The Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative

The Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative (WFRC) is an initiative of Pikangikum First Nation. The goal is to bring together a partnership of supports and participants in the development of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative in the form of a knowledge network where Pikangikum people are in the driver’s seat regarding the research programme.

The WFRC will promote the goal of the people of Pikangikum First Nation, especially the Elders of the community, to carry out partnership research in support of the vision, goals, aims and objectives of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. Partners that have been invited to join the WFRC include the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Sault College, the University of Manitoba, Lakehead University and the University of Winnipeg. Other university, government, industry and non-governmental institutions will be invited as the research programme grows.
The people of Pikangikum First Nation are the keepers of a land-based indigenous way of life that has been passed on to them from their ancestors. Their culture is a vital part of the cultural diversity of humanity. Through their indigenous way of life the people of Pikangikum First Nation have always cherished the diversity of all living and non-living things on their land.

Pikangikum First Nation people have developed the Whitefeather Forest Initiative to provide livelihood opportunities for their youth in keeping with their indigenous cultural teachings, values and customs. The initiative is being guided by the Elders of Pikangikum. It is the goal of Pikangikum First Nation for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative to develop land-based tribal enterprises rooted in Community-Based Resource Management and Supported by mutually beneficial and consensus-based partnerships with the larger environmental, business, academic and research communities.

The Whitefeather Forest Initiative incorporates a number of key objectives that have been established by Pikangikum First Nation:

1. Acquire from Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and manage commercial forestry tenure (e.g. a Sustainable Forest License (SFL)) for a portion of their traditional lands within the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area (WFPA);

2. Develop and manage protected areas within the WFPA in co-operation with, the OMNR, and Ontario’s partnership for Public Lands (PPL);

3. Promote and develop a community capacity to
engage in forestry woodlands operations;

4. Develop other community-led and controlled business enterprises within the WFPA, including a value-added forest products enterprises, Non-timber Forest Products (NTFP) business, and protected area tourism opportunities;

5. Lead in the development of a collaborative research program to ensure that the foregoing are undertaken in accordance with the highest possible standards.

The Whitefeather Forest Planning Area (WFPA) comprises approximately 1.3 million hectares, and includes the trappings of Pikangikum people.

The development of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative is centered on Community-based Land Use Planning, an approach that has now been adopted as policy under Ontario’s Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI) (Appendix 1). (Title: Northern Boreal Initiative – Community-based Land Use Planning Approach). The first of several community-based Land Use Planning processes is “… [being] led by Pikangikum First Nation in association with NBI. The resulting land use strategy will guide the protection and management of lands and resources over a 1.3 million hectare area in Northwestern Ontario, north of Red Lake, Ontario and north of the [Ontario Living Legacy] OLL Strategy area” (Appendix 2).

The vision of Pikangikum people for research in
PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES OF THE WFRC

The Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative (WFRC) is established on the basis that research undertaken in support of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative should be based upon fair, equitable, transparent and mutually beneficial partnership. Decision-making within the WFRC will be based on mutual respect and consensus led by Pikangikum First Nation.

The WFRC is based upon the following objectives of Pikangikum First Nation for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative:

1. Community-Based Land Use Planning will be completed prior to any development activities, including the establishment of protected areas and the commencement of commercial forestry, within the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area.

2. Community-Based Land Use Planning should guide the identification and development of resource-based opportunities, including protected areas, and infrastructure development support of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative is that it will enhance their ability to take care of the land and resources in the Traditional Territories of the Pikangikum First Nation that forms that basis of the initiative. This vision honours the teachings and wisdom of Pikangikum Elders that supports the effective care and protection of the diversity of life on the land. This vision supports dialogue and working together to carry out research on the basis of respect and in a manner that will bring together the best of different knowledge traditions.
In this relationship partners of the WFRC agree that:

1. The Whitefeather Forest Planning Area and adjacent areas are “...a geographic area that is a cultural landscape, modified, influenced and given special meaning”, by the Pikangikum First Nation People;¹

2. The outcomes of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative will maintain the ability of Pikangikum people to pursue cultural and livelihood activities on the land;

3. The outcomes of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative will maintain the ability of Pikangikum First Nation to take a leading role in the orderly development of new protected areas and commercial forestry opportunities and the stewardship and management of the land in support of these opportunities;

