Manitoba Model Forest Inc., 1997/98 Annual Report
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ISBN 1-896763-20-0

End of the Phase I agreement

In March of 1997 the Manitoba Model Forest ended its first five years of project research and program implementation. A review of its activities, both from a national and local perspective, revealed that the most outstanding achievement was the Manitoba Model Forest's success in bringing together a diverse group of interests and forest stakeholders to work in cooperation toward the sustainable development of forests.

With the end of Phase I of the program the Model Forest now needed to prepare for the start of Phase II. This second phase meant that a new proposal for the Manitoba Model Forest would have to be written. This new proposal process would take over a year to complete and would focus on the revision of the Manitoba Model Forest's goals and objectives. It was therefore necessary to start the workshop and consultation processes well in advance of the end of Phase I in order to be ready for the next chapter in the Model Forest story.

It took months of preparation, several rewrites, and addendums but the Manitoba Model Forest signed a new five year agreement with the Canadian Forest Service in November, 1997.

The funding agreement will cover the period from 1997 to 2002. Under the new agreement the Manitoba Model Forest will be focusing its efforts on the application of new and innovative ideas and technologies developed under Phase I.

Signing of the Phase II agreement.

Most of 1997, the first year of phase II, was involved with the rewriting of the 1997-2002 proposal. It took months of preparation, several rewrites, and addendums but the Manitoba Model Forest signed a new five year agreement with the Canadian Forest Service in November, 1997. The contribution agreement will cover the period from 1997 to 2002. Under the new agreement the Manitoba Model Forest will be focusing its efforts on application of new and innovative ideas and technologies developed under Phase I which ended in March. Efforts to achieve the MBMF Phase II goals and objectives are already underway. Copies of the five year proposal are available from the MBMF

The arrival Phase II also signified the expansion of the Manitoba Model Forest Board of Directors to include a more diverse selection of the region's forest stakeholders. The Manitoba Model Forest expanded its Board of Directors in 1997 to better represent the interests in the Model Forest region. As of April, 1998, the Board is composed of:

Rod Bollman	University of Winnipeg
Alice Chambers	Time To Respect Earth's Ecosystems
Fred Cousins	Community of Bissett
Ken Danwich	RM of Alexander
Rod Demoline	Village of Lac du Bonnet
Trent Hreno,	Manitoba Environment
Stuart Jansson	Manitoba Trappers Association
Stan Kaczanowski	Manitoba Natural Resources
Bill Kozyra	WRBCF Development Corporation
Gordon McColm	Manitoba Natural Resources

Karen Palidwor	NorthEast Sustainable Development Assoc.
Dan Phillipot	Local Unions
Henry Phillips	Manitoba Metis Federation SE Region
Glen Pinnell	Pine Falls Paper Co.
Len Riding	Woodlot Assoc. of Manitoba
Don Sikora	RM of Lac du Bonnet
John Sinclair	Natural Resource Institute U. of M.
Ron Singbeil	RM of Brokenhead
L. Swanson	LGD of Pinawa
Walter Tokar	Waasaabiyaa Shining Waters Heritage Region
Bob Neustead	Canadian Forest Service

Network milestone: New Model Forest joins Network

The Waswanipi Cree Model Forest in Quebec was announced by Minister Ralph Goodale as the new, Aboriginal Model Forest. An official signing ceremony was held at Waswanipi September 17, 1997. This makes a total of eleven Canadian Model Forest

The 209,600 hectare Waswanipi Cree Model Forest is located more than 600 kilometres northwest of Quebec City.

The Waswanipi Cree Model Forest is based on a strong partnership of individuals and organizations with different experiences and backgrounds in forest resource management. These partners include among others, the National Aboriginal Forestry Association, the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources, Laval University, Nabakatuk Co. and the Waswanipi Mishtuk Corporation.

MBMF Highlights from 1997

With the signing of the Phase II, 1997 - 2002, agreement the Manitoba Model Forest entered into a period of intense activity. Workplan development and delivery became a priority. A brief examination of some of the activities the Manitoba Model Forest was involved with in 1997 gives a feeling for the new purpose and direction the organization is taking in the years to come.

Aboriginal Involvement Initiatives were high on the list of priorities for the Manitoba Model Forest. With four First Nations Communities within the Model Forest region, the Manitoba Model Forest built upon the existing relationships with these communities and began forging new initiatives designed to increase aboriginal involvement.

