

**WILLOW LAKE
CONSERVATION RESERVE**

STATEMENT OF CONSERVATION INTEREST

Ignace Area, Dryden District

April 1998

Approval Statement

I am pleased to approve this Statement of Conservation Interest for the Willow Lake Conservation Reserve.

This Statement of Conservation Interest provides guidance for the management of the conservation reserve and the basis for the ongoing monitoring activities. More detailed direction at this time is not anticipated. Should significant facility development be considered or complex issues arise requiring additional studies, more defined management direction, or special protection measures, a more detailed Conservation Reserve Management Plan will be prepared with full public consultation.

The public was widely consulted during the original regulation process and further consultation is not required at this time.

The conservation reserve will be managed under the jurisdiction of the Ignace Area Supervisor, Dryden District, Ministry of Natural Resources.

M.L. Willick
Regional Director
Northwest Region

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1.0 Background Information

The purpose of this document is to identify the natural heritage values of Willow Lake Conservation Reserve, the activities which occur there and through a set of management guidelines, lay out the activities which will be permitted and not permitted and the direction of management for the area. For more information for the basis of this Statement of Conservation Interest (SCI) please refer to the “Conservation Reserves Policy and Procedure PL3.03.05”, specifically pages 2-6 and 14-22 of the of the procedure.

Background Information

Name	Willow Lake Conservation Reserve
Site Region / Site District	3W-2
OMNR Administrative Region / District / Area	Northwest / Dryden / Ignace Area
Total Area (ha)	55
Regulation Date	January 7 th , 1995
First Nations	Treaty 3, Saugeen First Nation
OBM	15-6500-55100
Lat./Long.	Lat. 49°47 ' 30 " North, Long. 90°49 ' 10 " West
Basemap	497904
FRI Stands	68, 72, 73
General Location Description	Located on the northwest shore of Willow Lake, 75 km northeast of Ignace
Access	The area is isolated and only accessible by boat or floatplane

1.1 Targets

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

Life Science Representation	Old growth white pine
Earth Science Representation	Moderately broken ground moraine

Cultural Resource Representation	No research to date; no documented cultural heritage
Recreational Opportunities	Opportunities exist for wildlife viewing, hunting and sport fishing on adjacent waters

1.2 Survey Information

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

Survey Level	Reconnaissance	Detailed	Requirement
Life Science	No	No	Yes – identified as a requirement in the Keep It Wild (KIW) site report
Earth Science	No	No	No
Cultural	No	No	No
Recreational	No	No	No
Other	No	No	No

2.0 Values to be Protected

This section provides a description of the key natural heritage values on the site, and their condition relative to past resource use and management activities and their sensitivity to future land use and management activities.

2.1 Values Identified on the Site

Life Science	Old growth white pine community at northern fringe of this forest community's northern range; core area of 28 ha, has 30% white pine, 172 years old (1998).
Earth Science	Moderately broken ground moraine
Cultural	None identified
Aboriginal	None identified
Tourism	No specific site values; area is located on an active tourism oriented water system
Recreational Fishing	High profile recreational fishery in adjacent waters
Recreational Hunting	Moose Point Lodge on Shikag Lake to the south uses this area for Moose and Bear hunts
Mining	Low mineral potential; no significant site concerns (MNDM, Kenora)
Aggregate	None on site
Forest Harvest	High value timber of significant volume; unallocated within FMP area removed from SFL
Trapping	Part of a registered trapline; not presently active, but may be allocated in the future
Bear Management Area	Part of an active Bear Management Area
Commercial Fish	None

2.2 Values to be Protected

The intent of this SCI is to protect 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.

Forest Values – the forest in the entire area is to be protected (including the old growth component) from any alteration. The forest type will naturally maintain itself for at least another 50-100 years. It may be a source for genetic material for northern white pine genotypes.

Recreational Values – sport fishing and hunting opportunities.

Tourism Values – the contribution of this unique and highly attractive area to local tourism.

3.0 Management Guidelines

3.1 Land Tenure

Willow Lake Conservation Reserve will remain Crown land. No dispositions (including Land Use Permits or Licenses of Occupation) will be issued for the site.

3.2 Existing and Proposed Development

No development exists in the area. No development will be allowed in the area including campsites or anything that would disturb the forest including its understory. No access will be permitted into the area itself except by foot.

