

Killala Lake Conservation Reserve (C2208)

Statement of Conservation Interest



May 2003

**Prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources,
Northwest Region**

**By Rebecca Zeran and Natalie Kolody
OLL Resource Managers
MNR, Nipigon District**

Approval Page

Statement of Conservation Interest

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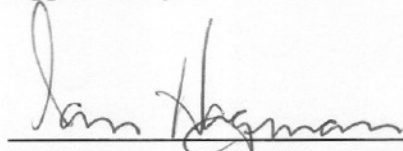
Killala Lake Conservation Reserve

C2208

Nipigon District
Northwest Region

The purpose of this Statement of Conservation Interest is to identify the natural heritage values of the Conservation Reserve and to identify the activities which occur at this location. This Statement outlines the activities which will be permitted and those which will be prohibited. From this outline, the management direction for the site can be determined.

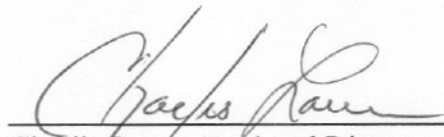
Approved by:



Ian Hagman, District Manager, Nipigon District

JANUARY 9, 2004
Date

Approved by:



Charlie Lauer, Regional Director, Northwest Region

04/01/13
Date

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Background Information
3. Representation Targets
4. Survey Information
5. Natural & Cultural Heritage Values
6. Management Guidelines
 - 6.1 Land Tenure
 - 6.2 Existing and Proposed Development
 - 6.3 Recreational Activities
 - 6.3.1 Summary
 - 6.3.2 Guidelines
 - 6.4 Commercial Activities
 - 6.4.1 Summary
 - 6.4.2 Guidelines
 - 6.5 Aboriginal Interests
 - 6.6 Natural Resource Stewardship
 - 6.6.1 Vegetation Management and Fire Management
 - 6.6.2 Fish and Wildlife Management
 - 6.6.3 Landforms
 - 6.7 Cultural Resource Stewardship
 - 6.8 Client Services
 - 6.9 Research
 - 6.10 Marketing
7. Implementation
8. Review and Revisions
9. Public Consultation
 - 9.1 Results of Past Consultation
 - 9.2 Present and Future Consultation
10. References

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Site Location Reference Map

Appendix 2 – Site and Values Map of the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve

Appendix 3 – Permitted Uses Table

Appendix 4 – Photographs

Appendix 5– Earth Science Report

Appendix 6 – Life Science Report

Appendix 7 – Public and Aboriginal Consultation Documentation Form

Appendix 8 – Recreation Resource Assessment Report and Checksheet

1. Introduction

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released *Ontario's Living Legacy (OLL) Land Use Strategy (LUS)* to guide the planning and management of Crown Lands within a large part of northern and central Ontario. A major component of this Land Use Strategy was the establishment of 378 new protected areas in this part of Ontario. This commitment will be the largest expansion of Provincial Parks and other protected areas in the history of Ontario.

The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve (C2208) is one site within this expansion of Ontario's protected areas.

Conservation Reserves are areas of Crown land set aside by regulation under the *Public Lands Act* to complement provincial parks in protecting representative natural areas and specific landscape features. Most recreational activities (e.g. hiking, skiing, tourism related uses, nature appreciation) and non-industrial commercial activities (e.g. fur harvesting, bait fishing and commercial fishing) that have traditionally been enjoyed in the area will continue – provided that these uses do not impact upon the natural features requiring protection. Recreational hunting and fishing are permitted uses within all new conservation reserves identified through the *OLL Land Use Strategy*. Killala Lake however, is designated as a lake trout sanctuary, where no angling is permitted. Commercial timber harvesting, mining, aggregate extraction and hydroelectric development are prohibited in conservation reserves.

The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve is located approximately 35 km northwest of the Town of Marathon and approximately 45 km northeast of the Town of Terrace Bay. Little direct access to the site exists, however several logging roads do run within close proximity to the site. The conservation reserve contains representative landform and vegetation types, including conifer and deciduous forests on lacustrine deposits and weakly to moderate broken bedrock (OMNR, 1999). Killala Lake is a fish sanctuary (lake trout refugia), where angling is not permitted. More detail on the natural values of the site can be found in the attached Earth Science Report, Life Science Report and the Recreation Resource Assessment Report.

