

# Pichogen River Mixed Forest

## Interim Management Statement



## APPROVAL STATEMENT

I am pleased to approve this Interim Management Statement for Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park (P1530). *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (1999) designated this area as a nature reserve provincial park. Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park was regulated under the *Provincial Parks Act* in June 2003 (O. Reg. 210/03).

This Interim Management Statement provides direction for the protection and custodial management of Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park.



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Paul Bewick  
Zone Manager  
Northeast Zone  
Ontario Parks

May 30, 2006

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Date

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park contains 3, 043 hectares of Crown land. This nature reserve class park was selected to represent distinct natural habitats and landforms within this region of the province. The park is being protected for educational and research purposes to benefit present and future generations, as well as for its intrinsic value.

Pichogen River Mixed Forest is located approximately 130 kilometres north of Chapleau and 87 kilometres south of Hearst. The park is located within the Chapleau Game Preserve (Figure 1).

### 1.1 Objectives

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park will be managed consistent with the two main objectives for nature reserve class provincial parks:

*Protection:* To protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscapes of Ontario.

*Heritage Appreciation:* To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.

## 2.0 MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

The purpose of this Interim Management Statement (IMS) is to provide direction to ensure the custodial management of park resources. Future park planning may be undertaken as required to provide direction on significant decisions regarding resource stewardship, development, operations and permitted uses.

Park management will follow direction from:

- *Provincial Parks Act* (1990) and regulations
- *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999), policy clarification amendments (OMNR 2000) and related direction

- *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies* (OMNR 1992) and updates
- *Ontario Crown Land Use Policy Atlas* (OMNR 2004).

In addressing custodial management obligations to protect park values and ensure public health and safety, Ontario Parks will ensure that policy and environmental assessment requirements are implemented.

The park superintendent will implement the policies, procedures and legislation that are derived from the above direction and written into the IMS for the park.

## 2.1 Environmental Assessment

As part of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ontario Parks is a public sector agency that is subject to the *Environmental Assessment Act* (1990). Management of this park will be carried out in accordance with legislation, policies and MNR's *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves* (OMNR 2005).

## 3.0 PARK FEATURES AND VALUES

Pichogen River Mixed Forest protects representative ecosystems and landforms in Ecodistrict 3E-2.

This nature reserve is located within the Chapleau Game Preserve

### 3.1 Geological Features

The Precambrian bedrock in the park is predominantly Archean age granitic rock of the Superior Province, with a narrow east trending band of greenstone along the north edge. The greenstones are at the extreme eastern end of the Kabinakagami Lake greenstone belt (BGS 2003).

Quaternary deposits are predominantly thin till over bedrock with lacustrine clays and silts in low-lying areas. A pronounced esker ridge and valley follows the Pichogen River along the southeast side of the park.