3.3 Recreational Activities

Most recreational activities that have traditionally been enjoyed in this area can continue provided they pose no threat to the natural ecosystems and features protected by the conservation reserve. These permitted uses include wildlife viewing, hunting, walking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. Sport fishing and boating will continue in adjacent waters.

3.4 Commercial Activities

The Willow Lake Conservation Reserve is part of the Brightsand Forest Sustainable Forest License and will be permanently removed from the Forest Management Plan allocation. An examination of the possible impact of activities on adjacent lands should be evaluated in the FMP. Any required changes to the FMP will be made to protect the existing values.

The conservation reserve has been withdrawn from all mining exploration and extraction activities by MNNDM at MNR's request.

This conservation reserve is part of a registered trapline which is presently inactive. It may be allocated in the future to a new trapper.

The area is part of a Bear Management Area. Hunting may continue in this conservation reserve.

No other commercial activities exist in the area. No new activities, such as mining, commercial logging, hydro-electric power development, new transmission lines (e.g. power or communications), pipelines, highways or roads, and the extraction of aggregate or peat, will be permitted.

3.5 Aboriginal Interests

Willow Lake Conservation Reserve may be within the area traditionally used by the Saugeen First Nation. Nothing in this Statement of Conservation Interest affects in any way existing or future aboriginal or treaty rights.

3.6 Natural Resources Stewardship

3.6.1 Vegetation Management

The area will naturally evolve and should be stable for some 50-100 years. As this conservation reserve is currently surrounded by high timber values of the Brightsand Forest Sustainable Forest License, it will remain as part of the MNR's intensive fire management zone. All fire occurrences are considered a high priority for action and will be aggressively suppressed.

There is a concern that this strategy may be in conflict with the ecosystem management objective for old growth values (biodiversity, genetic heritage) where low intensity wildfire would contribute to ecological maintenance and renewal within this conservation reserve. However the small size of this conservation reserve and the extremely high adjacent values rule out the use of a natural fire regime.

3.6.2 Fish and Wildlife Management

Nothing is required other than existing Wildlife Management Unit and sport fishing regulation and management activities.

3.6.3 Landforms

No management activity is required except protection.

3.7 Cultural Resources Stewardship

No management activity is required at this time based on existing information.

3.8 Client Services

No management activity is required at this time.

3.9 Research

Non-destructive research related to the study of old growth white pine communities will be encouraged in this conservation reserve.

3.10 Marketing

No management activity is required at this time.

4.0 Implementation

These management guidelines will be implemented immediately by Ignace Area, Dryden District (pending any input resulting from this document's posting on the EBR). Any

affected clients will be immediately informed of proposed changes to this statement of conservation interest.

5.0 Review and Revisions

5.1 Review and Revisions

Willow Lake Conservation Reserve Statement of Conservation Interest will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

If changes in management direction are needed at any time, the significance of the changes will be evaluated. Any minor amendments will be posted on the EBR prior to their approval at a minimum. Local consultation may also be required, as determined by the Area Supervisor. Any major amendments will require full public consultation and the approval of the Regional Director. This Statement of Conservation Interest will comply with all requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act and the Environmental Bill of Rights.

5.2 Public Consultation

5.2.1 Results of Past Consultation

Under the previous Keep It Wild Initiative, verbal contact was made with First Nations, the timber companies and local communities in June, 1994. Newspaper advertisements and a district information package was distributed in August, 1994.

The forest industry who expressed concern about not having an opportunity to participate in the planning stages of the initiative. No other responses were received concerning the specific proposal. It was felt that no public response was received due to the following reasons: small size; restricted to shoreline area where loss of potential timber management opportunities is a minor issue; isolation of the site; low human activity.

5.2.2 Present and Future Consultation

This draft Statement of Conservation Interest will be posted on the EBR and all input evaluated carefully prior to its approval. More widespread consultation is not deemed necessary at this time because of the extensive consultation which occurred in 1994 (see section 5.2.1).

5.2.3 Authors

This Statement of Conservation Interest was prepared by Art Huntley, Technician, Ignace Area.

