

Proposed Protected Area Expansion of the Maganasipi Watershed



WOLF LAKE FIRST NATION Presentation to the

Commission on seven Biodiversity Reserve Projects and an Aquatic Reserve
Project in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue Administrative Region
December 18, 2012

“Staring into the amber eyes of a wolf. I feel the closest to understanding an animal whose blood flows with the confidence of one that has never been broken. Those are the eyes of a hunter who has never been hunted, and they offer a portal into understanding not just wolves but also the forest world they represent. When I look into those eyes, I hope for a bit more time and a bit more patience while we find our way. Future generations may very well judge our success by how bright those eyes still shine.”

-Ian McAllister
Following the Last Wild Wolves

Forward



Why a Maganasipi Protected Area Expansion Proposal?

By Chief Harry St Denis
Maigan Sagaigan

WLFN is motivated to create expanded boundaries for the Maganasipi watershed that respect and build on traditional Algonquin values for forest ecosystems and watersheds. We're proud of the work we have accomplished to date in protecting the Maganasipi watershed in advance of the Quebec protected area designation. WLFN has been aware long before Quebec's protected area strategy that the Maganasipi watershed had a higher proportion of old growth forest than anywhere else on our territory. Since 2003, WLFN has focused forestry harmonization on measures that support the persistence of old growth forests and biodiversity within the Maganasipi to safeguard the long-term provision of ecosystem goods and services on which we all depend, even in the face of increasing stresses of climate change. We Algonquins know this river as *Maigan sibi* – Wolf River because of the valley's resident wolf population. One of our primary objectives in this project is to prevent future logging activities that could potentially have a detrimental impact on this resident wolf population – a population that has lived relatively undisturbed in this watershed for thousands of years. By expanding the protected area we hope to insure the critical range and habitat of this vulnerable group as well as other threatened species. The following presentation reviews our activities in the Maganasipi to date, sets targets for the protected area expansion, provides maps of the most important natural and cultural features and areas for further protected area expansion, and makes recommendations on governance mechanisms. The purpose of our presentation is to build Quebec government awareness of WLFN's role to date in the establishment of the Maganasipi protected area and that it is worthy of greater recognition within the Quebec strategy.

Meegwetch,



Chief Harry St. Denis
Maigan Sagaigan
Wolf Lake First Nation

Kwe Commission members:

My name is Harry St Denis. I am the Chief of the Wolf Lake First Nation (WLFN). We are a member community of the Algonquin Nation.

I am presenting here with:

- Ms. Rosanne Van Schie, our Economic Development Officer; and member of the the IUCN Environmental, Economic and Social Policy Committee

We are grateful for the opportunity to present to you today. We commend you on the effort you have undertaken to set targets for protected area development and expansion in the Province. We are hopeful that our set of targets and recommendations outlined in this presentation will enable further co-ordination that leads to an agreement between our First Nation and Quebec ministries involved in this process.

While there is much to consider in this review, we urge you to understand and recognize the full scope of Aboriginal rights, title and treaty rights as you make improvements to the current provisions of the previous government's plan for protected areas within our traditional lands.

In 2008, the Québec MDDEP requested agreement with the WLFN to assign provisional protection to the Maganasipi River (C02A) watershed and another five areas identified in the WLFN conservation plans, namely, Dumoine (C09), Ottawa River Deer Yarding Area Basses-Collines du Ruisseau Serpent (C03A), Riviere Noire (C10A) and Opemican. These areas have since been assigned provisional status under the Québec Natural Heritage Conservation Act, R.S.Q. c.C-61.1, and are the subject of this gathering.

As stated to the MDDEP Québec government administration in 2008, these assignments are subject to an agreement with our First Nation. For lack of this formal working agreement with your government we are here today at this public hearing, not as a stakeholder, but rather a First Nation with constitutional and legal rights affecting the take up of territorial lands for such intents as Provincial protected areas.

We recommend to your commission that your government resume negotiations of an independent working agreement with our First Nation in advance of formally establishing this network of protected areas on our traditional lands.

