

University
Of
Winnipeg

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
CO-MANAGING A NATIONAL PARK WHILE STIMULING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN CHURCHILL (MB)**



Thibault Martin Ph.D.

Lisa Falvo

Mike Chotka

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, SPRING 2004

Abstract

The town of Churchill is located in northeastern Manitoba, on the shore of the Hudson Bay. As a result of its sub-arctic location, the community is only accessible by air or rail. The area has been successively occupied by several groups of people, including the Pre-Dorset, the Dorset, the Thule, and the Dene people. Fur trading between the Europeans and Aboriginal peoples would begin in the seventeenth century and continue for years to come.

Today, Churchill has a population of approximately 1000 who rely heavily on the tourism industry to support its economy. In 1996, in accordance with the goal to create a national park in each of the 39 natural regions of Canada, Parks Canada established a national park southeast of Churchill to protect the tundra and wildlife of this region. The park is co-managed by Parks Canada, as well as representatives from the Town of Churchill, Manitoba Natural Resources, and First Nations. To assess whether this is a sustainable form of partnership, 2 sets of interviews were conducted with citizens of Churchill (n=48). Some participants were randomly selected while others, including town council members and park officials, were specifically targeted. Results were diverse, varying from feelings of anger and dispossession, to feelings of happiness and excitement towards the park, as well as Parks Canada. This report proposes a sociological analysis of the causes behind the diverging perceptions regarding the efficiency of the co-management structure.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you goes out to the University of Winnipeg and the Churchill Northern Research Fund, who provided financial support for this research. A sincere thank you is extended to Dr. Parvin Ghorayshi, whose comments contributed to the finalizing of this work.

In addition, we would like to thank the Churchill Northern Studies Centre and its personnel. We also want to extend our thanks to the residents of Churchill for willingly supplying their time, and knowledge for the completion of this research project. Thank you to the several Parks Canada officials who donated their time for interviewing. Without these contributions this research would not have been possible.

We are also happy to acknowledge the generous financial support of the Initiative on the New Economy of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; via the Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy. For further information please see: <http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/MRA.html>.



The Eskimo Museum

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
Table of Contents	4
Introduction	5
History of Churchill	7
Economic Development	12
Wapusk National Park	16
Method	18
Theoretical Framework	21
Results-Participant Interviews	28
Discussion	49
References	55
Appendix #1: Map of Wapusk National Park	58
Appendix #2: Interview Guide for Park Administrators	59
Appendix #3: Interview Guide for Citizens	61
Appendix #4: Follow-up Questionnaire	63
Appendix #5: Poster for Hunters and Trappers	64

Introduction

Just over 950 air miles or 1,697 rail miles northeast of Winnipeg, Manitoba (58 47'N, 94 12'W) lies the northern community of Churchill. The town is located on the shore of the Hudson Bay. Once a popular area for fur trading between aboriginals and European peoples, it was in Churchill that the Hudson Bay Company established its first trading post. This early trading would be a sign of things to come for this small remote location.

Other than rail service and air transportation, the town's 1000 citizens-50% of which are Cree, Inuit, and Dene (Town of Churchill, 1999), are isolated from the remainder of the province. Churchill's remoteness is one of its unique characteristics. However, despite the isolation, the town is growing in popularity among tourists because of its population of beluga whales, assortment of native birds, and its world-renowned polar bear denning area. In Churchill, also known as the "Polar Bear Capital of the World", tourism is economically important. It is one of the most important sources of livelihood for the community, especially since the closing of the military base which once created economic prosperity and sustained a population well above its current level. A new project emerged with the goal to increase tourism and create much needed employment, while still protecting and preserving the delicate wildlife and vegetation of the region. Wapusk National Park; established by Parks Canada, is home to the largest known polar bear denning area in the world. Countless other animals and forms of vegetation are also present within this particular ecological niche.

However, the creation of Wapusk National Park did not come easily or without controversy. Today, some citizens of Churchill, particularly aboriginal citizens that frequent this area for hunting purposes and recreational use, estimate that these activities are slowly diminishing with the establishment of the park. Moreover, a large number of local citizens think that the Park has failed to stimulate tourism development, and on the contrary, they estimate that Parks Canada is harming local development by restricting access to the territory. Some visible

tensions exist regarding the impact of the park on community development. To restore amity, several meetings were held by Parks Canada and town officials to inform the public of these important matters, as well as to address citizen concerns. The goal of Parks Canada is the preservation, conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources; the protection of natural and historic sites, while also allowing the public to enrich themselves by experiencing the park's resources first hand. However, these goals have been called into question numerous times by the citizens of Churchill during the development of the park, as well as at the present time regarding its management.

Many of Canada's northern coastal communities are isolated, have very large aboriginal populations, high unemployment, and are susceptible to climate change. This has a strong bearing on how co-management should be promoted (Newton, 2000). This study observes how management is promoted in the case of Wapusk National Park.

The following research objectives were developed for this study:

- To gather information related to the history of Churchill, and the history of Wapusk National Park.
- To identify community perspectives on the economy, environment, and social well being of the town.
- To be informed of, as well as understand, the opinions, and perceptions of townspeople surrounding the creation of the park.
- To establish an understanding of the relationship between townspeople and the agencies governing the park, for example, Parks Canada.
- To establish whether the current methods of management have met the satisfactions of townspeople regarding the protection of the local environment and wildlife.

