

Indigenous Protected & Conserved Areas



Mi'gmaqwe'l Tplu'taqnn

Recognizing Indigenous Rights

OVERVIEW

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Our Vision
- ▶ Identified Sites
- ▶ Moving Forward with IPCAs
- ▶ Discussion & Questions

We Rise Together

Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation

INTRODUCTION

A photograph of three Indigenous women in traditional regalia, featuring large feathered headdresses and intricate beaded jewelry. They are smiling and looking towards the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a green flag.

- ▶ The Mi'gmaq have been the stewards of the lands and waters of Mi'gmag'i since time immemorial. As our Co-Chair Chief George Ginnish has stated: "Our relationship with the lands, waters and resources is the foundation of our identity."
- ▶ Mi'gmagi includes what is presently called New Brunswick, and, along with our Wabanaki brothers and sisters, the Wolastoqiyik and Peskotomuhkati Nations, we signed Treaties of Peace and Friendship with the Crown that did not cede our lands, but instead recognized and protected our relationship with our lands.



Before Pathway – MTI Goals & Visions

- ▶ Well before Pathway to Canada Target 1, Mi'gmawel'I Tplu'taqnn have had a long-standing vision of being more involved in both the management of existing parks and protected areas, and the creation of Indigenous-led protected areas.
- ▶ NB Chiefs had developed a policy on the creation of tribal parks as part of a network of parks and protected areas.
- ▶ The Pathway to Canada Target 1 represents an opportunity to not only expand that vision, but to fully recognize the development and implementation of IPCA's.

OUR VISION

- Our vision for IPCA's is protected areas akin to Wilderness Areas or Parks with a high degree of protection, some public access for limited purposes, and allowing for sustainable harvesting of plants and animals by the Mi'gmaq.
- Our work would implement the vision, and develop a full-fledged Mi'gmaq protected areas strategy, implemented across Mi'gmaq'i. Our proposal and workplan includes a three-pronged approach:
 - 1) Work with the other Indigenous Nations, Federal and Provincial, and conservation NGO's on a Protected Areas Network Plan; and ensuring meaningful engagement with Mi'gmaq community members, land users, elders and youth to advance IPCAs.
 - 2) Development of a Mi'gmaq Protected Areas Strategy for Mi'gmaq Territory in New Brunswick; and
 - 3) Development and implement conservation plans, for specific sites of interest to be protected as IPCA's.



- ▶ Netukulimk: “the use of natural bounty provided by the Creator for self-support and well-being of the individual and community. Netukulimk is achieving adequate standards of community nutrition and economic well-being without jeopardizing the integrity, diversity, or productivity of our environment.” In other words, it is a concept that encompasses sustainability, while meeting community needs.
- ▶ Etuaptmumk: (or Two-Eyed Seeing) combines western science with Indigenous knowledge, so that each informs the other in a mutually beneficial way. – Elder, Albert Marshall
- ▶ Weji Squaliatiek: (We Sprouted from this Land) The Mi’gmaq have a unique relationship with our Territory, based on millennia of use, occupation, and stewardship, and that the Mi’gmaq have never ceded title or control of our lands and waters to the Crown. We sprouted from this land, weji squaliatiek (Francis & Sable, 2012:17), and we continue to have an important relationship with the lands and waters of our territory, despite repeated attempts to displace us.