Interim, in the context of this available planning exercise we ask you to honour, although limited from our point of view, the provisions the previous MDDEP Minister undertook, specifically with and limited to, the proposed Snake River biodiversity reserve, the Dumoine River Aquatic Reserve and the proposed Maganasipi River Valley Biodiversity Reserve—to negotiate with our Nation, to presumably arrive at mutually beneficial terms for the development of the territory. Pursuant to these conservation plans, at s.4:

“The Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks commits herself, until such time as the status of permanent protection has been granted to this territory, to work with the aboriginal communities concerned, including the community of Wolf Lake, towards the management and development of this protected area and, where relevant, will enter into partnerships on certain specific activities.” (Government of Québec 2008).

For over 7000 years the forest has provided the Algonquin people their livelihood -food, energy and materials, landscapes, spiritual grounds , economic trade and peace. The distinctive feature of our society over this period was that we did not mismanage our resources. The past 300 years we have witnessed our environment suffer the negative impacts of an exploitive resource management regime. Much of our traditional territory, culture and livelihoods have been significantly degraded and many ecosystems have permanent or severe damage. All the while our people have suffered disproportionate poverty. We see the establishment of a protected area network on our territory as a much needed opportunity for change.

WLFN territory has been subject to a long history of industrial forestry; and more recently mining activity. For several years, WLFN has prioritized long-term strategies to restore ecosystem health and economic stability as an alternative to intensive resource extraction industries by focusing on the following community development priorities:

- Provide learning opportunities for our community's youth that connect them to our traditional territory and culture;
- Create eco-tourism opportunities that are compatible with traditional cultural and environmental values and aspirations of the members;
- Build on environmental stewardship opportunities that reflect and strengthen cultural values, with climate change mitigation and adaptation co-benefits, and possible eco-system service opportunities.

These principles are based on self-determination and are derived from a history of traditional knowledge and governance on the land that provided the original instructions of what kind of humans we as Algonquins were and want to continue to be, free of government policy directives towards the extinguishment of our rights and who we are as a people.

Under the previous government the relationship between protected areas and land title policy reform has tended to be a controversial issue, with the focus entirely on entering the federal land claim process. Less attention has been paid to our work on the ground in the protected areas in maintaining the quality of the proposed protected resources and the development of related economic opportunities around them. We believe the opportunity now exists for your government to work in partnership with WLFN for our mutual benefit, for example through contract agreements or other forms of biodiversity stewardship agreements. Protected areas can support our traditional livelihoods while providing for much needed new opportunities in community economic development.

We will need a co-ordinated approach between your new government and the IUCN to achieve such results, but I am confident, together with our common goals and title to the land with the right policy reforms we can make this happen.

Rosanne Van Schie our economic development advisor, will now present more background on our protected area related economic development projects and our proposal for the expansion and management of the Maganasipi Protected area within your framework.

Thank you, Meegwetch, Merci.

Chief Harry St.Denis
Maigan Sagaigan
Wolf Lake First Nation

(Rosanne) Thank you, Chief St. Denis.

In 2002, I was hired to provide a working methodology for tourism development opportunities founded in the methods developed in 1996 in British Columbia for the Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture. The methodology has been simple. First, I assemble an information inventory of natural, cultural and infrastructure resources and identify candidate tourism development opportunities; Second, conduct a planning process to select from among the tourism development options in the context of what best suits community interests and values; and Third, implement the tourism products in areas identified by WLFN as appropriate. As a result of 10 years of community coordinated tourism development planning and forestry harmonization activities around the WLFN traditional territory WLFN is now successfully supporting a network of small tourism enterprises that connect WLFN members to their traditional land base, lifestyle, culture and new economic benefits. These small enterprises have existing services and infrastructure within the proposed Provincial Protected area plans, such as:

1. Two Algonquin Canoe Company outfitting locations serving over 500km of traditional WLFN marked and maintained canoe routes in the Ottawa river basin. One facility located at Rapides des Joachims the gateway to the proposed Dumoine Protected Area and the other at Long Sault Island on the Ottawa River between the Provinces of Ontario and Temiscaming Quebec.
2. Opemican Park Lodge, a waterfront five cabin, 3 bedroom lodge restaurant and bar facility now operating at Lanier Quebec on Lake Kipawa as Camp la Lucarne. The complex is located within the proposed Opemican National Park area.

