workshops were used to explore specific themes with knowledgeable individuals. Mapping of individual life histories was used to contextualize land use changes in individual experience, and identify patterns of movement and associated land use institutions. Archival research and document analysis were used to aid in back-filling the historical record of land use patterns, and to search for records of the process of bringing government traplines to Pikangikum. Mixing these methods helped me understand whether norms identified in interviews and workshops, or through mapping were observable in everyday practice.
3.4.1 Participant observation and field visits

Indigenous knowledge has been described as predominantly experiential, deriving from everyday practice (Berkes, 2008). (Sillitoe, 1998) notes that much is transmitted from generation to generation through means of experience and so learner and transmitter are not always accustomed to communicating through the use of words. Participant observation as a method offers advantages in describing indigenous knowledge and experience in that it lends itself to emphasizing both explicit and tacit aspects of culture and experience (Dewalt and Dewalt, 1998).

Participant observation refers to a process of “...learning through exposure to, or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the research setting” (Schensul et al., 1999). It also frames the essential approach to fieldwork associated with ethnographic methods, and subsumes the bulk of fieldwork experience. Although it is also situated alongside many other important methods comprising ethnographic and case study work, it may also be viewed as more inclusive, also encompassing formal and informal interviewing situations (Dewalt and Dewalt, 1998).

There is a spectrum of participation in participant observation, from being around for important activities, or “hanging out”, to making oneself useful (in small or large ways). Regardless of the specific approach, participant observation and field visits, as methods, necessarily include recording observations in fieldnotes, but also in photographs, audio, or video recordings. Through fieldnotes, ethnographers turn passing events into accounts which can be re-consulted during analysis. The use of observation to create “thick descriptions” of everyday practice may lead to a view of ethnographic research as more of an observational and less of an interpretive activity than it actually is (Geertz, 1973). Analysis of fieldnotes alongside other sources of data made “thick description” an essential aspect of my research approach.

In my methods, I refer to participant observation as the predominant method used
during field visits, but also during the course of day-to-day activities. Field visits refer specifically to planned trips on the land, where the objective is to understand a particular situation, activity, or relationships between people around a harvesting site, area, or boundary. Being out on the land is an opportunity to understand contemporary issues in the maintenance of customary access and spatial authority. Meanwhile, participant observation more generally put an emphasis on the requirement of being in the community (including at elders’ meetings and in people’s homes), and on the land for extended periods of time.

Selection of appropriate field visit sites required the identification of sites of social reproduction. For this, early during my stay in the community, several meetings were organized with WFMC Land Use Coordinator Paddy Peters, during which we identified objectives of the field visit approach, and Paddy Peters suggested family camps we could visit. Initially, it was agreed that there was interest in conducting fieldwork in areas which had not yet received research attention. Traplines in the western portion of the Whitefeather Forest area had seen widespread fire activity in the late 1990’s, and had been included in the Land Use Strategy as Dedicated Protected Areas (DPAs). Families in these areas had not participated extensively with University of Manitoba researchers. We decided these constituted good motivations for field visits in these areas, as they could potentially raise particular issues around changes in contemporary land use. I visited traplines on the west side on three occasions during fieldwork.

My initial introduction into the community involved field visits to two trapline areas in the spring of 2007; one remote from the community in the southwestern portion of the planning area, and one on Pikangikum Lake, a twenty-minute skidoo or boat ride from the reserve. My wife, Catie Burlando and I (see Burlando, 2012) were invited to join the extended family group of Larry and Donna Pascal on their trapline area for the month of April, spanning the break-up period. This group included their daughters, adopted son, and son-in-law. Our research budgets covered most costs associated with
flights for Larry and Donna’s immediate family, and food expenses. Although, between Catie Burlando and I, our research projects were quite different in scope, a key part of both of our approaches included visits to traplines, in order to experience Pikangikum’s land-based teaching approach and process of knowledge production. This field research approach has been developed by the WFMC in cooperation with their partners through extensive past research experience (e.g. WFMC, 2006; Davidson-Hunt et al., 2010, also see section 3.2 above). The more specific purpose of my visit however, was my interest in framing contemporary dynamics of access and land use decision-making through personal experience on the land. Larry and Donna Pascal’s land use area was selected in part because of its remoteness from the community. In practice, at the time of fieldwork, the Pascal’s camp was only accessed by bush planes capable of landing on water or snow and ice. I was curious to see how dynamics of access and spatial authority in this area differed from areas closer to the community.

In the fall of 2007, the Pascal family flew with us again to their camp. This time, the various families involved pooled their resources to pay for flights to the trapline. The fall group was different from the spring group. In spring Larry Pascal was joined by his daughters from various communities, but only one son-in-law who was a resident at the time in Pikangikum came along. In fall, three sons-in-law came from other nearby communities to hunt moose.

Our spring trip at the Pascal camp lasted roughly two weeks, from April 2 to 18, 2007. The planned duration of the trip was originally one month, spanning the spring break-up period. Our plane was to drop us off on the ice, and pick us up on open water. Unfortunately the trip ended suddenly due to illness. We chartered a plane back to the community while the ice was still safe enough to land on. This experience highlighted the risks involved in travelling to remote areas during this period. The break-up period is a productive season, and an active season for Pikangikum people on the land, but this is coupled with difficult access. Fortunately, Paddy Peters managed to quickly organize
another two week stay for us in a camp much closer to the community with the family of Gordon Suggashie and Sadie Quill. This trip lasted another two weeks until break-up was complete, and we could return to the community by boat on open water.

A final field visit was organized to the most northwestern trapline in the planning area with senior trapper Timmy K. Strang in July. The purpose of this trip was to focus on intensively visiting harvesting sites, and map out historical and contemporary land uses (see appendix B, section 6). Other opportunities for field visits to areas within a few hours travel from the community were also organized, sometimes spontaneously. For example I accepted several invitations to go fishing or hunting for periods of several hours to a day. A list of field visits has been compiled into table 3.1 which lists research activities undertaken during fieldwork.

3.4.2 Archives and documents

Historical documents and archives present unique issues. Historical state management systems working in peripheral parts of the state can be comprehended through interaction between documentary and interview data, where possible, and even then, details may often be vague. Nonetheless, it was important to try to address the issue of the initial delineation and registration of Pikangikum government traplines, and to try to contextualize this with narratives from the memory of Pikangikum elders. It was also important to see if there were archival records holding insight into the customary system before the traplines were introduced, and specifically, how government bureaucrats dealt with pre-existing family areas when registering the Pikangikum traplines. Initial interviews with elders served the same purpose, and helped develop further research questions.

Documentary and archival research was divided into several phases which were scheduled pragmatically into the research agenda. That is, it was not possible to plan
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exactly how archival research would interact with fieldwork in Pikangikum. Nonetheless, it was possible at several points to bring archival materials back to the community for review and comment by Pikangikum elders.

The first phase of document review in Pikangikum involved searching materials, including maps, interview and meeting transcripts available in the office of the Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation. A great amount of material from previous WFMC work has been stored in the WFMC land use planning office in Pikangikum, including a GIS database and statements made by elders at planning meetings and workshops. This material helped provide initial context for my research, and in several instances, elders’ statements themselves were quoted directly in the text. The LUS constituted a unique document in itself, even if its publication in 2006 makes it very contemporary. The document notes that “This is a unique plan, which reflects the manner in which it has been developed at a community level under the guidance of Pikangikum Elders” (note on language in Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). However, it was often difficult to pinpoint sources of statements in the text. Statements needed to be further pursued through interviews with elders. The LUS was read as a document that emerged out of the community processes I had come to investigate.

Archival research into the traplines was initially guided by Dr. Michael O’Flaherty’s report to Pikangikum from his own archival exploration, which he shared with me. I went on to research likely subject headings in the national and provincial archives. I visited the Ontario Archives in Toronto, and Dunning’s collection of personal notes and genealogical material at the the University of Toronto Archives. While the Ontario Archives only contained a sprinkling of records related to traplines, I found Dunning’s collection to contain valuable material related to pre-trapline organization, and the workings of the government trapline system early in its implementation. A visit was also made to the OMNR library in Peterborough, Ontario, where I was able to find
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a number of maps showing phases of early trapline implementation. The librarian, Helen Miln, was very helpful in showing me around the collection. More maps were found with the help of Doug Gilmore at the OMNR Red Lake District office. While in Winnipeg, I mail-ordered a number of files from the Library and Archives of Canada, and made a brief visit to the HBC archives in Winnipeg.

Dunning noted that land use and resource management off-reserve (i.e. anywhere but in the settlement of Pikangikum) in the decades prior to trapline registration had been characterized by only weak relationships with both the federal and provincial governments. Also, though Pikangikum people were deeply intertwined in fur trade relationships, there was relatively little Euro-Canadian fur-trade presence in Pikangikum. Trading outposts, when they did exist in Pikangikum or the nearby Poplar Hill, were managed primarily by Anishinaabe people. A corresponding scarcity of reports was found on land use and hunting and trapping organization from both government and HBC sources. A final phase of archival research included a visit to Hallowell’s archives at the American Philosophical Society.

The richest documentary collections were associated with the two anthropologists, Dunning and Hallowell, both of whom conducted field research in Pikangikum. Both took great interest in Pikangikum precisely because the hunting and trapping groups which made up this band (on the treaty lists at least) had maintained relatively little contact with outsiders and were therefore believed to exhibit cultural ways which had since disappeared from other Anishinaabe (northern Ojibwa) groups.3

I did not specifically look for documents related to licensing of other commercial activities. I did no independent archival research on commercial fishing or wild rice harvesting, and only came across incidental material relating to commercial fishing in my search for records on trapping. Archival research on commercial fishing licences,

3Also see Lytwyn (1986) for a discussion of the fur trade in the “Little North”, a region encompassing Pikangikum which historians have identified as being relatively isolated from outside contact, even during peak periods of the fur trade.
and a more specific dialogue on commercial fishing with Pikangikum elders has been published in a master’s thesis by Heather Nikischer Senyk (2008) which I refer to in my own analysis. Similarly, I found Senyk (2008) useful on wild rice harvesting.

3.4.3 Interviewing

Two interview formats could be generalized in my approach: These were thematic, exploratory interviews, and life history mapping interviews. Interviews were carried out one-on-one in most cases, in the presence of an interpreter, but also in small groups, with an interpreter. Interviews conducted ranged in style between unstructured and semi-structured (Creswell, 2009). At most interviews, audio recordings were made, transcribed and coded in a database.

Because I was not fluent in Ahneesheenabaymohween, and elders for the most part were not fluent in English, interpreters were used in most interviews with elders. Several interpreters were available during fieldwork, including Paddy Peters, Charlie Pascal, and Brian Keeper. In addition younger member of the WFMC office staff stood in when older, more experienced interpreters were not available (younger interpreters included Reggie Peters and Murray Quill). In identifying interviewees, I used a purposive and snowball sampling strategy. Themes were identified and elders with knowledge related to these themes were selected for interviews with the help of WFMC staff, but also other main informants. One of my main informants was Matthew Strang. Thanks to his command of English and his openness to conversation, I was able to introduce new topics to him and make sense of others’ interviews. During interviews, elders and WFMC staff were also asked to identify others with knowledge about the theme. Group interviewing followed a format similar to focus group research. Topics were chosen and groups of elders were asked to give statements related to them. Initial themes were identified through meetings with the WFMC staff and in introductory meetings with
elders. New themes which emerged from fieldwork were brought up with elders knowledgeable about these themes. Sampling stopped when additional interviews confirmed information already obtained through previous fieldwork, and no new themes emerged from the interviews (Cresswell, 2009). A list of interviews conducted during fieldwork has been included in Table 3.1 below. The majority of interviews were conducted with men, as I aimed to interview every senior trapper whose area had been included in the Whitefeather Forest. Several women were also interviewed, either during trips to trapline camps, or during house visits.

As the primary complementary method in the validation of documentary sources, oral history has the potential to bring out alternative perspectives to those presented in standard historical sources (Cruikshank, 1999). Mixed with archival research, interviewing helped establish relationships between what people said they had done in the past, and perceptions of outsiders who had made observations and conducted interviews with ancestors of today’s inhabitants. Trapline registration marks a particular episode in a continuous relationship between Pikangikum people and natural resource management of the Province. It has particular teachings which were explored in interviews and focus groups with elders.
### Table 3.1: Research activities and transcript sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended caribou project meeting</td>
<td>Elders</td>
<td>29/11/2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in focus group interview</td>
<td>Lizzy Turtle, Lucy Strang, Ellen Peters</td>
<td>30/11/2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field visit to Keeper Lake</td>
<td>Larry Pascal &amp; family</td>
<td>02/04/2007-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeper Lake</td>
<td></td>
<td>18/04/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field visit to Pikangikum Bay</td>
<td>Gordon Suggashie &amp; family</td>
<td>20/04/2007-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pikangikum Bay</td>
<td></td>
<td>02/05/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>George M. Suggashie, trans: Gordon Suggashie</td>
<td>29/04/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended meeting for EA organized by Karen Aquino</td>
<td>WFSG</td>
<td>30/05/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>George B. Strang, trans: Reggie Peters</td>
<td>12/06/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Matthew Strang</td>
<td>13/06/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Matthew Strang</td>
<td>14/06/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visit, Pikangikum Lake</td>
<td>Oliver Hill</td>
<td>22/06/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attended elders’ meeting</td>
<td>WFSG, organized by Doug Gilmore (OMNR)</td>
<td>25/06/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visit, Pikangikum Lake</td>
<td>Eli Strang</td>
<td>14/07/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visit, Berens Lake</td>
<td>Eli Strang</td>
<td>15/07/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Whitehead Moose, trans: Paddy Peters</td>
<td>18/07/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Jake I. Quill</td>
<td>23 &amp; 24/07/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Alec Suggashie</td>
<td>23 &amp; 24/07/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visit to Shining Falls</td>
<td>Timmy K. Strang</td>
<td>25/07/2007-</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>01/08/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Matthew Strang</td>
<td>03/08/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field visit, Hornblendite Lake</td>
<td>Eli Strang</td>
<td>04/08/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Oliver Hill, Matthew Strang, trans: Paddy Peters</td>
<td>08/08/2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Jimmy Keeper</td>
<td>10/08/2007</td>
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<td>SFMN project meeting, Winnipeg</td>
<td>Charlie Peters, Matthew Strang, trans: Paddy Peters</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
<td>Charlie Peters, Matthew Strang</td>
<td>07/09/2007</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field visit to Keeper Lake</td>
<td>Larry Pascal &amp; family</td>
<td>21/09/2007-</td>
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Mapping harvesters’ life histories

Life history mapping formed a significant part of data collection. In my approach to life history mapping, I drew on the map biography as a method. Map biographies are a specific type of interview in which the interviewee participates in a process of placing points or polygons on a map, and where the cumulative result is a rough picture of the spatial extent of a lifetime worth of activity on the land (Tobias, 2010). More of interest to me, however, was the overall trajectory of individuals’ lives on the land over time. On the whole, while a rigorous map biography technique was not followed as per Tobias, an overview of individuals’ movements was made. My method differs substantially from Tobias in that my life history mapping interviews put an emphasis on relationships between people and family harvesting areas over time. This at times resulted in the trade-off of having narratives which were not easy to interrupt to obtain points or polygons on the map. The results of several of these mapping interviews are included in appendix B.

I used life history mapping to tie movements of individuals across the landscape into larger processes of land use change (i.e. introduction of traplines). This method was useful for clarifying changes in the customary commons system in the context of government regulation of resource use. The method could be characterized as semi-structured interviewing with the aid of a map of the Pikangikum land use area extending just beyond the limits of the WFPA. The map could be considered a type of object probe, similar to the fashion in which photographs might be used during an interview (De Leon, 2005). The base maps used for these interviews were physical paper maps. Either orthophotos with trapline polygons overlaid, or maps showing lakes, lake names, trapline polygons, and shaded topographical relief were used. Maps were prepared by WFMC staff member Murray Quill, or myself using layers available in the WFMC GIS database in Pikangikum.
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Life history mapping interviews were held on a one-to-one basis, sometimes with the help of an interpreter. Interview topics included location of particular harvesting sites at which group or individual harvesting activities were conducted, and how the individual or group obtained access to these harvesting sites. Life histories were contextualized through reference to the lives of relatives, friends, partners, and ancestors, and in some cases I drew upon interview or archival material related to other individuals to provide more detail. While a level of consistency across interviews was sought, each life history mapping interview followed an idiosyncratic process typical of an unstructured, informal interviewing procedure. Because I was aiming for richness of qualitative material, I offered interviewees the flexibility to map as they saw fit. The interview process was based on the creation of polygons around areas of resource use, although points or sites were frequently also noted (i.e. trapping areas vs moose kill sites, fishing lakes, or wild rice fields).

While the goal of this method was to map the dynamics of the land use system spatially in the landscape it must be made clear (as a sort of disclaimer) that the total extent of land used by previous generations is not well represented by the maps and text of this thesis. I aim only to provide detail of patterns of land use through the use of individual and family histories, not map the total spatial extent of all uses. In other words, life history maps cannot and should not be identified with a land use and occupancy study, as this does not represent the objective of this method, or this thesis. Maps are meant to show evidence of dynamics of land use, and fall far short of showing actual historical use and occupancy. My mapping approach also certainly does not constitute a land use and occupancy study, as it would be particularly poor at representing the real density of harvesting, dwelling, and other sites of historical and cultural importance. A study of this type has already been conducted for the planning area, and can be consulted with the help of WFMC staff. Prior to my arrival, elders and senior trappers participated in a community GIS mapping and database study:
“There are 20 different family group areas that we work with. Lots of work [was done] identifying over 11,000 values sites within our territory” (Paddy Peters, August 15, 2007).

I am also aware that mapping indigenous land use may create new political possibilities alongside new dangers. Maps may open possibilities for recognizing indigenous rights to land and self-determination as a counter to colonialism’s legacy of displacement and genocide (Bryan, 2009). At the same time, maps can also become tools to freeze custom in time and space. However, although wary of the consequences of this type of exercise, the aim of mapping was to understand processes which could then be brought up in relation to western resource planning and management. The maps made in the process can hopefully make space for better articulation of alternative Anishinaabe approaches to land use which can then give rise to better understandings of Pikangikum’s land use. Building this kind of understanding involved interpretive analysis of fieldnotes and transcripts, as knowledge of Pikangikum people’s relationship with their customary land use area cannot be understood from mapping land use alone.

3.4.4 Workshops

Workshops represented a method Pikangikum elders have played a major role in developing. Workshops resembled variations on the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group (WFSG) meeting format in which elders were given the floor to make statements on the topic of discussion. The method involved having a small group of elders come to the WFMC office to address issues of importance prior to the actual workshop. The Elder’s Liaison then took responsibility for explaining the purpose of the workshop to others in person or on the community radio station, and inviting elders to participate. This gave elders chance to talk with each other before the workshop, and think about
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the stories or teachings they would like to bring up. At the actual workshop, statements were translated by a skilled interpreter, and audio recordings were made, and translations were transcribed and coded as per interviews.

Workshops were a good way to generate statements on topics elders have been given time to think about. If topics came up that elders did not have appropriate time to consider, statements could usually be considered preliminary to follow-up discussions with elders who were knowledgeable about the topic introduced, and who could be identified during the workshop.

3.5 CONSENT

Both community and university research protocols were invoked in obtaining consent for research activities. This involved the Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative Agreement and the Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba (see appendix A). Consent for my research project has been contextualized within the ongoing research activities being undertaken by university researchers in the community under the Cooperative Research Agreement. Consent for research was obtained through a series of stages which went beyond the researcher’s obligation to apply for University ethics coverage for research activities. Consent at the community level involved an initial presentation at an elders workshop in which I was introduced, and during which I had a brief chance to introduce my research interests.

Once in the community, interviews and field trips were brokered through a cultural interpreter until I was able to obtain the help of other key informants. While the purpose of my research was explained at the elders meeting, and before interviews with individuals, no consent forms were signed during the research process, as had been specified in my university ethics protocol. Informed consent was oral.

Retaining ongoing consent involved the presentation of results during the course
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of research when research products were produced, or documents from archives were brought back to the community. Workshops and elders’ meetings provided an opportunity to gather statements on particular issues. The role of cultural interpreters and community researchers in construction of specific research questions and interpretation of new material was critical. As an important example, one area of controversy with which Pikangikum leaders were well aware in terms of sensitivity, was presentation of maps in publications. Presentation of maps from archives may be sensitive in that they cannot be understood to represent the extent of Pikangikum people’s activities on the land and can been potentially taken out of context.

3.6 DATA HANDLING PROCEDURES AND LIMITATIONS

Interviews, workshop statements, and field walks were usually recorded using an audio field recorder, and occasionally video camcorder. Recordings and fieldnotes were transcribed into plain text files. Themes were initially identified from fieldnotes in which I had jotted down subjects of interest. Transcripts were then coded openly as themes emerged through qualitative text analysis (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). The open source qualitative data analysis software, RQDA, was used for coding of data, and code retrieval from text (Ronggui, 2011).

Validity was checked after preliminary coding, and was performed by comparing across multiple data sources. Helpful conversations were held with key informants, including elders Matthew Strang, Oliver Hill, and Land Use Coordinator Paddy Peters in order to interpret validity of findings.

A limitation to the research process, but also a check on the power of researchers to define research objectives and control outcomes, was associated with the Research Cooperative Agreement itself. I understood that my role as a researcher in a place-based learning community had an applied focus developed by the community in order
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to bring benefits to the community level. A limitation might be that within this process, it was not easy to address social divisions within the community. It would have been difficult to consider problems of social inequality unless these problems were identified through the research process as a concern by community leadership, or some other community agency (Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty, 2007). Although it was likely that more inequalities exist within the customary land use system than I was able to understand through this study, I would hold that as a researcher, I needed to also be wary of trying to address these issues without challenging the research process proposed by the community.

3.7 TEXT, REPRESENTATION, PRESENTATION, AND RESEARCH PRODUCTS

The main issues to deal with in presentation of the written thesis was the amount of space devoted to Pikangikum peoples’ voices, and the treatment of this text. The process of transcribing, coding, and writing tended to fragment bits of knowledge, and had the potential of separating knowledge from its context.

Teachings, or statements, provided a way in which elders were able to provide knowledge in response to particular questions. Statements and longer narratives given by elders were understood as the building blocks for more complex understandings articulated in the thesis. Long block quotes were frequently included to help Pikangikum peoples’ voices come through. When narratives provided by elders were teachings that did not lend themselves to simple reduction into short quotes, they were reproduced as complete narratives. Long narrative sections were provided in separate boxes in order to retain complex meanings without breaking the flow of the text. Quotes from elders were usually from translations provided by interpreters. I relied on the skill of the interpreters to get across meanings, thus block quotes were direct quotes from the
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interpreter. Statements and long quotes were structured in a sequence I felt was logical in explaining how I reached my understanding of what was explained to me. Elders’ statements were an important research product because they often stood well on their own, for example, as they were used in the Pimachiowin Aki Cultural Landscape Atlas (Davidson-Hunt et al., 2012).

Digital photographs or photocopies were taken of archival materials. These were left in a community digital archive. None of this material had been previously digitized, or shared with the community. My own photos, audio, and video recordings taken during fieldwork were also left with the WFMC, and with people I worked with in the community.
In 1947 the government of Ontario introduced a new fur management system which involved the licensing of parcels of land as registered traplines to individual trappers north of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) line. The boundaries of the traplines, visible on the map in Figure 4.1, were delineated as a result of a brief interaction between the government agencies involved in their creation, and the First Nations communities which formed the vast majority of the population in this area. This chapter presents data concerning the intersection of the customary land use system with the registered trapline system. The chapter takes a broad approach to exploring movements of individuals and groups between different harvesting areas. I attempt to answer the questions: (1) by what process were government traplines introduced in Pikangikum? And (2) did the new trapline system alter customary access and authority with respect to land use, including fur harvesting and associated winter harvesting areas?

The trapline system was introduced in order to address furbearer depletion across the north (see Section 4.2.1 below), yet its consequences were much further reaching in terms of the state’s relationship with First Nations peoples. The registration of trapline areas constituted an important juncture in accommodation and negotiation with regard
Figure 4.1: Traplines of northwestern Ontario (1948)

Source: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Library, Peterborough, Ontario. The date on the map (1948) appears to have been added at a later date by librarian. I was unable to determine the original date of the map.
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to land use and protection of commercial interests between the state and indigenous people in Canada. The process of trapline registration was not unique to northern Ontario and was carried out also in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Quebec (Notzke, 1994: see also section 4.2.1 below). Trapline introductions significantly disrupted indigenous land use, and represented a change in First Nations people’s relationships with state (e.g. Brody, 1981; Notzke, 1994; Feit, 2005).

In this chapter, I first begin by examining the land use system immediately before traplines were introduced, establishing a historical base line for customary land use. I do this by prioritizing accounts from the period immediately preceding trapline registration, i.e. in the living memory of the eldest community members, and documentary records of Anthropologists A. I. Hallowell, who travelled up the Berens River from Lake Winnipeg to Pikangikum in the 1930s; and R. W. Dunning, who was in Pikangikum in 1954-55.

In Section 4.2, I examine the process of trapline registration, addressing how trapline areas were delineated and assigned to trappers in the field, and evaluating how traplines impacted on the customary system of resource harvesting in the case of the community of Pikangikum. The role played by indigenous people in the designation of the new trapline system is important for understanding change in the customary land use system. This section juxtaposes documentary sources on the introduction of the registered trapline system with voices of Pikangikum elders to better understand the interaction between the customary and the registered trapline systems.

Finally, the chapter looks at changes in the customary land use system after 1947 by exploring the intersection of the government trapline system with the customary land use system—including the ways in which Pikangikum people navigated the new rules to maintain the flexibility and ease of movement that characterized customary land use.
4.1 SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF CUSTOMARY LAND USE

Before traplines were delineated on government maps in 1947, there were no fixed boundaries which constrained movement of Anishinaabe people on the land. Instead, movement and flexibility followed kin, leadership and norms of reciprocity, and were responses to variability in resource abundance. Customary land use was centred around the seasonal shift from summer gathering sites at productive fishing areas and winter harvesting areas most commonly associated with the harvest of furs, but equally important in terms of furnishing a group’s subsistence needs over the majority of the annual cycle (see chapter two, section 2.1.3).

Variability necessitated changes in group membership over time, while movement to follow animals or to harvest plants meant people developed kinship and friendship relationships with other groups. It is not surprising, then, that in the literature descriptions of these areas often include an understanding of the indeterminancy of boundaries and draw attention to the primacy of institutions of social reciprocity and sharing. Drawing upon the literature review, Tanner (1979, 182) understood winter harvesting areas as “including a relationship between a man and undefined land within a defined region (such as a vague area around a given central point) of a size suitable to his needs, or an area of a size he has occupied over a number of years.” The customary land use system as a result was a flexible system of seasonal dispersal that encapsulated rights and duties attached to distinctive social forms, including multi-familial hunting groups and distinctive forms of leadership (Feit, 1991). In this context, norms of social reciprocity cannot be understood to have emerged from western conceptions of property but rather from customs grounded in seasonal and inter-annual flexibility and movement and non-western forms of leadership (Scott, 1988).

In order to understand the intersection of the customary system with the government trapline system, this section examines the seasonal land use system which imme-
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diatedly predated the trapline system first at summer gathering sites, and then in winter harvesting areas.

4.1.1 Summer gathering sites

Hallowell found three summer gathering sites which he associated with the Pikangikum band during a period of fieldwork on the Berens River system in the 1930s. These were located at Pikangikum Lake, where the reserve is now located, and at two other sites further down the Berens River, one which is now the site of the reserve of Poplar Hill and one at Barton Lake which has not been permanently settled (see figure 4.2). Hallowell described these three localities as traditional summer fishing settlements that were seasonally occupied long before they were established as reserve communities (Hallowell, 1992). Hallowell placed Poplar Hill, Barton Lake and Pikangikum in a semi-autonomous relationship with regard to settlements further down the Berens River—at Paunigassi, Little Grand Rapids, and Berens Landing—where people travelled to trade and meet with people occasionally. However, accounts from Pikangikum elders also suggest that the three summer sites may have been more complex than let on by the literature or archival material left by both Hallowell and Dunning. The ways in which these sites became central in the lives of Pikangikum people as well as the importance of other lakes, may have been glossed over in Hallowell’s accounts.

Summer gathering sites were located on major lakes near productive fishing areas, and groups moved to these sites during the warm season when fishing provided for a major portion of subsistence needs. These sites were also important ceremonial centers (for example for drumming ceremonies), as well as sites of economic exchange, including exchange in furs during the fur trade. Sometimes these gathering sites became the locations for fur trade posts. A Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) outpost was first established at Poplar Hill in 1895 by Pikangikum resident Peter Peters, or Peter
**Figure 4.2:** Locations of summer gatherings associated with people presently settled at Pikangikum (Hallowell 1992)
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Quill, but known as Peter Pikangikum (The Beaver, September 1940, 15). A full HBC post was established at Pikangikum in 1946 (Dunning, 1959: 15). Between 1920 and 1946, Pikangikum was an outpost of the Little Grand Rapids HBC trading post.

Summer gathering sites were associated with certain family groups, and often associated with certain clans, but were not limited to clans. As Norman Quill suggested, “people who were in areas like Cairns Lake came to Pikangikum in summer. The people who were at Barton Lake lived there all the time, all year long. The people at Barton trapped the surrounding area.” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009).

For instance, at Barton Lake, several extended family groups camped together during the summer, then some of these groups radiated out to other areas during other seasons. Families associated with Barton Lake used areas immediately adjacent, and to the north and east, such as McInnes Lake and nearby Thunder Lake.

When meetings or ceremonies occurred, these gathering places briefly swelled in size. Within his lifetime, Matthew Strang recalled that people from Poplar Hill, Pikangikum and Barton Lake would meet during treaty time at Pikangikum (Matthew Strang, interview notes, October 9, 2008). At the time Hallowell made his summer voyages up the Berens River, he estimated Pikangikum’s summer population at near 200 people, while at Barton Lake and Poplar Hill, summer gatherings reached around 50 and 100 individuals respectively. Conversely, recounting Pikangikum’s year-round residents, or those who also remained in Pikangikum to harvest in the surrounding area during the winter season, Elder Matthew Strang estimated that Pikangikum had about 7 dwellings (around 25 people) when he was young—probably in the late 1930s (fieldnotes, June 13, 2007).

Interviews with Pikangikum elders confirm that people often stayed in closer proximity to their winter hunting and trapping areas—close to lakes that enabled them to meet subsistence objectives—and only met at one of these three summer gathering sites to trade, attend important gatherings such as treaty day, and for religious func-
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tions with important leaders. For example, Elder George M. Suggashie’s family group went to McInnes Lake and other smaller lakes in the vicinity to hunt and trap during the winter. McInnes Lake had camps located along its shores associated with different hunters’ winter areas. George M. Suggashie recalled how even during the summer months, his family spent little actual time at summer gatherings, frequenting larger gatherings at multiple sites for short periods of time.

Most of the seasons I stayed in the trapline area. Occasionally we would go to Barton Lake. Occasionally we would come to Pikangikum, but not for long. We would stay at our trapline. The reason we would go to Barton was to visit Wigwasatik [English name John Suggashie]. He used to be the chief. The reason the chief stayed here is because it was between Poplar Hill and Pikangikum. He stayed there all seasons, winter, summer (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, November 7, 2007).

Family groups that typically settled for the summer in Pikangikum, radiated out to nearby areas to the south, west, and east over the winter, including Berens Lake, Cairns and Roderick Lakes, and Silcox Lake. As with Barton Lake and Pikangikum, a group of families gravitated towards Poplar Hill in the summer, then radiated to adjacent areas in winter.

Before Poplar Hill [became a reserve], the community had been there a long time. Where the community is located, that’s where they spent the winter. And across the lake there, that’s where they spent the summer. The original name for Poplar Hill is Getewakaagining. That means an old house, dwelling or an old cabin dwelling (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

Dynamics of dispersal to and from these major summer gathering places indicates that people had stronger social and kinship connections with their particular area, while maintaining relatively weak ties with people in other areas for the majority of the year. For example, people hunting and trapping in Alex Suggashie’s area at McInnes Lake over the winter period had relations in the Barton Lake area. Alex did not recall seeing family groups from the Roderick Lake area southwest of Pikangkum come to Barton Lake. Neither did Alex know people from Kirkness Lake directly to the south
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of Pikangikum. People from Berens River had more direct relationships with Barton lake. For example, Osecase (English translation: Water hen) lived at Berens Lake over the winter, and came to Barton Lake to drum along with Ogimaa and Pigeon Turtle (Alex Suggashie, interview notes, January 27, 2009).

As Elder George M. Suggeshie suggested above, leaders often drew together larger gatherings of relations and non-relations around drumming ceremonies, but also played an important role in the way decisions were taken. For people living at Pikangikum and Poplar Hill, Wigwasatik (John Suggashie) was chief for over forty years until the 1950s (conversation notes, Alex Peters, October 16, 2008; Dunning, 1959). He was involved in determining the final location for the Pikangikum Reserve settlement, even though his choice was not ultimately accepted. During Wigwasatik’s lifetime and under his leadership, Barton Lake assumed importance as a central gathering site. In spite of its smaller size with respect to Pikangikum at the time Hallowell made his visit, Norman Quill noted that the original settlement was going to be at Barton Lake:

Barton Lake was the main gathering area year-round, not just in summer. The late Wigwasatik who was chief for 40 years lived in that area. He travelled to Pikangikum back and forth. Lots of people were at Barton, mostly in summer. These people were originally from Poplar Hill. When Pikangikum became a reserve, people from Poplar Hill went to Pikangikum. Then Poplar Hill got reserve status. [My] grandfather told [me] there were men that came from Lac Seul area many years ago that wanted to help people establish a community, a settlement, where the best place would be. They found Barton to be best because there were many fish in that lake (Norman Quill, March 25, 2009).

However, the current location at Pikangikum was eventually chosen following the way by which people decided things a long time ago. As late-Elder Whitehead Moose recounted, the chief, Wigwasatik, wanted the reserve located at Barton Lake, but another elder, the main councilor, Eenchokay, refused and insisted the community be sited at Pikangikum. At a community assembly to decide where the community should be sited, Eenchokay took Wigwasatik by the shoulders, slammed him up against a wall, and shook him; after which the chief relented and the Reserve was established at its present
location (Charlie Peters, interview notes, January 2, 2005; Whitehead Moose, Strategic Action Planning meeting notes, Red Lake Interpretive Centre, March 1, 2006).

Yet, Barton Lake continued to be an important gathering place for some time, until services and more permanent structures made travelling to Pikangikum a necessity. The customary leadership system, however, did not rely on one leader alone. Instead, decentralized leadership was often the norm, and it was not unusual for several individuals to be recognized as having important leadership roles at any one particular gathering site. Norman Quill recalled that Wigwasatik lived together with his two brothers, who were all family heads at Barton Lake:

There were three elders in the Barton Lake area. There was Ogaans, Ozawiji, and Wigwasatik. These were the three family groups here. There was another group at Poplar Hill, and another group at Pikangikum. Those three groups. A lot of these...These three family groups became a large family group (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

Further, while gatherings such as those at Pikangikum, Barton Lake, and Poplar Hill gained importance (and size) because of their association with influential leaders, other lakes gained relevance as summer gathering sites for their associated family groups (See Table 4.1). Dunning and Hallowell said little of these gathering sites which were not always associated with trade, commerce, or religious functions, but were important in terms of meeting subsistence needs (Figure 4.3 and Table 4.2). Late-Elder Whitehead Moose recalled how one of these sites was located at Stout Lake:

Bizhiw stayed year-round at his trapline...Stout Lake was almost a community, because they stayed year-round in that lake. All the relatives that Bizhiw had stayed with him all-year-around...That’s where my grandfather [Bizhiw] lived all his life, at Stout. Also Gezhyash, Jozhi [brothers of Bizhiw, stayed there]. It almost became a community like Poplar Hill because people lived year-around on that lake. We also lived in that area...Moose was the totem there. The ladies that were married into the Moose family, their totem was Sturgeon...That’s the only place I heard of that almost became a community (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008).

Through time, people from Stout Lake began gathering at other sites during the sum-
mer. While late-Elder Whitehead Moose spent the latter part of his life in Pikangikum, a large part of his extended family settled in Poplar Hill.

