

Emerging Partnerships between Municipalities & First Nations

Community-Based Forest Management in Northern Ontario

Lynn Palmer, PhD Student
Dr. Peggy Smith, Associate Professor

Faculty of Natural Resources Management
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario

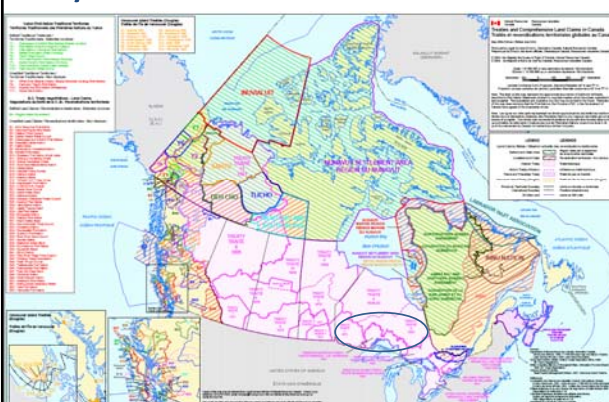
People in Places Coastal CURA Conference
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Outline

- History of northern Ontario communities & forestry
- Current forestry crisis
- Ontario forest tenure reform
- Emerging community-based forest management initiatives
- The voices of community forest advocates on building a new future through improved relationships, community forest enterprises, new forest products
- The future of First Nation/municipal relationships in northern Ontario


Study area in relation to historic treaties in Ontario




Communities

Municipalities

- Under provincial laws
- Historically benefitted from forestry



KVP Paper Mill, Espanola, 1946 (Ontario Archives)




First Nations

- On federally-owned "Reserves" under Indian Act
- Historic exclusion & lack of significant benefit from forestry
- Aboriginal economic development inhibited (culture & values; control over traditional territories)
- Dependency & alienation

Historic Forestry System

- Public (Crown) forests
- First Nations' "Traditional Territories"
- Centralized decision-making by provincial governments
- Timber licensed to large forest companies
- Aboriginal & treaty rights disregarded in forest licensing & management
- Local communities alienated from decision-making
- Export of "commodities" (bulk, unfinished "staples")
- "Boom and bust" cycles



Forestry Crisis

Extensive mill closures

First Nations:

- Some loss of jobs
- Loss of contracts
- Lack of well-being



Abitibi paper mill in Kenora permanently closed in 2005 affecting 390 workers (Discover Dryden)

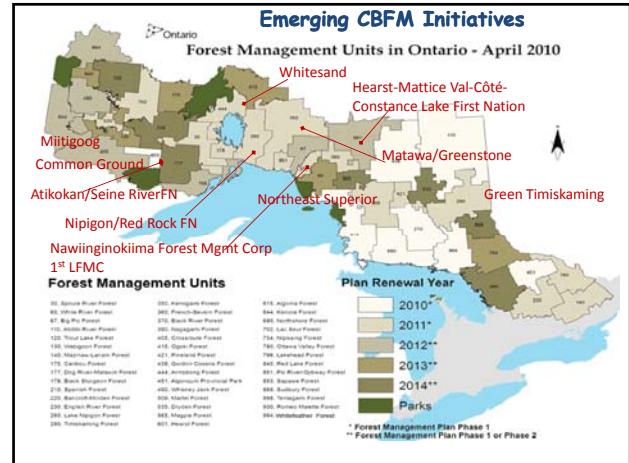


Municipalities:

- Widespread job losses
- Outmigration
- Loss of tax base
- Loss of social capital
- Lack of well-being

Ontario Forest Tenure Reform

- A direct result of forest sector crisis—"the silver lining"?
- Public consultations 2009-2011 by Ontario Ministry of Northern Dev, Mines & Forestry (MNDFM)
- Widespread call for local decision-making
- CBFM proposals based on community partnerships
- Forest Tenure Modernization Act passed May 17, 2011
- New forest management models
 - Local Forest Management Corporations (2 pilots)
 - Enhanced Shareholder Sustainable Forest Licences
- Evaluation over next 5 years



SSHRC CBFM Workshop



- Lakehead University & the Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership (NOSCP)
- Speakers
 - Community forest researchers and practitioners
 - Project Director: MNDFM tenure & pricing review
- Community dialogue: reps from proposed & emerging CBFM initiatives
- Live-streamed across northern Ontario via KNET



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines de Canada



Constance Lake First Nation-Hearst-Mattice Val-Côte

There's a lot of uncertainty about what will happen with the government, & whether or not the CBFM initiative that the communities have developed will actually move forward. But we won't have lost anything because the relationships that we've built & that energy, & that kind of synergy that's going on, is something that is worth far more than any structure. I think it's working, to stop concentrating on that objective of setting a business agenda & just get to know each other & actually act like neighbours.



Desneiges Larose, Sustainable Development Coordinator, Hearst Ec Dev Corp

Aroland First Nation



Mark Bell, EDO, Aroland First Nation

As Economic Development Officer, I got to go in & talk to some businesses that Greenstone brought in. So I was able to benefit from that & make some relationships there & bring some potential projects to our community. Just through initiatives that Greenstone had, it ended up sparking 2 or 3 ideas that Aroland can do on our own.

Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre



Carly Armstrong, MERC

It's really important just to have people relate to each other one-on-one; making time with the municipalities & First Nations & having sharing circles about something, like how has climate change touched you. Something personal.

**Common Ground—"we are all treaty people"
Grand Council Treaty No. 3 & City of Kenora**

We've got to empower ourselves. We've got to take some control out there in the bush & make some decisions for ourselves. We're going ahead without a dispute resolution mechanism. We understand that neither the municipality nor the



First Nations are going away. We are all in this together & we always will be. We will find ways to deal with it. Something that has been really powerful is the ceremonies—the spring & fall feasts. The ability for everyone to gather to share food, but it's more than sharing food; it's also sharing an understanding of the relationship; & the relationship in those ceremonies is that it's the earth that takes care of us, not the other way around.

Nipigon/Red Rock First Nation

We lost two mills, the mill in Red Rock & the one in Nipigon. There had been wood that had been sitting dormant & there's been no discussion with the local communities about what's going to happen with that wood or where the tenure process is going to take it.



Gordon McKenzie, Councillor, Nipigon

Nipigon/Red Rock First Nation



James Foulds, Councillor, Nipigon

With the new council in Nipigon we're going to take a lead role in development & attract some new business opportunities on high end value-added products. We're very excited because we're going to start doing our own initiatives based on community-based forestry.

We recognized the First Nation partner Red Rock Indian Band had some major initiatives in the Lake Nipigon Forest; their opportunity was around a sawmill with cogeneration. As a community we supported them & that initiative. . . . We are excited to support our neighbours Red Rock & the First Nation. We are all closely knitted.

Matawa Tribal Council Initiative

We're focused on the Enhanced Shareholder model. We're just at the very beginning stages. We're going to be starting a process with the First Nations in the Kenogami Forest & with Greenstone & Terrace Bay; not only with the First Nations within the license but also those outside the license. It will be a real balancing act in terms of bringing people to the table, some who have not been brought to the table before. So that's going to be a challenge, how to shape that structure.



Paul Capon, Matawa Tribal Council

Laid off workers formed a company with a First Nation, Making Ground Forest Products, & purchased the former mill. They are now starting various value-added products.



Seine River First Nation

It's about working as a team to reach a common goal. Within our area we're looking at economic development, & Atikokan is looking at the same thing. We're looking at protecting our traditional territory & yet pursuing economic development as a team when you approach the government to get what you want.



Tyrone Tenniscoe



John Kabatay

Part of the reason that we're excited is because of the partnerships that we're having through Rainy Lake Tribal Development Corp. We hope to be the delivery agent for the wood supply that is going into the pellet-making initiative that Atikokan Renewable Fuels is undertaking. And hopefully if the Atikokan station goes into wood burning.

Town of Atikokan



Dennis Brown, Mayor

The communities of Seine River & Atikokan have been working on the challenge of wood supply. Because that benefits all of us. It benefits the First Nations people & it benefits the people in the Atikokan area. We've actually had meetings on that. And hopefully we're going to keep meeting & develop a solution.

We don't have a local forest management group out here in our area. But we sure see the need for it, & we'll work towards it, perhaps the enhanced [coop SFL] model. That wood was taken away from the mill without anybody knowing about it. We found out about it from the Receiver. I think the communities & local people should have some say.