I am providing you with the promotional material for your reference. This recent emphasis on cultural and ecotourism economic development projects has also influenced regional non-natives and visitors in becoming more aware of WLFN's environmental, social and cultural history and modern day interests on the territory. These ecotourism businesses also create jobs of a type that draw upon the skills of, and appeal to, the younger members of the WLFN. I have witnessed the Algonquin tourism businesses to be a catalyst for WLFN current use on the territory including short term and long term watershed and forest management plans that support not only the businesses but eco-system protection, conservation and management activities.

In 2002, myself and 2 band members began our tourism inventory work in the Maganasipi watershed. We found the watershed to be of exceptional quality and quantity of resource, having only been last "high graded" for white and red pines by loggers in the late 1800's, and as such, the area had in my opinion, the most pristine natural resources I had found to date on the territory.

The area as well has an exceptionally rich intact heritage infrastructure. See Map 1. The area was designated as a protected game reserve by the lumber barons themselves as the Maganasipi Fish and Game Club in 1897. Like modern day environmentalists, these club founders had the foresight to spare the area from their own logging activities and set up an exclusive hunting and fishing club where they made further personal connections to the area by naming the lakes after themselves. Other key features surrounding the conservation history included the 1897 lodge, a riverside heritage trail which WLFN has been reconstructing since 2004, an intact 1860 logging shanty of famous Ottawa Valley lumberman JR Booth known as "Back Camp" all major historical features lending support to WLFN's efforts in protecting this area for its particularly

special natural and cultural heritage assets.

Regardless, of the rich natural and cultural assets I describe a period of futile harmonization efforts between the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), WLFN and Tembec have incurred since our visit in 2002. See Map 2. Your agency information document for these public consultations suggests that 66% of the forest cover accounts as old growth forest based on information in the "Portrait du réseau d'aires protégées au Québec - Période 2002-2009" It is our observation on the ground, and in office harmonization activities that during this same time period old growth volume is diminishing and we are rapidly losing the ability to create a large protected area. A sufficient protected area network supports the persistence of biodiversity within the broader landscape and safeguards the long-term provision of ecosystem goods and services (such as sufficient clean water, pollination etc.) on which we all depend. Intact ecosystems (i.e. ecosystems that are in a natural or near-natural state) withstand stresses better than highly modified and fragmented landscapes, and natural landscapes secured within protected areas are the anchor on which survival of broader ecological systems will depend. We feel our region is particularly entrenched in logging activities and the role of protected areas is worthy of greater emphasis in the global debate on climate change adaptation. Therefore, it is important and urgent to grasp every opportunity to create a viable larger protected area for the Maganasipi watershed regardless of industry and MRNF extractive objectives.

In 2007, WLFN successfully prevented the logging of the core of the Maganasipi valley known as the Crawford Sector from being logged in advance of the actual MDDEP Magansipi protected area designation. Our effort was not in isolation as World Wildlife Fund had also recommended nearby Percival sector be preserved for its exceptional forest attributes, as well Zec Maganasipi had maintained the Lac Vernide watershed as a protected area for its unique trout stocks. The grouped areas did receive subsequent protected area preliminary status as the *Proposed Vallée-de-la-Rivière-Maganasipi biodiversity reserve* by the Quebec Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks (MDDEP) in 2008.