6.0 References

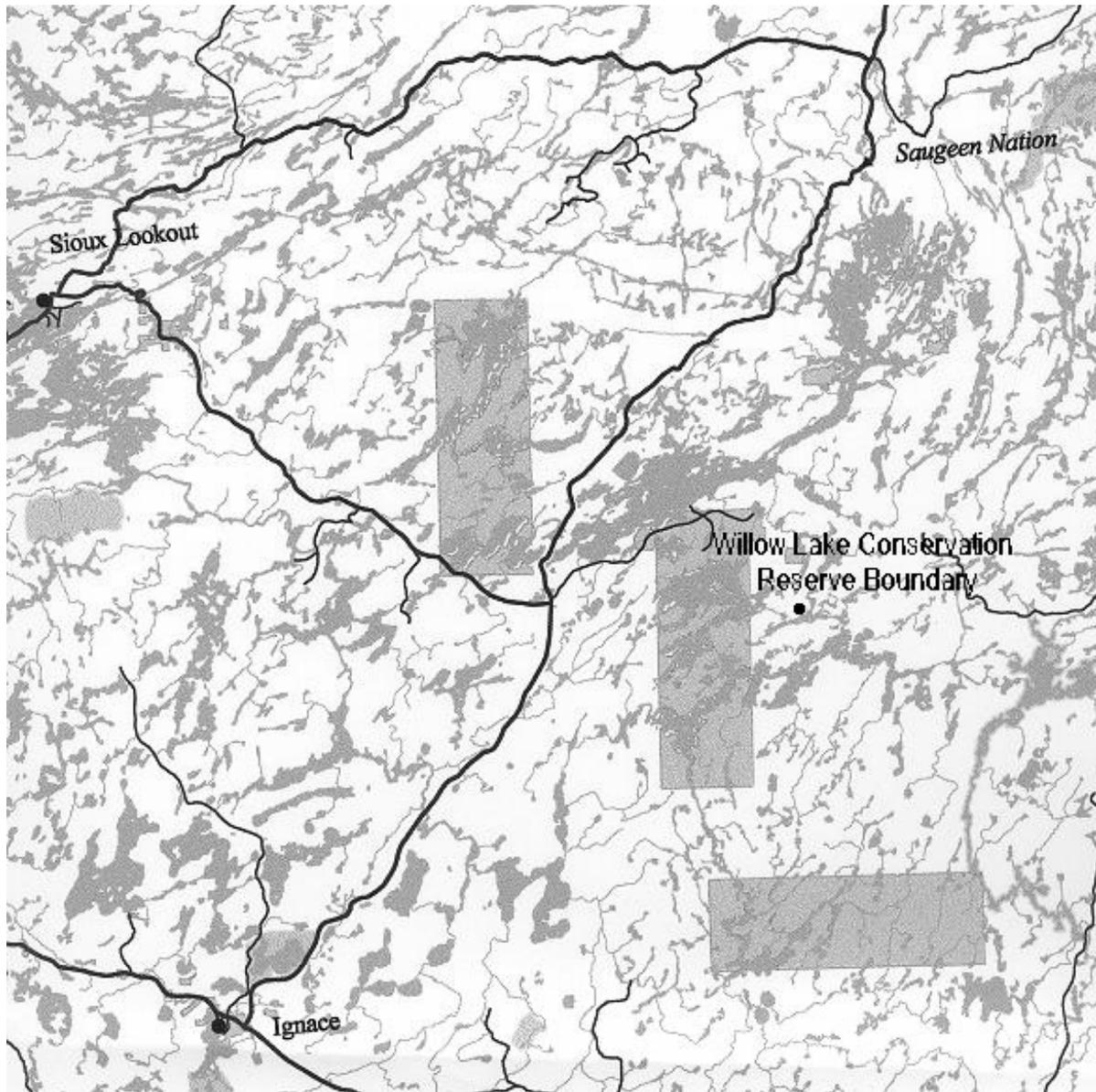
Ministry of Natural Resources. Conservation Reserves Policy and Procedure. PL 3.03.05. 1997

Figures

Figure 1: Willow Lake Conservation Reserve Regional Setting

Figure 2: Willow Lake Conservation Reserve Boundary

Figure 1 : Willow Lake Conservation Reserve Regional Setting



Scale 1 : 600,000

Figure 2: Willow Lake Conservation Reserve Boundary

