

WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

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sur la
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First Nations Workshop

October 7–8, 1998
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta



For copies of this or other SFM publications contact:

Sustainable Forest Management Network
G208 Biological Sciences Building
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E9
Ph: (780) 492 6659
Fax: (780) 492 8160
<http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/sfm>

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**Proceedings of the
Sustainable Forest Management Network
First Nations Research Workshop**

**October 7–8, 1998
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Compiled by

Marc Stevenson
First Nations Research Project Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

On October 7th and 8th, 1998, the SFM Network held a two day workshop addressing the roles of First Nations communities and their knowledge in sustainable forest management generally, and in the research of the SFM Network specifically. Approximately 50 individuals participated, including SFM Network staff and researchers, First Nations partners (Little Red River and Tallcree First Nations), industry partners (High Level Forest Products), and government partners (Alberta and Quebec). Also in attendance were Aboriginal representatives from the *National Aboriginal Forestry Association*, Eel Ground First Nation (New Brunswick), Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries, Cree First Nation of Waswanipi (Quebec), Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (Ontario), Whitefish Lake First Nation (Alberta), Dene Tha' (Alberta), Driftpile First Nation (Alberta), Alexis First Nation (Alberta), West Moberley First Nation (B.C.), Halfway First Nation (B.C.), and Gwich'in First Nation (Northwest Territories). Individuals from companies (Encompass Strategic Resources) and organizations (*Taiga Institute for Land, Culture and Economy*) committed to sustainable forest management also participated.

The principal goals of the workshop were to bring together SFM Network researchers, partners, and potential partners in an informal gathering in order to:

1. Assess what SFM Network researchers have done to date with respect to incorporating First Nations issues, people and/or their knowledge into research projects;
2. Identify the issues and challenges that confront SFM researchers efforts to maximize the potential contributions of Aboriginal people and their knowledge to sustainable forest management; and
3. Provide direction to the SFM Network with respect to First Nations issues and projects by identifying research priorities and developing potential cooperative research opportunities and partnerships.

The ultimate objective of the workshop was to develop an integrated research strategy for the SFM Network to address First Nations issues and research opportunities in ways that would maximize the contributions of First Nations people and their knowledge to sustainable forest management. However, in retrospect, this objective may have been overly ambitious given the time frame and nature of discussions that took place during the workshop. Nevertheless, most attendees agreed that the workshop was a resounding success, and looked forward to the next

one, which many felt should be on a First Nations reserve. Although the agenda was not followed precisely (after all, the workshop was intended to be an informal one) and discussions did not result in the development of an integrated research strategy, everyone who wanted to address the gathering had the opportunity to do so. Not only did the workshop serve as a vehicle for participants to share and exchange information, but it created an informal network and a dialogue that will ultimately provide direction to the Network with respect to the kinds of research that should be undertaken with First Nations in the boreal forest. While the occasional participant offered specific suggestions for research during the workshop that the Network might consider undertaking, participants were asked to think about what they had heard and learned at the workshop over the next two or three weeks, and to come up with some specific suggestions for research. This report on the workshop's proceedings is intended not only to synthesize what took place during the workshop, but also to assist those who participated to help the Network develop an integrated research strategy that will maximize the contributions of First Nations communities and knowledge to sustainable forest management.

Described below are the major presentations and discussions that took place during the workshop, as reconstructed from the notes of Marc Stevenson. While Marc's notes are an inadequate representation of the proceedings, insofar as they are uneven and reflect the biases of this individual, they do at least give some indication of what went on during the workshop. Thus, they may be of some use to participants and others wishing to provide direction to the Network.

Workshop Package

All participants received a workshop package consisting of:

- Workshop agenda;
- 1997/98 Annual Report of the SFM Network;
- The Network's vision statement and approach to legacy research; and
- An overview and analysis of First Nations research projects undertaken by the Network.

The agenda provided a structure for the workshop that was followed loosely; it was more important to hear from all who wanted to be heard rather than rigidly follow a pre-set format. The Annual Report provided important background for participants unfamiliar with the Network, reviewing the past three years and laying plans for the next four years. The vision statement and legacy approach to research outlined the objectives of the Network, while presenting a list of

questions under three research legacies that the Network is trying to address. First Nations peoples and their knowledge will undoubtedly have major contributions to make to at least two of these legacies, *Understanding Disturbance* and *Strategies for Sustainable Forest Management*. The overview of First Nations research projects summarizes the research undertaken to date by the Network on First Nations issues and/or with First Nations. Projects are analyzed with respect to their contributions to the Network's newly developed research legacies and objectives. A number of thematic gaps, where First Nations contributions have been overlooked, and several systemic challenges to realizing the potential contributions of First Nations peoples and their knowledge to sustainable forest management are identified, thus providing some direction for future projects with First Nations.

THE WORKSHOP

Welcome and Introduction (Early Morning, October 7th)

After opening prayers and a pipe ceremony by Cree elder **Sam Shirt** of Edmonton and Saddle Lake First Nation, **Marc Stevenson** (First Nations Research Program Coordinator, SFM Network) welcomed participants to the workshop, describing its goals and objectives. Marc noted that while understanding disturbance and the ecological basis of sustainability remain important research foci for the Network, its researchers and partners are beginning to realize that sustainability encompasses important social, economic and cultural dimensions. As 80% of Canada's First Nations communities live in the forest, these aspects of sustainability are in fact predominantly First Nations issues. Thus, addressing First Nations sustainability issues will form a significant component of the research to be undertaken by the Network in the future.