4. A primary goal of the Whitefeather forest initiative will be to conserve the forest cover of the protection of viable populations of Woodland Caribou and Wolverine and the habitats;

5. Research in support of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative will support the strategy of Pikangikum to work cooperatively with the Province of Ontario to establish the Whitefeather Forest Initiative, guided by the Elders of Pikangikum First Nation and centered on the indigenous Knowledge tradition, environmental values and perspectives, and customary indigenous stewardship values and practices of Pikangikum people and harmonized with broader-scale ecological considerations and provincial responsibilities of Ontario;

6. Research in support of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative will foster collaborative learning and capacity-building between indigenous and Western Science knowledge traditions.
Research projects will stress technical capacity building among students and youth both from Pikangikum and students and youth associated with Cooperative partners. Project research and learning experiences will be mutual and all efforts will be made to ensure that fiscal resources available to Pikangikum for research projects will achieve this objective.

7. The economic benefits of Whitefeather Forest Initiative should flow primarily to the Pikangikum.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMME
OF THE WFRC

Pikangikum First Nation has identified a research programme to be initiated by partners of the WFRC. The First Nation has mandated Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation with the responsibility to coordinate and pursue this research programme. Initial themes of the research programme will include the following:

1. Research Projects supporting the completion of Community-Based Land Use Planning associated with the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. The Land Use network and areas that will be identified for inclusion in a forest-management tenure agreement with Ontario. The planning process is to be completed by the end of 2005;
meets or exceeds the standards of the Forest Stewardship Council through Community-Based Land Use Planning that will become the areas where Pikangikum intends to secure forestry tenure in 2006;

3. Research projects supporting the goal of securing application of the provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act for the Whitefeather Forest Initiative and achieving environmental assessment coverage by 2006. This is to be done in a manner that addresses the particular community-based needs and vision of Pikangikum First Nation for the Initiative and the ecological circumstances of an intact northern boreal forest ecosystem;

4. Research projects supporting the goal of Pikangikum to work cooperatively with the Ontario’s government to develop an agreement for a forest management regulatory system for the Whitefeather that achieves the economic objectives, social objectives and environmental objectives of Pikangikum while meeting the broad-scale responsibilities of the province;

5. Research projects that support the conservation of the forest cover of the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area and its biodiversity. This includes the protection of viable populations of Woodland Caribou and Wolverine and their habitats;

6. Research projects that will support the development of commercial forest and protected areas timber and other resource management strategies and practices consistent with the environment values and resource management principles, teachings, customs and practices of Pikangikum First Nation people;

7. Research projects that support the goal of Pikangikum First Nation to achieve a special designation of Indigenous Community Forest by the Forest Stewardship Council. It is the goal of Pikangikum that this new certification
category will build upon existing FSC standards and will include the additional criteria of historical indigenous occupancy and adherence to the Code of Practice of the International Federation of Alternative Trade; and

8. Research projects and educational and other activities in support of the development of the Whitefeather Forest Indigenous Knowledge Teaching Centre. In particular, these will support the vision of Pikangikum Elders to develop the Centre as world-class initiative, which will include First Nation led partnership research, an experiential teaching program and a Visitor/Interpretative capacity related to creating greater understanding about and interpreting the indigenous cultural and natural heritage of the Traditional Territories of Pikangikum First Nation people associate with the Whitefeather Forest Initiative. This will include exploring the linkage between cultural and natural heritage on the land and indigenous ecological perspectives of Pikangikum people. A priority of the center will be to offer learning and training opportunities to Pikangikum people and outside students and researchers. This will include the investigation of economic opportunities and the development of interpretive materials, programs and businesses.
RESEARCH PROTOCOLS OF THE WFRC

Research proposals will be developed through collaboration between the parties of this Agreement.

Upon acquisition of research funding each research project will develop a Research Protocol which incorporates the following elements:

1. A statement that the project is a research partnership under the Whitefeather Forest Research Cooperative;

2. Identification of the specific experts and researchers who will be involved in the project;

3. That the project research partnership will be accountable to Pikangikum First Nation and the institutions of the research partners;

4. The composition of an Advisory Committee made up of members of the WFRC agreed to by the Whitefeather Forest Initiative Steering Group and research partners responsible for research funding;

5. Research being performed by researchers from the University of Manitoba, Sault College, Lakehead University, the University of Winnipeg and research from other institutions shall be undertaken in accordance with the policies of their respective institutions.