The purpose of this Statement of Conservation Interest is to identify the natural heritage values of the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve; this Statement also identifies the activities occurring within the conservation reserve. Through a set of management guidelines, this statement will outline the activities which will be permitted and those which will be prohibited. From this outline, the management direction for the area can be determined.

2. Background Information

Name	Killala Lake Conservation Reserve
Site Region / Site District	3W-4 and 3W-5
OMNR Administrative Region / District / Area	Northwest Region & Northeast Region/Nipigon District & Wawa District/Terrace Bay Area & Manitouwadge Area
Total Area (ha)	12, 484 hectares
Regulation Date	Slated for 2003/04.
Interested First Nations	Lake Nipigon Ojibway (Aninbiigoo Zaagi'igan), Aroland, Pays Plat, Rocky Bay (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging), Red Rock, Sand Point

	and Ojibways of the Pic River First Nations.
Lat./Long.	lat: 49° 05' and long: 86° 32'
OBM	2016530054400, 2016530054300, 2016540054400, 2016530054200
FRI Stands	Specific numbers for the FRI stands occurring within the conservation reserve can be obtained by contacting the Information Management Team in Nipigon or in Geraldton
General Location	Located approximately 35 km northwest of the Town of Marathon and approximately 45 km northeast of the Town of Terrace Bay. The conservation reserve spans two MNR Regions and Districts (the Northwest Region/Nipigon District and the Northeast Region/Wawa District).
Access	Little direct access to the site exists, however several logging roads do run within close proximity to the site. A 20-year primary road corridor (Michal Lake Road) passes north of the site and ends along the southeast shoreline of Kagiano Lake and may provide access to the northern portion of the site at sometime over the next 20 years.

3. Representation Targets

This section provides a summary of the earth science, life science and cultural resource values represented in the site. It also outlines existing and potential recreational opportunities available.

Life Science Representation	The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve was primarily chosen for protection as it contains representative vegetation types and includes a fairly large lake (Killala Lake) designated as a fish sanctuary for lake trout. Lake trout and northern pike are the dominant fish species present (Hector and Blackman, 1975) and several bird species have been documented within the site, including great blue herons, mergansers, black ducks, common goldeneyes, common loons, and belted kingfishers. Moose and wolves are also present within and adjacent to the conservation reserve.
Earth Science Representation	The site contains representative landform types, including lacustrine deposits and weakly to moderately broken bedrock (OMNR, 1999). Terrain in the conservation reserve is typically rugged, especially to the north. The northern portion of the site encompasses a circular structure known as the Killala Lake Alkali Complex.
Cultural Resource Representation	Several documented archeological sites are present within the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve. These sites date back to the Laurel Culture/Middle Woodland Period and are extremely sensitive to human destruction and disturbance. Locations and further information concerning these sites will not be discussed in this report.

Recreational Opportunities	Recreational opportunities within the site include: canoeing, hunting, trapping, back-country camping, exploring, landscape viewing and various nature activities (e.g. interpretation, photography, study).
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4. Survey Information

This section provides an overview of the inventories completed, their level of detail and any further inventory work required.

Survey Level	Life Science	Earth Science	Cultural	Recreational
Reconnaissance	Yes, Aug. 2002	Yes, Aug. 2002	No	Yes, Aug. 2002
Detailed	No	No	No	No
Requirement	No further requirement	No further requirement	No further requirement	No further requirement

5. Natural & Cultural Heritage Values

This section provides a description of the key natural and cultural heritage values of the site and their condition relative to past and present resource use and management activities. It also addresses the sensitivity of these values to future land use and management activities.

The intent of this Statement is to protect those values identified in the site, by establishing guidelines for existing and potential uses of the area, given the level of past disturbances and the nature of existing features.

Forest Values – The entire forest area is to be protected from human disturbance. The forest cover on this site is representative of the surrounding area and is predominately fire origin mature stands.

Vegetation Values – The site contains representative vegetation types (LUS, 1999). Forest species include: black spruce, white birch, poplar, jack pine, balsam fir, white spruce and cedar.

Geologic Values – The site contains representative landform types, including lacustrine deposits and weakly to moderately broken bedrock (LUS, 1999). Terrain is typically rugged, especially to the north. The northern portion of the site encompasses a circular structure known as the Killala Lake Alkali Complex.

Fish & Wildlife Values – The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve contains a fairly large lake (Killala Lake) designated as a fish sanctuary for lake trout. Killala Lake is protected as a wild broodstock lake for the provincial fish culture system and is a genetic refuge for this lake trout stock (Simpson, 1999). Lake trout and northern pike are the dominant fish species present (Hector and Blackman, 1975) and several bird species have been documented within

the site, including great blue herons, mergansers, black ducks, common goldeneyes, common loons, and belted kingfishers. Moose and wolves are also present within and adjacent to the conservation reserve.

Recreation & Tourism Values – Recreational opportunities within the site include: canoeing, hunting, trapping, back-country camping, exploring, landscape viewing and various nature activities (e.g. interpretation, photography, study). The site is utilized for trapping purposes and several temporary outpost tent camps (moose hunt camps) have existed within the conservation reserve at various times throughout the past decade. Currently, one commercial tent camp is located adjacent to the boundaries of the conservation reserve.

Cultural Values – Several documented archeological sites are present within the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve. These sites date back to the Laurel Culture/Middle Woodland Period and are extremely sensitive to human destruction and disturbance. Due to these sensitivity issues, locations and further information concerning these sites will not be discussed in this report.

Aboriginal Values – The site has probably been used historically by First Nation peoples for traditional hunting, fishing, gathering and cultural activities. The MNR has no record that would indicate the levels of historical use for these activities, however, should any be discovered, they will be given appropriate priority and protection. First Nation people also currently utilize the site for hunting, trapping, fishing and recreation. Nothing in this Statement of Conservation Interest in any way affects existing Aboriginal or Treaty Rights. Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation have indicated an intention to develop sections of the conservation reserve for tourism purposes. Should any further action be taken to pursue this intent, it may be necessary to replace this Statement of Conservation Interest with a more detailed Resource Management Plan.

6. Management Guidelines

The following topics briefly indicate the existing situation within the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve and outline the new and existing management guidelines to be implemented and followed. A copy of the Land Use Policy Report for the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve can be viewed on the Crown Land Use Atlas Website (<http://crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca/pdfs/C2208.pdf>).

6.1 Land Tenure

The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve consists entirely of Crown land. No private land or development currently exists in the area; no future private land disposition or development will be permitted. Existing commercial development within the site (e.g. commercial tent camps and trapping cabins) may be maintained; no future disposition or development will be permitted. Tourism facilities, however, may apply to upgrade tenure from LUP to lease.

6.2 Existing and Proposed Development

A few tertiary forest roads may enter into portions of the conservation reserve. Present use and condition of these roads is unknown. One trapline cabin is located on the eastern side of Killala Lake and one trapline cabin is located almost adjacent to the conservation reserve on Sandspit Lake.

An outpost tent camp LUP is located on the eastern shore of an unnamed lake to the east of Killala Lake.

Maintenance to existing trails, roads, and cabins will be permitted, however, no new development that would disturb the forest or the forest understory vegetation will be permitted. The area will be managed primarily for low-impact recreation, canoeing, hunting, public nature appreciation, educational experiences and scientific study. Major tourism facilities and development will not be promoted for the area due to the potential for site degradation.

6.3 Recreational Activities

6.3.1 Summary

Tourism	Several temporary outpost tent camps (moose hunt camps) have existed within the conservation reserve at various times throughout the past decade. Currently, one commercial tent camp is located adjacent to the boundaries of the conservation reserve. No information on the current level of activity that this camp sees is available. Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation have indicated an intention to develop sections of the conservation reserve for tourism purposes. Motorized boating activities will not be encouraged on Killala Lake to protect the lake's native lake trout populations.
Recreational Fishing	The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve contains a fairly large lake (Killala Lake) designated as a fish sanctuary for lake trout. Angling is not permitted on Killala Lake. Lake surveys for Sandspit Lake document the presence of numerous minnow species. No information exists for the other small lakes within the conservation reserve. Thus, recreational fishing is not a known present or future activity within this conservation reserve.
Recreational Hunting	As noted above, several moose hunt camps have operated within the conservation reserve in the past. However, the rugged landscape, the remote location, and the limited available access to the site will likely limit recreational hunting opportunities within the conservation reserve.

6.3.2 Guidelines

Low-intensity, non-structural activities that do not impact the health of the forest ecosystem (e.g. viewing, canoeing, etc.) are permitted. ATV access and snowmobile usage will be closely monitored for possible damage to the trees, hydrology, and to the site's ability to regenerate. If site degradation occurs, these activities may be excluded from the area. Access to the site by non-mechanized means is the preferred method.