A two day Aboriginal Involvement workshop in September of 1997 was held in Winnipeg. In attendance were Aboriginal representatives from Prince Albert Model Forest who shared their experiences with representatives from the four First Nations Communities in the Manitoba Model Forest. This workshop was fundamental to building the understanding and framework needed to improve the level of aboriginal involvement in the MBMF in the coming years.

In recognition of the need for encouragement of aboriginal communities and their representatives to participate in the Model Forest Network, the MBMF sponsored numerous First Nations representatives to MBMF workshops . This sponsorship included support for Aboriginal attendance at Natural Disturbances, Spatial Modelling and Archeaological workshops. It culminated in support for Aboriginal attendance in the Model Forest Network, Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement workshop held in Edmonton, Alberta. This workshop developed new terms of reference and set up the strategic initiatives for Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement across the Model Forest Network.

Manitoba Model Forest activities also extended into the academic community as well. In November of 1997, the MBMF made the decision to move its GIS equipment to the University of Winnipeg, Geography Department. In addition to being used for research within the department the GIS equipment will also be playing

a role in increasing the level of academic excellence of the students at the Geography department. This equipment was originally donated to the MBMF by the Canadian Forest Service following the close of their Manitoba District Office at the conclusion of the Canada - Manitoba Partnership Agreement in Forestry.

Network activities were a high priority for the MBMF during 1997 as illustrated by the MBMF presence at the Local Levels Indicator meetings held by the Model Forest Network in Rimouski, Quebec. The Manitoba Model Forest also played a role in the devlopment of a strategic communications plan for the Model Forest Network and continues to do so as new demands for information surface across the Model Forest Network.

As the Network expands internationally it becomes increasingly important for the "older" model forests to share their experience with potential Model Forest members. To facilitate this transfer of experience the Manitoba Model Forest was present at the invitation of the International Model Forest Secretariat, when the Model Forest Secretariat met with international forest representatives in Tokyo, Japan. The open discussion and dialogue at this meeting assisted new and potential model forest participants to move forward on their quest for new and innovative ways for people to grow with their forests through sustainable development.

1997/98 MBMF Projects

97-1-09 Model Forest Forum 97 highlights

The Manitoba Model Forest began Phase II by hosting the Network in Winnipeg at the Model Forest Network Symposium, "People Growing With Forests" May 12 - 15, 1997.

A showcase of Model Forest activities, research and accomplishments from across the network, this forum drew upon Model Forest projects, information and experience. Plenary discussions allowed for the sharing of experience and ideas in the areas of Ecosystem Functions and Sustainable Practices, Societal Elements, Economic Development and Diversification, and Management Planning and Decision Support.

Ecosystem Functions and Sustainable Practices theme topics included: rare and endangered species , soil and water conservation, forest succession, biodiversity, global ecological cycles, forest growth and yield, ecosystem classification systems, innovative silvicultural techniques, alternative harvesting systems, criteria and indicators (conservation of biodiversity), forest ecosystem condition and productivity, "best practices" , habitat models, and forest management effects and mitigation

Societal Elements theme topics included: aboriginal and treaty rights, societal values, education and technology transfer, heritage resources and partnership experiences, old growth forests, multi-stakeholder management , conflict resolution, non-market valuation , and criteria and indicators (societal responsibility and benefits) .

Economic Development and Diversification topics discussed included: agro-forestry, alternative fibre sources , alternative, value added and traditional forest products, eco-tourism, industry competitiveness, reserve land management, and woodlot management,

Management Planning and Decision Support theme topics included: public involvement, industry certification ,decision support models and systems, ecosystem management approaches, and integrated resource management approaches.

The forum had representatives from every model forest across Canada as well as presenters and delegates from the United States, and Mexico.

96-2-16 Cooperative Moose Management

This project represents a milestone for the Manitoba Model Forest in that the Cooperative Moose Management project undertaken for the past five years has allowed stakeholders to have an awareness and appreciation for different values and cultures with respect to the forest and its uses. It has resulted in a mutually acceptable five year moose management project spanning three study areas across the Manitoba Model Forest. It has demonstrated that public involvement can lead to potential management techniques that are based on stakeholders working together into the next century, with a common vision built from their differing views and opinions.

The Cooperative Moose Management initiative began in 1993. It was recognized that there was a need to develop a common vision for moose management on the east side of Lake Winnipeg due to pressure on moose populations from all stakeholder groups. The main objective was to develop a consensus between stakeholders which combined the traditional aboriginal beliefs, current rights and non-aboriginal views into a common vision for moose management in the Manitoba Model Forest Region. Since 1993, all stakeholders have worked towards understanding opposing views and learning to accept mutual compromise in the development of a common vision. The Committee for Moose Management was formed in 1995 and represents a diverse group of stakeholders with different views and interests on moose management. These interests include First Nations people, environmental groups, wildlife clubs, industry and government.