Vic Adamowicz (Program Leader, SFM Network) presented an overview of the Network and its views on sustainability, but first he spoke about the funding sources of the Network, (60% NSERC/SSHRC, with the remainder from industry, government, and First Nations), and the evolution of the Network's newly developed research legacy approach from a less integrated thematic approach. Vic also outlined the goals of the Network over the next several years:

- Building a national network;
- Building linkages with other research programs;
- Enhancing communications/knowledge transfer;
- Enhancing networking and partnerships, especially with First Nations; and

- Building international linkages.

After describing the Network's research legacies and the potential contributions of First Nations peoples to some of them, Vic addressed the issues of ecological and social/economic sustainability (which encompasses community well-being, linkages between humans and the environment, and inter- and intra-generational equity) from a economic perspective. "Capital" approaches to sustainability, which include natural capital, constructed capital, human capital, social capital, and cultural capital, attempt to address questions such as: Are trade-offs between various forms of capital acceptable or can we enhance all forms of capital through time without eroding some at the expense of others? To address sustainability we need to assess the various market and non-market benefits that accrue from use of the forest and how these benefits are shared. Vic also noted that we need to develop management strategies for maintaining various forms of capital as well as institutions for the wise use of forest resources. Without such initiatives, which will be impossible to achieve without significant First Nations involvement, it will be difficult to avoid costly, irreversible losses. Vic concluded with a table listing current SFM Network industry, government, and First Nations partners and collaborators, noting that it has to date only one First Nations partner – the Little Red River Cree and Tallcree First Nations (LRR/TC).

Jim Webb (Senior Policy Advisor, Little Red River Cree First Nation) spoke about the constitutional right of First Nations to live, use, and manage the forest. He reminded workshop participants that First Nations agreed to share the land and live in peace and harmony with the "white man". While this understanding formed the basis for undertaking treaty with the Crown, the government viewed treaties as a means to extinguish Aboriginal title. It is the government's interpretation of treaty, together with the *Natural Resources Transfer Agreement* (which transferred management responsibilities of natural resources to the provinces), that has resulted in the existing exploitive relationship between industry and First Nations in the forest. Both Jim and Susanne Hilton of the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest, observed that this is exacerbated by current provincial/federal government relations and "buck-passing" when it came to First Nations and forestry issues.

However, the very nature of this relationship has been challenged by Supreme Court decisions in *Delgamuukw* and other cases, which has set parameters for the definition of aboriginal title, its infringement, and compensation should title be infringed. Jim spoke about the

need to restructure the institutional frameworks and relationships among First Nations, industry, and government in order for First Nations to benefit socially and economically from the forest. Jim left us with the suggestion that the SFM Network might consider, in concert with other First Nations organizations (e.g., *National Aboriginal Forestry Association* [NAFA] and *Assembly of First Nations* [AFN]), approaching the federal government to fund a First Nations forest development and management program that would begin to honor commitments made in *Gathering Strength* (the federal government's response to Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP] Report) and the *National Forest Strategy Strategic Direction Number Seven*.

Caribou Mountains Research Partnership (Late Morning, October 7th)

Ellie Prepas (SFM Network Board of Directors) spoke briefly about the evolution of the Caribou Mountains Research Partnership. As there was no pre-set methodology or protocols for the Network to follow when interacting/interfaces with First Nations, researchers and administrators approached research with the LRR/TC First Nations in a manner that respected First Nations values, needs, and interests. Gradually, effective partnerships evolved at the field level, resulting in an exchange of knowledge and values. Ellie emphasized that research in the Caribou Mountains, while focused on the interface between land and water, was looking into the impacts of both human and natural disturbance (fire) on forest ecology. She noted that there were substantive differences between burned and unburned areas in the Caribou Mountains, and that Preston McEachern's (University of Alberta graduate student) work was investigating the impacts of recent fires on water quality (note: Preston will also be investigating the impacts of logging on water quality). Ellie concluded by recognizing that while traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) has not played a significant role to date in the research activities of the Network, such studies are being planned for this year and next.

Leslie Monteleone (University of Alberta graduate student) described her research on critical plants and vegetation mapping with LRR/TC and Dene Tha' elders. She stressed the point that, in recognition of the vast amount of TEK held by Alexis Meneen, he sits on her thesis committee. To her knowledge, this is the first time that the University of Alberta has recognized the knowledge of First Nations elders in such a fashion. Leslie stressed the role of reciprocity in her research, observing that while she has gained a lot of TEK from elders, they have trusted her to impart only that knowledge which was appropriate to share (elders have shared with Leslie

much knowledge about critical plants considered proprietary, if not sacred, by them). While Leslie's research sought to understand life histories and growth/regeneration rates of four critical plants, she did not ignore the elders information needs; they wanted to know why skunks and porcupines have declined dramatically over recent years (the practise of clear-cutting is assumed to be the cause). Leslie ended with several suggestions for future research. These include:

- Providing educational instruction (presumably for both researchers and First Nations research assistants);
- Conducting seminars within the community;
- Resolving the data ownership issue up front; and
- Use of videos/documentaries in both data presentation and instruction.

Leslie's presentation was one of the first to stimulate substantive discussion, most of which revolved around intellectual property rights concerning TEK. This issue was noted to be particularly sensitive in regards to plants that have medicinal value or pharmaceutical interest. As there is no system in place to protect TEK from appropriation by outside agents, this was recognized to be a major challenge for the Network.