**Table 4.1: Major lakes and leaders preceding trapline registration**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barton Lake</td>
<td>Wigwasatik (Sturgeon), Ogaans (Sturgeon), Osawiji (Sturgeon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berens Lake</td>
<td>Osecase (Sturgeon), Pigeon Strang (Sturgeon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkness Lake</td>
<td>Nigikowinini (Pelican) [English: Henry King]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mud Lake</td>
<td>Chechagamash (Sturgeon), Alex Strang (Sturgeon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pikangikum</td>
<td>Ogaans Suggashie (Sturgeon), Chechagamash (Sturgeon), Alex Strang (Sturgeon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poplar Hill</td>
<td>Paychech (Sturgeon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roderick Lake</td>
<td>Jozhi (Moose), Tommy Moose (Moose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stout Lake</td>
<td>Bizhiw (Moose)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Figure 4.3: Names of major lakes used by extended family groups
### Table 4.2: Comparative table of names of major waterbodies

**Sources:** Dunning, 1959; Hallowell Archives; Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006; WFMC, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Translated Name (WFMC)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe Name (WFMC)</th>
<th>English Name (Hallowell)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe Name (Hallowell)</th>
<th>English Name (Dunning)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe Name (Dunning)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barton Lake</td>
<td>White Spruce</td>
<td>Obeemeeahäigohkang/</td>
<td>Duck Lake/</td>
<td>Cicaswisagahigani</td>
<td>Duck Lake/</td>
<td>Opimena-eko-kangg/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narrows/Little Duck</td>
<td>Shi-shi-pe-si-wi-sa-ka-i-kang (from syllables)</td>
<td>Little Duck Lake/</td>
<td>Spruce Point</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sesep-saka-egun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td></td>
<td>Barton Lake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berens Lake</td>
<td>Remote Sturgeon Lake</td>
<td>Beekwahtahmay weesahgaheegahn</td>
<td>Sturgeon Lake</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Sturgeon Lake</td>
<td>Pekwutamaywe-saka-egun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairns Lake</td>
<td>Big Clearwater Lake</td>
<td>Ki-chi-wa-she-ka-mishing (from syll.)</td>
<td>Big Clear Water Lake</td>
<td>K'tehiwaégomík sagahigani</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle Rock Lake</td>
<td>Hawk Cliff</td>
<td>Keeneew Wahbik</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Eagle Rock Lake</td>
<td>Kiniw-wapikwunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkness Lake</td>
<td>Clear Water Lake</td>
<td>Wahshaygaheeshing</td>
<td>Clear Water Lake/Kirkness</td>
<td>Kawasigamisí-sagahigani</td>
<td>Clear Water Lake</td>
<td>Washaykumisheng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mud Lake</td>
<td>Shallow Mud Lake</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Shallow Mud Lake</td>
<td>Kapakwukiwagáko sagahigani</td>
<td>Mud Lake</td>
<td>Kapakoshkeewakake-saka-egun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pikangikum Lake</td>
<td>Not translated</td>
<td>Beekangikaming</td>
<td>Pikangikum</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Pekangekum Lake</td>
<td>Pegunchegum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roderick Lake</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Little Clear Water Lake/Roderick Lake</td>
<td>Wac’gamičis sagahigani</td>
<td>Clear Lake</td>
<td>Washaygamesesink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharpstone Lake</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Sharpstone Lake</td>
<td>Kaasopapikawakamik</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silcox Lake</td>
<td>Not translated</td>
<td>Pahkayahgahmak</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Bay Lake</td>
<td>Pukayyakamak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stout Lake</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Big Sandy Narrows Lake/Stout Lake</td>
<td>Kictciobawagá sagahigani</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page...
Table 4.2 – continued from previous page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English name (WFMC)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe name (WFMC)</th>
<th>English name (HALLOWELL)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe name (HALLOWELL)</th>
<th>English name (DUNNING)</th>
<th>Anishinaabe name (DUNNING)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Not translated</td>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Okotangunesepe</td>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Okotangunesepe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English name (WFMC) | Translated name (WFMC) | Anishinaabe name (WFMC) | English name (HALLOWELL) | Anishinaabe name (HALLOWELL) | English name (DUNNING) | Anishinaabe name (DUNNING) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Not translated</td>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Okotangunesepe</td>
<td>Throat River</td>
<td>Okotangunesepe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Summer gathering sites were often inhabited by families of a particular clan group, even though they were not exclusively clan-based. Clan names were inherited patrilineally and in Pikanigkum these names allow for a reconstruction of different families’ relationships with summer gathering sites at major lakes (Matthew Strang, interview notes, July 13, 2007). From the archives of Hallowell and Dunning, records of clan membership also make it possible to trace relationships between gathering sites and extended family groups more consistently than with Christian surnames, which were assigned somewhat arbitrarily, with the result that often brothers took different surnames (See Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3: List of clan names at major summer gathering sites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gathering place</th>
<th>Clans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poplar Hill</td>
<td>Moose, Sturgeon, Kingfisher (2 individuals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton Lake</td>
<td>Sturgeon (chief), Pelican, Moose, Loon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pikangikum</td>
<td>Moose, Sturgeon, Pelican, Loon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Stout Lake example presented above shows that the main extended family group associated with that summer site was from the Moose Clan, but that, according to elder Whitehead Moose, Pikangikum people married outside their own clans:

> The creator gave each family not to marry into the same totem family. That was against what the creator gave. That’s the reason each family or relatives were given totems. To be a member of that totem, and not intermarry into your same totem. That would be against the creator’s law. That’s the reason we were given these totems, so we can know which totem to go to when you look for a man or a woman. (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008)

Through marriage, Stout Lake people were brought into a close relationship with people of the Sturgeon clan. Late-Elder Norman Quill emphasized that individuals from different clans inter-married, so that clan groups became decentralized across gath-
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Gathering sites: The women of the Sturgeon families associated with Barton Lake “…were married into other clan groups. That’s where it spread” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007). The resulting kinship linkages conferred a degree of flexibility through which individuals and families were able to use camps at different sites over time.

Interactions and kinship relationships were developed not only within the current area used by Pikangikum people. There was some interaction between members of other adjacent communities. For example, Hallowell noted that there were five big families of the Ätik (Caribou) clan living at Lac Seul, south of Pikangikum (Hallowell Archives, Series V file 3). Some of these families intermarried with Pikangikum people, and Caribou people took up residence at Pikangikum as people began to build permanent residences there in the early 20th century (Dunning papers, University of Toronto Archives).

The interactions between customary leadership and kinship around summer gathering sites shows a flexible system at play in which people remained at lakes close to their family areas for most of the year, and travelled to large gathering areas to visit influential leaders, and participate in ceremonies and exchanges. The ability to move to different locations following kinship relationship enabled Pikangikum harvesters access to different types of resources, a pattern that could not be understood without reference to the annual seasonal cycle and dispersal to winter sites.

4.1.2 Winter harvesting areas

From fall through spring, most family groups radiated out from summer gathering sites to different areas centred around larger lakes or waterways. This seasonal dispersal pattern was adapted both to subsistence harvesting, and to the pursuit of fur resources for commercial trade: “They used to leave in the fall and spring months, they
were always on their traplines during winter until spring when they would go to where they would spend their summer months” (Norman Quill, Trapline History CD-ROM. Date of interview unknown). The fur trade was largely responsible for these seasonal movements. During the winter, fur was of higher quality, and demanded a higher price on the market. Furbearers which were important for the commercial fur trade were usually caught in traps or snares. Species caught during the fur trade included beaver, muskrat, marten, squirrel, weasel, otter, fox, lynx, fisher, wolverine, and wolf. Furbearers had dual importance in terms of fur for exchange, and meat for personal consumption. Indeed, the animals’ hides were scraped and stretched in preparation for sale to fur traders, and their meat was consumed by the family group: “The people used to enjoy trapping. It was their way of life living off the land and how they used to feed and clothe their children, they used to trap all winter” (Norman Quill, Trapline History CD-ROM. Date of interview unknown).

Winter groups were usually composed of a family head, his sons accompanied by their families, and occasionally sons in law (Dunning, 1959) although group make-up also often varied from this arrangement. George M. Suggashied described the customary arrangement of harvesting in relative isolation from other family groups for most of the year: “We were in groups of relatives. We had our own trapline with a group of relatives...Non-relations went to different places. We never knew each other in groups. Not really well. So we had to go with relatives” (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, April 29, 2007). Winter groups usually took advantage of lake and river systems removed from the summer gathering places, and which formed travel routes to access fur bearers for trade, and other resources needed for winter subsistence. Some winter harvesting groups, such as those at Barton Lake, also used summer gathering sites as camps from which they dispersed to nearby hunting and trapping areas during the winter.

Trappers set traps along “traplines”, which can be described as linear or looped
trails which generally connected a number of lakes and water ways around a central camp or cabin (see figure 4.4 which illustrates traplines radiating from a central site). Trappers might trap alone or with one or several partners: “There would be somebody with me, or a couple of people. I would go with one of my brothers, Matthew or David [Strang]” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, June 12, 2007).

Elders stressed how they were not restricted to any particular area. Tom Quill Sr. recalled that “before there were boundaries, we trapped anywhere ...My father would go all over the place” (Tom Quill Sr., interview transcript, November 6, 2007). George B. Strang recalled that “Everyone just went anywhere” (interview transcript, October 25, 2007). Charlie Peters contextualized these statements by recalling that before trapline registration, there were indeed recognizable areas where people normally went over
the winter, but these were customarily defined based on how far people would travel while pursuing their livelihood activities: “If we were at a lake, we would only trap so far” (Charlie Peters, interview transcript, October 9, 2008).

Adjacent groups generally understood and respected the extent of the trapping area used by one group: “Before boundaries, people knew where their area ended and started. We had no conflicts because everyone knew how far to go in their area” (Norman Quill, Interview transcript, March 25, 2009). Distance travelled was related to mode of transportation. Before 1947, travel was often by foot, but also by dog teams. Snowmobiles began to be used by First Nations trappers in northern Ontario in the 1960s (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008).

Even before snowmobiles were around, I used dogs and a sled to get around. I used to go really far when I got my snowmobile. I walked everywhere and sometimes all day ...If a person wants to walk around their trapline area, he usually made fire around eleven in morning to prepare his lunch, and again at 4 for supper” (Norman Quill, Trapline History CD-ROM. Date of interview unknown).

Mobility within a group’s area was common. Groups had spring camps, fall camps and winter camps at different locations where they would return every year (Norman Quill, interview notes, August 3, 2006). A map of Timmy K. Strang’s trapline area provides an example of movements between different parts of a trapline area both over time, and across seasons (see figure B.5 on Timmy K. Strang’s map in appendix B section 6). Timmy showed me a number of collapsed log dwellings on his trapline area which were no longer in use. Some of these dwelling sites had been used for a decade or longer, but movement between different camps during the year allowed Timmy’s family group to follow animals in different parts of the trapline area, without having to undergo long, daily journeys to access areas difficult to reach from previously well-used cabin sites.

Dunning (1959: 55) noted that from the time of the first government records for Pikangikum in 1876 (i.e. when the adhesion to Treaty 5 was reported to have been
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signed by Pikangikum people), to the period of his writing in the 1950s, the band was made up of a number of hunting groups situated at various distances apart, based upon the centers of their “communally owned hunting territories” (Dunning, 1959). Norman Quill described the way these areas were given recognition even though they were flexibly bounded. Approximate boundaries of areas in use by one group was known by other trappers. “You had a spring camp, fall camp, winter camp, and that would be at a different location. Maybe you’ll go back to the same location every winter” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

The earliest ethnographic writing on the spatial configuration of the winter harvesting areas associated with Pikangikum people comes again from Hallowell. Hallowell remarked that “their approximate boundaries could be easily traced by the Indians themselves” (Hallowell, 1992: 45). Hallowell referred to his efforts to map these areas in two published works (Hallowell, 1949, 1992). Hallowell did indeed map out these family harvesting areas along the Berens River using large scale government maps (Hallowell, 1949) but these maps were never published. Fortunately, a map has been preserved in the over-sized materials folder in Hallowell’s archives at the American Philosophical Society which seems to match well with the various descriptions Hallowell left both in his published and unpublished writing (see figure 4.5).

Hallowell’s map records temporal variation in both the location and size of these areas. In comparison, prior work by Speck and others writing about Algonquian land use made these boundaries out to be much more fixed in space and time. Beyond providing an early visual representation of the land use system featuring harvesting areas, it was not fully apparent from data available in Hallowell’s archives whether the areas, or indeed the gaps between areas on Hallowell’s map, represent an incomplete picture of areas in use, or whether groups simply did not need to use more land area in order to

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1Hallowell was a student of Frank Speck, who received early attention for his work on these areas (see chapter 2).
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Figure 4.5: A. I. Hallowell’s map of hunting territories (1930s)

Source: Hallowell’s family areas, redrawn from original. “Areas in use” (as of the 1930s) are marked with solid lines, and areas used in the past are marked with dashed lines. The squared top of the areas to the east result from an insert Hallowell had in his archived original.
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satisfy needs. Hallowell (1992: 9) later stated that hunting grounds could theoretically be extended, but this had not taken place before he arrived, or over the period of his visits. He reasoned that there seemed to be no economic advantage to expansion since needs were met by hunting and trapping in more restricted areas.

Leadership of family areas

Elder family heads that converged at summer gatherings each had responsibilities for coordinating group movement within their winter hunting areas. Group leaders also facilitated movement between different family areas. If they received an invitation from the family heads who were leaders for their areas, individuals and families were able to join other family groups to trap, as explained by Norman Quill: “Before the trapline system came in...people could go anywhere to trap as long as they were given permission by that head person or by that family group that trapped in that area” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

Through kinship and friendship, Pikangikum people maintained their ability to move to different harvesting areas if necessary. The ability to move around on the land when necessary was indeed contingent on respect for the authority of extended family groups and their leaders. Elders in extended family groups seem to have based the authority of their decisions on their knowledge of the land: “[Before the traplines]
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it was the elders. They were the ones that had the say, where to move, where to go. So they looked up to the elders” (Oliver Hill, interview transcript, September 10, 2007). “Gitchee-anishinaabekandang—elders that had influence had knowledge of these areas. They set things in motion. Gaawiijigooziidiwag, meaning, going together to a particular area” (Transcript from workshop with Oliver Hill, Matthew Strang and Charlie Peters, translated by Paddy Peters, September 10, 2007).

When elders passed away, decision-making authority for family areas passed to knowledgeable individuals. The succession of leadership of family areas from one group leader to the next followed a customary and flexible process by which leaders were chosen based on their knowledge and abilities.

According to Matthew, we follow a process. Matthew’s area is Berens Lake. Kuhoonhucheekayyuhn is the process we follow, kuhoonhucheekaywyuhch. Within that process, we use another term, kayneekuhneetuhmuhkayhch, which means ‘who shall succeed.’ Within their area, Matthew’s older brother, George, is head trapper, or the person up front, kayneekuhneeseehch.3 George has several sons. He can delegate to any of his several sons. Since George is Matthew’s brother, Matthew is going to succeed if George no longer traps or is deceased. If Matthew wants to turn it over to the next person behind him, it’s not his son, it’s the person behind him, eedohtuhnhumeeng, ‘the person who walks behind.’ It is a person related to the area, not a person related to us, but connected to the land...If Matthew succeeds in an area, it doesn’t give him authority to tell George’s sons to leave...The process that they have set up is from a long time ago. It is based on how long someone has been in an area, how knowledgeable someone is of that area. It is based on age and knowledge. The person behind him has all those capabilities...

As to who would take over as a head person. A young person would not be able to fulfil that role. To be a head trapper, you need to be very knowledgeable of the land. Only an experienced trapper would know. Kaysheeyuhsheowehdoch: you always need to be prepared for unseen circumstances (Workshop transcript, translated by Paddy Peters, August 16, 2007).

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3Pikangikum elders often refer to the senior trapper as the “head trapper”. The term is kept in translation of this, and other quotes by Paddy Peters, but I refer to this role as “senior trapper” in my text.

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Exceptions to the flexibility of winter harvesting areas

Meetings were an occasional occurrence between groups hunting and trapping in different areas: “In their travels, they would meet one another, like Cat Lake people, and Lac Seul people” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007). While each trapper knew where the family areas were, meeting other individuals or groups within the area used by one’s family group was not simply understood in terms of trespass—as it would be later defined under the registered trapline system. People did, however, observe certain rules regarding how individual beaver lodges—the most important, and scarce, resource in the fur trade at the time of the trapline registration—were appropriated: “It wasn’t like the way it is today. Like within your own trapline area, if there’s a beaver lodge, the person within the trapline area would assume ownership. Anyone who would find the lodge would assume ownership over that lodge” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007). Before the introduction of registered traplines, trappers appropriated lodges under the customary system. *Odipemdan* was translated to me as “ownership”, and Paddy Peters used the personal possessive, *ndipemdan* with reference to traplines (Paddy Peters, interview notes, October 11, 2007). Paddy remembered travelling with an elder who pointed out beaver lodges and said *ninigindimbenimak, ninindamikomak*—“those are my beavers, those are Ozawtigwan’s beavers” (Paddy Peters, interview notes, October 11, 2007).

Pressure on fur resources was variable across individual traplines, and across the broader landscape known by Pikangikum people. Beaver lodges were not always possible to trap so some lodges were left alone. This could be due to difficulty locating the entrance to a lodge, the presence of weak ice, thick ice, muskeg, or a rocky bottom. On the other hand, sometimes more than one individual would trap a single lodge if there was more than one entrance (Timmy K. Strang, interview notes, July 26, 2007). In these circumstances, individual ownership of lodges was likewise variable over time.
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Senior trapper Timmy K. Strang described the process by which trapping areas were appropriated by different trappers in a family harvesting area:

In the fall, beaver look around. When we went looking for moose tracks we found a new beaver house. We saw which direction you want to go and which lakes you want to go to, that’s how we worked it. Some people only found old beaver dams, no new ones. They went up little streams. Usually [beaver are] not on those big lakes. They make dams where there’s lots of food to eat. They flood that place in the bush, then they build their lodge (Timmy K. Strang, interview transcript, July 26, 2007).

This complexity reveals that beaver trapping was necessarily coordinated at the group level. Individuals appropriated beaver lodges before the introduction of traplines, but seasonal variability necessitated flexibility and coordination during the fur harvest.

The pre-trapline system was characterized by flexibility of movement in the absence of fixed boundaries to accommodate annual subsistence and commercial needs. Ecological variability was accommodated through movements of individuals and families between areas, but also by internal movement and flexibility within the bounds of traditional family harvesting areas. Decision-making with regard to where people went during the summer and winter seasons was decentralized to family groups and their leaders. Although individuals identified with particular groups and areas, people were able to move between areas (and within areas) following customs which enabled them to trap beyond their own family areas, and with different groups of relations and non-relations. While the introduction of a new government trapline system brought changes in terms of how people moved around on the land in relation to the customary system, the practice of moving beyond their family areas had important continuities between the customary system as it worked before and after 1947. This is the focus of the next section.
4.2 Establishment of the Registered Trapline System

In the 1940s, the Ontario government initiated a program to register trapline areas on unsurveyed Crown land—public land under the management jurisdiction of the Province—north of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) line (see 4.1). The program focused on the entire northern and northwestern portions of Ontario, an area predominantly inhabited by First Nations people.

At this time, the majority of commercial and subsistence land use activities of Pikangikum people were taking place on unsurveyed Crown land, with the exception of activities on the reserve itself. To the south of the CNR, on Crown land that had been previously surveyed and divided into rectangular townships, there was already a system of assigning one township per trapper as a trapline area. Because this never was the case in Pikangikum, and for most of the area north of the CNR line, the advent of registered traplines in the late 1940s represents Pikangikum people’s first experience with government induced spatial constraint of their land use activities off-reserve.

While the experience of setting traplines was borrowed from other provinces with similar programs, the delineation of traplines in northern Ontario proceeded rapidly, as the government personnel intended for all parts of the Province to be quickly brought under the new fur management system beginning in 1947. The following sections describe how government agencies described their motivations for introducing the new system, and how specifically traplines were delineated.

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4It is possible to see in figure 4.1, in some parts of the south, the residual rectangular pattern of townships in the landscape. These township-based traplines were also re-drawn to take into account, to some extent, natural features about the time of the trapline registration processes in northern Ontario.
4.2.1 Lineage and rationale of the system

The decision to institute a fur management program covering such a vast area appears to have been motivated primarily by conservation concerns. The program was a product of previous experience in the James Bay region, and of collaboration between Indian Affairs and fur management agencies of other provinces. Speaking to the future of fur management in Ontario in 1947, the Fur Supervisor for Indian Affairs, H. R. Conn noted that “The procedures...are roughly those we used in northern Manitoba.”

A report of the joint Fur Advisory Committee, comprised of members of provincial and federal levels of government, describes the lineage of the registered trapline system a decade after its inception:

A pattern for improving the harvest of wild furs was started in British Columbia about 1926 with registered traplines. These eliminated competitive trapping and made it possible for trappers to practice conservation. This system spread and in the 1940s the first steps were taken towards extending it to Ontario.

John Macfie, former trapline officer for the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests from 1950-55, referred me to a departmental technical circular which had shaped his thinking as he began his work in the new trapline management program (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). The circular points out the lineage of the trapline system as having come from the beaver preserve system: “It is necessary to give leadership to Indians in conservation matters and a successful pattern for this has long since been worked out by the Hudson’s Bay Company and Indian Affairs Branch.” The beaver preserve system sought primarily to restrict harvesting within the preserves, in areas where beaver populations were understood to be in an extreme state of depletion.

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5 Correspondence between H.R. Conn, Fur Supervisor for Indian Affairs, and H.R. Wells, Inspector of Registered Traplines, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, The Pas, Manitoba, May 21, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8105. Indian Affairs, Volume 6749, file 420-8-2-1
7 Department of Lands and Forests, Technical Circular #135. To all division chiefs and field officers. Re: wildlife management problems of Patricia by C.H.D. Clarke
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also was an attempt to revitalize the system of family areas which were perceived to have broken down during a period of intense competition for resources in the 1920s, leading to further depletion (Feit, 2005). The preserves were areas set aside for beaver conservation on both the Ontario and Quebec sides of James Bay. Quebec subsequently set up game reserves exclusively for First Nations trappers on lands more accessible to outsiders to the south of James Bay starting in 1927 with the Rupert House Preserve (Feit, 2005). Other preserves followed in Quebec and Ontario. The beaver preserves program was jointly administered by the HBC and the federal Indian Affairs Branch and constituted an important bank of experience the Province of Ontario could readily draw upon.

In Ontario, the use of family areas for setting up registered traplines was likewise modeled after the beaver preserves: “The new regulations provide for much the same management plan of band area and family group trapping grounds as have been in operation on the Beaver Preserves.”

Also, the government noted that: “The custom in the area is to trap in family groups. In order to organize fur management among them an understanding of their trapping methods is necessary.”

Government personnel were aware that it would not be practical to pursue registration on a surveyed township basis as in the south. Instead, reference to customary land use appears in part to have been related to the feasibility of the entire project: “The question of registering the Indian trapline on the established family trapping ground system should be thoroughly pursued. While Mr. Grew admitted that some plan other than township or definite surveyed boundaries would probably be needed I don’t think that either he or Mr. Lewis were very favorably inclined to registering a complete watershed in one family name

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8Letter, F.A. MacDougall, December 19, 1947, Ontario Archives, RG1-427, File no. 2207. Also see 4.2.3 below for a discussion of how these areas eventually were incorporated into the registered trapline system.

9Fur Advisory Committee Report, February 6-7, 1950, Ontario Archives, RG1-427, File no. 2207
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but that is the only system which I can imagine will be feasible.”

Alternatives to registered traplines considered in Ontario

Government managers associated fur depletion with increased competition among First Nations trappers, and particularly with Euro-Canadian trappers based on experiences to the south and in the James Bay area. John Macfie recalled there was an agency policy of gradually purging all non-First Nations trappers from the area north of the CNR (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). The government saw returning areas trapped by Euro-Canadian trappers to First Nations’ use as a way to re-enforce a pre-existing aboriginal property regime which was effective in conserving fur resources. However, the trapline system of 1947 was eventually arrived at following discussion of alternative strategies for buffering the system of family areas against competitive pressures. Government managers were well aware that they had limited staff and resources and that they had little knowledge of the vast area in which they were working. In the 1930s, the strategy of setting aside exclusive band trapping areas was discussed among federal and provincial government agencies, with the involvement of the HBC.

In 1937, the Department of Game and Fisheries in Ontario appears to have been in negotiations with the Indian Affairs branch to set aside an exclusive hunting and trapping area for First Nations people across the province, but a letter from that year indicated this might not happen “in the immediate future.” The province adopted a policy of prohibiting new white trappers north of the the Canadian National Railway (CNR) line by the 1940s. A 1946 internal circular from the Deputy Minister of Fish and Wildlife, Ontario, stated that:

10Letter from T. J. Orford to H. R. Conn, Moose Factory, May 30, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, RG10 c-8105
11Letter from Ralph Parson, Fur Trade Commissioner, HBC to H. W. McGill, Director of Indian Affairs, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, Ontario. March 15, 1937. Library and Archives Canada, RG10-8104
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The region north of the northernmost transcontinental railway line has been allotted to Treaty Indians by agreement with the Indian Affairs Branch and is therefore not open to licensed trapping except by persons with established rights who have been accustomed to trap in this region and whose right has previously been recognized by the Department.12

In the absence of personnel, the eventual registration of individual trapline areas seems to have been the chosen means to prohibit Euro-Canadian trappers in such a vast area.

Fur trade conditions in Pikangikum immediately prior to trapline registration

Few documents specific to Pikangikum First Nation were found during archival research. For this reason, it was difficult to reconstruct a picture of Pikangikum peoples’ participation in the registration process from the government perspective. Nonetheless, documentary material referring to areas of the West Patricia region of Ontario more broadly, and some accounts from Pikangikum people, cited conditions of fur-bearer depletion and untenable levels of competition between First Nations trappers and Euro-Canadian trappers as justification for the registered trapline system.

A Treaty Party Report provides a useful, if somewhat vague, sketch of Pikangikum trapping activities immediately preceding trapline registration.

The Pikangikum band is made up of 300 people, including 75-80 trappers who hunt north and south along the Berens River from Goose Lake to the Manitoba boundary where they meet the people from Little Grand Rapids. They range north from Pikangikum Lake about 40-50 miles where they meet the Indians from Deer and Sandy Lakes. South of Berens River, their hunting activities take them to within 35-40 miles of Red Lake where they at times dispose of their furs and obtain supplies. It is estimated that 20-30% of fur taken by the Pikangikum people is sold in Red Lake. The mining companies provide some casual labour for the members of this band but not to any very great extent. The Indian reserve on Pikangikum Lake sets as headquarters for these people and the Hudson’s Bay Company operates an outpost from Little Grand Rapids on the lake. Last season was a fair fur year although this group had perhaps the poorest catch of any of the Bands seen. Beaver are not overly plentiful and many of the rat marshes were frozen out last winter.13

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The summary of the Sioux Lookout Agent for Indian Affairs shows that trapping was a crucial economic activity, with more than one in four people participating in the fur trade in the early 1940s. There were as of yet no fixed boundaries limiting the activity of trappers, and as a result the phrases “fair fur year” and “beaver are not overly plentiful” do not have much meaning out of context and without any spatial delineations. It was not possible to deduce trends in fur bearer abundance from the archives consulted, other than references in reports from the time. An existing report from 1940 stated that “results from trapping, to date, appear to be average and in some sections of the agency, above average.”

A contradictory report from the same agency written in 1939 found a scarcity of fur in the southern portion of the region “during the last few years” so severe that it “has forced [Lac Seul] people to move around to new territory.” The Indian Agent, Swartman, stated it was his understanding that “until about ten years ago, almost the entire band hunted in the vicinity of lac Seul but now a very small percentage of the Band trap in the whole area covered by Lac Seul.” In another area immediately north of Pikangikum, a 1937 memorandum from Indian Affairs agent Patrick showed that the Severn and Winisk Rivers had healthy beaver populations, and that First Nations did not understand why the government was insisting on harsh restrictions on their harvest as beaver were “becoming a nuisance” in that section. Nonetheless, despite considerable spatial variability in the fur harvest, trapline registrations were carried out in the whole of northern and northwestern Ontario. This marked a departure from the beaver preserve system which had been tailored to address areas of local depletion.

14 Gifford Swartman, Indian Agent, Sioux Lookout, January 15, 1940. Agent’s report for month of December 1939. Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104, Indian Affairs, volume 6747, file 420-8
15 Gifford Swartman, Indian Agent, Sioux Lookout, November 17, 1939. Letter to the Secretary, Indian Affairs Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, Canada. Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104, Indian Affairs, volume 6747, file 420-8
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Pikangikum elders recall that the government explained the necessity for trapline registration in terms of curbing Euro-Canadian incursions into their customary harvesting area: “The reason is that the beaver boss said white men would come from the south and take your animals” (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, July 19, 2007). Several reports confirm that Pikangikum people had indeed experienced white incursions into their areas, although these were still comparatively rare for this area. Elder Lizzie Turtle remembered how one fall she and her family went to their trapline and found a cabin a white man had built: “He got his logs from the forest and had to cover up the stumps. They destroyed the cabin.” (Lizzie Turtle, workshop transcript, October 10, 2001). Charlie Peters recalled two white trappers in the area around Pikangikum, one on Cairns Lake, and the other on the Throat River (Charlie Peters, interview transcript, October 9, 2008). Charlie Peters likely knew of the trapper at Cairns Lake before trapline registration, whereas the one on the Throat River may have been there after registration (see Charlie Peters’ life history map, appendix B, section 4).

Nevertheless, Pikangikum elders reported relatively little interference from white trappers in the area around the time traplines were introduced. Likewise, a 1941 report from the Sioux Lookout Treaty party found minimal activity of white trappers:

> Except for possibly four or five white trappers along the Manitoba boundary between Berens River and Cobham River, Indians have the whole country to themselves for trapping and hunting. Very few halfbreeds [Métis] or non-treaty Indian trappers are resident in the district.18

The provincial government’s intentions for setting up the system of traplines were motivated by a concern over serious furbearer depletion across Ontario, and across much of the northern forests of Canada. In Pikangikum, people did not appear to be facing immediate depletion of fur resources during the period in which the trapline system was under consideration. Regardless of spatial variability and local abundance,

17Audio File #20. CBLUP - Steering Group. Planning Boundary/Stewardship Values
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trapline registration went ahead across the entire northern part of the province.

4.2.2 Growing awareness of Treaty rights

The Federal and Provincial governments engaged in discussion and negotiation amongst themselves with regard to fur management from the 1930s to 1947. Conversely, the period of consultation with First Nations people regarding trapline registration was relatively condensed, and limited for the most part to mapping the new system (see section 4.2.3 below). One reason for this appears to be rising awareness among First Nations groups of threats posed by the wildlife management to Treaty rights, a threat readily appreciated by both Ontario and Indian Affairs: “We feel that perhaps many of the Indian trappers north of the CNR, who have never been required to purchase a trapping license, may think that this step will be an encroachment upon what they believe to be their Treaty rights, and would be more inclined to conform to suggestions coming from officials of your Department [Indian Affairs].”

In Ontario, as elsewhere in Canada, some First Nations understood trapline registration to be a breach of their Treaty rights (Notzke, 1994). The trapline system was seen as a way for furbearer management to be taken out of the hands of First Nations people, and as a way to restrict harvesting rights to particular trapline areas through the issuing of licenses. This concern was attributed to a growing Canada-wide awareness of infringement of these rights on the part of First Nations peoples. Also, in Ontario, the government appears to have been aware of this trend. District forester Leman “...attributes a certain amount of this difficulty to the efforts of Jules Sioui of Loretville, Quebec, who apparently has created the impression among Indians that they can hunt, trap and fish as they desire without being subject to the Ontario game laws.”

19 Letter from Dr. W.J.K. Harkness to H. R. Conn, Toronto, March 8, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, RG10 c-8105, Volume 6749, file 420-8-2-1
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and the post-war periods were important times of heightened awareness of the treaties as they related to issues of military conscription and taxation. Sioui was a notable leader of this movement, and the above reference links his activities to growing awareness of treaty rights with respect to harvesting activities by First Nations groups (Shewell, 1999).

Speaking to the new requirement of licensing individuals to trapline areas, the Secretary of Indian Affairs wrote in 1939 about a court decision which would potentially limit First Nations’ claims to treaty rights, “According to a judgment recently handed down by the Supreme Court of Ontario, Indians are not exempt from this requirement by virtue of their treaties.”21 Regardless of the justifications provided by court rulings, it seems that the government was aware of a growing sense of mistrust against new government trapping regulations as evidenced in the following statement: “The Indians still feel that the Game Department are usurping their Treaty rights by making them pay a $5.00 fee for trapping rights to procure a licence to trap beaver.”22

Treaty rights seem to have framed, at least in part, the expediency with which efforts to implement the new fur management regime were initiated immediately following trapline registration in 1947. Despite the influence of Treaty concerns, people from Pikangikum First Nation did not specifically raise the issue of Treaty rights when talking about the trapline registration process (see 4.2.3 below).

4.2.3 The process of trapline delineation on the ground

Once the policy was enacted, provincial management personnel moved quickly to register a vast area of northern Ontario in a very short time. Communication between

21Letter from T.R.L. MacInnes, Secretary of Indian Affairs to Right Reverend J. G. Anderson, D. D., Bishop of Moosonee, Cochrane, Ontario, December 15, 1939, Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104. The judgment referred to is likely R. v. Commanda (September 11, 1939) “Whether The Game and Fisheries Act, R.S.O. 1937, ch. 353, applicable to Indians” and pertained to the Robson Treaty
22Letter from T.J. Godfrey, Indian Agent, Chapleau, to The Secretary, Indian Affairs Branch, Ottawa, November 30, 1939, Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104
government personnel found in the archives and statements made by Pikangikum elders revealed that the government achieved a speedy result by referring to the family harvesting areas of the customary system as they appeared at that time. No documentary sources could be located related specifically to the process of trapline delineation as it unfolded in Pikangikum. For that matter, local details of this process were found to be virtually absent from the documentary record for the whole of Ontario. There were, however, records detailing aspects of the process followed at the provincial level, as well as scattered field reports from several northern Ontario communities (Pikangikum was not one of those). It is clear from the few documents available, however, that traplines were registered across northern Ontario in a process designed for speed and efficiency.

The choice to base the new registered traplines on the family areas system of organization seems to have been motivated by conflict-avoidance, and the desire for a relatively frictionless transfer of power over fur management to provincial natural resource management authorities (see section 4.2.1 above). The government further justified this approach because of the enormous area that a limited number of officers had to cover in the short period they were given to complete the registration process.

While the mapping of trapline areas appeared to have been completed in a single summer in 1947, maps of family harvesting areas existed prior to this year. The Sioux Lookout Treaty Party Report of July 1941 indicates that a map was available delineating the “approximate boundaries of the traditional hunting grounds of the various Bands.” Unfortunately, this map was stripped from the report, and could not be found in the archives. It remains unknown whether this map resulted from consultation with First Nations groups or individuals, or whether the map detailed an attempt to delineate family areas, or more generalized band harvesting areas. It is also unknown

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23 Correspondence between Harkness and Dunning, Dunning Papers, University of Toronto
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whether this map was used during the subsequent process of trapline delineation in collaboration with Ontario.

District officers of the federal Indian Affairs Board also visited communities in northern Ontario prior to 1947, during which they sketched trapline boundaries on maps. The Provincial authorities and the Indian Affairs Board obtained help from whomever was available, including Indian Affairs district officers, missionaries, and HBC personnel. The first maps only showed “the approximate boundaries of such traplines.” In a description of the process, H. R. Conn, Fur Supervisor for Indian Affairs regarded the mapping exercise as “more or less a fact finding expedition, since little or no information is available in Toronto concerning trapping in the isolated districts of the Province.”

C. H. Harkness, chief of the Fish and Wildlife Division at the Department of Lands and Forests, in Ontario, summarized the 1947 delineation process:

North of the CNR, our officers met all the Indian trappers at treaty time [summer] and the boundaries of their traditional trapping grounds were plotted on maps of the district. Each band was then broken down into family groups, each group with its own trapping area, and the names of the members of each group listed. This work was accomplished with the help of the Indian Agents, the traders and the missionaries at the various settlements throughout the district including Severn and Weenusk. No doubt some adjustments in the area boundaries will have to be made next summer and if your post managers can secure information pertaining to any changes of that kind it will be appreciated.

Due to limitations of staff, it took some time before the registered trapline system was actually operational on the ground:

In the Patricia District we have not as yet enough field personnel to adequately cover this large territory and bring all the various groups of trappers, who are almost all Indian trappers, into the fur management program immediately.

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26Correspondence between H. R. Conn and T. J. Orford, Ottawa, June 7, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8105
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New fixed boundaries

The new trapline system fixed trapline boundaries in space and time. In this regard, it was not readily compatible with the customary family areas system based on flexibility and movement. Yet the traplines were understood by Pikangikum elders to be an outcome of the recognition of customary family areas by the government. While most elders were not involved directly in this process—as they were still relatively young at the time and were not in a position to take leadership roles in the community—several elders had heard teachings from their own elders, and recalled how their own elders set up the trapline system, in conjunction with the Province:

Before the trapline boundaries, these areas belonged to particular family groups and these groups knew their territories. When the MNR [Ministry of Natural Resources] 29 came to register these trapline areas, the people knew where those boundaries would go. They helped draw those lines. (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009)

Dunning (1959: 27) wrote that “government registration of trappers on trapline areas was based on the 1947 grouping of trappers and their own definition of existing trapping areas as drawn on large-scale maps.”

The new trapline system also drew on custom by involving leaders of family areas and their own definition of their boundaries:

The trapline boundaries were not written by a white person. These people were asked where their trapline areas were, and that’s what their response was: those boundaries. The boundaries that are in my trapline area were written by my father and [his brother]. That’s why [trapline registration is] so important; because the elders at the time drew these boundaries. And these boundaries will not change. They will stay as they are. And the MNR will not change these boundaries...Elders long ago, they’re the ones who set those boundaries (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007).

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29In 1947, the Provincial agency responsible for trapline agency was the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, Fish and Wildlife Division. Pikangikum elders often referred to this agency as the MNR, as it was its predecessor.
In the same spirit, Norman Quill stated: “These areas were made by the families that were in these territories. The way that they came across these boundaries is how far this family wanted to go. That’s how it was based on” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007). Norman Quill and George B. Strang emphasized in their statements that traplines were registered in accordance with elder’s understandings of their customary trapping areas.30

The new trapline boundaries, however, were not strictly based on local understandings of the extents of family areas. Because of the insistence of government personnel on the permanence of these boundaries, disputed lines needed to be settled and areas unused at the time of registration needed to be mapped out and assigned. In addition, it appears that the province made an effort to manipulate trapline boundaries on maps to force them to conform roughly to watersheds for management purposes. For example, at the time of registration, the question “where do you normally trap” was asked “over and over again” (Novak, 1979: 6). Lines were drawn on maps at these meetings and “tough decisions were made when no common boundary could be agreed upon” (ibid). A few years following the registration process, the Fur Advisory Committee for 1958-1959 reported that “The new traplines covered the entire Crown land area and were gradually altered to a natural, watershed, basis.”31 John Macfie also noted that in delineating traplines, it was important to try to follow watersheds (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). Crichton, writing from the Province’s perspective, stated that “In more northern parts of Province, watersheds may include quite a large area upon which a number of Indian families may trap together.”32 This policy was not exclusive to the process of trapline delineation in Ontario alone: “The accepted procedure not only in Ontario but throughout all areas in which this Branch [of the Indian Affairs

30Also see Senyk (2008: 53) for a statement on trapline registration by elder Charlie Peters
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Board] is cooperating in fur developments is the watershed system of sub-division.”

The beaver boss and the senior trapper

The government was virtually absent in fur management before traplines were introduced, with the exception of increasing their involvement in fur-tagging programs to track the provenance of furs. Until 1947, these programs were for the most part implemented through the HBC, with the Indian Agent supervising trapping activities through the local trader. After the trapline system was introduced, the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Ontario government took on the responsibilities of Indian Affairs in this regard. For instance, disputes regarding thefts of fur and traps came largely under the jurisdiction of the provincial government official who made annual trips to the community. Dunning noted that this official was locally known as the amik ogimaa or “beaver boss”. This person was responsible to government for the operation of the trapline system: “There is usually a man of slightly higher status who is known as wempipe-ogima, literally trapping boss, who is also the person responsible to government for the operation of the trapping area” (Dunning, 1959, 58). This role was also known by Pikangikum people as Weweni-ige ogimaa or alternately, as wempipe-ogima, literally trapping boss or trapline/boundary boss respectively (Charlie Peters, interview notes, October 9, 2008). George B. Strang recalled, “There was no such thing as a trapline boss back when I was born” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007). Another term commonly used to refer to this government authority in Pikangikum is aweaskay ogimaa, literally, ‘meat boss’. This person was involved in administering the traplines: “The meat boss gave them licenses to trap” (Tom Quill Sr., November 6, 2007). Pikangikum people sometimes used these terms interchangeably with the English language title, “game warden”.

