



for all our relations

Message from the General Manager

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter under the new Forest Communities Program (FCP). You may have not known, but the Canadian Model Forest Program which was funded by Natural Resources Canada since 1992, came to an end in late 2007. This program provided core funding to the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF) over the years and enabled the development of many local partnerships and the initiation of research projects that has helped us learn about our boreal forest and how to manage it more effectively for the benefit of "All our Relations". The last two years have represented a period of significant change for our organization. With the passing away of Mike Waldram, our beloved General Manager, we lost a part of our very being.

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Board Members & staff at December 2008 Board Meeting

New Initiative Replaces Former Canadian Model Forest Program

On September 30, 2007 and after 15 years of successful partnership building, the Government of Canada Model Forest Program came to an end. At the same time however, the federal government announced the creation of a new initiative called the Forest Communities Program (FCP). The Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF), along with more than 50 other non-government organizations across the country, submitted propos-

als to become part of the FCP. The MBMF was one of the 11 new sites selected for funding under the FCP, with the new program starting up on October 1, 2007. "The many partners involved with the MBMF were very pleased to be chosen as one of the original sites of the Canadian Model Forest Program 15 years ago, and are even more excited and grateful now that funding will continue under the new Forest Community Program" indicates Dr. Brian Kotak, the new General Manager of the MBMF. The official launch and celebration of the FCP in Manitoba was held on June 26, 2008 at the MBMF Annual General Meeting. The Honourable Vic Toews, Member of Parliament for Provencher, helped to officially launch the new program.

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Ethno-tourism Project Starts Up in Costa Rica

The MBMF and Broken-head Ojibway Nation (BON) have initiated a joint project on ethno-eco-tourism in Costa Rica with the indigenous communities of Nairi Awari, the Reventazon Model Forest and the Centre for Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education. The Nairi Awari are members of the Cabecar Indigenous peoples. The Nairi Awari, a collection of 8 small communities, are located along the Pacuare River, rated as one of the top five white water rafting rivers in the world. The project focuses on the development of a community-based ethno-eco-tourism business centered on the river, surrounding mountains and tropical rainforest and their cultural heritage. While the community already participates to a limited extent in the ecotourism trade through rafting, the community desires to build more capacity in their youth. Currently, rafting guests typi-



Paul Chief, Carl Smith and Brian Kotak visiting the Reventazon Model Forest in Costa Rica

cally spend only an hour in the community for lunch during day-long rafting trips. The community wishes to build the necessary infrastructure and programs to allow clients to stay in the community for multiple days. The project focuses on train-

ing in small business management, English, rafting and the hospitality industry, as well as the development of an eco-tourism management plan. The project will also result in building of riverside cabins, proper shower and toilet facilities, a cultural centre, solar power, telephone and internet service, and improved hiking trails. By the end of the project, clients will be able to stay in the community for extended periods of time, and be able to experience the local culture through ancient song and dance, visit important cultural sites, take day and longer guided hikes, and taste the diversity of the indigenous cultural cuisines. In the long-term, the project will provide the Nairi Awari with sustainable, low environmental impact economic development.



Urbano's first trip outside of Costa Rica. Visit to the Rocky Mountains.

As part of the project, MBMF President Carl Smith and MBMF General Manager have visited the Nairi Awari communities in 2007 and 2008. Paul Chief, Vice-Chief of BON, has also been part of the Canadian delegations to Costa Rica. On the first trip to Costa Rica, Paul gave a presentation to an international audience on BON's economic development experiences and Brian gave a presentation on the MBMF program and our previous international projects. As this meeting, the MBMF delegation also met with the Canadian Ambassador to Costa Rica. In the summer of 2008, Urbano Chaves, a member of Nairi Awari, visited the MBMF area, including the communities of BON and Black River First Nation. It was Urbano's first trip outside of Costa Rica and his first time on an airplane. To further Urbano's perspective on just how big Canada is (Costa Rica is only 120 km wide at its narrowest point), Brian and Urbano drove from Pine Falls to Hinton, Alberta to attend the International Model Forest Network's Global Forum conference. When asked about the 20 hour drive, Urbano responded by saying "muy largo" (very long)! His favourite part was hiking in the Rocky Mountains, and touching snow for the first time in his life.

In June 2008, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) approved the continuation of the project by awarding BON and the MBMF with a **\$100,000 grant.**

New Initiative

Continued from page 1

The Manitoba Model Forest, a not-for-profit organization has accomplished much in its 15 year history. Carl Smith, President of the MBMF states that "the organization has evolved by building new partnerships between communities, industries and governments. The programs have also evolved, providing a mechanism for communities to become more engaged in decision-making with respect to natural resource management, by providing a vehicle for direct community input into projects, and by providing the means for communities to lead projects". It is fair to say that over the last 15 years, the Model Forest has played a significant role in natural resource policy development in Manitoba and helped to improve the management of our forest resources. "The rewards have been tremendous for our region and the province" states Brian Kotak. "We have built strong alliances among our partners, with the long-term view of maintaining the environmental sustainability of our forests and the social and economic well-being of our communities and industries".

Much has changed over the last 15 years. Today, forest industries are facing significant challenges due to globalization, shifts in consumer demand for forest products, the value of the Canadian dollar, and more stringent regulations as a result of the ever-increasing requirements to accommodate the values

that society places on the forest. These challenges have a direct and substantial effect on forest-based communities. Through the FCP, the MBMF will help to diversify the local economy through education and training and by exploring alternative forest-based economic opportunities with communities. MBMF will continue conducting research to improve our understanding of the ecology of the boreal forest and to work collaboratively with the provincial government and industries to develop new and innovative tools and approaches for natural resource management. MBMF will also initiate programs and projects in Western Manitoba, engaging a whole new suite of stakeholders, communities and organizations.

15 Years of MBMF Reports available on DVD

The MBMF has compiled all 15 years of its project reports in pdf format onto DVD.

If you would like a copy of the DVD, please contact the MBMF office. The DVD will be updated annually as project reports become available.

We're on the Web!
www.manitobamodelforest.net



Wisdom of elders is shared at TAAC meetings.

Facilitating opportunities for local level participation in sustainable forest management has been an ongoing objective for the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF). Since 1993, communities within MBMF have been involved in projects, which have been designed to increase aboriginal involvement, community planning, diversification of economic opportunities and meaningful participation in sustainable forest management.

In order to further communication between their community, governments and industries on matters relating to natural resource management in their traditional area, Hollow Water First Nation developed the concept of a Traditional Area Advisory Committee (TAAC) back in 2002-2003. The Hollow Water TAAC raises awareness of natural resource management issues with community members, and provides a conduit of communication between governments, industry and the Chief and Council. Operating at "arms length" but an advisory group to the Chief and Council, the Hollow Water TAAC is comprised of a diverse cross section of community members, including elders, trappers, fishermen, traditional plant harvesters, hunters and any other interested community members.

Resource industries and government interact directly with the TAACs, discussing future or planned resource development activities such as forestry operations, road building, mining exploration and any other development proposals within community traditional lands.

TAACs also plan workshops and hold field trips with local industries to view resource industry activities. The existence of TAACs has been seen as a great benefit to communities and to government and industries that wish to communicate with them.



The Hollow Water TAAC raises awareness of natural resource management issues

At present, TAACs are established in Hollow Water and Black River First Nations and a committee is being initiated at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. Meetings are ongoing with Sagkeeng First Nation to explore the desire for such a committee in their community.

Traditional Area Advisory Committees provide an effective conduit of communication between government, resource industries and First Nation communities and MBMF is proud to be assisting in this process.



Workshops and field trips form an important component of information sharing for TAAC members.

Winnipeg River Learning Centre

The Winnipeg River Learning Centre (WRLC) is a project of the Winnipeg River Regional Round Table (WRRRT). The Manitoba Model Forrest (MBMF) is a member of the WRRRT, and along with all the other partners, has provided the initial seed funding that has made it possible to hire a WRLC Manager. The Winnipeg River Learning Centre Trades School idea grew out of a 2004 priority setting exercise of the WRRRT, and from a regional training needs assessment underwritten by Little Black River First Nation in 2005. Surveys conducted in each First Nation (and non-First Nation) community in the region, as well as major businesses like Manitoba Hydro, Tembec, mining and others documented the keen interest and need for a regional trades school.

The WRRRT completed a comprehensive feasibility study in June of 2007, building on the regional interest in post-secondary education and trades training. The feasibility studies clearly identified the interest and the need for post-secondary training and education within the region; identified the training needs and interests of adults, especially in First Nations Communities; and determined the support of industry and business in the region.

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The Red River College (RRC) Health Care Aid Certificate Program was the first to be offered at the learning centre and started in February 2008 and wrapped up in July. The RRC Business, Accounting and Management Certificate program was also initiated in June and completed at the end of summer. Both full time programs continue to be offered at the learning centre.

The WRLC also offers many computer courses and various workshops for businesses and agencies, as well as for personal use. New courses are under consideration and development. After only one year of operation, the training centre has 30 full time students registered and approximately 100 others have participated in the various part time curriculum and workshops. More than half of all the students have been from First Nation or Métis communities.

The WRLC will provide training programs that address diversification needs relevant to the region, as well as a training facility that is located close to the communities in the region.

If you are looking for a particular program or course, and it is not listed at WRLC, call them and let them know what your training and education needs are. Customized training is available for an employer, agency, or a group of employers, as well as for community organizations.

This is a project of the Winnipeg River Regional Round Table. The following funding partners have made the Winnipeg River learning Centre possible:

Winnipeg River Community Futures
Sunrise School Division
Manitoba Model Forest
Manitoba Hydro
North Eastman Health Authority
RM of Alexander
Town of Powerview-Pine falls
Black River First Nation

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Garry Enns, Manager, Winnipeg River Learning Centre

2008 Junior Ranger Program



Students and staff from one of the three week Junior Ranger field programs.

The Junior Ranger (JR) Program has been offered three times in the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF) area over the last decade but judging by its success in 2008, MBMF board of directors wish to have the program continue on an annual basis.

The program offered training opportunities for students in many facets of natural resource management. Historically, no central agency was responsible for the program prior to 2008, and as a result, there has been several years in which the program has not been offered. The MBMF will continue to act as

During the summer of 2008, thirty students participated in two-3 week field programs that were conducted in eastern Manitoba.

the manager of the JR program and examine the possibility of expanding the program to other parts of the province.

During the summer of 2008, thirty students participated in two-3 week field programs that were conducted in eastern Manitoba. Students came from Hollow Water FN, Sagkeeng FN, Black River FN, Brokenhead

FN, Seymourville, Pine Falls, Pinawa, Bissett, Manigotogan and Lac du Bonnet from the MBMF area. Others came from as far away as Skownan FN (western Manitoba) and Shoal Lake Band # 40 (NW Ontario).

The JR program allowed students to obtain provincial certificates in a number of areas related to natural resource management, including chain saw safety, St John's First Aid, Boating and Quad Safety, Level 1 Firefighters and Canadian Firearm Safety. In addition, students gained hands on learning experiences in forest management, trapping and fur

bearer management, orienteering (compass & GPS), and First Nation traditional values and culture.

The purpose of the JR program is to get high school students involved and to pursue a career in the field of natural resources. Opportunities for the youth are there within industry, government, and post-secondary education. The Junior Ranger program will hopefully act a catalyst and lead the way for students to reach their goals of becoming the future Conservation Officers, Foresters, Biologists or even GIS specialists.

Graduates of the JR program ranked fire fighting, ATV safety and the firearm safety training as the top 3 training courses offered. Testimonials such as "I have gained a lot more confidence in myself and found out a little about myself and about how much potential I have" and "I learned a lot of things and I had bad habits and learning new things helped me fix them" is a clear indication that graduates not only learned about



Three students enjoying their studies.

natural resources but also their inner self!

Funding partners in the 2008 JR Program included Canadian Forest Service, First Nations Forestry Program, Tembec, Manitoba Hydro and Louisiana Pacific. The MBMF was also very fortunate to use Manitoba Conservation's Shoe Lake Fire Fighting Training facility and the Manitoba Forestry Association's Sandilands Forest Discovery Centre as a base for the JR program.

Managers Message

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He is sadly missed but fondly remembered. Read on in our newsletter just how his legacy lives on.

From the time that we found out that the Model Forest Program was coming to an end, many projects were put on hold as we prepared our proposal to the newly announced FCP. The partners of the MBMF can be proud that our proposal was selected from more than 50 proposals across the country to be part of the new program. We look forward to the new directions that the FCP will take us. Read about some of our on-going and new initiatives under the FCP in this issue of our newsletter.



2002 Junior Ranger students, staff & guests



Dr. Brian G. Kotak

The Legacy of J. Michael Waldram

Manitoba Model Forest General Manager 1993 - 2006



J. Michael (Mike) Waldram was the General Manager of the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF) since its inception in 1993 until his passing in January, 2006. Mike strove to enhance the participation of Aboriginal people and communities in the Model Forest program as well as in sustainable forest management decision making. In particular, Mike viewed the participation of Aboriginal youth as an integral component of the future of Aboriginal involvement in all aspects of natural resource management.

Mike's talents were also recognized internationally where he was called upon to share his experience and expertise with indigenous people and other partners in Model Forests located in Chili, Thailand, the Philippines and Mexico.

One of the sustainable forest management's strongest supporters, Mike began his career with his graduation from the University of New Brunswick, Faculty of Forestry. Shortly thereafter, Mike was applying his forestry knowledge with the Ontario government in forests across northern and northwest Ontario. As a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) Mike would become well known in government and the forest industry.

His passion and love for the forest, coupled with a gifted ability to bring together diverse peoples from all walks of life, along with their differing perspectives and viewpoints, will continue through the ongoing progress and future achievements of the Canadian Model Forest Network and all Canadian Aboriginal youth who benefit from his legacy.

Following his passing, the J. Michael Waldram Fellowship was established. It is valued at up to \$1,000, and is open to Canadian Aboriginal youth enrolled in either a degree or diploma program in natural resource management at an accredited Canadian university or college. The Fellowship is awarded annually and is administered by the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) and the Canadian Model Forest Network (CMFN). The first recipient of the fellowship was Tyson Williams from Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation. The announcement was made that the CIF conference in Fredericton, NB on September 8, 2008. Tyson is a forestry student at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. Congratulations Tyson!

Mike was an avid golfer, so fittingly the MBMF held it's third annual J. Michael Waldram Fellowship Golf Tournament on September 12, 2008. Forty people enjoyed a day on the links, reminiscing about their fond memories of Mike and helped to raise funds for the Aboriginal Student Fellowship in Mike's name.

**To contribute to the
fund or for additional
information about
upcoming fundraising
events, contact the
Manitoba Model Forest**



The main door prize of a set of golf clubs donated by Mike's widow, Kate Murphy was won by Elaine Bird from Black River First Nation. The first place team of John Dojack, Jeff Delaney, Bruce Bruyere, Carl Smith and Rene Barker shot an outstanding 3 under par score of 69. Frank Abraham and Russ Spence won closest to the hole shots while Vince Kuzdak and Jeff Delaney won longest drive and longest putt respectively.

Please come and join us next year !!!!!



Mike visiting the Philippine Model Forest. "I liked the Philippines" claimed Mike, "Everyone was shorter than me !!!"

Sustaining Woodland Caribou In Eastern Manitoba

For over 15 years, the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF) has been the driving force behind a diverse partnership, which is studying the life of one of Manitoba's largest, and most elusive boreal forest creatures. Through the Eastern Manitoba Woodland Caribou Advisory Committee (EMWCAC), this diverse partnership of community, industry and stakeholder interests, has brought together the most up-to-date technology, traditional ecological knowledge and scientific data towards the understanding the life cycle requirements of this Threatened species. Over the years of this program, more than 50 woodland caribou in 5 separate caribou ranges in and north of the MBMF area have been fitted with GPS and VHF collars to track movements of animals. Using this information, the EMWCAC has assessed habitat use and preferences, developed and revised habitat suitability index models and created woodland caribou management zones.

The overall goal of the EMWCACs work is to maintain or enhance existing caribou populations on their current ranges.

The overall goal of the EMWCACs work is to maintain or enhance existing caribou populations on their current ranges. State-of-the-art research is one vehicle used to achieve this goal. In 2005, two landmark documents were produced. The first document "Determining Woodland Caribou Home Range and Habitat Use in Eastern Manitoba" reports on the methods used to analyze caribou movements, habitat selection and "core areas of use" for woodland caribou in eastern Manitoba. The second document titled "Landscape Management Strategy for the Owl Lake Woodland Caribou Herd" identifies habitat objectives, sets out rules for maintaining winter habitat supplies and outlines principles for experimental forest harvest prescriptions. Both documents can be downloaded from our website. An elaborate landscape-scale forest harvesting experiment was also designed and implemented to test the assumptions in the Owl Lake strategy.

In the winter of 2006-2007, an aerial survey was undertaken on a large portion of the Model Forest area north of the Winnipeg River to study the distribution of wolves in relation to caribou and moose. This information will help improve our understanding of predator-prey relationships and the degree of influence wolf predation has on woodland caribou populations.

While the EMWCAC has focused more research and monitoring attention on the Owl Lake caribou range (which is the most southern herd range in western Canada), work began in earnest in 2007 to compile all available information for the Atiko and Bloodvein caribou ranges, located to the north of the Owl Lake range. A Conservation strategy is being developed for the Atiko and Bloodvein ranges.

In order to gain a deeper knowledge of the historical patterns of woodland caribou distribution in eastern Manitoba and the importance to local First Nation communities, traditional knowledge workshops were held in Bloodvein First Nation and Poplar River First Nation. This information is being used to complement existing western-based scientific information on caribou.



Mature woodland caribou bull

The work of the EMWCAC has played a significant role in policy development concerning species at risk in Manitoba. For example, the EMWCAC has become one of the key mechanisms that the Government of Manitoba uses for the review and approval of Tembec's Annual Operating and Renewal Plans. In addition, the Government of Manitoba released a provincial strategy for woodland caribou in 2006, a strategy which was based significantly on the concepts and principles developed by the EMWCAC and those in the Owl Lake herd strategy. The multi stakeholder EMWCAC model is also now being pursued in other regions of Manitoba. Finally, the EMWCAC continued efforts on public education.



Grand opening of kiosk at Black Lake, in Nopiming Provincial Park

The committee produced a video, "Shadows of the Forest: Managing Woodland Caribou" in French and English which tells the story of Manitoba's threatened woodland caribou and documents some of the activities the EMWCAC has undertaken to protect caribou habitat. A provincially accredited science unit on woodland caribou was produced for use in high schools. The curriculum was first piloted with a few schools and then the MBMF held a training workshop with science teachers from across the province at the annual Manitoba Education's Special Area Group conference in the fall of 2006. The caribou curriculum unit also contains classroom activities and exercises, as well as several educational games. A French version of the curriculum has subsequently been produced. The curriculum can be downloaded from our website.

The EMWCAC also developed an educational kiosk for the Black Lake campground in Nopiming Provincial Park. The grand opening of the kiosk was held on July 20, 2008. Woodland caribou cows commonly give birth to and raise their calves on islands on Black Lake. The islands afford protection to the calves from predators.

**Please visit the
MBMF web site
if you want to
learn more about
woodland caribou
research in the
Manitoba Model
Forest area.**

www.manitobamodelforest.net



Kelly Leavesley, Provincial Wildlife manager attempting to direct caribou for capture in order to place a GPS collar to allow researchers to gather information about habitat preferences

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