6. The Advisory Committee will have the responsibility to review approved project proposal and provide guidance and advise on the project activities consistent with funding agency requirements;

7. The WFRC will seek authorization to undertake approved research projects from by the Council of Pikangikum First Nation or a designated community authority;
8. Funded research projects under the WFRC shall be presented to the community in clear language through an oral presentation to the community. Concerns regarding the private and public nature of research results shall be discussed in this presentation, in order that they may be addressed before the project completion;

9. Research protocols shall include a consideration of individual consent to participate in research projects, confidentiality of data provided by individuals, masking of individuals for information released publicly, archiving of data and access to archived data;

10. Research Results will be presented in clear language to the Pikangikum Community, the Advisory Committee and Project Partners at community workshops and at meetings of the Advisory Committee;

11. Issues and problems that arise during the Research Project will be dealt with at meetings convened with the Advisory Committee and Steering Group;

12. Written reports, theses, dissertations, publications and any other material for the public release that is based on the activities undertaken for a research project will be submitted to the Advisory Committee for review. In the case of data, results, and conclusions of the western science component of the project strong obligations to the research findings, data, or interpretation will be noted and published. The review process will be undertaken within two months of the document being submitted to the Advisory Committee;

13. Public domain information will be freely available to partners of the WFRC and Community members of Pikangikum;

14. Copies of all documentation to be in the public domain collected during a research project will
13. WFRC partners will create an archive of all research documentation which will include protocols of access to information;

15. Research partners may create archives of public domain information with access protocols (procedures) agreed to by the WFRC partners and private information which includes protocols to ensure confidentiality and masking of sensitive information collected during research;

16. Research students will make themselves available during the time that they are undertaking research in the community to help with community programmes in which they can offer services;

17. Research students will undertake to prepare their research results in clear language presentation that enhance communication with community members through translation during community workshops.
Nothing in this Agreement shall prejudice in any manner or way any of the Treaty and Aboriginal Rights of the citizens of Pikangikum First Nation or the Treaty and Aboriginal Rights of any other First Nation person.

The parties signing this Agreement represent that they are familiar with, and agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement and that they are duly authorized to sign the Agreement and agree and intend to be bound by the Agreement.

In signing this Letter of Agreement, we solemnly seek continued gifts of good guidance and strength from the Creator in our efforts to work together on developing the WFRC in support of the Whitefeather Forest Initiative.
(Signed this 17th day of June, 2004 at Pikangikum First Nation For Pikangikum First Nation)

Paddy Peters, (Chief)  Brian Keeper, (Deputy Chief)

(Da. ∆ ∆ ∆ (Councilor) Da. ∆ ∆ ∆ (Councilor) Da. ∆ ∆ ∆ (Councilor)

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(Signed this 13th day of June, 2004 at Pikangikum First Nation
For Whitkatnath Forest Management Corporation)

Alex. Heels, President
Samuel Quill, Director
Mark Godfrey, Director

(Signed this 17th day of June, 2004 at Pikangikum
For the University of Manitoba)

Iain Davidson-Hunt
Asst. Professor,
Natural Resources Institute

Barbara Crutchley
Director
Research Grant and Contract Services

Deborah McCallum
Vice-President,
Administration

(Signed this 10th day of June, 2004 at Sault College
For Sault College)

Brian Punch,
Academic Administrator

Colin Kirkwood, Dean
Natural Resource Program

(Signed this 11th day of June, 2004
For Lakehead University)

Scott Hamilton, Professor
Dept. of Anthropology

Fred Gilbert, President

(Signed this 17th day of July, 2004 at Winnipeg
For the University of Winnipeg)

Jennifer Brown, Professor,
Dept. of History, Centre for
Rupert's Land Studies

Patrick Deane, Vice President (Finance and Administration)
(Academic) and Provost.

Steven Willetts, Acting President/Vice-President (Academic)

Stephen Willetts,
Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
SCHEDULE “A”

INITIAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

Pikangikum First Nation, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation the University of Manitoba, under the WFRC, hereby agree to work together to seek funding in order to undertake research on the following themes:

1. Shared Criteria and Indicators for the holistic management of the WFPA. This will integrate teachings, customs and experiential knowledge that have been used by Pikangikum People to assess changes in the land with western science. Shared Criteria and Indicators can act as a conceptual bridge between Pikangikum’s goals and objectives of land management and those of other partners such as provincial governments, environmental organizations and market certification. The creation of such Criteria and Indicators will be a necessary step as initial resource managers from outside the community will work with local experts from the community. They will benefit from having access to shared Criteria and Indicators to guide management decisions and monitor outcomes.