George Haas and Philippe Crabbé (Institute for Research on Environment and Economy, University of Ottawa) described the work undertaken by Natasha Blanchet-Cohen (graduate student) on the environmental health concerns of the LRR/TC First Nations. It was observed that, while older men having a foot in the traditional lifestyle were coping with contemporary realities, young men were not and seemed to be particularly at risk to substance abuse, violence, suicide, etc. While employment in forestry would seem to offer some solution to this social problem, further research is proposed to examine the most viable opportunities to engage young men.

George also brought up the issue of linking TEK with scientific knowledge, noting that the Network needs more demonstration projects in this regard. While it was observed that the Network could be doing more research with First Nations on issues of common interest, a number of potential First Nation opportunities were noted, including research with:

- The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne;
- First Nations in New Brunswick (some of whom have recently signed a joint agreement on forest management with Canadian Forest Service, provincial government, Fraser Paper and the University of Ottawa); and
- First Nations residents of Senneterre, Quebec.

Naomi Krogman (Department of Rural Economy, University of Alberta) described her study of the *Caribou Mountains Cooperative Planning Board*. While Naomi noted that co-management should be considered as an interim measure only, she is addressing the question of How well do such multi-stakeholder social organizations function in changing times? The intention of her research was to examine the effectiveness of the Board with respect to meeting the needs and expectations of First Nations, industry, government, and other member stakeholders, even though the Board has yet to hold its first meeting. Thus, her study, assisted by Leslie Treseder (University of Alberta graduate student), has shifted focus to examining not just the structure, content, and process of the Board, but the development of the Memorandum of Understanding leading to its establishment. Naomi concluded her presentation by vowing to continue her study while consulting the RCAP Report to determine if the *Caribou Mountains Cooperative Planning Board* satisfies its recommendations on co-management.

Other SFM Network First Nations Research Projects (Early Afternoon, October 7th)

Luc Bouthillier (Sciences du bois et la forêt, Université Laval, and **Martin Pelletier** (Université Laval graduate student) described their research with First Nations in Québec. While virtually no research has been undertaken with First Nations in the context of Luc's larger socioeconomic assessment of forest dependent communities in Québec, Martin is currently working with the Waswanipi Aboriginal Model Forest. His research with the Waswanipi Cree has concentrated on the development and evolution of a joint management committee composed of Cree trappers and forest industry representatives. Martin's research is dealing with cognitive mapping approaches and culturally appropriate ways to incorporate TEK and values into forest management. He is also looking at conflict resolution processes employing a co-systemic approach which deals with complexity in cross-cultural situations. While the committee views its work as a collaborative learning process, it is trying to achieve the desired social, not just ecological, benefits of sustainable forest management. However, one of the greatest challenges

that the committee faces is overcoming the long-standing resentment that has traditionally characterized relations between First Nations and Francophone communities in Québec. Fortunately, although there are no specific government directives to consult with First Nations in the boreal forest of Québec, Jean-Francois Gravel (Québec government) noted that the Minister of Natural Resources has ordered his officials to begin consultations with First Nations. It is also encouraging that the nine forestry companies having an interest in lands used by the Waswanipi Cree are also looking for solutions, and are generally willing to work with them.

Mike Robinson (Executive Director, *Arctic Institute of North America* [AINA]) described some of the research undertaken and various publications produced by AINA. The institution has been involved in over 40 traditional land-use studies using GIS (geographical information system) technology. Although the challenges that confront this type of research were not discussed at length, AINA partnerships with the Dene Tha' and the Russian Sami of the Kola Peninsula were described. The main thrust of these initiatives appears to have been to study and facilitate alternative co-management structures and appropriate forest management tenure models that meet both community and industry needs, while incorporating TEK and values to inform sustainable forest management.

Monique Ross (Canadian Institute of Resources, University of Calgary) spoke about the legal aspects of co-management, which she views as a question of rights, specifically Aboriginal rights vs. industry rights. Monique's research has focused on the Alberta government's approach to FMAs (Forest Management Agreements), which gives little or no consideration to Aboriginal rights nor recognizes the Province's obligation to consult with First Nations when allocating the timber basket (note: according to Jim Webb, Monique's experience is quite different from that of the LRR/TC, who have obtained forest tenures from the province to approximately 50% of their traditional lands). Although AINA has conducted dozens of traditional land-use studies, Monique suggested that we need to explore ways and means to use and apply this knowledge so as to produce greater benefits to First Nations communities. She also touched on the issues of merging TEK with scientific knowledge and intellectual property rights. Monique concluded her presentation with the suggestion that the SFM Network needs to take an advocacy role when addressing First Nations and forest management issues, which adopts a "rights based" approach to co-management and the incorporation of TEK into management decisions.

David Natcher (Ph.D. candidate, University of Alberta) and **Brian Tallman** (Whitefish Lake First Nation) briefly described the co-management agreement that the Whitefish Lake First Nation has developed with government and industry. The documentation of traditional and contemporary land use and occupancy patterns, relying on local knowledge and TEK and using GIS technology, has been an important part of the implementation and development of this co-management agreement. In fact, the agreement has been amended to include fisheries and wildlife. In addition to the forest industry (Ziegler), oil companies have become a signatory to this agreement.