6.4 Commercial Activities

6.4.1 Summary

Mining	No mining claims are located within the conservation reserve. At least 17 active mining claims are presently located adjacent to the conservation reserve and many more are located within close proximity to the site's boundaries.
Aggregate	None known to exist within the site.
Forest Harvest	Mature forest cover on the site is commercially merchantable.
Wild Rice	None observed on site.
Trapping	Traplines TR32, TR33, and TR26 overlap portions of the conservation reserve.
Bear Management Areas	No active BMAs overlap the conservation reserve.
Outpost Camps/Outfitters	One commercial tent camp is located just adjacent to the conservation reserve.
Commercial Fisheries	No commercial fishing operations are present within the site. No active baitfish harvest areas overlap the conservation reserve. No angling is permitted on Killala Lake.

6.4.2 Guidelines

The site forms part of three active traplines. One commercial tent camp is located just adjacent to the conservation reserve. These activities will be permitted to continue. No new trails, cabins or other development are permitted without specific authorization from the Ministry of Natural Resources. However, the maintenance and repair of existing trails and cabins is permitted, as long as the scale and function of the trail or cabin is not significantly altered.

No other commercial activities are known to exist within the conservation reserve boundaries and no new commercial activities will be permitted (i.e., mining, hydroelectric development, logging, aggregate extraction, road development, utility corridors, peat development and topsoil removal).

The area of the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve has been permanently removed from the operable area of the Big Pic Sustainable Forest License and the Pic River Ojibway Sustainable Forest License. The area has also been officially withdrawn from staking by means of a withdrawal order.

6.5 Aboriginal Interests

Local First Nation communities were asked to provide input into the regulation of the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve. District Manager letters were sent to 7 local First Nations on November 12, 1999. Meetings were held with Lake Nipigon Ojibway, Aroland, Pays Plat, Rocky Bay and Red Rock First Nations to discuss the regulation of the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve (along with 7 other OLL sites).

The Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation, although not consulting specifically with regard to the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve, have produced a report outlining potential economic

development opportunities for their community. In this report they identified Killala Lake as potentially providing economic opportunities (e.g. a fly-in tourist outpost on Killala Lake). Consultation regarding the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve was put on hold in 1999/2000 pending a further effort to consult and work with the Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation regarding this issue.

Consultation in this respect will begin anew in September of 2002 and will continue throughout 2002/03. On May 1, 2003 a letter was sent to the Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation inviting them to discuss the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve. The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve will not be formally regulated until the Ministry feels that the First Nation consultation process for this conservation reserve is complete.

The following First Nations have changed their names since the above consultation was undertaken:

- Lake Nipigon Ojibway First Nation → Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek
- Rocky Bay First Nation → Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek

Nothing in this Statement of Conservation Interest in any way affects existing Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.

6.6 Natural Resources Stewardship

6.6.1 Vegetation Management and Fire Management

The area will be managed in accordance with relevant existing policies. Natural ecosystem processes and features will, for the most part, be allowed to occur with minimal human interference.

The MNR recognizes fire as an essential process fundamental to the ecological integrity of conservation reserves. In accordance with existing Conservation Reserve Policy and the Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario, forest fire protection will be carried out as on surrounding lands.

Whenever feasible, the MNR fire program will endeavor to use “light on the land” techniques, which do not unduly disturb the landscape, in this conservation reserve. Examples of light on the land techniques may include limiting the use of heavy equipment or limiting the number of trees felled during fire response efforts.

Opportunities for prescribed burning to achieve ecological or resource management objectives may be considered. These management objectives will be developed with public consultation prior to any prescribed burning, and reflected in the document that provides management direction for this conservation reserve. Plans for any prescribed burning will be developed in accordance with the MNR Prescribed Burn Planning Manual, and the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves (approval pending).

6.6.2 Fish and Wildlife Management

Fisheries and wildlife will be managed in accordance with existing policies. Opportunities for wildlife viewing will be encouraged. Angling is not permitted within Killala Lake (designated as a fish sanctuary/lake trout refugia).

Sandspit Lake and Killala Lake are designated lake trout lakes and, in addition to management policies concerning OLL and Killala's sanctuary status, these lakes will be managed according to current management policy and guidelines for lake trout lakes.

