



Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island

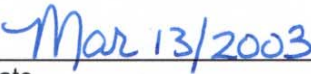
Terms of Reference

APPROVAL STATEMENT

I am pleased to approve these terms of reference to prepare a management plan for Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks. These terms of reference will provide an agenda and timeline for the preparation and completion of the Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Park Management Plan.



Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks



Date

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A *management plan* provides direction for the protection of natural and cultural resources and for appropriate recreational opportunities in a provincial park.

These terms of reference signify the start of the park management planning process for the Michipicoten Post¹ and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks. This document provides a brief background for each park, identifies the planning team and their responsibilities, the expected timeline for the planning process and topics of planning interest (OMNR, 1994).

Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks are regulated separately but have many planning details in common. They will undergo the planning process at the same time to allow for efficient use of resources. Although the planning process is combined, separate management plans will be developed for each park.

The approved *Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Park Management Plans* will be reviewed as deemed necessary throughout the documents' 20-year horizon.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Michipicoten Post

Michipicoten Post Provincial Park was originally established as a wilderness area under the Ontario *Wilderness Areas Act* (May 1971) and was regulated as a provincial park under the *Provincial Parks Act* in June of 1982 (Ontario Regulation 429/82). An interim management statement (IMS) was approved in 1986 and the park has been managed accordingly since.

The post is situated in Michipicoten Bay at the mouth of the Michipicoten River on the eastern shore of Lake Superior (Figure 1). It is located approximately eight kilometres southwest of the town of Wawa, 230 kilometres northwest of Sault Ste. Marie and approximately seven kilometres north of Lake Superior Provincial Park.

Michipicoten Post is situated on a sandy delta, formed by a glacial spillway, set amongst the typically rocky Lake Superior shoreline. This sandy delta offers visitors one of the largest (1.5 kilometres), accessible and scenic beaches on the shores of Superior. The post has an extensive history of settlement, travel and trade by both Aboriginal and European groups, as it was a connecting point for northern, southern and interior Ontario travel routes.

The park's natural features include provincially rare and regionally significant plants, seasonal habitats for migratory birds including bald eagles and a scenic landscape along the Lake Superior shoreline.

Park use is low to moderate at present. Visitors can reach the park using an access road from Highway 17 or by water using canoes, kayaks and other watercraft. The post's recreational opportunities include an historical canoe route, the Voyageur Trail, driftwood beach and an accessible fishery associated with Michipicoten River.

2.2 Michipicoten Island

Michipicoten Island was regulated as a provincial park in 1985 under the *Provincial Parks Act* (Ontario Regulation 45/85) and is classified as a natural environment park. An interim management statement was approved in 1986 and the park has been managed accordingly since. The island is without public facilities as no development has been completed to date.

¹ Michipicoten Post Provincial Park IMS provides a recommendation to change the park's regulation name, which is Michipicoten Provincial Park, to Michipicoten Post Provincial Park. This new name would provide a more accurate description of the park's historical significance and would reduce confusion with Michipicoten Island Provincial Park (OMNR, 1986). Management planning, with full public consultation, will clearly describe the intent to re-regulating this park as Michipicoten Post Provincial Park. In consideration of this, Michipicoten Provincial Park will be referred to in these terms of reference and throughout the planning process as Michipicoten Post Provincial Park.

Michipicoten Island is the third largest island in Lake Superior. It is located in the lake's northeastern corner approximately 65 kilometres southwest of the town of Wawa (Figure 1). At its closest point, the island is located 16 kilometres south of Lake Superior Highlands Conservation Reserve on the mainland.

Michipicoten Island, its surrounding islands, and much of the Lake Superior basin were formed by volcanic activity that occurred in few other places in the province. This volcanic activity along with glacial activity and weathering has provided the remarkable geological features associated with the island.

The island harbours a variety of provincially and regionally significant plants and animals including arctic relics and one of the southernmost populations of Ontario's woodland caribou. The island provides an ideal environment for studying plants and animals due to its isolated location and the absence of industrial and other land uses.

