

***LAWRENCE LAKE
CONSERVATION RESERVE***

STATEMENT OF CONSERVATION INTEREST



Ministry of Natural Resources
Rainy River/Manitou Area
Fort Frances District

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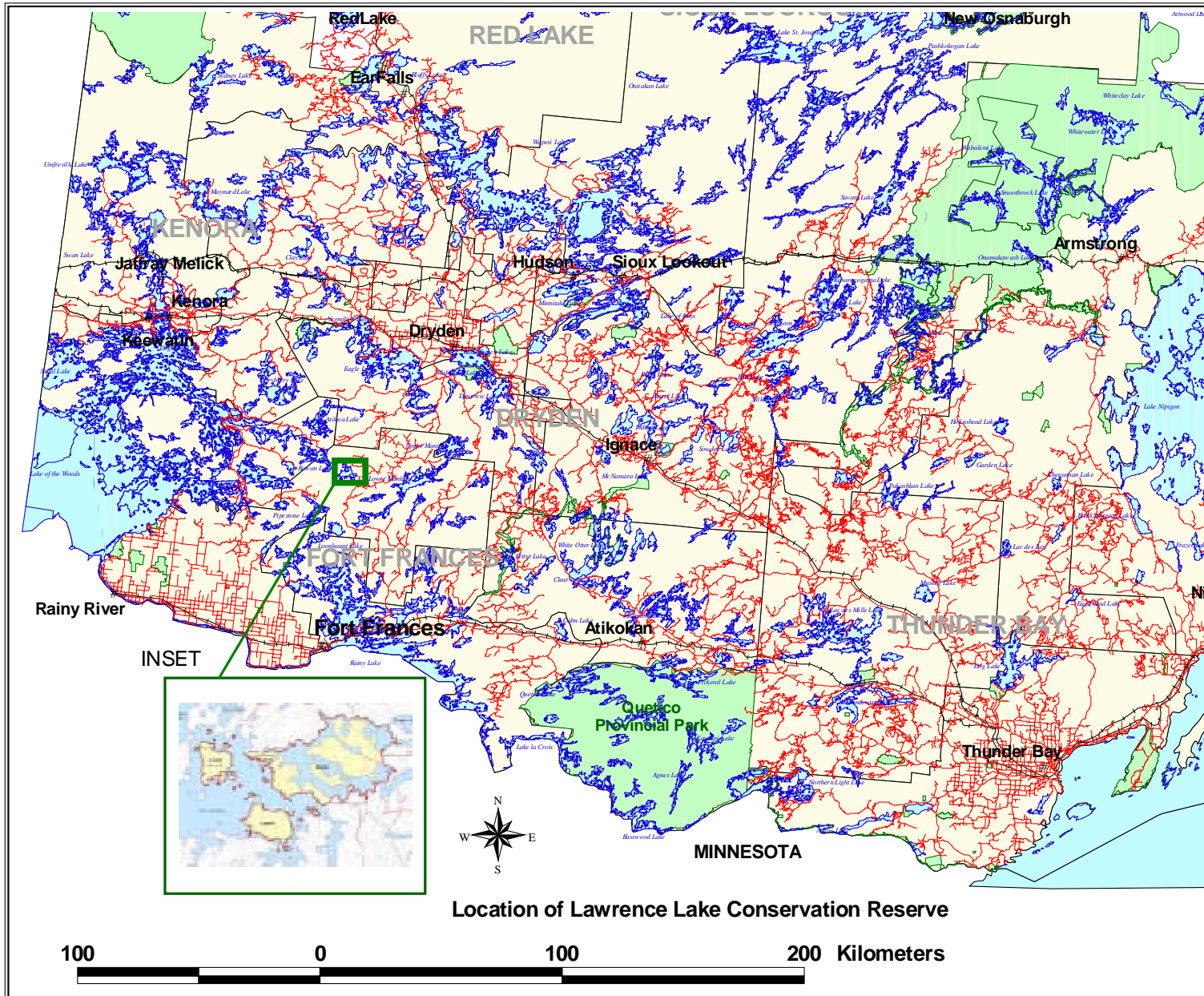
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Location of Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve

1.0 Introduction

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy to guide the planning and management of Crown lands in central and parts of northern Ontario. A major part of the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy was a government intent to establish 378 new protected areas. This commitment marks the biggest expansion of provincial parks and conservation reserves in Ontario's history.

The **Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve** is part of this significant expansion of Ontario's protected areas system.

Conservation reserves are areas of Crown land set aside by regulation under the Public Lands Act, complementing provincial parks in protecting representative natural areas and special landscapes. Most recreational (e.g. hiking, skiing, tourism related uses, nature appreciation) and non-industrial (e.g. fur harvesting, commercial fishing and bait harvesting) activities that have traditionally been enjoyed in the area will continue, provided that these uses do not impact on the natural features needing protection. Hunting and fishing is permitted within all new conservation reserves proposed through Ontario's Living Legacy.