97-2-46 Ecosystem Based Management

Achieving ecosystem based management goals requires accurate databases such as those required for a Forest Ecosystem Classification system. In 1997, the Manitoba Model Forest built upon previous databases and completed the FEC mapping for the Manitoba Model Forest region. This work was carried out by Geomatics International. Geomatics devised a formula to interpret the Manitoba Model Forest inventory to a Forest Ecosystem Classification system. Using the new FEC, maps of the region have been prepared.

The formation of a partnership between governing bodies, industry and other concerned stakeholder organizations was also necessary to ensure that Ecosystem Based Management strategies would not only be attainable, but encompass areas of concern to forest stakeholders. Formation of a steering committee for EBM and a partnership was therefore a priority for 1997. This new EBM committee is chaired by Merlin Shoesmith, Assistant Deputy Minister, Manitoba Natural Resources and has representatives from Louisianna Pacific, Pine Falls Paper Company, Manitoba Natural Resources, Manitoba Model Forest and the environmental community.

97-2-47 Criteria and Indicators

Continuing in phase II of the Model Forest program, and of great importance to the success of the program is the ongoing development of criteria and indicators of sustainable development. Through the Pine Falls Paper Company, in partnership with Lakehead University, the Manitoba Model Forest is establishing a soil compaction index related to relevant indicators of sustainable development. This two year project will be continuing through 1998 with the assistance of a graduate student of Lakehead University.

This ongoing work on criteria and indicators is part of the strategic direction within the Model Forest Network to address the development indicators of sustainable forest management at a local level.

Industry and government representatives and other Model Forest partners were introduced to the concept of Criteria and Indicators at a Workshop at the University of Winnipeg in 1997/8. The aim of the workshop was to inform participants about the goals and objectives of the Criteria and Indicators program and to ensure they all had an equal understanding of the ongoing research and development in this important area.

97-2-49 Natural Disturbance Regime

A workshop was held in Winnipeg attracting people from across the country to introduce themes about natural disturbance regimes. Over sixty participants crowded into the International Inn, Winnipeg, to hear from experts in the area of forest disturbances. The workshop, "Emulating Natural Disturbances" featured speakers on forest disturbance research in the boreal forest from across Canada's Boreal Forest Region. The workshop attracted interest from across Manitoba . Representatives from government, industry, environment groups and universities were in attendance.

The day long event provided insight into the approaches being taken to implement natural disturbance harvesting regimes across the boreal forest region. Interactive computer displays allowed workshop participants to explore models first hand while experts in the development and use of these models provided informative presentations and addressed questions regarding performance, limitations and advantages of the various models.

Among the results of the workshop was the release of a request for proposal for the 1998 project year. The proposed work in 1998 will address the design, implementation and monitoring of a natural disturbance harvesting regime within the Manitoba Model Forest.

97-4-09 Alternative Forest Products

The focus of forest industry during the past century or more has been in the production of fibre, be it for pulping or for lumber and related products. Traditionally however, people have relied on the forest for far more than fibre. The forest has provided a multitude of products from medicinal herbs to foods. Cataloguing these products, their uses and determining markets for them has been the focus of the Manitoba Model Forest's Alternative Forest Products project.

The development of future product markets and the sustainable harvest of these products will be important to the growth of this area of resource extraction. As the markets for, and importance of, sustainable harvest of alternative forest products increases so will the need to manage these resources sustainably and in conjunction with fibre extraction needs.

97-5-22 Private Woodlots in the Manitoba Model Forest

The Manitoba Model Forest encompasses over one million hectares. This region includes crown lands, multi-use parks, recreational developments, agricultural lands and a significant number of private woodlots. The purpose of this project is to assist in the sustainable management of private woodlots.

To proceed with the development of a sustainable woodlot strategy for the MBMF it was necessary to establish the location of private land holdings within the region. Using the Forest Resource Inventory database, private lands were located within the region. Landowners were identified using the Province of Manitoba Rural Assessment Database. Once identified, the larger landholders were contacted and visited.

Private woodlots were mapped using Geographic Information System, GIS, technology. Maps outlining the forest cover types were created for each of the land parcels assessed. Based upon GIS information and additional survey information a management plan was developed and finalized for each land parcel. Copies of the management plan were given to the land owner as well as compiled in a final project report for future reference.