In 2011, WLFN requested to Tembec Inc. and the MDDEP to formally consider, under the Quebec Natural Heritage Conservation Act, the protection of the entire watershed. See Map 3 This request, would prevent further Tembec Inc. logging activities such as the Allouez sector proposed cut in Maganasipi in 2012. The current status is MDDEP and MRNF met regionally to discuss the extended protected area request of WLFN that would prevent further logging in the Allouez sector and WLFN was advised that it would be very difficult to add 500km² to the existing proposed protected area in an effort to protect the entire Maganasipi watershed. However, you are interested in "enlarging the protected area with some restrictions to the total surface of harvesting for each micro watershed concerned." It is a positive step but the disturbance still continued. As a result, WLFN held a meeting at the Maganasipi Fish and Game Club in July of 2012 with Tembec Inc. and signed an Eco-System Service Letter of Intent for the main purpose of "the development of long term improved ecosystem and forest management projects starting beginning with the Allouez sector in the Maganasipi watershed". The agreement is based on the defining terms of agreement of the 2010-2013 WLFN- Tembec Inc. Memorandum of Understanding where priority activities for the parties included among others the development of an "Eco-system-based management project" We are in the process of developing a Project Idea Note for the generation of related carbon offset credits.

Wolf Lake First Nation would like to present today a revised proposed boundary for the

Maganasipi watershed and ask that MDDEP interim negotiates with MRNF a moratorium on all competing land use activities in the area until a final boundary for the Maganasipi protected area is established and/or the new regulations of the Quebec Sustainable Forest Act are in place. Otherwise this process of hearings for protected area expansion is of little value leaving remaining undisturbed areas open for logging activities. MDDEP should move on with our recommendations at how urgently these focus areas should be addressed.

See Map 4

I will now overview WLFN's interests within this proposed boundary. It sets targets for protected area expansion, provides maps and photos of what are in our view the most important areas for protected area expansion.

Protected areas can be a cornerstone for local economic development and stewardship, providing immediate socio-economic benefits to WLFN in a region where they occupy very little economic space. The time has come to acknowledge WLFN's work to date and request for not only more protected area space in Maganasipi but space that best represents their overall environmental, social and economic interests in the region.

We look forward to your comments and continued work together.