After 1947, leaders in the family areas system were assigned new roles in relation

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33Letter from H. R. Conn to J. Grew, February 15, 1949, Library and Archives Canada, RG10 c-8105
to the Province with regard to wildlife management matters. Although leadership at the level of family areas was a feature of the customary system before traplines were registered, trapline leadership by a senior trapper accountable to Provincial wildlife management was a new feature of the system. People other than the senior trapper who wished to be registered to a trapline were recorded by the beaver boss as helpers (Claire Qwewezence, Personal communication, October 3, 2008).

Some who became senior trappers were involved in the initial delineation of boundaries. “[My father] told the MNR exactly where he trapped, where he went up to. My father was the first [senior trapper]” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007). Matthew Strang also explained that the first senior trappers were selected following registration based on the areas where they were active on the land:

I remember when head trappers were first selected. They were selected where they were active on the land. William Keeper and George [B. Strang] were selected because they were trapping in that area. Even in Oliver Hill’s [area], Moses Turtle was selected because he was active there. Jake Kejiik’s father was [senior] trapper (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007).

**Pikangikum perceptions of the registered trapline system**

The question may be asked, did the registered trapline system do what the government promised it would do with regard to stemming the tide of white trappers moving north? Pikangikum people understood that Euro-Canadian trappers could not go to their areas to trap. For Whitehead Moose an outcome of registration was a safeguard against pressure from Euro Canadian incursions on Pikangikum people’s family areas: “When [the registered trapline system] was established, no white people came around” (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008). Whitehead Moose explained how he saw traplines as a means of protecting their lands from encroachment of Euro-Canadian trappers:

As a young boy I saw the beaver boss arrive in Poplar Hill. This is how long the beaver boss was around in this area. Since the trapline was put in place, the white
man has not bothered us to steal the animals. The beaver boss worked with us long before the registered trapline system. He issued the licenses in 1946 just to reinforce the trapline system (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript July 19, 2007). 34

Whereas in the customary system, Pikangikum people recognized each other’s family harvesting areas, there was legitimate concern that Euro-Canadian trappers did not respect this system. For Whitehead, recognition of the importance of the family areas through the traplines ensured the survival of Pikangikum’s customary land use system, and thus their integrated subsistence and commercial land based economies which were both dependent upon seasonal dispersal to family harvesting areas:

The reason is that we told them that we survived from that land, and that’s the reason we were given those areas. So each family member would go to an area. We told them that’s where our survival came from. That’s before there was any welfare. The creator gave us this land for our children and grandchildren to survive on. That’s what we told them (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008).

Pikangikum elders also understood that they were now required to respect the new trapline boundaries in their own activities: “People only trapped in their areas. They didn’t go into other people’s traplines. I was told that the white man couldn’t come in to trap because it’s someone else’s trapline.” (Tom Quill Sr. November 6, 2007). Although licenses for trapline areas acted as spatial buffers against incursion, Pikangikum elders were clear about the implications of these licenses for their own ability to conduct commercial fur harvesting in their areas:

The game warden came and made borders around people’s traplines. People were protective of their traplines. After that, they would not allow other people to trap in their traplines. If someone trapped in your trapline it was like someone reached into your wallet and took your money. (George M. Suggashie, no date. 35)

I think it was a good idea when MNR established the trapline area system. Today it helps protect the areas. If the trapline boundaries were not there, anybody from the outside could come in and rob anything from our area, trees, other

34 The date 1946 is given by some Pikangikum people. It appears to be impossible to reconcile exact dates. Elders often used the date 1946, while government sources point to 1947.
35 16.CD#19-CBLUP_Steer, WFMC audio files
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things...they might be. The other thing is a lot of outsiders would come and trap in our areas. The trapline system helps and protects our areas. An example is the Throat River. A long time ago there was a white man who trapped there. He lived there also. He did that secretly (Matthew Strang, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009).

On the other hand, Pikangikum elders also noted other reasons for the Province’s new interest in fur management. Elder Norman Quill stated: “The reason why [the Ontario Department of Fish and Wildlife] ...set up trapline boundaries was to find out if animals were being trapped or not” (Norman Quill, no date: Trapline History Audio CD, in WFMCArchives). Government trapline regulations were used to enforce quotas (see section 4.3.2 below) and to restrict people’s movement to their own trapline areas. Paddy Peters noted this new intervention: “The reason the trapping system was set up was to impose a system of order. Some people accepted this, others were unhappy about this. Nevertheless, people still trapped” (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, August 15, 2007).

The trapline boundaries impacted the degree to which Pikangikum people could move freely, and make choices within their customary areas. Paddy Peters translated a statement by Charlie Peters which sums up some of these sentiments.

Charlie Peters says we need to be clear on who we are. We are Anishinaabe. At one time the Anishinaabe controlled hunting in their territory. It was all under our own authority and it was good when this occurred. The creator gave the land to the Anishinaabe for our survival. One day a white man came. The OMNR came to our community to put something in place for us to use. OMNR explained that they would be given a piece of paper that would help the Anishinaabe by giving them a system to hunt under. People accepted this proposal to help them trap. But Charlie is unsure if people understood what this meant. The traditional way was better—there were no boundaries, just one big area. Under new system trapping was restricted—trappers couldn’t go beyond boundaries, trespassers could have traps confiscated and be jailed (Paddy Peters, August 15, 2007).

In summary, the traplines introduced a new layer of interaction between Pikangikum and the government. Pikangikum elders valued some aspects of this interaction, such as the perception of a process which had recognized their leadership, and the pro-
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tection from encroachment of Euro-Canadian trappers from the south that traplines brought. They also critiqued others, such as the imposition of boundaries and the restriction on movement. The next section of this chapter examines how the traplines effected the way Pikangikum people interacted with each other with regard to the customary practice of winter dispersal to family harvesting areas.

4.3 LAND USE FOLLOWING TRAPLINE REGISTRATION

The registered trapline system marks an important departure for the provincial government into resource management in northern Ontario, as well as in its relationship with northern First Nation communities. Findings suggest a complex story about the relationship of Pikangikum people with this system, and important and long-lasting impacts on land use. First, there was concern about the implications of the trapline system in terms of the amount of control Pikangikum people could wield within the system.

This was a foreign system. They never sat at the table with the government when the system was introduced. The only say our people had was to identify the family areas that our people inhabited…it seems like they just upgraded those areas. The government put lines on maps to take control over our people’s territories. Our people never had these kinds of lines. Groups define boundaries based upon geographical features, e.g. rivers. An elder said I have to walk to that river or that hill which identified my boundary. I like to be careful when I talk about the trapline system. The trapline is a foreign system that people had to work in to obtain an income. But trapping was already done by our people long before the government system was introduced to our people (Paddy Peters, interview transcript, August 15, 2007).

Second, there were uncertainties regarding how the new system altered the lives of Pikangikum people with respect to their ability to follow their own customary system, as well as the long-term effects the system might have on the land use of Pikangikum hunters and trappers. Norman Quill stated that, “MNR didn’t even tell them how many years [the registered trapline system] was supposed to last” (Norman Quill, transcript,
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Trapline History in WFMC Archives). Norman touched on Pikangikum people’s uncertainties about the goals of the new system, whether the government policies around traplines would change over time, and how this imparted a sense of insecurity in Pikangikum’s relationship with government resource managers. Regardless of the presence of new boundaries, people continued to think about their trapline areas in terms of their customary relationship to the land and with other groups and neighbours. During his life history mapping interview, Larry Pascal pointed out lakes, and cabins on those lakes, associating lakes with the individuals and families which used those areas. A map we were using did not have traplines demarcated. When I asked about the extent of his trapline in the southern portion of his area, Larry was unclear about where the boundary was, instead pointing out the waterways that were part of his trapline, and pointing out cabins that other trappers used in the adjacent Roderick and Cairns Lake areas (fieldnotes, April 3, 2007).

When the new trapline system came into effect in 1947, the government introduced new rules to ensure trappers respected the new boundaries, set quotas on furbearer harvests within these areas, and defined new leadership roles in relation to the trapline system. Pikangikum people’s perceptions of these new rules, and the extent to which they followed them, are subjects of the following section.

4.3.1 Boundaries, trespass and sanctions

Sanctions against trespassing greatly influenced Pikangikum people’s perception of the traplines as limiting their freedom of movement. The most important rule introduced for trapline management sanctioned setting traps in another group’s trapline area. For all fur bearers, setting of traps on another trapper’s line without permission was a behaviour that potentially carried negative sanctions. People were told to remove traps in one’s area if they were set by a trapper from another trapline. John Macfie advised
trappers who saw snowshoe tracks on their trapline area to follow them and to pull up that person’s traps (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). The discoverer of the traps could pull them up and hang them in a tree. This was considered fair warning, but also spoiled the trapper’s chances of catching animals. If traps were re-set by the offender, the sanctioned trapper could then take possession of the traps. Although government officials encouraged this practice, according to Oliver Hill, people would generally not report these events to outsiders (fieldnotes, October 14, 2008). Senior trapper Robinson Peters confirmed that while game wardens advised them to confiscate traps set by intruders, people didn’t follow these rules (Robinson Peters, interview notes, October 24, 2007). People were told to react not only to traps found on one’s trapline area, but also to snowshoe tracks and boats. This indicates a broader policy of ensuring people stayed within the areas they had been assigned.

The rule against trespass was associated with the government trapline system, and was not consistent with the flexibility of Pikangikum’s customary system. It appears Pikangikum people rarely involved government officials in disputes over trespass. Elders Matthew Strang, Charlie Peters, and Oliver Hill agreed that in the history of trapping at Pikangikum, they had never heard of people being fined or charged for trapping rule infringements (Matthew Strang, Charlie Peters, Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 9, 2008). George B. Strang, however, recalled a stricter face of government sanctions:

MNR was very strict. They took people to court as a result of going to someone else’s trapline. That’s the way it happened. In my trapline area, when I would see someone else’s trap there, I would personally take ownership of that trap (George B. Strang, interview transcript, October 25, 2007)

While boundaries were respected in many circumstances, crossing of boundaries was mostly dealt with by following customary practice (See also sections 4.3.3 and 4.3.4). For example, Matthew Strang recalled how the senior trapper imparted rules against crossing the trapline boundary. Senior trapper George B. Strang restricted his partic-
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ular trapping group to the south side of the Berens River where his trapline boundary was located. Matthew recalled that when he set traps on the opposite bank of the river, George required that he remove those traps (fieldnotes, November 2, 2007). Meetings between trapping groups from adjacent trapline areas were not necessarily characterized by discordance or wariness of trespass. “We used to see McDowell Lake People when trapping in this area for muskrat...These were not planned meetings. Sometimes we would camp overnight with them” (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, November 7, 2007). Oliver Hill described in the Land Use Strategy the importance Pikangikum people attached to the ability to move freely on the land and associate with other groups of people as a basic feature of survival:

Our people had relationships with other communities and because of these relationships there was trust there. They knew if there was trust there they knew there was a basis for survival. If they travelled they never took flour to make bannock, because they knew they could get what they needed along the way. Sometimes they took only a fishing net.

When I look at the land as a whole, our traditional land planning area, I think about what our people did in the past. They had a kinship relationship with other people. By that kinship relationship they had help, and could help other people in the community (Oliver Hill quoted in Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 32).

Blanket prescriptions of trespass were not consistent with the customary system as they had the potential to engender conflict between neighbours, rather than cooperation and sharing. Indeed, these rules created tensions, but some, like Norman Quill, chose to deal with them in their own way, or chose not follow them at all.

When the trapline system was introduced by MNR, that created a lot of friction. For instance, these people that trapped in Pikangikum area here would not even let anybody cross the area. They would not tolerate it. They were offended. Part of the beaver boss’ policy was that if you find a trap in your area from a different party, a different group, you were told to seize that trap, to take away that trap. But I don’t know whether people did that. I think maybe some trappers did that. As for me, I never followed that (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

Norman related two stories to explain his approach when he became involved in dis-
We lived at the north end of Barton Lake. There were two small lakes in this area. Some beaver were there that I had set snares for. I went back the next day or the day after to go check my snares, and I saw some tracks. Someone had walked from the west direction and came upon my snares. I couldn’t find my poles, my snares. I eventually found them. They were under the ice. That person had collected my snare poles, wrapped all my snare wire around those poles, and shoved them under the ice. I eventually found out who did that...This was not his area, it was our area. I went back over there, I reset my beaver snares, and what I did was I followed his trail to a lake area on this side. I went and walked on the ice, just to show that person that I was there. So I never had any problems. Nobody ever came to this area after that. Even ’till the spring time, there was nobody that came (Norman Quill, interview transcript, October 1, 2007).

Norman also once set up some traps in an area near the trapline boundary to the south of the area he normally went to trap. When he went to check them, they had disappeared. He understood that it was another Pikangikum trapper that had confiscated them because he claimed the traps were in his area. Norman never got his traps back. He told me he had no right to say anything because the other trapper thought the traps were in his own area (Norman Quill, interview notes, March 25, 2009). In another example, Scottie Owen always trapped on the trail between his trapping area at Cairns Lake and Pikangikum (when helper Roy Owen drew the route, it appeared as though he only trapped to his trapline boundary). Oliver Hill’s helper, Thunder Strang once confiscated traps that Scottie had set on a small lake inside Oliver’s trapline. This was just off the trail to Pikangikum. Scottie did not do anything to respond to this incident (Roy Owen, interview notes, October 17, 2007). These examples indicate that trappers who were guilty of infringement and admonished, understood that their actions were not appropriate, and did not pursue them further.

Other responses were also used when a senior trapper witnessed a group entering his area without obtaining the appropriate consent:

One time long ago a man from Little Grand Rapids came across... He was with his family and had his stuff with him and he stayed with us awhile. He was sneaking around. He had two canoes with him and he was looking to set up camp in my
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trapline. He had two daughters and I got my family and we left him there and we set up camp elsewhere (George K. Strang, no date).36

In this particular case, the action of the offenders carried no negative sanctions for infringement of trapline regulations, yet it also appears that the visitors were greeted with a cold reaction on George K. Strang’s part. This reaction could be interpreted as a form of sanction because in leaving this group, George K. Strang also denied them any aid, accommodation, and knowledge of his area. No outside involvement was sought in any of these cases, indicating that Pikangikum people were unlikely to involve government authorities in trapline disputes, both while living out on the land, and when meetings took place with government officials.

It appears then that government sanctions were a rare event, both because of the lack of resources in the north on the part of the government, and because of the unwillingness on the part of Pikangikum people to report infringement of rules against trespass. It is evident that Pikangikum people did not favour strong sanctions. Instead, infringement of new trapline rules was usually met with reactions that Pikangikum people felt were appropriate and consistent with their own customary approaches.

4.3.2 Quotas

Prior to the trapline registration in 1947, government restrictions on fur harvests were applied through closed seasons on beaver and other furbearers, and through quotas for individual trappers set on a regional basis. A letter from 1937 indicates support for a small harvest of four to five beaver north of the CNR following a closed season on beaver for the previous four years.37 The Sioux Lookout Indian Agent’s report for January 1940 states that another open beaver season had been declared that year with

36WFI archive, 05.CD#20-GeorgeB/g2
37Letter from Ralph Parson, Fur Trade Commissioner for the HBC to Dr. H.W. McGill, Director of Indian Affairs, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, March 15, 1937. Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104
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a quota of ten beaver per trapper.\footnote{Gifford Swartman, Agent’s Report for the Month of January, Sioux Lookout, February 19, 1940. Library and Archives Canada, RG 10 c-8104}

At the time of trapline registration, a new quota system was introduced to effectively put a seasonal limit on the fur harvest within each trapline and its group of trappers. The rationale and design for the trapline-based quota system derived from experience with the beaver preserve system.\footnote{Report of the Fur Advisory Committee for 1958-59, Archives of Ontario, RG 1-427, Accession 6321, box 1} Quotas were set based on reported catch, and could be distributed between senior trappers and helpers, but were managed on a trapline by trapline basis. John Macfie explained that the system was essentially designed for beaver recovery, with the aim to keep as many live beaver lodges on a trapline as possible: “the natives told us the number of beaver caught, and we would set the quotas. It was usually one per colony. In places with more beaver, it could be 1.5 or 2” (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). Quotas were applied first to beaver, followed by “other fine furs.”\footnote{ibid.}

Government managers were interested in fostering local stewardship over trapline areas. Trappers were told that “the [Ontario Department of Fish and Game] considered each and every one a fur farmer; their fur farm being their trapping area as defined on the license.”\footnote{Crichton, 1948} The quota system was a check on trapping activity designed to increase productivity of traplines over time. Initially, trappers were required to draw a map of their traplines on the reverse side of their licenses showing waterways.\footnote{ibid.} Following trapline registration, initial quotas were low. Crichton records they were set at one beaver for every live house.\footnote{Crichton, 1948} Solomon Turtle recalled he was initially given a quota of five beaver annually (workshop transcript, March 31, 2009). “There was a time when the beaver became abundant so he gave us a limit on how much beaver to trap. In each
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of our traplines, he would ask to see how many beaver lodges were in each area. If there were more than ten, he would give us some beaver to trap” (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008). Through time, quotas varied dramatically. Close to the peak of the fur economy before the crash in fur prices of the 1980s, Pikangikum trappers reported beaver harvests to be high. Robinson Peters remembered his father, senior trapper Albert Peters, got seventy beaver when Robinson was fifteen years old (around 1978). Norman Quill recalled he was usually given a quota of 120 beaver after he became senior trapper for his line (after 1978). Although he tried to trap up to his quota one year, he recalled he was not able to make it because it required “too much work.” That year he managed to trap 75 beaver alone (Norman Quill, interview notes, March 29, 2009).

While the intent of government resource managers was to impart a sense of resource stewardship to senior trappers, mutual distrust developed between First Nations trappers and managers partly because of disagreements over quotas. Three interrelated issues with the trapline quotas were often discussed in Pikangikum. First, furbearers were hunted for both their commercial and subsistence value, and not for commercial values alone. Second, Pikangikum trappers questioned the basis of the quota system because it undermined their spatial and temporal knowledge of local furbearer abundance and dynamics, while at the same time that knowledge was being used in a restricted sense to set quotas. Third, they did not generally agree with the scientific management notion of setting quotas to increase furbearer populations.

John Macfie understood that western understandings of wildlife management were not shared with local trappers, and equally, a stewardship approach based on western cultural norms was at odds with customary practice. For example, John recalled marten, lynx and fisher were rare immediately following registration. While he and other government personnel tried to dissuade trappers from taking these animals, he suspected this did not deter anyone (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008).
Further, speaking to the importance of the subsistence economy, John Macfie figured that beaver was at least as valuable as a food source as it was for fur (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008).

Pikangikum people became wary of management officials using Pikangikum trapper’s own knowledge to set quotas which limited their livelihood pursuits. Timmy K. Strang recalled that people would exchange information about their catch with government managers at the beginning of the trapping season. “When [the OMNR] said there were few lynx around and started to put limits, some people said, ‘how does the MNR know?’ ” (Timmy K. Strang, interview transcript, July 27, 2007). Some trappers continued to trap regardless of quotas, as John Macfie suspected, but this led to an environment of conflict between trappers and managers. Timmy K. Strang recalled how managers imposed quotas on fisher in a year when it commanded a very good price on the market. Also lynx, a valuable fur, was limited to only 3 per season, and Timmy felt this was too low. Further, when animals were trapped by mistake, and this meant going over quota, Timmy stated that government officials would not believe the trapper’s story. Timmy recalled that some trappers “slowed down their trapping because of all the warnings they got” (Timmy K. Strang, interview notes, July 27, 2007).

Quotas were also not always respected locally because of a deeper issue related to Pikangikum people’s understanding of their relationships with other living things. Ayou Turtle, a senior trapper who claimed to understand the government’s perspective and who kept track of beaver quotas, nevertheless shared his own view of how animals came back:

I don’t think I’m going to completely wipe out the animals on my area. I just trap and I don’t think about that. In the fall after I’ve trapped, in the following year, I know there are going to be the same number of animals. It’s probably the same with the MNR. There’s always animals that come back, even though he keeps track of how much we can trap, they’re still coming back. One amazing thing is the one who blesses us with the animals when he sees that people are enjoying what they’re doing, when they enjoy living off the land. That’s when it’s amazing
that there’s plenty of animals. What I think is that if people were to completely stop going out on the land, I don’t think there would be animals there. MNR is probably happy to let people trap because he knows that there are animals. MNR probably knows it’s like that. Still the MNR has to follow their policies of the quotas that they administer to every trapline. He has that responsibility (Ayou Turtle, interview transcript, October 31, 2007).

Instead of quotas, Pikangikum people explained their own norms for limiting their catch locally:

When I was growing up I observed that there were a lot of everything, a lot of animals on the land. We would kill them off in a sustainable manner so they could survive in the following year. The Anishinaabe had a practice, a system that the Creator wanted them/us to follow; they were not to kill off all the animals and help the animals preserve their numbers for the future (William Strang, interview notes, elders interview conducted December 15, 2004).

We used to work the traplines, harvest its abundance and it would return again. This was the Creator’s way of looking favourably upon us. But now we don’t harvest so many; there is no increase, only decline. I often think about when the Creator looked favourably on us and gave us a good harvest. Why should the Creator give us more when we don’t harvest so much anymore? As I become an old man this is how I see things (Solomon Turtle, December 11, 2003, quoted in Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation, 2006).

Trappers understood through their teachings and their experience on the land that animals would return in abundance if they were needed. The need for harvest was tied to meeting the needs of family groups, and by the imperative to share part of the harvest more widely.

*Chiwakwahkwaywahch*: this means if you see three animals you don’t kill them all but maybe just two so that animal can continue its journey, so the tracks will continue on...This process depends on the family size. If you have just one family, you just take one animal. These are traditional processes we followed. We had to learn those and how they are applied. I had to learn and adapt to these traditional processes. This is the only way the animals would continue to survive, if we followed these processes (Whitehead Moose, March 3, 2006, quoted in Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation, 2006).

They [trappers] would survey the land. What would grow plentifully and what would not grow. They did all of this. Now you can’t ...there’s not enough of these
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berries around. That’s what I observe on the land. So if we don’t monitor the land, monitor the land and anticipate, what will grow on the land. So if we don’t do this, things will begin to disappear on the land. I just want to mention that this one process that our people followed. And I don’t think that is being followed today (Solomon Turtle, meeting transcript, June 25, 2007).

The quota system further complicated the relationship between Pikangikum people and government resource managers with regard to the introduction of the trapline system. Rules against trespass and the new quota system were seen as unjust or arbitrary, and simply did not make sense according to Pikangikum understandings of their relationships among themselves, and with animals. The relationship between Pikangikum people and the animal and plant resources they use was an important driver of adaptation of the customary land use system to the new constraints of the trapline system. This is further taken up in chapter five with regard to the other resources used.

4.3.3 New roles and leadership

The new government trapline system formalized the relationship between government authorities and local leaders. A local beaver boss was responsible for ensuring rules and quotas were respected, while senior trappers were responsible for administration of their own trapline areas. Whitehead Moose named an individual from the government, who was locally known as \textit{jeebohbikwan}, as the person responsible for administering the beaver quota system:

At that time, there was a beaver boss...we called \textit{jeebohbikwan}. The reason why he was around at that time was that beaver were scarce at that time...And then there was a time when the beaver became abundant so he gave us a limit on how much beaver to trap. In each of our traplines, he would ask to see how many beaver lodges were in each area (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008).

Also community member Daniel Peters (Charlie Peter’s father) was referred to as beaver boss by Pikangikum people (Matthew Strang, interview notes, October 9, 2008). “There was a beaver boss that was an Anishinaabe from here. He looked after the traplines and
how much beaver was being trapped” (Whitehead Moose, interview notes, October 15, 2008).

After the boundaries were established, Daniel [Peters] reminded every family to follow his expectations as beaver boss. Even though there were head trappers in each of these traplines, they still respected what Daniel had to say (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008).

Matthew Strang stated that Daniel Peters would not resort to checking on people or fining people as punishment (Matthew Strang, interview notes, October 9, 2008). Whitehead Moose thought people followed his requirements so there was no need for monitoring.

I guess the reason he didn’t do that is because what his requirements were, what he wanted us to do, we followed. He never went to each trapline. Maybe if we broke his expectation, he might have come, but we never did anything...The beaver boss never asked us to see if we did anything wrong. The only person the MNR ever talked to was Daniel (Whitehead Moose, October 15, 2008).

With regards to the role of senior trappers, the selected leaders were individuals recognized for their activity on specific areas of their traditional territory (see section 4.2.3 above). However, the overlap between the government traplines and customary land use was not always straightforward and it meant that accommodation within the community was necessary. For example, although government officials held trappers accountable to the new rules, Pikangikum people continued to observe their normative imperative to share resources, including by allowing access to the trapline to others through customary channels. Providing access to others continued to be one of the responsibilities of local leaders. In practice, if someone wished to trap in an area, they would have to obtain consent from the senior trapper. George K. Strang was senior trapper near Poplar Hill and his area was frequently used by people from Poplar Hill:

As the head trapper there, Poplar Hill people have always called me to ask permission to use that area; even if they want to trap beaver, they have always done that and this is a good thing. My only concern is when people move in there without
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asking, without consulting with me. I am not happy with that (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).

Succession of areas

In the 1930s, Hallowell (1992) emphasized that he had found no rigid principle of intergenerational succession of hunting areas in the traditional system. However, writing soon after implementation of the government trapline system, Dunning (1959) concluded that, with few exceptions, succession of trapline areas occurred partrilineally, and that residence on trapline areas in the time of increasing government influence has tended to favour increased rigidity of this system of succession (Dunning, 1959). Although this has generally been the case, as observed in each of the map biographies I conducted, understanding the actual succession process can offer insight into continuity with customary leadership, primarily through the role of elders in decision-making.

The role of senior trapper was usually passed to a person of the next generation who was knowledgeable about the area:  

The head trapper used to be Peter K. Strang; that was my father’s brother. When Peter was old he gave that trapline area to me to be the head trapper. The reason he gave that area to me was that he was impressed by how I worked the land, how I worked that area when I was young (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).

Timmy K. Strang was given the trapline by George K. Strang’s wife, Marie K. Strang, after George passed away. Timmy explained that his elder brother Kenneth went to school while Timmy did not, so he did not trap as much as Timmy during his youth (Timmy K. Strang, interview notes, July 26, 2007). In practice, there may be substantial uncertainty as to who should take the leadership position next, as is evident from this statement made by Talbot Turtle, who spoke about the future succession of his area:

I haven’t really thought about that; I don’t have anybody in mind. Likely somebody will take over my area when I am gone. I don’t know if it will be one of my sons. None of my sons go there and I don’t go there myself. I don’t know who else goes there (Talbot Turtle, interview transcript, February 2, 2005).
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Talbot’s statement suggests that one of his own sons may not be the appropriate choice for trapline leadership considering they were no longer active in the area.

Looking to Dunning’s records for examples, Abraham Keeper was relatively old, and because his mobility was limited, he was trapping in a small area of his own near the community of Pikangikum at the time Dunning did his studies. This would suggest that flexibility for this type of arrangement continued after trapline registration. However, it appears Abraham also had authority in relation to the trapping area around Pikangikum, as he was able to pass on responsibility for the area to a family member:

Abraham Keeper had several brothers. Before he died, he turned over that responsibility to Maggie Black (his sister). When Maggie was old, she turned it over to her grandson, Ayou Turtle. She was the only senior trapper in the area. She had one son. She could have delegated to her son but didn’t...If there were more elders, then she should have conferred with them. Since there were no others, she made the decision on her own (Paddy Peters, interview transcript, August 16, 2007).

The case presented by Paddy Peters suggests continuity between the customary system and the registered trapline system in terms of succession, for which the practice of passing down areas to family members appears to have been the norm. Women acted only rarely as senior trappers, but elder women participated in the process of succession. I was given the name of another woman who took leadership of her area before the registered trapline system came in: “There’s a woman named Chaap. Her husband was Joozhii. He passed away and she became leader of the area” (Oliver Hill, September 10, 2007). In practice, cases arose where a senior trapper was “next in line” based on their patriline, but leadership was enacted by elders of the area. New, younger senior trappers continued to defer to elders as in the cases of Bobby Suggashie, Robinson Peters, Jim Turtle and Alvis Peters, all of whom were younger, but well respected middle-aged senior trappers who had recently taken on this responsibility at the time of fieldwork.
4.3.4 Flexibility and movement following trapline registration

The introduction of the trapline registration system changed the ways in which Pikangikum people used the land and moved across new boundaries. In describing their changes in land use and movement across the land prior to trapline registration, Pikangikum people emphasized important differences:

After traplines were established...you couldn’t trap with others like you could before. Elders talk about what it was like before...one big area...These boundaries were made rigid. People were told to pick up traps that were across the line from their territories (Paddy Peters, interview notes, November 15, 2006).

On the one hand, the policy of the Province was to encourage steady, long-term occupation of a single area to foster good wildlife stewardship as well as to guard against poaching of valuable fur resources. Government policy in this regard was explained by Crichton (1948):

A trapper is required to spend as much time on his trapline as possible in order to thoroughly look after and maintain it. In this way, the District office can very well see just who are looking after their traplines and who are not.44

Although there appears to be some overlap between the government perspective and the customary imperative to share use of harvesting areas, government policy derived significantly from western notions of private tenure and usufruct, and had the additional effect of putting trapline tenure at risk if an area was not being actively trapped. For First Nations, this introduced the possibility that the government could revoke land use rights using the justification of non-utilization. “The head trapper wants to see activity on the land, because the MNR will come by and survey that area to see if there’s any activity. We suspect that the MNR will put somebody else there to trap” (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007). Senior trapper John Pierre Kejick explained that senior trappers may invite others to trap in their registered trapline area,

44Crichton, 1948
“Just to know that people are there. Just to make signs that you were there” (interview transcript, October 23, 2007). In this respect, the increasing encroachment of forestry and mining from the south may have encouraged trappers to ensure their presence on the land for fear that the government might re-allocate access to the land.

Yet, fear of losing formal tenure over an area was not the only—or for that matter the most important—driver of interchange and flexibility between trapline areas. Instead, sharing of resources was a necessary adaptative strategy with regard to variability in resource abundance. This meant that access and harvesting rights were negotiated with respect to the appropriate authority of an area, and the senior trapper was the person responsible for facilitating exchanges in trapline membership. It was the senior trapper who extended an invitation or gave permission for trappers to move to their trapline if they wished to change traplines on a temporary or long-term basis.

Dunning’s archived notes contain a number of sketched maps and charts in which he linked family groups to lakes on extended family harvesting areas. Based on Dunning’s data, WFMC data, and my own notes, table 4.4 illustrates long-term changes in extended family groups present at camps at harvesting areas, and makes it possible to observe long-term trends in family group movement between areas. Dunning often used clan names in his notes, but also names of group leaders in order to identify family group ties to particular areas. I followed his logic of using clan names, rather than personal names or Christian surnames, which made it easier to represent the dynamics of extended family group associations with areas. Clan affiliation is inherited patrilineally, so it is easier to identify processes of succession of areas during a period when Christian surnames were rare and inconsistent across generations. Although families had Christian surnames by the time traplines were registered, clan names have been used to maintain continuity with Dunning’s data.

Because Dunning’s maps and charts represent snapshots of harvesting area organization beginning in 1876, he has made it possible to reconstruct a time series showing
movement of extended family groups from the late fur-trade period to the present. There appears to have been a change in family harvesting areas at several of the major lakes. It also seems that new sites were occupied over time, although this may reflect the quality of the record more than actual expansion into new areas. It is also possible that relatively large harvesting areas were sub-divided through time as the population increased, as is indicated by Dunning for the later years covered in his own archival research (Dunning papers, University of Toronto Archives). In the customary land use system, undue emphasis should not be placed on the boundedness of family areas. Boundaries were flexibly defined. Dunning’s clan-named groups are associated with major lakes, not with particular areas, thus, he did not attempt to map out the area boundaries as did Hallowell, merely central locations of family groups.

Government personnel made regular note of the trappers on a trapline, and recorded changes to trapline membership on an annual basis. Trappers could formally make arrangements to switch between traplines at annual trapline meetings held in the community with government officials, likely in an effort to ensure traplines were seen to be
in use (see above). Dunning (1959: 27) noted that changes in personnel on the traplines were made in accordance with trappers’ wishes at such meetings. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources staff note that these meetings changed location and format throughout the latter half of the 20th century and in the 1980s they were discontinued. The last meetings were held in Red Lake (Claire Qwewezence, Personal communication, October 3, 2008). Other means of communication with senior trappers continued to be pursued, namely one-on-one meetings, and through written communication.

The interchange of individuals and families between areas on both a long-term, and a more temporary basis was often referred to in terms of a senior trapper taking on helpers. Matthew Strang recalled how his older brother George B. Strang had invited the elder Ogima to his trapline when Matthew was sixteen years old. Matthew was also invited to trap for two years with Moses Pascal at Keeper Lake shortly after the traplines were delineated. Moses was Matthew’s senior of ten years, and was a friend of Matthew’s (Matthew Strang, interview notes, August 3, 2007). At the time, both George B. Strang and Moses Pascal were younger members of their trapline areas. By Matthew’s interpretation, often the role of helper involved a teaching relationship.

It was not infrequent for trappers to seek and obtain permission to cross boundaries to trap portions of adjacent traplines on a more temporary basis. For example, in order to trap watersheds extending into others’ trapline areas. Jimmy Keeper showed how his brothers crossed their trapline boundary into Norman Quill’s area, but obtained permission to do this (Jimmy Keeper, interview notes, March 18, 2009; also see appendix B, section 1). On the other hand, permission did not always appear to be necessary. For example, Jake I. Quill pointed out two lakes he would trap located outside his trapline area. Jake told me he did not need to obtain permission to trap at those lakes because “nobody goes to those lakes” (Jake I. Quill, interview notes, July 24, 2007). The distinction between the two statements is important as it highlights the idea that the traplines were not regarded as containers of individual authority, but were areas in
which people asserted entitlements to use.

Whitehead Moose pointed to the importance of living with close relations:

After [trapline registration] we were everybody at their trapline, each family or relatives, I guess that’s the reason today they go there. To be with their relatives or brothers. Whoever is a member of that trapline. To hunt, or to fish, or to trap (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008).

Although staying with close relations may have been preferable, local resource scarcity was an important driver of movement and flexibility. Matthew Strang moved to Moses Pascal’s area because there were no beaver houses in his own area:

Some people share. Moses [Pascal, for example], I was on the trapline at Berens Lake and he wanted me to come to trap with him at Job Lake. I went to trap with him. There were no beaver houses in my area. Moses knew I didn’t have any beaver. He just asked ...I walked with Moses because he knew the area. I didn’t know the area. I was about 25. I had my own traps. I trapped the same lodges as Moses (Matthew Strang, October 26, 2007).

Occasionally, large extended family groups were able to re-locate together. Just before 1947, an entire extended family group, including six male trappers, split off from their former customary area to make arrangements to trap in another relatively empty area. As recorded in the archives and told through personal accounts, Daniel Peters and his son Charlie, along with a group of other trappers moved from Roderick Lake to go to the area containing Silcox Lake, Upper Goose Lake and Mamakwash Lake.

My father [Charlie Peters] was invited to go to another trapline, other than the one he was born at. From then on, that’s where he went. You have to be invited to go to another trapline. It’s possible to ask people to trap on their trapline, or if you want to use a section of the trapline (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, November 15, 2006).

This group obtained permission to trap in this area from Walter King, who previously, was one of only two trappers in that area. When registration came up, Daniel Peters became senior trapper. Dunning noted that Walter King continued to hunt on his own in an area separate from Daniel’s group (Dunning papers, University of Toronto
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Archives). Charlie Peters’ life history map (see figure B.3 in appendix B, section 4) shows this move from a sizeable area over which he trapped when he was young, to his new area.

Although it did not happen often, traplines were divided or united, and boundaries were re-drawn after the initial registration in 1947. It was possible to make arrangements with adjacent leaders and bring formal changes to trapline boundaries to government managers for approval. Norman Quill described to me how his trapline area was expanded to include a portion of a neighbouring trapline (see figure 4.6):

A long time ago, my father had a friend who was living at North Spirit Lake, another elder Wahbisheshi. That elder had his trapline area where he marked it [A and C], connected to my area [B]. That elder gave his trapline to my father. So my father turned it over to me shortly after that. To be fair to those people living in that area, they have a cabin there, I only took a portion of that area [C] to where the line is drawn (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009).

The presence of customary mechanisms for flexibility could account for the relatively weak influence traplines appear to have had on the customary system. John Macfie remembered rarely needing to deal with boundary disputes—the last time being in 1952—and thought that people “either settled on boundaries, or chose to ignore them” (John Macfie, interview notes, January 6, 2008). Map biography interviews with Pikangikum trappers substantiated part of this claim. Indeed, boundaries were not ignored, and seem to have been taken seriously by senior trappers and their helpers. It appears people respected the boundaries yet dealt with exchanges through their own customary system (including both short-term and long-term changes in trapline membership), and sought permission from the appropriate authorities before crossing them.

4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter began by looking at the interaction between two levels of community organization, the winter harvesting area, mostly based around the family level, and the
Figure 4.6: Norman Quill’s trapline extension
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summer settlement, when more families met together. It examined broad continuities and changes in the traditional family area system as Pikangikum people engaged with the new registered trapline system, and examined the process by which the traplines came into place.

Traplines were instruments for the northward spread of formal state natural resource management institutions. Through the trapline system, the government assigned rights to harvesting areas to avoid fur depletion, and, purportedly, to protect First Nation interests in the north. Traplines were conceived by the two levels of government as a means to encourage conservation practices through the allocation of property rights to fur resources. Registration of traplines was based on the customary family harvesting areas for speed and efficiency. The result was boundaries that were fixed in time and space. Further, they also introduced rules and institutions which impacted the ways Pikangikum people interacted with each other, and interacted with government resource management authorities. In Pikangikum, people felt that government managers were using people’s knowledge against them to restrict their activities in their harvesting areas.

The customary land use system, before the arrival of traplines, was characterized by flexible and unbounded areas associated with kin groups with prior rights to use. A question arising from the interaction with state resource management is whether Pikangikum people could continue to go out on the land following their customary system after the registration process was completed, or whether the trapline system did away with the traditional system. As this chapter shows, continuity of this system is evident through the custom of asking permission from the senior trapper when going to trap in another trapline area. Succession of areas did not follow a straightforward pattern based on inheritance, but continued to be tied to a person’s knowledge gained through experience.