Funding Target – Professor Iain Davidson-Hunt; Sustainable Forest Management Network;

2. Indigenous Cultural Landscapes, Land Management and New Media.

Develop new innovations to document, translate and represent indigenous cultural landscapes so that they can be included in land management. This will include developing and working with new media technology and methods to evaluate their use by Pikangikum to communicate the values and meanings of a place (WFPA) to resource managers, WFI partners and the public. Research will look at specific parts of the cultural landscape that are currently in the cultural and ecological databases of the WFMC. Other data held by the WFMC and other partners can also contribute to this research.

Funding Target: Prof. Iain Davidson-Hunt, Prof. Jennifer Brown - Standard SSHRC Grant; Pikangikum First Nation, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation, Prof. Iain Davidson-Hunt; Prof. Jennifer Brown - SSHRC CURA, Trillium Foundation, Canadian Heritage

3. Woodland Caribou Research.

Identify protection strategies for woodland caribou habitat in the Whitefeather Forest Planning Area through a partnership between Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science.
Funding secured from the Ontario Living Legacy Trust and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

4. Heritage Research.

Build a cultural heritage (archaeology and ethno-history) component into the on-going research program of Pikangikum First Nation (PFN) involving the Whitefeather Forest and Woodland Caribou Provincial Park (WCPP) (Figure 1). Pikangikum First Nation has an on-reserve population of about 2,200 people, and is located 120 km northwest of Red Lake in northwestern Ontario. It is within the boreal forest mantled Precambrian Shield, is sparsely populated, has limited road access, and is economically underdeveloped. Very little archaeological research has been done in the region.

Funding Targets – Prof. Scott Hamilton - Standard SSHRC Grant; Pikangikum First Nation, Indigenous Values Overview Scan for Woodland Caribou Provincial Park (Signature Site) – MNR contribution; Pikangikum First Nation, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation, Prof. Scott Hamilton - Comprehensive Heritage Resources Research Program – Canadian Heritage, Ontario, SSHRC First Peoples Program
APPENDIX 1

EBR Registry Number: PB03E1003  Type of Posting: Policy
Ministry: Natural Resources  Status of Posting: Proposal
Date Proposal Loaded: 2003/05/14
Comment Period: 57 day(s)

Written submissions may be made between May 14, 2003 and July 10, 2003.

NOTICE OF PROPOSAL FOR POLICY

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This notice initiates the Community-based Land Use Planning process for the Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas, north of Red Lake, Ontario. The Terms of Reference for this process can be viewed by contacting the locations listed below or can be accessed electronically through the link provided at the bottom of this notice.

This notice was first published May 14, 2003. It was re-published May 21, 2003 to extend the comment period, and to provide a link to the Whitefeather Forest website.

Proposal Title:

Northern Boreal Initiative: Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas
Community-based Land Use Strategy

Short Description:

The Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI) was established in 2000 (Registry # PB01E1008). The NBI has a goal to provide several northern First Nations with opportunities to take a leading role in the orderly development of new, commercial forest management opportunities, including working collaboratively with the ministry on planning for such opportunities. Proposed locations are north of the area of Ontario that is described in both the Area of the Undertaking (AOU) for the Class Environmental Assessment for Timber Management on Crown Lands in Ontario and in the Ontario Living Legacy (OLL) Strategy. The NBI goal is important to foster sustainable economic development opportunities for stronger First Nation community futures.

NBI affirms that land use planning is one of the first steps in making wise decisions about potential land uses and resource development. Community-based Land Use Planning was adopted in 2002 as a framework to guide the
preparation of strategic land use direction. The process is to be led by First Nations in association with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and NBI (Registry # PB01E1012).

Key elements of Community-based Land Use Planning are the recognition of a need to balance local, landscape-level and provincial interests, and a commitment to rationalize proposed new land uses with traditional Aboriginal uses. Planning processes generally take two to three years to complete. During that time, all interested parties will be invited to participate in this consensus-building approach to develop the strategic direction. The lead First Nation(s) will follow community-determined approval procedures. MNR can provide approvals for the recommended strategic land use direction through administration of the Public Lands Act.