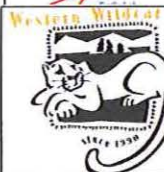
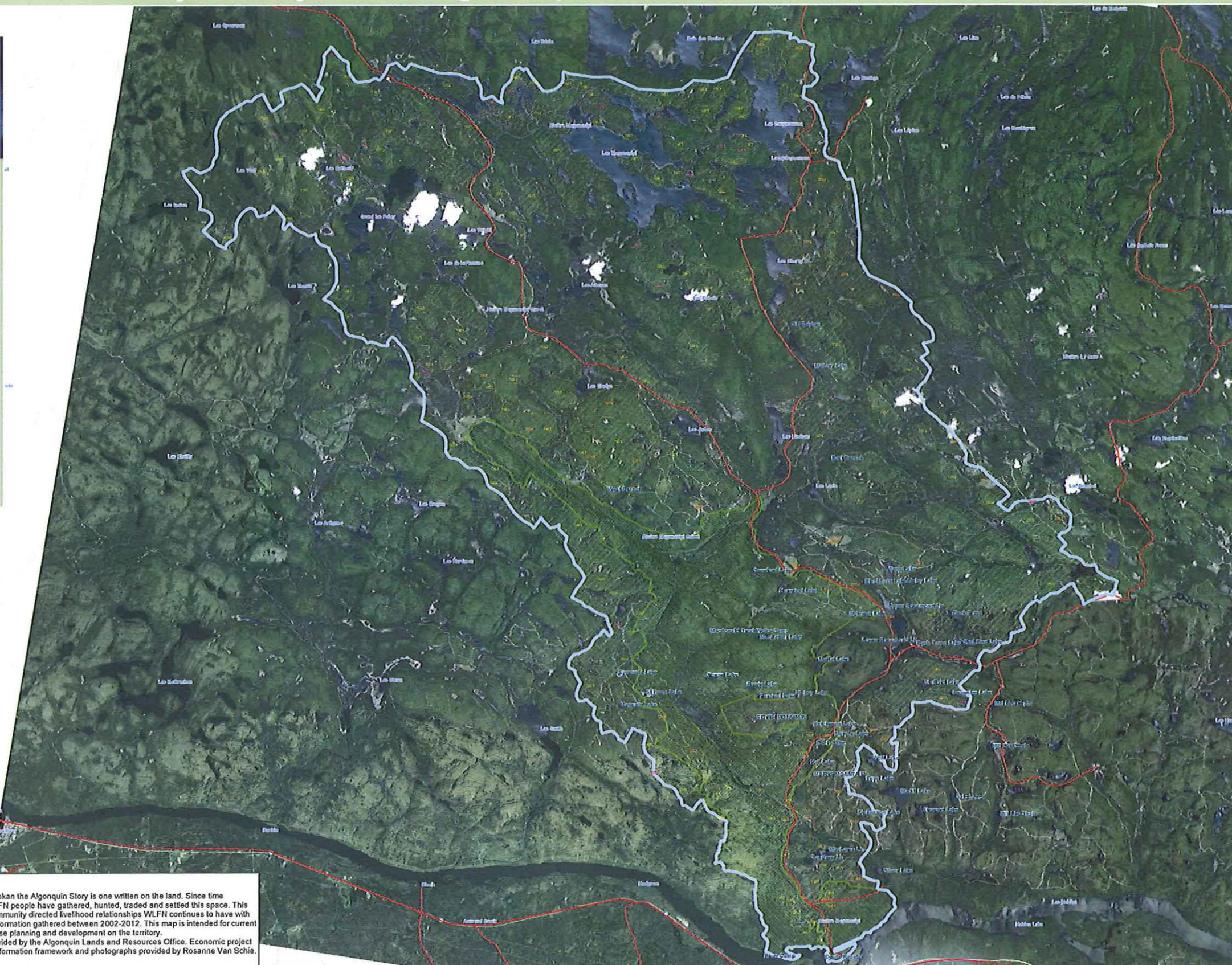
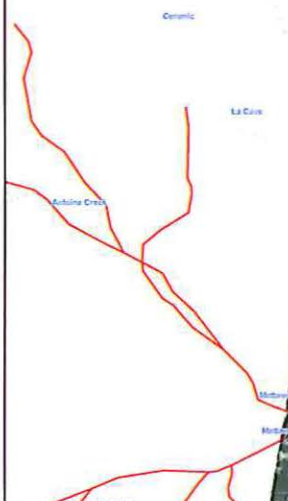
Forestry Activity in the Maganasipi Watershed 1983 - 2008



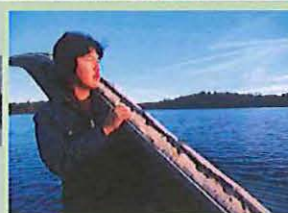
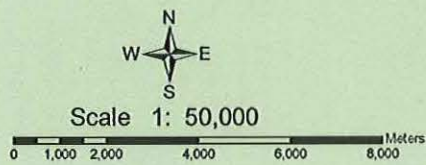
Legend

-  Watershed
-  Roads
-  Rivers
-  Partial Harvests (2001 - 2008)
-  Partial Harvests (1983 - 2000)
-  Clearcut Harvests (1983 - 2000)
-  Reserve de biodiversité
-  Lac-Percival

The imagery from Google Earth
Image Date: Aug 14 2009



Mamiwinni Adisokan the Algonquin Story is one written on the land. Since time immemorial WLFN people have gathered, hunted, traded and settled this space. This map depicts community directed livelihood relationships WLFN continues to have with the land from information gathered between 2002-2012. This map is intended for current and economic use planning and development on the territory. Map data is provided by the Algonquin Lands and Resources Office. Economic project development, information framework and photographs provided by Rosanne Van Schie.



MAGANASSIPPI
FISH & GAME CLUB
ORG. 1892 - INC. 1897
CONST. 1916

Maganassipi Fish and Game Club History



James C. Stewart.



Gen. J. R. Dickson.