The trapline system was not the first instance of extended interaction with western
resource management, but it was the first systematic interaction with government re-
source management institutions. It was also the first time the community obtained gov-
ernment licenses to conduct a traditional activity on their land, granting them exclusive
rights to harvest fur commercially in their area. This amounted to a kind of affirma-
tion of land use rights by the state. Meanwhile, a purposeful avoidance of involvement
of the state in sanctioning and rule-enforcement was adopted by Pikangikum people.
It appears as though Pikangikum people wanted the state involved in enforcement of
trapline rules *vis-à-vis* non-First Nations trappers, but did not want the government
involved in their internal affairs. Although incursion of Euro-Canadian trappers pre-
sented a new concern, Pikangikum people did not wish to extend rules against trespass
to their own relations. Trusting relationships, and the flexibility to change areas, not
exclusion in the sense of private tenure, were the basis of survival.

Trapline organization served to regulate and organize the commercial fur harvest.
Other land uses, including other parts of the seasonal resource use cycle were gov-
erned by other relationships. The next chapter deals with other resources that cannot
be understood to be governed by the logic of the trapline system.
The previous chapter was dedicated to describing the introduction of the government trapline system, and presented data more generally related to movement between harvesting sites and between trapline areas. In this chapter I further explore the articulation between customary harvesting activities and the government trapline system by considering how other commercial and subsistence harvesting activities interacted with traplines. The government traplines were introduced for the purpose of fur management. Because the thesis revolves, in part, around questions about the implications of the trapline system for customary land use, in this chapter I am interested in exploring the impact of the traplines on access and authority related to non-fur resources.

Family harvesting areas were more than just parcels of land dedicated to fur production. The same could be said for registered trapline areas after their introduction, as traplines evolved as governmentally sanctioned representations of the customary system of fur harvesting areas. The resources discussed in this chapter were not, for the most part, regulated under the government trapline system. Because the traplines were the most important organizational unit for fur trade activity, it is important to inquire into the relationship of traplines with other harvesting activities which supported the fur trade, namely hunting for subsistence purposes, but also other commercial activi-
ties such as fishing and wild rice harvesting.

With trapline delineation came more government oversight over people’s everyday land use activities. Hunters and trappers were told to stay within their family areas. However, as chapter four has shown, the trapline system did not fundamentally change the way Pikangikum people gained access to and used family areas. Pikangikum people registered their trapline areas as per government regulations, but ignored or resisted rules that came along with the new system in the everyday practice of carrying out harvesting activities. It seems people generally abstained from reporting on each other’s infringement of government trapline rules, and made informal arrangements among themselves to make use of each other’s trapline areas. In this process, continuity with customary spatial authority is also evident in the process of trapline registration.

This reaction to government oversight may be understood to have evolved for a multiplicity of reasons, from disdain for government involvement in everyday life, to avoidance of government quotas. More critically, the family areas system was not simply a product of fur trade economic relations, but played an important role in coordinating subsistence livelihood activities as well. Subsistence dynamics drove the customary harvesting system as did the fur harvest, indicating that subsistence harvesting constituted a very important concern. This is reinforced by Whitehead Moose’s assertion that traplines were fundamentally connected to survival (see section 4.2.3) and John Macfie’s observation on the importance of furbearers as subsistence resources (see section 4.3.2). The seasonal logic of dispersal associated with extended family areas and summer gathering sites described in chapter four becomes the basis for my analysis of norms of access and resource use in this chapter. During the period of fur trade activity in living memory, and in historical records, family areas underlay customary access to furbearers, and formed the basis for land-based organization for much of the year. Because most land-based commercial harvesting activity was spatially oriented around the fur harvest, subsistence activities were usually spatially associated with this sea-
sonal round, with important exceptions (e.g. the fish and hare period described in the literature review).

In this chapter, I look at the interaction between the registered trapline system and other harvesting activities. In doing this, I set up a division for analytical purposes between norms of access for subsistence use, and norms of access for commercial harvesting of resources. In this way, I aim to integrate a broader study of resource use and the underlying patterns of spatial organization through inclusion of both subsistence (production for household needs) and commercial harvests (production for the market). The LUS makes a distinction between commercial and subsistence harvesting activities. Shooneeyahkaywee ohtahchee eeteeseeweenahn are translated as commercial livelihood pursuits, and include trapping, fishing, wild rice harvesting, and artisinal production (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 10).

Because harvesting activities (both for subsistence and commercial ends) were typically combined, spatially and temporally, this analytical separation does not aim to simplify Pikangikum hunters’ holistic approach to harvesting. It is rather a heuristic way to analyze the larger issue of how access is mediated and how this mediation intersects with government regulation and the registered trapline system. Although the sections of this chapter illustrate harvesting norms related to different harvesting activities, the topics of spatial access, knowledge, and authority are considered cumulatively as norms emerge throughout the chapter.

The primary objective addressed in this chapter is to understand the way personal authority and access to non-fur resources for subsistence use and commercial sale work in the context of the government trapline system. How did the customary land use system hold up in relation to the trapline system and other experiences with state regulation of land use? In this way, the chapter addresses the question of how access and authority worked for resources which were not regulated under the government
trapline system. The scope here is to understand the system of norms of use and access associated with these resources. Specific questions include: how does one go about obtaining access to harvest in another group’s area? What is the role for trapline-level authority in this mediation? How does leadership work around non-fur harvesting?

In addition, Pikangikum people related through stories and statements that they did not consider themselves the only ones mediating access. Apart from the powerful role exerted by government managers, animals and non-human persons modified their environments and played a role in directing people to use appropriate behaviour in their presence.

Organizationally, the chapter addresses access by harvesting activity. I document norms related to a host of resources which are harvested by Pikangikum people in addition to furbearers. First, norms related to subsistence harvesting are examined. These resources are grouped together under the general categories of hunting, fishing, and plant harvesting, and details are provided by example for larger taxonomic groups, or at the species level (e.g. moose or waterfowl), in order to draw out particularly those resources with a high subsistence activity in the community. These sections are intended to examine the ways in which Pikangikum people organized spatially around these harvests according to their customary system. The chapter then turns to government regulation of commercial resource harvesting (see section 5.2)—namely wild rice and fish—and considers the relationship of these commercial harvests with the family areas, filling in the relationship of these areas with regard to authority and leadership associated with these harvests.

5.1 Norms of subsistence harvesting

During the lifetimes of Pikangikum’s elders and senior trappers, subsistence and commercial harvesting were not normally spatially or temporally separate spheres of ac-
Chapter 5 Access and authority for harvests other than furbearers

tivity. Commercial fur harvesting was supported by subsistence harvesting, and vice versa, allowing for many families to continue to live on the land during long periods of the year. Both income from the fur trade, and food from hunting, fishing, and trapping were critical aspects of livelihood strategies while there was an active trade in furs. This continued to be the case until the late 1980s when fur prices collapsed. Commercial fishing and wild rice harvesting constituted additional commercial activities which intersected with subsistence food harvesting and fur harvesting.

The pursuit of these livelihood activities necessitated a certain range of movement between different hunting, trapping, and fishing areas. From chapter four, it is evident that seasonal flexibility of movement was complemented by movement on an inter-annual basis between family harvesting areas. That is, people would associate with a trapping area for a major part of the year, then make arrangements to go to a different area in another year. In numerous cases following trapline registration, family groups have maintained their trapline boundaries but have continued to co-operate, camp together, and hunt together, even though they occupied different registered traplines. In his own observations, Dunning (1959) noted that the role of extended family groups associated with trapping territories had a broader scope than simply organization for the commercial fur trade:

From [a group of relatives who regularly live together], two, three, or four trappers go together on their traplines or on a moose hunt. Meat from the hunt and some meat from fur-bearing animals is shared... certain tasks such as house-building or trips to the post are done cooperatively. A man always calls for assistance from persons in this unit (Dunning, 1959: 57).

Although extended family groups are certainly important, Dunning’s statement is not entirely consistent with my own experience. Movement of people on the land was not as structured as Dunning set it out to be. Not only did people tend to range over wider areas over their lifetimes than Dunning indicated, but reliance on ones extended family group did not eclipse broader relationships between friends and more distant relations.
While it was common for people to hunt, fish, and trap with their extended family members, it was not unusual for people to access others’ harvesting areas, often accompanied with friends or distant kin. It is possible to draw out two norms related to access that can be used to guide the discussion of results presented in this chapter:

1. While senior trappers must be notified when a person wishes to trap in another’s trapline area, there appears to be no need to obtain the senior trapper’s permission for subsistence harvesting in another family’s area.

2. At the same time, it is considered appropriate behaviour to let people with spatial authority (e.g. the senior trapper or an elder) know of one’s activities in their area. It was also common practice for a person to share meat from their catch with others from that area, although not necessarily with the senior trapper.

Access to resources needed for subsistence (or survival) was not usually dealt with as a matter separate from commercial harvesting. Because trapping is associated with a larger complex of livelihood activities, a trapper would be able to hunt and fish for his own household’s use if invited to go to another’s trapline. I asked senior trapper Tom Quill Sr. if hunters needed to ask his permission to go to his trapline, to which he responded that this was only necessary for those who wished to go trapping. On the other hand, Tom Quill Sr. specified that he did not expect to be asked by those wishing only to go hunting in his trapline area: “They go trapping to sell the furs, but they hunt to eat.” (Tom Quill Sr., interview transcript, June 11, 2007). It was common practice to go to one’s own trapline area for any kind of harvest, although many factors may have made it more practical to go elsewhere. This appeared to be motivated out of a combination of respect for others’ areas, and knowledge of one’s own area. Senior trapper Ayou Turtle said people now asked him only if they wanted to shoot beaver to eat (Ayou Turtle, interview notes, October 31, 2007).
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Norms of access were articulated to me using the term *gidawayin*, meaning sharing or borrowing without expectation of receiving something in return (Paddy Peters, fieldnotes, October 12, 2007). Oliver Hill noted *gidawayin* would be used to describe the action of giving another person meat from a hunt, for example if someone asked for moose meat. *Gidawayin* could also be used to describe a trapper’s request to change traplines. Oliver Hill explained how another trapper, Jim Turtle, registered on his trapline, wanted to invite Eli Kejick to go with him on the trapline. Jim Turtle asked Oliver Hill who was senior trapper for his area. Oliver said he accepted this arrangement and did not expect anything in return. Oliver further specified that the term *gidawayin* would not be used to obtain access to another area in order to hunt moose or to go fishing (Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 17, 2007). In the latter cases no permission would be required.

This ontological difference between going to a trapline to trap furbearers for sale on the fur market, and going to an area to hunt or fish for one’s own household needs is differentiated here in terms of a sharing relationship. Elder Matthew Strang explained this further:

You wouldn’t have to ask anybody for going hunting and fishing in their trapline. Say for instance…somebody from another trapline area would approach another person in another trapline area. This person wants to trap in that area, that’s when the term would be used. So it’s for trapping. In terms of trapping, that’s the way that term is used. [Trapping without obtaining permission] would be stealing from another trapline area. It’s always been done like that for hunting and fishing. [The term] was never used. It doesn’t matter with duck hunting, as long as they don’t shoot anything like beaver, muskrat and these animals are sold (Matthew Strang, October 26, 2007).

In the examples Matthew used, permission from the senior trapper is not required to hunt, but appropriate behaviour (i.e. not shooting furbearers for sale) would be expected.

It became apparent as I asked around that cases where people explicitly asked permission to use a trapline area were relatively few. For short hunting trips, people often
hunted with those who knew the area, because they were from the area. Frequently, hunters from different families and different areas would invite each other to hunt in one another’s area. For example, Nathan Quill told me he went moose hunting at Kirkness and Stormer Lakes with his cousin, Kenneth King who is from that area (Nathan Quill, fieldnotes, September 13, 2007). In such cases, norms pertaining to access or sharing of the catch or equipment did not appear to be overtly structured, and were arranged relatively informally. In cases of difficulty of physical access to an area, a person might need to camp, stay in another family’s cabin, or borrow equipment. In such cases, permission is usually obtained prior to the hunting trip.

_Furbearers_

Trapping for fur was linked to procuring food, especially during the years of active trade in furs, when individuals and families spent months at a time away from the community dedicated to this activity. With the waning of the fur trade in the late 1980s, a switch from hunting of furbearers with intent to sell furs on the market, to an interest solely in their value for food provision is reflected in the absence of norms related to commercial trapping of furbearers. A focus on hunting and trapping of furbearers for food has shifted these activities away from the sphere of norms of access and use pertaining to commercial harvesting. In 2007, norms for hunting and trapping of furbearers could be described alongside norms applied for other valuable subsistence resources.

Beaver/amik (Castor canadensis), once one of the most important commodities of the fur trade, took on nearly exclusive importance as food for household consumption following the decline of the trade. Regardless of its low market value, both hunting and trapping of beaver has continued in spite of the low commercial value of fur. In 2007 Jake I. Quill told me he trapped two beaver, but he did not sell the fur (fieldnotes, July 24, 2007). Charlie Pascal told me that if a person were to trap in another group’s trapline
area, “you would only need to ask if you wanted to trap fur to sell” (fieldnotes, October 8, 2008). Charlie’s statement indicates that the norm of asking permission when trapping of furbearers encountered in the previous chapter would lose importance when food was needed.

When trapping for furbearers on another’s family area, I inquired into norms of sharing of meat. Although I received a range of responses, no requirement, or rule could be said to apply to the sharing of meat, but typically some would go to the senior trapper. Oliver Hill gave an example for muskrat/washeshk (Ondatra zibethicus) hunting: a person might give some meat to the senior trapper of the line where the muskrat was trapped, but there were no clear rules (Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 14, 2008). Paddy Peters stated, “You have permission from that person to trap beaver, you would get the meat but give the fur to the head trapper” (Paddy Peters, interview notes, October 11, 2007).

Until the decline of the fur trade, shooting beaver—as opposed to trapping beaver for fur—was considered inappropriate, as was trapping of furbearers in the summer. These practices decreased the value of the fur for sale on the market. Restrictive norms on shooting furbearers appear to have been recently relaxed in Pikangikum. In 2007, shooting furbearers such as beaver was widely practiced. An interview with Elder Matthew Strang revealed that some senior trappers have continued to pay attention to hunting of furbearers in their areas. Matthew Strang told me his brother, senior trapper George B. Strang continued to restrict trappers on his trapline from shooting beaver (George B. Strang, interview notes, October 14, 2008). On the other hand, when I visited him on his trapline for two weeks in April, Senior trapper Larry Pascal took me out to shoot beaver in his trapline area. Larry told me anyone is entitled to hunt or trap beaver in his area as long as they are hunting to eat. He specified, however, that on his trapline, only he, his father, and brother, and father’s brother-in-law trapped or hunted furbearers (fieldnotes, April 15, 2007). The small number of people using Larry’s area
was likely related to the remoteness of this trapline from the community, a relationship which will be explored in chapter 6. While staying at Gordon Suggashie’s camp in late April on the north end of Pikangikum Lake, we shot two beaver and a muskrat for family consumption. No furs were kept, and no meat was shared with the senior trapper of the line. Gordon said he had not obtained permission specifically for this hunt because his grandmother, who was part of the extended family of the senior trapper, had told him to take care of the land on her behalf. This suggests that although Gordon did not have trapline-level authority, he had received some level of spatial authority from his grandmother. Gordon suggested that some people left beaver to rot. He understood that although it was important for him to discourage this practice, he saw no issue with people shooting beaver to eat (fieldnotes, April 20, 2007).

While actively trapping during the fur trade period, Matthew Strang listed wolf and snowshoe hare as the only species of commercial value he remembered being hunted during the summer months, when fur would be expected to be of poor quality, and thus yield a low economic return (Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 2, 2007). Snowshoe hare, which historically had low commercial value—but was important for food and material for clothing—could be hunted or snared by anyone. Snowshoe hare were usually snared and consumed immediately in the vicinity of camps, dwellings, or gathering areas and communities. While staying with Larry Pascal and his family at Keeper Lake in the spring and fall, we immediately set snares for hare in the bush behind their cabins upon arrival. Most of the hare we snared was consumed immediately. Near Pikangikum, I was invited to hunt snowshoe hare with John Pierre Kejick (fieldnotes, October 27, 2007). We travelled by boat ten minutes south of the community on Pikangikum Lake to a hunting area John Pierre frequented. John Pierre was an active hunter and trapper with a trapline located near the community to the south along the road. Hunting for hare in this area at Pikangikum Lake did not warrant special permission or arrangements.
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Large ungulates

Two species of large ungulates were hunted in the Pikangikum area, moose/moos (Alces alces), and woodland caribou/atik (Rangifer tarandus). Moose was more commonly encountered than caribou in most areas of the Whitefeather Forest area, and were more widely sought as well. Moose hunting was often a rather opportunistic activity. The most popular period for moose hunting was mid to late fall, but moose were hunted at any time of year in practice, when they were encountered during travel, or while conducting other activities such as fishing or trapping (Lizzy Turtle, Lucy Strang, interview notes, November 30, 2006). It was not uncommon to hear of moose being tracked during winter near the community, or along the winter road. In one example, Eli Kejick told me he and a group of three of his cousins went to his area at Nungesser Lake looking for waterfowl during the fall migration. They came across signs of moose, and decided to track it (fieldnotes, September 18, 2007). In another instance, when out on a day-fishing trip less than ten kilometers south of the community during summer, we heard six shots nearby. Amos Quill, who had taken me fishing, presumed the shots had been fired at a moose, and showed me he had taken a gun along in case we also encountered a moose on our trip (fieldnotes, June 16, 2007).

During planned moose hunts in the fall, the most common hunting technique involved moving along the shoreline with a motorized boat or canoe. Moose could be called to the shoreline more easily at dusk or at night. Calling from a boat was the only method practiced at Larry Pascal’s trapline during a hunting trip we took in the fall of 2007 with Larry’s extended family. During the fall, hunters often travelled in small groups of two to four people.

Neither planned, nor unplanned hunting were restricted to one’s own trapline area. Travelling by boat with Larry Pascal and his two sons-in-law during our fall moose hunting trip, we crossed into the trapline north of his own, nearly making it to Cairns
Lake (see figure 5.1). Although no moose were killed on this particular trip, this group was able to cross into an adjacent trapline without obtaining prior permission from the senior trapper (fieldnotes, September 24, 2007). Prior to becoming senior trapper, Larry travelled with his father and his family up Keeper River system too. They went into Pauingassi trapline areas (Larry Pascal, interview notes, September 30, 2007).

Although Pikangikum hunters travelled widely, often crossing multiple trapline boundaries in search of moose, moose hunts were often conducted in a hunter’s trapline area, or were planned with a member of a trapline group where hunters would be spending the most time. Paddy Peters explained that he usually went to his father’s area in the Silcox Lake area, and to his father-in-law, Norman Quill’s area at Sampson Lake.
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He chose these areas “out of respect” (fieldnotes, Paddy Peters, August 2, 2007). Paddy has hunted in other trapline areas when asked, including the Berens River and Barton Lake areas which are popular among Pikangikum hunters. People from Pikangikum hunted on Berens Lake on the route from the community to Red Lake (Paddy Peters, August 2, 2007). As a matter of practice, respect for others’ traplines made it more likely to find people hunting in their own trapline areas if they were planning to be hunting for an extended period away from the community. On planned moose hunts, moose were often hunted with the help of knowledgeable individuals when travelling in another family’s area. Although Charlie Pascal went hunting with his own group on Larry’s trapline area, Charlie Pascal’s group of three hunters flew to Larry’s camp and coordinated their activities with Larry Pascal’s family group. Charlie’s group also borrowed one of Larry’s boats for the duration of their visit (fieldnotes, October 3, 2008).

I observed that senior trappers were often aware of others hunting on their trapline areas, indicating that prior arrangements or notification had been sought on the part of the hunting parties. In the summer of 2007, Timmy K. Strang noted footprints while walking along a portage trail on his trapline area. Timmy identified these footprints as belonging to Daniel Quill. He noted that Daniel, Jake I. Quill, and others had come up from Pikangikum to go moose hunting on his trapline (Timmy K. Strang, July 26, 2007). Timmy said he knew the prints belonged to Daniel Quill because he was there a couple of weeks before (fieldnotes, July 26, 2007). Matthew Strang noted that senior trappers usually know when someone has gone moose hunting on their trapline area, but there was no need for hunters to ask permission (Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 2, 2007). Oliver Hill and Matthew Strang agreed that while they were aware of cases where senior trappers resented others travelling to their traplines to hunt moose, other people were not prevented from hunting moose in another group’s area (Oliver Hill, Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 2, 2007).
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A show of respect for spatial authority could be accomplished both through restricting ones activities in an area, or notifying the senior trapper, but also through sharing of meat from the hunt as described by Elder William Strang:

Poplar Hill people often go into my area to hunt. I give them that access. There are plenty of moose in there and an increase in caribou coming into that area. The only thing I don’t permit is for people to trap. I like to keep that for myself and my family. Anything else I give permission for Poplar Hill people. Part of the reason is that I am connected to Poplar Hill, through family members. I have never known for them to go over me as the head trapper there, to do any trapping. They share with me whatever they hunt there, they share the meat (William Strang, interview notes, February 2, 2005).

I could not, however, identify consistent rules for sharing meat with the senior trapper; only that it was generally practiced. Meat was also shared with other extended family members and with others in the community. Examples of sharing of moose meat serve here to illustrate a range of practices in this regard. Matthew Strang told me “if he was leaving his area with moose meat, and met someone on the way home, he would give them some meat. When someone would arrive at the [community] dock with moose, they would shout for people to come and get some meat” (Matthew Strang, interview notes, March 24, 2009). In the fall of 2007, Eli Strang killed two moose, a mother and calf. He told me he gave the whole calf to elders because of the tender meat. Someone helped Eli transport the moose from one of the community docks so he gave that person part of rump (fieldnotes, September 18, 2007). Oliver Hill described to me how a fellow trapline group member, Jim Turtle, shot a moose at Mud Lake on his trapline. Jim called Sam Quill, his father in law, by satellite phone to pick it up with a plane. Sam Quill kept the whole moose (Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 14, 2007). Jacob Moose usually hunted from his camp on an island on Roderick Lake across from the senior trapper’s camp. He recalled how he killed two moose during the fall moose hunt in 2007, and gave a portion of the meat to the senior trapper, Paul Moose, who is also Jacob’s uncle (fieldnotes, October 9, 2007).
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Waterfowl

Waterfowl hunting carried with it a similar normative relationship to the trapline system as other subsistence harvesting activities described above. Although no prior permission was required from senior trappers in order to hunt for ducks or geese on another’s trapline area, appropriate behaviour, was expected of hunters travelling in other peoples’ areas.

Hunters often organized in small groups, or with a single partner. Because of spatial constraints on good duck hunting areas, the likelihood of crowding of hunters in one place increases the likelihood of ducks or geese being disturbed by others. Where blinds were built and used by groups of hunters, people might return to areas where their blinds were set up, and other groups would not typically use these.

Waterfowl were most intensively hunted in the spring. Hunting began as soon as inlets and sections of swift current began to have open water where waterfowl could land. There were a number of early spring open water areas near Pikangikum. Figure 5.2 shows a map of harvesting activities near Gordon Suggashie’s camp in Pikangikum Bay where we stayed in late April of 2007. Duck hunting and fishing were practiced near such areas of open water. The map includes points taken on our daily excursions from the camp. Duck hunting was the primary purpose of these trips during our stay over the break-up period. In practice, anyone could hunt at these areas without obtaining permission first from the senior trapper or others with spatial authority. In 2007, Pikangikum Lake and its associated river outlets and wetland areas did not see more than a few groups at a time. Gordon Suggashie noted thick ice in Pikangikum Bay that particular spring meant there were fewer hunters than usual (fieldnotes, April 24, 2007). This usually meant there was ample space for anyone who wanted to hunt, but this was not always the case. A young, active hunter in his early twenties, McKendrie Suggashie, explained that there were no hard rules to regulate where one could hunt.
Sometimes people got upset because of noise made by other hunting groups in close proximity (Fieldnotes, April 16, 2007). In one instance at Pikangikum Bay, I found Gordon Suggashie, in a poorly located position near his hunting camp along the shoreline calling ducks. He explained he was there because the areas where he usually hunted were getting too crowded (Fieldnotes, April 24, 2007).

The situation was different at Larry Pascal’s family hunting camp at Keeper Lake in 2007. Crowding was not an issue during the spring duck hunting season because his was the only hunting group in the area. Hunting for ducks began before dusk. Hunters would approach a blind near an area of swift current which kept the water open in early spring. This blind was constructed about 300m from the hunting camp. This morning hunt was usually the most successful. Following this, a snowmobile was used throughout the day to access other points of open water, and at the same time, to check traps set for beaver. Open water areas were approached quietly on foot without the use of hunting blinds (fieldnotes, April 2007).

Outside of the traditional spring and fall waterfowl hunting seasons, ducks and geese were still hunted when encountered by chance. While travelling by canoe with Timmy K. Strang on his trapline in July, we encountered a group of yearling geese in a small bay. Timmy got out of the boat and followed the geese into the woods. He managed to kill six of eight geese. Some of these were consumed immediately, and some were frozen in a freezer, in a fishing lodge he maintained, for transport to the community at the end of our trip.

Fish

Subsistence fishing involved the use of seine nets and fishing lines, and was practiced in all seasons. Walleye/oohkuhseh (*Sander vitreus*) appeared to be the most commonly fished species as it was relatively abundant and easy to catch with net or line in all seasons. Whitefish/auhteekuhmayg (*Coregonus clupeaformis*) was fished using nets,
Figure 5.2: Harvesting activities in Pikangikum Bay, April 20 - May 2, 2007
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and was present in larger, deeper lakes where it could be found in deep, cold water during the summer months. Whitefish was easier to catch in nets during winter and spring runs when mixing of the water column brought cold water and whitefish close to the lake surfaces. Whitefish was a very popular fish to eat both fresh, and preserved through smoking. It was also possible to catch lake trout/nuhmaykoos (Salvelinus namaycush) during runs, and in deep lakes during the hottest summer months. Tulibee/oodonepe (Coregonus artedi) and occasionally sucker/nuhmaybehn (Catostomus commersonii) were also eaten when fished from nets. Northern pike or jackfish/keechoo keeohshayseh (Esox lucius) were sometimes purposefully fished with nets and were easily caught when fishing with hook and line, but were sometimes left on shore or on the ice for consumption by other animals because they were difficult to bone. For this reason, only the larger northern pike were usually consumed. Less appreciated fish such as smaller pike and sucker were often left behind when nets or lines were pulled in. At Keeper Lake, for example, the majority of sucker caught in fishing nets were left on the ice surface where they were consumed by bald eagles, ravens, and other animals. Sturgeon was also fished for personal consumption, although I do not have knowledge of any catches while I was working in Pikangikum. Eli Strang showed me the rapids on the Berens River where people used to net sturgeon during the spring for a period of several days (fieldnotes, July 15, 2007).

Fishing for household consumption could be summarized in Matthew Strang’s statement that “fishing is okay anywhere” (Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 2, 2007). On Pikangikum Lake, fishing with hook and line was commonplace. Dunning (1959) counted fifteen gill nets in Pikangikum in 1955 whereas Michael O’Flaherty counted eight on the southern portion of the lake in the summer of 2009 (Michael O’Flaherty, personal communication, August 9, 2013). Several community docks could be used, and people often used their own boats to access areas nearby. Productive fishing sites near the community were fished around the year, with the exception of the
break-up and freeze-up periods. Popular ice fishing areas could be found near the ice road, where access was possible by vehicle. Good spots with abundant walleye and whitefish where nets could be set could be found very close to the community. Jake I. Quill and Alec Suggashie set nets under the ice in early December, 2006, near the community. Norman Quill and Oliver Hill shared the catch from nets set in winter on Pikangikum Lake near the winter road (fieldnotes, January 28, 2009). In these cases, setting and pulling up nets could be accomplished by two people, but while at camps, often more people were involved.

Beyond the lakes and waterways near Pikangikum, however, it was not uncommon for people to go to their own trapline areas to set nets in order to bring home larger catches. Some people preferred to fish nearly exclusively at their own trapline areas. Larry Pascal stored his fishing nets at his trapline and only fished near his camp on Keeper lake. Van and Jake Keeper set a fishing net where they used to camp as a family in Pikangikum Bay (at the northern end of Pikangikum Lake) on their trapline area. When I asked him about his choice of location for his net, Jake specifically noted he was fishing on his trapline area (Jake Keeper, fieldnotes, April 24, 2007). Fishing in this area was not restricted to that particular family group: Matthew Strang’s father also used to go into Pikangikum Bay to fish (Matthew Strang, fieldnotes, June 13, 2007). Spring was a very productive time in the shallow bay, and families camping there in May were able to fish well with minimal effort, setting nets from the shore of the camp, or from boats just off shore. Abundant fish runs meant several different groups with nets near one of the inlets were able to consistently catch enough fish to feed several families, and ship extra fish back to the community. Matthew Strang recalled “There used to be a lot of people there fishing” (Matthew Strang, fieldnotes, June 13, 2007). Interesting though, while we were there following break up over a two week period, only families associated with that particular trapline area set nets in Pikangikum Bay.

Whitefish seemed to draw people further afield. When whitefish were caught dur-
ing trips to trapline areas they were sometimes shipped by plane back to the community where they were smoked or frozen (for example from Larry Pascal’s area discussed in chapter six). Barry Peters told me he set a net in mid-October at Silcox Lake on his trapline area to catch whitefish. This activity could easily be integrated with moose hunting at this time of year (Barry Peters, interview notes, October 24, 2007). Tony Suggashie explained he was at his father’s area on Bearnose Lake with his family during the fall. They returned with plenty of whitefish to smoke in the community (fieldnotes, October 11, 2008). In mid summer, whitefish, tulibee, and trout could be fished in some locations in the deepest lakes. Oliver Hill took me out to set a net in a deep section of Pikangikum Lake on June 22, 2007. I learned that Oliver, Norman Quill, and Jake Keeper had fishing nets set up at this time in different parts of the lake at sites with sufficient depth (fieldnotes, June 22, 2007). Timmy K. Strang showed us a small, deep lake which had become popular with fishing lodge guests on his trapline because of trout fishing. He used fishing lines to catch trout at this location (fieldnotes, July 27, 2007).

Plant harvesting

Observations related to harvesting of plants build on the other sections in terms of spatial authority with regard to resources harvested. Plants may be harvested where they are found growing, but some plants are also intentionally planted or transplanted. Generally what a person planted was under that person’s ownership, which was the case for both planting of potato gardens, and for transplanting of wild rice/muhnoomeehn (Zizania palustris) in shallow sections of lakes and waterways. Medicinal plants and berry harvesting, on the other hand, were practiced anywhere by those with knowledge of where and when to harvest.

No gardening was taking place during fieldwork, however, historically potato crops were integrated into the diet after they were introduced by missionaries. Potatoes were
buried in sandy pits for the winter, and were opened in May. Matthew Strang recalled that near Pikangikum, there were about ten pits on Potato Island. Fish Point, located in the community, and also a location near the present band office also were used for potato pits. Potatoes were grown in family garden plots, but this did not mean people did not share their harvest: “Potatoes were shared in winter. Everyone shared. People [also] made holes in the basement for storage” (Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 1, 2007).

Several elders talked about eating wild rice when they were living at their camps. George M. Suggashie mentioned harvesting rice in the northern section of his trapline area: “In Charlie Dunsford’s area there’s a river that goes around where there were rice fields. When they made rice, it looked like oats. They boiled rice on the open fire” (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, November 7, 2007). Lilian Quill recalled harvesting rice with her husband Norman Quill, and noted only their grandparents knew how to prepare it (possibly a reference to roasting the rice) (Lilian Quill, interview notes, November 30, 2006). In general, those who planted the rice in an area would give permission to those who wished to harvest (Paddy Peters, interview notes, June 21, 2007). Areas with wild rice were also attractive to waterfowl. Timmy K. Strang pointed out a location with shiship muhnoomeehn, literally translated as “duck rice”. Although this rice arrived through transplanting, anyone was able to hunt ducks at such locations (fieldnotes, July 27, 2007).

Although people generally required permission to harvest what another person had planted, this does not make any assumptions about ownership of land used to cultivate, as emerges around the issue of ducks and rice. Dunning (1959: 32) wrote that no value is attached to land per se until it had been prepared for gardens. According to Dunning, inheritance of gardens was of minimal importance as new forest could be easily cleared and there was no pressure on land related to gardening. Dunning estimated that around half of the families in Pikangikum had garden plots close to
their houses. He noted that some people had put pole fences up around their gardens. In one case “a man claiming the old concept of communally owned land deliberately set up his tent by the fence of a neighbour so that his tent ropes and pegs went through it.” (Dunning (1959: 32). Enclosure of a vegetable garden could have different purposes, however, including keeping animals out, and the location of the garden near a family’s dwelling could be attributed to practicality, and is not necessarily a statement about ownership of the land. I did not further clarify the issue of fencing during interviews.

Berries were harvested in open areas, left after a burn, or by forestry. A popular, accessible berry picking area was identified by Paddy Peters near the permanent road network south of the community, and is shown in figure 5.3. Lizzy Turtle explained they would mix [dried] fish with berries picked in large quantities (Lizzy Turtle, interview notes, November 30, 2006). Oliver Hill described berry harvests as well organized, social activities, which could involve harvesting and processing a large amount of food:

Blueberry picking was important for our people because it was something they depended on, nutrition-wise. They didn’t really take [blueberry harvesting] as something simple. They prepared ahead of time. They had to eat properly before they went out blueberry picking. They would prepare a day ahead of time. Some would go ahead of time and go and set a net across the lake so they could have fish for their trip. Early in the morning they would check their net. They would catch fish there—pickerel, sucker fish—that they would take out of their net and take along to where they were picking blueberries. When they got to that area, they would go ashore and take the fish and prepare them...Mainly suckers—they would cut them and prepare them—put them on branches on trees and let them dry till they would come back down when they were finished picking blueberries that day. Some of those containers that they took were wooden containers—large wooden containers that the older men would use. They would fill those containers with blueberries. They didn’t quit until they filled all those containers with blueberries. The men would carry those containers on their shoulders or on their backs. After they were done blueberry picking, they would all gather together and come down. Once they got down to the lake shore they would build a fire, take the fish down that they had left on the branches of the trees, and they would roast those fish over the fire. Once those fish were cooked...they took some utensils along—frying pans, they would fry blueberries, and make a kind of jam. Once the fish were roasted, they would take them off their sticks and they would lay them on the rocks, open [they would cut them in half lengthwise down the back]. They would pour the blueberry jam on top of the fish and they would mix [the fish and blueberries]
on top of the fish. We called that *sheekohmee*—all that fish and blueberry together (Oliver Hill, November 28, 2011, quoted in full from Davidson-Hunt et al., 2012: 37).

**Figure 5.3:** Berry harvesting areas located along the gravel road system south of the community

Medicinal plant harvesting was practiced by those with knowledge of the appropriate harvesting practices. Sweetflag/ *weekaynsh* (*Acorus calamus*) was widely in use in the community. While visiting Timmy K. Strang’s trapline in July of 2007, Timmy harvested *weekaynsh* at three sites on his trapline area with the purpose of bringing the dried roots back to the community. Timmy also showed us one site where he knew where to harvest lynx root/ *peesheewuhtehg* (scientific name not known). This site was not located on his trapline area.

Plants used for medicinal purposes were given careful treatment when harvested, because it was important for harvesting areas to be left clean and harvesting sites re-
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spected. These sites were not “off limits” or restricted to anyone in particular. On the contrary, although appropriate behaviour in relation to plants was expected from harvesters, the statement by Charlie Peters below indicates that continued use of medicines was an important responsibility of Pikangikum people:

One of our ancient sayings that was spoken by our elders; if our people refused to use the medicine on the land, if they refused to treat it respectfully for what it was intended, there will be a time when the Whiteman will come and pollute the land. There will be cans that will be scattered on the land and this is how the medicine plants will be destroyed. Our elders said if we neglected these medicines on our lands, this is what will happen, these medicines, plants will cease to produce these medicines, they will cease to exist (Charlie Peters, Audio file #33: Community Based Land Use Plan (Steering Group). Planning & Stewardship Values, September 17, 2002).

Matthew Strang told me that anyone could harvest medicinal plants where they were found as long as they left tobacco at the harvesting site. This was an individual responsibility, not one which was left for the senior trapper, or others with spatial authority to keep in check (Matthew Strang, interview notes, November 2, 2007). Individual responsibility for appropriate behaviour toward other beings when harvesting medicinal plants hints at a relational issue which was introduced in the literature review (section 2.2.4), and which received discussion in section 4.3.2 in relation to quotas on fur harvesting.

5.2 NORMS AND RULES FOR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

In contrast to subsistence use, permission was often explicitly asked of the senior trapper, or other licence holder to conduct commercial harvesting activities on the area for which he held a licence. This person was often, but not always, the senior trapper: “Anything that was sold, for example fish, was something you had to ask the head trapper about” (Tom Quill Sr., interview notes, November 6, 2007). This section explores two commercial harvesting activities (wild rice harvesting and commercial fishing), the
Wild rice harvesting was a source of additional income on top of trapping and commercial fishing for a period toward the end of fur trade activity. Wild rice sales did not figure into the Pikangikum land-based economy to the same extent as trapping and fishing. Wild rice also played an important role in subsistence harvesting, and was noted for attracting waterfowl which was harvested for family consumption. Rice appeared to be no longer harvested for commercial or subsistence purposes during fieldwork with Pikangikum.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) was responsible for a commercial rice harvesting program under the leadership of Bill Morrison, who was locally known as the “Mahnoomin Okimah”, or “Mahnoomin Ahkeewenzi” (literally translated as “rice boss”, or “rice old man”) (Robinson Peters, interview transcript, October 24, 2007).

The late Bill Morrison from Wabigoon area was called the “rice man”. He used to go around and help people plant rice. Here he helped Esah plant rice, and here he helped Jake plant rice. That must have been about 20 years ago. (Paddy Peters, June 21, 2007)

Pikangikum community member Peter Quill was economic development officer and inherited responsibility for community-level coordination of wild rice harvesting while this activity was ongoing.

Rice was planted on most Pikangikum traplines. Ownership of the rice was usually associated with the senior trapper of an area, who was in turn, usually the one who planted the rice, although this was not always the case. Larry Pascal told me his father Moses Pascal, who was senior trapper at the time, made wild rice on his trapline which he sold (Larry Pascal, interview notes, September 23, 2007). Larry also worked on ma-nomin harvesting with Peter Quill, Johnny Dunsford, and Willie Quill (Larry Pascal,
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interview notes, September 23, 2007). Robinson Peters remembered his father Albert Peters, senior trapper for Silcox Lake area, planting and harvesting rice in two areas on his trapline; one area on Silcox Lake, and another on a nearby river. His father only sold the rice once (Robinson Peters, interview notes, October 24, 2007).

There’s another rice area in this bay in the community. An elder from Pikangikum used to own the rice there. His late grandfather’s name was Nigikowinini. The elder that owned that rice area’s name is James Turtle...Nigikowinini had to ask James if he could pick some rice there (Jake P. Quill, interview transcript, June 21, 2007).

Nigikowinini (deceased) asked James Turtle if he could pick rice for personal consumption and James agreed (Jake P. Quill, interview transcript, June 21, 2007).

Rice could be planted with permission within another person’s trapline area. George K. Strang explained how the senior trapper of a neighbouring line, “John James, since we had a good relationship, told me to plant rice on Mallet Lake. We planted rice there, maybe ten years ago, and last time I checked there was a lot of rice there” (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).

According to Peter Quill (former economic development officer for the band), “rice was good for a while until some of the lakes were lost”. Peter thought this was mainly due to changing water levels. Generally though, wild rice did not offer the economic promise of fishing or trapping and no one interviewed could speak of harvests lasting more than several seasons, with the exception of Norman Quill who said he harvested for seven years until a large fire swept through at Prairie Lake and the rice disappeared (Norman Quill, interview notes, March 25, 2009).

Commercial fishing

Commercial fishing began to be regulated as a government program through the Indian Affairs Board. Fishing was a significant economic activity over a period of several decades, roughly lasting from the 1950s through part of the 1970s. The archives
show development of the program was initiated following trapline registration in the 1950s, and was a subject of collaboration between the Provincial government (Department of Lands and Forests) and the federal Indian Affairs Board. It appears as though the Ontario government was still searching for their policy position regarding commercial fishing in Ontario, and the Indian Affairs Board had authority to deal with the program.\(^1\) Matthew Strang confirmed that commercial fishing in Pikangikum was sponsored by the government, and that flights in and out of commercial fishing lakes were subsidized (Matthew Strang, interview notes, June 17, 2007). As with fur management and the registered trapline system, the government’s position was that without appropriate government support, commercial fishing opportunities would be lost to entrepreneurs from the south (Senyk, 2008).\(^2\)

The significance of fishing for local economies was noted by Indian Affairs Superintendent Clifford Swartman (Sioux Lookout): “in recent years commercial fishing has replaced trapping as their major source of income” (1959 in Senyk, 2008: 73). Dunning (1959: 31) described very little commercial fishing at Pikangikum, however, this was at the very early stage of its development in 1954-55: “At present, two or three men fish commercially at the reserve, and sell their catch through the company trader. They earn enough during the summer to keep their own families in groceries.”

A strict quota system limited catch at levels many interviewees felt were low for their expectations. George B. Strang remembered quotas were low for their expectations: “I wasn’t given much—only two thousand pounds of walleye” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, June 12, 2007). Nonetheless, commercial fishing was considered an important economic activity, and lasted for a significant period of Pikangikum elders’ living memory: “We used to set the net for two weeks and that’s the quota I


\(^{2}\) Also see “Ojibwa Fisheries in Northwestern Ontario”, Commercial Fish and Fur Branch, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, June 1974.
would fill up fast. We caught walleye, it’s a good price” (Paul Moose, October 5, 2007). “After a while with these big lakes, we were given permission to do some commercial fishing. And that’s what we did for our living...I requested Moar Lake to commercial fish and they granted me that lake. I fished there for 25 years” (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, October 15, 2008). Jake I. Quill recalled there were few jobs during this period and that while trapping was a good source of income, it was inconsistent. Jake recalled he would make about $2000 per season. In these conditions, commercial fishing was able to significantly contribute to income (fieldnotes, July 24, 2007).

Flexibility of movement was a central feature of commercial fishing practice. Fishers rotated among lakes throughout their commercial fishing careers, and sometimes fished multiple lakes during the course of a year:

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 travelled by airplane, while the men travelled by snowmobile to the different lake areas. If it was winter, we had to set up tent camp sites (Solomon Turtle, November 10, 2006, in Senyk [2008: 84]).

This flexibility was negotiated by leaders who had spatial authority for fishing areas. This contrasted with the situation of access to fishing areas for household use. Other households could not be denied access to trapline resources for their own consumption, but permission had to be negotiated with leaders in order to fish commercially: “They would not need to ask. That’s for your survival. The head trapper would recognize that, even if it’s for sturgeon. They would not allow people to set a net for commercial fishing, but if it’s for your own consumption, no one would stop you.” (Paddy Peters, SFMN project meeting transcript, August 15, 2007). Similarly, Tom Quill Sr. asserted that permission was needed to sell fish commercially: “If they’re fishing for themselves, they don’t have to ask me. But if they’re selling, they must ask.” (Tom Quill Sr., interview transcript, June 11, 2007). These two statements also hint at a role of the senior trapper in granting access to commercial fishers on their traplines, which is further examined
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below.

Initially, a single commercial fishing licence was given to the community of Pikangikum, where the case appeared to be that “anyone from Pikangikum reserve could go fishing in any of these [lakes where commercial fishing was permitted]” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009). Thus, this licensing system seems to have initially followed a community-level process distinct from the commercial trapline system:

All fishing licences were given to the Pikangikum band. So anyone from Pikangikum reserve could go fishing in any of those [lakes where commercial fishinging was licensed]. Even when they went to these different lakes, they got paid by the band to put ice in the ice houses. People would have to decide at the community-level. They would ask for permission if they wanted to go to a particular lake. They also used to fish at Nungesser lake. They’d have to ask permission. The Chief and leaders were asked in the community. They worked with a fisherman boss in the community. Peter Quill looked after that (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009).

It is not clear how long the community commercial fishing licence lasted. Later, a system was adopted by which local leaders were given fishing licences for major lakes, which have been highlighted in figure 5.4. Commercial fishing licence holders under this new system were often (but not always) senior trappers or other leaders who historically hunted and trapped at the commercial fishing lake in question: “As I understood, with commercial fishing, it was the head trappers that were issued the licence. It wasn’t just any individual” (Matthew Strang, March 31, 2009). In the new system, the norm seemed to be that commercial fishers needed to obtain permission from licence holders in order to fish at a particular lake. Matthew Strang also stressed that the Senior trapper would permit anyone to net fish for their own consumption. However when it came to commercial fishing, “that senior person would have some restrictions on who he would permit to commercial fish in that lake” (Matthew Strang, SFMN project meeting, August 16, 2007). Paddy Peters related that head trappers benefit from economic activity on their land. “That’s the way it has been for trapping and
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...for commercial fishing. Fishers of the trapline area asked for other fishers to come out as helpers” (Paddy Peters, July 16, 2007). Other evidence points to the possibility that access to commercial fishing lakes was relatively unencumbered for Pikangikum people wishing to fish from lake to lake throughout the area: “With commercial fishing, you don’t have boundaries. You just go to a lake wherever you want to go. Individuals had licences for different lakes...A person has a licence, but anybody can fish there” (Jimmy Keeper, interview transcript, August 10, 2007).

In addition to areas within the present Whitefeather Forest Area, Pikangikum people fished commercially at several trapline locations whose senior trapper and large parts of the family group lived during the summer in other communities. These lakes included Bearnoose Lake, Moar Lake, Stout Lake, Trout Lake, Sharpstone Lake, and Upper Goose Lake.

Approval of the senior trapper seems to have been somewhat conditional, where some lakes appear to have had more restrictive conditions of access than others. The commercial fishing licence holder was not necessarily the senior trapper for the area containing a major lake. For example, on Pikangikum Lake, the senior trapper, Ayou Turtle, did not hold the fishing licence. Ayou told me: “People never asked me to fish, but they were from here, that’s why they did this” (Ayou Turtle, interview notes, October 31, 2007). In the case of Pikangikum Lake, access for commercial fishers appears to have been open for Pikangikum residents. In some cases, senior trappers did not venture beyond their own traplines for commercial fishing. For example, Paul Moose told me he commercial fished at Roderick Lake only (fieldnotes, January 27, 2009).

Table 5.1 is intended to provide an overview of commercial fishing use of major lakes within the planning area. Notably, trapping groups and fishing groups were often, but not always, comprised of different members. Also, it can be seen in the table that fishing licence holders were often not the senior trappers for the traplines containing the commercial fishing lake in question, but were likely people who were associated...
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Figure 5.4: Location of commercial fishing lakes fished by Pikangikum people

Sources: Jake I. Quill (July 24, 2007), Norman Quill (March 25, 2009), Oliver Hill & Paddy Peters (November 28, 2011)
with the same area. For instance, the McInnes Lake commercial fishing licence went to trapline member Charlie Dunsford, who was active fishing on that lake, but his family group did not trap in the same area as the senior trapper.

**Table 5.1: Commercial fishing lakes**

Sources: Larry Pascal (April 7, 2007), Paul Moose (January 27, 2009), Norman Quill (March 25, 2009), Oliver Hill & Paddy Peters (November 28, 2011), Jake I. Quill (July 24, 2007). Names followed by an asterix denote commercial fishing licence holder in the fishers column and denote senior trapper in the trappers column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lake</th>
<th>Fishers</th>
<th>Trappers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pikangikum Lake</td>
<td>John T. Strang*, Scottie Turtle*,</td>
<td>Ayou Turtle*, Abraham Keeper,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oliver Hill, Matthew Strang,</td>
<td>Maggie Black, Magnus Turtle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charlie Peters, Jake Keeper,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jimmy Keeper, Alex Suggashie,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Moore, Alec Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>McInnes Lake</td>
<td>Charlie Dunsford*, Albert Sugg.*,</td>
<td>Ogaans*, Osaweegee, Sagee,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oliver Hill, Norman Quill,</td>
<td>George M. Sugg., Samuel Sugg.,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alex Suggashie, Jake I. Quill,</td>
<td>Charlie Dunsford, Alex Suggashie,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jake Keeper, Jimmy Keeper</td>
<td>Albert Suggashie, Louis Dunsford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thunder Lake</td>
<td>John T. Strang*, Jake I. Quill,</td>
<td>Peter Quill*, Jake I. Quill*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Solomon Turtle, James Turtle,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Harry Quill, Benjamin Quill,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Moose, Paul Moose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cairns Lake</td>
<td>Moses Pascal*, Thomas Moose,</td>
<td>Thomas Moose*, Scotty Owen*,</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Scottie Owen*</td>
<td>Moses Pascal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silcox Lake</td>
<td>Albert Peters*, Gideon Peters*</td>
<td>Albert Peters*, Walter King,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Daniel Peters*, Charlie Peters,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Turtle, Peter Turtle,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gideon Peters, Fred Moose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Goose Lake</td>
<td>James M. Strang*</td>
<td>Cat Lake trapline members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berens Lake</td>
<td>George B. Strang*, Oliver Hill,</td>
<td>George B. Strang*, James Turtle,</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Matthew Strang</td>
<td>Isaac Quill, Jake F. Quill,</td>
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<td>Matthew Strang, Edward Turtle,</td>
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<td>Roderick Keeper, William Keeper,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alex Keeper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barton Lake</td>
<td>Simon Turtle*, Solomon Turtle*,</td>
<td>Simon Turtle*, Solomon Turtle,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jake I. Quill</td>
<td>Norman Quill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued on next page...*
The senior trapper was not necessarily the responsible authority for commercial fishing. Norman Quill explained that when he wanted to commercial fish at McInnes Lake, he asked Alex Suggashie because he would be going to Alex’s area on the McInnes Lake trapline (interview transcript, March 25, 2009). Oliver Hill recalled being asked by George B. Strang (senior trapper and commercial fishing licence holder for Berens Lake area) to go to Berens Lake to fish. Also, George King asked Oliver to go to Kirkness Lake. However, in another case, Oliver Hill was invited to Roderick Lake by Jozhi Moose who was not the senior trapper (Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 9, 2008).

The holder of the commercial fishing licence (who was sometimes also the senior trapper) could give the licence to others without fundamentally altering their spatial authority for that area. In the quote below, George K. Strang passed on the fishing licence for a lake shared between his trapline and another senior trapper from Poplar Hill:

With Stout Lake, which is a large lake, half of that lake is in my trapline area. Some time ago the commercial fishing licence was under my name and we did a lot of fishing in that lake. Poplar Hill wanted to take that licence and I let them do that (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).
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Fishing lodges

Remote fishing lodge tourism is not new to the Pikangikum area. Dunning (1959: 18) noted that two or three people in Pikangikum could speak some English because of their fairly long association with “non-Indian fishing camps”. Tourist camps owned and operated by outsiders continued to bring occasional employment in the Whitefeather Forest in recent years. For example, Larry Pascal was employed to cut wood for a lodge owner at Keeper Lake on his trapline (fieldnotes, September 7, 2007). However, Pikangikum people have seen limited benefits from tourism operated by owners from the south.

As with commercial fishing, initially, fly-in fishing tourist lodges were operated as a band program in which the band office held licences for tourist lodges in the Whitefeather Forest area. Pikangikum’s fishing tourism program, “Whitefeather Waters”, operated at the band level, independently of trapline-level leadership, while at the same time, those involved respected the spatial authority of senior trappers. Senior trapper Roy Owen was employed by the band to maintain the network of lodges. Roy noted that Kenneth Strang, who was responsible for this program, always asked Roy when sending people to work at Cairns Lake, located on Roy’s trapline area, indicating that it was important to respect the spatial authority of the senior trapper in such cases (Roy Owen, interview notes, October 17, 2007).

In some cases, it appears as though senior trappers and their family groups benefit from fishing lodges in their area. As senior trapper Solomon Turtle explained, “we want to do our own ventures in our own areas.” Solomon explained he planned to put a fishing lodge on his trapline at Barton lake before outsiders came to build their own lodges: “We want to take that over because it’s our own area. I was born and raised at Barton Lake. I made my livelihood by hunting and trapping” (Solomon Turtle, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009). In other cases, senior trappers may grant permission
to others to conduct fishing lodge operations on their areas. George K. Strang elaborated how, through an arrangement with another senior trapper, he was able to operate a fishing lodge on a trapline adjacent to his own:

I have an outpost camp on Sharpstone Lake but that is not my trapline area. I was given permission to build that outpost from the trapline holder, Coran Keeper, who is from Little Grand Rapids. He let me build there because he is on the Manitoba side. The head trapper used to be John James Keeper, he used to run a camp on Spoon Lake; I had a good relationship with this elder but he is now deceased (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).

Timmy K. Strang, George K. Strang’s son and successor as senior trapper for his area, informed us that he wanted to build a new day-use hut for tourists on his area (field-notes, July 26, 2007).

Direct economic benefits seem to be associated with building and maintenance of the lodge structure, as long as a person or family group has appropriate spatial authority for an area, or has obtained consent from the appropriate person. Solomon Turtle explained that for the lodge in his area, “Three years after we opened our outpost camp it didn’t take long to see if we could make money. We got all our supplies, lumber, and we took it to Barton lake” (Solomon Turtle, WFMC office, folder of translations, Pikangikum, November 10, 2007). Solomon Turtle exercised his authority to speak in relation to his area regarding people from Pikangikum travelling up the ice road to fish at Barton Lake during the winter. Solomon made an announcement on the community radio station in which he asked people not to leave cans or sticks used to fish on the ice in the winter at Barton Lake. Matthew Strang said this was because Solomon wanted to keep the area clean (Matthew Strang, fieldnotes, November 2, 2007). The interpretation of this statement is somewhat ambiguous. Two reasons for Solomon to make this statement on the radio might be proposed: one is related to preserving the appearance of the area for tourists. The second could be interpreted in relation to Solomon’s use of medicinal plants from his area, and the necessity to the harvesting area clean as
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described in section 5.1 on harvesting of medicinal plants above.

5.3 SPATIAL AUTHORITY AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS

This section offers another perspective on access and spatial authority through the presentation of statements related to non-human persons. Encounters with non-human persons as Pikangikum people harvested in particular places and moved across the land and water show how Pikangikum people understood their authority in connection with others. Respect for the spatial authority of other persons was extended to knowledgeable individuals, but also more widely to powerful non-human beings. Section 4.3.2 showed how Pikangikum people understood their relationships with furbearers to differ from those of government resource managers. The relational perspective is extended in this section to look at how Pikangikum people perceived their spatial authority in relation to other non-humans.

Every individual had a responsibility to show respect toward others. In the case that a hunter was in another family group’s area, this was also a matter of appropriate behaviour toward the group with spatial authority for that area:

One of the things that we can really appreciate is that you couldn’t just shoot something and leave it there. For example you couldn’t just shoot a beaver and leave it there...That’s disrespectful of that other area. Two years ago in our area there were two moose that were shot. Whoever shot those moose just took the hind quarters. The two moose rotted there. We were not happy about that (Matthew Strang, March 24, 2009).

Gordon Suggashie explained that his deceased mother, Madeline Keeper had told him to watch over the area around their camp at Pikangikum Bay. Gordon related an incident in which they found a dead, bloated beaver floating near their camp, which upset his mother. In the spring of 2007, Gordon decided to issue a statement on the community radio station that animals which were killed in his area should be consumed (Gordon Suggashie, interview notes, April 24, 2007).
Bears are powerful animals, and it was important to be aware of appropriate behavioural norms around them. It was necessary for one to be careful about how bears were spoken about. George B. Strang said the bears know when people are talking about them: “You don’t talk about a bear in winter because it will snow. This is because the bear wants to cover its tracks” (George B. Strang, interview notes, September 18, 2007). Matthew Strang added, “if you see blueberry scat from a bear, don’t touch it, otherwise the bear will be mad at you. Bears are smart. They won’t forget anything. Next summer, he’ll chase you after you” (Matthew Strang, interview notes, September 18, 2007). Teasing animals was not considered appropriate: Charlie Peters noted, “if you tease the bear, he won’t like that. If you talk well of the bear, that’s okay” (Charlie Peters, interview notes, September 18, 2007). Jacob Moose told me a story which illustrates how bears could influence decisions about movement on the land. It was winter, and Jacob was bringing food with his father to the Pascal family on the Pascals’ trapline area adjacent to Jacob’s father’s area. They did this sometimes when the Pascal family group ran out of store bought food items at their trapline camp. As they were walking, Jacob’s father saw bear tracks in the snow. The tracks continued along their trail for a long time, making his father very uneasy. Jacob’s father told him that when bears come out of hibernation in the middle of winter, they cannot be shot because they are frozen—bullets cannot penetrate the ice that covers the bear. They nearly turned back out of fear, but when they saw the bear’s tracks diverge, they decided to go on and meet the Pascal family (Jacob Moose, fieldnotes, January 27, 2008).

Powerful beings could make themselves known or heard to people while out on the land. Charlie Peters described how once when he was a child, he felt an earthquake as he was walking on the ice. He was wearing snowshoes. After that he heard thunder. Charlie remembered he was shaking and scared. The earthquake was preceded by some shot like sounds (Charlie Peters, interview notes, September 18, 2007). I asked Charlie if he had asked anyone about what he heard and saw but did not get a response. Matthew
Strang later told me that Charlie Peters knew how to interpret what this had been, but that Charlie did not want me to know (Charlie Peters, interview notes, October 26, 2007).

At times, people could directly interfere with other beings. Matthew Strang had a story about a powerful being. In this account, Matthew pointed out damage which had been done to an area while building a road. He told a story which associated this area with this being:

There was one time I was with Scotty Turtle and Isaia Quill. We were hunting in that area one time. It was about this time [fall]. It was a beautiful day. We were moose hunting. That’s when we heard the distant sound of thunder. That’s when we would start to hear it frequently in that area that one day. We wondered what we heard. First time he heard it, we heard it coming from the distance, then more often. We decided to leave...[We] want to protect that area because we suspect somebody lives under the ground. We’ll not be the ones to blame for what happened there [referring to the construction of the road network south of Pikangikum]. Non-natives will be the ones to blame because they don’t know what they did. They don’t know how to protect (Matthew Strang, interview notes, October 26, 2007).

Another of Matthew’s stories indicates again that it is the responsibility of individuals to know how to behave appropriately in relation to others. Certain behaviour was met with warnings or sanctions:

There’s something I want to tell you about Cairns Lake. One time we were netting, we were commercial fishing. I was with Moses Pascal one time. There’s a certain island there that has a cliff of rock. That elder [Moses Pascal] told me never to get off and get on that island because you will experience something, he said. Then one time in August when there were blueberries, harvesting blueberries in August, we went there, me and Moses—the guy who told me never to get on the island. We decided with our wives to go there and harvest some blueberries. Then when we were on that island suddenly we heard this thunder. Like in the distance you could hear thunder. Then we would hear more often so the elders told us that we should go back. Then when we got close to the lake we didn’t hear anything. Nobody goes on top of that island (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007).

Matthew returned later in this interview to finish talking about areas such as these:
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One of the things that our people are not permitted, going on certain lands, because the creator respects those lands...They’re considered sacred. The land’s considered sacred ’cause the creator owns that land, and we were told to protect that area. When we get on those lands, that’s why we hear these things. We were told not to go on those lands, on those certain lands, certain areas, but we don’t know why. When we go ahead and do it anyway, when we’re told not to go, that’s when we experience those things, like thunder, distant thunder. We don’t know if God has those lands, holds those lands sacred, but [we’re] told not to go on those lands. (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007)

Animals and other persons could assert authority in relation to places, and invoked respect and rules about land use. Individual harvesters may have knowledge and authority with regard to particular areas, but these qualities were also extended to other beings with agency. Warnings such as approaching thunder seem to be connected with being knowledgeable before one acts, for example, around building a road.

5.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Seasonal movement on the land was often driven in recent memory by commercial resource harvesting, however, livelihoods were sustained through day-to-day harvesting to cover subsistence needs. In this and the previous chapter, access was shown to be typically negotiated with the help of those with spatial authority who have knowledge of an area. This was often the senior trapper, or a member of the extended family group for that particular area. People went to the places they were knowledgeable about, or went with individuals who had knowledge of those places.

People spent significant parts of the year on their trapline areas, and these areas tended to be used by relatively stable extended family groups. Certain activities, however, required people to travel to particular areas outside their usual family harvesting areas to find resources, thus necessitating moving through, and harvesting on, others’ trapline areas. For example, commercial fishing could be done at certain major lakes that were commercially licensed, and fishing groups were regularly composed of members of more than one family group. Commercial fishing—although carried out
with reference to major lakes on trapline areas—did not follow the logic of customary
winter dispersal to family areas.

In the case of harvesting for household consumption, access to harvesting areas
was normally exercised without the need to obtain permission from senior trappers
or others with spatial authority in relation to harvesting areas. Waterfowl and moose
hunting might require travel over large areas, and hunters were not bound to a par-
ticular group’s trapline area. Crossing trapline boundaries for these activities was a
regular and acceptable practice and did not require the consent of the senior trapper.
Warnings were issued when it was discovered that people were leaving the animals
they had killed at the kill site, or were not showing appropriate respect toward oth-
ers. Senior trappers were also constrained by norms that did not allow them to restrict
access to their areas for subsistence harvesting. This speaks to the concern that while
another person should not profit from harvests on ones trapline area, they were able to
harvest for food. As long as a person conducted their activities in an appropriate way,
it would not be appropriate for a senior trapper to restrict their access for subsistence
purposes.

Commercial harvesting of fish and wild rice provided important supplemental in-
come, and these activities had a logic of land use that was different from subsistence
harvesting. For commercial harvests, senior trappers and their family groups tended
to benefit, or at least exercise some authority over commercial activities in their areas.
Commercial fishing appeared most flexible, where fishers each benefitted from their
own effort at a number of lakes. Wild rice was usually planted and harvested by se-
nior trappers in their areas, but could be planted and harvested on other areas when
arrangements were made for access. In the case of fishing lodges, senior trappers were
asked about activity in their trapline areas, and in some cases, outpost owners could
directly benefit from tourists. This was usually the case for senior trappers and their
family groups running outposts in their trapline areas, but permission could also be
granted to a person to run a fishing outpost on another group’s area.

With regard to both subsistence and commercial activities, trapline boundaries did not put a stop to fluid movement of individuals and groups between trapline areas. Commercial fishing, wild rice harvesting, and fishing tourism opportunities often facilitated further exchange of people between major lakes and waterways.

Those with spatial authority, such as senior trappers, elders, or harvesters with specific knowledge regarding a place, may speak out if they perceived inappropriate behaviour in their area. Notwithstanding, it was up to individuals to mediate their own behaviour, given guidance of those with authority, whether this might be a senior trapper, an elder, or a non-human being. The customary harvesting system contains much latitude for individual decisions based on what a person considers most appropriate, given his or her range of relations with others.
One of the key challenges Pikangikum people have faced as they engaged in planning for the WFI was integration of customary harvesting activities with new land-based economic development opportunities, including forestry, non-timber forest products, and tourism. Preparation for new land uses at a larger scale has presented two challenges: collective action dilemmas must be dealt with relating to decision-making and management authority in the community on one hand, and the negotiation of the relationship with outsiders such as the OMNR on the other. This chapter presents results on dynamics of land use following the collapse of the commercial fur trade, in order to set the context for a discussion of contemporary access and decision-making authority. The chapter then addresses the question: how can the relationship between the family areas, the traplines, and the planning area be characterized in the recently completed land use planning process?

With the launch of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative, Pikangikum shifted to a novel governance approach to address the dual challenges of (1) partnering with the OMNR, and (2) planning for an area greater than a single trapline area, encompassed in the Whitefeather Forest. These challenges were in large part brought to bear by the planning framework introduced by the NBI, which has been summarized in figure 6.1. This
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Figure 6.1: The concept of community-based land use planning, re-drawn from Ontario (2001)

Community-centered planning: Build direction for land and resource use through consensus within the community.

Landscape-scale planning: Address subjects in an appropriate broader area context (e.g. wildlife habitat range, watersheds, or ecosystems).

Provincial context planning: MNR will bring forward Provincial policy direction and work with communities to apply direction locally.

This chapter attempts to address both challenges, with an emphasis on the latter. In this sense, the chapter looks at how governance has been “scaled up” to the level of the Whitefeather Forest, whereas customary land use decision-making was decentralized to leaders of extended family groups.

The main collective action issue has been problematized as a coordination issue because it requires integration of decentralized customary authority at the trapline level, and leadership to make decisions which affect the whole planning area. Addressing the coordination issue requires an understanding of the way decisions are being taken at both of these levels, but also requires an understanding of the emergence of the community level, and its relation to spatial authority of extended family harvesting groups.

This chapter considers the customary land use system and its relation to the Whitefeather Forest Initiative, including contemporary approaches to resource access and decision-making authority. The questions posed in this chapter are the following: (1) who has authority to plan and manage at a broader spatial scale—more specifically, at the level of the Whitefeather Forest; (2) was there any kind of precedence for authority at this level; and (3) how did Pikangikum pursue authority to guide decision-making
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at this level?

The fur trade remained an important driver of land use up until the late 1980s. In chapter five, I introduced more drivers of land use dynamics, including commercial fishing, wild rice harvesting, and subsistence harvesting. In this chapter, I examine the relationship between land use and permanent settlement on reserves, the loss of commercial harvesting licences, and the Whitefeather Forest Initiative planning process. These realities constituted new drivers of land use, emerging in the last several decades. I begin this chapter by looking at recent dynamics of access to family harvesting areas and harvesting sites near the reserve (section 6.1). In 2007, Pikangikum people were no longer spending the majority of their time on their trapline areas. I begin by asking how access to harvesting areas, and spatial authority with regard to these areas, work in the contemporary context.

I then move from this discussion of contemporary harvesting to look at planning for future resource use in section 6.2. Elders’ teachings were used to analyze the intersection between customary land use and contemporary land use planning and management. I develop this line of analysis through five sub-sections. The first two sub-sections are concerned with authority and leadership at the community level. The first deals with the emergence of the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group as a new institution in the planning process. Following this, the coordination issue introduced above is given attention. The next three sub-sections look more closely at the role of government regulation in the planning process in order to understand how Pikangikum pursued authority to guide decision-making at the Whitefeather Forest level. The third sub-section looks at how the Whitefeather Forest Initiative and the Whitefeather Forest Steering group have shifted dialogue between government resource managers and Pikangikum to the community level. The fourth sub-section looks at Pikangikum’s strategy of pursuing control over commercial harvesting licences as a means of “buffering” against incursions from outsiders pursuing valuable natural resources. Finally, the last
sub-section examines the delineation of the planning area and its relationship to the trapline system.

6.1 ACCESS AND AUTHORITY IN CONTEMPORARY LAND USE

The high density of occupation in Pikangikum coupled with ease of access along major transportation routes has created a gradient of harvesting intensity, where Pikangikum people were more likely to hunt, fish and trap near the community, and where remote trapline areas saw significantly less use than several decades earlier. The loss of commercial fishing licences in the 1970s and the decline in the market value of fur in the 1980s precipitated a change in seasonal residence patterns of Pikangikum people. The decline in commercial markets is understood in Pikangikum to be directly related to the recent shift toward a more sedentary life in the community: “If the [fur] prices went up, I don’t think people would be here, they’d be out on the land” (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007). “It’s not worth it…mink was 78 dollars. It’s worth 10 today. That’s why nobody really traps nowadays” (George B. Strang, interview transcript, June 12, 2007). Sedenterization on the reserve was helped along by availability of centralized services, mandatory schooling, and social assistance which had begun to have effect in the 1950s (Dunning, 1959; Hamilton, forthcoming), but the loss of commercial licences and the fur trade were effective in hastening this move into homes on the reserve.

At the time of fieldwork, hunting and fishing trips primarily had a non-commercial scope with the exception of several people who continued to trap commercially near the community. This notable shift toward community life has shifted dynamics of access to resources. In 2007, a large part of both subsistence and commercial harvesting occurred near the community where people spent the majority of their time.

Areas near the community were usually accessed during the open-water season.
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(May until November) using aluminium boats with outboard motors, or during winter by snow machine or vehicle on the winter road network. The Berens River system and tributaries allowed access which ranged over several nearby traplines, without the need to portage, or carry the boat over obstacles. Up-river, an old boat lift allowed access to Berens Lake, and the Throat River beyond to the east.1 A 20-minute boat ride also accessed the parking area, known as “Taxi Bay” which is the terminus of the all-season Road leading to the town of Red Lake, located 120 km to the south, and the provincial highway system. A short ride down this road, hunters could access important moose habitat, and a system of forestry access roads and boat launches leading into large lake systems on southern traplines (Kirkness, Stormer, and Nungesser Lakes), and to areas south of the Whitefeather Forest (see figure 6.2). After freeze-up, which usually occurs in November, access from the community becomes somewhat expanded relative to the situation in summer. A winter road network extends the Nungesser road northward, linking Pikangikum with other communities, including Poplar Hill and North Spirit Lake. Snow machines were used on lake surfaces and on winter trail systems. At the time of fieldwork, important subsistence activities such as fall moose hunting, summer berry harvesting, and winter fishing took significant advantage of the road network.

As detailed in chapter five, setting fish nets, or hunting and snaring small game, such as snowshoe hare were activities that did not require explicit permission from senior trappers. These activities were popular in accessible areas immediately surrounding the community. Ayou Turtle, senior trapper of the trapline surrounding the community of Pikangikum, explained that there were few reasons for which he expected people to obtain permission to carry out activities on his trapline area in which the community of Pikangikum is located:

There are people that ask [me] if they want to shoot beaver to eat. People don’t

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1The boat lift consists of wooden rollers which allow boats to be hauled up hill to avoid a labourious portage.
just sneak off and do it without permission. They don’t need to ask permission to hunt moose in this area. The only time they ask is when they want to hunt beaver (Ayou Turtle, October 31, 2007).

**Figure 6.2:** Map of access trails and transportation network

Source: WFMC GIS database

Consistent with other statements of spatial authority of senior trappers, Ayou Turtle did not expect people to ask his permission for subsistence harvesting, with the exception of hunting of species with commercial value, even in the populated Pikan-
gikum area. A range of land uses involving harvesting are examined below for areas near the community with the purpose of understanding the relationship between the growing reserve population and spatial authority with regard to harvesting activities.

Elder and senior trapper Norman Quill played an important role in a Health Canada program which maintained a retreat for youth on Pikangikum Lake. The camp, located only a short distance from the community served as a site at which Norman and others could work with troubled youth and youth with addiction problems by giving them the option to get out of the community and participate in land-based activities such as hunting and fishing. Notably, Health Canada programs were also set up for youth with addictions to travel to remote trapline areas where they were hosted by knowledgeable individuals and their families from those areas. For example, groups went with Kenneth Strang (senior trapper Timmy K. Strang’s brother) to the Shining Falls area; another group went to the Roderick Lake hunting camp; and the Keeper Lake hunting camp once hosted a group (Donna Pascal, interview notes, October 20, 2007).

Norman Quill also taught an outdoor education program for the Pikangikum Education Authority, as did two other senior trappers, Bobby Suggashie and Timmy K. Strang. The program contained both classroom and outdoor segments, where educators brought students to sites near the community to teach skills necessary for survival in the bush. Sites used by the school for education were necessarily located near the community, as transportation to land use areas was relatively straightforward. Timmy K. Strang explained how he would have felt more at home if he was able to run these courses in his own trapline area, however his area was not easily accessible from the reserve. Timmy used these school outings as opportunities to teach students to respect the trapline system (fieldnotes, July 27, 2007). On the recreational side, fishing derbies have become well-attended community events. Derbies were held both in summer and winter in 2007 and 2008. Prizes may be quite lucrative: for example, new boats, ATVs, or cash. Community-organized activities, such as fishing derbies, complemented family-
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level organization of land use. These activities had a recreational and cultural scope as well as healing dimensions.

A few people have continued to trap commercially at locations more easily accessible from the community. Planes were no longer used for transport to remote camps for commercial trapping, but were used by family groups to access their harvesting areas during certain periods of the year. Some cases of commercial trapping could be considered special circumstances, as in the case of Elder Norman Quill, who acquired fur from a youth training program on trapping near the community. The fur from this program was given to another elder, Sam Quill, to sell (Paddy Peters, fieldnotes, March 3, 2009). Sam Quill continued to do some commercial trapping on Pikangikum Lake because he had a bad knee. This restricted him from travelling to his own trapline on Thunder Lake (Sam Quill, interview notes, March 15, 2009). A particularly active part-time trapper, Eli Kejick, managed to make around $10000 in 2009 on sales of marten pelts to a buyer in Red Lake. Eli chose to trap marten because of its relatively good value at fur auctions. Eli told me he was able to trap most weekends over the winter of 2008-2009. He took his truck with his snow machine hitched behind down the winter road, then followed his trail in to his trapline cabin on Nungesser Lake, which he shared with three other part-time trappers. One of these trappers, Peter Paishk, trapped at Nungesser Lake for periods up to 2 weeks at a time over the same winter. Peter was invited to use that trapline by the former senior trapper, Jake Kejick. Eli occasionally went with his family members or trapping partners, but usually trapped alone.

On the other side of this land use gradient, harvesting areas remote from the community continued to be accessed by Pikangikum families, yet the number and duration of visits had been significantly reduced in recent decades. Following the 1980s, low economic returns for furs and rising fuel prices meant access by boat, plane or skidoo

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2Sam Quill’s case is also consistent with the case of Abraham Keeper presented in chapter four, who was listed by Dunning (1959) as trapping in a small area near Pikangikum.
to remote areas of Pikangikum’s traditional land use area has become prohibitively expensive. The two-week trip I took to the trapline camp of Larry and Donna Pascal and their immediate family cost upward of $8000 including charter flights and supplies. The Pascal’s camp was located at Keeper Lake, 40 km from the community by air. The budget included flights, supplies, and food for nine people. The Pascal family booked several additional flights to bring food back to the community that were not included in this budget. Senior trapper Billy Joe Strang estimated he would personally spend around $5000 in charter flights every fall to fly a party of twenty-five youth, mostly in their teens to his trapline area located southwest of Pikangikum within Woodland Caribou Provincial Park. The fall moose hunt was important enough for families that children were given a holiday from school in fall for “Culture Week”, giving families an added incentive to hunt. Funding was available from the Band to help families with lower incomes access their fall hunting camps.

In spite of the expense, families often elected to travel to areas where they have personal experience, and continued to go out with those knowledgeable of these particular areas. Moose were often hunted in areas for which the hunter was already knowledgeable. This usually meant hunting at one’s own family harvesting area, or accessing areas near the community, but hunters were also invited to other’s areas. Senior trapper Larry Pascal predominantly hunted from his camp at Keeper Lake over his lifetime. Timmy K. Strang, senior trapper of the trapline in the far northwestern segment of the planning area, also continued to do the majority of his hunting and trapping, as well as collection of firewood and fishing, in his own area, in spite of the collapse of the fur trade. Nathan Quill, a leader in his own area down the Berens River, north of Pikangikum, told me he sometimes joined his cousins to go hunting at Kirkness and Stormer Lakes. His cousin Kenneth King was from the Kirkness Lake area (Nathan Quill, interview notes, September 13, 2007).

In practice, families often timed their travel to remote areas to coincide with the
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fall moose hunt, but also to the spring break-up period when waterfowl return. Moose, waterfowl, and fish were the focus of harvesting activities during these seasons, and sometimes fur bearers were hunted or trapped as well. Harvests were consumed immediately at family camps, but some food was usually transported to the community to share among community members, or sell in an informal economy of prepared meals to fund-raise for church meetings and other events. Of all subsistence activities, moose hunting was perhaps the activity that warranted the most investment by families in order to access moose populations on remote trapline areas. This shift in seasonal residence from trapline camps to the community is illustrated in figure 6.3. The figure reflects the way harvests of plants and animals continue around the year in areas easily accessed from the community, but only during important productive periods in spring and fall activity does it increase at remote trapline camps. The transition season, meenookamin is important for waterfowl hunting at both near and remote locations.

In terms of cultural (and economic) value, moose hunting, waterfowl hunting, and fishing for household consumption have largely replaced fur trapping as key drivers of contemporary land use, and thus access to remote trapline areas. As subsistence motivations for access have almost entirely replaced commercial ones, a change in behaviour toward these resources has been observed: “I heard something this fall, a lot of people complaining about people going into their trapline hunting moose” (Matthew Strang, October 26, 2007). Matthew’s statement also attests to the increasing subsistence value of moose in the community.