With accurate and up to date information, plus an implementable management plan private woodlot owners now have the capability to manage their lands sustainably. This represents a new approach to woodlot management for a number of private land owners in the region. If implemented during the course of the next few years, these sustainable management strategies for private woodlots in the MBMF region will assist in attaining sustainable forestry practices within the region. Their successful implementation and long term benefits, once recognized beyond the MBMF boundaries should encourage other woodlot owners to proceed along their own course to sustainable management of private lands across the province.

97-6-19 Manitoba Model Forest Scholarship

The Manitoba Model Forest has been encouraging the region's youth to further their education in the environmental sciences by offering scholarships. To date scholarships totalling over $10,000 have been presented to area students to pursue college and university training.

Academic achievement has always been a way to award scholarships however, the Manitoba Model Forest recognized that financial need often played a greater role in limiting educational opportunities. With post-secondary institutions located well beyond the boundaries of the Manitoba Model Forest the Education, Culture and Public Awareness committee of the MBMF decided to consider financial need as well as academic achievement in awarding scholarships.

97-6-20 Communication Strategy

With the advent of Phase II, and the revision of Model Forest activities it was necessary to assess the communications activities of the past five years not only on a local basis but also at the network level. This review showed that a revision of activities were necessary to better meet networking needs. The Manitoba Model Forest's shift in focus away from baseline research to more on-the-ground implementation projects also signified the need for a shift in communications activities.

The Manitoba Model Forest will be facing many communications challenges as the organization moves into Phase II, 1997 - 2002. The challenges, which will ultimately affect the success of the program, are also a major consideration in the development of communications activities both in Manitoba and in terms of network activities.

Three broad communication goals have been identified and are based on the MBMF mission statement. In addition, these broad goals are reflective of the overall goals of the Model Forest Network as defined under the Model Forest Program. They are:

1. Advancement of the level of public awareness and understanding of the Boreal Forest.
2. Communication of the benefits and achievements of Manitoba's Model Forest.
3. Education of the public about forest management practices and forest ecology.

The evaluation of MBMF activities indicated that "creating partnerships" was a major accomplishment of not only the MBMF but all Model Forests across the network. The Model Forests were able to bring people to the table as the Model Forests were perceived as a neutral forum. One of the challenges facing the MBMF in Phase II will be maintaining these partnerships and developing its profile as "a neutral forum " where parties with diverse interests can meet and discuss their differences of opinion. Maintaining partnerships and developing new ones, coupled with enhancing the lines of communications between them will be a major communications task for the MBMF. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to target communications activities more precisely.

One of the greatest challenges which faces the MBMF and indeed all participants in the scientific community, is the effect which a rapidly changing and evolving technology, with its accompanying terminology, has had on communications efforts. In Phase I, the changing nature of terminology resulted in difficulties expressing to target audiences what key concepts were; what the practical applications of new and innovative technologies are; and what significance the evolution towards sustainable forestry would have on the average person. The problem is one which affects all Model Forests across the network.

Within the partnership of the MBMF people receive and rely on information in different ways. While for many the advent of the Internet has allowed for greater access to information, the majority still rely on more basic communication avenues. Even in the more urbanized populations south of the MBMF region, communication tools such as the Internet and cable television are only accessible by a small portion of the population. It will be a challenge for the MBMF to provide information to its audiences in a format which is not only acceptable and understandable by its audiences but is accessible by them.

In addition to the factors discussed previously, the MBMF will also be confronting the challenge of integrating distinct national messages into its communication activities. To aid in this, a national committee has been working to develop network specific activities to assist in the delivery of Model Forest messages. It will therefore be necessary in the upcoming years to improve communications both externally and internally. Indeed, this must be a focus for any second generation program.

97-6-21 Implementing Network Communications Initiatives

The Phase I communication strategy for the Manitoba Model Forest focused on local initiatives with the goal of increasing community support and interest in the Model Forest . To date, communications beyond the local region have been limited. As a result it has been decided that in Phase II communication efforts be increased to include more network initiatives.

. It was partly in response to recommendations being made that a group, consisting largely of communication professionals employed by Model Forests across Canada, was assembled to direct and coordinate national communication efforts in an attempt to increase public recognition of the Model Forests and achieve the goals set out for the Model Forest Program.

The communication activities of the Model Forest Network are being coordinated through the Model Forest Communication Network, MF-C-NET. As the communication goals of the individual Model Forests are in part derived from the Network's communication goals and objectives the communication activities of each Model Forest are being designed to compliment the activities across the Network, and enhance the communications abilities of the individual Model Forests.

The MF-C-NET had its first full meeting in Toronto in February of 1995. . Subsequent meetings, most notably at the Model Forest Network Forum '97 hosted by the Manitoba Model Forest, the process of revising goals and objectives for Phase II began. From these later meetings a document was produced outline revised goals and a series of communication options which reflected the need for flexibility not only in approach but in the ability to respond to changing fiscal realities. Each Model Forest is expected to participate in and support the national communication effort as part of its funding agreements. The benefits derived from this national participation, such as increased profile and recognition, will benefit the individual Model Forests through increased regional profiles.

To date, the Manitoba Model Forest has participated in the development of a national display which will be used to promote the Model Forest network and all its members at large events across the country. the MBMF has assisted in the development of a network brochure and contributed towards the development of a Model Forest Network website.

Model Forest Network website: http://www.modelforest.net
Manitoba Model Forest website: http://mbmf.home.ml.org

97-6-25 Green Kids

In 1997 the Manitoba Model Forest assisted the Green Kids Program with their education projects in Manitoba. The goals and objectives of all Green Kid programs are to educate the public about issues of environmental concern and to inspire positive action towards protecting our environment.

The Green Kids Program accomplished and implemented their most successful school tour project since their inception. With the assistance of the Manitoba Model Forest , Green Kids was able to hire professional actors who were also fully qualified teachers. This made the delivery of the Green Kids program more effective than ever. Their tour was also the largest they have ever conducted in terms of number of shows and geographic reach.

To complement programming Green Kids developed and published a second edition of their Teacher's Kit. The revised kit has been receiving excellent reviews from teachers and parents alike.

Green Kids took the opportunity in 1997 to launch a new program for naturalizing schoolyards around International School Grounds Day on May 1st. This program is called, "Plant your feet on Greener Grounds". It assists schools in establishing a more natural school yard through the planting of grasses, trees and shrubs, as well as education programming on the value of having natural school yards.

Green Kids was nominated for the Sustainable Development Award of Excellence by the Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy for a series of four vignettes they produced for Can-West Global. The success of this activity has resulted in plans to produce an additional four in the summer of 1998.

Green Kids contacted about 550 schools and delivered 157 programs over the past year. This resulted in approximately 30,000 children being exposed to Green Kids programming so far.

Green Kids also launched themselves onto the world wide web in 1997. Their website can be found at www.greenkids.com

97-6-28 Forest Education Program

The continual change in information resulting from the development of new approaches and technologies has resulted in the need for upgrading the information base for educators across the province. The Forest Education Program strives to address the continuing information needs of teachers.

The Manitoba Model Forest first became involved in the cooperative education program in 1995. In partnership with the Manitoba Forestry Association, Manitoba Natural Resources and a variety of other sponsors, the Forest Education program has proven to be a popular resource for teachers from all grade levels.

In 1998, the Forest Education program will be held in the popular recreation area of Albert Beach located on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg, within the Model Forest Region. Topics and workshops in the three day workshop include teaching modules on forest education found in Project Learning Tree, the role playing simulation "Forests For All" and hands on workshops in plant identification. Educators participating in the program tour the NorthStar Trail through the Bel Air Forest and the NESDA Trail, both Manitoba Model Forest Projects.

97-6-30 Database of existing Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Archeological Heritage site information.

The Manitoba Model Forest is one of the richest archaeological sites in Manitoba, with sites dating back over 9,000 years. The purpose of Project 97-6-30 is to acquire, interpret, map and document on the Pine Falls Paper Company database the known and documented Traditional Ecological Knowledge, TEK and archaeological site information. Documenting and digitizing this database will allow Pine Falls Paper Company to use this information in their resource management planning and operations.

This database will provide the Manitoba Model Forest with a digitized inventory of archaeological, heritage and TEK sites. This is the first step in the development of predictive models which will allow the future identification of potential archaeological sites. Among the steps taken in the development of this model is the Archaeological Predictive Modelling workshop held in Winnipeg early in 1998. This workshop reviewed the experience of British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Northern Ontario identifying strengths and opportunities. It also served as a way to gather the ideas and concerns of a variety of heritage stakeholders such as Aboriginal and Metis groups. This Workshop developed the basic steps needed to be taken for the successful development of future predictive models which address the needs of forest stakeholders.