

Brief –

Protected Areas and First Nation Resource Stewardship Accord / World Heritage Site (WHS) Nomination

November 2006

Protected Areas and First Nation Resource Stewardship Accord

In 2002, Poplar River, Pauingassi, Little Grand Rapids and Pikangikum First Nations joined together in a unique cooperative relationship with the objective of advancing common interests regarding protected areas in their respective traditional territories. (Bloodvein River First Nation is considering participation)

Our vision is based on an acknowledgement that the Creator, the maker of all, placed us on our ancestral lands where we have lived since time immemorial... Our shared vision also acknowledges that we are to protect and take care of the land and resources that the Creator has given us for our survival and well-being. Finally, our vision incorporates respect for the teachings and wisdom of our Elders who are able to guide us in taking care of the lands and resources that we have been given as a sacred trust from the Creator.

Protected Areas and First Nation Resource Stewardship: A Cooperative Relationship Accord

The ***Protected Areas and First Nation Resource Stewardship Accord*** is a commitment to cooperatively and collectively pursue the shared objective of creating an internationally recognized and designated network of linked protected areas on the ancestral lands of the signatory First Nations. It recognizes and affirms that each of the First Nations will establish planning areas for its respective protected area proposals and initiatives. The boundaries of the respective planning areas are based on the trapline districts of the First Nations.

As part of the stated intent to secure both self-management and protection for their traditional lands, the Accord First Nations also wish to pursue World Heritage Site status.

World Heritage Sites (WHS)

World Heritage Sites are places of natural and/or cultural significance considered to be of "outstanding universal value". Achieving inscription on the 'World Heritage List' involves a nomination and evaluation process that can take several years.

The *Atikaki/Woodland Caribou/Accord First Nations - Manitoba and Ontario nomination* represents a potential World Heritage Site that is both naturally and culturally significant on a global basis and consistent with the current priority to secure WHS in the boreal forest. The boreal forest ecozone is under-represented on the World Heritage List in relation to their global total area. Furthermore, boreal forests and the cultural heritages supported by the boreal forest ecozone are currently under threat from extensive industrial activities and climate change.

Securing legal protection for lands and completion of lands management plans for traditional territories are both community goals of the Accord First Nations as well as being requirements for the WHS Nomination File (see below). Along with identified traditional lands of the Accord First Nations, the potential World Heritage Site also includes Atikaki Wilderness Park (Manitoba) and Woodland Caribou Park (Ontario).

Steps in WHS Nomination Process

1 - Countries' Tentative Lists

The first step to be taken by a country is the creation of its ‘Tentative List’ – its list of important natural and cultural heritage sites that the country may decide to submit for WHS inscription in the next five to ten years. The World Heritage Committee cannot consider a nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List unless the property has been included on the country's Tentative List. The Accord First Nations’ WHS nomination was added to Canada’s Tentative List in April 2004.

2 - Preparation of the Nomination File & Meeting Selection Criteria

The Nomination File is prepared in accordance with *Section III Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (Operational Guidelines) and must include necessary documentation and maps. Sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria in the Operational Guidelines. When the Nomination File is submitted, the World Heritage Centre checks to make sure it is complete. Complete Nomination Files are then sent for evaluation.

3 - Evaluation: The Advisory Bodies

Two Advisory Bodies mandated by the World Heritage Convention – the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) – independently evaluate WHS nominations. Their evaluations are provided to the World Heritage Committee. A third Advisory Body – the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) – provides the Committee with expert advice on conservation of cultural sites, as well as on training activities.

4 - World Heritage Committee Decision

Following nomination and evaluation stages, the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee makes the final decision on WHS inscription. Once a year the Committee meets to decide which sites will be inscribed on the World Heritage List. It can also defer its decision and request further information from the nominating country.

The Nomination File

The Nomination File, which is evaluated by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Committee, must include the following information:

Identification of the Property

- detailed maps, including topographic maps, to boundaries and buffer zones (if applicable) of the nomination

Description of the Property

- overview of nomination area's history and development; how the property has reached its present form and the significant changes that it has undergone; information supporting and giving substance to the argument that the 'property' meets the criteria of outstanding universal value and conditions of integrity and/or authenticity.

Justification for Inscription

- indicate the World Heritage criteria under which the property is proposed, with a clear argument for use of each criterion; Statement of Outstanding Universal Value shall make clear why the property merits inscription on the World Heritage List; comparative analysis of the property in relation to similar properties to explain importance of the nominated property in national and international context; Statements of Integrity and/or Authenticity demonstrate how the property satisfies conditions outlined in the Operational Guidelines

State of Conservation and Factors Affecting the Property

- accurate information on the present state of conservation of the property (including information on physical condition of the property and conservation measures in place); description of factors affecting the property (including threats)

Protection and Management

- Protection – list of the legislative, regulatory, contractual, planning, institutional and/or traditional measures most relevant to the protection of the property; detailed analysis of the way in which this protection operates
- Management – provide management plan or other management system; demonstrate how effective implementation of the management plan management will occur

Monitoring

- key indicators proposed to measure and assess conservation of the property, factors affecting it, conservation measures at the property, monitoring of conservation and protection measures, examination, and identity of responsible authorities

Documentation

- all documentation to substantiate the nomination