Following the approval of strategic direction, the next steps for land and resource allocations and the initiation of activities are determined by the Environmental Assessment Act and other relevant legislation, and by resource management planning responsibilities.

The first of several Community-based Land Use Planning processes is now ready to begin and will be led by Pikangikum First Nation in association with NBI. The resulting land use strategy will guide the protection and management of lands and resources over a 1.3 million hectare area in northwestern Ontario, north of Red Lake, Ontario and north of the OLL Strategy area.

The Community-based Land Use Planning Area is described in two sections. A reference map is available electronically through a link provided at the bottom of this page. The sections are:
- Section A: The Whitefeather Forest Planning Area (WFPA) of 1.2 million hectares is defined by Pikangikum First Nation on the basis of traditional use and occupancy,
- Section B: Three Adjacent Areas defined by Pikangikum First Nation and MNR’s Red Lake District are located between the Whitefeather Area and the northern boundary of the OLL area. In these areas, Pikangikum First Nation has historical occupancy interests, but does not currently hold traplines. The Adjacent Areas are the Valhalla Area at 44,500 hectares, the Crossland Lake Area at 24,700 hectares and the Blondin Lake Area at 40,000 hectares.

Pikangikum First Nation will lead planning for the WFPA. The Red Lake District will lead planning for the Adjacent Areas in a consolidated process with the WFPA.

Community-based Land Use Planning is a key component of Pikangikum’s overall Whitefeather Forest Initiative and is one of the NBI orderly development steps. MNR is working with Pikangikum to support planning needs, provide a provincial and landscape-level context, and assist with the
Pikangikum First Nation describes the Whitefeather Forest as an ‘Indigenous Cultural Landscape’, characterized by the traditional use and stewardship of the Pikangikum people in the northern boreal forest environment. Traditional activities include hunting and fishing, trapping, and harvesting of other non-timber forest products. The population of Pikangikum is 2,000. A variety of remote tourism establishments exist throughout the area based on numerous lakes and river systems. There is one all-weather road, the Nungesser, that reaches to the southern shore of the Berens River.

The land use strategy will be developed respecting traditional and other existing uses, will recommend appropriate protected areas, and will consider the capability of lands and resources to support new allocations and land uses such as forestry, tourism, recreation, mining, and waterpower. Proposals will be consistent with Pikangikum’s stewardship principles, will reflect a rationalization of new uses with traditional use, and will address provincial responsibilities, including those expressed in the OLL Land Use Strategy and the 1999 Ontario Forest Accord. Defining protected areas that contribute to meeting the objectives of the provincial parks and protected areas system is a priority.

Traditional knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge, western science, and all other available information for both the local and broader landscape scales will support decision making.

A Terms of Reference has been prepared that identifies the Whitefeather Forest Community-based Land Use Planning goal, principles, planning structure, and schedule. The adjacent planning areas will adhere to the same process and schedule. Additional direction regarding consultation opportunities and process is provided in the Terms. This documentation is available at the locations noted below and on the web site listed at the end of this document.

**Purpose of the Proposal:**

To prepare strategic land use direction for the Pikangikum Whitefeather Forest Area, Valhalla, Crossland Lake, and Blondin Lake Adjacent Areas that will support decisions for the establishment of protected areas, for the protection and management of ecosystems, and for sustainable resource development opportunities.

**Other Relevant Information:**

Information about the Northern Boreal Initiative and Community-based Land Use Planning is available at the locations below. A link to the Registry sites for NBI is provided below.
Ontario’s commitment to NBI is founded on policy direction and commitments from the 1999 Ontario Forest Accord, Ontario’s Living Legacy and the 1996 Aboriginal Policy Framework with the associated Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy. The preparation of strategic land use direction, led by First Nations, is consistent with commitments of the 1999 Ontario Forest Accord. In commitment number 24, the Accord describes support for initiatives directed to the orderly development of areas north of the AOU on a best efforts basis and as quickly as possible subject to the following conditions:
- Full agreement of affected First Nations
- Subject to obtaining the concurrence of the Minister of the Environment to provide coverage modeled after the coverage of the Timber Class EA terms and conditions, and,
- Recognition and regulation of parks and protected areas on these lands.