Figure 1: Regional Setting

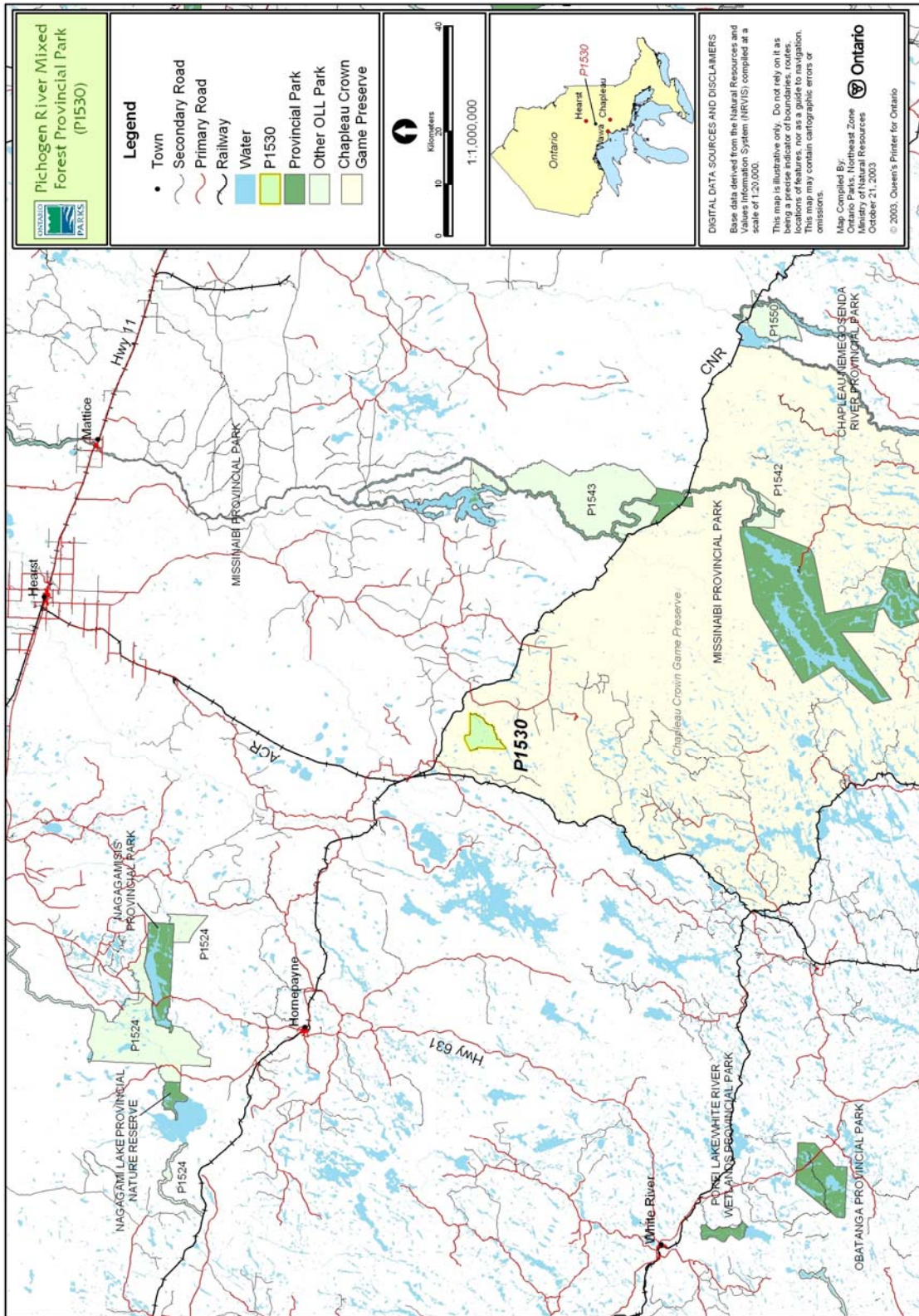
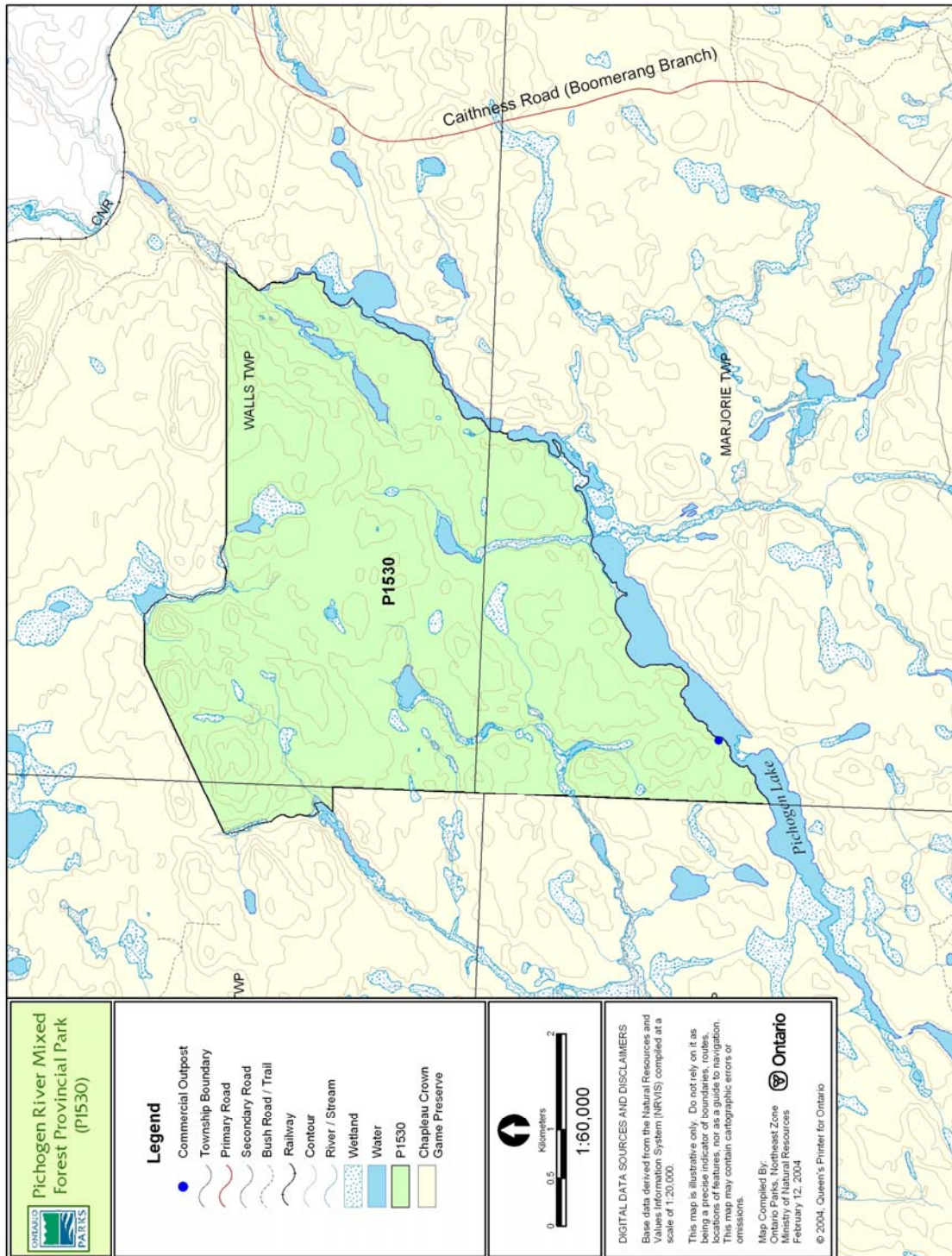