The beaches and docks of Pikangikum were lined with rows of aluminium boats with outboard motors and houses often had snow machines and ATVs parked outside. In contrast, snow machines and boats were in limited supply at remote trapline camps, so the practicality of harvesting in these areas often depended on obtaining permission to use these means of transportation from their owners. Practically speaking, this meant guests at camps remote from the community usually needed to make arrange-
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Figure 6.3: Seasonal round
ments with camp leaders in order to harvest resources, such as moose or fish. These would usually be considered in a class of subsistence resources which do not require permission from the senior trapper to harvest. Charlie Pascal spoke of gaining access to Larry Pascal’s trapline area during the fall moose hunt. He confirmed that although permission would usually have to be obtained to hunt at a trapline area requiring more complex travel arrangements, this would not be necessary in order to hunt near Pikangikum where access is a relatively simple matter (Charlie Pascal, interview notes, October 8, 2008).

Another apparent motivation for people to travel to their hunting camps on remote traplines was the need to monitor activity of others on the land. In late September (2007), Larry Pascal went out with his boat to investigate a shot he heard from the camp. Larry figured the shot came from a hunting group that had left from his camp, but when he made contact with the other group, he discovered the hunters had not fired the shot. Larry’s daughter then called several other camps using their trail radio system and found out that another group from Burntwood Lake to the south of Larry’s trapline area had also heard the shot. Working together, these two groups figured the shot had come from a nearby hunting lodge. Larry’s daughter told me they knew the lodge owner to bring in hunters illegally from the south to hunt moose (fieldnotes, September 24, 2007). Communication using trail radio was a daily occurrence to keep track of news from the community, as well as from other adjacent hunting camps. Another example occurred at Nungesser Lake, which is easily accessible by road. The senior trapper, John Pierre Kejick, noticed a winter trail leading to a small lake on the Nungesser Lake trapline which seemed to him to be out of the ordinary. John Pierre reported this to the Ministry of Natural Resources to try to find out who had accessed the area (Peter Peishk, interview notes, March 9, 2008).

Senior trapper George K. Strang complained about lodge owners in his area from previous experience with the same owners at Sharpstone Lake on a trapline adjacent
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to his own. These lodge owners asked George if they could come to stay on his trapline for a day or two. Since George was already familiar with their activities at Sharpstone Lake, and did not trust them, he refused. The lodge owners obtained permission from the Ministry of Natural Resources regardless. When George saw they had constructed a new dock in his area he called the MNR to complain (Timmy K. Strang, interview notes, July 30, 2007).

A further concern was losing control over an area because of lack of evidence of human activity. John Pierre Kejick explained the importance of making signs of activity on one’s area:

That’s what I’m trying, to keep my land. That’s what you’re supposed to do. Make signs, so people know that you’ve been there. Just can’t go there a week in the fall and leave it the rest of the year. You have to go there every year, when the trapping season starts. You have to keep track of your trapline... You gotta try to make signs on your trapline, just let people know that you were there (John Pierre Kejick, interview transcript, October 23, 2007).

Extended family groups continued to use trapline areas to meet group needs in terms of subsistence and exchange, as well as to keep track of use of the land by others. The decline of the land-based economies of trapping and commercial fishing has not led to the demise of customary land use more generally in areas both adjacent to and remote from the community, although there has been a marked decline in access to areas remote from the community. Leaders at the trapline level continued to play an active role in making decisions about their own areas with regard to customary harvesting activities and access is still mediated by family group leaders.

Although the practice of travelling with knowledgeable individuals, or obtaining permission from family group leaders has not fundamentally changed, mediation of access by elders and knowledgeable individuals has taken on a new meaning. Elders and senior trappers understood that continuation of land-based activities was a factor in establishing relationships to the land among young people:
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If the youth or the children are taken out more often, I believe that they will go back. For example, my grandchildren. I take them out to my trapline, and often the grandchildren want to go back even though I don’t plan on going back up as soon. (Paul Moose, interview transcript, May 10, 2007).

The focus of elders and leaders at the trapline level has shifted from mediating commercial use while ensuring subsistence access, to ensuring continued access to areas remote from the community.

In order to understand the land use planning process for the Whitefeather Forest, it is necessary to look at how harvesting needs are reconciled within the larger planning process, and who holds authority to plan and manage at the level of the Whitefeather Forest. The next section “scales-up” to try to understand the basis for collective decision-making at the community level.

6.2 Leadership and Collective Action in the Planning Process

Following the introduction of the Registered Trapline System in 1947, the government gave recognition to local extended family group leaders as head trappers. In the WFI, senior trappers continued to be recognized as authorities for their areas in the planning process, however, authority was distributed more broadly, and was associated more generally with the customary custodianship of knowledgeable individuals for the harvesting sites for which they held knowledge. This obligation on Pikangikum people to “keep the land” also formed the basis for Pikangikum’s position on their management partnership with the OMNR (Senyk, 2008). In the customary land use system, decision-making authority was decentralized. This section addresses how governance has been “scaled up” to the level of the Whitefeather Forest through the land use planning process.

During the planning process, there was open discussion in the community as to
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how authority would be distributed in relation to the planning area. Elder Alec Suggashie brought out the deliberative process for figuring out what would work at this level. His statement below spoke to the issue of decision-making at the community level:

I don’t mind who goes to my trapline. We should all work together on this [the WFI]. This is how it was from the start. No one would enter another trapline. The boss would ask for licences for other trappers in their area. The system was not to let anyone in your area. Is this going to help our initiative? Is there going to be one boss? It would work if there was one boss. I want this initiative to work. One leader to work under. It worked under the trapline system. It’s sure to work if it worked then. For this to work we need the whole community to help (Alec Suggashie, interview transcript, November 10, 2007).

The Whitefeather Forest is comprised of most of nineteen trapline areas which were voluntarily included in the planning process by their custodians:

Pikangikum First Nation has decided to use OMNR trapline areas as the basis for defining the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area out of respect for the customary custodial responsibilities of Pikangikum people and our neighbours. The head trappers on each trapline are some of our keecheeahneesheenahbayg [esteemed Elders] who provide guidance for our community-based decision-making processes in Pikangikum First Nation. Each of these head trappers exercises a customary custodial responsibility for their trapline areas and therefore these head trappers are central to both Pikangikum First Nation’s relationship to the land and to our Community-based Land Use Planning process (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 26).

In the beginning they were having an elders gathering. I was asked to come. So I came. I didn’t know why they wanted me to come to this gathering. The first thing they asked when I arrived was ‘do you support what we’re going to do here, the land planning process?’ Right away I gave my pledge. And what that pledge was, it was my trapline area. That is the first thing that took place (Solomon Turtle, Whitefeather Boundaries Working Group meeting, June 2, 2011).

Although decision-making authority regarding inclusion was held by the senior trapper, the decision-making process involved other hunters and elders with spatial authority related to land use. Consent for inclusion of their traplines in planning was ultimately given by senior trappers for their own trapline areas, but importantly, elders, and others in the trapline groups were involved in guiding this decision: “In regards
to my consent to have Poplar Hill use my area for their planning, I have other helpers in my trapline and no one is opposing my decision” (George K. Strang, interview transcript, February 4, 2005).

The Land Use Strategy (LUS) describes the trapline system as the basis of the WFI. It was not the intention of the community to override existing arrangements of authority; thus the LUS lends legitimacy to decentralized authority associated with customary harvesting areas:

The Land Use Strategy is a guidance document, providing a framework for future land and resource management in the planning area. In itself, it does not alter existing authority, nor does it confer new authorities. Pikangikum First Nation’s relationship to the land and customary stewardship responsibilities will continue and are reaffirmed through the Community-based Land Use Planning process (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 13).

The basis for Pikangikum’s continuing partnership with the OMNR has been their assertion of authority over their traditional territory derived from experience on the land: “We know that this is our planning. The direction came from our people. It is our experience of living on the land that provided us the training and learning” (Gideon Peters, folder of translations, WFMC archives, January 19, 2007). This mandated a unique spatial planning approach which necessitated the identification of a planning area which will be addressed in section 6.3.2 below. Land use planning has involved making decisions about land uses, including protected areas, road infrastructure, and forestry, decisions which cross the boundaries of individual trapline areas, and thus involved coordination between individual authorities at a scale greater than that of the individual trapline. In order to address planning and future management needs at this level, community leaders adapted a novel governance approach, involving elders in the decision-making process. At the time of writing, the WFI was entering a new forest management phase. Management presents the challenge of decision-making at multiple levels. The sections that follow present results on decision-making at the level
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of the planning area, beginning with the novel institution which I argue is most closely associated with decision-making at this level: the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group.

6.2.1 Guidance from the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group

Planning for new land-use activities, including forestry has been guided by a core group of elders who have been involved in decision-making since the early days of the Initiative in the mid 1990’s. A new institution has emerged which functions as a forum for elders and custodians to voice their knowledge at the community level. This institution is referred to as the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group (hence forth, the Steering Group) in Pikangikum’s Land Use Strategy, to reflect its role in guiding the planning and management process (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006). The Steering Group was mandated at the beginning of the land use planning process:

Regarding the elders Steering Group, we had to get elders involved. When we began the process, it didn’t get off. We had to find people in the community to get involved. One idea was to get elders together. This happened with word from the Band Council. Matthew said that the reason we began this was to respect the elders that have passed away. We are respecting their teachings. Nothing had been documented. We wanted to leave something behind for children of community to use. This has never happened in past. (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, August 15, 2007)

When Peter Quill was chief he came to me one time to discuss what came into his mind, to begin these kinds of elder’s gatherings in the community again for them to discuss the needs of the community and also put this land planning process in place. They wanted to create a good future for our children in this community. That’s the reason why we started what we’re still working on today (Solomon Turtle, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009).

Matthew’s assertion that “this has never happened in the past” could be interpreted as meaning that documentation is a new activity, but also that the Steering Group represents a new institutional approach to the planning process. Although elders had met in the past to pass on knowledge and advise on the future, the elders had not met in the past in this way. Stepping back with the aid of elders’ statements, Pikangikum
elders remembered the way they learned through their elder’s teachings in the past. These teachings came from particular elders at particular gathering places and communities. With reference to chapter four, in living memory leaders were to be found at major lakes scattered around the Berens river. The reserve settlements at Pikangikum and Poplar Hill are a relatively recent phenomenon. Major lakes were sites of decentralized authority. Pikangikum elders remembered their own elder’s teachings at these gathering sites.

What emerged from elders’ statements with regard to these gatherings was that these meetings were used to devolve teachings, and in line with Steering Group gatherings, discussions were had in preparation for future events:

I witnessed elders getting together. They had evening discussions before the sun goes down. Sometimes I would see four elders sitting together. They would talk about certain things, things that would happen in the future. They probably talked about this planning, that something of this sort would happen in the future...Most of their discussions were regarding warnings—those things that would happen in the future, and how to approach those things when the white man came to our land—is what they discussed. They talked about the white man coming on the land. That the white man will take away our lakes. That they would come and take control over everything. That’s why they got together, to discuss these issues (Solomon Turtle, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009).

Paychech talked about the land being cut. I distinctly heard about...forestry. The other elders talked about warnings, about the future. Many things they told were of future events. Today as I look I know we’re going through some of the things they talked about. (Lucy Strang, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009)

When asked about how forest management decisions would be made once forestry had begun, Elder Liaison Oliver Hill responded that learning would come from the elders. The Land Use Strategy specifies the guidance role of elders in planning and management:

Our vision respects the teachings and wisdom of our Esteemed Elders (keechee-ahneesheenahbayg). They are able to guide us in taking care of the lands that we have been given as a sacred trust from the Creator, to guide us in keeping the land (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 1).
Much of the knowledge which has been brought out through the planning process emerged at meetings in the form of teachings or statements. Steering Group meetings were attended almost exclusively by elders, with a regular presence of 20 to 30 individuals. Steering Group membership and leadership is itself flexibly defined. The death of Oliver Hill (1938-2011) led to another elder, Tom Quill Sr. being appointed Elder Liaison, a spokesperson for the Steering Group informally selected by the elders themselves. Steering Group leadership does not carry additional authority, but the late Oliver Hill tended to have a vocal presence in the community, through radio announcements, as well as in meetings with outsiders.

Meetings of the Steering Group were organized with a purpose, whether it was to learn about a particular issue of concern for forest management, or for the presentation of a new project in which the presenter requests appropriate guidance from the Steering Group. Steering Group meetings were usually announced on the community radio station, and were coordinated by the Elder Liaison. Meetings open and close with a prayer. Project ideas or items for discussion are then brought forward by OMNR personnel, consultants, and others. The floor is subsequently given over to the elders to speak and elders’ statements are usually translated by an experienced cultural interpreter from the community. Senior trappers may participate in these meetings, along with other community members, but it is usually elders who deliver statements.

Occasionally younger individuals attended and spoke at Steering Group meetings. Senior trapper Paul Moose described how going to these meetings, he felt “...Like [he was] receiving an understanding of the things they [the elders] spoke of. I enjoyed it because I started to learn what their understanding is. But not all of it” (Paul Moose, interview transcript, October 5, 2007). Senior trapper Jimmy Keeper had recently started to attend planning meetings as of 2007. He explained usually his elder brothers were in attendance: “I’m not involved in the land use planning. I’ve attended maybe three or four meetings. My brother [Alex Keeper] was involved, and also Jake [Keeper]. They
call me and ask me to come when there are meetings about my area” (Jimmy Kee-
per, interview transcript, August 10, 2007). Thus, active senior trappers might attend
meetings regarding more specific issues relevant to their traplines, or might sit in to
listen. This could also be indicative of a general respect for elders on the part of senior
trappers.

Authority to share knowledge was deferred to a person who has acquired that
knowledge through experience on the land. As an example, Matthew Strang pointed
out several areas on a map of the southwestern portion of the Whitefeather Forest.
Matthew pointed out a site on Cairns lake known as “Wiskeyjack’s Bridge”. Although
there was a story about the mythical character, Whiskeyjack, attached to the site, which
Matthew was aware of, he told me to ask Roy Owen, senior trapper for Cairns lake, who
would know that particular story (fieldnotes, September 18, 2007). Elder Charlie Peters
later gave me a summary of this story. I learned that Charlie had grown up hunting
and trapping in that area (fieldnotes, October 11, 2007). Another example concerns the
Dunsford family group, which came from the northern part of McInnes Lake. Through
the planning process, a protected area was designated around McInnes Lake. Accord-
ing to Elder George M. Suggashie (a member of another family group on the same
trapline, which harvested and camped in the southern portion of McInnes Lake) the
new protected area was “on somebody else’s trapline in that area, Charlie Dunsford.”
George interpreted that the late Charlie Dunsford, who was an active member of the
Steering Group, had pointed out the area that was to be designated as a protected area:
“Charlie Dunsford had the whole area there. He would have pointed out which areas
should get protected” (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, November 7, 2007).
Similarly, Tom Quill Sr. told me his late father was the one who had decided upon area
designations on his trapline. Tom Quill Sr. was not present during this process, even
though by his account, he was already senior trapper at the time the boundaries of the
protected area were delineated. Senior trappers, while holding stewardship roles for
their areas, did not necessarily guide decisions on use of areas in the context of the WFI.

Elders no longer active on the land were some of the most active in the Steering Group. Elders continued to provide guidance for land use even though they may have lacked the mobility to go out to their trapline areas themselves. Solomon Turtle, who frequently attended Steering Group meetings, described his continuing connection with his family area through knowledge transmitted between himself and his sons who continued to be active on the land:

I have my sons, and our territory is Barton Lake area, and I’ve been going to this area for many years. So what I possess, ganuhnuhkuhcheechekayyahn, the way I monitored the land, the way I monitored my territory, this is theirs now. They will monitor the land the way I taught them. I also test them every now and then. This time of year I know there’s baby ducks this time of year in Barton Lake. I asked them if they see any baby ducks and they said there’s a lot of baby ducks they’re saying. Even young geese. So I was happy to hear that. That they continue to monitor the land the way I taught them. So this is my teaching to my sons. Leave those young ducks, those baby ducks alone. When they grow up, you can take them at the right time. Now it’s not the right time (Solomon Turtle, workshop transcript, June 25, 2007).

Trail radio was used for communication between hunters and trappers in remote camps and people in the community. The community radio station was also often used to communicate elders’ teachings in the community. For example, at Gordon Suggashie and Sadie Quill’s spring camp on Pikangikum Lake, Gordon explained how he had heard Elder James Strang on the radio warning people to be careful at their camps and around the community because unusual events were known to happen during the break-up period. Gordon had not given this much attention until an unexplained event, the sudden relocation of several large boulders on his hunting area, changed his perception (fieldnotes, April 26, 2007).

Elders played a continuing role in the production of knowledge in the community, even if not active on the land. This knowledge was understood as the basis of
their authority to guide decision-making. The Whitefeather Forest Steering Group has emerged as a new institution which plays a role in the decision-making process at the level of the whole planning area. This community level of decision-making has, in turn, emerged with regard to the land use planning process. Interactions between the family areas system and the community-level decision-making process are presented in the next section.

6.2.2 Decentralized authority and the challenge of scaling up in the planning and management process

Actual decision-making power was not vested in the Steering Group, yet elders played an important guidance role. Decision-making was described in the Land Use Strategy as a community process:

Preliminary decisions in Strategic Action Planning meetings were made by our elders who are our Steering Group. Final community decisions are made at Ohnah-shohwayweeneeng, our plenary assembly, which is announced on the community radio and all Pikangikum people are invited to attend (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 15).

For important planning decisions, open community involvement in decision-making was sought. Approval of all planning documents and any associated formal agreements was formally to be obtained through the community Plenary Assembly (Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation and Ontario Parks, 2009).

What was shared in the context of the Steering Group was, however, given serious attention because elders’ statements reflect the decentralized authority of the leadership in the customary family areas system:

The head trappers on each trapline are some of our keecheeahneesheenahbayg (esteemed Elders) who provide guidance for our community-based decision-making processes in Pikangikum First Nation. Each of these head trappers exercises a customary custodial responsibility for their trapline areas and therefore these head trappers are central both to Pikangikum First Nation’s relationship to the land and
to our Community-based Land Use Planning process (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 26).

Chief and Council played an important role in decision-making at the community level, but were usually not present at Steering Group meetings. Nonetheless, their presence was often sought by members of the Steering Group when important decisions were being discussed: “Our leaders, Chief and Council have to be involved...The community must be involved, our leaders must be informed. They are our elected leaders. They act on our behalf” (Gideon Peters, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009). Chief and Council did not play a leadership role in the planning process because knowledge and authority in the planning process was recognized to lie with the Steering Group.

The Pikangikum land use planning process is unique because the Council is not involved in day to day discussions...This results in reduced political interference...Chief and Council are not [often at Steering Group meetings] because they’ve delegated authority to the elders for land use planning. They only come when they’re invited. They take care of funding, and talk in meetings when invited (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, August 15, 2007).

The result of these overlapping authorities was a process that was unique in its institutional approach. The lead-up to decision-making required that appropriate consultation with the appropriate knowledgeable people must take place. Decisions could not be taken until measures had been taken to consult the appropriate people. Elders have also indicated that they could not be expected to speak to a matter without being given the appropriate amount of time to discuss the outcomes of meetings among themselves. I saw this process at work at a meeting concerning a vegetation survey to be undertaken with Ontario Parks. One of the issues in question concerned the physical places on which this research project would focus. Elder George M. Suggashie stated:

We can’t really decide today on anything. We need to think about this. We need a follow-up meeting. I know this discussion is very important. Also Jake Keeper [is] saying we need time to discuss this in the community. For instance the elder that was named Thomas Moose; I can probably visit him and sit with him and ask him about these proposed research ideas. I need time to look at those maps too, to
give him a layout of those areas, and to get him to identify these areas on a map (George M. Suggashie, Steering Group meeting transcript, June 25, 2007).

Thomas Moose was identified as the appropriate elder to consult because he was known to be knowledgeable about the area in question. Certain decisions also were not be taken without consulting the responsible senior trapper:

The discussion that we’re having, we’re not having the head trappers for those areas that are being mentioned. They should be here. We should be consulting with them. The reason why I bring that up of these head trappers not being consulted is, [Woodland Caribou Provincial Park] took away from our people certain areas that belonged, with no prior consultation. I think if we want to follow the right process we should do this, we should follow proper consultation (Sam Quill, meeting notes, June 25, 2007).

When I began talking with WFMC Land Use Planning Coordinator Paddy Peters in 2007, he was concerned it was too early to begin planning at the harvesting-site level with individual trappers because a community process still had not occurred to sort out how planning and management authority would be distributed at different levels. In practice, some coordination issues—introduced above as the integration of decentralized customary authority at the trapline level, and leadership to make decisions which affect the whole Whitefeather Forest—had already emerged in the planning phase, and were actively being engaged within the community. The need for a community-level process for dealing with management decisions across trapline areas was a topic I asked about while organizing an elders workshop in March 2009. Elders Liaison Oliver Hill, made it apparent that the particulars of such a process had not yet been decided upon:

The community has to put a process in place that we can work with...The traplines had their own process where head trappers either approved or disapproved of issues, or what happens in their areas. With this land use planning process, within our territory we have to come up with a process that we can work with. I know that the elders will be involved, and also the head trappers, and also the whole community as a whole will be involved in this decision process. That’s the only way it’s going to work. An individual person here in this area cannot decide for the whole community, what’s going to happen over here, or there (Oliver Hill, interview transcript, March 24, 2009).
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Oliver Hill explained that head trappers had the responsibility to know whether an activity in their trapline area was acceptable to them: “The senior trapper should be notified of activities that will take place on their land in the future. Part of their individual responsibility is to know how to get knowledge even as new activities are developed” (Oliver Hill, interview transcript, March 24, 2009). Oliver had earlier elaborated that “the current planning process is an open process. Senior trappers are invited. Everyone’s invited. They need to be involved in their area. They shouldn’t be surprised by anything that happens with forestry” (Oliver Hill, interview transcript, March 10, 2009).

Decisions taken at the trapline level were themselves deliberated with involvement of the appropriate knowledgeable individuals. In planning for forestry activity, Matthew Strang raised the issue of correspondence between those with authority for different areas. It appears that at least some authority to make decisions regarding where cutting is to occur is expected to involve senior trappers, but that making appropriate decisions, even regarding one’s own trapline would need to involve others:

The processes that we put in place, the whole community has to be involved in the decision-making processes. Like what’s going to happen in [my] area here? I understand there’s a lot of good timber in this area. But George [Matthew’s brother] is the head trapper in this area, so how’s George going to involve the rest of the trapline areas for him to make the proper decision, for forestry to begin in his area? These are some of the questions that we still have to discuss. We’re not even there yet. It’s going to take a lot of debates, a lot of discussion at the community level (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, March 24, 2009).

In practice, decisions may be taken after the appropriate individuals have been consulted. Yet this was not a straightforward process. It may also involve negotiating trade-offs for family groups, and benefits flowing to the community as a whole. Oliver Hill posed the question of how decision-making on land uses in different trapline areas could be reconciled with benefits flowing to the community as a result of forestry revenue:
If they start forestry in this area here, then all these other areas will be looking on, all the head trappers. In my area here, I understand that’s going to be a protected area. They’re not going to harvest any trees from this area here, but all the trees...will be harvested from this area. How’s that going to look on this particular area? How are these individuals, these families going to feel, that their trees are getting cut down and the rest are not? (Oliver Hill, interview transcript, March 24, 2009)

The potential for the coordination issue to emerge around new land use activities relates to the need to address their intersection with customary uses, including hunting, trapping and fishing. Senior trapper John Pierre Kejick continued to trap commercially in an area located south of Pikangikum. Half of his trapline has been included in the planning area whereas the other half is located outside the Whitefeather Forest, and therefore ineligible for inclusion in the planning process according to the terms of the NBI which opened the planning process north of 51 degrees latitude. John Pierre Kejick had witnessed intensive forestry over a large portion of the southern part of his harvesting area. He explained that unlike his experience with forest fire, which sees rapid recovery and return of animal populations within “three or four years”, areas which had been clear-cut continued to be in poor condition even 10-15 years after the cut “because there’s not enough food for animals” (John Pierre Kejick, interview notes, October 18, 2007; also see Miller et al., 2010). The implications of this are unclear, as it remains to be seen how trapline leaders would be involved in forestry planning at the site-level. This also brings up the possibility that hunters and trappers might be displaced for longer periods of time, and may need to make customary arrangements to use other trappers’ areas as described in chapters four and five. Planning issues at the community level were not only limited to preparation for forestry. Dedicated protected areas posed their own challenges in terms of community access and land use. The potential for protected areas designations to remove decision-making power to organizational scales above the community (let alone trapline leadership) has made them a source of controversy and criticism among elders and leaders (Burlando, 2012).
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As of June 2012, the forest management planning process and the Protected Areas Dialogue reached completion, and the 2012-2020 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Whitefeather Forest has been made publicly available (see OMNR and WFMC, 2012). As was the case during the development of the Land Use Strategy, the FMP specifies that the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group will continue to provide strategic advice as part of Pikangikum’s customary decision-making approach. Indigenous Knowledge Experts were to participate with the planning team in the forest management planning process with regards to access, harvesting, silviculture planning and guiding the Annual Work Schedule, and on-site supervision to guide implementation of forestry operations (OMNR and WFMC 2012, section 6.1 (l), page 22, Terms of Reference). The FMP specifies that focus group interviews with Indigenous Knowledge Experts were carried out to vet decisions for location of cut blocks and road construction, with the desire to invite 100% participation from Pikangikum senior trappers to participate in cut block planning. For the first 5-year term, seven out of eight senior trappers for areas on which cuts had been allocated attended sessions involving identification of values which may be affected by operations, and aided in the development of Areas of Concern (AOC’s) to protect values in their trapline areas (OMNR and WFMC, 2012: 140). Areas of Concern are those sites that contain special values, including trappers’ trails and cabins, and therefore may require special measures to be used in forest management operations.

Customary leadership processes, when scaled up, may involve several different leaders, including elders, knowledgeable individuals, and the senior trapper from a given trapline area, reinforcing the idea that people speak in relation to the areas they know best. Knowledge may be brought to the Steering Group by different elders within a single trapline area, and not necessarily the senior trapper. Different groups often used different parts of the same trapline, resulting in the possibility of overlapping spatial authority at the trapline level, and distinct knowledge of specific areas.
6.3 **Spatial Authority and Interaction with the State**

As already noted, planning and management authority in Pikangikum derive from direct experience on the land. Addressing the subtleties of authority in relationships with the state has been an ongoing task in the WFI. References to authority are prominent in the Land Use Strategy. In the Land Use Strategy, *Nahnahkahcheeqeekayweenahn* is translated as authority but also responsibility (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 13). The Land Use Strategy is the first cooperative document to be brought into the public domain, co-authored by Pikangikum and the OMNR. It is an exercise in collaboration, but the two sides did not always see eye-to-eye, and the issue of authority was particularly important in this regard:

> Under the Land Use Strategy we had trouble with the idea of authority. OMNR didn’t like the word ‘authority’ and wanted it removed from the Strategy. I got into this debate. The elder with me at that time was unhappy with this. I told OMNR that if they wanted to take authority out, we might as well shut the whole process down. We have to present our Strategy under authority, using authority. (Paddy Peters, workshop notes, August 16, 2007).

In past dealings with the OMNR, senior trappers were consulted as the main liaisons in communication and decision-making. It appears that senior trappers were consulted on an individual basis as a matter of course, but there was no ongoing strategic communication with government resource managers. In one example, OMNR personnel contacted senior trapper Jake Kejick because they wanted to log an area on his trapline. Jake told them “not yet, not until he told them to. They still haven’t logged there” (Paddy Peters, interview notes, September 17, 2007). The senior trapper for the trapline surrounding Pikangikum, Ayoo Turtle, related a similar incident and described how he dealt with it:

> There’s an area close by here that was clearcut. An all season road. I received a letter from the MNR, if I had anything to say about it. I guess one of the reasons I let that go, that clearcut, is because the stuff at the top of the trees would blow right onto the ground and start to grow again. That’s one of the reasons I just
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permitted that to happen. That I knew the land would grow back in the way it is. If there would be a wide area of clear cutting in that area, I think we would have problems...I’m not opposed to forestry. Whoever is conducting forestry needs to sit with a First Nations person to consult (Ayou Turtle, interview transcript, October 31, 2007).

Ayou Turtle made a decision about the cut on his trapline, and provided details as to why he made this decision. He stressed that he was guided by his knowledge, and that other practices may not have been acceptable in his view.

The OMNR continued to recognize senior trappers as authorities with respect to their areas, but their consultation often persisted within the framework of the WFI process. A joint research program on caribou was ongoing as I began working with the community and I was quickly introduced to the way in which Pikangikum worked with the Ministry in exercises of knowledge sharing. Pikangikum and the OMNR became involved in helicopter flights with the objective of landing where signs of caribou were observed from the air. At a meeting with several elders and senior trappers, senior trappers were asked to accompany the MNR scientists in flights to their family areas. At this meeting, senior trapper George B. Strang told the MNR he would go “wherever they wanted to go to look at caribou” (fieldnotes, November 29, 2006). Senior trapper Tom Quill Sr. agreed to the research being conducted in his area, but said he could not go along due to trouble walking. He suggested another helper in his area, Joseph Peters, accompany the scientists (fieldnotes, November 29, 2006). Respect for trapline-level authority was part of the research protocol, but while senior trappers were consulted, they were not necessarily in the lead, as elders and other trapline users were also recognized to hold spatial authority as knowledge holders. WFI Land Use Planning Coordinator Paddy Peters seemed interested in making sure this was clear when choosing areas for research (fieldnotes, November 29, 2006).

When speaking to issues affecting broader spatial scales, spatial aspects of authority were evident in that elders’ teachings often pertained to areas about which par-
ticular individuals had knowledge. One particular Steering Group event, a meeting concerning spraying of pesticides for Jackpine Budworm in March of 2009, was particularly well attended by senior trappers whose areas were to be affected. This was a revealing meeting on two accounts. First, OMNR personnel approached the community for consultation, rather than individual trappers for the areas affected by spraying (the conventional approach), signalling that the OMNR is coming around to building a working relationship with Pikangikum based on the decision-making authority of the Steering Group. Second, decisions were not taken at the meeting, allowing for internal deliberation in the community. Oliver Hill explained that head trappers and elders needed to take the issue back to their family groups: “They [OMNR] invited trappers to come. [senior trapper] Jimmy Keeper came. Now he has to tell [others in his area] what he learned” (Oliver Hill, interview notes, March 10, 2009). This meeting therefore indicated that the OMNR is building a working relationship with Pikangikum based on the guidance of the Steering Group, and the customary authority of elders more generally. This recognition of customary authority has been carried through to the 2012–2022 Forest Management Plan for the Whitefeather Forest, which explains “the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group will play a guiding role in forest management planning”, including by assigning a representative on the planning team, and reviewing and endorsing the forest management plan (OMNR and WFMC, 2012, 7-8).

Ongoing interaction between Pikangikum’s elders (through the Steering Group) and the OMNR have led to observable shifts in the way in which knowledge was brought into the planning process. Shifts in the relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR in terms of decision-making authority have also revealed strategic dimensions of this interaction. The next section discusses the decision to pursue a forestry licence and other commercial activities in partnership with the government, and sets up a rationale for the delineation of new boundaries corresponding to the planning and management area.
6.3.1 The buffering role of commercial licences

It is clear that issues of authority, however important for outsiders to understand for Pikangikum, are also quite complex for Pikangikum people to articulate. In some instances, references to spatial authority are quite tangible, as over strategic resources, and control in relation to Pikangikum people’s traditional territory. Matthew Strang affirmed that Pikangikum was working to exert control over fishing lodge tourism development in the Whitefeather Forest. In the following quote, interpreted by Paddy Peters, authority refers directly to control over Pikangikum’s traditional territory:\(^3\)

We heard the MNR say to us once the First Nation gets the licence, we will have full authority over our territory, even the lodge owners...Lodge owners will have to come to Pikangikum if they want their permits renewed (Matthew Strang, workshop transcript March 31, 2009).

What has become clearer through research with elders is that the initiation of the WFI was based on seeking control and authority with regard to commercial harvesting activities (including fishing lodges) in the Whitefeather Forest, as comes across in these notes taken by the consultant Karan Aquino:

We want to keep our way of life, but MNR keeps coming up with new policies and ways. Not fair, not easy for us (e.g. commercial fishing, trapping). When we keep having to adapt, it makes things difficult for us. Wants to remind MNR not to take anything away from us. With commercial fishing, they took quotas, non-aboriginal people are accommodated. You can’t do that to us anymore (Charlie Dunsford, notes taken by Karan Aquino for Ahkee Dialogue, Special Areas Meeting, February 8, 2006).

Elders showed they were familiar with a range of Euro-Canadian resource development interest in their areas. For example, George M. Suggashie made reference to outsiders on his trapline who appeared to be interested in minerals development:

Our great grandfathers used to meet these [white] people there. They didn’t want

\(^3\)Again, I use the term traditional territory, not to refer to an absolute space, but in reference to an area of interest to Pikangikum people as they sought to strategically control land use areas used by them in the past (also see section 1.1 where the term was first discussed)
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to know them. They didn’t let them know them. The reason why they didn’t want them out there—they were trying to talk to them or stay with them. They knew before that they were not going to stop bothering them. They knew there was something important out there, like the mines. They were afraid of that. They dreamed of it. They knew they were going to come over there. Today they’re already there on that trapline...The only thing they’re protecting there is what they found (the minerals). They don’t want them to destroy them. They knew there were large fish out there—walleye, trout—at McInnes Lake. That’s the reason they really liked that place (George M. Suggashie, interview transcript, April 29, 2007).

George made clear that his family group was uncomfortable with their activities, and he understood that outsiders were being drawn in by potentially lucrative mineral finds, and abundant fishing opportunities. An area on Matthew Strang’s trapline, oohnuhkukh-meewehpuhweetehg, which Pikangikum people refer to as “sturgeon blockade rapids” (O’Flaherty, 2009: 8), was known to be a good area for sturgeon. Matthew described how he experienced loss of control over commercial fishing of sturgeon:

There are lots of sturgeon and they spawn there. One day several white men came to catch sturgeon during spawning season. They never consulted [Matthew]. They took away many sturgeon. There were 10 years like that. There were planes that came to take away all that sturgeon. Now OMNR puts restrictions on sturgeon fishing. Matthew says the white men that came gave us sturgeon heads just to pass it by us, for us to eat (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, August 15, 2007).

Within living memory, Pikangikum people have also grown acutely aware of what was going on to the south in terms of forestry and other land use activities:

Many years ago our community would have already been wiped out by outside forestry companies. They would have already clearcut our area. We would have had no benefits. That’s why the community came together to put something in place. We wanted to be able to benefit. That’s why the land use strategy came into place (Sam Quill, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009).

The community has attempted to gain control over all types of commercial resource development in the Whitefeather Forest through the planning process with the aim of obtaining and Sustainable Forestry Licence (SFL). This push seems to have been motivated in large part by the threat of encroachment on resources from the south.
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as made clear in the checkerboard prophecy (box 1.1 in chapter 1), but also through contemporary observation and monitoring of outsiders’ activities:

In any proposal, in any plan that is not controlled by the community, anything can happen. [Solomon is] just making comments in regards to, I guess the plane that has been flying around. We have no control over that airplane. Fly all over in the air, all over in our territory. We have completed the Land Use Strategy but what control do we have? The only control we have is if we just always patrol our territory, every day. That’s the only way we can have control...We wanted to do our own ventures in our own areas. That’s why, for instance, Barton Lake, we planned to put a lodge there before outsiders came to build their own lodges there. We wanted to take that over because it’s our own area. I was born and raised in Barton Lake. I made my livelihood by hunting and trapping...At the beginning of our process I thought we would only deal with one activity and that was forestry. Now you hear about a lot of other activities that are going to happen within our territories (Solomon Turtle, notes from Steering Group meeting, June 25, 2007).

In addition, the above quote by Sam Quill made reference to elders’ understanding that they needed to pursue control over other commercial activities (i.e. fishing lodges), and that they needed to be vigilant, otherwise these opportunities would be taken away from them, as happened with commercial fishing licences and the subsequent development of fishing lodges. At the same time, the Registered Trapline System tended to be regarded as a successful system of conferring spatial authority to Pikangikum trappers (see box 6.1 below). Part of ensuring continuity of the customary land use system has involved ensuring these licences would be granted to them, and not outsiders, giving Pikangikum people control over land use and resources.

Box 6.1. Commercial tenure and licences

Regarding commercial fishing, the community didn’t start it up. It was started by the HBC. That’s what my dad told me. It was not through Chief and Council. They were asked by the HBC to do some fishing for them. Later on the community got involved. They took over. The reason why I know this is that I was one of the licence holders. I lost that licence. One summer it was given to someone else without my knowledge. Without being consulted. We were told that the fish had bugs. That’s what we’re told today, that the trees have bugs. This always happens
when First Nations people want to start up their own ventures. Something always comes up. I learned that the fish had gone bad. I questioned OMNR why the lodge owners were permitted to fish. That was in that same lake area. They told me that the individual consumption was OK. But the commercial fishing, that was public consumption. That was not OK. Now we’re learning that the trees are sick. This is what the MNR says. There are a lot of people coming to inquire in our community [about the Land Use Plan]. Once they have the information they need they take it out of the community. What do they do with the information we give them? ...Regarding trapline areas, I believe this is our security, when those boundaries were established to make trapline areas. Because we had no boundaries, anyone could come in and do whatever they wanted in that area. Commercial fishing was also ours. They took that away because the fish were bad, took that out of our hands.

(Gideon Peters, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009)

Loss of commercial fishing licences was associated with the emergence of tourist lodges. This, in turn, with the decline of all commercial activities in Pikangikum’s land use area, was identified with additional loss of authority with regard to land use. The issue of authority, then, appears to have as much significance at a broader level as within the relationship between Pikangikum and the OMNR (i.e. in terms of Aboriginal rights, or treaty rights). The level of importance elders attached to the term “authority” in their relationship with government resource managers was indicative of a parallel process of retaining (and returning) authority in relation to their traditional land use areas:

We have been able to sustain life on the land with a little bit of help from MNR. Whitehead sees the land the same way ever since he first came to Pikangikum. The land is still good. Both large and small creatures are still out on the land. Every species of tree is still there. He sees the planning area as a form of government. We need our land in order to function. We’re trying to create government to regulate land in a way we want it regulated. We have to carefully plan to keep animals on the land. (“06_02_08_Dialogue_Notes”: Personal notes taken by Karen Aquino for Ahkee Dialogue, Special Areas Meeting, February 8, 2006).
Sustaining life in the community then, according to Whitehead Moose, was related to maintaining authority in relation to Pikangikum’s traditional land use area.