Incorporating Mi’gmaq Principles in IPCA

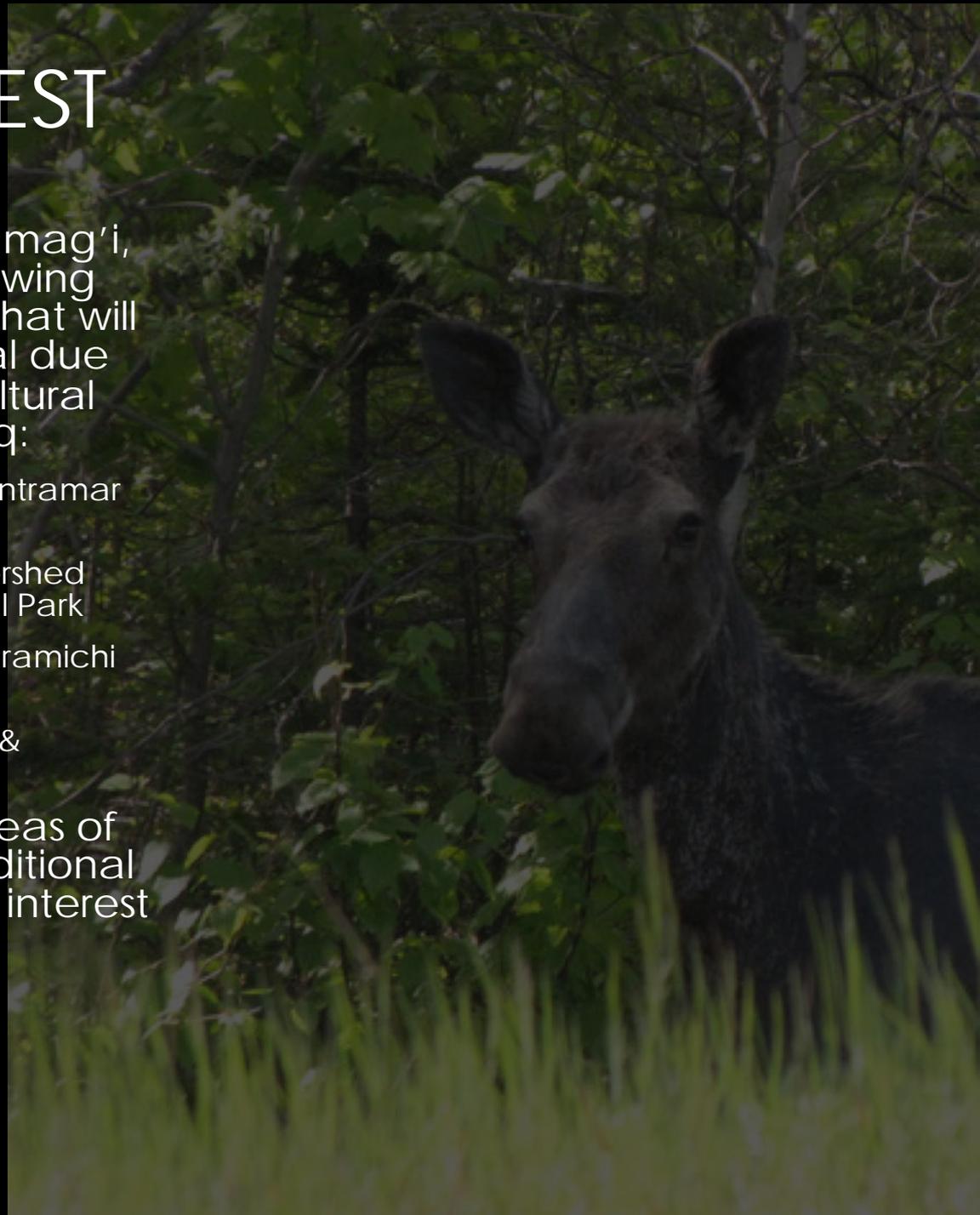
IPCA CRITERIA

Mi'gmawe'I Tplu'taqnn has an interest in seeing an improved network of protected areas throughout our territory, and has considered numerous potential sites, partnerships, and proposals. We have begun to develop and apply the following criteria in deciding on candidate areas for IPCA's:

- Conservation: contribution to biodiversity, conservation targets (quantitative and qualitative) and other goals, including climate change mitigation. This includes targets such as:
 - Size of area to be protected and contribution to Target 1 goals;
 - Contribution to protection of species at risk and species of cultural significance;
- Cultural and Historical Significance to the Mi'gmaq, and opportunities to strengthen our relationships with our Territory;
- Indigenous Knowledge: opportunities for development, sharing, and transfer of Mi'gmaq Indigenous Knowledge (MIK) and application of
 - Etuaptmumk; (two-eyed seeing)
- Connectivity: contribution to network of protected areas;
- Potential Partners: strength, resources, and commitment to working with First Nations.

AREAS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Although the intention is to implement throughout Mi'gmaq'i, we have identified the following particular areas of interest that will be the focus of this proposal due to their high natural and cultural significance to the Mi'gmaq:
 - ▶ The Chignecto Isthmus/Tantramar Marsh area
 - ▶ The Kouchibouguac watershed and area around National Park
 - ▶ The Miramichi river and Miramichi Bay
 - ▶ The Nepisiguit Watershed & Nepisiguit Bay
- ▶ Along with the identified areas of interest we are open to additional sites outside of the areas of interest that are important to the communities!