Figure 2: Park Boundary



### 3.2 Biological Features

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park is dominated by mixed forest stands of mainly deciduous vegetation, mixed forest with mainly coniferous vegetation, and dense conifer stands.

A detailed survey of the biological features of this provincial park has not been completed to date.

### 3.3 Cultural Setting

A detailed survey and analysis of the cultural history and features of this park has not been completed to date.

Any future planning will be within the context of a provincial framework, *A Topical Organization of Ontario History* (OMNR 1974). In addition, updates and discussions with First Nations, other agencies and stakeholders may be carried out to identify cultural heritage values and features within the park and their significance. This information may be used to develop management guidelines to conserve and protect representative archaeological and historical values and features, or to provide direction for further research.

### 3.4 Recreation

The park is located within the Chapleau Game Preserve. Due to the park's remote location and limited access, recreational use of this park is minimal (Harper 2003).

The protection and maintenance of environmental values and features are fundamental to the management of nature reserves. Nature reserve policies ensure that natural processes are allowed to function freely within the constraints of public safety and the need to protect values.

Low-intensity recreational uses such as hiking, exploring and nature appreciation are complementary activities for this nature reserve.

### 4.0 ABORIGINAL USES

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park is located within Nishnawbe Aski Nation

(NAN) Treaty #9 (1905-06). The closest Aboriginal community is the Pic Mobert Indian Reserve.

No issues specific to Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park were documented during the park boundary refinement review (OMNR 2003).

First Nations have expressed interest in and have shared knowledge of the park and surrounding area. Aboriginal communities have used the area for hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering and travel. These uses may continue, subject to public safety, conservation and other considerations.

