

Proposal to designate the Little Grand Rapids Traditional Use Planning Area and approve the Ni-Kes Lands Management Plan: Report on Consultation

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Overview

Little Grand Rapids First Nation requested the designation of a planning area and provided a draft management plan, the “Ni-Kes Lands Management Plan” for approval under *The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act* (“the Act”) on February 9, 2011 and May 3, 2012, respectively.

Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship is responsible for administration of the Act and receives requests from First Nations and Aboriginal communities to designate planning areas by regulation and approve management plans by order in council under the Act.

Under the Act, at least 90 days before an area is designated as a planning area by regulation and before an order is made approving a proposed management plan, an opportunity must be provided to First Nations, aboriginal communities, stakeholders and the public to review and comment on the proposal. The 90-day review period was initiated on June 9, 2012 and closed on September 7, 2012.

On October 19, 2012, Little Grand Rapids First Nation requested that the proposed Plan be revised to include a protected area buffer on the Berens River (the Mishipawitigong Cultural Waterway Protected Area) and a prohibition on peat mining in 89% of the Planning Area.

Notice of the Plan revision and of a 30-day extension of the review period was provided on November 14, 2012. The closing date for comments was December 14, 2012.

All comments received during the 90-day and 30-day review periods have been addressed.

Aboriginal, Stakeholder and Public Consultation Efforts

A variety of consultation methods were employed to ensure that First Nations, Aboriginal communities, stakeholders and the public were provided with a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposal, including: newspaper advertisements, a public meeting / open house, mailouts and an electronic registry.

Newspaper Advertisement

A newspaper advertisement was placed in 6 local daily, weekly or monthly publications to inform Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders and the public of:

- (1) the date and location of the public meeting where the proposal and representatives from both Little Grand Rapids and the Government of Manitoba would be present to address any questions or concerns;
- (2) the online registry where the proposed management plan, regulation and comment sheet could be obtained; and
- (3) where written comments could be submitted by mail or electronically, and contact information for Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship representatives.

The proposal was advertised in the following paper media:

The Winnipeg Free Press	June 9, 2012
The Lac du Bonnet Leader	June 7, 2012
Grassroots News	June 5, 2012
The Winnipeg River Echo	June 6, 2012
The Clipper Weekly	June 4, 2012
The Pinawa Life Newsletter	June, 2012

Open House/ Public Meeting

An Open House / public meeting was held on June 19, 2012 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the South East Resource Development Council located at 360 Broadway in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Representatives from the Government of Manitoba and the Little Grand Rapids First Nation were in attendance to present the proposal and address any questions, comments or concerns.

Approximately 40 people attended the Open House, with representation from First Nations, tribal councils, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, the tourism sector, the governments of Manitoba and Ontario and the Pimachiowin Aki Corporation.

Electronic Registry

An electronic public registry was established on the Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship Lands Branch website:

http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/lands_branch/public_registry.html, also accessible via a link from the Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship main website: www.manitoba.ca/conservation).

The website provided the following information:

Conservation and Water Stewardship  [Printer Friendly](#)

Gov Home > Conservation and Water Stewardship > Lands

Get Started Here

- Home Page
- Land Management and Planning
- Off-Road Vehicle Events on Crown Land
- East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act
 - Summary of the Act
 - Principles of the Act
 - East Side Planning Registry
 - Approved Plans
- Crown Land and Aboriginal Land Programs
- Manitoba Geographic Names Program
- First Come, First Served Cottaging Program

Public Registry

East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act [[English](#) (html); [Oji-Cree](#) (pdf, 34 kb); [Cree](#) (pdf, 46 kb); [Ojibwe](#) (pdf, 38 kb); [Regulation Amendment](#) (pdf, 35kb); [Boundary Map](#) (pdf, 2 mb)]

Traditional Use Planning Area Proposals:

Notices of these proposals were published to the registry on June 9, 2012. The comment periods for these proposals are now closed.