Green Timiskaming Development Co-op

District heating is a very compatible industry that would work well with the forest harvesting that is going on now. It would allow northern Ontario to establish an industry which could probably employ about 50,000 people. We didn't get a very good response to our proposal at this time but hopefully in the future, they [MNDMF] will understand the value of this type of industry because it has huge paybacks to the communities.



Ambrose Raftis, Green Timiskaming

I think the thing that worked very well with the Community Conversations is when we asked where they would like to be in one year, 5 years.

Whitesand Community Sustainability Initiative

We are making some headway in terms of establishing local control at the community level by having the government recognize this proposal. But the challenge is that we have a long way to go to achieve our overall objective. Although we were successful in the wood supply competition, we also want to talk about land use management, conservation, tourism, etc. It was also our desire to have increased control of management & the resources in our traditional territory.



Clifford Tibishkogijig, EDO, Whitesand First Nation

We're starting to open the doors as to how we could include municipalities & go at it as a regional initiative.

Northeast Superior CBFM Initiative

NRCan Forest Communities Program: A partnership between 6 municipalities and 6 First Nations in the Northeast Superior area

Our blueberry initiative is the most exciting thing going on right now. It's a partnership between private industry, First Nations & the forest community municipalities. We're looking at establishing a blueberry farm. But there's no precedent for Crown land being used for blueberries other than wild picking.



Angela St. Michael, Forest Sector Project Specialist, NSFC



Non-timber forest products

Regarding policy for NTFPs, we are always told that the legislation (CFSA) has flexibility for it. But there's a difference between nurturing it & then having flexibility for it. We need someone who looks at policy development for NTFPs & other types of understory vegetation. We're not going to be developing them commercially if they're not an integral part of our forest management planning or policy.

Desneiges Larose, Sustainable Development Coordinator, Hearst Economic Development Corp.



Value Added

There should be more being done to ensure the best use. Lately with all the closures ...they just seem to use whatever wood is close by. So we get saw logs going to pulp mills.

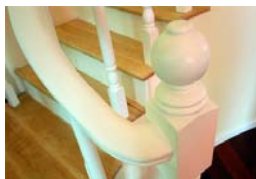
Dennis Brown, Mayor of Atikokan



Canada Wood Group

There needs to be some kind of discussion that looks at maximizing the use of our resources for value, not just producing something, what's cheapest or easiest to do right now. And there's different grades when you look at a tree. So you could have different companies using different parts of a tree for different products. We're so inefficient.

Desneiges Larose, Sustainable Development Coordinator, Hearst Economic Development Corp



Canada Wood Group

Moving Forward

From the groundswell, just keep pushing through the barriers. Every time you or I keep pushing to get through the barrier it sets a precedent, it changes things & that helps somebody else. Just keep going, don't wait for government, even though there are barriers in place. It's great to go to policymakers, but I think a lot of the grassroots groups in this room are not waiting.

Angela St. Michael, NSFC

Moving Forward

There's a real opportunity for the two parties [First Nations, municipalities] to come together—including the educational faculties within this region—to participate in developing an overall partnership to meet our objectives on how we view community-based initiatives.

Clifford Tibishkogijig, EDO



Moving Forward

We're in a really special place in time because now we have the legislation that can do things it couldn't before. It's very flexible now. They can take licenses away. So now they need the pressure so they can start using this legislation which they didn't have before. So there's some real potential there & what our role would be is to push them along in that direction. I think there can be progress, not just in 5 years but during the 5 years.

With a group this broad across the north, we can use the media to do some pretty powerful things.



Ambrose Raftis, Green Timiskaming

Moving Forward

If there's going to be any new vision, it's going to come from here, from the municipalities & the First Nation leaders who've been putting a lot of good stuff on the table. This has been a terrific few years for progress.



David Robinson, Economist, Laurentian U

The degree of collaboration between communities & First Nations across northern Ontario has just gone way up. There are real conversations going on right across the north. And that's an astonishing piece of progress. The fact that there's even a discussion on community forestry is actually a big accomplishment.



We have come a long way.

We can be a powerful force for change in northern Ontario!

<http://noscp.greenstone.ca>