Commercial timber harvesting, mining, aggregate extraction and commercial hydroelectric development are prohibited in conservation reserves.

Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve is located in northwestern Ontario in the Fort Frances Administrative District of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, approximately 75 kilometres north of the town of Fort Frances. The conservation reserve and surrounding area is largely undeveloped Crown land and the dominant land uses are resource-based tourism, recreation and forestry. Forest access roads surround the Reserve, but access controls are in place in those instances where all-weather roads approach closely, preserving the remoteness of the area. Access may be gained by floatplane or, with some effort, by water and portage.

Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve is located within Hills' Site Region 4S and Site District 4S-5 (Hills, 1961). The area occupies an upland of moderately to steeply rolling and broken bedrock terrain situated on the felsic intrusive rocks of the Lawrence Lake Batholith, adjacent to the mafic metavolcanic rocks of the Rowan Lake greenstone belt. Surficial geological features are dominantly ground moraine, representing shallow tills forming a discontinuous cover over the Precambrian bedrock. Rock outcrops are frequent, including a dramatic fault scarp at Gibraltar Narrows. Mineral potential is rated as low (least) (Springer, 1978). The rugged topography varies from a maximum elevation of approximately 400 metres on the hilltops to approximately 350 metres along the shorelines. Evidence of carbonate content in the soil is manifested in the common occurrence of eastern white cedar throughout the area, perhaps originating in the greenstone belts surrounding the batholith and deposited by ice advancing from the northeast across the area from the Labradorean centre during the last glacial period. Organic

deposits occur in the depressions between the surrounding uplands and on the margins of watercourses.



Figure 2: Rock scarp on the south side of Gibraltar Narrows, between Lawrence and "Back Lawrence" Lakes.

The upland forests and wetlands captured by the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve include representative areas of red and white pine, jack pine, spruce-pine conifer, fir-spruce mixedwoods, hardwood mixedwoods, black spruce treed bog, eastern white cedar, black spruce swamp, thicket swamp, shore fen, open fen and exposed marsh. The occurrence of abundant red and white pine here which are more common further to the south led to the inclusion of the area as part of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Forest Region (Rowe, 1972). Lying on the northern edge of this forest region, near the boundary with the northern Boreal Forest Region, the forests tend to have a more boreal character in terms of dominant species. Rowe recognizes the Rainy River area as part of a separate section of the forest region that is influenced by the northward movement of the southern forest, the prairie to the west and the northern forest.

The conservation reserve does not contain any known rare species, however detailed life science surveys would be required to confirm this. Species diversity within this conservation reserve is not expected to be as great as that for areas lying farther to the south in the District. The northern character of the forests of the conservation reserve provides habitat for boreal species such as

moose, lynx, red squirrel, black bear, marten and great grey owl. Bald eagles frequent the area and one nesting site has been identified within the conservation reserve. Further nesting sites have been identified on surrounding lakes for both bald eagle and osprey. The bays of the lakes and connecting waterways provide abundant nesting and foraging habitat for waterfowl, although the area lies outside of major flyways. Lawrence Lake is a deep, coldwater lake that contains lake trout and lake whitefish, as well as northern pike and walleye. Spawning areas have been identified at Gibraltar Narrows, on the Penassi River at both the outlet and inlet of NE Lake and the outlet of SE Lake.

The site has a high potential for outdoor recreational activities, particularly those associated with remote camping canoeing, hunting and fishing. No direct road access exists to the area, with seasonal access controls in place where all weather roads approach closely. Access may be gained via Frypan Lake and the Penassi River from the east, off the Cedar Narrows and Penassi Roads, but two difficult portages are required and trails are not maintained. Access may also be gained via canoe routes connecting to Rowan and Atikwa Lakes to the west, and Pipestone Lake Conservation Reserve through Upper Lawrence and Ashiegamoo Lakes to the south. Several sand beaches suitable for swimming do exist on the lakes of the conservation reserve, but most of the shoreline is rocky or bouldery. Numerous sites suitable for camping exist.



Figure 3: Frypan Portage looking west into NE Lake.

The purpose of this Statement of Conservation Interest is to identify the natural heritage values of the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve, the activities which occur there and, through a set of management guidelines, outline the activities which will and will not be permitted, as well as the management direction for the area (MNR, 1997).

2.0 **Background Information**

The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve is an area protected as representative of red and white pine and mixed forests on bedrock-dominated terrain. The area is not accessible by road, and measures have been implemented to preserve the remoteness of the site. Remote, resource-based tourism and wilderness recreation are the two dominant land uses within the conservation reserve, and comparatively little development has occurred. Lawrence Lake is a waypoint on a significant canoe route leading from Rainy Lake to the south to Lake of the Woods to the west. It forms part of a system of protected areas in this part of the Province created under Ontario's Living Legacy which include the larger Pipestone Conservation Reserve which lies approximately 9 kilometres to the south and the Eagle - Dogtooth Provincial waterway Park to the northwest.