Any communications and cooperation between Aboriginal communities and the MNR for planning and operations purposes will be done without prejudice to any future discussions or negotiations between the government of Ontario and Aboriginal communities.

## 5.0 STEWARDSHIP POLICIES

### 5.1 Terrestrial Ecosystems

The removal, damage or defacing of Crown property, natural objects, relics or artifacts is not permitted (*Provincial Parks Act*).

#### 5.1.1 Vegetation

##### Harvesting

Commercial forest harvesting and renewal activities are not permitted within the park (OMNR 1992, OMNR 1999).

There are no fuel wood cutting permits currently issued within the park. No new permits will be issued (OMNR 2000).

Wild rice harvesting is not permitted (OMNR 2003).

The harvest of non-timber forest products such as club moss, Canada yew etc. will not be permitted within the park.

##### Non-Native Plants

Non-native plant species will not be deliberately introduced into Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park. Where non-native plant species are already established,

and threaten park values, a strategy to control the species may be developed (OMNR 1992).

### **Insects and Disease**

Insects and diseases may be managed where the park's aesthetic, cultural or natural values are threatened (OMNR 1992).

Control measures will follow guidelines established by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and MNR. Whenever possible, biological controls will be given preference over the use of chemicals (OMNR 1992).

### **Fire**

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park is located within the Boreal Zone for fire management. In accordance with existing provincial park policy and the *Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario* (OMNR 2004b), forest fire protection will be carried out in Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park as on surrounding lands.

Whenever feasible, MNR's Forest Fire Management program will use techniques which minimize damage to the landscape, such as limiting the use of heavy equipment or limiting the number of trees felled during response efforts (OMNR 2004b).

### **5.1.2 Wildlife Management**

The park is located in Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 32. The removal and harassment of non-game animals is not permitted in provincial parks (Provincial Parks Act RSO 1990).

### **Hunting**

Hunting is not permitted the park (OMNR 1992).

### **Bear Management Areas**

There are currently no bear management areas (BMA) the park. New BMA licences will not be permitted (OMNR 2000; 2003).

### **Trapping**

Trapping is not permitted within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park (OMNR 1992, OMNR 1999).

### **5.1.3 Industrial Resources**

Commercial mineral exploration and extraction, sand and gravel extraction, and peat development are not permitted within the regulated boundary of Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park (OMNR 1992).

### **5.1.4 Access and Crossings**

#### **Access**

Access to the park is limited. The northeast boundary of the park is accessible from Highway 538 south from Hearst to Caithness Road (Boomerang Branch). The road has an access restriction applied from May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Roads**

There are no roads within the park. New roads will not be permitted (OMNR 2004).

#### **Utility Corridors**

There are no utility corridors within the park.

All public utilities (e.g. gas pipelines, transmission lines, communications towers) will avoid park lands wherever possible. New utility corridor crossings may be necessary to maintain essential public services (OMNR 2004a).

Any future utility corridors proposed through the park, where park lands are unavoidable, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The protection of park features and values will be priority and all requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* will be met.

#### **Recreational Trails**

There are currently no authorized trails within the park boundary. New trails (e.g. hiking) may be developed, if the need arises, and are subject to the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

### **5.1.5 Adjacent Land Management**

#### **Forestry**

The lands adjacent to Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park are within the Nagagami Forest and Hearst Forest management units (FMUs). The Nagagami Forest is managed by Donahue Forest Products Inc., a subsidiary of Abitibi Consolidated Company of Canada. The

current forest management plan for the Nagagami Forest is to be renewed in 2006. The Hearst Forest is managed by Hearst Forest Management Inc. The forest management plan for this FMU is to be renewed in 2007.

### **Chapleau Game Preserve**

The Chapleau Game Preserve was established in 1925 and surrounds the nature reserve. Hunting and trapping are prohibited within the game preserve. Other forms of resource harvesting such as timber harvesting do occur within the preserve.

### **General Use Area**

General Use Area G1729 overlays the Chapleau Game Preserve and is adjacent to the park. The land use intent for this 1,637,822-hectare general use area is resource utilization.