Brian emphasized the economic benefits of this agreement, noting that the First Nation derives \$5 million annually from timber allocations and contracts with industry. One goal from the agreement is to realize \$10 million annually. Another is to create 100 permanent jobs, or ca. 25% of the potential jobs available in forestry in the S-9 forest management area.

Nancy Gibson (Clinical Sciences, University of Alberta) talked about her interests and her graduate student's (Molly Turnbull) research into the various factors that influence the health of Aboriginal communities in northern Alberta. Educational background, employment history and opportunity, social conditions and other factors were observed to affect the health of Aboriginal communities in the boreal forest. While Nancy and Molly's research is aimed at developing models to address health issues in Aboriginal forest-dependent communities, they stressed that the principles of justice and equity guides their research and its outcomes.

Peter Clarkson (Executive Director, Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board) described the structure, composition, functions, and forest related research activities of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board. While the commercial value of timber in the Gwich'in settlement area is marginal at best, local inhabitants place considerably more value on non-timber values and uses of the forest. The Gwich'in are particularly dependent on the forest for firewood, hunting, trapping, and fishing. With the assistance of David Anderson (Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta) the Gwich'in have been undertaking TEK studies with respect to human use of the forest and forest resources. The Gwich'in have also just recently completed another TEK research project, producing a book describing the uses, habitats, and behaviours of specific forest animals that are of social, cultural, economic, and spiritual importance to the Gwich'in.

Discussion after Peter's presentation centred around the value of documenting, preserving, and disseminating the TEK of Gwich'in elders in such a manner. While local school children and the public at large would undoubtedly benefit from such a book, one of the best ways to preserve TEK is to give it meaning, value and efficacy in a contemporary setting. This, in turn, instructs us to focus on the sustainable use and development of non-renewable resources.

Presentations by Non-SFM Network Workshop Participants (Early Morning, Oct. 8th)

Harry Bombay, (Executive Director, *National Aboriginal Forestry Association* [NAFA]) spoke about the objectives, activities, initiatives, affiliations, and plans of NAFA, as well as First Nations forestry issues generally. NAFA represents the interests of over 300 First Nation communities, three-quarters of which occupy productive forest regions. Harry noted that significant changes in the social and economic landscapes of Canada's forest will continue to occur well into the future as a result of:

- Land claims and treaty land entitlements which will enlarge the land base controlled by Aboriginal peoples;
- The growth rate of Aboriginal communities (the highest in rural Canada) which forces Aboriginal leaders to focus on the forest sector as a source of employment and revenue generation; and
- Recent Supreme Court and lower court decisions that have provided guidance to help determine the legal interests of First Nations in the forest and its resources.

NAFA is involved in a number of research and advocacy activities as a member of a variety of government and non-government organizations, including:

- National Forest Strategy Coalition;
- Canadian Standards Association;
- Forest Stewardship Council;
- National Advisory Board on Forestry Research;
- Science & Technology Action Plan Group;
- FORCAST; and
- Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

NAFA is also involved internationally in forestry issues as a member of Canada's delegation in the drafting of an international convention on forestry.

The three main activities that drive NAFA's current agenda are:

1. Development (with the AFN) of "An Agenda for Action on First Nation Forestry", which evolved out of an AFN resolution calling upon the federal government to implement the RCAP recommendations on lands and resources, and to develop a mandate to work with provincial governments to support and supplement First Nation sustainable forest management initiatives;
2. Coordinating First Nations activities related to, and overseeing federal and provincial implementation of *Strategic Direction Number Seven of the National Forest Strategy*, which outlines six objectives and makes 18 commitments with respect to First Nations forestry issues; and
3. Providing and coordinating First Nations input into the development of regional standards for forest product certification by the Forest Stewardship Council in order to ensure that Aboriginal issues are considered in certification.

NAFA has also developed "An Aboriginal Forest Research Agenda", the purposes of which are to facilitate appropriate policy development, to increase access of Aboriginal groups to knowledge generated by the scientific community, to facilitate the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to sustainable forest management, and to ensure equitable sharing of economic benefits. Four of the five main areas of research that NAFA plans to concentrate on provide a good fit with the SFM Network's research and networking legacies. These include:

- Sustainable Forest Management (e.g., integration of traditional activities with timber harvesting, and development of methods to use TEK to enhance biodiversity and management practises, policy to address Aboriginal and treaty rights in forest use and management, criteria and indicators to ensure Aboriginal rights and forest values are addressed, etc.);
- Forest Tenure (e.g., development of appropriate tenure, access and management arrangements with provincial/territorial governments);

- Traditional Knowledge (e.g., development of models for traditional land-use studies, a *sui generis* system to protect TEK and intellectual property rights, and protocols for use of TEK); and
- Capacity-Building (e.g., development of Aboriginal-controlled forest management regimes, institutional development to facilitate Aboriginal-led research initiatives, sustainable forest management practises on reserve lands, and education and training curricula to address Aboriginal skill shortages in the forest sector).