Table 1. Background Information

<i>Name</i>	Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve
<i>Site Region / Site District</i>	4S/4S-5
<i>Ecosite Class</i>	ES 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 32, 34, 35, 41, 44, 45 and 48
<i>OMNR Administrative Region / District / Area</i>	Northwest / Fort Frances / Rainy River-Manitou Area
<i>Total Area (ha)</i>	1,416
<i>Regulation Date</i>	Not yet regulated.
<i>First Nations with Interest in Area</i>	Treaty Three: Whitefish Bay and Sabaskong Bay (Ojibways of Onegaming) First Nations. Other First Nations may also have an interest.
<i>OBM</i>	15U 4750/54550
<i>Lat./Long.</i>	49°15'00"N; 93°20'00"W
<i>Basemap</i>	2015 470054500, 470054600, 480054500 & 480054600
<i>Forest Cover</i>	Mixed forest: red pine, white pine, jack pine, black spruce, cedar, poplar and white birch. Predominantly upland, but also contains examples of treed lowlands. (Refer to Appendix D)
<i>General Location Description</i>	The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve is situated approximately 75 kilometres north of the Town of Fort Frances, 9 kilometres north of the Pipestone Lake Conservation Reserve. The conservation reserve is comprised entirely of Crown land within unorganized

	territory (refer to Figure 1.)
<i>Access</i>	Access can be gained via floatplane, through the canoe routes/waterways from the northwest or south, or via portaging through Frypan Lake from the Cedar Narrows and Penassi Roads from the east. Access is restricted seasonally on the Hector Road to the north of the conservation reserve, and the site is not accessible by road.

2.1 Targets

This section provides a summary of the earth and life science system and values, cultural resources represented and recreational opportunities available or possible.

Table 2. Summary of Social, Economic and Environmental Opportunities

<i>Life Science Representation</i>	<p>The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve contains representative examples of burn, conifer forest, conifer mixed forest, deciduous forest, open wetland, and sparse forest over ground moraine within Site District 4S-5.</p> <p>The most distinctive life science features of the conservation reserve are the mixed white and red pine stands and ecosites that occur throughout. The abundance of eastern white cedar is also significant in terms of representation within this site district. All three species occur here near the northern limits of their ranges.</p> <p>Although no rare species have been identified or confirmed within the conservation reserve, the variety of habitat, both upland and aquatic is quite diverse within the site. The lakes and rivers associated with the reserve include both deep, cold waters supporting lake trout, and shallow waters that support warm water species. Four identified fish spawning sites have been identified within the reserve, below rapids in the connecting waterways. Common sportfish present include lake whitefish, lake trout, walleye and northern pike. A variety of wetland habitats are also represented within the site, including shallow water marshes that provide nesting</p>
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	<p>and foraging habitat for waterfowl and wading shorebirds and other wildlife. Upland forests include hardwood and conifer, as well as mixedwood habitat. Moose, beaver, black bear and other boreal species are common throughout the area, and 11 moose aquatic feeding areas have been identified within or adjacent to the conservation reserve. One known bald eagle nesting site has been identified within the conservation reserve, but this species is common throughout the area and potential nesting sites along the large amount of shoreline within the reserve, represented by large white pine, are numerous.</p> <p>Detailed life science surveys have not been conducted on the site. No records of rare species occurring in the area exist (NHIC, 2001).</p>
<i>Earth Science Representation</i>	<p>The dominant landform feature is moderately broken bedrock knob with subordinate ground moraine and organic terrain (Roed, 1980). A thin, discontinuous, sandy glacial till has been deposited over the felsic intrusive granitoid bedrock, with minor glaciolacustrine silts and clays. (Blackburn, 1981, Barnett et al, 1991). Stones and boulders of glacial origin alternate with bedrock to form much of the shoreline of the lakes within the conservation reserve. Sand beaches are less common.</p>
<i>Cultural Resource Representation</i>	<p>The site contains no known cultural resource values. Although located along a travel route believed to have been used by native peoples historically, the frequency of much larger waterbodies to the north, west and south may have limited the use of the Lawrence Lake area to incidental use. More recent uses have been associated with recreation.</p>

<p><i>Recreational Opportunities</i></p>	<p>The overall recreational potential of the conservation reserve is ranked as high to very high. Of the potential recreational activities identified, those which are associated with backcountry camping and canoeing, hunting and fishing are considered the most viable, although these are somewhat hampered by access limitations and difficulty. Such activities could also include nature study, bird and wildlife viewing and photography.</p> <p>The limited easy access to the area tends to limit use primarily to the few camp owners on Lawrence Lake and guests of the tourist lodge located there. As a consequence both game and fish populations are relatively high. Opportunities for hunting and fishing are therefore considered excellent for those wishing to make the effort.</p> <p>The conservation reserve lies on a significant canoe route leading from Rainy Lake through Footprint, Burditt, Pipestone, Yoke, Crossroute, Ashiegame and Upper Lawrence Lakes to the south, to Lake of the Woods through Hill, Rowan, Denmark, Caviar and Dogpaw Lakes to the northwest. It is also possible to follow connecting lakes and rivers through to the Eagle - Dogtooth Provincial Waterway Park to the northwest. Several established campsites have been identified on Lawrence, Back Lawrence and NE Lakes (Refer to Map 3) and numerous other suitable locations exist throughout the site.</p> <p>A limited number of sand bathing beaches exist, with the largest and best examples being on the north shore of Back Lawrence Lake.</p>
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2.2 Survey Information