Aboriginal myths and past activities on the island such as small-scale copper mining, commercial fishing, trapping and lighthouse operation since the 1800's enhance the cultural significance of the park.

Park use is relatively low. Access to the island is limited to tour operators, commercial fishing vessels, float planes and recreational watercraft. Park visitors are awarded with a variety of recreational opportunities including wildlife and landscape viewing and photography, canoeing and kayaking, boating, diving and hiking along the island's rocky and sandy shorelines.

3.0 PLAN AREA

3.1 Michipicoten Post

The park encompasses a total of 289.0 hectares (Figure 2). The park's western boundary includes a one-and-one half (1.5) kilometre stretch of sandy beach running north-south, plus the waters and islands within 200 metres of the shoreline. The northwestern corner of the park is located at the mouth of the Michipicoten River opening into Michipicoten Bay. The Michipicoten River presents the northern and most of the eastern boundary. Highway 17 and privately owned land abut the remaining eastern boundary. Patented lands together with topographical lineament mark the park's southern limits.

3.2 Michipicoten Island

The park boundary encircles Michipicoten Island and extends two-and-one half kilometres (2.5 km) offshore to include all shoals and islands, encompassing 36,740 hectares (Figure 3). Michipicoten Island is approximately 26 kilometres long and 10 kilometres at its widest point.

The following properties are excluded from the park:

- Eight (8) private lands in Quebec Harbour;
- Four (4) patented lands elsewhere on the island: one on the northern shore near Bonner Head, one on the old Philips Mine site (northwestern corner of the island) and two locations on the eastern shores of the island);
- Department of Transport properties: two lighthouses, two beacon locations- one in Quebec Harbour and one on the Island's west end, and;
- One (1) mining lease has recently reverted to Crown land (2002). The land will be added to the existing provincial park and as such will be considered during park management planning.

