

Nominations for the positions of chairs of the three Regional Working Groups were received by the ESPI Chair. Volunteers for membership in the RWG and PCI were also received (Aboriginal Protocol Working Group membership was predetermined). Once the ESRT and FNC were canvassed for volunteers and those volunteers placed, remaining memberships were made available to members of the ESAC. It was not considered essential that each member of the ESRT or the FNC be on a Working Group.

The Secretariat supported the Chairs of the Working Groups in carrying out their responsibilities. The Secretariat also ensured that progress reports were shared among the various working groups. All Working Groups completed their tasks. The Secretariat assembled Working Group submissions by issue and, following numerous review meetings, forwarded a draft of the status report to the ESRT and FNC for consideration and approval.

6.2 Aboriginal and Community Development

Mandate

“The east side round table review the status of community planning in the planning area and provide advice on ways and means to meet the needs for community plans.”

“The east side round table provide advice on the relationship that should be established between the Broad Area Plan and local community plans and how they may be integrated into the large area plan for the east side of Lake Winnipeg.”

Poplar River, Black River and Hollow Water First Nations are in the process of developing land use plans for their traditional areas. Berens River First Nation and the Island Lake Tribal Council have indicated their intentions of doing the same. The communities of Manigotagan and Wasagamack are in the process of developing community plans. In spite of these initiatives, the majority of communities in the study area have not undertaken any form of planning, community or otherwise, even though they desire to do so.


There are, however, much broader community development issues than are captured by the mandate. For example, an overriding issue is the increasing population in the area and the lack of economic opportunities. Reasons for the lack of opportunity include a perception of policy and regulatory roadblocks preventing access to financing and an inability to acquire licenses for various activities, resulting in non-local ownership and cash outflows. The ESRT heard comments that there are too many regulations. Trapline regulations, for example, are too costly and restrictive.

While there is support for economic development on the east side, there is a frustration by residents at the lack of involvement and participation in decision-making with regard to: the granting of licenses and permits, the

“Must plan right with traditional knowledge. Must carefully consider how development takes place. Have to consider how we are part of the land.”

(East Side Resident)





realization of local economic opportunities and benefits, and the assurance that economic benefits are realized locally. While there appear to be many training opportunities for local residents to acquire the skills necessary to participate in economic development activities, there are few employment opportunities available.

In spite of apparent new opportunities for economic development on the east side, in partnership with industry and government (e.g., forestry, hydro, parks and ecotourism), there is a seeming lack of interest and support from government in pursuing potential partnerships.

The Memorandum of Understanding and resulting Protocol between First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and the Government of Manitoba will serve as a foundation for First Nations communities to become involved in economic development and land use decisions affecting their communities and traditional territories. A similar Protocol is recommended for the Métis Nation resident on the east side of Lake Winnipeg (see 5.2. Building Positive Relationships with Aboriginal Peoples: *Protocols of Agreement*). However, there is still a need to help all communities realize their full development potential.

Recommendations

6.2.1

All First Nation governments, the Métis Nation government representing Métis residents on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, and Northern Affairs communities in the east side planning area be provided the necessary financial and other resources to develop and produce plans for both their community and surrounding areas of interest, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge, before significant development expansion, new developments, or new licenses are issued in any potentially affected area.

6.2.2

Future development must be contingent on the establishment of processes and policies that ensure community involvement, training and employment and that resource allocation decisions involve local communities.

6.2.3

The Government of Manitoba provide capacity building initiatives and programs for people to participate more fully in resource activities in their traditional territories. Effective skills training programs must be developed to maximize local input in community economic development initiatives.

6.2.4

A formal assessment be done that would identify current and anticipated economic opportunities and skill sets that will be required to take advantage of these opportunities. Training programs such as business management skills must then be designed and delivered to meet these needs. Other programs

could include emergency fire fighting, first aid, dangerous goods, presentation skills, emergency readiness, ecotourism, life skills, and proposal preparation.

6.2.5

Certification training programs be established for those occupations where certification is currently not required – e.g., tourism industry, timber harvesting, mining and commercial fishing.

6.2.6

The development of local enterprise and ownership be encouraged in addition to ensuring that there is local benefit, training and employment when the public or private sector is operating in the planning area.

6.2.7

The Government of Manitoba must support joint ventures / partnerships / local ownership creating the means for communities to gain benefits from resource initiatives and economic activities within communities and traditional territories. All economic development initiatives undertaken by the public or private sector within the planning area should ensure training and employment opportunities for local residents where possible.

6.2.8

First Nations, Métis and local community governments be given representation on Manitoba government boards, agencies, commissions and committees in order to gain more information and participate more actively with respect to planning and development issues that impact their traditional territories.

6.2.9

The Government of Manitoba commit to working with the ESFNC and First Nation governments to establish a natural resources management authority that would be operational within three years. The authority must be grounded on the principles of the seven generations and the structure and authorities of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission is offered as a desired model.

6.2.10

The Government of Manitoba actively engage the Métis Nation resident on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and local communities in developing and enhancing their own conservation capacity and engagement in formal conservation practices and activities in the planning area.

6.3 Forest Resources

Mandate

“The east side round table provide advice on protecting the values of the boreal forest, its sustainability, and sustainable use including, but not limited to:

