

WABOS SOUTH CONSERVATION RESERVE (C286)

Statement of Conservation Interest

**Ministry of Natural Resources
Algoma Area
Sault Ste. Marie District**

January 17th, 2003



**Ministry of
Natural
Resources**



Ontario

Ontario's Living Legacy

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Sault Ste. Marie District Ministry of Natural Resources

APPROVAL STATEMENT

I am pleased to approve this Statement of Conservation Interest (SCI) for the Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286), prepared by Marjorie Hall.

Wabos South Conservation Reserve captures spectacular rolling terrain covered by a dense forest canopy. The site protects mature sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* Marsh.) and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis* Britt.) mixed-wood communities, in association with a bedrock-drift complex. Regulated on December 21, 2000, this 580-hectare conservation reserve is situated approximately 40 kilometres northeast of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, in Shields and Gaudette Townships.

Direction for establishing, planning and managing conservation reserves is defined under the *Public Lands Act* and current policy. The direction for managing this conservation reserve is in the form of a SCI, which defines the area that is being planned, provides the purpose for which the conservation reserve has been proposed, and outlines the Ministry of Natural Resources' intent for the protected area. This SCI will provide both guidance for the management of the conservation reserve and the basis for ongoing monitoring of activities. More detailed direction at this time is not anticipated. However, should significant facility development be considered or complex issues arise requiring additional studies, more detailed management direction in the form of special protection measures, or a detailed Resource Management Plan will be prepared with full public consultation.

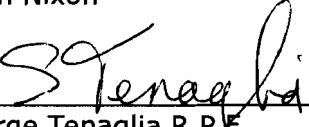
Public and Aboriginal consultation occurred prior to the regulation of this conservation reserve during the planning for Ontario's Living Legacy (OMNR 1999). Furthermore, there was a 15-day review period in November 2002 concerning a draft of this SCI. Comments from the review period have been considered in the development of this document.

This SCI will be implemented by the Algoma Area Supervisor, and will be reviewed every five years and amended as required by the District Planner, Sault Ste. Marie District, Ministry of Natural Resources.

Submitted by: Erin Nixon

Date: February 21, 2003

Recommended
For Approval by:


Serge Tenaglia R.P.F.
District Manager
Sault Ste. Marie District


Date

Approved by:


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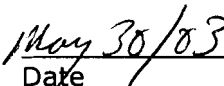

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1.0 Introduction

The following document is a Statement of Conservation Interest (SCI) for Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286). The purpose of this SCI is to identify and describe the natural, recreational and cultural values of Wabos South Conservation Reserve and to outline the Ministry of Natural Resources' management intent for this area. The first portion of this document highlights the provincial context in which it was produced, states its goal and objectives, and summarizes the planning process for conservation reserves. The second portion of this document is specific to Wabos South Conservation Reserve. Management direction provided within this SCI will serve to protect the conservation reserve for the benefit of all Ontario residents. This direction will comply with the land use intent stated in the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999).

1.1 Provincial Context

Ontario's network of natural heritage areas has been established to protect and conserve areas representative of the diversity of the natural regions of the province, including species, habitats, features and ecological systems which comprise that natural diversity. Protected natural heritage areas are a key component in the sustainable management of natural resources. They ensure that representative sites within the larger managed landscape are permanently retained in their natural state. Wabos South Conservation Reserve is part of Ontario's network of natural heritage areas.

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* to guide the planning and management of Ontario's Crown lands. Extensive consultation was conducted during the development of the Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999). The objectives of the Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999) are to complete Ontario's system of parks and protected areas; recognize the land use needs of the resource-based tourism industry; provide forestry, mining and other resource industries with greater certainty around land and resource use; and enhance hunting, angling and other Crown land recreation opportunities.

The Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999) demonstrated the government's commitment to completing Ontario's system of protected natural heritage areas by designating 378 new areas to be protected. These areas are considered to be significant and require protection from incompatible activities in order for their values to endure over time. The addition of these 378 new areas marks the largest expansion of parks and protected areas in Ontario's history. Wabos South Conservation Reserve was created as part of this expansion. It protects mature sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* Marsh.) and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis* Britt.) mixed-wood communities, in association with a bedrock-drift complex.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has established conservation reserves as a tool to protect natural heritage areas on public lands, while permitting traditional public land uses to continue. These uses include recreational activities, such as hunting and fishing, and the traditional activities of Aboriginal societies, as defined under applicable Aboriginal Treaties. Lands designated as conservation reserves in the Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999) are removed from the Sustainable Forest Licence, and mining and surface rights are withdrawn from staking under the *Mining Act* (RSO 1990 Chapter M.14).

Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999) outlines the general land use policy and management direction for new conservation reserves. Each new conservation reserve will have a planning document, either a SCI or, in more complex situations, a Resource Management Plan, that details site-specific management direction.

2.0 Goal and Objectives of the SCI

2.1 Goal

The goal of this SCI is to provide the framework and direction to guide management decisions affecting Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

2.2 Objectives

The following objectives are identified as the means to achieve the above stated goal.

- ♦ To describe the state of the resource with respect to the values identified in Section 5.0 and current land use activities.
- ♦ To outline the Ministry of Natural Resources' management intent for the protected area.
- ♦ To determine the land use compatibility of current land uses, and to develop specific guidelines and prescriptions to manage these uses.
- ♦ To create public awareness of the values within this conservation reserve, as mentioned in Section 5.0, by providing information on the resources that it contains and protects; and to promote responsible stewardship of the protected area through partnerships with local stakeholders.
- ♦ To determine the long-term management goals for the conservation reserve by identifying research, client services, and marketing strategies necessary to position this conservation reserve among the system of parks and protected areas in Ontario.
- ♦ To identify the scientific values on the site in relation to provincial benchmarks and identify any monitoring and/or research necessary to maintain the integrity of those values.
- ♦ To provide direction for the evaluation of proposed new uses or economic ventures through the application of the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A). This test will evaluate the impact of suggested use(s), either positive or negative, on the protected values of the conservation reserve (Section 5.0).

3.0 Management Planning

3.1 Planning for a Conservation Reserve

The planning process for a conservation reserve consists of defining site boundaries and preparing a site specific management plan. Public, Aboriginal and industry

consultations occur during the planning process. When the boundaries of the site are finalized the Ministry of Natural Resources' approval process is complete, a conservation reserve becomes regulated. Once a conservation reserve is regulated, the level of management planning required to fulfill the protection targets is determined, and either a basic or an enhanced SCI or a Resource Management Plan is prepared. A basic SCI is prepared when no new decisions are made beyond those mentioned in the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999), whereas an enhanced SCI is prepared when one or more decisions are made beyond those mentioned in the Strategy. A Resource Management Plan is prepared in more complex situations where a number of issues have to be addressed. Whichever the determination, the plan must be completed within three years of the conservation reserve's regulation date. The guidelines for the preparation of these documents are provided in *Procedural Guideline A – Resource Management Planning (Conservation Reserves Procedure PL3.03.05, Public Lands Act)*.

A SCI is essentially a management plan based on the management direction provided in the Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999). The purpose of a SCI is to identify the state of the resource with respect to the values mentioned in Section 5.0 and current land use activities, and to outline the Ministry of Natural Resources' management intent for the conservation reserve. Basic SCIs typically go through a public review period of 15 days. Upon completion of this public review, the SCI is revised as appropriate and approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources' Regional Director.

Existing permitted uses within conservation reserves may continue, unless they are shown to have a significant negative impact on the values protected by the site. A review/evaluation mechanism is in place to address proposed new permitted uses, or land use proposals. The Test of Compatibility as outlined in the *Public Lands Act Policy PL 3.03.05* (OMNR 1997) and/or other standard Ministry of Natural Resources' environmental screening processes, is used to screen future proposals. Where cultural resources may be impacted, proposals may be screened through *Conserving a Future for our Past: Archaeology, Land Use Planning & Development in Ontario*, Section 3 (MCzCR 1997), in a manner similar to that used by the Ministry of Natural Resources in the forest management planning process.

Public comment may be solicited during a review of any future land use proposals that require new decisions to be made. Appropriate environmental assessment requirements and amendment processes will apply to any future proposal and/or any significant change in management direction being considered for a site.

3.2 Planning Process for the Wabos South Conservation Reserve

Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286) was proposed as a conservation reserve in the 1999 *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Public, Aboriginal and industry consultation has taken place and the boundary of the site has been finalized. The site was formally regulated through an amendment to Ontario Regulation 805/94 of the *Public Lands Act* on December 21, 2000, by Ontario Regulation 686/00.

To date, no significant issues related to land use in this area have been identified. For this reason, it was determined that a basic SCI will adequately identify the conservation reserve's significant features and address the management guidelines. Therefore, the Wabos South Conservation Reserve will be managed under the

auspices of a SCI. It should be noted that this SCI addresses only those issues or land use proposals currently known to the District Manager. The direction provided by this SCI, and future management decisions, will resolve any future land use conflicts and will ensure that identified values continue to be adequately protected.

3.2.1 Planning Area

The planning area for this SCI consists of the regulated boundary for the Wabos South Conservation Reserve (see Section 10, Map 1c). However, to fully protect values within the conservation reserve, additional consideration within larger land use planning initiatives may be required. The forest management planning process is an example of how adjacent land management may consider sensitive features within the conservation reserve boundary.

3.3 Guiding Principles

All current or planned activities within this conservation reserve will be in compliance with the following guiding principles. If a conflict between management guidelines exists, the following guiding principles will be used to discern management intent and resolve the issue.

- All management guidelines will be based on maintaining the long-term ecological integrity of the area.
- No new or existing uses will be permitted if it is deemed that they compromise the protected values of the site.
- All attempts will be made to maintain traditional uses while protecting the values identified in Section 5.0 and maintaining the long-term ecological integrity of the site.
- This conservation reserve was chosen to represent vegetation and landscape types unique to this site district and Ontario. All efforts will be made to maintain those values identified in Section 5.0.
- Overall, management strategies will focus on maintaining the conservation reserve in as natural a state as possible.

4.0 Background Information

4.1 Location and Site Description

Wabos South Conservation Reserve is located approximately 40 km northeast of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, and approximately 5 km northwest of the community of Searchmont, in Shields and Gaudette Townships (Section 10, Map 1a). Whenever possible, natural and/or artificial features have been used to delineate site boundaries to facilitate easy on-the-ground identification of boundaries. The northeast section of the boundary of the conservation reserve follows an old tertiary road, while the western section follows a tributary of Achigan Creek. The portion of the boundary connecting the tributary and road sections, as well as the southern boundaries of this site are defined by straight lines between two established points (vectors).

An abandoned logging road bisects the conservation reserve from a point midway along the north boundary to the southwest corner. The northern portion of this road is overgrown and extremely difficult to follow (Hall 2002). The Algoma Central Railway tracks run very close to the northeast boundary of the site, and parallel to

the old road that forms a section of this boundary. Public access from the north on these old roads is limited due to the existence of private land, and access from the south has not been assessed. It is possible to gain access to the northeast corner of the site via the Algoma Central Railway and walking a short distance from the tracks into the conservation reserve. (See Section 10, Map 1c). From this point, however, access to the interior is limited.

Table 1 describes the location and administrative details of the site.

Name	Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286)
Site Region – Site District (Hills 1959)	4E-2 Batchawana
Site region – Site District (Crins and Uhlig 2000)	5E-13
OMNR Administrative Region/District/Area	Northeast Region/Sault Ste. Marie District/Algoma Area
UTM co-ordinates	720500 E, 5187500 N
SCI Completed	January 17, 2003
Regulated	December 21, 2000
Area	580 ha
Nearest Town/Municipality	Approximately 40 km northeast of the City of Sault Ste. Marie/ approx. 5 km northwest of Searchmont
Township(s)	Shields and Gaudette
OBM Numbers	2016710051800, 2016720051800
Topographical Map Name/Number	41K/16 Searchmont
Wildlife Management Unit	36
Watershed	Lake Superior Basin
Forest Unit	Algoma

Table 1. Location and administrative details for the Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

4.2 History of the Site

The small community of Wabos lends its name to the Wabos South Conservation Reserve. In 1902, 145 families were farming a total of 100 farms in the Wabos area (Vosper 2000). However, farming in this area of Algoma was a difficult endeavor, and many of the families that initially established themselves in Wabos subsequently moved elsewhere (Vosper 2000). Those that remained turned to the forest industry for work to subsidize their farming income. By 1912, extensive lumbering operations were active in the Wabos area (Vosper 2000).

Timber harvested from the area within and surrounding Wabos South Conservation Reserve, was skidded down to the Algoma Central Railway line and shipped by rail to a charcoal plant located in the community of Searchmont and to a lumber mill in the City of Sault Ste. Marie. The Searchmont charcoal plant required 25 acres (10 hectares) of forest to be harvested daily to fuel its operations (Vosper 2000). The charcoal created by these plants was shipped to Algoma Steel Inc. in Sault Ste. Marie for use in the blast furnaces. Thus, it is likely that Wabos South Conservation

Reserve, along with the majority of the surrounding area, was cut over in the early 1900s to provide lumber for the charcoal plants (J. Miller, pers. comm.).

Fire also plays a role in shaping the landscape in this region. In 1947, fire claimed more than 1,700 hectares of forest just southwest of the boundaries of the present day conservation reserve (H. Barns, pers. comm.).

4.3 Inventories

Table 2 indicates the current status of natural heritage inventories that have occurred and/or are required for Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

Survey Level	Earth Science	Life Science	Cultural	Recreational
Reconnaissance	Fall 2001	Fall 2001	Fall 2001	Fall 2001
Detailed	Not required	March 2001. M. Crofts, Timber Cruise Course (NRT-106) Sault College – information collected on species, diameter, height, site class, basal area and regeneration.	Not required	Not required
Further Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further research should be completed to determine the regional and provincial representation of the maple-birch bedrock communities. - Ground survey should be completed to confirm current level of site disturbance below canopy. 		An assessment should be completed of the condition of the old road that bisects the conservation reserve & the old road that forms part of the north-east boundary.

Table 2: Inventory and Survey Information for the Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

5.0 State of the Resource

Site visits have indicated that Wabos South Conservation Reserve is in excellent condition. An aerial reconnaissance survey, completed in fall 2001 by the Ministry of Natural Resources, found no observable disturbances to the site. Currently, the condition of the surrounding land is also considered to be healthy. There is good connectivity to forest stands beyond the site's boundaries to the southeast, south, west and northwest (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2002). To the north and northeast, some ecological fragmentation is evident due to the Algoma Central Railway tracks, access roads, private land development and the small hamlet of Wabos. These features artificially separate Wabos South Conservation Reserve from the conservation reserve of Wabos North, located directly north of this site, and from the naturally established forest communities in the northeast.

The conservation reserve's extensive artificial boundaries result in many of the landforms and forest communities extending beyond the site's borders. In addition, the site's small size and adjoining patent land could make the long-term management and protection of the core values problematic.

The key values (geological features and/or featured species), found within Wabos South Conservation reserve include the following:

- Extensive sugar maple and yellow birch forest communities that cover approximately 80 percent of the conservation reserve in a dense forest canopy.

The key values are those values that make this site unique and have led to its designation as a conservation reserve. Their protection is paramount. Additional values as listed in Section 5.1 through to Section 5.5 are also important. This description is not necessarily complete. If new values are identified, they will be added to this section. If any new value is considered significant, management guidelines may be modified, if required, to ensure its protection.

5.1 Earth Sciences

Wabos South Conservation Reserve is located within a very scenic area of Ontario. Situated approximately 20 kilometres inland from the Lake Superior coastline, this site falls within the Batchawana Site District 4E-2 (Hills 1959). This site district is known for its rugged topography. The landform features in this site district are the result of numerous geological structures such as faults, joints, and diabase dikes that dissect the area (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2002). In this region, the bedrock uplands have a thin layer of sandy soil on the upper slopes and deeper soils in the valleys. Exposed bedrock is common, and dates back billions of years to the Precambrian and Cambrian periods (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2000).

The majority of the conservation reserve is considered by Kristjansson (2002, in prep.) to be bedrock drift complex. The drift is predominately thin and consists of relatively continuous till, with some alluvial and glaciolacustrine depositions associated with Achigan Creek. Till and organic deposits are present along the eastern and central portions of the site (Section 10, Map 2). There are five major landform features protected within this conservation reserve, including organic deposits, glaciolacustrine deposits of silt and clay, till deposits, bedrock-drift complex, and alluvial deposits (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2002).

5.2 Life Sciences

Dense stands of mature forest cover approximately 80 percent of Wabos South Conservation Reserve. Mixed-wood stands dominated by yellow birch, and to a lesser extent sugar maple and white spruce (*Picea glauca* (Moench) Voss), cover the valley bottoms, while the uplands consist of a wide assortment of tree species (Section 10, Map 3). According to Lajeunesse and Thompson (2002), the bedrock-drift complex found throughout the site supports dense sugar maple and yellow birch mixed-wood communities, which include red maple (*Acer rubrum* L.), white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis* L.), white spruce, balsam fir (*Abies balsamea* (L.) Mill.), poplar (*Populus* spp.) and white birch (*Betula papyrifera* Marsh.). Mature sugar maple and yellow birch dominated communities, ranging in age from 100 to 140 years, are located in the southwestern section of the conservation reserve. Throughout the conservation reserve, stands are estimated to have between 70 and 100 percent stocking (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2002). Currently no old-growth stands exist within the

conservation reserve, however, in the absence of any natural or human caused disturbance, old-growth stands of sugar maple and yellow birch (defined by Uhlig *et al.* (2001) for these two species as older than 150 years) will start to appear in as early as ten years.

A portion of Achigan Creek crosses a short section of the conservation reserve's north boundary and associated tributaries of Achigan Creek form segments of the boundary. Vegetation, growing along a tributary that forms part of the northwest boundary, consists mainly of alder (*Alnus* spp.) thickets, mixed with tall shrub fen (Lajeunesse and Thompson 2002). White spruce, yellow birch or sugar maple mixed-wood communities dominate the bank vegetation. Located centrally within the conservation reserve, growing on organic and till deposits, is a wetland complex of meadow marsh and short shrub fen associated with lowland white cedar. This wetland area contains sedges (*Carex* spp.) and shallow pools of water with cattails (*Typha* spp.), leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), and bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*). Further east, a second meadow marsh borders the site. Evidence suggests that both wetland areas were the result of former beaver activity.

While aquatic information for Achigan Creek is limited, it is known that the creek has a naturalized population of rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and a native population of brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) (R. Knudsen, pers. com.). There are no known artificial dams on Achigan Creek or its tributaries, upstream of the site.

The Goulais River, into which Achigan Creek drains approximately 5 km south of the conservation reserve, has historically supported a population of wood turtles (*Clemmys insculpta*) (R. Knudsen, pers. com.). The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) (2002) classifies the wood turtle as a Species of Special Concern, indicating it has characteristics that make it particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Tributaries of the Goulais River, such as Achigan Creek and its associated feeder streams, have the potential to support small groups of wood turtles.

5.3 Recreational Values

According to a local resident with private property adjacent to this conservation reserve, hunting is a common recreational activity within the site (Hall 2002). The aesthetic features of Wabos South Conservation Reserve, however, add to the recreational potential of the site. Features such as the feeder streams, wetlands, and extensive forests offer opportunities for photography, bird and wildlife viewing, hiking, snowshoeing, fishing and camping.

Access to the conservation reserve can be gained from the Algoma Central Railway line in the northeast corner where the tracks are in close proximity to the site boundary. The old road that enters the conservation reserve midway along its northern boundary, is located on private land outside of the reserve, limiting public access. This same road also enters the conservation reserve from the southwest corner. However, neither this road, nor the old road that forms a portion of the northeast boundary, have been assessed to determine if access is possible along these routes. Should these routes be found impassable, recreational opportunities may be limited.

5.4 Cultural Values

This site falls within the Robinson-Huron Treaty area. To date, no First Nation community has identified any specific cultural values within this conservation reserve.

5.5 Research Values

The only known research to have taken place within the Wabos South Conservation Reserve was a timber cruise, undertaken by students from the Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology, during the winter of 2001. Three temporary plots were studied in the southeast section of the site. Data collected included: species distribution, heights and diametres of trees, site class, basal area and regeneration. No additional research values have been identified.

6.0 Management Guidelines

All management guidelines in this SCI are based on policy and direction outlined in the *Ontario Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR, 1999) and associated policy clarification statements. Management policies in this document may be subject to change and may be amended as necessary. These guidelines are specific to Wabos South Conservation Reserve, and provide for protection of the site's unique features.

New proposed uses and development as well as research and education will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The Test of Compatibility (Appendix A – PL 3.03.03, *Public Lands Act*) must be passed with reference to *Conserving a Future for our Past: Archaeology, Land Use Planning & Development in Ontario*, Section 3 (MCzCR 1997) before new proposals will be permitted. In addition, all new proposals are subject to the *Class Environmental Assessment for Parks and Conservation Reserves*.

The following management strategies have been created to achieve the goal and objectives of the Wabos South Conservation Reserve SCI.

6.1 Industrial Activities

6.1.1 Commercial Timber Harvest

The area contained within this conservation reserve (580 ha) has been withdrawn from the Algoma Sustainable Forest License area and no commercial timber harvesting will be permitted. Please refer to Section 6.4.3 for information regarding non-commercial wood harvesting.

6.1.2 Mining and Exploration

There are no known current mining interests within this conservation reserve. Mining and surface rights within the conservation reserve's boundaries have been withdrawn from staking under the *Mining Act* (RSO 1990 Chapter M.14). Mineral exploration is not permitted.

6.1.3 Extraction of peat, soil, aggregate and other material

Extraction of peat, soil, aggregate and other material is not permitted.

6.1.4 Energy Generation

Hydropower development and windpower generation is not permitted within the conservation reserve.

6.2 Existing and Proposed Development

6.2.1 Transportation Corridors

6.2.1.1 Roads

According to the Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999), new roads for resource extraction will not be permitted, except for those identified in Forest Management Plans prior to March 31, 1999. No new or existing roads for resource extractions were identified within this site.

An old road runs from the southwest corner of the conservation reserve through the site to a point midway along the north boundary. The north end of this road crosses private land prior to entering the conservation reserve and is overgrown and difficult to follow. An evaluation of the condition of this road is required.

Existing roads are permitted to continue within this conservation reserve but will not be maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Maintenance by area users may be permitted, subject to appropriate approvals to ensure the values of the site are not compromised. Should the protected values of the site be compromised, the Ministry of Natural Resources may consider appropriate provisions under the *Public Lands Act* to ensure their protection.

6.2.1.2 Trails

Currently, no Voyageur Trail Association or Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs trails have been identified within this conservation reserve. Any future trail development must consider the conservation reserve's core values that are protected within the boundaries of this site. Trail development in low-lying areas and wetlands will be discouraged. Any proposed new trails will be subject to the work permit review process and the Test of Compatibility screening process (Appendix A). All new and existing trail heads and trail routes must be identified using new technologies (ie. global positioning systems) to ensure the most accurate record of the feature. If new trails are approved, an amendment to this SCI will occur.

6.2.2 Other Corridor Development/Maintenance

No communication, energy transmission, or other non-road corridors are located within this conservation reserve. New corridor developments will be actively discouraged through planning. Proposals for new corridors will be subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and other applicable district policies.

6.2.3 Land Disposition

No land will be sold within the boundaries of this conservation reserve.

6.2.4 Land Tenure

Presently, no Land Use Permits or leases exist within this conservation reserve. With the exception of private recreation camps, new leases or land use permits may be issued for other approved uses, subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and applicable district policies. These forms of land tenure will neither be patented nor phased out but may be eligible for enhanced tenure or transfer. Enhanced tenure is defined as anything beyond the term and form of current tenure. All requests for transfer or enhanced tenure will be subject to the following screening criteria:

- 1) Is the transfer or enhanced tenure consistent with the conservation reserve's land use intent, which is the protection and enhancement of the site's natural, recreational and cultural values?
- 2) Is it consistent with the land disposition policies outlined in the District Land Use Guidelines, the Crown Land Use Atlas, this SCI and any other applicable document?
- 3) Does it adversely affect the values as identified in Section 5.0, and/or conflict with other uses?
- 4) Is land needed by the Crown to protect significant natural or recreational values outlined in this SCI?
- 5) Does the transfer or enhanced tenure clash with Aboriginal traditional uses, land claims or agreements?
- 6) Are all rents, taxes, fees, rates or charges paid up for the existing LUP or lease?

6.3 Commercial Activities

6.3.1 Commercial Bait Harvesting

No active baitfish harvest operations or licences currently exist within this conservation reserve. However, Shields and Gaudette Townships have been set aside for First Nation commercial bait harvest. At this time it is not known whether a local First Nation community, or individual First Nation member, will obtain a commercial bait harvest licence covering these townships. New operations can be considered within the conservation reserve subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and applicable district policies.

Under the *Public Lands Act* and in conjunction with *PL 3.03.08 "Buildings for Bait Harvesting Management"*, cabins for the purposes of bait harvesting may be constructed on Crown land. However, the approval of such buildings within this conservation reserve should be avoided, and Crown land outside of the protected area used wherever possible.

6.3.2 Commercial Fishing

There are no commercial fisheries within this conservation reserve.

6.3.3 Commercial Fur Trapping

Portions of Registered Trapline Areas SS22 and SS29 fall within the boundary of this conservation reserve. These registered trapline areas are currently allocated to head trappers and are considered existing operations. If a head trapper surrenders a registered trapline, or the head trapper's privileges are revoked, the registered trapline may be transferred to another trapper following established allocation procedures. If the registered trapline is not transferred in due course, or remains

unallocated for a significant period of time, reallocation of the trapline may occur following applicable district screening processes.

The establishment of new trapline trails will be considered following the procedure and criteria outlined for trails in Section 6.2.1.2. No trap cabins currently exist within the conservation reserve. The establishment of new trap cabins will not be permitted within the conservation reserve.

6.3.4 Bear Management Areas

This conservation reserve is located within Bear Management Area (BMA) SS-36-003. Guided hunting activities associated with a BMA may continue within this conservation reserve. Transfer of the BMA within this conservation reserve may be permitted in cases where the current operator sells his/her bear hunting business to another operator and the BMA transfer is approved. If an operator surrenders the BMA or the BMA is revoked, reallocation of the BMA may occur following applicable district screening processes.

6.3.5 Commercial Food Collection

There are no existing commercial food harvesting ventures within this conservation reserve. New ventures will be subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and the appropriate Ministry of Natural Resources' policies and procedures.

6.3.6 Commercial Non-Timber Forest Products

Policy is currently being developed by the Planning and Research Section of Ontario Parks regarding commercial non-timber forest products. In the interim, proposals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, subject to the Test of Compatibility and applicable district policies.

6.3.7 Outpost Camps/ Main Base Lodges

There are no existing authorized outpost camps or main base lodges within this conservation reserve. New outpost camps and main base lodges may be considered through planning and will be subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and applicable district policies.

6.4 Non-Commercial Activities

6.4.1 Nature Appreciation/Recreation Activities

Off-trail hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and other activities will be permitted within this conservation reserve. However, should the impact of these activities degrade the landscape of the conservation reserve, the Ministry of Natural Resources will re-evaluate these permitted uses and determine a new strategy for this site. New trails to support these activities may be considered; see Section 6.2.1.2 for more details related to trail development.

While camping is permitted within the conservation reserve, campers should avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands.

6.4.2 Natural Heritage Appreciation Facilities/Recreational Structures

Within this conservation reserve, there are no existing authorized natural heritage appreciation facilities or recreational structures such as boardwalks, bird viewing platforms, kiosks, ski shelters, or interpretative signs. New natural heritage appreciation facilities and recreation structures are encouraged and permitted, subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A).

6.4.3 Non-Commercial Consumptive Resource Use

Cutting of trees for non-commercial purposes within this conservation reserve may be authorized by permit issued by the local Ministry of Natural Resources' Office, subject to a review and determination of the impact that such cutting would have on the values identified in Section 5.0. This flexibility is intended only for leaseholders, Land Use Permit holders, cottagers and other property owners within the conservation reserve who do not have road access to their property and have no alternative wood source outside of the conservation reserve area. This permit is intended to cover fuelwood, dock stringers, and other occasional small scale uses.

It should be noted that the mature sugar maple and yellow birch mixed-wood communities found in the southwest section of this conservation reserve have been identified as significant features and harvesting in this area is prohibited.

Non-commercial harvesting of non-timber forest products such as berries, mushrooms, sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum spp.*) and wild rice (*Zizania L.*) can occur provided the values of the site (Section 5.0) are not jeopardized.

6.4.4 Hunting and Fishing

Hunting is a traditional use and has been identified as an important value of this area. In conjunction with current hunting regulations and adherence to the guiding principles (Section 3.3) of this conservation reserve, hunting is permitted to continue.

Recreational fishing is also permitted to continue within this conservation reserve in compliance with current fishing regulations.

6.4.5 ATV and Snowmobile Use

No authorized snowmobile trails have been identified within this conservation reserve. Please refer to Section 6.2.1.2 for more information on trails. In general, off-trail use of ATVs and snowmobiles is not permitted within this conservation reserve. However, off-trail use is accepted for licenced trappers to access their traplines and for licenced bait harvest operators while conducting harvest operations. Off-trail ATV and snowmobiling is also accepted for the direct retrieval of large game by hunters. In all cases, off-trail use is only permitted provided the protection of the site's values, as per Section 5.0, is not compromised. Should the impact of off-trail ATV and snowmobile use degrade the landscape of the conservation reserve, the Ministry of Natural Resources will re-evaluate these permitted uses and determine a new strategy.

6.5 Resource Management Activities

Resource management activities are tools used to protect and enhance the values of this conservation reserve. Some management activities may require the use of intrusive techniques. Some of these techniques, under normal circumstances, would not be permitted to occur in the conservation reserve; however, if they are found to be necessary, they may be applied under controlled conditions, to achieve a desired result. Infrastructure such as roads, trails and buildings may need to be constructed to perform activities such as prescribed burns, forest regeneration, wildfire control, and insect and disease control. Activities described in this section will be deemed acceptable if the ultimate outcome is in compliance with the guiding principles of this SCI.

6.5.1 Fish Stocking

No water bodies within this conservation reserve have been stocked, or are currently being considered for stocking.

6.5.2 Insect and Disease Control

In accordance with the guiding principles, this conservation reserve will be maintained in as natural a state as possible. Insect and disease control measures should only be considered if the identified values are significantly threatened.

6.5.3 Fire Management

Fire protection will be carried out in accordance with current Ministry of Natural Resources' fire management strategies. When aggressive fire suppression is undertaken, techniques that may excessively damage the site, such as heavy equipment use, trenching, camp construction, tree cutting, etc., should be avoided within the conservation reserve except where an excavation is required due to the occurrence of a deep-seated peat fire. If it is deemed that human life or property is in jeopardy, all necessary fire suppression measures should be undertaken regardless of potential damage to any of the protected values in this conservation reserve.

Prescribed burning may be considered if fire has not occurred for a sustained period of time and it is determined that the features of this site would benefit from controlled burning (e.g. to promote regeneration).

6.5.4 Management for Key Values

Management that maintains or improves the conditions of the site's key values is permitted on a case-by-case basis and is subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A). Please refer to Section 5.0 for a list of the site's key values. Management may also include habitat or ecosystem management.

6.5.5 Forest Renewal

The preferred regeneration option after any natural disturbance is natural regeneration. In some cases, regeneration may be artificially assisted when it is deemed appropriate to mitigate against human disturbances (e.g. illegal occupation and trespass).

6.6 Research

Scientific research is encouraged, by qualified individuals or institutions, that contributes to a better understanding of the natural and cultural values protected by this conservation reserve or that advances the protection, planning and management of these values. The Sault Ste. Marie District Planner should be contacted for information on research and/or monitoring opportunities within this conservation reserve. Proposals to conduct research should be directed to the Algoma Area Supervisor, Ministry of Natural Resources, Sault Ste. Marie District Office, and will be subject to the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A), to ensure that no values will be damaged in the process. Any site that is disturbed during research activities is to be rehabilitated as closely as possible to its original condition. Research programs will also be subject to Ministry policies and other legislation. Collecting may only be permitted as part of an authorized research project.

Existing Forest Resource Inventory surveys and approved resource monitoring activities are permitted to continue.

The Wabos South Conservation Reserve may have potential as a research and monitoring site. This is due to the presence of mature sugar maple communities.

Development, research and education proposals pertaining to this conservation reserve may be considered in accordance with the Test of Compatibility (Appendix A) and with reference to *Conserving a Future for our Past: Archaeology, Land Use Planning & Development in Ontario*, Section 3 (MCzCR 1997).

6.7 Marketing

No active marketing of this conservation reserve is currently taking place.

6.8 First Nations

Traditional activities and Aboriginal rights, as defined in the Robinson-Huron Treaty and other relevant acts, will not be affected within or by the boundaries of this conservation reserve.

Any First Nation land claims within this area will be addressed according to appropriate Ministry of Natural Resources' procedures. When possible, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to work with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation in identifying archaeological sites to be protected.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Additions to the Reserve

Many of the significant landforms and forest communities present within Wabos South Conservation Reserve extend beyond the site's boundaries onto surrounding Crown and private land. Additional protection of the site's forest communities may result from their consideration within a broader planning process. This may also be accomplished by the addition of adjacent Crown lands into the conservation reserve, although no specific areas have been identified to date.

7.2 Future Needs and Considerations

The following recommendations should be considered in any future planning initiatives for this conservation reserve:

- Efforts should be made to work with partners (such as the Ontario Forest Research Institute and Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology) to gather baseline data on this site. This data will be used for future monitoring and inspection activities when required. Baseline data should include, but not be limited to:
 - An assessment of the tertiary road that bisects the conservation reserve.
 - A field assessment to determine the level of site disturbance beneath the forest canopy.
- Boundaries of the conservation reserve should be clearly marked as well as identified using Global Positioning System technology, specifically along the vectored boundaries and the old road which forms the northeast boundary, to ensure core values are protected. It is also recommended that adjacent private properties be identified to prevent incursions.
- The values of the site should be considered in land use management activities on Crown lands adjacent to the site to ensure sufficient protection of the site's core values.
- Recognizing that community and species diversity in wetlands is maintained by fluctuating water levels, efforts should be made to ensure natural water level fluctuations continue undisturbed within this site.
- It is recommended that the conservation reserve be considered as a potential research and/or monitoring site, by the Ministry of Natural Resources or its partners. This is due to the presence of a mature sugar maple and yellow birch mixed-wood community.
- A detailed life science inventory should be completed to evaluate the overall significance of the site within the district, region and province. This information will assist with placement of the conservation reserve within the provincial parks and protected areas system.
- If there are further inventory, monitoring, assessment, research, or inspection requirements for this site, efforts will be made to complete these needs.

7.3 Monitoring

Periodic monitoring of human activities within this conservation reserve will be conducted. A schedule for cursory field monitoring will be identified within the District's annual compliance plan and an Integrated Field Monitoring Inspection Report Form will be filed at the Sault Ste. Marie District Office. The Algoma Area Supervisor will oversee these activities.

If at any time human activities are deemed to be negatively impacting the protected features, the activities will be reviewed and measures taken to mitigate any disturbance.

Approved inventory, monitoring, assessment or research activities that are compatible with protection objectives are encouraged. Any area that is disturbed during research activities is to be rehabilitated as closely as possible to its original condition. The Algoma Area Supervisor may apply additional conditions.

8.0 Implementation, Review and Revisions

8.1 Responsibility

The Sault Ste. Marie District will be responsible for implementing the management policies and guidelines for Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286). The primary role will be to provide public information and compliance monitoring to ensure adherence to current policies and guidelines.

8.2 Review and Revisions

The Wabos South Conservation Reserve SCI will be reviewed every five years by the District Planner to confirm and update the information in this document.

Revisions to this document will be subject to the requirements as specified in the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*. If changes in management direction are needed at any time, the significance of the changes will be evaluated. Minor amendments to the plan that do not alter the overall protection objectives may be considered and approved by the Area Supervisor without further public consultation. In assessing major amendments, the need for a more detailed Resource Management Plan will first be considered. Where a Resource Management Plan (RMP) is not considered necessary or feasible, a major amendment may be considered with public consultation. Major amendments will be recommended by the District Manager and approved by the Regional Director, and will follow the appropriate guidelines (OMNR 2001).

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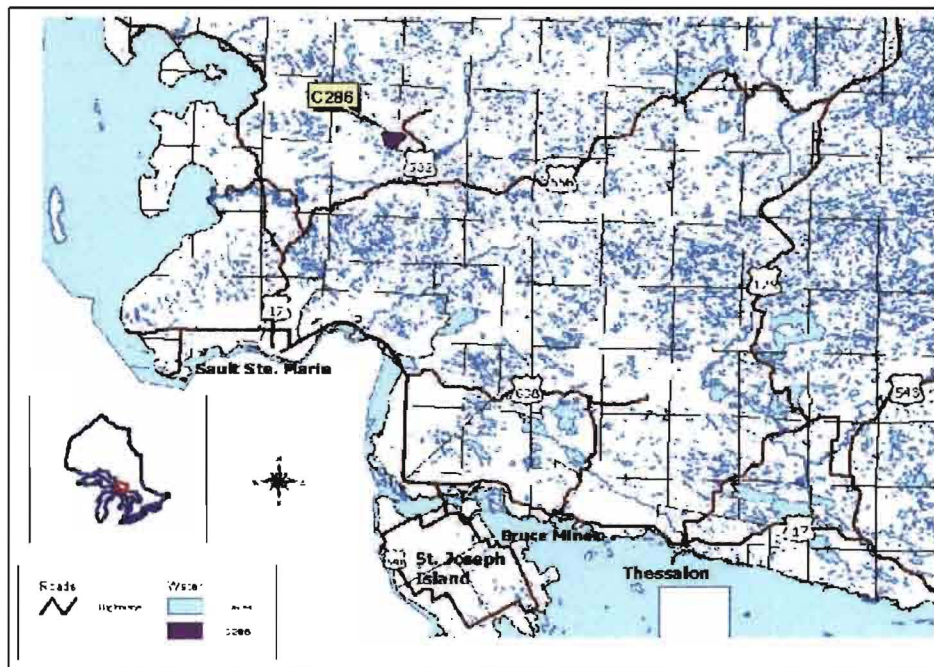
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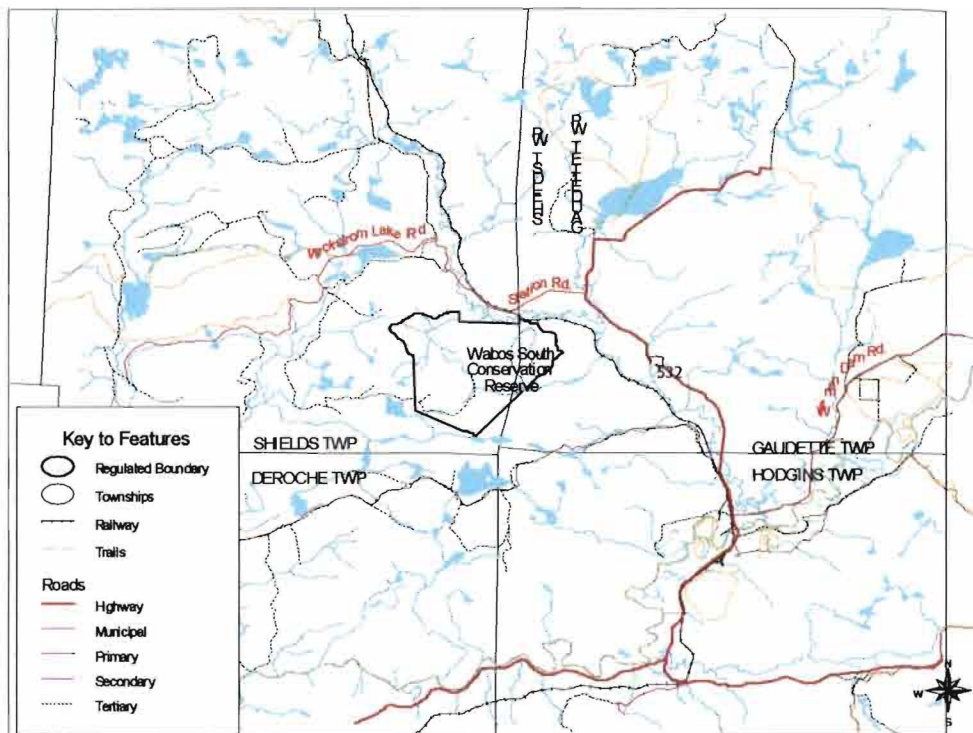
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10.0 Maps

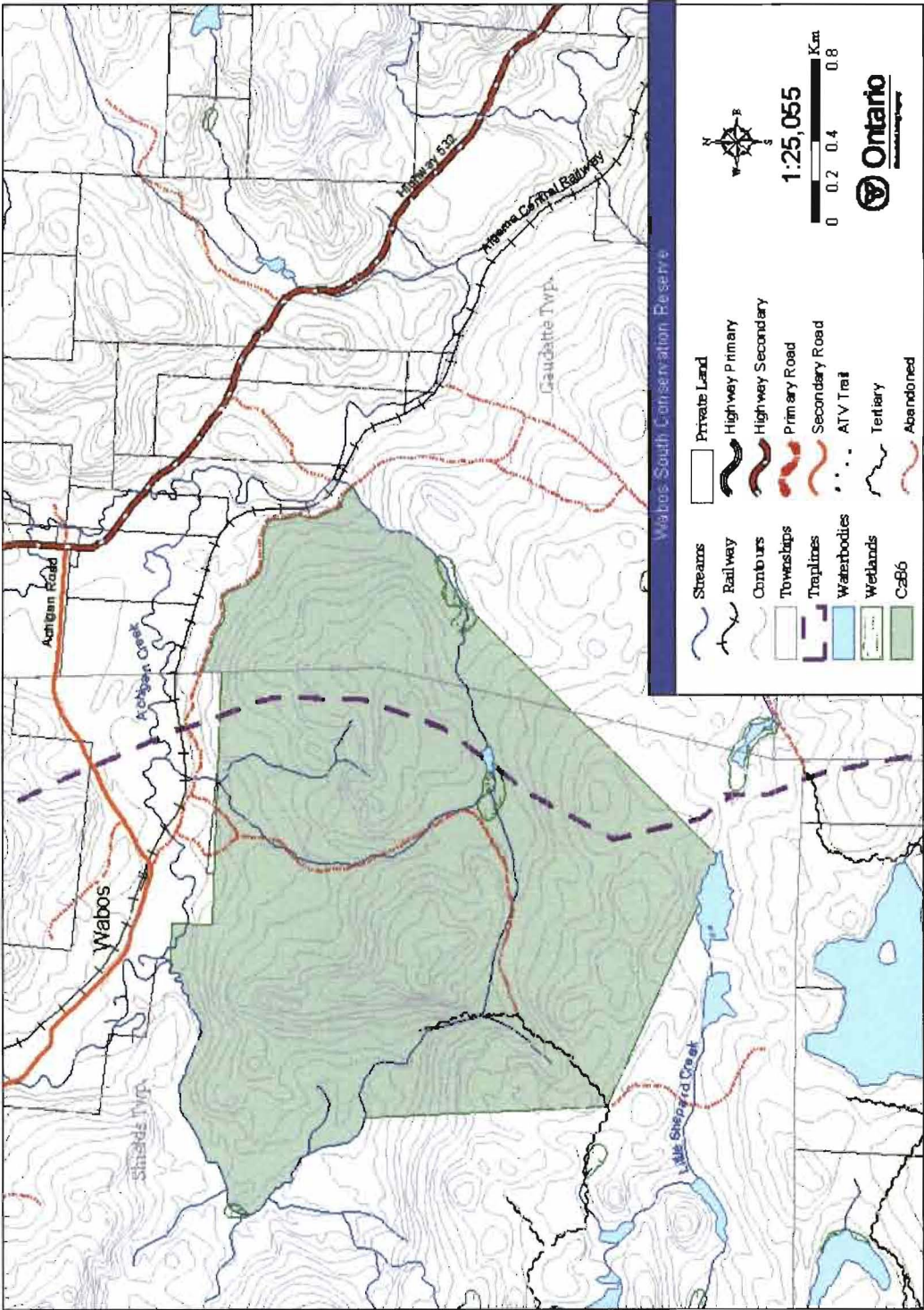
Map 1a: Location of the Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286)



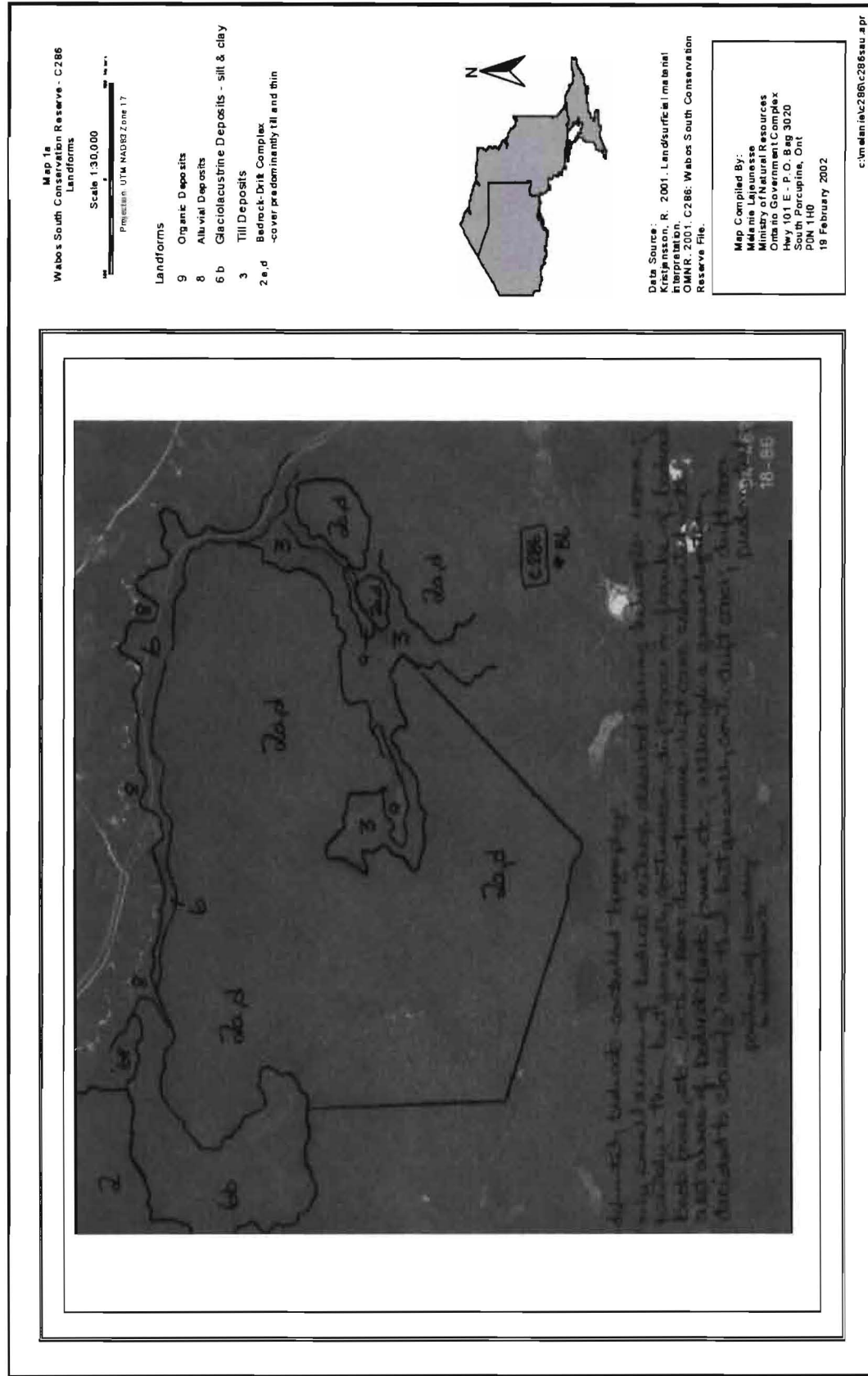
Map 1b: Location of Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286)



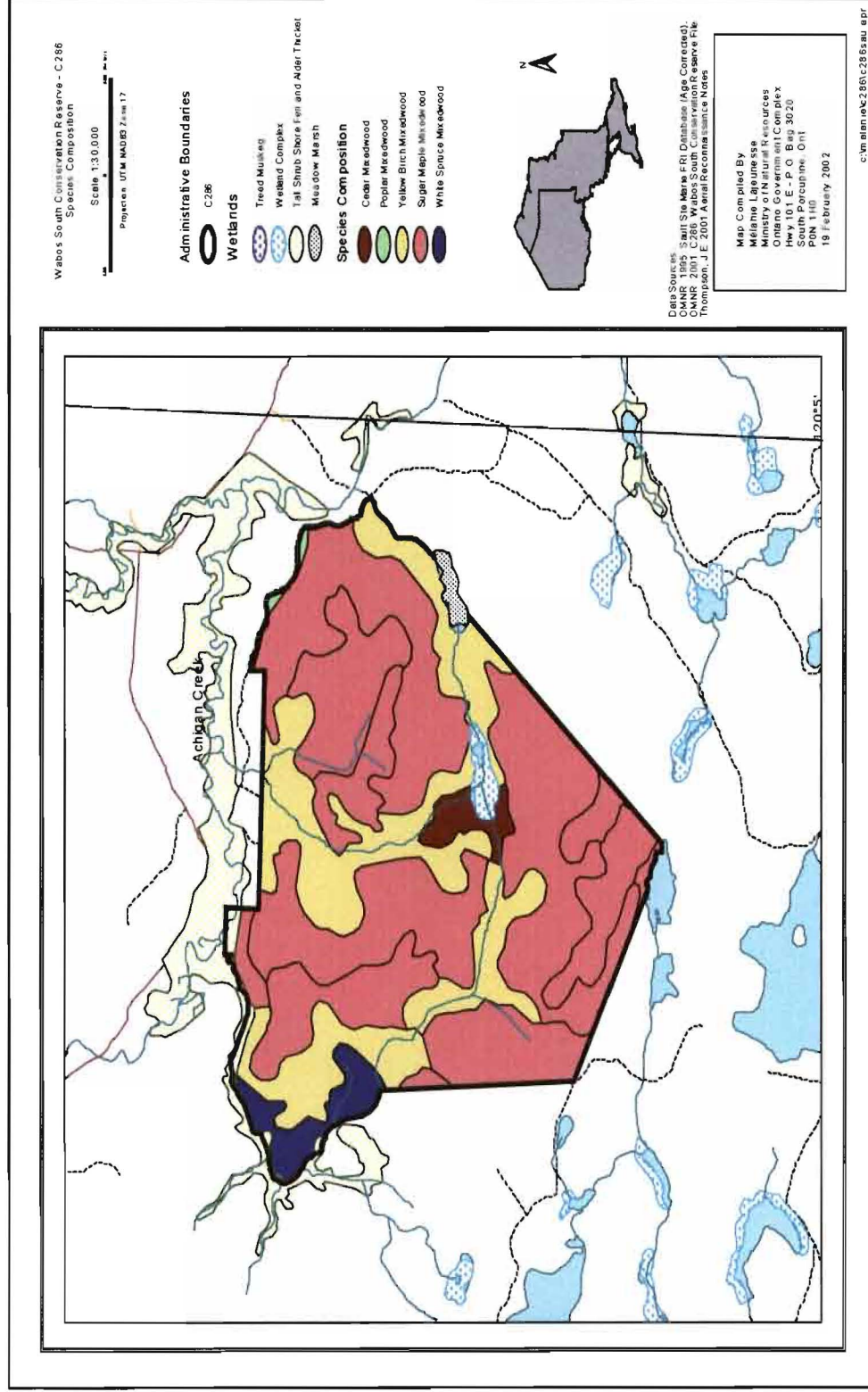
Map 1c: Location of Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286)



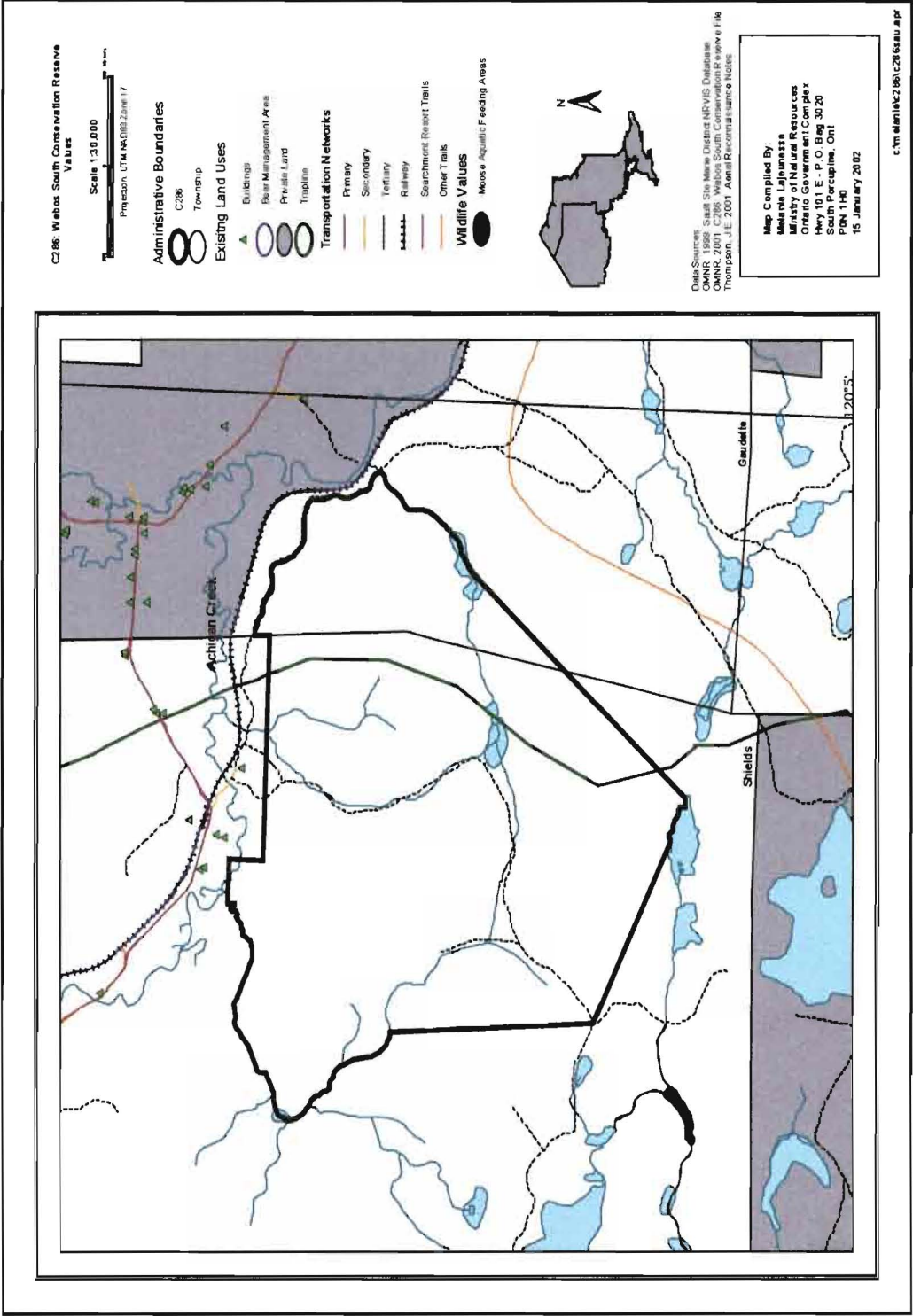
Map 2: Aerial photograph showing Landforms in Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286)



Map 3: Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286): Species Composition Map



Map 4: Wabos South Conservation Reserve (C286): Recreational Values map



11.0 Photos



Photo 1: View of wetland area in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.
(Photo taken by N. Nathwani during aerial reconnaissance survey, OMNR; 26 Sep 2001)



Photo 2: View of wetland area in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.
(Photo taken by N. Nathwani during aerial reconnaissance survey, OMNR; 26 Sep 2001)



Photo 3: View of wetland area in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.
(Photo taken by N. Nathwani during aerial reconnaissance survey, OMNR; 26 Sep 2001)



Photo 4: Northern portion of the overgrown abandoned road in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.
(Photo taken by M. Hall, OMNR; 21 Aug 2002)



Photo 5: Section of a timber cruse line in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

(Photo taken by M. Croft, Sault College; 02 Aug 2001)



Photo 6: Section of a timber cruse line in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

(Photo taken by M. Croft, Sault College; 02 Aug 2001)



Photo 7: Section of a timber cruse line in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

(Photo taken by M. Croft, Sault College; 02 Aug 2001)

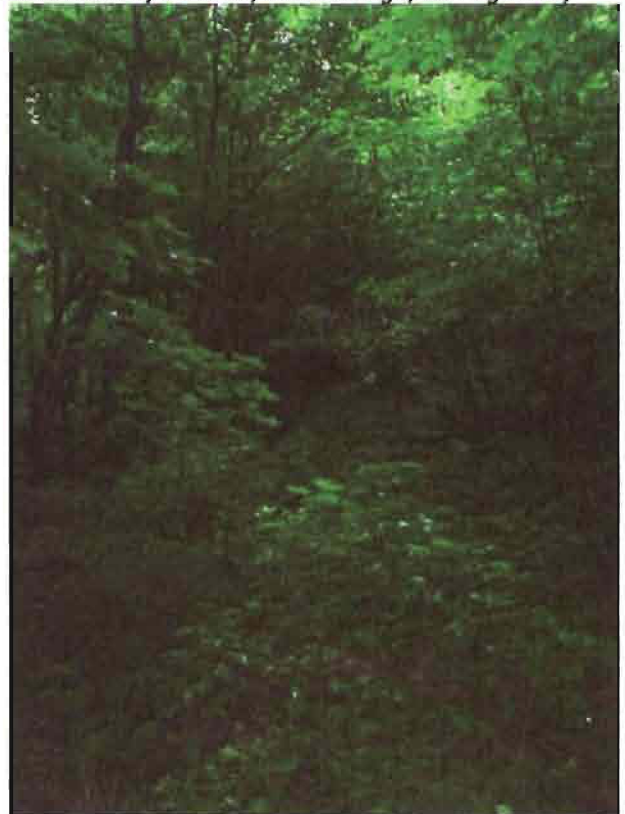


Photo 8: Northern portion of the abandoned road in Wabos South Conservation Reserve.