FIGURE 1. Regional Context Map

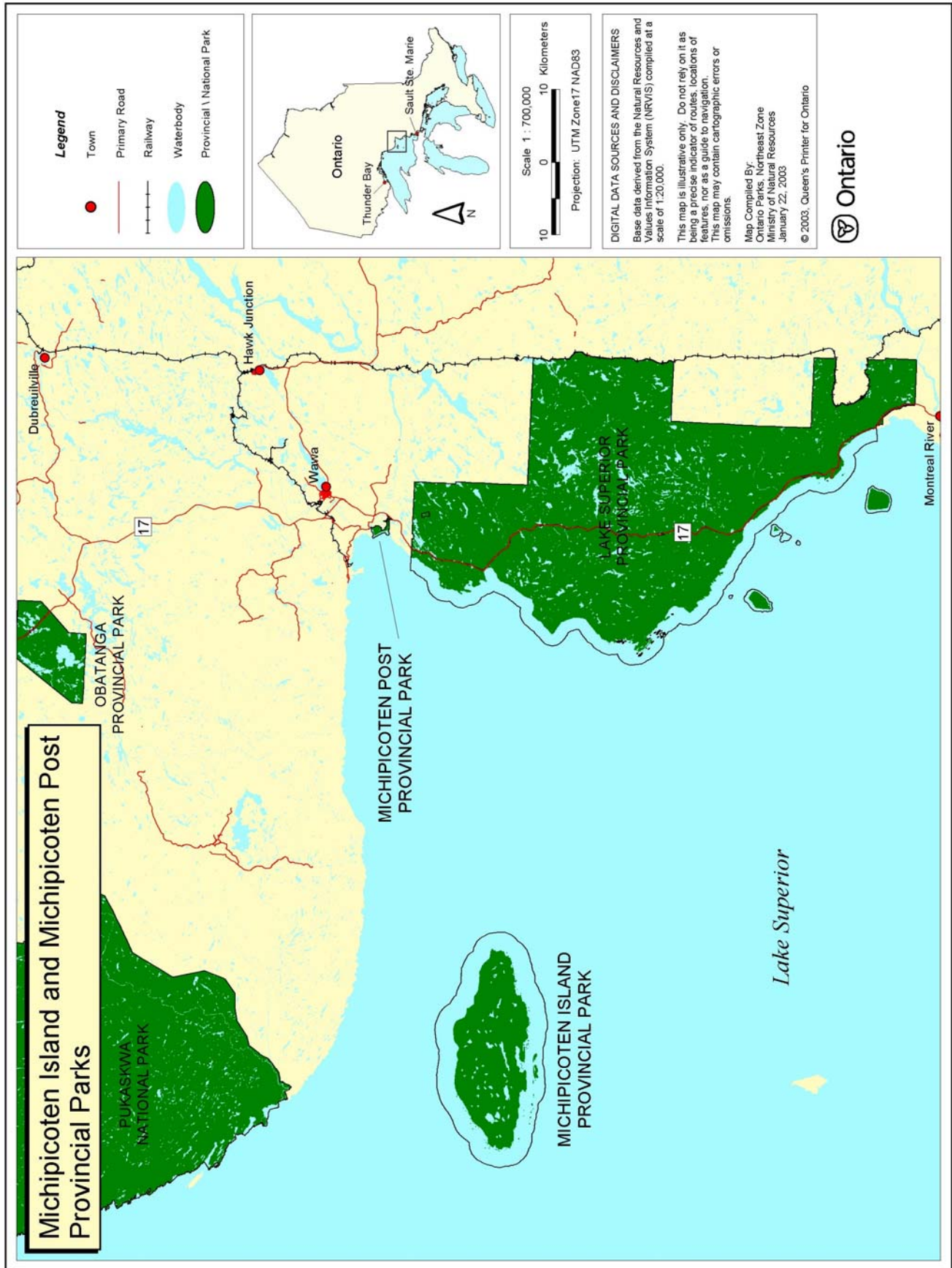


FIGURE 2. Michipicoten Post