

Enabling Community-Based Forest Management in Northern Ontario

Lynn Palmer

PhD Student

Faculty of Natural Resources Management

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Study Goal

Raise the voices of forest-dependent communities in northern Ontario regarding their visions for future management of their local forests

How?

Make recommendations for new provincial forest tenure policy that best supports communities based on research findings

Study Objectives

- 1) Explore developing CBFM initiatives as case studies of forest tenure policy alternatives
 - Assess community values and perceptions of local forests
 - Assess community visions for proposed CBFM initiatives
- 2) Develop a framework for a new forest tenure model in northern Ontario that incorporates CBFM

Foundational Theories

1. Common Property Resource Management

The Commons - general term for shared resources in which each stakeholder has an equal interest
(International Association for the Study of the Commons)

Research shows CPR management to be successful when robust common property institutions are in place where local users can:

make, enforce, monitor and adapt management rules



2. Community-Based Forest Management

- Research indicates success when there are appropriate institutions for sustainable forest governance
- Key: tenure security, local decision-making power

3. Decentralization

- Formal transfer of powers from central authorities to actors and institutions at lower levels
 - **accountable local authorities** able to make and implement decisions
- *Democratic* Decentralization:
 - demand for participation from below through social movements that challenge the centralized approach to public policy
- Theoretical premise: decision-making closer to local people is more equitable, efficient, participatory, accountable and ideally, ecologically sustainable

4. Social Capital

- Networks, trust, shared norms, understandings & values that facilitate cooperation within/among groups
 - communities (FN, non-FN), gov't, industry, NGOs, academia
- Central to equitable and sustainable local development

Study Methodology

- Qualitative research approach
- Methodological Approach: Participatory Action Research
- Multiple case study approach: exploration of 5 CBFM initiatives

Participatory Action Research

- Co-generative inquiry: researcher and local participants formulate **solutions of major relevance to participants**
- Follow REB requirements and Indigenous methodology
 - CREE: capacity-building, respect, equity and empowerment (Harvey Lemelin, Faculty of Outdoor Rec. Parks and Tourism, Lakehead University)
- Input by participants to all research activities
 - data collection, publications, conference presentations

Case Studies

- Whitesand Community Sustainability Initiative
- Hearst/Mattice Val-Côté/Constance Lake FN CF
- Green Timiskaming CF
- Northeast Superior CF
- Matawa Forest Tenure Model/Greenstone CF

Data Collection

- Interviews: face-to-face, audio-recorded
- Research Workshop for each initiative
- Document Review

Research Timeline

- June - Dec. 2011: Interviews, research workshops
- Analysis and writing: by spring 2013

Research Themes: 1. Governance

- Structure: e.g. board
- Legal entity: corporation, co-op, non-profit society, authority, limited company
- Representation
 - How? elected, appointed
 - Who? community reps, government, other stakeholders (industry, NGOs)
- Conflict resolution: is a mechanism needed?



2. Support for & Collaboration with First Nations

- Meaningful and respectful partnerships
- Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and treaty rights
- Contribution to Aboriginal Economic Development
 - preservation of First Nations culture and values
 - control over First Nation traditional territories and decision-making at both the operational and strategic levels



3. Community-based Forest Enterprises

- Products: timber & non-timber
- Partnerships
 - knowledge exchange, research, capacity building, technical expertise,
- Markets: local, regional, national