The First Nation communities currently working with NBI are Pikangikum, Poplar Hill, McDowell Lake, North Spirit Lake, Eabametoong, Mishkeegogamang, Marten Falls, Moose Cree, Constance Lake, Cat Lake, and Slate Falls. Communities are in various stages of preparing for planning, gathering background information and describing their land use planning process. As they become ready, communities will define a planning area, planning subjects, anticipated timelines, and opportunities for consultation. Community and provincial endorsement of recommendations will be sought to complete the preparation of strategies.

The Community-based Land Use Planning approach is consistent with MNR’s intention to proceed in a manner without prejudice to the Aboriginal and treaty rights of First Nation communities and individuals.

MNR’s role in Community-based Land Use Planning is that of a planning partner and facilitator, to bring forward the vision of sustainable development, to ensure ecological sustainability, and to provide for public participation in environmentally significant decision-making. MNR will follow its strategy of Integrated Resource Management (IRM), directing ministry efforts to achieve the optimum sustainable level of benefits from all of Ontario’s natural resources, while, at the same time, minimizing conflicts among resource management activities, users and uses. This is consistent with the MNR’s strategic direction contained in the document ‘Beyond 2000’.

The allocation of specific areas for the purpose of commercial forest management takes place after land use strategy approval through preparation of a forest management plan, a process that also includes a rigorous public consultation program. Among other approvals, any new commercial forestry opportunities will require licensing under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA).
Preparation of a land use strategy does not relieve MNR of its obligations under the Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act). MNR’s existing approvals for activities will continue to apply and new EA Act coverage will need to be obtained for commercial forest management activities, north of the AOU. It is anticipated that the EA Act coverage to be sought will be modeled after the coverage of the Timber Class EA terms and conditions.

The Ministry of Natural Resources will collect comments under the authority of the Public Lands Act in order to assist in making decisions and determining further public consultation needs. Comments and opinions will be kept on file and may be included in study documentation that is made available for public review. The MNR may also use this information as public input on other resource management surveys and projects.

During the development of land use strategies, the Ministry is considering both Beyond 2000 and its Statement of Environmental Values.

**Other Public Consultation:**

First Nations communities, resource users, local and provincial interest groups, government agencies, landowners, and the general public have received an Invitation to Participate through direct written notice. Persons not included in this initial mailing who wish to be involved in the process may have their names added to the mailing list by contacting the Area Supervisor at the Red Lake District office at the address given below. Public notice of this planning process has also been placed in local newspapers.

At the Invitation to Participate stage, the planning team is seeking any knowledge and/or concerns about the planning area that will assist in the development of the land use strategy. In addition, issues that need to be addressed in the planning process can be identified.

Opportunities for Public Involvement will include:

1. Invitation to Participate, Viewing of the Terms of Reference and Background Information – June 2003 (this is the current opportunity)
2. Public Review of Issues and Options – February 2004
4. Public Inspection of Approved Strategy – March 2005

At each stage of public consultation, open houses will be held in Pikangikum and Red Lake. These open houses will provide information relevant to the particular phase of planning occurring at that time. Project Planning Team members will be present to provide information, collect comments, and answer questions. Notice of each open house will be mailed to all names on the mailing list at least 15 days prior. Summaries of all public input will be provided.
Comments should be directed to the following Contact Person:

Roy Sidders, Red Lake Area North Supervisor
MNR Red Lake District
P.O. Box 5003, 227 Howey Street
Red Lake, Ontario, P0V 2M0
PHONE: (807) 727-2253  FAX: (807) 727-2861

Some Government offices have additional information on this proposal for viewing. These are listed below:

MNR Northwest Regional Planning Unit
435 James Street South, Suite 221a
Ontario Government Building, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7E 6E3
PHONE: (807) 475-1251 FAX: (807) 473-3023

MNR Red Lake District Office
P.O. Box 5003, 227 Howey Street
Red Lake, Ontario, P0V 2M0
PHONE: (807) 727-2253 FAX: (807) 727-2861

Additional material in support of this notice is available by clicking the following hyperlink(s):

http://www.whitefeatherforest.com/
http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/oll/ofaab/accord.html
http://www.nativeaffairs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/apf.htm

All comments will be considered as part of the decision-making by the Ministry if they:

a. are submitted in writing;
b. reference the EBR Registry number; and
c. are received by the Contact person within the specified comment period.