Provincial Park Boundary Map

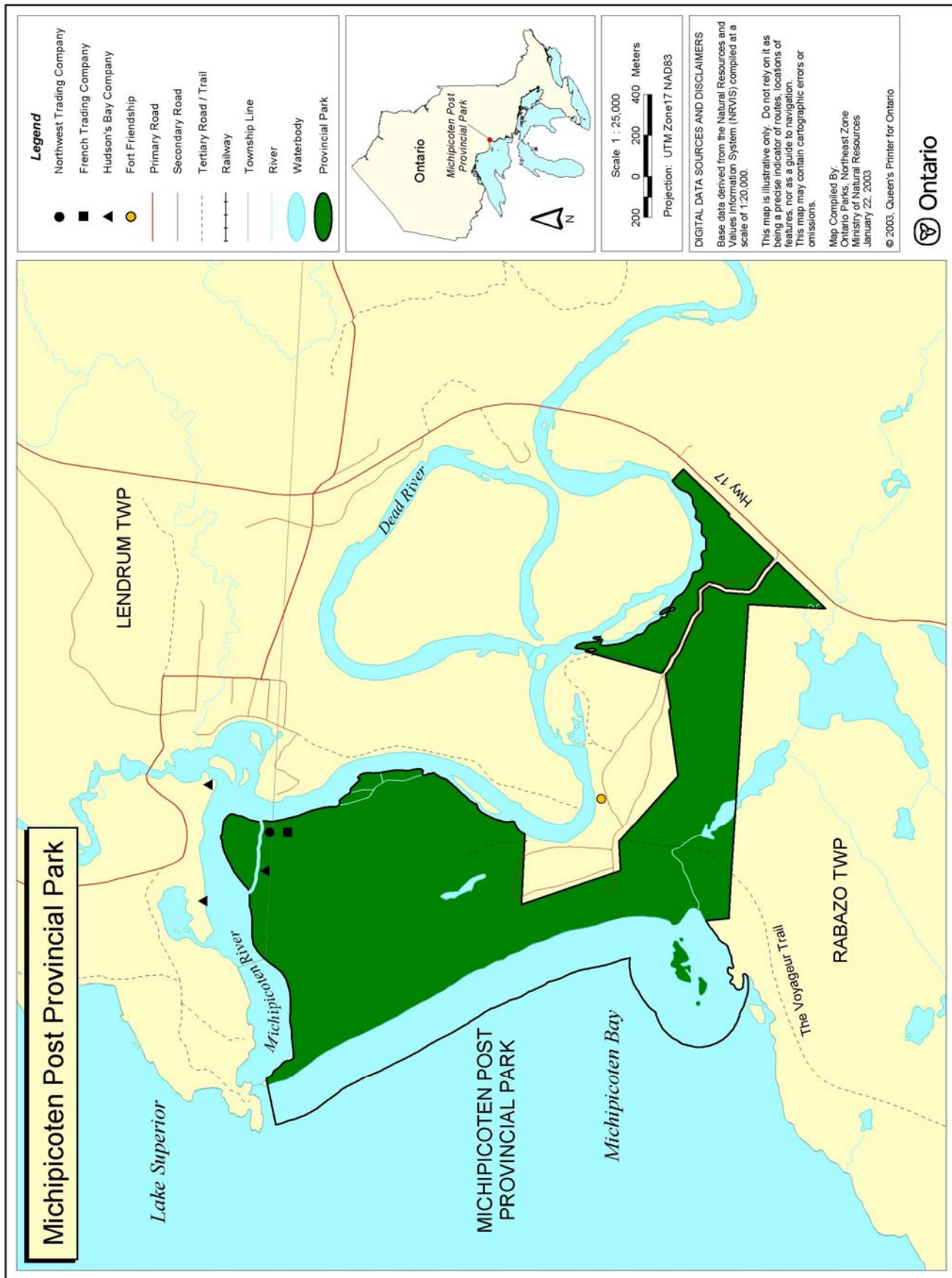
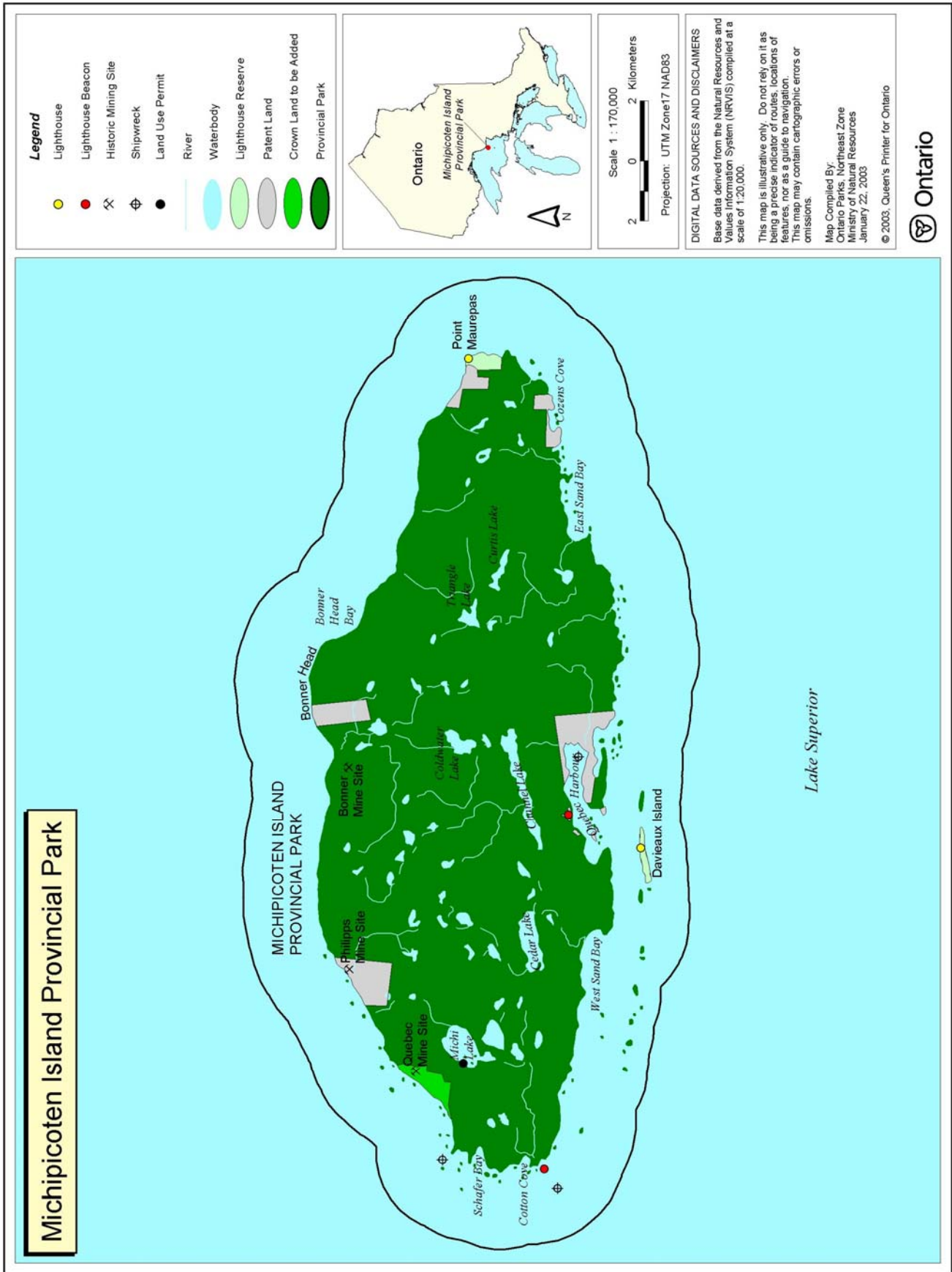