#### **5.1.6 Land Disposition**

New land disposition for the private use of individuals or corporations will not be permitted (OMNR 1992; 2000).

### **Land Use Permits, Licenses of Occupation, Unauthorized Occupations**

There is one commercial land use permit (LUP) located on Pichogen Lake within the park boundary (Figure 2). This LUP is for a commercial outpost camp. Existing tourism facilities are permitted to continue, subject to management prescriptions which may be determined through management planning. Existing tourism facilities may be eligible for enhanced tenure. Eligibility for enhanced tenure will be determined through future management planning (OMNR 2004).

There are no licenses of occupation (LO) or unauthorized occupations within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park.

### **Patent Land**

There are no patent lands within the park.

### **Boat Caches**

There are no authorized boat caches within this provincial park. Watercraft are not permitted to be left unattended in the park without written permission from the superintendent under the authority of the *Provincial Parks Act*.

## **5.2 Aquatic Ecosystems**

Sustaining high quality water resources is fundamental to the protection of park and adjacent land values. The MOE enforces applicable legislation and regulations pertaining to water quality.

### **5.2.1 Water Management**

There are no dams, water control structures, or diversions within the park, nor will any be permitted in the future (OMNR 1992; 1999).

### **5.2.2 Fisheries Management**

The fishing values for the Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park are not known. The provincial park does include several small lakes and is bordered by Pichogen Lake along its south-eastern edge.

Fisheries management will complement maintenance and enhancement of the native, self-sustaining fish populations. Non-native fish species will not deliberately be introduced into the waters contained in the park (OMNR 1992).

### **Sanctuaries**

There are currently no fish sanctuaries located within this park. Prior to any changes in fisheries management or regulations further research and public consultation will be carried out to determine the status of angling and fish populations. Sanctuaries are established under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997).

### **Sport Fishing**

Sport fishing is permitted within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park (OMNR 1992). Any sport fishing activity is governed by the legislation and regulations in the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*, as well as the *Fisheries Act* (1985). The *Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary* contains details on the regulations that are applicable to this area.

### **Commercial Fishing**

There are no commercial fishing operations within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park. No new operations will be permitted (OMNR 1992).

**Commercial Baitfish Harvesting**

Marjorie Township (Hearst District) is not allocated for baitfish harvesting at this time. Walls Township (Hearst District) and Hawkins Township (Wawa District) were allocated for this use. Due to the nature reserve classification of this park, baitfish harvesting is no longer permitted. The portions of the existing baitfish harvesting areas within the park will be removed from the respective baitfishing license. Baitfish harvesting can continue on Pichogen Lake, which is not included within the boundary of this park.

New bait harvesting licenses will be not permitted (OMNR 2000).

**Fish Stocking**

Fish stocking is not permitted (OMNR 1992).

**6.0 OPERATIONS POLICIES****6.1 Recreation Management**

Future management planning, with full public consultation, will review the current direction on motorized and non-motorized recreation uses.

**6.1.1 Motorized Recreation****Motorboats**

Motorized watercraft are not permitted on waters contained within the park boundary (OMNR 1992).

**Aircraft**

Aircraft landings are not permitted within this nature reserve class park (OMNR 1992).

**Snowmobiles**

There are currently no authorized snowmobile trails within the park boundary.

Proposals for new trails may only be considered through future planning with public consultation (OMNR 2000).

The off-road use of snowmobiles is prohibited.

**All-Terrain Vehicles**

There are currently no authorized all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails located within the park.

Proposals for new trails may only be considered through future planning with public consultation (OMNR 2000).

Off- road use of ATVs is prohibited.

**6.1.2 Non-Motorized Recreation****Camping**

Camping is not permitted within nature reserve parks (OMNR 1992).

**Hiking**

There are no authorized hiking trails within the boundaries of this provincial park. If there is an identified need, the development of trails will be addressed during future planning, which includes public consultation. Any trail development is subject to MNR's environmental assessment requirements.