Susanne Hilton (Waswanipi Cree Aboriginal Model Forest) described the challenges of implementing the Aboriginal Model Forest initiative “on the ground.” Although the Waswanipi Cree receives federal funding of \$500,000 and other funding of \$200,000 a year for this initiative, Susanne observed that it has increased the amount of stress within the community, which is already experiencing considerable socioeconomic change. Thus, the Waswanipi Cree are in the process of “greasing” or modifying the Aboriginal Model Forest proposal in order for it to fit with local realities. For example, they are attempting to simplify the number and functions of committees created under the program, while still encouraging meaningful community input and participation. Another challenge for the Waswanipi community is that it views the Aboriginal Model Forest as encompassing their entire land base, not just the 200,000 ha recognized by government. Thus, the Waswanipi Cree are attempting to expand the concept and proposal to cover all lands traditionally used by them. While the Waswanipi Cree are learning how to accommodate the product-driven, bureaucratic system that the Model Forest structure imposes on them, they are more interested in process than product, and are experiencing difficulty in coping with the Model Forest system. Susanne noted that the Aboriginal Model Forest must also be considered against the background of Treaty rights, and specifically the *James Bay Northern Québec Agreement*, to which the Waswanipi Cree are a signatory.

Susanne stated that the Model Forest Board is composed of 18 members including nine Waswanipi Cree members, as well as representatives from government, industry, non-government organizations (NGO), and University members. NAFA, an adjacent First Nations community, and the Grand Council of the Cree are also represented on the Board. Although two forest companies (Domtar and Donahue) are partners in the Model Forest, the Waswanipi Cree

are focusing more on the non-timber values rather than timber values. They are particularly concerned about adequately conveying their perception of, and their relationship to, the forest. Even so, the community remains concerned about developing capacity in the forestry sector. To balance these needs, which may not be mutually exclusive, Susanne stated that the Waswanipi Cree want to work with other First Nations, especially those that submitted proposals for Aboriginal Model Forest funding.

James Denny (Executive Director, Eel Ground Community Development Centre) who came in place of Steve Ginnish, described the involvement of the Eel Ground First Nation in forestry. Currently, the First Nation is undertaking a medicinal plant study. Access to knowledge produced by this study is strictly controlled by the First Nation. Funds for this and other research activities come from the Model Forest Initiative.

Eel Ground owns a sawmill which produces value-added products. Although this venture has been successful, it has to purchase timber from other suppliers because its land-base is too small to support even a small operation. New Brunswick has been the scene of recent confrontations between First Nations and the province over access to New Brunswick's forests. The province has offered First Nations an interim settlement of 5% of the province's annual cut. While four or five of New Brunswick's First Nations have signed this agreement, Eel Ground has not; it and other First Nations state that they require 15–25% of the annual cut to become self-sustaining. James noted that one of the biggest problems for First Nations forestry is that the province usually allocates poor wood lots to First Nations, while reserving the best wood lots for industry.

Richard David (Mohawk Council of Akwesane) described the First Nation of Akwesasne's intimate connection to the land and dependence on the forest. The Mohawk have always practised sustainable use. However, this is becoming more and more a challenge as the population grows and the land-base shrinks. The approach taken by the Mohawk with respect to natural resources is based on the principles of respect, equity, and empowerment – a model that the LRR/TC have borrowed in developing their agenda with respect to the forest.

While there are no commercial timber operations on reserve lands, the Mohawk are working with Domtar and the Provincial government on areas of common interest. The Mohawk are also actively involved in a reforestation program that will dramatically increase the number of black ash trees on their lands. Black ash is the principle wood used in the production of

traditional baskets for domestic use and commercial sale. Currently, the Mohawk basket-making industry brings in \$2–4 million annually, despite the fact that there is severe shortage of black ash trees on reserve (n=6) and much of this wood has to be purchased elsewhere. As market demand for woven ash baskets may be as high as \$10–15 million annually, the Mohawk have initiated a black ash tree planting and enhancement program which will not pay dividends for some 50 years. Nonetheless, the Mohawk remain committed to this program and the basket-making industry, because not only do fewer ash trees equal fewer economic benefits, but less ash means less transfer of knowledge about basket-making and traditional values about appropriate uses of the land and its resources to younger generations.

Tom Hoffman (Woodlands Manager, High Level Forest Products [HLFP]) described HLFP's involvement with the Dene Tha' and LRR/TC First Nations. HLFP is engaged in water disturbance and caribou management research with the SFM Network, Canadian Forest Service, and Arctic Institute of North America, and was a partner in the LRR/TC First Nations' Aboriginal Model Forest proposal.

HLFP has expended \$2.4 million on economic development with the LRR/TC First Nations, and \$800,000 with the Dene Tha' First Nation. Most of this money is spent purchasing logs from the First Nations at the going rate. For example, last year, HLFP purchased 200,000 cubic meters of wood from the LRR/TC at \$12 per cubic metre. HLFP also employs First Nations peoples in timber production and silviculture, an activity that costs the company \$8-10 million annually.

Tom stressed a number of points that inform industry's perspectives on sustainable forest management and First Nations involvement in forestry, generally. Industry, for the most part, has a difficult time reconciling its needs with those of First Nations. In order for industry to work with First Nations, a stable environment must be created and nurtured by both parties. Each must be willing and prepared to share in both the benefits and risks of their association. While industry needs to be more sensitive to First Nations concerns and issues, First Nations must understand that, in order to compete at the global scale, Canadian companies face many challenges. A large number of international competitors do not practise sustainable forestry, or silviculture for that matter, making it very difficult for HLFP to survive on the global market. However, rather than lowering standards at home, the challenge is to raise international or global standards. While Canada's (and especially, NAFA's) involvement in the development of an international forestry

convention may help to achieve this goal, Tom felt that the SFM Network had an important role to play in continuing the dialogue on these issues.