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

Table 3. Level of survey performed

Survey Level	Life Science	Earth Science	Cultural	Recreational
Reconnaissance	Yes ¹	Yes ²	No	Yes ³
Detailed	No	No	No	No
Requirement	No	No	No	No

¹ Foster and Harris, 2002

² Blackburn, 2002

³ Munroe, 2002

The reconnaissance surveys which have been completed, in conjunction with other values and earth/life science records for the area (OMNR, 2002) are deemed sufficient in scope and detail to determine management direction for the conservation reserve. More detailed surveys may be undertaken at a later time if circumstances change.

3.0 Values to be Protected

This section provides a description of the key natural heritage values on the site (Appendices) and their condition relative to past resource use and management activities. It also addresses the values' sensitivity to future land use and management activities.

3.1 Values Identified in the Conservation Reserve

Table 4. Values identified in the conservation reserve

<i>Life Science</i>	<p>Identified ecosites classified in accordance with the Northwestern Ontario Forest Ecosystem Classification (Racey et al, 1996) within the conservation reserve include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES12 Black Spruce - Jack Pine: Very Shallow Soil • ES13 Jack Pine - Conifer: Dry - Moderately Fresh, Sandy Soil • ES14 Pine - Spruce Mixedwood: Sandy Soil • ES15 Red Pine - White Pine: Sandy Soil • ES17 White Cedar: Fresh - Moist, Coarse - Fine Loamy Soil • ES18 Red Pine - White Pine: Fresh, Coarse Loamy Soil • ES19 Hardwood-Fir-Spruce Mixedwood: Fresh, Sandy - Coarse Loamy Soil • ES 20 Spruce-Pine / Feathermoss: Fresh, Sandy- Coarse Loamy Soil • ES21 Fir - Spruce Mixedwood: Fresh, Coarse Loamy Soil • ES23 Hardwood-Fir-Spruce Mixedwood: Moist, Sandy - Coarse
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	<p>Loamy Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES26 Spruce-Pine / Feathermoss: Fresh, Fine Loamy - Clayey Soil • ES32 Fir - Spruce Mixedwood: Moist, Silty - Clayey Soil • ES34 Treed Bog: Black Spruce / Sphagnum: Organic Soil • ES35 Poor Swamp: Black Spruce: Organic Soil • ES41 Open Poor Fen: Ericaceous Shrub - Sedge/Sphagnum: Organic Soil • ES44 Thicket Swamp: Organic-Mineral Soil • ES45 Shore Fen: Organic Soil • ES48 Exposed Marsh: Emergent: Mineral Substrate <p>A map displaying the distribution of the represented ecosites is contained in Appendix C.</p> <p>Those parts of the conservation reserve supporting tree growth include areas dominated by red pine, white pine, jack pine, black spruce, eastern white cedar, white birch and aspen. The presence of carbonates in the glacial tills may explain the occurrence of cedar throughout the site, both as a dominant and component species. The age of the forest cover ranges from 54 to 155 years, and averages 83 years of age. The eastern white cedar and lowland black spruce represent the oldest stands, while white birch represents the youngest. The red and white pine in the area are relatively young, with most being less than 100 years of age, although older individuals may exist. Some natural disturbance of the forest has occurred in the easternmost portion of the conservation reserve. A small area of recent burn has been identified, and older areas of disturbance occur sporadically throughout the area. The lack of jack pine regeneration and the existence of balsam fir would suggest that the area was damaged by wind. Appendix C contains a forest cover map and Appendix D contains stand listings for the conservation reserve.</p> <p>Lawrence and Back Lawrence are deep, coldwater lakes which contain lake trout, lake whitefish, walleye and northern pike.</p> <p>The vegetation of the conservation reserve is typical of the ecosites represented, with no rare plants having been documented for this site. Although a detailed survey of plant species has not been undertaken, a list of the plant species identified during reconnaissance surveys on the site is contained in Appendix B.</p>
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<p><i>Earth Science</i></p>	<p>The bedrock geology has not been intensively studied in this area, and more detailed investigation of the entire Lawrence Lake batholith would be required in order to present a comprehensive picture for the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve.</p> <p>Located within the western portion of the Wabigoon subprovince, the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve lies entirely atop the felsic igneous rocks of the Archean age Lawrence Lake Batholith. Reconnaissance surveys found rocks consisting of granites and granodiorite cut by narrow dikes of pegmatite and felsic porphyritic rocks (Blackburn, 2002). The topography is moderately broken, with bedrock knob terrain predominating, rising from an elevation of approximately 350 metres along the shoreline to 400 metres on some of the island and peninsular hilltops. The area is covered by a thin, discontinuous drift of sandy glacial till, with minor occurrences of fine-textured glaciolacustrine sediments and Recent organic deposits occupying depressions between the bedrock knolls. Deeper surficial deposits are localized and tend to occur on the down-ice side of the ice movement to the southwest, in the lee of bedrock features.</p> <p>Much of the shoreline within the conservation reserve consists of exposed bedrock that ranges from relatively flat to steep, near-vertical cliff faces. Elsewhere large glacially deposited boulders line the shore and form boulder-choked channels in the rapids along connecting streams. Exposed sand beaches are less common, but do exist on the north shore of Back Lawrence Lake and on Emm Island. Submerged beaches, often accompanied by aquatic vegetation also occur sporadically.</p> <p>A minor fault line is apparent extending northeast-southwest along the northern end of Back Lawrence Lake. A dramatic fault scarp associated with this feature, approximately 4 metres in height (Figure 2), lies along the rapids between Lawrence and Back Lawrence Lakes at Gibraltar Narrows. Another example exists along the northern end of the peninsula on the east side of Back Lawrence Lake.</p> <p>A large boulder shoal lies just beneath the surface of the water in the middle of the southeastern channel of Lawrence Lake. This feature may only be exposed during low water conditions.</p> <p>The abundance of eastern white cedar, that cedar tends to favour more alkaline soils, would seem to indicate the presence of</p>