**6.1.3 Emerging Recreation Uses**

There are emerging recreation uses for which there is no or limited policy to deal with their management (e.g. adventure racing, geocaching). The park superintendent will use legislation, policy and guidelines that are in place in the interim to manage emerging uses.

**6.2 Development**

There is no existing development within the park. New development within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park will only be considered through future park management planning.

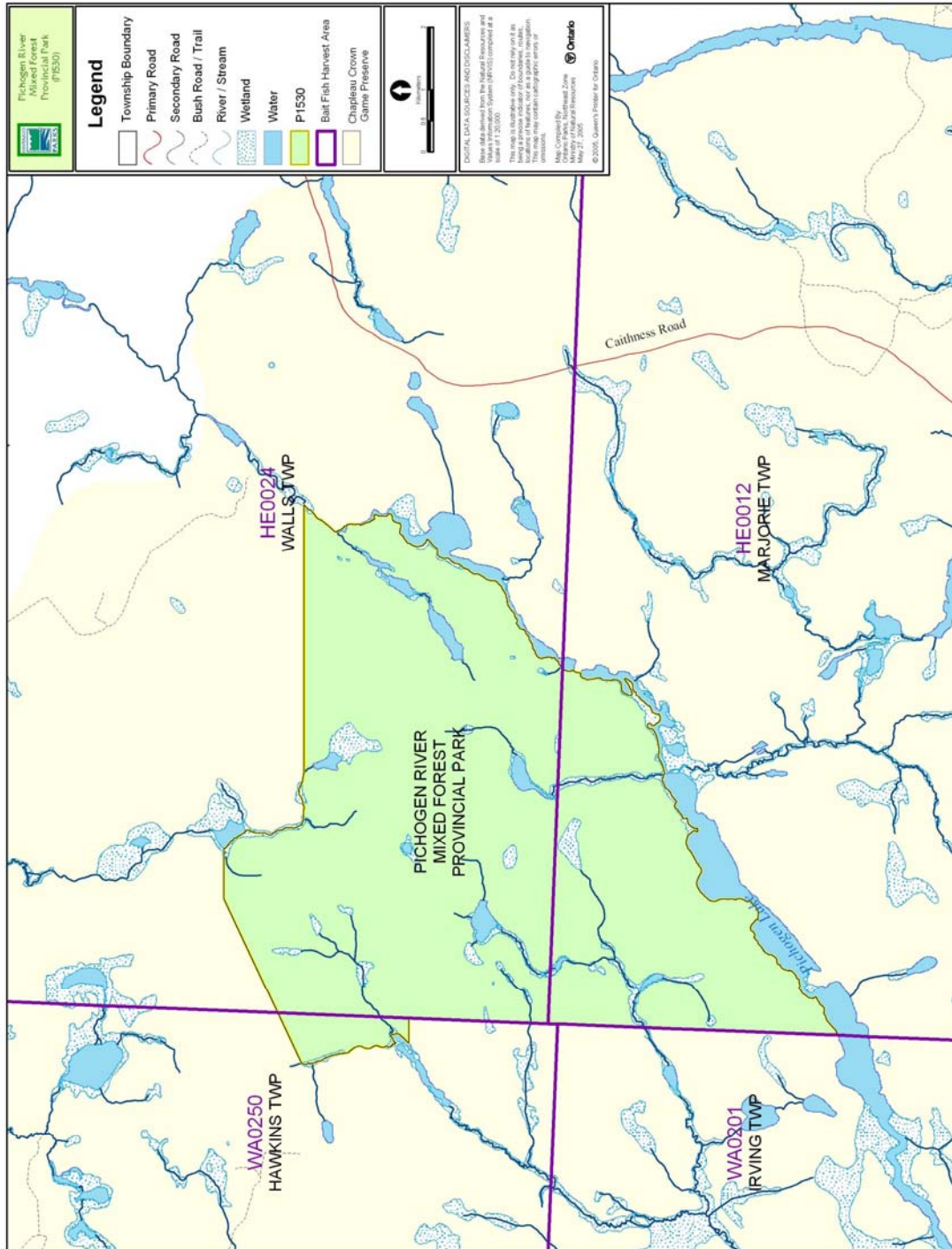
Any proposed development is subject to the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

**6.3 Commercial Tourism**

There is one commercial outpost camp, which managed through a LUP. Existing authorized tourism facilities within the park are permitted to continue, but may be subject to management prescriptions determined through future management planning (OMNR 2004).