(Photo taken by M. Hall, OMNR; 21 Aug 2002)

Appendices

Appendix A: SCI Test of Compatibility

Test of Compatibility¹:

1. Conformity to SCI/RMP – SCI describes values for which an area has been set aside and the range of appropriate uses that will be permitted in the area. SCI may also speak to the acceptability of other 'new' uses currently not occurring in the area.

The first 'test' is: "do proposed new land uses and/or commercial activities conform to the direction of the SCI/RMP for the conservation reserve? Would the new use(s) depart from the spirit of appropriate indicator land uses in the SCI/RMP?"

2. Screening Process – proposed uses for the area must be assessed before they are approved. To establish a minimum standard, Northeast Region (NER) recommends that the Screening Process identified in Section 4.2 of *A Class EA for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Phase IIb: Draft Class EA* (subject to approval by MOE) be used to screen projects and options.
3. Impact Assessment – the Test of Compatibility from the Conservation Reserve Policy (PL 3.03.05) identifies the classes of values and main concepts that need to be considered in determining the impacts of uses on a specific Conservation Reserve. These include:
 - Natural heritage
 - Cultural
 - Research activities
 - Current uses
 - Area administration
 - Accommodating the use outside the conservation reserve
 - Socio-economics
 - Area accessibility.

The class EA (Table 4.1) presents similar values and concepts under the following considerations:

- Natural environment
- Land use, resource management
- Social, cultural and economic
- Aboriginal

The above considerations and classes of values are meant to assist planning staff in answering the following questions for any potential use:

- Will the new use impact any values within the Conservation Reserve?
- If so how?
- To what degree?
- Is it tolerable?

¹ This Test of Compatibility is taken from both *Procedural Guidelines B – Land Uses – Test of Compatibility* PL 3.03.05 and from the *Planning Process for Conservation Reserve Statement of Conservation Interest and Resource Management Plan Northeast Region Guidelines Version 2.1 September 17, 2001*.

Appendix B: Summary of Permitted Uses

Policy Report (revised May 10, 2002)

NEWID: C286/SM2**District: Sault Ste. Marie****Region:****Northeast****IDENTIFICATION:****ID: C286****AreaName: Wabos South****Area (ha): 580****Land Use: Conservation Reserve (Ontario's Living Legacy)****Category:****DESCRIPTION:**

Red maple, sugar maple and yellow birch dominate the steep hills and pockets of flat lacustrine deposits of this landscape in Site District 4E-2.

Wabos South was regulated as a conservation reserve on December 21, 2000.

LAND USE INTENT:

Management of this area is also governed by the general policies contained in the Land Use Strategy (1999).

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION:

Those uses and management activities not listed in the following table are governed by existing Conservation Reserve policy. Over time the management direction will be elaborated in a Statement of Conservation Interest or Resource Management Plan. Any new uses, and commercial activities associated with Conservation Reserves, will be considered on a case by case basis, and they must pass a test of compatibility to be acceptable. Compatibility is normally determined through a planning process.

Activity	Permitted	Guidelines
Commercial Activities		
Aggregate Extraction:	No	
Bait Fishing:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing use permitted to continue, unless there are significant demonstrated conflicts. New operations can be considered, subject to the "test of compatibility".
New:	Maybe	
Commercial Fishing:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing use permitted to continue, unless there are significant demonstrated conflicts. New operations can be considered, subject to the "test of compatibility".
New:	Maybe	
Commercial Fur Harvesting:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing use permitted to continue, unless there are significant demonstrated conflicts. Existing trap cabins can continue; new cabins are not permitted. New operations can be considered, subject to the "test of compatibility".
New:	Maybe	
Commercial Hydro Development:	No	
Commercial Timber Harvest:	No	
Commercial Tourism:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing authorized facilities can continue, unless there are significant demonstrated conflicts. New tourism facilities can be considered during the planning for an individual reserve.
New:	Maybe	
Bear Hunting by Non-residents (guided):		
Existing:	Yes	Existing authorized operations permitted to continue. New operations not permitted.
New:	No	
Outfitting Services:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing authorized operations permitted to continue. New operations can be considered during the planning for an individual reserve.
New:	Maybe	

Policy Report (revised May 10, 2002)**NEWID: C286/SM2****District: Sault Ste. Marie****Region:****Northeast**

Outpost Camps:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing authorized operations permitted to continue. New operations can be considered during the planning for an individual reserve.
New:	Maybe	
Resorts/lodges:		
Existing:	Yes	Existing authorized facilities permitted to continue. New facilities can be considered during the planning for an individual reserve.
New:	Maybe	
Energy Transmission and Communications Corridors:		
Existing:	Yes	These facilities should avoid conservation reserve lands wherever possible.
New:	No	
Food Harvesting (Commercial):		
Existing:	Maybe	
New:	Maybe	
Mineral Exploration and Development:	Maybe	Mineral exploration may occur under controlled conditions in portions of new conservation reserves that are identified through further analysis and consultation as having provincially-significant mineral potential. If a site is to be developed for a mine, it would be deregulated as part of the reserve, and a replacement area added to the reserve.
Peat Extraction:	No	
Wild Rice Harvesting:		
Existing:	Yes	
New:	Maybe	
Land and Resource Management Activities		
Crown Land Disposition:		
Private Use:	Maybe	Sale of lands is not permitted, except for minor dispositions in support of existing uses (e.g. reconstruction of a septic system). Renewals of existing leases and land use permits are permitted. Requests for transfer of tenure will be considered in the context of the Statement of Conservation Interest or Resource Management Plan. New leases or land use permits permitted for approved activities. Tourism facilities can apply to upgrade tenure from LUP to lease.
Commercial Use:	Maybe	
Fire Suppression:	Yes	Fire suppression policies are similar to adjacent Crown lands, unless alternative fire policies have been developed through a planning process.
Fish Habitat Management:	Maybe	
Fish Stocking:	Maybe	Conservation Reserves policy indicates that "featured species management" may be permitted.
Insect/disease Suppression:	Maybe	
Inventory/Monitoring:	Yes	
Personal use permits for Wood Harvesting:	Maybe	Existing permits may continue on an interim basis for properties that do not have road access. The long term status will be determined through management planning.
Prescribed Burning:	Maybe	
Roads (Resource Access):		
Existing:	Yes	Existing roads can continue to be used. Continued use will include maintenance and may include future upgrading. New roads for resource extraction will not be permitted, with the exception of necessary access to existing forest reserves for
New:	Maybe	

Policy Report (revised May 10, 2002)**NEWID: C286/SM2****District: Sault Ste. Marie****Region: Northeast**

		mineral exploration and development, or where part of a conservation reserve has been formally identified as having provincially significant mineral potential that is open for controlled exploration.
Vegetation Management:	Maybe	Conservation Reserves policy indicates that Featured Species Management and Natural Systems Management may be permitted. Vegetation management can be considered in a planning process.
Wildlife Population Management:	Maybe	
<u>Science, Education and Heritage Appreciation</u>		
Collecting:	No	
Historical Appreciation:	Yes	
Nature Appreciation:	Yes	
Photography and Painting:	Yes	
Research:	Yes	
Wildlife Viewing:	Yes	
<u>Recreation Activities and Facilities</u>		
All Terrain Vehicle Use:		
On Trails:	Yes	Existing use permitted to continue where it does not adversely affect the values being protected. ATV use off trails is not permitted except for direct retrieval of game.
Off Trails:	No	
Campgrounds:	Maybe	
Food Gathering:	Yes	
Horseback Riding (trail):	Yes	Existing use on trails permitted.
Hunting:	Yes	
Mountain Bike Use:	Yes	Existing use on trails permitted.
Motor Boat Use:		
Commercial:	Yes	
Private:	Yes	
Non-motorized Recreation Travel:	Yes	
Private Recreation Camps (Hunt Camps):		
Existing:	Yes	Existing camps permitted to continue, and may be eligible for enhanced tenure, but not purchase of land.
New:	No	
Rock Climbing:	Maybe	
Snowmobiling:		
On Trails:	Yes	Existing use permitted to continue where it does not adversely affect the values being protected. Snowmobiling off trails is not permitted, except that snowmobiles may be used for direct retrieval of game.
Off Trails:	Maybe	
Sport Fishing:	Yes	
Trail Development:	Maybe	Development of trails for a variety of activities (e.g. hiking, cross-country skiing, cycling, horseback riding, snowmobiling) can be considered as part of planning for an individual reserve.

Note: The policies outlined in this table do not supersede any Aboriginal or treaty rights that may exist, or other legal obligations.

Appendix C: Public Consultation Handouts



MINISTÈRE DU
Natural
Resources

MINISTÈRE DES
Richesses
naturelles

64 Church Street
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3H3

Telephone: (705) 949-1231 x 210
Facsimile: (705) 949-6450
E-mail: serge.tenaglia@mnr.gov.on.ca

November 10, 1999

TO: ONTARIO LIVING LEGACY STAKEHOLDERS

Dear Sir/Madam:

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*, a broad land use strategy for the planning and management of much of the Crown lands in central and parts of northern Ontario. A major part of *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* was a government commitment to the biggest expansion of provincial parks and conservation reserves in Ontario's history. Ontario intends to add 378 new areas to its protected areas' system. *Ontario's Living Legacy* is a momentous achievement that will be recognized around the world as a significant contribution to sustaining our natural environment. A copy of the *Land Use Strategy* is available from our office upon request.

In accordance with the recommendations in *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*, the Ministry of Natural Resources is now beginning the process of establishing the first set of 64 protected areas from the *Land Use Strategy*. The first step in this process is consultation on the boundaries of these 64 areas. The remaining 314 proposed protected areas will be consulted upon in the future.

As stated in the *Land Use Strategy*, the boundary refinement process will consider local ecological information and will attempt to locate regulated boundaries along features that can be identified on the ground. This boundary refinement process may result in modest increases or decreases in the sizes of the areas. Any existing commitments for the areas which were considered during the land use planning process, will be considered in defining the final boundary.

This list of 64 areas includes the proposed Wabos North and Wabos South Conservation Reserves.

The *Land Use Strategy* established the Ministry's intent to add these Crown lands to Ontario's protected areas' system, following the extensive public consultation associated with *Ontario's Living Legacy* and the *Lands for Life* land use planning initiatives between 1997 and 1999. Prior to the finalization of the boundary of these conservation reserves proposed for regulation under the Public Lands Act, the Ministry is inviting public comment on the proposed boundaries.

Your name and address have been included within a Ministry mailing list to advise potentially interested persons about these new conservation reserves. This mailing list includes a broad group such as nearby landowners, resource users, persons with other rights or tenure (e.g. land use permit, Mining Act rights), municipalities and others who may have an interest in these areas.

Information describing these proposed areas is attached. More detailed mapping and information about the proposed boundaries are available from this office.

In the future and subject to the intended regulation of these areas as conservation reserves, the Ministry of Natural Resources will undertake a management planning process to determine the long-term management of these protected areas. Depending upon the complexity of issues related to these conservation reserves, management planning may take the form of a simple Statement of Conservation Interest or a more detailed Resource Management Plan. Please let us know if you would like to be notified when planning begins.

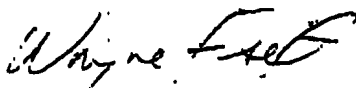
Planning, management, and permitted uses within these conservation reserves would be consistent with the commitments of *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*.

The Ministry is collecting comments and information regarding these proposed conservation reserve boundary reviews under the authority of the Public Lands Act, to assist in making decisions and determining further public consultation needs. Comments and opinions will be kept on file and may be included in study documentation that is made available for public review. Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (1987), personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent is obtained. However, the Ministry may use this information as public input on other resource management surveys or projects. For further information regarding this Act, please contact Wayne Fiset, Information Management Supervisor, Ministry of Natural Resources, Sault Ste. Marie District (705-949-121 ext. 288).

If you would like to discuss the proposed boundaries and the protection of these areas under the Public Lands Act, please contact Erin Nixon, Community Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources, 64 Church St., Sault Ste. Marie, P6A 3H3, tel: 705-949-121, fax: 705-949-6450, by December 15, 1999. Further information on *Ontario's Living Legacy* is available in our office or by visiting the Ministry's Internet website at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/oll/.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours sincerely,



for Serge Tenaglia
District Manager

Ontario's Living Legacy

WABOS SOUTH CONSERVATION RESERVE (C286) FACT SHEET

JANUARY, 2001

♦ Background

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released *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 *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999)* 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 Wabos South Conservation Reserve is part of this significant expansion of Ontario's protected areas system. Following public and Aboriginal consultation in late 1999 and early 2000 on refining the boundary of this protected area, Ontario Regulation 805/94 of the *Public Lands Act* was amended on January 6, 2001, by Ontario Regulation 686/00, to formally establish this conservation reserve.

♦ Size and Location

The Wabos South Conservation Reserve is comprised of 580 ha of tolerant hardwood forests in an area approximately 40-km northeast of the city of Sault Ste. Marie. Located in the townships of Shields and Gaudette, the reserve is west of Highway 532, east of Leaf Lake, and south of Wabos.

• Area Highlights

The Wabos South Conservation Reserve is located in a scenic area of Ontario along the Lake Superior coastline between Agawa Bay and Gros Cap that is known by resource managers as "*ecological site district 4E-2*". Extending inland for approximately 60-90 km, this ecological unit has a rugged topography and elevations exceeding 450 metres. The topography is the result of numerous geological structures such as faults, joints, and diabase dikes that dissect the area. The bedrock uplands have a thin layer of sandy soil on the upper slopes and thicker soils in the valleys. Exposed bedrock is common, and dates back billions of years to the Precambrian and Cambrian periods. Pockets of "lacustrine deposits", soils that were formed long ago in a lake, are also found in the area.

Located within the Algoma Forest Section of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Region, the reserve is characterized by a high proportion of tolerant hardwood trees. Sugar maple, mixed sugar maple/red maple, and yellow birch stands of all ages are present, dominating the area's steep hills and valleys. Tributaries of Achigan Creek, which is just to the north of the reserve, also cut through the area.

While a detailed biological study has not been conducted within the conservation reserve, a number of significant species are known to be present within site district 4E-2. The provincially significant wood turtle has been recorded here, while the increasingly rare snapping turtle reaches the northern limits of its range. The endangered bald eagle breeds here as well as the provincially significant least bittern, red-shouldered hawk, American coot, and long-eared and short-eared owls. Many rare vascular plants have been recorded, including Braun's holly fern, the limestone oak fern, the lance-leaved coreopsis, and the monkey flower.

- **Land Use Intent**

Conservation reserves are areas of Crown land set aside by regulation under the Public Lands Act.

Conservation reserves complement provincial parks in protecting representative natural areas and special landscapes. Most recreational activities (e.g. hiking, skiing, tourism related uses, nature appreciation) and non-industrial activities (e.g. fur harvesting, commercial fishing and bait harvesting) 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 are also 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. Careful mineral exploration may occur in specific new conservation reserves proposed through *Ontario's Living Legacy*, in areas that have provincially significant mineral potential. If a portion of a new conservation reserve is to be developed for a mine, it would be removed from the reserve, and appropriate replacement lands would be placed into regulation. Please refer to Table 4 from the *Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999)* for a detailed summary of permitted uses in conservation reserves.

- **Next Steps**

This regulated area has been withdrawn and protected from resource extraction activities such as timber harvesting, hydroelectric development, aggregate extraction and new mineral exploration.

In the future, the Ministry of Natural Resources will prepare a long-term management plan for this area. Depending upon the complexity of issues within this conservation reserve, management planning may take the form of a simple SCI or a more detailed Resource

Management Plan. Please let us know if you would like to be notified when planning begins.

Planning, management and the uses permitted within this conservation reserve would be consistent with the commitments of *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999).

♦ **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For further information on the Wabos South Conservation Reserve, please contact Erin Nixon, District Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources, Sault Ste. Marie District (705-949-1231 ext. 247). You may also visit the Ministry's Internet website at www.ontarioslivinglegacy.com for information on *Ontario's Living Legacy*.

64 Church Street
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3H3

August 22, 2001

Regulation of Ontario's Living Legacy Protected Areas in Sault Ste. Marie District

In July 1999, the Ontario Government released the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*, a broad land use approach to the planning and management of Crown lands in central and parts of northern Ontario. A large component of the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (OMNR 1999)* was a government commitment to add 378 new provincial parks and conservation reserves to Ontario's protected areas system.

In November 1999 and again in September 2000, we provided you with the opportunity to comment on the proposed boundaries for the park and the conservation reserves in Sault Ste. Marie District. I am pleased to inform you that, as of January 2001, the park and fifteen of these conservation reserves have been regulated. The new park and conservation reserves in the District are:

- P285 *Sandy Islands Provincial Nature Reserve*
- C243 *Wagong Lake Forest Conservation Reserve*
- C244 *Rawhide Lake Conservation Reserve*
- C245 *Jollineau Conservation Reserve Conservation Reserve*
- C246 *Echo River Hardwoods Conservation Reserve*
- C258 *Thessalon River Delta/Rock Lake Red Oak Conservation Reserve*
- C260 *Rose Lake Dune Peatland Complex Conservation Reserve*
- C262 *Stuart Lake Wetland Conservation Reserve*
- C263 *Garden Lake Forest Conservation Reserve*
- C281 *Tilley Creek West Conservation Reserve*
- C284 *Wabos North Conservation Reserve*
- C286 *Wabos South Conservation Reserve*
- C289 *Searchmont South Forest Conservation Reserve*
- C294 *O'Connor Conservation Reserve*
- C298 *Harmony Forest Conservation Reserve*
- C307 *Ile Parisienne Conservation Reserve*

Regulation means the park and conservation reserves are now legally mapped and recognized as protected areas of crown land under the jurisdiction of the provincial government. As such, these areas will be protected from industrial activities, including commercial forestry, hydroelectric development, mining, and aggregate and peat extraction. Traditional recreational and resource uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing, boating, and fur trapping, will generally be permitted to continue within the

conservation reserves. In nature reserve class provincial parks (eg. P285, Sandy Islands), hunting and fur trapping are not permitted; other traditional recreational uses (fishing, hiking, canoeing, boating) may continue.

Ontario Parks staff is responsible for the planning and management of Sandy Islands Provincial Nature Reserve and they will prepare an Interim Management Statement to guide the management of this property. Sault Ste. Marie District is responsible for the management of the conservation reserves and will develop Statements of Conservation Interest (SCI) to guide the management of each new conservation reserve. There will be opportunity for the public to review and comment on draft SCIs for each conservation reserve. Depending upon the complexity of issues related to the sites and their management, more detailed Management Plans may, in due course, be required.

Detailed maps of the regulated boundaries for these new protected areas are available for viewing in the Sault Ste. Marie District office and the Blind River Area office of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

If you have any questions or concerns about the management of Sandy Islands Provincial Nature Reserve, please contact Chris Caldwell, Ontario Parks at the Sault Ste. Marie District Office. Concerns regarding any of the conservation reserves should be addressed to Sheila Walsh (OLL Resource Planner) also at the Sault Ste. Marie District Office.

Thank you for your interest in Ontario's Living Legacy.

Yours truly,

Tom Mispel-Beyer
A/District Manager
Sault Ste. Marie District

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TMB/gm