Land use planning acted as a process through which customary land use institutions interacted with state institutions. Knowledge of the land, validated through continued land use, was important in terms of maintenance of customary authority and decision-making institutions at the community level. At the same time, Pikangikum people understood they were walking a fine line between buffering their customary system through this process, and further encumbering customary land uses: “We don’t want to create a snare for ourselves through the planning process. We need to maintain access, and practice traditional activities” (Paddy Peters, notes taken by Karen Aquino for Ahkee Dialogue, Special Areas Meeting, February 8, 2006). Matthew Strang was concerned about the OMNR further tightening regulation in the Whitefeather Forest following initiation of the planning process:

You can’t even build a cabin in the bush. They want us to have a licence. Matthew’s referring to that cabin that [X] is building at Berens Lake. Since we’re into this planning process, everything’s going to be monitored by MNR because everything needs to be regulated within our territory (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, March 24, 2009).

An offshoot of this discussion on outsiders and government authority was that while Pikangikum was working through the WFI process to consolidate authority for their own territory (in large part through obtaining an SFL, and with reference to the trapline licences held by Pikangikum residents), they were also clear that they were using their knowledge and authority to deal specifically with issues relevant to Pikangikum alone. These issues could not be abstracted to other places or communities by government planners and resource managers. For other nearby First Nations communities involved in land use planning, the Land Use Strategy suggests they must follow their own process: “This Community-based Land Use Planning process is a new process for both planning partners [Pikangikum First Nation and OMNR]; it is a unique process
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that cannot be compared to initiatives elsewhere in Ontario" (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 12). “This Strategy is not intended as a model for other First Nations who are going through their own Community-based Land Use Planning process for their respective areas” (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 14).

The planning process was understood to work alongside, not over-ride, the customary system of authority. The WFI planning process helped Pikangikum people coordinate strategies to pursue commercial opportunities with new authority at the community level, while emphasizing the continuity of the customary family areas system which respects individual authority in relation to family areas and harvesting sites within the Whitefeather Forest. Pikangikum elders perceived intrusions from the south in the form of commercial forestry, as well as a more diffused, and difficult to monitor intrusion of mineral prospecting and fishing tourism. The significance of the trapline licences in terms of conferring spatial authority over land use was not lost on Pikangikum elders. Traplines were understood as spatial buffers which allowed for the ongoing coexistence of commercial harvesting and customary subsistence harvesting by Pikangikum people. When I asked about trapline introductions, Norman Quill referred me to George B. Strang’s statement in the Land Use Strategy: “What George is saying is that when the traplines were introduced by the beaver boss, they wouldn’t be broken” (Norman Quill, interview transcript, March 25, 2009). The land use planning process and the SFL were new strategies which provided strong potential for Pikangikum people to retain control over land use, and developing new commercial activities on traditional areas. This strategy necessarily required the delineation of a bounded planning area which became the Whitefeather Forest. The delineation of the planning area receives treatment in the next section.
6.3.2 The planning area boundary

The delineation of Pikangikum’s planning and resource management area through the WFI planning process was not the first instance of an attempt to designate a management area for Pikangikum First Nation (or for other northern Ontario First Nations for that matter). An earlier attempt to create management areas for northern Ontario First Nations was undertaken as a top-down provincial land use planning initiative, the West Patricia Land Use Planning Project of 1982, which was ultimately never implemented. The delineation and administration of “Band Management Areas” were an ultimate objective within this process. Figure 6.4 shows this area over top of the Whitefeather Forest boundaries for comparison. Band Management Areas were not areas where First Nations had resource management authority, even for furs. Rather, these were to be management areas “that incorporated a community reference” (Ministry of Natural Resources, 1981: 47, in Chapeskie et al., 2005).

These areas were not delineated by First Nations themselves. Pikangikum’s Band Management Area looked quite different from the way Pikangikum people perceived the extent of their own traditional land use area. Areas were clearly based on trapline areas, but incorporated some decisions about which trapline areas where to be included in a particular area. In turn, the WFI process of boundary delineation was described as a compromise based on feasibility under the Northern Boreal Initiative:

Before the Pikangikum territory was defined on maps, their territory ran to Red Lake. This area has now been taken over by others. Now we can only identify our traditional territory north of the Line of Undertaking. People were not consulted about the park [Woodland Caribou Provincial Park] that extends into their territory. At present, traplines within this park will be returned to Aboriginal peoples [when they expire under provisions in the Park plan] (Paddy Peters, workshop transcript, August 15, 2007).

In the quotation above, Paddy Peters interwove references to trapline territories, and a historic land use area used by people who have taken up residence in Pikangikum.
Figure 6.4: The West Patricia Land Use Plan boundary

Source: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Red Lake, Ontario
People living in Pikangikum had been involved in subsistence and commercial activities in areas outside the WFI planning area. Chapter five cited some of these cases, as with Norman Quill’s involvement with wild rice harvesting near Red Lake, Larry Pascal’s family hunting trips down the Keeper River system, and Whitehead Moose’s and Timmy K. Strang’s family’s involvement in commercial fishing at Moar Lake.

Delineation of a fixed boundary conferred spatial authority with regard to resource development, but this strategy was not free of controversy with regard to other activities, including customary harvesting, and recreation. Matthew recalled that initially the OMNR and others had difficulty with the title of the Land Use Strategy, *Keeping the Land*, which is an English translation of the term *cheemuhnucheechekuhteg*. Matthew Strang asked how I understood *Keeping the Land*. He repeated that before other First Nations thought they wanted to keep it to themselves (Matthew Strang, interview notes, March 23, 2009). This presented confusion in terms of the meaning of the planning boundary.

I guess they thought the elders referred to for example, there’s an area they would *cheemuhnucheeetoowach*, I guess MNR misinterpreted that nobody would go there, or fish there, so that’s how they interpreted the elders. But it wasn’t like that. Like no trespassing that sort of thing, [or a] protected area. That’s what they thought, like *cheemuhnucheecheekuhteg* referred to no trespassing, no activity on that land or anything...The elders were trying to explain, to keep the land the way it is. There are people from Red Lake that usually have a good relationship with the elders. And when they heard that term, *cheemuhnucheecheekuhteg*, they misinterpreted the term, more like a no trespassing sign. I guess that’s the kind of term they understood it to be. Non-native people thought that term meant they couldn’t go in that area. That’s the term [we’ve] used, *cheemuhnucheecheekuhteg*. But [we] made it clear to non-native persons that they would have access to the lake if they want to come up to camp. They’re starting to understand. We went to Winnipeg one time not too long ago and we met with some First Nations people there. So we asked those people about that term, *cheemuhnucheecheekuhteg*. Right away they responded the same way that MNR responded, [the way] that non-native people responded to that term (Matthew Strang, interview transcript, October 26, 2007).

The Land Use Strategy and further workshops involving other communities help
somewhat to explain Pikangikum’s use of the term. Further clarification can be drawn from the way Pikangikum people have explained the relationship between the planning area and the traplines. With a more nuanced understanding of trapline dynamics and customary authority from this, and previous chapters, it becomes possible to read the implications of this relationship, specifically in terms of the contrast between subsistence and commercial harvesting activities. Box 6.2 collects two references in the Land Use Strategy to the basis of the planning area in the trapline areas held by Pikangikum members. The boundary was also an outcome of an intra- and extra-community processes, where Pikangikum and other First Nations have consulted each other in order to come to understandings of the boundaries rooted in customary authority.

**Box 6.2. Land Use Strategy excerpts dealing with planning area boundaries**

The boundaries of the Whitefeather Forest have been defined by the trapline areas of Beekahncheekahmeeng paymahteeeseewahch. Long ago our people were not bounded by these traplines however in the present context the traplines provide a useful basis for Community-based Land Use Planning purposes. In addition, the Whitefeather Forest does not encompass the whole of Pikangikum First Nation’s ancestral lands. Some of our trapline areas have been lost to non-native trappers and to Woodland Caribou Park; one of our people’s trappers is split by the 51st parallel which generally divides the Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI) from the Ontario Living Legacy planning area and hence Pikangikum First Nation is only planning for that portion in the NBI area...The trapline areas have also been used to define the boundaries of the WFPA in order to respect neighbouring First Nations.

(Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 26)

*Beekahncheekahmeeng* Elders will often refer to the Planning Area as *weem-bah- bee-pee-ee-gwan*. This refers to an area that stands out by itself within a larger area; a part of the landscape that forms a covering like a traditional tent (*wah-bahnoh-agahmik*), a tent like that pictured on the left used for ceremonial drumming). These tents were made from saplings bent over and covered with bark, typically birch bark (*weegwahs*). The word *weembahbeepee-eegwahn* is related to
the word for a trapline, or some similarly defined area: weem-bee-pee-ee-gahn (weem-bee-pee-ee-gahn-nahn for several traplines together).

(Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 26)

6.4 **OHNAHCHEEKAYWEEN: “PUTTING OUR PROCESS IN PLACE”**

Although Pikangikum elders carefully maintained the contemporary validity of their decentralized customary system of group organization and resource access, they have constructed a set of institutions at the community level in order to address forestry planning and management issues at broader spatial scales. Decision-making at the community level has involved coordination between new institutions. The WFMC has been delegated responsibility for planning and management by Chief and Council. In turn, these institutions are guided by the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group. At the same time, the basis for planning and management authority has continued to reside in customary spatial authority. Precedence for collective decision-making was historically linked to the coordination of land-use decisions between extended family groups gathered in the summer months at their fishing sites. Family group leaders continued to hold responsibility for mediating access in their areas, but also guiding decisions collectively by bringing their knowledge into planning and management processes at the community level. The customary system has undergone changes, for instance, with the introduction of registered traplines, but decentralized customary authority—the role of elders in decision-making—has not been fundamentally altered.

Residence at the reserve has more recently replaced flexible seasonal movement from summer gathering sites to winter harvesting areas. However, traditional harvesting activities have carried on. Due to constraints associated with living on the reserve, however, the dynamics of land use have changed significantly. A gradient of accessi-
bility has emerged between harvesting areas near the community and hunting camps on remote traplines as a new, and powerful, driver for land use. Trapline areas distant from the community were accessed for short periods by expensive chartered flights. Maintenance of physical linkages to remote areas has become increasingly difficult, but leaders from these areas participated in decision-making for their areas in the land use planning process. These leaders also played an important role in mediating access to resources in their areas for those living in the community.

An important point can be drawn from this observation. Pikangikum residents continue to conduct harvesting activities following their customary system. Loss of connection with their traditional land use area was perceived to be a major concern. The introduction of the government trapline system and subsequent regulation of commercial harvesting was not understood to be responsible for this disconnect. The decline of the commercial fur trade and other commercial land use activities contributed significantly to the degree of “settlement” on reserves.

Re-introducing commercial harvesting options has been the broad focus of the WFI. The Anishinaabe term Ohnahcheekayween, translated as “putting our process in place” was brought in at a workshop as a way to articulate the changes accompanying the new management plan (Solomon Turtle, Boundaries Working Group meeting, June 2, 2011). Another term was used during my final workshop to describe the Steering Group’s part in the process: “keekendimaweencheegay: Knowledge…putting knowledge in our process. [Or] knowledge for community process…putting knowledge to work” (Ellen Peters, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009). In turn, a change in process was not viewed as a threat to Pikangikum people’s relationship with their customary harvesting areas: “Elders have lived in these areas for a very long time. We will continue to live in these areas even though we have a different process. It will continue in the future generation. With a different process that they’ll work with” (Gideon Peters, workshop transcript, March 31, 2009). Whitehead Moose likened Pikangikum’s customary harvesting areas
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to a government cheque. Although this comparison is not completely transparent to me, his reference to the continuation of a way of life through a new process while deriving benefits from resource harvesting is clearer:

At our last [Steering Group] meeting I gave an example: this example was an envelope which contains a government cheque. This is how I see this whole land area that our people possess. We can continue to make a living as we did in the past. We made income from the animals that we trapped. There was no government support. It was our way of life, living on the land that supported us. Our people are planning for future activities. Mainly forestry. This is just a continued process from what we did in the past. We’re not keeping the land just to keep it and not benefit from it. We taught our sons and daughters to survive off the land. The same process will continue in the territory we’re planning for (Whitehead Moose, interview transcript, July 19, 2007).

Returning to passages in Pikangikum’s Land Use Strategy, it is now possible to read more clearly the notion that new livelihood activities can buffer, or support customary land use. Pikangikum peoples’ very presence on the land, and their connection with customary harvesting areas is linked to a mixture of commercial and subsistence harvesting activities:

Pikangikum First Nation is seeking to train our youth to enter new livelihood activities, not at the expense of customary land based activities, our Ahneesheenhbay kahnahwaycheckahwin, or our cultural attachment to our Ancestral lands (Ahneesheenhbay otahkeem) but to continue our Ahneesheenhbay way of life. Ahneesheenhbay kahnahwaycheckahwin, the customary stewardship approach of Pikangikum First Nation, and our very cultural survival as Beekahncheekahmeeng paymahteeseewahch, depends on Pikangikum people being on the land, learning from the land, learning the teachings of Pikangikum Elders. In this way, new land-based livelihoods in the Whitefeather Planning Area will compliment customary pursuits; both will be guided by our customary stewardship approach (Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2006: 11-12).

These activities were understood by Pikangikum elders to be mutually supportive. In addition, Pikangikum elders understood that along with a set of new rules brought in by the trapline system, the government protected Pikangikum harvesters’ exclusive use of their areas when faced with the incursion of Euro-Canadian trappers. On the other hand, the loss of commercial fishing licences was associated with an influx of
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Euro-Canadian lodge owners. It appears that these understandings, grounded in past experience, have been carried forward into Pikangikum elders’ expectations in terms of the role the SFL and other commercial opportunities discussed in the WFI planning process have in protection Pikangikum people’s use of the land.

The planning process has involved a reconfiguring of Pikangikum people’s relationship with government resource managers and other outsiders, and has entailed a discussion on relationships between individuals with authority within the community. The Whitefeather Forest Steering Group has allowed for Pikangikum elders and those with direct experience on the land to bring their knowledge directly into the planning process, engaging with state management institutions. While the WFI was conceived as a buffer to guard against erosion of Pikangikum people’s decision-making authority in connection with their traditional lands, it has also introduced an “internal” challenge: how to scale-up customary trapline authority to the Whitefeather Forest as a whole. To date this challenge has been met by ensuring the elders play a direct role, through the Steering Group, in planning for all new land uses in the Whitefeather Forest. The recently published Forest Management Plan (FMP), the first of its kind in Ontario, gives direction for interaction between institutional levels within the community (i.e. between the elders, Indigenous Knowledge Experts, and senior trappers participating in Steering Group meetings), but it is not specific on how interaction will take place between these levels. The FMP implies consultation with affected senior trappers has, and will continue to take place through individual participation and organization of focus groups, and specifies that community-level consensus will be built through the activities of the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group, through which Indigenous Knowledge experts and head trappers are expected to play a continuing role. Forestry activity has not yet commenced in the Whitefeather Forest Management Unit. For this reason, it remains to be seen how an individual’s knowledge and authority with regard to their harvesting area can influence management decision-making in practice if issues should
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emerge.
In implementing the new fur management system, the Province of Ontario assigned rights to harvest and sell furs from parcels of land to indigenous trappers, giving them priority over Euro-Canadian trappers, at least in policy. This is significant in two senses. In the first sense, Pikangikum elders remembered how the province affirmed their prior usufruct over the interests of outsiders with regard to a significant commercial activity on their land. In the second sense, the state (in a joint program administered by both the federal and provincial governments) moved to spatially regulate aboriginal land use outside the geographical confines of reserves in the north of the province.

The examination of the data and formulation of an analysis was based on the following research questions:

1. By what process were government traplines introduced in Pikangikum? Did the new trapline system alter customary access and authority with respect to customary land use?

2. How did rules related to furbearer harvesting and the government trapline system interact with relationships around other resource harvesting activities?

3. What were the dynamics of land use (including the trapline system) following the collapse of the commercial fur trade in the 1980s? How can the relationship between the family harvesting areas, the traplines, and the planning area be characterized in the recently completed land use planning process?
Three chapters took different angles on the traplines, looking at their origins and use in regulating fur harvests (chapter four), examining their interaction with other commercial and subsistence harvests (chapter five), and their contemporary role in the WFI (chapter six).

Chapter four (Customary land use and the introduction of the government trapline system) showed how leadership and decision-making authority was tied to knowledge of the land. Despite trapline introductions, people continued to move around on the land following customary arrangements guided by decisions taken by group leaders. Elders stated that at the time of introduction of the trapline system, Pikangikum people had little say over the design and implementation of the traplines (apart from sitting at the table with wildlife managers during the delineation of trapline boundaries). Nevertheless, neither the fur trade nor trapline introductions were sufficient to introduce private property relations in land. The trapline system did not open up a market in traplines. The government succeeded in introducing a weak form of modern resource management as it struggled with enforcement of management rules. Although Pikangikum people resented some of these rules (e.g. trapping quotas), they were mostly content to resist them in everyday practice. Perceptions of new rules, however, were balanced by Pikangikum elders’ understanding that the new trapline system had effectively blocked Euro-Canadian incursions into their trapping areas.

Chapter five (Access and authority for harvests other than furbearers) explored different approaches to authority and access around the harvest of resources other than commercial fur in the customary land use system. Commercial and subsistence harvests were found to require different approaches to access in relation to those with spatial authority. Other-than-human persons, as participants in this system of access and authority, were included in relationships of respect.

Chapter six (Spatial authority for contemporary land use planning and management) set up a contemporary gradient of land use in relation to centralized community settle-
ment which contrasts with the former dispersed and decentralized organization on the land. Even though commercial harvesting economies had largely collapsed, subsistence use of areas continued to be important, although remote areas which were more difficult to access saw much less use. The chapter showed how Pikangikum has drawn on their customary family areas to coordinate the planning process at the level of the community. While customary spatial authority was drawn on in terms of reproduction of Pikangikum peoples’ ties to the land, the trapline boundaries were used to delineate the Whitefeather Forest planning area boundary.

Taking these results as a whole, there are three cross-cutting themes that have emerged, to which I give attention in this discussion. These are: (1) the moral economy and the relational commons, (2) spatial authority and territory, and (3) coordination of planning and management across scales.

In the first section (From family harvesting areas to traplines: the moral economy of access), I ask, did the traplines change customary authority, and did they restrict the flexibility of movement that was an essential feature of the customary system? In what sense could the intersection between the customary land use system and the government traplines benefit from (and contribute to) commons analysis?

The second section (Dynamics of spatial authority and territory) introduces an analysis of the intersection between Pikangikum peoples’ customary spatial authority, and state internal territorialization. This analysis can be framed with the question: can the traplines be understood in terms of the production of state space, or internal territorialization (Brenner, 1997; Lefèbvre, 1991; Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995), or were more complex relationships evident, in which the community was able to articulate their customary authority?

The final section, (The coordination issue in contemporary planning and management) looks at how the relationship between the family areas, the traplines, and the planning area can be characterized. I ask more specifically, did the WFI alter custom-
ary access relationships and decision-making authority at the level of the Whitefeather Forest? Here, I deal with the issue of coordinating planning and management authority across spatial scales.

7.1 FROM FAMILY HARVESTING AREAS TO TRAPLINES: THE MORAL ECONOMY OF ACCESS

Throughout the fur trade, livelihood provisioning for Anishinaabe peoples in the boreal forest region depended on a dynamic relationship between subsistence and commercial harvests. People moved around, and groups were re-organized seasonally. The fur trade became associated with certain spatial changes which were incorporated into these spatial dynamics (Tough, 1996), namely, the association of flexible harvesting areas with extended family harvesting groups. These harvesting areas were connected with more sedentary furbearers, so it was possible for hunting groups to gather at a central camp while trapping commercially, and radiate out to lakes and waterways within an area with which they were familiar, for a range of harvesting activities. Attentive studies of Algonquian land tenure have identified these harvesting areas as parts of a customary commons system (Scott, 1986; Berkes, 1986). Nonetheless, this commons system must be further qualified as a relational, moral economic system, as complex features of land and resource use in this system did not, at first glance, seem to fit easily with any particular land tenure regime. As others have similarly observed, patterns of seasonal movement associated with fur harvesting were complemented by dynamic patterns of resource use, including organization of summer gatherings for fishing, berry harvesting, and spring and fall waterfowl hunting. Harvesting dynamics necessarily involved flexible movement between harvesting sites (Tanner, 1983; Scott, 1986).

When the traplines were introduced, the government attempted to transform these
dynamic harvesting areas into bounded trapping territories which could be delineated on government maps. In addition, certain dynamic summer gathering sites were transformed into geographically fixed, permanent reserve communities. Customary flexibility of family harvesting areas contrasted with the government’s (perhaps wishful) understanding of the registered traplines as a “hunting equivalent to individual farms” (Brody, 1981: 90). Archival research revealed that the government perceived the need to work with the indigenous system in delineating new trapline areas. However, the customary system was interpreted by the government in terms of clear property rights over bounded areas of land, and the trapline system was an attempt to make this a reality on the ground.

In terms of the impact of the new system on customary land use, the question may be posed as to whether traplines were simply an expression of the historical Anishinaabe land use system with the additional overlay of trapline boundaries. Did the trapline boundaries affect the flexibility of the customary system? Results from this study indicate that seasonal dispersal to trapline areas continued to be grounded in the customary land use system which was not compatible with property in land. The government traplines did not fundamentally transform people’s relationships with the land, so land could not be appropriated by family groups or clans for their exclusive use. Nor did boundaries acquire meaning in terms of exclusive resource use by owners of trapline areas. This study is not alone in this finding. For example Tanner (2002), in the case of the Mistassini Cree, found that although groups became associated with fixed government trapline areas, harvesters found no contradiction in the need for long-term flexibility and adjustment.

Thus, with flexibility built into the system even following the introduction of traplines, this thesis presents evidence of a mixed system of rights to trapline area usage, overlaid on a customary system of flexible access to harvesting areas based on prior knowledge, experience, and relationships. Traplines did not necessarily change
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the way Pikangikum people obtained access to harvesting areas, and boundaries did not necessarily restrict movement or change the way people related to one another. The strongest evidence of this layering of government and customary systems was seen in the grounding of the land use system in subsistence harvesting which continued to provision extended family groups alongside commercial harvesting. Following the trapline introductions, furbearers remained important for subsistence provisioning while at the same time furnishing furs of economic value for the commercial trade. The land use system could not simply be described in terms of the production of fur as a commodity—which is what seems to have been the primary assumption within the Algonquian land tenure debate (c.f. Speck and Eiseley, 1939; Leacock, 1954). To this end, it is important to note that the fur trade and associated processes of interaction with global markets—let alone government regulation of trapline areas—in themselves did not dismantle or lead to replacement of the customary system of land use. Indeed, co-existence of commercial harvesting with subsistence harvesting was integral to the survival of the customary land use system, and recognition of this fact by government agencies was often welcomed by indigenous groups (elsewhere see Scott, 1986; Scott et al., 2004).

It was desirable for people to be able to move around to different harvesting sites without constraints, but this flexibility depended on a person’s knowledge of how to move appropriately. A picture has emerged in which people generally harvested with those who were familiar with an area, or went to areas with which they had personal familiarity. Respect for others could be understood as a means of mediating access to resources. Chapters five and six showed how access was mediated differently for commercial and subsistence harvests. A person wishing to hunt, fish or trap on areas typically used by others must first request permission from a family area leader only if she or he intended to harvest commercially. The rights and privileges of a harvesting group and its leader with respect to their customary harvesting area did not necessarily
entail the right to deny access to others. Harvesters must respect others’ relationships with their areas, but senior trappers and other leaders with spatial authority held certain responsibilities for the subsistence security of others. Access was not guided by a strict set of rules, but by norms which put primacy on an individual’s ability to act respectfully and responsibly in relation to others. Other scholars of Algonquian land use have also observed that extended family groups usually had usufruct rights in a given territory and could not be refused access by the senior trapper or hunting boss (Scott, 1986). In other Algonquian societies, an ethic of sharing guides access, and in this sense, flexibility did not entail disorganization, degradation and chaos as Western property rights theory would hold (Poirier, 2001). People had a complex relationship to land, and to others, and maintenance of flexible access is the key to understanding this relationship.

In spite of the incorporation of some aspects of Pikangikum’s family harvesting areas system into the government trapline system, rules associated with the government trapline system were often ignored, and infringements were not reported by Pikangikum trappers. The traplines did not change the ability of people to enter one another’s areas if they needed food. A sort of “subsistence ethic” prevailed, guiding the way access to traplines was mediated, and confounding government attempts to organize people in stable family groups on their traplines. In spite of senior trappers being told to discourage trespass by other trappers in their areas, Pikangikum people did not report incidences of trespass, and continued to cross into others’ areas following customary arrangements. It also appears they did not always conform to trapping quotas, and preferred not to report violations. These practices could be collectively understood as “everyday forms of resistance” (Scott, 1985), but the more important point is that the customary land use system remained tied to meeting people’s livelihood needs, and continued to be guided by customary institutions mediating access to harvesting areas.
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Pikangikum’s mix (or layering) of customary and government resource management institutions, coupled with resistance on the part of harvesters and weak enforcement of rules on the part of government managers presents a situation which lends itself to be understood as verging on open access conditions. Is Pikangikum’s land use system then open to critique from a resource management perspective for its lack of clear rules and enforceability of constraints on access? Again, a key to the commons analysis is found in the idea of a subsistence ethic. Subsistence security was strongly tied to flexibility of access, and was linked to responsibilities of leaders to their groups and to wider social networks. Access has continued to be negotiated through these relatively open networks. Customary land use was not simply a set of institutions or rules-in-use embedded in cultural norms, but a coherent system of moral relations—a moral economy extending to relations with all others. Pikangikum elders resented the government’s attempts to regulate their activities within formalized trapline boundaries. This thesis shows that Pikangikum elders were quite clear on norms for accessing harvesting areas that respected the spatial authority of leaders as well as peoples’ needs when facing variability in the harvest.

Thus, Pikangikum’s commons cannot be specified as “open access”, but rather as a moral economy conceptualized around a subsistence ethic, and therefore of access for those in need. Recent work in the commons has raised awareness of the central role of morals in guiding use and management of common pool resources, especially where social and spatial boundaries may appear vague under more conventional analysis (Falk et al., 2012; Fernandez-Gimenez et al., 2008). Within this system, access for subsistence needs was not just a right, but was attached to norms of reciprocity. Not only humans, but animals, plants, and non-human persons were participants in this moral economy. Persons shared qualities of perception, knowledge, and authority. In an example given in chapter five, bears had knowledge of the land and of the behaviour of others. Bears knew when someone else was being disrespectful of them, and disrespect could have
consequences, such as bad weather. Non-human persons could also convey warnings. Appropriate behaviour toward others was expected from every individual, including senior trappers. Senior trappers and other leaders with spatial authority were restricted from placing limits on others’ activities in their areas if these activities were connected to subsistence provisioning. In these cases, permission to access someone else’s area was not required. Appropriate observance of norms might involve sharing access to family harvesting areas, but also sharing a portion of the harvest.

Shared norms of access existed in the absence of fixed spatial boundaries. It was inappropriate for people to delineate boundaries and tell others what to do within those boundaries. Animals also required flexibility of movement in order to live. This is perhaps best illustrated through research conducted by Pikangikum on caribou. Elders observed it was not appropriate to create protected area boundaries and expect caribou to thrive within their new confines.

If you want to preserve the land for caribou, to keep them in a certain area, this is only going to invite trouble; the wolves are going to hear about this. Once the wolves hear about this they are going to come with their tribes and ravage the caribou herds (Gideon Peters, March 1, 2006, in O’Flaherty et al., 2007).

And more to the point:

Regulation was not the intention of the Creator; the intention was for every creature to roam freely. Once you draw lines and regulate, that will cause them to be extinct...what are we going to do if we regulate all these boundaries and the caribou still disappear (Gideon Peters, April 21, 2005 in O’Flaherty et al., 2007)?

Recognition and respect for the role of others was also extended to plant use, including Anishinaabe food (meecheem) and medicine (mushkeekeeh) (Pengelly, 2011).

As members of a moral economy involving relationships between both humans and non-humans, Pikangikum people stressed the necessity of following norms that respected the resource being “governed” or “managed”. This was the foundation of a moral economy in which non-human persons and spirit beings were participants in
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the commons system, and not merely the objects of property relations. Hallowell (1992) made the distinction that participation in a broader society encompassing non-human persons was far from metaphorical for Pikangikum people. The necessity of showing respect in relationships between human and non-humans has important implications for the characterization of the commons as neither being sufficiently described by conditions of common property, nor of open access, but of relationships between persons extending beyond property relations.

The roots of the subsistence ethic and flexibility of access can be located in the historical making of the customary land use system. Flexibility was historically necessitated by the real possibility of subsistence crisis. Have conditions of access changed in the contemporary context, given that people lived for the majority of the year in the reserve community and no longer relied on harvesting for their physical survival? Land use during fieldwork was characterized by a gradient of use from areas near the reserve, to areas distant from the reserve. With this land use gradient, it could be hypothesized that areas near the community would experience higher frequency of use, putting more pressure on resources. Tighter control of resources or greater contestation of access to common-pool resources near the community might be expected while areas distant from the community might see a general loosening of access rules.

Regarding the first statement, Pikangikum people have continued to reference a subsistence ethic, and moral economic norms of access and authority in their interview and workshop statements. For example, in sections 4.2.3 and 6.4 elders Charlie Peters and Whitehead Moose recalled how people survived on their harvesting activities alone during his lifetime. It is significant that contemporary spatial authority did not restrict subsistence use as long as subsistence harvesting was done respectfully. The continuing importance of subsistence harvests was connected to the importance of maintaining continuing ties to the land for a reserve-bound community that has lost its commercial harvesting economy (chapter six).
As for the contemporary land use gradient, areas near and remote from the community were used for similar reasons and in similar ways (i.e. families went out during important times of the year, such as the fall moose hunt, to stay at camps or cabins, but also hunted and fished near the community), however issues around access and use of resources differ. Snow machines and boats may be in limited supply at remote locations, and so the practicality of harvesting in these areas depended on access to these means of transportation. Flights were expensive and so remote areas may be visited much less frequently. Guests to remote traplines may have to make more complex arrangements with camp leaders in order to harvest or travel through these areas. Nonetheless, people still travelled to their remote trapline camps. Elsewhere, it has been noted that family land use areas continued to be important sites of social and cultural reproduction. Feit (1991: 224) suggests a continuing importance of the family harvesting area for the James Bay Cree. These areas have been, and continue to be, critical in terms of reconstituting the wider social relations and basic meanings of hunters, and are means of locally shaping changes caused by increasing linkages to both nation states and markets (Feit, 1991). This statement can also apply reasonably well to Pikangikum’s situation, although the context of their linkage with the state and market differ in some ways.

By now it should be evident that trapline rules (in contrast with the customary land use system) related in a more limited way to fur resources, and that these rules were often disregarded or resisted in everyday practice. Chapters four through six built the case that people continued to work out access to harvesting areas in relation to their customary system. In the next section, I argue that the traplines became part of a relationship Pikangikum people have fostered with the government, and this relationship appears to be regarded by Pikangikum people as more important than the wildlife management benefits the traplines were expected to bring to struggling furbearer populations.
7.2 DYNAMICS OF SPATIAL AUTHORITY AND TERRITORY

The trapline system was introduced at a time of post-war modernist optimism in the process of development and cultural change in the periphery of the modern state. Modernization and colonization were processes which took different forms in particular ways in different places, yet these processes were tied together by state projects which shared important similarities. For example, a conversation on the importance of secure tenure appears to have been mutually agreed upon between the various government and private parties (federal, provincial, HBC) involved in the spread of traplines throughout Canada. Government technocrats were not insensitive to local realities. Indeed, justification for the registered trapline system was couched in concern for the survival of the fur trade which, as they were well aware, was one of the few commercial livelihood options available to northern indigenous groups. This helps place trapline introductions within a wider process of state internal territorialization, coupled with increasing state control over the lives of indigenous peoples (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). But this was not the only story; in introducing the discussion, I asked: how is it possible to understand Pikangikum’s agency, and more specifically, their choice to base their planning areas on traplines?

Pikangikum’s claims to spatial authority can be conceptualized as a form of interaction through which indigenous groups have projected themselves onto the political arena, drawing on a common language and shared rules of the game accepted by all parties involved in the encounter (Kent, 2008). In interviews and in their Land Use Strategy, Pikangikum elders talked about traplines as the government’s recognition of their customary stewardship. That is, Pikangikum elders held that government traplines were conceived with the intention of protecting their land use system and trapping economy from incursion of Euro-Canadian trappers. The traplines were a key to translating between both systems in terms of a mutual, grounded understanding of
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the planning area boundaries.

The previous section established the Pikangikum commons system as a relational, moral economic system driven in large part by a subsistence ethic. It has been pointed out that maintenance of customary management systems and community-level institutions necessitates some degree of exclusion of outsiders (e.g. McCay and Acheson, 1987; Dietz et al., 2003). Some indigenous groups maintain access for exclusive groups through normative notions of respect for the traditional area of a social group (Berkes and Davidson-Hunt, 2007). Customary access to areas and resources in Pikangikum implied maintaining relationships with others through appropriate behaviour. However, incursion of Euro-Canadians into northern Ontario seemed to necessitate stronger approaches to buffer against appropriation of land and resources by outsiders. Many aspects of the government traplines system restricted customary flexibility of movement. Rules related to the government traplines system were tolerated only to the extent that there was some overlap in terms of spatial authority between the family areas and the new traplines system, but more significantly, that the traplines strengthened Pikangikum peoples’ spatial authority vis-à-vis Euro-Canadian outsiders. Assertions of territorial authority by Pikangikum elders in the WFI land use planning process were grounded in this understanding of their relationship with government traplines.

The tradeoffs involved in accepting government regulation of commercial harvesting activities were understood by Pikangikum people through prior experience. The registered traplines were a pragmatic compromise on the part of the government in that they created a mix of bureaucratic intervention in land tenure (i.e. the propagation of clear boundaries), overlaid with the customary northern Algonquian land use system (i.e. family harvesting areas). This combination was not possible without strain. Pikangikum’s experience with traplines—as the August 2007 meeting with Moose Cree First Nation confirmed—was not an isolated case.1 The registered trapline system was

1SFMN project meeting, Winnipeg, MB, 14/08/2007-16/08/2007
understood by both these First Nations to be an impediment on the flexibility of the customary system. Likewise, the experience of these First Nations with trapline regulation was not unlike experiences of indigenous peoples with development of modern states in peripheral areas elsewhere in the world (e.g. Berry, 1989; Peters, 1994; O’Flaherty, 2003).

In Pikangikum elders’ statements about the trapline system, and their own involvement in the delineation of planning area boundaries, Pikangikum’s strategic stance vis-à-vis government regulation might be confused with outright adoption of western resource management and related land tenure institutions. Yet, this thesis has shown that the trapline system did not simply replace the customary system. I have also demonstrated how this situation was extended to the planning process, and delineation of the planning area boundary (see chapter six).

Traplines consolidated authority over fur management activities and to a certain extent, became the basis for negotiating relationships with outsiders in Pikangikum’s land use areas. With increasing outside pressures outlined in the introduction, including movement of forestry north into Pikangikum’s traditional area (see box 1.1), trapline areas were no longer sufficient as buffers to Euro-Canadian activities in the north, and a coordinated, community-level strategy was mandated. Pikangikum turned to obtaining a Sustainable Forestry Licence, as this strategy would further consolidate authority over land at a larger scale beyond what was obtainable through negotiations based on traplines and their leadership. In the contemporary context, the importance of traplines in terms of fur management has been greatly reduced because few people are still trapping today. Traplines were relevant, as elders pointed out, in terms of their role in recognizing their spatial authority. This did not necessarily mean that the customary system was understood by those in the position to make decisions at the provincial level, but it did seem to mean that Pikangikum peoples’ customary authority, in complex ways, and mediated through the trapline system, has made its way into
In theoretical terms, this relationship between the customary system and fixed spatial boundaries related to state resource management institutions has been approached through a territorial perspective developed in the literature review. Territory, in a material (but non-formalistic) sense (see section 2.2.2), can be understood to develop out of the need to fulfill social production and sustain social reproduction (Godelier, 1988). In the case of Pikangikum’s land use system, flexibility was key to the social reproduction of the customary system, and so a territorial perspective must be aware of how it references the issue of spatial boundaries. Social reproduction could therefore not be tied to a spatially fixed territory. In contrast to Pikangikum’s land use system, state territory has been theorized to be produced through the creation of internal boundaries in order to organize and render legible customary systems for which rigid boundaries were part of an “invented tradition” of the state (Vandervegeest and Peluso, 1995; Scott, 1998). An interesting feature of the encounter between Pikangikum and the state is that traplines as internal boundaries were taken up in Pikangikum’s own territorial strategy vis-à-vis the state.

Pikangikum elders were aware of the strategic aspects of mapping the boundaries of the WFI land use planning and management area. Through the WFI, Pikangikum has pursued control over decision-making, and in the process, they have had to make reference to fixed space. The planning area constituted yet another boundary (based on trapline boundaries they have had recognized in the past). Pikangikum elders have noted that this new boundary, like the trapline boundaries that came before, did not represent the extent of Pikangikum’s land use, or knowledge of their traditional harvesting areas, and did not constitute a boundary over which all trespass is resented. The planning boundary constituted an area which had been primarily strategized for the working of customary decision-making authority within a powerful state management system, serving much the same role of traplines in terms of buffering against
incursions of Euro-Canadian commercial enterprises. Alongside these functions of the new planning boundary, contemporary access could still be theorized in terms of moral economic relationships between persons.

The necessity of the new WFI planning and management approach has been grounded in Pikangikum elders’ insistence that a viable land-based economy would help Pikangikum people maintain their relationships with their customary harvesting areas, and with the land more generally. From trapline introductions in the post-war period, through the loss of commercial fishing licences in the 1970s and the crash of the fur market in the 1980s, to the present, a combination of changes in the economy, government regulation, and settlement have deeply affected the lives of Pikangikum people. Of this combination, perhaps the most dramatic effect on land use has been felt around settlement on reserves, which was a very recent phenomenon at Pikangikum and neighbouring Poplar Hill. Summer gatherings at major lakes continued in elders’ living memory. Most elders grew up at their family harvesting areas, and met with others primarily during the summer months (section 4.1.1).

It is possible to find some important connections in the issue of settlement on reserves, with the observations of the two anthropologists, Hallowell and Dunning, and to “update” them to understand contemporary land use and the WFI planning process. In Dunning’s study, the introduction of government traplines took a rather peripheral role when juxtaposed with other changes in the 1940s and 50s. Although Dunning wrote extensively on state intervention in Pikangikum, he did not give much attention to the traplines. Perhaps Dunning considered trapline regulation as relatively benign, which arguably it was, as I have understood from statements given by elders, until the NBI policy became relevant for planning in northern Ontario. In the post-war period the state had a much larger agenda in the north than implementation of the trapline system.