No new commercial tourism facilities will be permitted within the boundary of this nature reserve park (OMNR 2004).

Figure 3: Commercial Baitfish Harvesting



## **7.0 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

An assessment of the cultural resources of Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park has not been completed at this time.

Management of any cultural features and values within this park will be directed toward protection and heritage appreciation (OMNR 1992).

## **8.0 HERITAGE EDUCATION**

Literature and other supporting information may be developed to describe the park in the context of Ontario's provincial park system. Boundary limits, significant heritage features and permitted uses of the waterway park may be included in park literature.

Prospective park visitors may be informed about the sensitivity and significance of park values through park literature.

## **9.0 RESEARCH**

Scientific research by qualified individuals which contributes to the knowledge of natural or cultural history, or to environmental or recreational management, may be encouraged in the park. Ontario Parks will encourage institutions, such as universities, to undertake research projects.

All research programs will require the approval of Ontario Parks and are subject to park policy and other applicable legislation. Any materials removed from the park will remain the property of Ontario Parks.

Approved research activities and facilities will be compatible with the park's protection objective. Any site which is affected by research will be rehabilitated as closely as possible to its original state. *Environmental Assessment Act* requirements will apply.

## 10.0 REFERENCES

- Blackburn Geological Services (BGS), 2003. *Earth Science Reconnaissance Surveys of Selected Provincial Parks and Park Additions in North-East Zone of Ontario Parks 2003-2004: Summary of Field Work.*
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- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2004b. *Fire Management Strategy for Ontario.* Aviation and Fire Management Branch.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 2005. *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.*
- Provincial Parks Act*, 1990.



## APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name	Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park (P1530)
Classification	Nature Reserve
Eco Region/Eco District	3E-2 (Hornpayne)
OMNR Administrative Region/District	Hearst & Wawa
Total Area (ha)	3,043
Regulation date & Number	June 7, 2003 (O. Reg. 210/03)

### REPRESENTATION

#### EARTH SCIENCE:

The park's earth science features were investigated and inventoried by Blackburn Geological Services (BGS) in 2003. The Precambrian bedrock is predominantly Archean age granitic rock of the Superior Province, with a narrow east-trending band of greenstone along the north edge. The greenstones are at the eastern end of the Kabinakagami Lake greenstone belt. Quaternary deposits are predominantly thin till over bedrock with lacustrine clays and silts in low-lying areas. A pronounced esker and valley follows the Pichogen River along the southeast side of the park.

#### LIFE SCIENCE:

The life science values of this park have not been investigated or inventoried at this time. This nature reserve is an area of weakly broken bedrock, gentle relief, and sparse wetlands. The site is dominated by mixed forest stands of mainly deciduous vegetation, mixed forests with mainly conifer and dense conifer stands. The eastern section of the park has greater relief, whereas the western section is mainly lowlands and wetlands.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCES:

There has been no investigation or inventory of the cultural values that may exist within Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park. There are some areas along the Pichogen River that have been identified as having a high probability of significant native values.

#### RECREATION & TOURISM:

Pichogen River Mixed Forest Provincial Park, a nature reserve class park, protects representative natural areas and special landscapes. As such, the park offers an area to be explored to appreciate natural heritage features. Nature reserves also offer valuable opportunities to compare and measure the effects of human activities on unprotected areas. Low-intensity recreational activities, such as natural heritage interpretation, walking/hiking, big tree observation, drawing/painting, identifying wildlife, nature study, and photography may be encouraged provided these activities do not harm the protected features. Access to this park is very limited and as a result this park has a very low potential for recreation use.

#### INVENTORIES:

Survey Level	Earth Science	Life Science	Cultural	Recreational
Reconnaissance	BGS, 2003			Harper, 2003