The Chignecto Isthmus/Tantramar Marsh area

- ▶ The Chignecto Isthmus has been identified as an area of interest for a number of reasons, including its significance as a wildlife migration corridor between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, its significance for birds travelling between the Bay of Fundy and the Northumberland Strait, and its cultural and historical significance to the Mi'gmaq. It's also called the Moose Love Corridor, as it's the route the Moose travel in and out of NS/NB.
- ▶ The Mi'gmaq of New Brunswick currently own the site of the former CBC Broadcast facility in Tantramar Marsh. Coles Island, on which the building stands, was historically an important harvesting site for the Mi'gmaq to access the surrounding wetland. Much of the remainder of the 124 hectare property is wetland, and includes frontage on the Tantramar River. The site itself provides habitat for many migratory bird and niche wetland species. The Mi'gmaq concept for this site includes a living museum and cultural centre, as well as ecotourism, medicine walks, and cultural interpretation. Wetland restoration would be undertaken.
- ▶ The goal would be to designate most or all of the former CBC lands as an IPCA, rehabilitate the wetlands, and seek to expand that area through land acquisition, or connect it to other protected areas in partnership with other landholders or organizations, including Canadian Wildlife Service, the Nature Conservancy, and Parks Canada.



The Kouchibouguac watershed and area around National Park

- ▶ Kouchibouguac is culturally significant to the Mi'gmaq, traditionally a gathering place. We wish to enhance by protecting more area around the National Park. The target site here is Crown land in an area known as Hells Gate Plains, Crown lands to the Northeast of the park. These lands are need protecting in order to connect established protected peatlands and wetlands in Kouchibouguac National Park, and Black River protected natural area. This will effectively create functional contiguous protected wetland and peatland habitat areas.
- ▶ Protecting the Wetland and Peatlands on crown land adjacent to Kouchibouguac National Park will improve the ecological benefits provided by functional wetlands. Some of these ecological benefits include:
 - ▶ Water retention
 - ▶ Flood mitigation
 - ▶ Niche habitat preservation



The Miramichi river and Miramichi Bay

- ▶ Miramichi River and its tributaries are culturally and historically significant to the Mi'gmaq. An area recognized for its bountiful resources that have sustained the local Mi'gmaq communities for centuries, is under threat. Salmon, wood turtle, bank swallows, plant life, including medicines and other significant species such as white Birch and black ash, that support the Mi'gmaq way of life are vulnerable.
- ▶ The intention would be to identify areas which are currently not protected, and develop linkages between current protected areas and non protected areas by acquisition of Crown and private lands in partnership with local Indigenous communities and the NTN.B..
- ▶ Creation of an IPCA in the Miramichi watershed area will protect these resources and allow Mi'gmaq to continue to live as they have for over 30 centuries.



The Nepisiguit Watershed & Nepisiguit Bay

- ▶ The source of the river lies north in the Christmas Mountains, between Mount Carleton and Big Bald Mountain. The terrain provides for lush old forest and several falls, including Pabineau Falls, located in Pabineau First Nation. Ancient Mi'gmaq portage routes are located along this system and the river and its lush forests along the rivers has sustained the local Mi'gmaq for centuries. fish, wildlife and plants have provided not only food but have continued to support the Mi'gmaq culture allowing for sustainable harvests and land-based learning to allow for the sustainability of the culture.
- ▶ Creation of an IPCA in this area will allow for connectivity options to current protected areas, including Mount Carleton, as well as protection for significant species such as national listed species at risk such as endangered (probable breeding location) harlequin duck; (threatened): Canada warbler, common nighthawk, olive-sided flycatcher, American eel; and federal species at risk (special concern): rusty blackbird; and provincially endangered Canada lynx and bald eagles.





Moving Forward with IPCAs in New Brunswick

1. Establishing meaningful engagement with community members/land users, other Nations, particularly our elders and youth to advance IPCAs.
2. Establish criteria for the identification of new candidate areas based on recognition and respect for Indigenous rights and responsibilities.
3. Identify mechanisms for protection based our Peace and Friendship Treaties and Indigenous values, knowledge and law.
4. Advance protection through interim measures and establishment agreements working toward the establishment of IPCAs.
5. Revisit existing protected area designations to create space for Indigenous rights and responsibilities. Initiate meaningful discussions in relation to legislative reforms & shared stewardship models for existing protected areas in partnership with Indigenous people.
6. Conduct Indigenous Knowledge Studies and assessments on areas of interest to inform work moving forward.
7. Work with partners to develop implement conservation plans, climate change action plans, monitoring plans

Indigenous Protected & Conserved Areas

Questions?

Wela'lioq!!!!



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