FIGURE 3. Michipicoten Island Provincial Park Boundary Map



4.0 PLANNING TEAM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ontario Parks will guide the park management planning process for Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks through the planning team. The planning team consists of:

Mike Pym, Project Management Planner, Ontario Parks
 Joel Cooper, Resource Planner, MNR, Wawa District
 Will Kershaw, Senior Management Planner, Ontario Parks
 Carol Dersch, Natural Heritage Education Leader, Ontario Parks
 Bob Elliott, Acting Park Superintendent for Lake Superior, Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks, Ontario Parks

The responsibilities of the planning team are to:

- Prepare and review drafts of planning documents;
- Organize and deliver public consultation, and;
- Address planning questions raised through public consultation.

The project management planner will coordinate the management planning process under the direction of the senior management planner. Planning team members will provide background information, review planning documents and assist in public consultation. Advisors may be approached from time to time to provide additional information and expertise for the project (e.g. Life science Biologist, Wawa District staff).

The project management planner will be the key contact responsible for answering all inquiries. The project planner will take questions to the planning team for their input.

The resource planner will be the contact person for the Wawa District MNR office and the liaison for the Michipicoten First Nation community.

Ontario Parks will have final approval of the official documents relating to the management planning process.

5.0 PLANNING PROCESS

A *management plan* is the final product of the park management planning process. This process consists of 4 stages:

1. Terms of Reference
2. Background Information & Management Options
3. Preliminary Park Management Plan
4. Park Management Plan

Terms of Reference

The approval of these terms of reference will begin the management planning process.

Background Information & Management Options

This stage involves the inventory, analysis and description of information that will aid in the development of ideas for the next stages of park planning. Management planning options, including alternatives for zoning, protection and enhancement of the natural, cultural and recreational values for each park will be developed and made available for public review.

Preliminary Park Management Plans

The preliminary management plans contain the proposed policies and direction for the management of the parks. The preliminary park management plan is the ministry's preferred policy for the parks that will be subject to full public review.

Park Management Plans

Following analysis and consideration of public comments on the preliminary management plan, the planning team will finalize the management plans for approval.