Changing dynamics of land use with settlement, and decline of commercial har-
vests, has set up a situation in which leaving the community for subsistence harvests has gained considerable importance in terms of social and cultural reproduction. The planning process drew on the trapline system to address the more threatening trend of continued settlement, or “sedentarization” on reserves, while connections to remote land use areas were progressively weakening. In the contemporary context, relatively light usage of areas on the margins of Pikangikum’s traditional land use area raised an issue of territorial integrity vis-à-vis the state that had already been noted by elders during the era of trapline introductions. Some senior trappers and elders felt they must show active use of these areas, for fear they would be taken away, and rights to the trapline licence would be given to others—a real threat used in parts of Ontario south of Pikangikum. Senior trappers expressed a wish for areas to be adequately used and expressed a need for adequate monitoring of land use. Senior trappers in remote areas attempted to make sure their areas were adequately used. These expressions have both relational, moral economic dimension in terms of maintaining relationships around harvesting activities, and dimensions in terms of strategic interaction with the state.

Part of indigenous peoples’ interaction with government regulation can be understood in terms of resistance, but Pikangikum peoples’ recognition of the buffering effect of commercial licences also points to a negotiated process by which Pikangikum has sought to secure commercial rights while prioritizing the imperative of maintaining spatial authority in their own customary system. Like Pikangikum’s experience, Tanner (1979) found that when the hunting territory system was formalized in the provincial law of Quebec, customary harvesting dynamics were maintained because hunters and trappers continued to regard their size and boundaries to be flexible. Mistassini hunters in Quebec, when asked by Tanner about the land tenure system, drew a map but said that hunters basically hunted wherever they wanted. Although in Pikangikum’s case, mapping represented an important recognition of spatial authority, formalization of trapline boundaries did not lead to the maintenance of these boundaries.
in practice. Yet their buffering qualities continued to be relevant.

Traplines became the foundation for a new boundary (the Whitefeather Forest) rooted in an approach to assert decision-making authority of Pikangikum leaders. Commercial licences (and their accompanying rules for commercial harvests) did not historically confer new authority within the community. Decision-making authority was customarily held by leaders of extended families who were elders. This is also explicit in the Land Use Strategy. Licences were understood to buffer incursion and intervention of outsiders and the state. Pikangikum challenged the state’s decision-making authority through promotion of its own territorial agenda using the approach of defining boundaries and scaling up institutionally.

7.3 The coordination issue in contemporary planning and management

Pikangikum negotiated recognition of their customary spatial authority by engaging with the state through the WFI planning process. In order to do this, Pikangikum needed to scale up to a community-level planning approach to move beyond a potential trap of continued fragmented control of resource management through the trapline system. For indigenous people, this is the difference between control of management processes, and the trap of being constrained by state regulation, without a clear voice in management decisions being taken. New knowledge requirements for planning raised the concern that Pikangikum’s knowledge could be alienated from knowledge holders through its documentation and translation as knowledge artifacts to be utilized within decision-making process controlled by actors located at other organizational scales (Davidson-Hunt, 2006). Pikangikum has sought to move beyond this trap by asserting their authority to manage resources at the spatial scale of the planning area.

This necessity raises the question of how spatial authority was scaled-up to the
community level in order to meet these new planning and management needs. In this section, I argue that although traplines continued to be important for coordination of commercial harvesting—and experience with fishing lodge tourism suggests that families may benefit directly from activities in their area—the WFI planning process, and subsequent Forest Management Plan suggest that authority held by elders was key to decision-making at the community level.

The moral economy and territory literature provides insights for understanding the response of communities to encroachment on and enclosure of land and resources connected with livelihood provisioning. It can also be useful for thinking through the ways norms of participation in collective action are reproduced across different levels, including at harvesting sites, family harvesting camps, summer gathering sites, and in the reserve community. A risk in this analysis is that by directing all attention to strategic engagement of Pikangikum people in their struggle with government regulation and resource appropriation, the important issue of the way commons are constituted or reproduced by common-pool resource users could be missed. This is consistent with my dual focus on analyzing internal issues of coordination alongside strategic territorial dimensions.

The Whitefeather Forest Steering Group (WFSG) as a community-level institution emerged out of a process of land use planning for a larger spatial scale than that which Pikangikum people have been accustomed to working with. In chapter six, I presented a coordination issue, which was essentially framed as a scale issue: when the new scale of the planning area was “moved into”, coordination between institutions at this new level, and those associated with the decentralized customary land use system, needed to be dealt with in order to figure out how spatial authority for decision-making in planning and management would work. The Steering Group was established as a new institution in the planning process. The Steering Group has helped establish (and has provided guidance for) a new way of interacting at the community level, and in rela-
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tionships with government managers.

Chapter six dealt with the roots of the Steering Group in customary decentralized spatial authority. I showed that although Pikangikum people were not accustomed to working at this scale in the past, community-level decision-making was constructed out of prior experience. Significantly, this was a new scale of engagement with the state, but it was not the first time networks of Pikangikum people have gathered together to make important decisions—for example, powerful leaders decided where the reserve would be (see Whitehead Moose’s story in section 4.1.1).

Important questions remain as to how internal changes accompany the scaling-up of decision-making authority to the community-level. On such questions, this thesis can only provide incomplete answers. Although decision-making could occur at the Whitefeather Forest level with reference to decentralized customary authority, another issue remains to be resolved: this is the issue of negotiation of benefits between extended family groups, and the community as a whole. Chapter six concluded that this issue had not been dealt with as the research process was drawing to a close. However, in cases in which decisions affected single trapline areas, a decision could not be taken at the community level until those with spatial authority in relation to that area had been consulted. While the trapline areas formed the basis for the planning area, authority to plan and manage for the Whitefeather Forest was grounded in the knowledge of Pikangikum elders. Meanwhile, within the planning process, the trapline-level authority of senior trappers did not translate directly into authority to take decisions related to land use activities considered under the WFI (including protected areas and forestry) for one’s own trapline area.

Points taken from the Algonquian land use section of the literature review (section 2.1), and from chapter six (section 6.2.2) indicate that the scaling-up of decision-making authority was partially rooted in the formation of the community level, given that Pikangikum people interacted differently in the past before settlement in the reserve
Community. If settlement drove the formation of community-level organization, how then did settlement interact with the customary decentralized land use system?

Customary leaders (and senior trappers) had authority in relation to their direct experience on the land. Chapter five showed that resources could be used by those with knowledge of a harvesting area, or with cooperation and guidance of those with spatial authority, derived from knowledge of the area. As with medicinal plants, harvesters needed to follow teachings from knowledgeable individuals regarding appropriate behaviour toward plants and harvesting sites. It was the individual’s responsibility to know how to behave appropriately. Flexibility was maintained in the customary land use system through networks of relationships between harvesters and harvesting groups that continued to gather together during the summer months at major lakes. Elders’ teachings could be brought into Steering Group discussions at the community level. Many such teachings were place-based and derived from customary land use: they were produced through direct experience on the land. However, teachings were also are shared at social gatherings, for example, during summer gatherings, and became part of a corpus of collective knowledge at the community level by which they could guide decision-making for new land use activities.

The Whitefeather Forest Steering Group played an important role mediating customary decentralized authority related to personal knowledge held by elders. The Steering Group has allowed for the emergence of a system which is still in formation, and which is still being negotiated between Pikangikum people, but represents an important new institution through which decentralized authority can be expressed. One committee member, during my oral defence, spoke to the concern of how First Nations were expected to resolve such coordination issues through land use planning and management processes. Although at the time I completed my fieldwork, Pikangikum had an institution in place which was positioned to help resolve coordination issues in management, the process remained very much in the making, and was being made in prac-
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tice. Pikangikum people were dealing with coordination as planning and management issues arose. As issues emerged which crossed organizational levels, the Steering Group constituted a new institution through which solutions could be negotiated.

7.4 CONTRIBUTIONS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Traplines were a key institution under investigation in this case study, and have made for a fruitful starting point for an examination of the interaction between customary land use management and government resource management. The trapline system represents the first intervention by the modern state in the spatial organization of resource management in much of Canada’s north. The study took shape out of questions concerning the role of traplines in Pikangikum’s land use planning process. I examined the introduction of the government trapline system in Pikangikum First Nation, then looked at the role of the traplines within the planning process, and in terms of community-level collective action. I have identified three areas of theoretical contribution emerging from this study in terms of (1) moral economy and the relational commons, (2) spatial authority and territory, and (3) coordination of planning and management across scales.

I began the thesis by posing a question regarding negotiation with the state around resource management authority: What aspects of their customary land use systems have indigenous groups sought to protect in the course of this interaction? In this way, I have positioned continuity of the customary system in terms that may reveal Pikangikum peoples’ agency. The case of Pikangikum First Nation presents a unique opportunity to understand this negotiation within a land use planning process. Following trapline introductions in 1947, an increasing degree of settlement in the reserve community coupled with a decline in the viability of commercial harvesting in the 1970s and 80s, precipitated dramatic changes in the daily lives and land use of Pikangikum
people. The delineation of traplines on the other hand did not result in a major shift in land use dynamics. Even these changes in combination did not fundamentally alter the customary spatial authority of knowledgeable individuals in relation to harvesting areas. Pikangikum’s system of access and decision-making authority continued to work according to customary rules. The trapline system marginally contributed to change in the customary land use system, but in other ways, functioned simply as a state-sanctioned spatial framework within which the customary system could co-exist with state resource management. This spatial framework was adopted as a form of territorial authority through which Pikangikum could negotiate land use with the state, and this presents an interesting point of intersection between the trapline system and the WFI planning process.

**The moral and relational commons**

My analysis of the intersection between Pikangikum’s customary land use system, the government trapline system, and the WFI planning process revolves around the related issues of access and decision-making authority. The main theoretical contribution of this thesis around access is in moving the issue of access in the commons from a (property) rights framing toward a relational, moral economy analysis.

An important trend in the commons literature looks at historical contextualization of the commons in the evolution of norms with moral dimensions (Cleaver, 2000; Goldman, 1998; Mosse, 1997; McCay, 2002). Yet another current brings the moral economy and entitlements literature into the commons in terms of maintenance of access for poor and vulnerable people (Johnson, 2004). In Pikangikum’s customary land use system, humans and non-humans were understood to be linked through reciprocal relationships of respect. An important aspect of this was respect for the subsistence needs of others within a mixed land use system involving both harvesting for personal
use, and harvesting for the market. A parallel between J. C. Scott’s moral economy and Pikangikum’s customary harvesting system can be found in the emphasis that Scott places on a powerful subsistence ethic. Historically, decisions about land use in the boreal forest region were often motivated by fear of loss of subsistence security. Avoiding subsistence crisis and ensuring future survival was tied to an accordance of reciprocity and respect for others in the landscape. An emphasis on survival continues to intervene in discussions about engaging commercial markets. This is certainly not lost on scholars of Algonquian land use who have been taken interest in the importance of kinship and sharing networks in livelihood provisioning, and their extension to encompass Euro-Canadian traders throughout the fur trade (Bohaker, 2006; Peers and Brown, 2000; Francis and Morantz, 1983), yet Pikangikum elders’ emphasis on survival updates this relationship to the contemporary situation.

Maintenance of relationships across large distances was necessitated by boreal ecology, and a level of flexibility of movement was necessitated by a variable environment. In this environment, the need for clear spatial boundaries did not emerge in Pikangikum’s customary land use system. In the commons literature, access to land and resources is a complex issue that has not often been accorded appropriate attention. Ribot and Peluso (2003) locate access within social and political-economic contexts that shape people’s abilities to benefit from resources, and point out the dependency of access on complex webs of relationships that may transcend fixed spatial boundaries. The commons literature has generally moved beyond thinking about the commons only in terms of property, but in the literature relating to community-based resource management, there are few examples of this shift to draw upon. This case shows how it is possible to move from thinking in terms of property and tenure to a broader set of social relations and institutions that shape access to common-pool resources and benefit flows. Those with spatial authority, including elders and senior trappers, described how they upheld customary access arrangements, differentiating between a range of har-
vesting activities, and asking that permission be sought only in the case of commercial harvesting. As access is based upon respect, reciprocity, and knowledge of harvesting areas, and is tied closely to subsistence needs, it is not possible to make a useful distinction between insiders and outsiders in the customary system. This could help explain feelings of injustice when changes are introduced by the government in an attempt to regulate peoples’ flexibility.

Pikangikum people have been unwilling to compromise on, or negotiate their relationship with the land. This relationship has typically been misunderstood by outsiders—both those supporting indigenous struggles, and those in opposing positions (Feit, 2004). It constitutes a basic and unchallengeable authority with regard to land use decision-making. This moral economic relationship also frames a practical difficulty with entitlements thinking. Pikangikum people were not merely claiming or negotiating what Feit (2004) has identified in the case of the James Bay Cree, as what is “rightfully mine”, but searching for a process which could maintain a larger set of relationships. Pikangikum’s moral economy extends to non-human persons, who play an active role in resource provisioning. Pikangikum’s customary system of management is not about limiting use, but about maintaining appropriate relationships with others, both in subsistence harvesting spheres, and at the same time, while interacting with commercial markets.

**Spatial authority and territory**

Despite the historical disjuncture in the immediate post-war period in the north when the trapline system was introduced, development of relations with modern state have been understood as continuing manifestations of a relationship with Euro-Canadians that started with the fur trade (Scott, 1989). I find this to be a useful proposition for looking at the contemporary relationship between First Nations and the state more
broadly, but I feel the statement needs to be qualified in terms of how this relationship was negotiated through time in relation to indigenous land use, which is the focus of this study.

A theoretical contribution which ties together issues of access and spatial authority is related to the buffering of Pikangikum’s customary system through the pursuit of commercial harvesting licences. The WFI had as much work to do in negotiating Pikangikum’s relationship with the state as it had to do with kickstarting a flow of resource revenues. The LUS envisaged ways that customs could be re-invigorated through new land-based commercial activities. Commercial licences have historically acted as buffers for subsistence livelihoods because they protected against resource appropriation by outsiders, while at the same time, Pikangikum people were able to move about on the land following their customary system. In constructing a new relationship with the state, this buffering requirement has been rather explicit in Pikangikum’s case.

Pikangikum’s strategy of buffering through application for commercial licences has brought forward a counter-intuitive conclusion. A popular notion stemming from political economy is that markets tend to be viewed as destructive, doing away with tradition, community, solidarity, and culture (Berndt and Boeckler, 2009). While Pikangikum was dealing with their new trapline system, scholars were working with the idea of acculturation, and specifically with the notion that market forces would eventually derail socio-economic reproduction of indigenous societies, leading to the westernization of their institutions (Murphy and Steward, 1956). Working with this hypothesis, interaction with modern mechanisms of state development and control could lead to the eventual disappearance of traditional societies. Globalization has opened up new vulnerabilities in these commons systems as a result of increased connectedness, accelerated flows of material, knowledge, and people (Pérez et al., 2011). This connectedness means commons must be understood as embedded in processes of resistance and nego-
tiation, and not operating in isolation as autonomous entities. This thesis builds upon this idea by documenting a process of negotiation through territorial strategies aimed at buffering Pikangikum’s customary system. The Pikangikum commons were not destroyed or replaced in the process of territorial negotiation. The result in Pikangikum’s case was a mixed system where both the state system and the customary system co-exist, and are linked through this buffering relationship.

Planning and management across scales

This thesis makes another theoretical contribution in terms of coordination across spatial scales. A “coordination issue” has been theorized which has emerged out of Pikangikum’s move to consolidate spatial authority at a larger scale above the single trapline area, and engage with new land-based economic opportunities at the community-level. The shift in scale in terms of Pikangikum’s interaction with the state from the trapline-level to the community-level is key to understanding change in Pikangikum’s commons system. Through a scale framing, I address both strategic and material aspects of territory, specifically as they relate to Pikangikum’s move to consolidate management authority at the scale of the Whitefeather Forest.

The moral economy appears to hold a wide variety of meanings, many associated more closely with broader ideas of social embeddedness of the economy. I take the moral economy literature to be of significant help for understanding this case study in its positioning of human activity in relation to the market economy. It can help understand how people resist, negotiate, and interact with the working of market society and the nation state. Indigenous groups often need to make strategic decisions concerning which aspects of their customary system come into contact with the market system (and thus government resource management). At the same time, they must effectively engage state resource management at a level which best safeguards their relationship
with the land. This case study has shown the process by which Pikangikum scaled-up their decision-making authority *vis-à-vis* the state from the level of decentralized family harvesting areas, to the community-level. This has meant working out internal dynamics in decision-making between customary decentralized authority, and the new need to be able to make decisions about land use at the Whitefeather Forest level. This was understood to be an ongoing process, negotiated through the Whitefeather Forest Steering Group and involving its relationship with other community institutions including Chief and Council, and the WFMC. This case shows how the process of scaling-up institutionally is incremental, and is addressed through issues as they arise. I argue that although the case study is culturally and historically specific, issues of scale in community-based land use planning and management lend themselves to further analysis, not only in terms of the strategic dimensions of scaling-up in relation to other management scales, but simultaneously in terms of the ways in which the community-level itself is constituted in relation to customary decision-making authority.

**Future directions and final thoughts**

This thesis suggests further research possibilities in terms of the central dilemmas which preoccupy commons scholars, resource managers, and commons users. In reality, commons dilemmas are multiple and not enough attention is given to the internal dynamics within which commons are contested, and through which change and adaptation is negotiated (Brown, 2007). The thesis attempts to provide a thorough analysis of the dilemmas identified by Pikangikum peoples themselves, namely access to subsistence and commercial resources, management authority with regard to these resources, and coordination across scales from the trapline to the community level.

The commons literature is technical, yet its application is also profoundly norma-
Chapter 7 Discussion and conclusions

tive. Its use as a tool for local empowerment and control of resources cannot easily be separated from its role in guiding sustainable resource management. Yet within this, the commons literature can benefit from a relational approach based on a shared sense of justice characteristic of moral economy. This thesis tries to articulate the complex interaction between community and state, and how internal community issues are mediated within this relationship. Pikangikum’s moral economic rationality for buffering of their customary system, including commercial harvests, reflects, and perhaps is best expressed in terms of a moral economic relationship. This relationship is at work both within the community, and with the state—this relationship with the state has perhaps been best expressed in the moral economy literature. Systems of reciprocity have been produced over long historical time periods and moral expectations continue to be held by groups drawing upon common-pool resources.

Many new opportunities for local resource control may be had by indigenous communities in the north through similar processes of devolution of planning and management. However, out of this case study, the question may be asked: is it possible (or even desirable) to identify “local” or “community-level” building blocks for successful community-led planning in northern Ontario? Related to this: is the trapline itself a universal building block through which planning processes can be designed for indigenous communities in Ontario’s north? This study suggests further work in this area be grounded in local processes. Pikangikum elders clearly stated that they did not want their process to become a rubber stamp for other community-based planning processes. Of course, wider (regional) understandings of the process Pikangikum negotiated are possible, as other northern Ontario communities undertake their own land use planning—this was demonstrated through observation of Pikangikum’s boundary delineation process. By referencing their customary system, and making explicit how their process gets used by the state in terms of ownership of process and knowledge, Pikangikum put up a challenge to the construction of state space, or the continuing
process of state territorialization in the north. Pikangikum has made claims to territorial authority in the Whitefeather Forest, but this was necessarily a negotiated process with some degree of internal turmoil. Indeed, at the community level, the process is ongoing. The construction of community-level management institutions was a new and internally controversial process, but it was understood to have real consequences in terms of management authority.
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APPENDIX A  Ethics and consent
APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

24 January 2007

TO: Nathan Deutsch
   Principal Investigator

(Advisor: I. Davidson-Hunt)

FROM: Wayne Taylor, Chair
       Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: Protocol #J2006:128
   "Articulating Adaptive Management Cultural Continuity and the
    Commons in Pikangikum First Nation"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval
by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board, which is organized and operates according
to the Tri-Council Policy Statement. This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to
the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- if you have funds pending human ethics approval, the auditor requires that you
  submit a copy of this Approval Certificate to Kathryn Bartmanovich, Research Grants
  & Contract Services (fax 261-0325), including the Sponsor name, before your account
  can be opened.

- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you
  to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval;
  otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at:
http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/ethics/ors_ethics_human_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be
in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.

Bringing Research to Life
Life history mapping interviews

B.1 JIMMY KEEPER, AUGUST 10, 2007 & OCTOBER 7, 2008

Jimmy Keeper was born in 1949. Jimmy’s trapline area and the Pikangikum trapline area were initially considered one large area with no formal internal boundary. Before registration, William’s family’s area extended over the area also encompassing the Pikangikum trapline (now divided into RL 88 and RL 86). According to Jimmy Keeper, “The people in this area made an agreement and divided the area in two.” This division does not appear to have been made clearly along family lines.

Jimmy’s father William was the eldest son of his family. William became the first senior trapper of his trapline area following registration in 1947. Jimmy figured William probably learned to trap from his own father, Abraham Keeper. Jimmy initially started trapping with William at an early age (he estimated around 12 years old). He also learned from his elder brothers. Jimmy’s grandfather Abraham Keeper continued to trap as he grew old, but decided to restrict his activities to a small area near the community (1) in figure B.1. Jimmy told me he often went out to hunt and trap on a small lake on Abraham’s old trapping area after days at work—about a two hour one-way trip from Pikangikum. Jimmy kept a boat there at the end of an ATV trail.

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1Life history mapping interviews with Jimmy Keeper took place on August 10, 2007 and October 7, 2008. Main life history mapping interviews with each person are noted in section headings.
Appendix B Life history mapping interviews

Jimmy attended school in Pikangikum until he reached grade 8, after which he spent time in the bush rather than attending school. He remembers leaving Pikangikum before Christmas and staying out until March. He remembers that over this period there were hardly any people in Pikangikum as they were all out on the land. Jimmy usually went to Sparling Lake (2) for muskrats in spring, then went trapping at smaller lakes south of Pikangikum Lake (3). Jimmy travelled up to Sparling from Berens Lake. He also went to Sparling in the fall. Jimmy’s brothers used to trap in the far southern part of the family’s area (3). Jimmy’s elder brothers Moses and Richard used to have cabins in this area before the Nungesser Road was built to connect the winter road system to Red Lake.

There were two extended family groups on Jimmy’s trapline area. The first group included Jimmy’s family, and the second group included the family of Edward Turtle. There was significant exchange between these families, although they generally used spatially distinct trapping areas, and had seasonal camps in separate locations. Jimmy went to Pikangikum Bay where his parents set up their spring camp (4). The Turtle family also had a camp at Sparling Lake (2). While Jimmy’s family generally used the western portion of the trapline, the Turtle family group trapped to the east. The Turtle family group also stayed on the north side of Berens Lake across from George B. Strang’s family area (5). Kenneth Turtle and his partner Alec Black trapped the area on the north side of Berens River. Scotty Turtle had a cabin on Berens Lake. Edward Turtle used to trap at Moreau Lake (6). Some of Jimmy’s brothers trapped with the Turtle family, and Jimmy showed me where he also trapped and travelled in areas which included areas more regularly used by the Turtle family group (7). Jimmy told me he could always trap on his family’s area, but agreed in several cases to go to other areas when invited. Jimmy’s brothers chose to do likewise on occasion. For instance, Jimmy’s brother Jake Keeper trapped with Norman Quill for a period at Zeller Lake (8), then eventually returned to his own family’s line. Other families have
Appendix B: Life history mapping interviews

asked him to go to their areas. Jimmy was asked to go to Roderick Lake (9), and George M. Suggashie asked him to help at Dolphin Lake (10). He was also invited to go moose hunting at Bigshell Lake (11).

Jimmy participated in commercial fishing with his brothers. He told me he learned about fishing from his brother Jake Keeper when he was young. Jake owned all the fishing nets. Jimmy fished in winter at McInnes (12) and Nungesser (13) Lakes, and in summer fished in Pikangikum Lake.

After William’s death, Jimmy’s eldest brother Moses took over as senior trapper. When Moses passed away, Jimmy’s brothers appointed him as senior trapper. According to Jimmy, nobody else wanted to take on the role. Jimmy remembers he became senior trapper in 2004. Jimmy had recently been doing little trapping, but regularly hunts moose. He has set up an easily accessible camp on the Nungesser Road on the way down to Red Lake (14). Jimmy began using this area after the road was built. Easy to get to Red Lake for groceries. He has been using this cabin most recently for 2 week periods for the fall moose hunt.


Whitehead Moose’s area was Stout lake (Gitchi-obowngang). The area he trapped with his family group was around Stout Lake. Whitehead’s grandfather, Bizhiw (Lynx) grew up in this area. Bizhiw had two wives. Whitehead remembered Bizhiw stayed at Stout Lake throughout the year: “Bizhiw stayed year-round at his trapline. His father, his brother, even the beaver boss knew that he always stayed there year-around. Stout lake was almost a community, because they stayed year-round at that lake.” Whitehead’s father’s name was Gezhyash (English name John Owen Moose). His father continued to live in the Stout Lake area. Bizhiw’s sons were at Stout Lake with their families, including Gezhyash, Jozhi and Omishoos. Whitehead and his family
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Figure B.1: Jimmy Keeper’s map
group continued to stay at Stout Lake after Bizhiw passed away. They would be there from September until summer arrived, then Whitehead would move to Poplar Hill. Before the traplines were put in place in 1947, Whitehead went to trap at McInnes Lake and Barton Lake with his father in law, Ogaans. He lived at Barton Lake, but only trapped at McInnes Lake. After 1947 Whitehead trapped at his father’s area at Stout Lake, and did not return to Barton Lake or McInnes lake. By this time, his father could not trap anymore. Whitehead became the senior trapper for Stout Lake. Ogaan’s father, Sukushki was also trapping in the area east of Barton Lake.

Whitehead commercial fished for twenty-five years at Moar Lake where he was the license holder: “I requested Moar Lake to commercial fish and they granted me that lake…I fished at Stout Lake once in a while too. Mostly Moar Lake is where I fished” (interview transcript, October 15, 2008). Once back in the community, he started a store business. He purchased an plane and vehicles, but lost everything in a fire, so gave up after that. Whitehead rarely trapped at other traplines, other than at Stout Lake and outside of his experience at McInnes Lake. One spring, after 1947, he trapped with George K. Strang on George’s trapline adjacent to his. He was asked by George to come. Whitehead’s trapline is now a Poplar Hill trapline.

B.3 LARRY PASCAL, APRIL 17, 2007 & SEPTEMBER 23, 2007

Larry’s father Moses Pascal came from Pauingassi. Moses had a grandfather who lived in Pikangikum. He moved to Pikangikum after he met is wife (Norman Quill, interview notes, August 3, 2006). Moses’ trapline once included both RL106 and RL105 (including Cairns and Keeper Lake). Moses eventually moved from Cairns Lake to Job Lake in the southern portion of his trapline (Oliver Hill, interview notes, October 9, 2008) and the trapline was split just above Keeper Lake. The northern
section with Cairns Lake went to Thomas Moose and Scotty Owen, and Moses became senior trapper of the southern portion (RL106). When Larry was growing up, his family had their main cabins at Job Lake (1) on figure B.2. Larry completed kindergarten, then was taken out of school to live on the trapline with his family. Growing up, Larry remembered going to Pikangikum for the month of August each summer. He spent Christmas and New Years at their trapline. They would then go to Pikangikum after New Years, and returned to the trapline again in March. Larry recalled his family group never stayed in one place while trapping. They would move around, camping in winter.

Moses hunted and trapped with Norman Quill when Larry was a child. Larry learned to trap with Moses. Kenneth and Johnny Turtle were also part of the trapping group. Kenneth Turtle’s mother-in-law and Larry’s mother were sisters. Others used to come to trap at his trapline, including James Turtle, Joe King, Jerry Pascal, Alex Peters, Amos Pascal, and Larry’s son, Larry Jr. Pascal who lived in Cat Lake as of 2011. Over his lifetime, Moses lived and trapped at several major lakes, including Burntwood, Thicketwood, Roderick, Cairns, Job, and Keeper Lake, whereas Larry lived for extended periods only at Job Lake and Keeper Lake. Larry indicated he had travelled with his father to McCusker Lake on at least one occasion when he was young. He remembered stopping at a large camp with several cabins (Larry Pascal, interview notes, September 30, 2007). When living at Job Lake, they continued to trap at Keeper Lake, stopping to trap at smaller lakes along the way between these areas. Larry also travelled up the Keeper river with Moses and his immediate family on moose hunting trips.

Larry married Donna and continued to go to Job Lake as a young man. Larry’s family group spent most of their time at Job Lake before building cabins at Keeper Lake (Donna Pascal, interview notes, April 4, 2007). Their reason for the move to Keeper lake was linked to a fishing lodge which was constructed at Job Lake. Larry recalled
Figure B.2: Larry Pascal’s map
that the camp owners were not friendly to the Pascal family. For a time, Larry had a camp half way between Job Lake and Keeper Lake.

Moses commercial fished on Keeper Lake and Cairns Lake when Larry was a boy. He also planted and harvested wild rice on Keeper lake. One year, Larry went to work on wild rice with Peter Quill, Johnny Dunsford, and Willie Quill for two weeks. Moses Pascal had a fishing license for Cairns Lake. No other areas on the trapline had commercial fishing. While Moses did most of the commercial fishing, Larry also helped out. Larry recalled there were many people fishing commercially at Cairns lake. Three families had cabins there, including: Solomon and Simon Turtle, Stanley Quill, David Strang, Joe King, Kenneth Turtle, and Tom Turtle. These other families fished while they were at Cairns Lake, but did not trap. Larry remembered how while commercial fishing, activity was generally focused, but Moses also occasionally hunted beaver while commercial fishing. Larry only commercial fished at Cairns Lake with his father, and never fished at other commercial fishing lakes. Commercial fishing was conducted during the coldest months of the year, January and February. Larry remembered each family having 3-4 nets.

A large fire swept through the Keeper and Cairns Lake area in the 1990s. Larry and his family continued to come to the area. They returned immediately after the fire (Larry Pascal, interview notes, April 5, 2007). Moses passed away in 1998, leaving his trapline to Larry (Donna Pascal, interview notes, September 22, 2007).

B.4 **Charlie Peters, September 18, 2007 & October 9, 2008**

Charlie Peters was born in 1927. He trapped in an area approximately 50km southwest of Pikangikum from the age of 13. While in this area, Charlie trapped with Moses Pascal. Beginning from when he was fifteen or sixteen years old, he no longer
trapped with his own relatives, but was sent to trap with Moses Pascal when he was old enough to trap. Charlie trapped a broad area before 1947, including McCusker, Cairns, Keeper, Roderick, Thicketwood, and Job Lake. At Roderick Lake, Charlie trapped with Weeswaw, his father-in-law. His father, Daniel, was also there at the time (Charlie Peters, interview notes, January 21, 2009).

Charlie’s extended family group moved to a new trapline area in 1947. He moved with his father to Upper Goose and Mamakwash Lake, now included in the RL93 trapline area (see figure B.3). Charlie moved with his father, Daniel Peters. Charlie’s group moved to Upper Goose, Mishigwan, and Mamakwash Lakes in the eastern portion of the area because there was an abundance of beaver and only two other people trapping at the time: Walter King was a trapping in this area, as was Alec Keeper. Dunning’s archived notes confirm Charlie Peters moved with his own father, Daniel Peters, and a large group of trappers from an area containing Roderick Lake to Silcox Lake (Bay Lake in Dunning’s records) around 1947. The Silcox Lake area had previously been occupied by a small trapping group.

Daniel Peters was made the first senior trapper, but he and Charlie (his eldest son) were not particularly active in the area. Daniel, and later Charlie had full-time employment. Charlie stamped fur for the HBC store, while Daniel’s involvement in fur management was described in Chapter 4 (Barry Peters, interview notes, October 31, 2007). After Daniel Peters became inactive as a trapper, his second-eldest son Albert Peters became senior trapper. Albert moved from Kirkness Lake and took up residence at Silcox Lake (Barry Peters, interview notes, October 31, 2007).

B.5 Norman Quill, October 31, 2007 & March 25, 2009

Norman Quill was born at Poplar Hill in 1931 (1 on figure B.4). Generally, Norman’s father, Isaiah was too busy working at the HBC to remain active as a trapper.
Figure B.3: Charlie Peter’s area predating trapline registration (dotted outline), and move at the time of registration to the Silcox Lake area.
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Norman’s father, however, did live at Barton Lake for around a decade with his father in law, John Suggashie (*Wigwasatik*), according to Matthew Strang (interview notes, October 9, 2008). Norman began going to the Keeper Lake area (2) when he was about 9 years old, and moved to Cairns Lake (3) area at about 19 years old. Moses Pascal, the senior trapper for this area was Norman’s mentor as he was learning to hunt and trap. While Norman trapped with Moses at Cairns Lake, they would travel to Keeper Lake, where they had two camps. From there they would go down to Job Lake (4). Norman recalled that there were no trapline boundaries when he was trapping with Moses, indicating that this preceded trapline registration. Norman continued working on Moses Pascal’s’s trapline until he married Lillian (maiden name, King) in 1952. For two years after he met Lilian, Norman trapped at Kirkness Lake (5) with George King, on Lilian’s family area.

Following their marriage, Norman and Lilian lived through a period in which they had no firm attachment to any particular trapline area. They continued to hunt and trap as part of extended family groups in several different areas. Norman went muskrat trapping over two springs in the Hornblendite Lake area (6): “I have a good knowledge of that area” (interview transcript, March 25, 2009). On the Berens Lake area (7), Norman lived and trapped with three family groups, including his grandfather (Peter Peters), Isaac Paul Quill and his son, and George B. Strang’s family group. These three trapping groups decided among themselves where to trap, and where camps were to be made (Norman Quill, August 3, 2006). Norman stayed with his grandfather on an island on Berens Lake. Norman’s grandfather trapped at Berens Lake after quitting his job at the HBC. Norman also lived in several places at Barton Lake (8) where he trapped for a period with his father and other relatives (confirmed by Matthew Strang, interview notes, August 3, 2007).

Norman commercial fished at McInnes Lake (9) and at Kirkness Lake. In order to access McInnes Lake, Norman obtained permission from Alex Suggashie. Commercial
Figure B.4: Norman Quill’s map

Legend
- harvest area
- registered trapline
- camp or cabin
- fishing area

Norman began trapping here with senior trapper Moses Pascal until he married (from about 1940 until 1952).

Norman was made head trapper for this area in the 1980s. He continued to hunt and trap here until 2010.
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fishing at both of these locations lasted several years for Norman (March 25, 2009). Norman also spent seven summers harvesting wild rice at Prairie Lake near Red Lake. He maintained a relationship with Stanley Comber (Angus Comber’s son) in which Stanley bought several rice harvesting boats which Norman helped to operate (Norman Quill quoted in Senyk, 2008: 54-56). Norman moved to Angus Comber’s trapline (RL91) where he trapped with Angus’ son, Charlie Comber, and Fred Pascal, then trapped two more years with Angus’ other sons, Willy and Roy. Angus was a former HBC employee who spoke fluent Anishinaabemowin. His wife was a Pikangikum resident, but he was not originally from the area. Angus asked Norman to build a cabin at Zeller Lake (11), so Norman built it. After that, Angus turned the trapline over to Norman. Angus’ sons eventually stopped trapping in the Pikangikum area. Angus himself had trapped at Zeller Lake. Norman became senior trapper of the line “about thirty years ago”. He first trapped at Zeller Lake, and only later trapped Sampson Lake (12), although his cabin was initially situated at Little Sampson Lake below it. Norman moved to Sampson Lake only two years before a fire swept through the east side of the trapline area (Norman Quill, interview notes, October 1, 2007).

B.6  TIMMY K. STRANG, JULY 26, 2007

Timmy K. Strang’s life history is presented differently from the others above. His life history interview took place over the period we were with him at his trapline in July, 2007. I conducted an interview on the evening of July 26, 2007 from which most of the details presented here have been taken. Timmy’s map is a hybrid map comprised of sites which we visited on his trapline (constructed from GPS points), and points which Timmy marked on paper. Timmy also discussed places lying outside the area we travelled together. These were also recorded on the map. The result is that
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Timmy’s map shows denser use of his trapline, while also showing seasonal use of different camps.

Timmy’s case also gives a sense of the seasonal dynamics of life on the land while trapping dominated the local land-based economy. Timmy described an annual trapping cycle which depended in large part on when furs were at their highest quality. Timmy used to leave for his trapline in mid-September, and came back to the community in December. They would started trapping in mid-October, with beaver and fox. When ice began appearing on branches, fox fur is no longer good. That’s when they began trapping marten, fisher, and mink. They would also trap muskrat in October when ice was not yet strong. They would still use boats. By end of October they started snaring otter, lynx, and wolves. By March, they stopped trapping lynx, fox, marten, and fisher. They then started with muskrat again in April when rivers opened. Timmy also showed me several areas where wild rice had been planted and harvested by his father in the summer months.

Timmy’s family was from the community of Poplar Hill, immediately adjacent to his trapline area (RL 98). Timmy’s father, George K. Strang began trapping with his own father at Onepine Lake as well as in the area west Popler Hill on Whitehead Moose’s area. Timmy remembered growing up at a time when there was an abundance of furbearers in his area. While trapping with his parents, he pointed out that “there were lots of [beaver]. We couldn’t trap them all.” Timmy became senior trapper after George K. passed away less than a year before our interview. His mother, Marie K. Strang, asked him to take the trapline. Timmy related that also Marie trapped and used snares. Timmy is the second eldest son in his family. He told me that when he took over the trapline, he also took over his father’s beaver lodges, while one of his brothers continued to use another section of the trapline west of his.

Timmy’s main trapping partner was Sandy Keeper, who was no longer alive at the time of the interview. Timmy’s elder brother Kenneth went to school while Timmy
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Figure B.5: Timmy K. Strang’s map
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did not, so Timmy felt he was not as active trapping as he was, which figured into his mother’s decision that he would make an appropriate successor as senior trapper. Timmy commercial fished with Whitehead Moose at Moar Lake. George K. Strang also had a commercial fishing license for Sharpstone Lake. Fishing lodges were incorporated as an important new activity for Timmy’s father and his family after commercial fishing ended. Timmy told me the Whitefeather Waters fishing lodge at Shining Falls was constructed soon after the lodge at Sharpstone Lake, which was built by his father. George K. Strang used to commercial fish at Sharpstone Lake, so he had a personal knowledge of the lake where the fishing lodge was situated. Sharpstone Lake is on Poplar Hill trapline.