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	<p>carbonate material within the glacial tills despite the fact that the area is underlain by granitoid rocks which are associated with acidic soil conditions. The source of the carbonates may be the metamorphic rocks of the greenstone belt that surrounds the Lawrence Lake Batholith.</p>
<i>Cultural</i>	<p>The area contains no identified cultural heritage values.</p>
<i>Aboriginal</i>	<p>The area contains no identified aboriginal values.</p>
<i>Tourism</i>	<p>Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve is located in an area rated high for remote, resource-based tourism values. Although forest access roads surround the site, seasonal access controls are in place (Hector Road) to preserve the remoteness of the area.</p> <p>Opportunities exist for hunting and fishing based on the fish and wildlife resources of the area, which include lake trout, lake whitefish, northern pike, walleye, black bear, moose, upland gamebirds and waterfowl. The access limitations limit hunting and fishing pressure on the resources that tends to preserve the local populations compared to surrounding, more accessible areas.</p> <p>Although not heavily used for this purpose presently, the area does represent opportunities for non-consumptive tourism. Canoe routes, both formal and informal connect the conservation reserve with the Pipestone Conservation Reserve to the south, Eagle - Dogtooth Provincial Waterway Park to the northwest, and Lake of the Woods to the west. Associated activities such as wildlife viewing and wilderness camping may also have commercial value.</p> <p>One commercial tourist lodge is located on private land adjacent to the conservation reserve on the north shore of Lawrence Lake, to the west of Gibraltar Narrows. Commercial boat caches are located at Gibraltar Narrows, at a narrows to the south between Lawrence and Back Lawrence Lakes, along the portage from Back Lawrence Lake into SE Lake and on the Penassi River where it empties into NE Lake from Frypan Lake.</p>
<i>Recreational Fishing</i>	<p>The conservation reserve encompasses four lakes which support gamefish populations: Lawrence, Back Lawrence, NE and SE Lakes. Species present include lake trout, walleye, lake whitefish and northern pike. The quality of the fishery is considered high, maintained by the access limitations in place. For canoeists passing through or those willing to make the effort required to gain access, the rewards are potentially higher than would be expected for more</p>

	readily accessible waters.
<i>Recreational/ Commercial Hunting</i>	Hunting potential, particularly for moose and bear is considered to be high, although access is a limitation. Seasonal road use restrictions on the Hector Road to the north are lifted after September, as these restrictions are aimed primarily at preserving the quality of the fisheries. However, the Hector Road is currently unmaintained and a beaver dam on the road presently blocks access by this route. Hunting for upland gamebirds and waterfowl also present opportunities, although in the latter case the area is off major flyways and may be limited primarily to early-season hunting of locally nesting birds. The area contains portions of two Bear Management Areas (BMA's), FF 08-55 and 09A-29. (Refer to Map 3)
<i>Mining</i>	The conservation reserve and surrounding area contain no active mining claims, with exploration in the area tending to focus on the area of the greenstone belt to the west, where active claims do exist. The area is ranked as low (least) in terms of mineral potential (Springer, 1978).
<i>Aggregate</i>	The area is generally low potential for aggregate extraction, with deposits tending to be shallow tills over bedrock. (Roed, 1980) No aggregate pits currently exist in proximity to the conservation reserve.
<i>Forest Harvest</i>	Apart from some periodic logging of Crown lands surrounding the conservation reserve, no forest harvesting has been documented in this area. .
<i>Trapping</i>	The conservation reserve contains a portion of trapline FF21. A cabin associated with this trapline is located within the conservation reserve at Gibraltar Narrows.
<i>Wild Rice</i>	Commercial wild rice harvesting currently does not occur within this conservation reserve, nor have stands been identified.
<i>Wildlife</i>	Although a detailed life science survey would be required to document and substantiate all of the flora and fauna occurring within the conservation reserve, the variety of upland, wetland and aquatic habitat would suggest that the area supports a wide variety of the commonly-occurring local species, either as resident or nesting populations, or occasional visitors. Wildlife species observed in the area during reconnaissance surveys include moose, black bear, beaver, river otter, red squirrel, least chipmunk, bald eagle, broad-winged hawk, common loon, herring gull, turkey vulture, wood duck and pileated woodpecker. One bald eagle nesting site has been identified within the conservation reserve. A list of the commonly occurring vertebrate species that may be found in the area is