6.0 PLANNING SCHEDULE & BUDGET

The following schedule forecasts the planning stages to complete a management plan as per the Provincial Parks Management Planning Manual (1994). Planning costs will include park management planner salary, printing and distribution of approved documents, advertising the availability of and review periods for each document, and miscellaneous expenses including travel costs and supplies.

| Stage of Planning Process | Requirements | Dates | Consultation | Budget |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Terms of Reference & Invitation to Participate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Approval by Ontario Parks Managing Director •Public notice after approval providing public opportunity to comment on management planning for Michipicoten Island | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Approval by spring 2003 •Public notice •Comment deadline late spring 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EBR Decision Notice •Newspaper notice •Mailing list •Meetings as requested | \$ 3,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Notices •Bilingual translation •Publication |
| Background Information & Management Options Documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Review of existing and new background information •Public notice that background information & management options are available for a 45 day review period •French Summary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Approval by summer 2003 •Public notice •Comment Deadline summer 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Newspaper notice •Local meetings and/or presentations as required •Requirements as defined by the Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual | \$ 6,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Notices •Bilingual translation •Publication |
| Preliminary Park Management Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •First proposals of policies to direct park management •Public opportunity to review for 45 days •French Summary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Approval by fall 2003 •Public notice •Comment deadline fall 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EBR Decision Notice •Newspaper notice •Mailing list •Meetings as requested | \$ 6,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Notices •Bilingual translation •Publication |
| Park Management Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Summary of public comments on preliminary plan •Internal reviews & refinements, approval, plan production •French Translation of Approved Plan •Public opportunity to inspect (45 days) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Approval by winter 2004 •Public notice •Comment deadline spring 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EBR Decision Notice •Newspaper notice •Mail public notice •Distribution of approved management plans | \$ 6,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Notices •Bilingual translation •Publication |

7.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION METHODS

Individuals representing government agencies (MNDM and other ministries), Michipicoten First Nation, local municipalities as well as those representing public and private sector interests will be consulted to provide additional information and expertise for the project.

Michipicoten First Nation will be invited to participate by reviewing planning documents and offering their ideas in the planning process. In this way, the First Nation community perspective will be actively reflected in the project.

Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks are within a designated bilingual area. The management planning process will adhere to the *French Language Services Act*.

Throughout the park management planning process, several methods of consultation will be used, as specified below.

Mailing Lists

Mandatory Mailing List as per provincial park policy (PM 11.02.02);
 First Nation Communities (Michipicoten First Nation)
 Local municipality of Wawa
 Area residents and businesses showing interest in the project
 Property owners and Land Use Permit holders within or immediately adjacent to properties
 Tourism interests
 Fur Harvesters
 Other individuals who request to be on the mailing list

Newspaper Notices

Newspaper notices will appear in the following local newspapers: Algoma News Review, The Sault Star, Sault This Week.

Meetings

Meetings will be held on request or as the planning team deems necessary over the duration of the project.

Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) Registry

A registry proposal file will be posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry during all plan stages (i.e. terms of reference, background information & management options, preliminary management plan). Public comments will be accepted for 45 days following each posting. A registry decision file will be posted for 45 days once the plan has been approved. www.ontarioparks.com/english/invit.html

Comment Sheet

A comment sheet will be available at each stage for public input and submissions will be directed to the planning team. Copies of all documents will be available to the public. Public comments will be summarized for each stage and will be a source of input for subsequent stages.

Ontario Government

Ontario Parks/local MNR offices (e.g. Wawa, SSM) will carry all Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island park planning documents.
 E-mail message/notice will be issued to Ontario Parks, MNR District Managers and front-line staff 2 to 3 days prior to public release of planning documents.
 Relevant planning documents will be circulated to MNR and NE Zone staff, Ontario Parks main office staff and the Communications Services Branch.
 Park planning documents will be available to view online at www.ontarioparks.com/english/invit.html

All comments received will be considered during the completion of each stage of the process to develop the Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Park Management Plans.

8.0 INTEGRATION

Integration of the various resource management and stewardship interests will be addressed at appropriate stages of the management planning process.

Internal Integration

The *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Planning Policies (1992)* and the *Ontario Provincial Parks Management Planning Manual (1994)* will guide this management planning process. Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy and the Great Lakes Heritage Coast guiding principles will also be utilized and adhered to during the park management planning process.