3. Ni-Kes (Little Grand Rapids):

- [Proposed Regulation \(English\) \(French\)](#) (pdf, 28 kb)
- [Boundary Map](#) (pdf, 2.03 mb)
- [Management Plan](#) (pdf, 2.09 mb)
- [Summary Plan](#) (pdf, 1.65 mb)
- [Comment Sheet](#) (pdf, 53 kb)
- [Public Meeting Notice](#) (pdf, 54 kb)

Direct Mail-Out

On June 12, 2012, a direct mail out was sent to First Nations, Aboriginal communities and stakeholders. As a principle of Aboriginal consultation and public participation, a follow-up mail out was sent on November 14, 2012 to inform recipients of the revisions to the proposal and to provide for an opportunity to comment on those revisions.

Recipients of the mail outs were:

1. Berens River First Nation
2. Black River First Nation
3. Bloodvein First Nation
4. Bunibonibee Cree Nation
5. Garden Hill First Nation
6. God's Lake First Nation
7. Hollow Water First Nation
8. Manto Sipi Cree Nation
9. Norway House Cree Nation
10. Pauingassi First Nation
11. Poplar River First Nation

12. Red Sucker Lake First Nation
13. St. Theresa Point First Nation
14. Wasagamack First Nation
15. Pikangikum First Nation (Ontario)
16. Manitoba Métis Federation
17. Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters Association
18. Manitoba Model Forest Inc.
19. Manitoba Wildlife Federation
20. Manitoba Cottagers Association
21. Manitoba Trappers Association
22. Mining Association of Manitoba Inc.
23. Manitoba Prospectors and Developers Association Inc.
24. Manitoba-Saskatchewan Prospectors and Developers Association
25. Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada
26. East Side Road Authority Engineering and Construction
27. Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
28. Southern Chiefs Organization
29. Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
30. Wabanong Nakaygum Okimawin
31. Association of Manitoba Municipalities
32. Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation
33. Norway House Community
34. Town of Bissett
35. Berens River Community
36. Island Lake Community
37. Manigotagon Community
38. Matheson Island Community
39. Incorporated Community of Seymourville
40. Aghaming Community
41. Loon Straits Community
42. Princess Harbour Community
43. Sunterra Horticulture Canada

The Little Grand Rapids First Nation Chief and Council and Lands Coordinator were copied on the letters.

Summary of Comments and Responses

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (June 14, 2012)

Requested a copy of the proposed management plan.

Disposition:

Provided the link to the public registry where the plan could be obtained. Also provided information about the public meeting scheduled for June 19, 2012.

Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters Association (June 15, 2012 and November 23, 2012); and Jackson's Lodge (June 19, 2012)

Inquired as to whether the plan would have an affect on existing lodge operations.

Disposition:

Assured the association and lodge operator that existing uses of Crown land and resources in the proposed planning area would not be affected by regulations under *The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act*. Also explained that once an approved management plan is in place, all decisions being contemplated by the provincial government respecting the allocation, disposition or use of Crown land and Crown resources in the planning area must be generally consistent with the approved plan for that area, and furthermore, that the Act does not preclude a review of the legitimacy of permitting decisions made in the past, in the same way that those decisions can now be reviewed.

Helios Hernandez (June 19, 2012)

Suggested that area calculations be included in the plan for each of the proposed land use areas.

Disposition:

Table 1: Summary of the Ni-Kes Lands Management Plan Land Use Areas was added to Section 4.

Canadian Boreal Initiative (August 1, 2012, December 11, 2012 and December 12, 2012)

Provided some suggested editorial changes to the plan. Expressed support for the following plan commitments:

- Legislative protection of the majority of the planning area from industrial development while meeting community access and resource needs
- Implementation of the plan by the Little Grand Rapids Stewardship Board, through a management system guided by traditional values and knowledge, ancestral teaching methods and science-based approaches
- Protection of species at risk including woodland caribou, wolverine and sturgeon
- Maintenance of ecological processes which are key for the long-term preservation of the boreal ecosystem's integrity
- Support culturally and environmentally appropriate recreation and tourism opportunities

Disposition:

All of the proposed editorial changes, with the exception of one thematic revision to Figure 2, were incorporated into the final plan. The Director of Lands Branch, on behalf of the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, responded to CBI in writing, acknowledging their letters and indicating that CBI's comments have been considered and documented in the record of consultation.

Recommended Action

All comments received on the proposal have been addressed. It is recommended that the proposal to designate the Little Grand Rapids Traditional Use Planning Area and implement the Ni-Kes Lands Management Plan under *The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act* be approved.