	contained in Appendix B.
<i>Commercial Fish</i>	No commercial fishing for human consumption exists within the conservation reserve. Commercial baitfishing does occur, with the area forming parts of baitfish blocks FF-132 and FF-137, and will be permitted to continue.

3.2 Values Protection

The intent of this Statement of Conservation Interest is to protect the identified values by establishing management guidelines for existing and potential uses in this area, given the level of past disturbance and the nature of the existing features. Uses and activities which are permitted, not permitted or conditionally permitted are governed by the policies applying to conservation reserves as stated in the Land Use Strategy and existing conservation reserve policy. Any new uses, and commercial activities associated with them, will be considered on a case by case basis, and must pass a test of compatibility to be acceptable. Compatibility is normally determined through a planning process. The policies outlined in this Statement of Conservation Interest do not supersede any Aboriginal or treaty rights that may exist, or other legal obligations.

Forest Values

The upland forest types and ecosites identified will continue undergoing natural successional changes already initiated, towards a spruce-fir forest without the advent of a major disturbance such as fire. The eastern white cedar forest ecosites are not expected to change, given the autecology of the primary species. The treed and untreed peatland features are also likely to remain unchanged in the absence of natural disturbances such as fire. Human activities that represent the greatest potential impacts on forest structure, such as logging, mining and hydroelectric development, will not be permitted. However, sustaining these values in the long-term may require development of a vegetation management plan and natural disturbance strategy.

Activities occurring on adjacent lands surrounding the conservation reserve are not expected to have a significant impact on the ecology of the site, with the actual interface between the forested portions of the site and adjacent lands being relatively limited, confined six relatively small areas (Refer to Map 1). Where the waters within the conservation reserve abut unregulated Crown lands, normal no-cut reserves buffer surrounding forest harvesting activities.

Recreational and Commercial Values

The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve contains features that may hold interest for amateur and professional naturalists. There is the potential for a number of low impact, non-consumptive recreational activities such as canoeing, camping, wildlife viewing and photography, although access difficulties are expected to continue to limit use.

The existing traplines, baitfish harvest areas and bear management areas within the conservation reserve will remain and existing uses associated with them allowed to continue. New operations may be considered, subject to the "test of compatibility". Normal application of controls such as quotas and seasons are designed to ensure that affected wildlife populations remain sustainable. Use of existing trails will be allowed to continue. Proposals for the development of new trails to permit access for these activities will be considered carefully to ensure that the values of the conservation reserve are protected. Recreational hunting and fishing will be permitted, although

it is expected that access limitations will limit these activities and the level of use may remain relatively low.

Traditional recreational hunting and fishing will continue to be a significant activity, although access limitations and difficulties will continue to limit numbers of users, which in turn will help to maintain the quality of the resources.

Tourism Values

Access to this area is limited by a lack of all-weather access roads to or within the site, and the application of seasonal use controls on those roads that approach the area, such as the Hector Road. A tourist lodge currently exists on Lawrence Lake west of Gibraltar Narrows, with boat commercial caches located at strategic portages throughout the conservation reserve. Portages within the Reserve tend to be maintained by the tourist operator for the use of their guests and local cottagers for personal use. Portages leading to and from the Reserve tend to be either unmaintained or non-existent, contributing to the remoteness of the area. The quality hunting and fishing represent the traditional tourism values for the area, but other non-consumptive activities associated with the earth and life science features are possible. The sinuous nature of the waterbodies, most connected by existing portages, represent undeveloped possibilities for a variety of wildlife viewing and nature appreciation activities associated with a reasonable day trip or short overnight canoe trip for novice canoeists, all within a remote wilderness setting.

4.0 Management Guidelines

4.1 Land Tenure

The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve consists entirely of Crown land and no disposition of Crown land by sale is permitted within the conservation reserve. The surrounding and adjacent lands consist largely of Crown lands, although four small private holdings occur adjacent to the conservation reserve, all on Lawrence Lake. No expropriation or purchasing of private land for inclusion in the conservation reserve is planned. New leases or land use permits may be considered for approved activities, subject to the "test of compatibility", but will generally be discouraged within the conservation reserve.