Sandra Cardinal (Aboriginal Affairs, Alberta Pacific Forest Industries [AL-PAC]) spoke frankly about her experiences as an Aboriginal person working for a forestry company, and the awkward position this places her in when dealing with both the corporate culture and the Aboriginal community. While she tries to represent AL-PAC's interests to Aboriginal communities, she must articulate Aboriginal concerns and issues to industry. For guidance in this cross-cultural role, she looks to the advice of her grandmother.

AL-PAC is currently involved in two traditional land use studies with two First Nations. However, Sandra shared the concern that these studies are not being properly used or disseminated, and that we need to come up with a process to maximize the potential contributions of such studies for both industry and Aboriginal stakeholders.

Sandra described the work that the Métis of Kikenow have started with horse-logging operations. Not only has this created a viable economic enterprise for the community, but it has instilled a sense of pride and accomplishment among its members. Indeed, this experiment has been so successful that other Aboriginal communities (e.g., Buffalo Lake) may be following suit.

Randy Renauer (Forester, Dene Tha' First Nation) described the Dene Tha' First Nation's involvement in forestry, and with HLFP and *Forest Renewal British Columbia*, specifically. While the Dene Tha' benefit economically from its shared FMAs with HLFP in F-13 and F-14, there is no or little commercial value to timber in F-20 (its other forest management area). Thus, the Dene Tha' are undertaking experimental studies on taking seeds from the best timber stands (usually on higher south facing hills) and planting them in the more marginal areas (lower, but still well drained areas) to increase timber production. With *Forest Renewal British Columbia*, the Dene Tha' are experimenting with three different methods of cutting, one of which (the Macmillan-Blodel method, which leaves buffer strips of trees standing) may enhance biodiversity.

Jean-Francois Gravel (Directeur des Affaires Autochones, Ressources Naturelles, Québec government) described the Province of Québec's present position on First Nations involvement in forestry. The province encourages economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people off-reserve as well as the development of greater management responsibilities for Aboriginal peoples. Having said that, it was noted that First Nations in Québec and the

Assembly of First Nations have rejected Québec's policies regarding Aboriginal forestry. Even so, the province is working towards developing directives and policies that will hopefully meet the expectations of its forest-dependent Aboriginal communities.

Andrew Chapaskie (Director, *Taiga Institute for Land, Culture and Economy*) compared the European and First Nations perceptions of landscape within the context of sustainability. He deconstructed the concepts that Aboriginal people lived in a wilderness, were passive residents that eked out an existence on whatever nature provided, and did not significantly manipulate their environment. Andrew noted that for generations prior to European contact, native North Americans altered their ecosystems through the use of fire. Burning the forest to enhance the production of grasslands and parklands to maintain habitat for game was not only an important part of the annual routine for many First Nations, but it contributed significantly to biodiversity and abundance. However, the very institutions that Aboriginal people depended upon to maintain biodiversity and their dependence on the land have been suppressed by governments. It was Andrew's contention that the SFM Network should not so much focus on emulating natural disturbance regimes, but investigate how social and ecological systems can be linked to maximize abundance and biodiversity in the forest.

Bruce MacLock (SFM Network Manager) spoke about the various research nodes of the SFM Network and how First Nations might get involved. Bruce noted that the SFM Network is a \$5 million/year directed research program. University-based researchers comprise the bulk of the Network's principal investigators. However, their research proposals must fit with the mission statement and research legacies of the Network. Currently, the Network has developed successful research nodes in Alberta and Québec, and is looking at expanding into Ontario and Manitoba. Bruce described in some detail the development of the Québec node. With two Québec forest industry representatives on the Board, combined with a handful of Québec researchers doing SFM Network type research, an ideal opportunity for node expansion developed. Regardless of their stage of development, all nodes have in common a number of characteristics:

- Partner involvement in funding and research;
- Maximum conformity to Network mission, themes and legacies;
- Maximum integration of research design into research activities in node; and
- Funds raised in a given province stay only research in that node.

Bruce spent considerable effort describing to workshop participants how First Nations might become involved with the Network, often referring to the LRR/TC situation. A number of different types of members can join the Network. These include:

- Industry
- Government
- First Nations
- Universities
- General.

While Industry has an additional three subcategories (Small, Medium, and Large), each category has three different kinds of association, each with its own level of funding commitment: Member, Supporter, and Mentor. For example, forestry company (large), provincial government, and First Nation *Mentor* associations (the highest degree of involvement) require contributions of \$200,000, \$1,000,000, and \$40,000, respectively.

Subsequent to Bruce's presentation, discussion focused on the processes by which First Nations might get involved with research that is of direct benefit to them, as well as the Network.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Following individual presentations, there was little time left for discussion. Moreover, many participants were approaching "information overload." Nevertheless, there was some opportunity to discuss 1) the pros and cons of partnering with the SFM Network, and 2) the kinds of research issues and projects that it should consider addressing over the next several years. It was agreed that there are a number of concrete advantages for First Nations to partner with the SFM Network. For example, for last year's \$40,000 contribution, over \$100,000 worth of research was undertaken on projects and issues of direct concern and interest to the LRR/TC. However, it was also recognized that, maximizing the roles and contributions of First Nations people to sustainable forest management remains a fundamental challenge and an unrealized opportunity for the Network.

This is especially the case for incorporating TEK into the development of sustainable forest management practises. While it is important to acknowledge that both scientific knowledge and TEK have significant contributions to make to this process, it is crucial to recognize that we need to create a "level playing field" whereby the contributions of each

knowledge base can be realized. There is no respect, reciprocity, or empowerment for First Nations when their knowledge plays “hand-maiden” to science. This instructs us to look at the institutional structures and mechanisms (e.g., traditional management systems) that promote and give efficacy to TEK.

This discussion touched upon the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal & Treaty rights and access to the forest in order to create certainty for all stakeholders — an area that several workshop participants thought should be a major component of future SFM Network research. It was especially felt that the SFM Network could lead the way in researching and developing appropriate institutions that account for Aboriginal & Treaty rights, while maximizing First Nations involvement in, and contributions to, sustainable forest management. As a starting point to shape, develop, and direct the SFM Network’s First Nations research program, it was also suggested that the Network could refer to NAFA’s “Aboriginal Forest Research Agenda”, perhaps even developing some collaborative research projects.

Although specific research proposals and an integrated research program have yet to be developed, this workshop’s success can be measured by the informal network it created among a group of individuals committed to realizing the roles and contributions to First Nations to sustainable forest management. As part of the ongoing dialogue established, participants were asked to think and talk over the next few weeks about what was discussed at the workshop, and to come up with specific suggestions for research to guide the SFM Network. Once solicited and received, these suggestions will be incorporated into the development of an integrated strategy that the SFM Network will use to initiate, structure, and focus its research with First Nations.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Adamowicz, Vic
Program Leader
University of Alberta
SFM Network, G208 Bio Sci,
U. of Alberta, Edmonton, AB T6G 2E9
Ph: 403-492-3625 Fax: 403-492-8160
vic.adamowicz@ualberta.ca

Bombay, Harry
Executive Director
National Aboriginal Forestry Assn.
875 Bank St., Ottawa, ON K1S 3W4
Ph: 613-233-5563 Fax: 613-233-4329
nafa@web.net

Cardinal, Sandra
Business Unit Leader, Aboriginal Affairs,
Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Inc.
Box 8000, Boyle, AB T0A 0M0
Ph: 1-800-661-4210 ext. 8075 Fax: 403-525-8099

Clarkson, Peter
Executive Director
Gwich' in Renewable Resource Board
P.O. Box 2240, Inuvik, NT X0E 0T0
Ph: 867-777-3429 Fax: 867-777-4260
grrbpc@inuvik.net

David, Richard
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
P.O. Box 579, Cornwall, ON K6H 5T3
Ph: 613-575-2377 Fax: 613-575-2073

Didrena, Gabriel
Forester
Dene Tha First Nations
Box 120, Chatch, AB T0N 0S0
Ph: 403-321-3774 Fax: 403-321-3086

Belhumeur, John
Co-editor
Native Journal
Ph: 403-448-9816
nativejournal@home.com

Bouthillier, Luc
Laval University
Université Laval, Sciences du bois et de la forêt,
Sainte-Foy, QC G1K 7P4
Ph: 418-656-7813 Fax: 418-656-3177
Luc.bouthillier@sbf.ulaval.ca

Chapeskie, Andrew
Director of Research & Program Dev.
Taiga Inst. for Land, Culture & Economy
300-120 Second Street S.,
Kenora, ON P9N 1E9
Ph: 807-468-9607 Fax: 807-468-4893
taiga-institute@voyageur.ca

Crabbé, Phillippe
Inst. for Research on Environ. and Economy
University of Ottawa
115 Seraphin Marlon Street,
P.O. Box 450, Station A,
Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5
Ph: 613-562-5874 Fax: 613-562-5873
crabbe@acadvm1.uottawa.ca

Denny, James
Executive Director
Eel Ground Community Devel. Centre Inc.
40 MicMac Road,
Eel Ground, NB E1V 4B1
Ph: 506-627-4604 Fax: 506-627-4605

Dosman, Donna
Student
University of Alberta
Rural Economy, 515 GSB,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-0272 Fax: 403-492-0268

Gibson, Nancy
Assistant Professor
University of Alberta
13-125 Clinical Services, Edmonton
Ph: 403-492-3883
nancy.gibson@ualberta.ca

Gravel, Jean-François
Directeur des affaires autochtones
Ministère des ressources naturelles
Direction des affaires autochtones,
5700, 4e avenue ouest, bureau A-313,
Charlesbourg, QC G1H 6R1
Ph: 418-627-6254 Fax: 418-643-3954
jean-francois.gravel@mrn.gouv.qc.ca

Hebert, Daryll
Consultant
Encompass Strategic Resources
R.R.#2, 599 Highway 21 South,
Creston, BC V0B 1G2
Ph: 250-428-3092 Fax: 250-428-7073

Hoffman, Tom
Woodlands Manager
High Level Forest Products Ltd.
Box 749, High Level, AB T0H 1Z0
Ph: 403-926-2989 Fax: 403-926-4919
forest@telusplanet.net

Kotak, Brian
Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Inc.
Box 8000, Boyle, AB T0A 0M0
Ph: 403-525-8431 Fax: 403-525-8099

MacLock, Bruce
Network Manager
SFM Network, G208 Bio Sci,
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2E9
Ph: 403-492-8161 Fax: 403-492-8160
bmaclock@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Giroux, J.R.
Technician - Ec. Dev. & Empl. Services
Driftpile First Nation - Treaty 8
Box 30, Driftpile, AB T0G 0V0
Ph: 403-355-0006 Fax: 403-355-0007