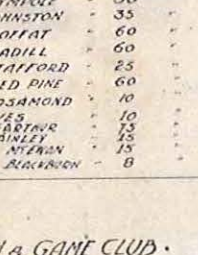
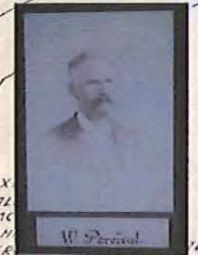
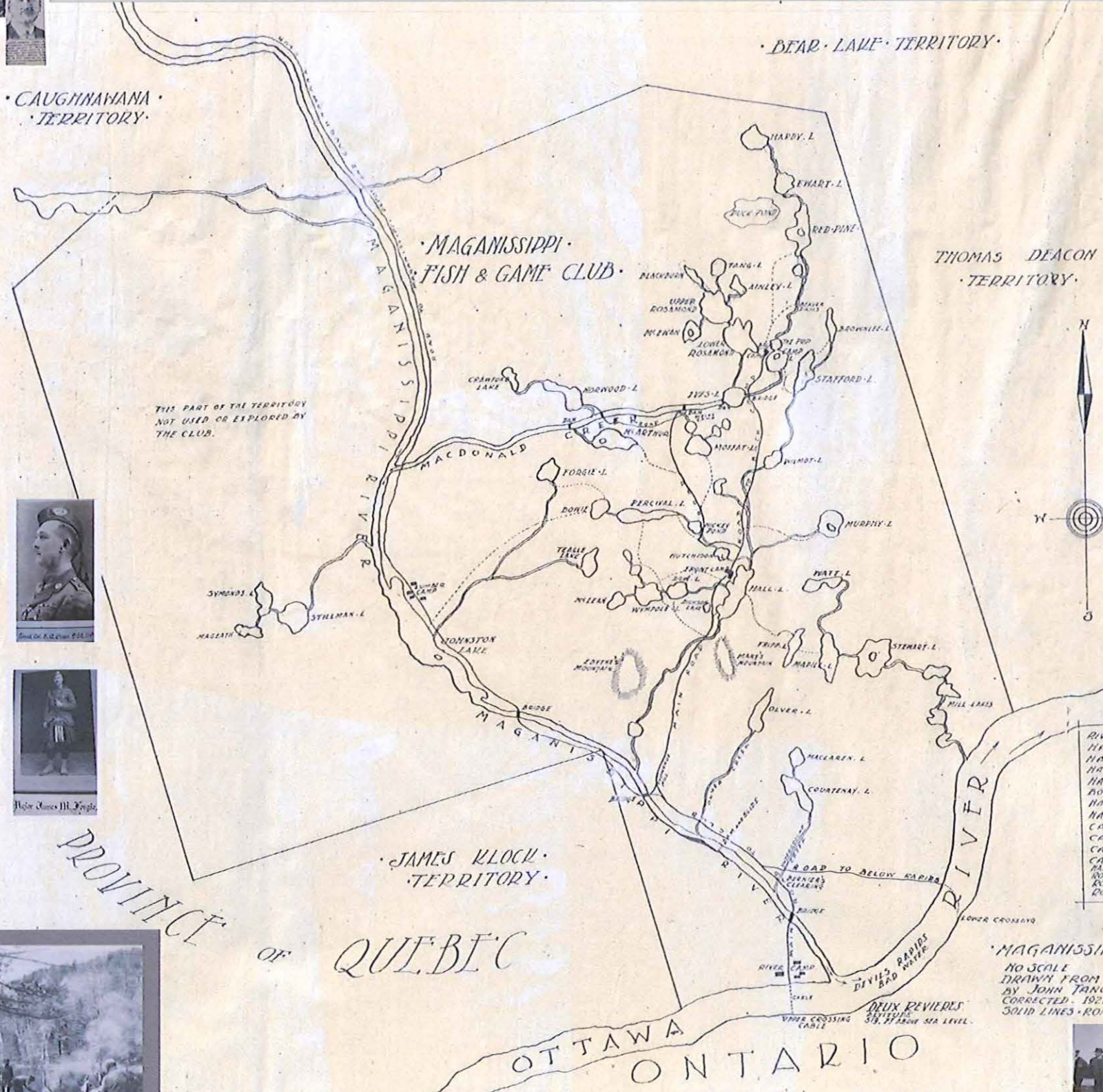
Lt. Col. A. Gordon Stewart.