4.2 Existing and Proposed Development

No mining development or mineral exploration activities will be permitted within the conservation reserve.

No roads currently exist within the area and no new roads will be permitted.

No commercial aggregate permits exist for the area of the conservation reserve and no new permits will be issued. Aggregate extraction will not be permitted.

No logging operations or facilities, nor hydro- electric facilities or structures exist within the area and no new development will be permitted.

No cabins or other facilities associated with commercial bear management or baitfish harvesting on the site exist, and no new facilities will be permitted. One trapper's cabin currently exists within the Reserve and may remain in accordance with existing policy, but no new cabins associated with this activity will be permitted. Existing trails used in conjunction with these activities may continue to be used, but new trails will only be considered subject to the "test of compatibility". New fur harvesting or commercial baitfishing operations can also be considered, subject to the "test of compatibility".

No trails suitable for recreational purposes, such as hiking, skiing, snowmobiling or horseback riding, exist within the conservation reserve. The development of new trails will be subject to further planning if considered desirable. Under such circumstances planning will favour the upland portions of the site, and avoid the wetland features and other sensitive areas in locating trails.

No private recreational camps currently exist within the conservation reserve and no new camps will be permitted. (Note: three private recreation camps exist on private lands not included within the conservation reserve, on Emm Island and west of Gibraltar Narrows,)

Portages exist between Lawrence and Back Lawrence Lakes at Gibraltar Narrows and a small narrows to the south. Local users have constructed a rudimentary log structure for portaging laden boats across the Gibraltar portage. Additional short portages exist on the Penassi River between Back Lawrence and NE Lake, and between Back Lawrence and SE Lake. Any proposals to improve existing portages or create new ones will be subject to the "test of compatibility".



Figure 4: Log portage structure on portage at Gibraltar Narrows.

4.3 Recreational Activities

Recreational hunting will be allowed to continue within the conservation reserve, subject to applicable regulations. The use of motorized and non-motorized means of transport will be permitted, but ATV's will be limited to existing trails. New trails may be permitted, subject to the "test of compatibility", and will be discouraged within the wetland features and other sensitive areas of the site. Other recreational low impact activities and non-motorized recreational travel such as skiing, canoeing and hiking are permitted.

The use of mechanized means of transport such as snowmachines and all-terrain vehicles off of existing trails will not be permitted, except for direct retrieval of game in accordance with existing conservation reserve policy. Evidence of existing snowmachine use is limited to the waters of Lawrence Lake (Refer to Map 2).

Existing Ministry policies and regulations relating to Crown land camping will apply. Existing policies relative to boat and equipment caches will also apply.

Sport fishing is a permitted use within the conservation reserve, subject to applicable regulations.

Low-impact recreational activities such as nature appreciation, photography and wildlife viewing are permitted and will be encouraged.

4.4 Commercial Activities

Activities associated with current traplines and baitfish harvesting areas in the conservation reserve will be permitted to continue in accordance with existing policies and regulations. New operations may be considered, subject to a test of compatibility.

Existing bear management areas will be permitted to continue in accordance with existing policies and regulations. No new operations are permitted.

No commercial tourism facilities, such as outpost cabins, resorts or lodges, exist within the conservation reserve, although one tourist lodge, located on private land outside the boundaries of the reserve, does exist on Lawrence Lake west of Gibraltar Narrows. New commercial tourism facilities within the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve may be considered, unless there are significant demonstrated conflicts, subject to review through the planning process as set out in the Draft Class Environmental Assessment for Ontario's Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves. Existing Ministry policies and regulations relating to Crown land camping will apply. Four commercial boat caches associated with commercial tourism operations exist within or adjacent to the conservation reserve. Existing policies relative to boat and equipment caches will apply.

No commercial food fisheries operations exist within the conservation reserve. New operations may be considered subject to the "test of compatibility".

Commercial wild rice harvesting does not occur within the conservation reserve, nor have any significant occurrences of wild rice been identified. No other commercial food harvesting (i.e. blueberries) activities have been identified. Any new activities will require the written authorization of the District Manager, be subject to a test of compatibility and alternative locations will be preferred.

4.5 Aboriginal Interests

The creation of this conservation reserve will not affect any Aboriginal or treaty rights. Consultation with interested First Nations towards identifying cultural and spiritual values within the area will continue.

4.6 Natural Resources Stewardship

4.6.1 Vegetation Management

The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve will be managed to allow natural processes to continue. Suppression of fire will occur in accordance with existing MNR fire suppression strategies. Prescribed burning may be carried out to simulate natural fire, subject to a planning process. The development of a vegetation management plan for the area in the context of regional fire strategies is recommended over time.

Control of insects and diseases within the conservation reserve will be carried out, if required, in accordance with existing Provincial programs and policies. All such proposed activities will be reviewed carefully to ensure that the values of the conservation reserve are protected. Control of non-native species will be considered a priority.