Haas, George
Inst. for Research on Environ. and Economy
University of Ottawa
115 Seraphin Marlon Street,
P.O. Box 450, Station A,
Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5
Ph: 613-562-5874 Fax: 613-562-5873

Hilton, Susanne
Waswanipi Cree Model Forest
Waswanipi, QC J0Y 3C0
Ph: 819- Fax: 819-753-2904

Johnson, Leslie Main
Post-Doctoral Fellow
University of Alberta, Anthropology,
13-15 Tory H M, Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-3879 Fax: 403-492-5273

Krogman, Naomi
Assistant Professor
University of Alberta
515 GSB, Rural Economy,
Edmonton, T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-4178 Fax: 403-492-0278
naomi.krogman@ualberta.ca

McGregor, Cam
Policy Advisor, Government of Alberta
Alta. Environ. Protection
Land & Forest Services,
9th Fl., 9920-108 St.,
Edmonton, AB T5K 2M4
Ph: 403-422-4571 Fax: 403-427-0085
Cmcgrego@env.gov.ab.ca

Monteleone, Leslie
Graduate Student
University of Alberta
CW405 Bio Sci Bldg, U of A,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2E9
Ph: 403-492-0079 Fax: 403-492-0082
lmontele@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Nanooche, Celestan
Environmental Technician
Little Red River Cree First Nation
John D'Or Prairie
Ph: 403-759-3912 Fax: 403-759-3780

Neal, Vern
Environmental Director
Little Red River Cree First Nation
John D'Or Prairie
Ph: 403-759-3912 Fax: 403-759-3780

Pelletier, Martin
Ph.D. Student
Laval University
Université Laval, Sciences du bois et de la forêt,
Sainte-Foy, QC G1K 7P4
Ph: 418-656-7813 Fax: 418-656-3177

Quinn, Walter
Trapper Management Coordinator,
Aboriginal Affairs,
Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Inc.
Box 8000, Boyle, AB T0A 0M0
Ph: 1-800-661-4210 ext. 8075
Fax: 403-525-8099

Robinson, Michael
Executive Director
Arctic Institute of North America
University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive
NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4
Ph: 403-220-7516 Fax: 403-282-4609
mrobinso@ucalgary.ca

Mustus, Barry
Research Coordinator
Alexis First Nations
Box 7, Glenevis, AB T0# 0X0
Ph: 403-967-2225 Fax: 403-967-5484

Natcher, David
Ph.D. Student
Canadian Circumpolar Institute
8820-112 St., Room 301, University of Alberta,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2E1
Ph: 403-492-4512 Fax: 403-492-1153
dnatcher@ualberta.ca

Nelson, Shirley
Manager of Resource Development
Government of Alberta, Aboriginal Relations
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs,
1301 Commerce Place, 10155-102nd St.,
Edmonton, AB T5J 4G8
Ph: 403-422-4062 Fax: 403-427-4019
snelson@inter.gov.ab.ca

Prepas, Ellie
Professor
University of Alberta
Z806 Bio Sci, Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-3463 Fax: 403-492-8160
eprepas@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Renauer, Randy
Forester
Dene Tha First Nations
Box 120, Chatch, AB T0N 0S0
Ph: 403-321-3774 Fax: 403-321-3086

Ross, Monique
Research Associate
Canadian Institute of Resources,
Faculty of Law,
PF-B 3330, U of C, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4
Ph: 403-220-3973 Fax: 403-282-6182
monross@acs.ucalgary.ca

Salkie, Fiona
Research Manager
University of Alberta
SFM Network, Rural Economy, 515 GSB,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-5714 Fax: 403-492-0268
fiona.salkie@ualberta.ca

Shirt, Samuel
Native Consultant
Saddle Lake First Nation
Ph: 403-474-0034

Tallman, Brian
Whitefish Lake First Nation
Atikameg, Alberta T0G 0C0
Fax: 403-767-3814

Treseder, Leslie
Ph.D. Student
Renewable Resources,
751 Gen. Serv. Bldg, University of Alberta,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-2111 Fax: 403-492-4323
treseder@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Veeman, Terry
SES Theme Co-Leader
University of Alberta
Rural Economy, 515 GSB,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-0818 Fax: 403-492-0268
terry.veeman@ualberta.ca

Wein, Ross W.
Professor
University of Alberta
Renewable Resources, 338B Earth Sciences,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-2038 Fax: 403-492-4323

Senecal, Roger
Halfway First Nation
P.O. Box 55, Rose Prairie, BC V0C 2H0
Ph: 250-827-3776 Fax: 250-827-3778

Stevenson, Marc
First Nations Research Project Coordinator
SFM Network,
G208 Bio Sci, University of Alberta, Edmonton,
AB T6G 2E9
Ph: 403-492-2476 Fax: 403-492-8160
Mgs1@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca

Tough, Frank
Native Student Services,
2-400 Sub, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
T6G 2H1
Ph: 403-492-5677 Fax: 403-492-1674

Turnbull, Molly
Ph.D. Student
Public Health Sciences, U. of Alberta, Clinical
Sciences Bldg,
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G3
Ph: 403-437-0897
molly.turnbull@ualberta.ca

Webb, Jim
Senior Policy Advisor
Little Red River Cree Nation
c/o Cook Duke Cox,
2700, 10155-102 St.,
Edmonton, AB T5J 4G8
Ph: BC 250-788-3663 AB 403-429-1751
Fax: BC 250-788-9792 AB 403-424-5866