Please Note: No acknowledgment or individual response will be provided to those who comment. All comments and submissions received will become part of the public record.
APPENDIX 2
EBR Registry Number: PB01E1012  Type of Posting: Policy
Ministry: Natural Resources  Status of Posting: Decision
Date Proposal Loaded: 2001/07/13
Date Decision Loaded: 2002/11/20
Comment Period: 110 day(s)

Written submissions were permitted between July 13, 2001 and October 31, 2001.

NOTICE OF DECISION FOR POLICY

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A registry notice inviting public involvement in the development of a land use planning approach for the Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI), called Community-based Land Use Planning (C-LUP), was published on July 13, 2001 with a 65-day comment period. This notice was subsequently re-posted for an additional 45-day period resulting in a total of 110 days for comment.

Proposal Title:

Northern Boreal Initiative – Community-based Land Use Planning Approach

Proposal Decision:

MNR endorses Community-based Land Use Planning as a framework to guide planning by First Nations working with the Northern Boreal Initiative. The approach has been refined to reflect careful consideration of comments received from the public during the review period.

Number of Comments Received: 5

Effect of the Comments on the Decision of the Ministry:

As a result of the Environmental Registry notice for the proposed "Community-based Land Use Planning approach", five written submissions were received. Consultation on the approach during meetings and workshops also contributed to MNR’s decision.

This decision is provided to proceed with the approach described as Community-based Land Use Planning in the Northern Boreal Initiative area. Subsequent consultation for the preparation of each land use strategy, using this
approach, will commence with a Terms of Reference and continue throughout the process.

Reviewers expressed support for the commitment to provide an arrangement with NBI whereby First Nations lead planning for their traditional areas. There was some interest expressed in expanding planning to cover an all-inclusive northern area, rather than the NBI area. MNR has carefully considered the scope of planning and is prepared to move forward with Community-based Land Use Planning for the defined area based on the expressed interest of the First Nations working with NBI. This is consistent with commitments to move forward and address NBI’s goal of new economic development opportunities for First Nations.

Considerable interest, and caution, was expressed regarding the need to integrate local planning with broader goals and objectives, and to carefully consider the sequencing of planning decisions. For some subjects, landscape scale direction will be essential to evaluate local options, or to measure the contributions of local recommendations to the achievement of Provincial goals and objectives. MNR recognizes the importance of these concerns and will work together with First Nations and interested parties to address them.

There was interest in the clarification of MNR’s responsibilities and sharing of authority in decision-making with Community-based Land Use Planning. Land use planning has been identified with NBI as an essential step to achieve sustainable development goals. A working relationship between MNR and each First Nation(s) involved in NBI has been described to understand and share this planning responsibility. MNR and the First Nations leading planning will work towards dual endorsement of the resulting land use strategies.

The commitment to a consultative process was important to reviewers, both to provide adequate consultation within the First Nation communities and to provide adequate consultation opportunities to others. Community-based Land Use Planning commits to use of a consultative process for development of each individual strategy. Terms of reference describing consultation opportunities will be prepared for each strategy. MNR will also provide consultation opportunities at set points through this Registry and other means.

The importance of ensuring that adequate information and science is applied to decision-making was highlighted. To this end, both government and non-government organizations can support community efforts by ensuring that all available information is brought forward, by supporting efforts to gain better information, and by providing expert advice.

Comments of broader government policy or jurisdiction that were considered beyond the scope of Community-based Land Use Planning were referred to alternate discussion forums.
The adequacy of funding to support Community-based Land Use Planning was questioned. Funding will be required for information gathering and analysis, consultation, and administrative functions. The expectation is that First Nation communities will be seeking funding arrangements through a number of agencies; this sourcing of funds will appropriately reflect agency interests and responsibilities.

Below is the text of the proposal as it was first published.

**Short Description:**

The Northern Boreal Initiative (NBI) has a goal to provide several northern First Nation communities with opportunities to take a leading role in the development of new, commercial forestry opportunities, including working collaboratively with the ministry on planning for such opportunities. Proposed locations are north of the area of Ontario that is described in the Area of the Undertaking (AOU) for the Class Environmental Assessment for Timber Management on Crown Lands in Ontario, and the Ontario’s Living Legacy (OLL) planning area.

Land use planning is one of the first steps in making wise decisions about potential land uses and resource development. The resulting strategic land use direction will identify where activities can occur, will provide guidance for future land use and will provide input to the subsequent preparation of resource management plans, for example, forest management plans.