The use of pesticides and other control agents within the conservation reserve, should such measures be considered desirable, will favour biological controls.

4.6.2 Fish and Wildlife Management

Current Acts, Regulations and Policies will apply. The lands and waters of the conservation reserve will be included in scheduled fish and wildlife management programs and activities. The terrestrial and wetland ecosites of the conservation reserve will be considered in other resource management planning as a component of the wildlife habitat in the broader landscape. The introduction of non-native species will not be permitted.

4.6.3 Landforms

Activities that tend to impact landforms, such as aggregate extraction and road construction, will not be permitted.

4.7 Non-Commercial Consumptive Uses

The consumptive uses of fish and wildlife resources within the conservation reserve are discussed under Section 4.3, and commercial consumptive uses under Section 4.4.

Non-commercial food gathering activities such as berry picking for personal use will be permitted to continue. Plant collection except for approved research or inventory purposes will not be permitted.

Non-commercial harvesting of traditional forest products such as fuelwood for personal use will may be permitted within the conservation reserve, subject to existing Provincial legislation and policy, only if other viable alternatives do not exist outside the Reserve boundaries. The location

of any areas where such activities may be permitted will be determined subject to the test of compatibility.

4.8 Cultural Resources Stewardship

The location and specific details regarding cultural heritage resources may be kept confidential in order to ensure protection of such values and sites. No cultural heritage values have been identified within the site to date.

4.9 Client Services

No on-site facilities or services exist within the conservation reserve, nor are any proposed at this time.

The permitted uses and recognized values of this conservation area will be made known to the public through public consultation associated with the Land Use Strategy, the site regulation process, and materials, including this Statement of Conservation Interest, available through Government Information Centres. No significant advertising campaigns for the Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve are planned at this time.

Future planning for the conservation reserve will be in accordance with the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves, which may involve formal public consultation.

4.10 Research

Research activities which do not detrimentally affect the values which the conservation reserve is designed to protect will be encouraged, but will require the written authority of the District Manager.

4.11 Marketing

No marketing associated specifically with this conservation reserve for tourism and recreational purposes is planned at this time.

5.0 Implementation

The Lawrence Lake site will be regulated as a conservation reserve under the Public Lands Act, in 2002, following the process set out in the Ontario's Living Legacy Protected Areas Regulation Implementation Manual (*MNR, 2000*).

The Fort Frances District, Rainy River/Manitou Area of the Ministry of Natural Resources will be responsible for implementing the management policies and guidelines for the area. All MNR Resource Management Plans or Land Use Plans have been revised as necessary to exclude timber harvesting and other non-permitted activities from this area. All stakeholders and clients will be informed through mail and other consultation of the changes that will take affect. The Rainy River/Manitou Area will have primary responsibility in administering the policies and guidelines. The primary role is providing public information and monitoring of compliance to the policies and guidelines.

6.0 Review and Revisions

6.1 Review and Revision Process

The Lawrence Lake Conservation Reserve Statement of Conservation Interest will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and revised as needed.

Revisions to the Lawrence Lake Statement of Conservation Interest will be subject to the requirements as specified in the Draft Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves. Significant changes as defined under the Class EA will involve a public consultation process and approval from the District Manager and Regional Director of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

6.2 Public Consultation

6.2.1 Past Consultation

The Lawrence Lake site was part of the consultation process in the land use planning exercise. Consultation associated with the land use planning initiative occurred at a number of stages in the process:

- Lands For Life round table consultation June 1997- July 1998
- Ontario Forest Accord 1999
- Ontario's Living Legacy round table discussions 1999
- Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy 1999
- OLL Site Regulation Public Consultation Process 2001.

6.2.2 Present and Future Consultation

Summary of the 2001 Site Regulation Process:

- Mailouts were sent to adjacent property owners and other affected and interested parties and agencies by the District Manager, and newspaper adds placed in local and regional media, informing of the regulation process and inviting comments on the proposed boundaries.

- A concern was raised by a local property owner who indicated that his lot on Emm Island was shown in the wrong location and provided a corrected map. Secondly, he proposed an expansion of the protected area to include a sizeable area on the south of Lawrence Lake between that lake and Upper Lawrence Lake, citing concerns over water crossings, an Eagle nest and mature timber in the location as rationalization.
- Recommendations: Based on the input received, revisions to the boundaries of the site in the location of the private lot on Emm Island were deemed necessary. No expansion of the protected area based upon the values represented was recommended.

(More detailed Consultation Documentation is available on file at the Fort Frances District offices of the Ministry of Natural Resources)

The policies that form the basis of this Statement of Conservation Interest are specified in the approved *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*. A policy statement defining the land use intent and specific policies applicable to this conservation reserve may also be found posted on the internet as part of the Land Use Atlas (under preparation, expected completion 2002). Should revisions to the policies applying to this conservation reserve be required over time, such revisions will be subject to the provisions of the *Land Use Strategy* regarding amendments.

7.0 References

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