The terms of reference, preliminary management plans and the recommended management plans will be circulated for review to Ontario Parks and Ministry of Natural Resources Wawa District.

Ontario Parks and the planning team will identify significant resource values within the park environment, and suggest management options that would be considered within the existing provincial park policy framework.

Staff from other ministry programs may be asked to serve as resource contacts during the public consultation phase of the park management planning process.

Advance copies of all communications products will be shared with the Wawa District MNR.

External Integration:

There will be liaison with First Nations, tourist operators, land use permit holders and Transport Canada. Meetings may be held with key stakeholders to discuss the park management planning process, issues, options, etc.

Existing technical reports and documents pertaining to Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks will be reviewed and incorporated, as appropriate, into the park management planning process.

9.0 MANAGEMENT TOPICS

9.1 Michipicoten Post

Recreational Activities

Michipicoten Post provides opportunities for recreation activities such as canoeing, kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. There have also been accounts of motorized ATV use and camping within park limits. Recreation within the park may threaten the viability of provincially rare and regionally significant plant species therefore management of recreational opportunities is needed (trails, etc). The park management planning process will determine appropriate park zoning to protect and manage park values.

Protection of Heritage Values

Aboriginal cultural areas are located within the park. Ongoing discussions with Michipicoten First Nation will provide for appropriate management of these areas. The park was also the location of an active fur trading industry from 1725 to 1904. Management of the park will protect these heritage and cultural sites.

Commercial Tourism

There has been some use of the post by commercial tourism interests. The opportunities for commercial tourism use will be reviewed during park management planning. Prescriptions (e.g. locations for uses and activities) will be considered to protect park values and enhance visitor appreciation and experiences.

9.2 Michipicoten Island

Recreational Activities

Michipicoten Island provides opportunities for recreation activities such as camping, hiking, boating, canoeing and kayaking. There are provincially rare vegetation species on sandy beaches and rocky islets

/headlands where some recreational activities occur. Management is necessary to protect these species. The park management planning process will determine the zoning and management options.

Protection of Heritage Values

There are oral accounts of various Aboriginal uses of the island. Aboriginal culturally important areas may exist around the island, however, no research has been completed to date. The island has a history of mining, commercial fishing, lighthouse operation and the use of Quebec Harbour as a refuge for ships. There are also several shipwrecks located around the western and southern shores. Management of the park will protect the island's heritage and cultural sites.

Commercial Tourism

Commercial tourism outfitters use Michipicoten Island as a tourism destination. The continued use of the island by outfitters will be reviewed during the park management planning process. Prescriptions (e.g. locations for uses and activities) will be considered to protect park values and enhance visitor appreciation and experiences.

Land Use Permit on Michi Lake

A fly-in outpost camp is currently being operated on Michi Lake. Commercial land use permits (LUP's) and outpost tourism will be evaluated through management planning. Zoning and appropriate prescriptions will be developed to manage commercial tourism associated with the island.

Wildlife Management

Woodland Caribou

In the fall of 1982 eight caribou were re-introduced to the island. The population today is estimated at over 200 caribou. Further information (i.e. survey, study) is required to determine the management needs of this species. There is no provision for hunting on the island yet there is evidence of hunting caribou. Management planning will identify direction to deal with caribou management.

Beaver

An abundance of beaver on the island has resulted in the flooding of many areas. Further information (i.e. research) is required to appropriately manage this species.

Fish

A thorough survey of the fisheries within the Island's inland lakes needs to be conducted. Management plans will be developed and reviewed as future pressures on these fisheries grow.

Visitor Safety

The island is remote from the mainland and depending on the weather, can be very difficult to access. Visitors need to be properly prepared and experienced to safely enjoy this wilderness setting. No development has been completed to date and no infrastructure exists. There is very little information available, and no park maps. Information resources should be developed for visitor use. Future infrastructure will be identified through management planning and as resources become available, however, visitor safety will remain the sole responsibility of the park visitor

10.0 SELECTED REFERENCES

Ontario Ministry Natural Resources, 1992. Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies.

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