A Community-based Land Use Planning approach has been designed for NBI. This concept will provide the First Nation communities associated with NBI the opportunity to develop a strategic framework for land and resource use. The communities will engage members in consensus-based decision-making and will invite broader consultation to share and seek input from other interested parties. Planning will consider the community level needs as well as broader ecological considerations and provincial level direction.

Community-based Land Use Planning will consider forestry as one of many interests. Communities will address and find a balance among protection, conservation, traditional and livelihood uses, and sustainable development. NBI has recognized that the preparation of recommendations for parks and protected areas is a priority that will be addressed through the Community-based Land Use Planning approach.

The First Nation communities currently working with NBI are Pikangikum, Moose Cree, Constance Lake, Cat Lake, Slate Falls, and Eabametoong. Communities are in various stages of preparing for planning, gathering background information and describing their land use planning process. As
they become ready, communities will define a planning area, planning subjects, anticipated timelines and opportunities for consultation. Community and provincial endorsement of recommendations will be sought to complete the preparation of strategies.

MNR’s role in Community-based Land Use Planning is that of a planning partner and facilitator, to bring forward the vision of sustainable development, to ensure ecological sustainability, and to provide for public participation in environmentally significant decision-making. MNR will follow its strategy of Integrated Resource Management (IRM), directing ministry efforts to achieve the optimum sustainable level of benefits from all of Ontario’s natural resources, while, at the same time, minimizing conflicts among resource management activities, users and uses. This is consistent with the MNR’s strategic direction contained in the document ‘Beyond 2000’.

The Community-based Land Use Planning approach is consistent with MNR’s intention to proceed in a manner without prejudice to the Aboriginal and treaty rights of First Nation communities and individuals.

The geographic reference map for the NBI can be viewed by following the weblink at the bottom of this notice.

**Purpose of the Proposal:**

To provide a planning approach for developing land use strategies with the Northern Boreal Initiative, called Community-based Land Use Planning.

**Other Relevant Information:**

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) established the Northern Boreal Initiative (EBR Registry # PB00E1008, http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/014243ep.htm) to address the expressed interest of several northern First Nation communities, and the province, in new, sustainable commercial forestry opportunities. Among other approvals, any new commercial forestry opportunities will require licensing under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA).

Ontario’s commitment to NBI is founded on policy direction and commitments from the 1999 Ontario Forest Accord, Ontario’s Living Legacy and the 1996 Aboriginal Policy Framework with the associated Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy. The Ontario Forest Accord, in Commitment number 24, establishes support for initiatives directed towards the orderly development of areas north of the AOU on a best efforts basis and as quickly as possible, subject to conditions.

Preparation of a land use strategy does not relieve MNR of its obligations under
the Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act). MNR’s existing approvals for activities will continue to apply and new EA Act coverage will need to be obtained for commercial forest management activities, north of the AOU. It is anticipated that the EA Act coverage to be sought will be modelled after the coverage of the Timber Class EA terms and conditions.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is collecting comments under the authority of the Public Lands Act to assist in making decisions and determining further public consultation needs. Comments and opinions will be kept on file and may be included in study documentation that is made available for public review. The MNR may also use this information as public input on other resource management surveys and projects.

Background information related to this proposal are listed as weblinks in blue at the bottom of the notice for the following:

- Community-based Land Use Planning Document (English and French)
- Ministry of Natural Resources, Beyond 2000
- Ontario Living Legacy Land Use Strategy site
- Ontario Forest Accord site
- Ontario’s Aboriginal Policy Framework and Building Aboriginal Economies Strategy


**Other Public Consultation:**

Discussion of the Community-based Land Use Planning approach has occurred on several occasions with First Nation communities, members of the Ontario Forest Accord Board, interest groups and other agencies responsible for lands and natural resources.

**Comments were directed to the following Contact Person:**

Manager, Northern Boreal Initiative  
MNR Field Services Division  
Ontario Government Bldg., 435 James St. Suite 221A  
Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7E 6S8  
PHONE: (807) 475-1251  FAX: (807) 473-3023

Additional material in support of this notice is available by clicking the following hyperlink(s):
The EBR stipulates that the Ministry must take every reasonable step to ensure that all comments relevant to the proposal received as part of the public participation process are considered in this decision (S. 35 ebr). Only comments relevant to this proposal were considered in this decision.