The lake trout is a sensitive species and is adapted to a very narrow range of environmental conditions. Only one percent (approx.) of Ontario's lakes contain lake trout, but this represents about 20-25% of all lake trout lakes in the world (OMNR, 2002). Lake trout (and lake trout lakes) are especially vulnerable to the impacts of human activities, such as: exploitation, enrichment from cottage septic systems, acidification, species introductions, and habitat destruction (OMNR, 2002).

6.6.3 Landforms

No management requirements exist for this category, except that significant and unique landforms should be afforded continued protection as a natural resource.

6.7 Cultural Resource Stewardship

There are no requirements for management of cultural resources at this time based on existing information. The Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to work with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation's regional chief archaeologist to identify archaeological sites requiring further protection.

Several documented archeological sites are present within the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve. These sites date back to the Laurel Culture/Middle Woodland Period and are extremely sensitive to human destruction and disturbance. Locations and further information concerning these sites will not be discussed in this report.

6.8 Client Services

Nipigon District and the Information Management Team staff will be the primary contact for responding to inquiries about the basic level of information such as access, nature appreciation, scientific study requests, wildlife viewing opportunities, hunting, permitted uses and boundaries.

6.9 Research

Non-destructive scientific research by qualified/recognized Canadian institutions or organizations that will contribute to the Ministry of Natural Resources' natural heritage information base will be encouraged. All research programs will require the approval of the Ministry of Natural Resources and will be subject to ministry policy and other relevant legislation.

6.10 Marketing

Activities will include producing a fact sheet highlighting the importance of the reserve and responding to inquiries about the site. There are no other requirements at this time.

7. Implementation

Implementation of this Statement of Conservation Interest will primarily involve monitoring activities to ensure adherence to management guidelines. The conservation reserve will be managed under the supervision of the Information Management Team supervisor (Nipigon District) and the Terrace Bay Area supervisor. Any affected clients will be notified of any amendments to this Statement of Conservation Interest.

The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve is slated for regulation in 2003/04 (by Ontario Regulation 86/01) under the *Public Lands Act*, following the process set out in the *Ontario's Living Legacy Protected Areas Regulation Implementation Manual (MNR, 2000)*.

8. Review and Revisions

Any changes that may occur to the management direction outlined in this Statement of Conservation Interest for the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve will be evaluated for their significance. Minor changes, which do not alter the overall protection objectives, may be considered and approved by the Area Supervisor. Local consultation may also be required, as determined by the Area Supervisor. In the case of major changes, the need for a more comprehensive Resource Management Plan will be considered first, along with any legislated notification requirements that may exist at that particular time. Any major amendments to this document will require public consultation and the approval of the District Manager and Regional Director.

9. Public Consultation

9.1 Results of Past Consultation

The Killala Lake Conservation Reserve has been a part of the land use planning and consultation process during:

- Lands for Life round table consultation (June 1997 to July 1998)
- Ontario's Living Legacy consultations (Fall 1998, Spring 1999)
- OLL Site Regulation and Public Consultation Process (November 1999)

During the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* site regulation and public consultation process for the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve, contact was made with local stakeholders. In November of 1999, letters from the District Manager were sent to First Nations, representatives from the forestry industry, trappers, municipalities, landowners, prospectors, fish and game clubs, trail and recreational clubs, and tourist operators/outfitters. Newspaper advertisements were also released at this time.

Eight comments were received regarding the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve (see Appendix 8 for a copy of the *OLL Public and Aboriginal Consultation Documentation Form for the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve*). Meetings were held with Lake Nipigon Ojibway (Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan), Aroland, Pays Plat, Rocky Bay (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging) and Red Rock First Nations to discuss the regulation of this site (along with 7 other sites). Please see section 6.5 for an account of the comments put forward by First Nations. Concerns that arose with respect to the establishment of the conservation reserve were addressed accordingly.

9.2 Present and Future Consultation

Further widespread consultation is not deemed necessary at this time because of the extensive consultation that has already occurred to date.

Once the Killala Lake Conservation Reserve has been formally regulated under the *Public Lands Act*, Decision Notices will be sent to all members of the public who expressed interest in the site. Notices will also be sent to all First Nations, industry and municipal organizations potentially affected by the regulation of this site.

10. References

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Swift, B. and M. Willie. (1979b). Lake Survey for Sandspit Lake, OMNR.