Major W. R. Creighton.



Capt. Alexander Stewart.



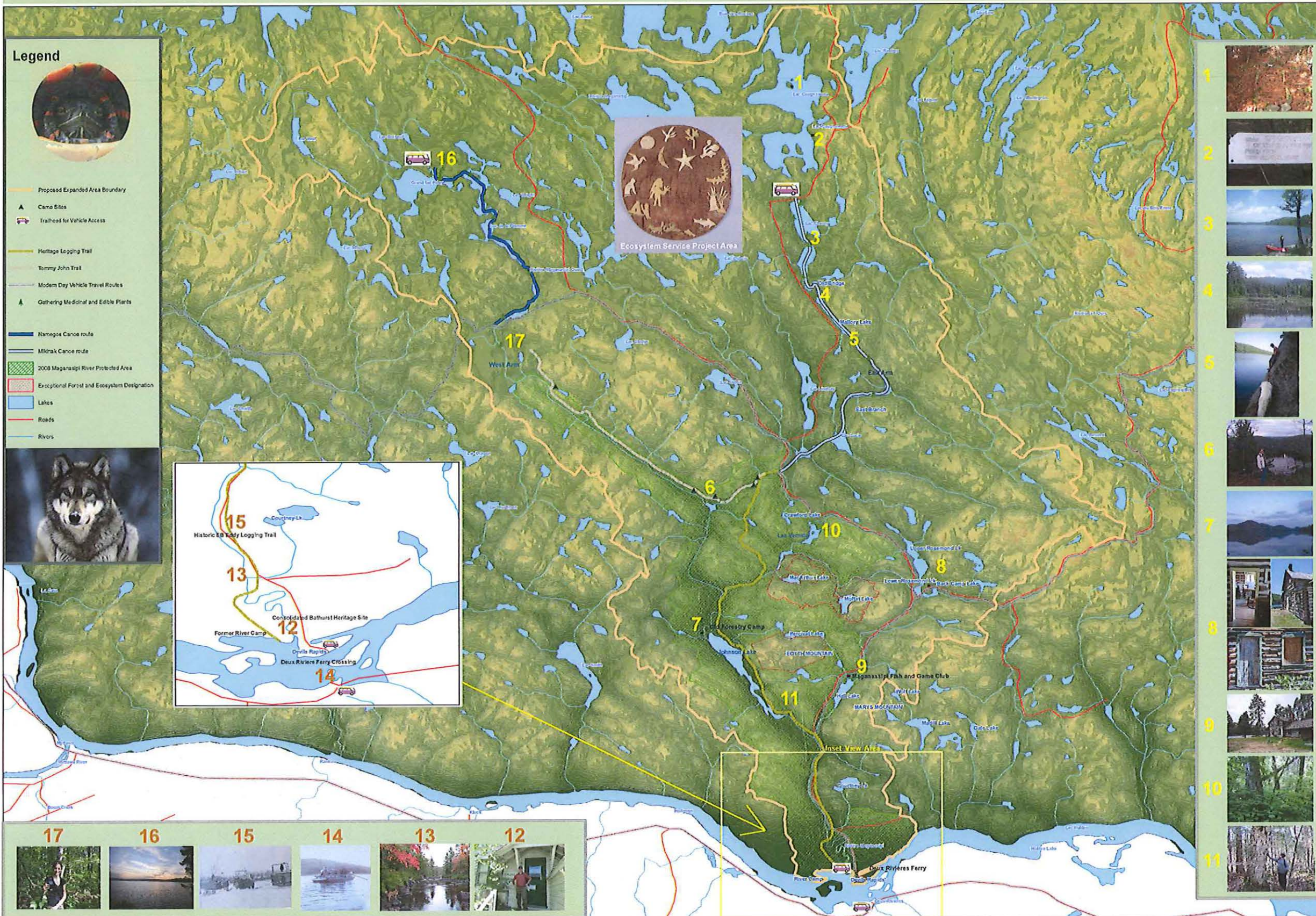
APPROX. RIVER TO HALL

HALL - DAC	
HALL - JOHN	
HALL - DEAR	
HALL - WYNDOLE	30
HALL - JOHNSTON	35
HALL - MOFFAT	60
HALL - MADILL	60
CAMP - STAFFORD	25
CAMP - RED PINE	60
CAMP - ROSAMOND	10
CAMP - IVES	10
HALL - MIDTUN	75
ROSAMOND - ANLEY	15
ROSAMOND - NIVEN	15
ROSAMOND - BLACKBURN	8

MAGANASSIPPI FISH & GAME CLUB.
NO SCALE
DRAWN FROM INFORMATION FURNISHED
BY JOHN TRING 1915 BY E. L. HORWOOD.
CORRECTED - 1921.
SOLID LINES - ROADS - DOTTED - TRAILS.

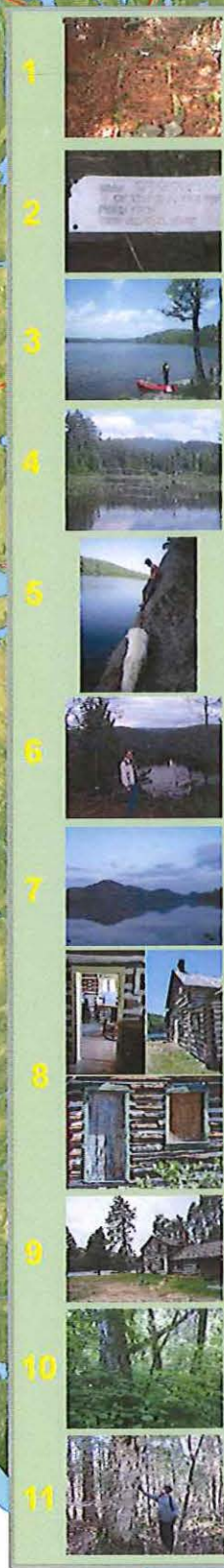
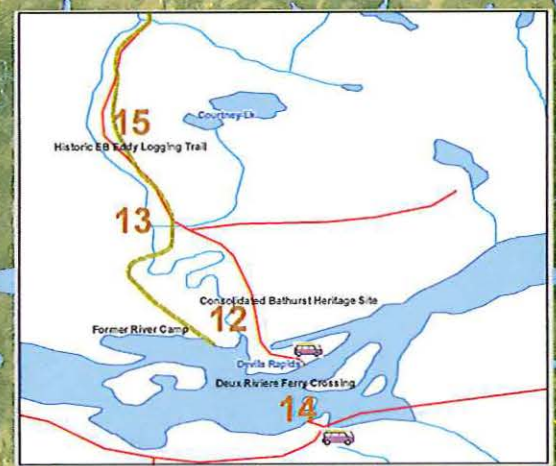


Proposed Expansion of Protected Area within Maganasipi Watershed



Legend

- Proposed Expanded Area Boundary
- Canoes Sites
- Trailhead for Vehicle Access
- Hortage Logging Trail
- Tommy John Trail
- Modern Day Vehicle Travel Routes
- Gathering Medicinal and Edible Plants
- Namegoa Canoe route
- Mikinak Canoe route
- 2008 Maganasipi River Protected Area
- Exceptional Forest and Ecosystem Designation
- Lakes
- Roads
- Rivers



Scale 1: 50,000

Map data is provided by the Algonquin Lands and Resources Office. Economic project development information framework and photographs provided by Rosanne Van Schie. Mapping by MITIG Forestry Services Ltd. Dec 15, 2012