This research document is organized into eight sections. The first section presents the background and focus of this study. Section two provides a history of development in the town of Churchill. Third, economic development in Churchill will be described, with particular focus on the tourism industry. Section four introduces Wapusk National Park, and the role Parks Canada has played in the area. The methodology of this study, participants, and the procedures

will be the topic of section five. The 6th section consists of a literature review on the theoretical basis of co-management, sustainable development, and applicable frameworks. Moving on, the seventh section presents the results of the interviews with community members, the park's management board, and those individuals having a key link to the park. Finally, the eighth section analyzes and synthesizes the information gathered through the literature review and personal interviews.

The History of Churchill

The Pre-Dorset people were the first to inhabit the Churchill area prior to 800 BC. Their lifestyle was largely nomadic, and they lived mainly in underground pit houses, summer tents, or snow houses. Caribou and seal were the main staples of their diet (Newton, 2000). Following the Pre-Dorset people, were the Dorset, who inhabited the area around 800 BC. Marine animals including whales, seals, and walrus made up most of their diet. The Thule people arrived from Alaska by 1000 AD, and took the place of the Dorset culture, forming the basis of the present Inuit culture (Beals, 1968).

Beginning about 500 AD, Athapascan-speaking Dene people arrived in northern Manitoba from the west. Before contact with Europeans, trade amongst the Cree, Dene, and Inuit made up an important part of life in northern Manitoba in terms of economics, politics and diplomacy. When and by whom the Hudson Bay was first made known to Europeans is unknown, but, from early maps, evidence indicates that western maritime people, most commonly assumed as Portuguese, had “founded” the bay in the 16th century (Kenney, 1932). The earliest definite information acquired is from August 3 1610. Henry Hudson, with the crew of his ship *Discovery*, was the first explorer to sail into the water of the great Hudson Bay. Hudson, outward bound from Thames River in England, was searching for a northwest route to Asia. As a result of his southward travels, he found himself blocked at the bottom of James Bay. In June, when navigation opened, several crewmembers decided upon mutiny, and cast Hudson, and some of his men “adrift in a shallop” while sailing back to England. (Kenney, 1932). Hudson was never found.

An association composed of English noblemen and leading merchants of London, in addition to the “Muscovy” and East India companies, had financially supported Hudson’s undertakings. They documented a successful passage to Hudson Bay, and therefore convinced many that a northwest route to Asia had been discovered (Kenney, 1932). The Company granted a new expedition under the command of Captain Thomas Button. In April of 1612, Button sailed from Gravesend through the Hudson straits. Button was the first to explore the western coast of the Hudson Bay. He named the spot “Hopes Checked” (Kenney, 1932). On August 15, he arrived at the mouth of the Nelson River. As a result of necessary repairs to their ship, Button and his crew were forced to stay put for the winter. In the summer of 1613, Button set sail back to London. In going down to Port Nelson, Button must have passed by Churchill, but it is probable that it went unnoticed.

Under the patronage of King Christian IV of Denmark, an expedition sailed north of America in the spring of 1619. By July 11th Jens Munck; a Danish explorer, arrived at the mouth of Hudson Bay (Kenney, 1932). As a result of stormy weather and the cold, the crew decided to set up a winter dwelling on the west peninsula of Churchill River. In June, when the ice broke, only three of the 65 men had survived due to an outbreak of scurvy. On July 16 1620, they set sail to Norway, arriving on September 21st of the same year. What returned with them were illustrations, a map of Hudson Bay, and the earliest known representation of Churchill.

In May of 1670, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) was officially founded. It’s chief interests for its first two centuries were the fur trade, exploration, and settlement. King Charles II granted a charter of incorporation to “the governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson’s Bay the sole trade and commerce of all those seas that lie within the Entrance of the Hudson straits together with all the lands and territories upon the countries, coasts and confines of the seas” (Kenney, 1932: 15). The first expedition was sent out in 1668 aboard the *Nonsuch*. The *Nonsuch* sailed into the Hudson Bay, spent the winter there, and returned in 1669 with a large cargo of furs. The company set up permanent trading posts called “forts” or “factories”, where furs were obtained by barter with Aboriginals throughout the year. Ships from England would bring merchandise for the traders to barter with and return home with furs.

The attraction to the Hudson Bay area developed rapidly due to its richness in fur-bearing animals; such as the beaver and fox, which were in high demand at the time in Europe. Aboriginal traders traveled to HBC posts on the Hudson Bay. Furs were traded for guns, blankets, tools, and tobacco. Of all the posts, York Fort, known today as York Factory, was one of the busiest trading centres. York Fort was first constructed in 1684 on the north bank of the Hayes River, but was rebuilt twice at two different locations due to flooding. The economic potential of the fur industry in the Hudson Bay region was soon well known in Europe, and ultimately sparked much competition for territorial control between the English and French. In 1686, the Chevalier de Troyes from New France led an expedition to the bay and captured all but one of the HBC posts on western Hudson Bay. James Knight of the Hudson Bay Company recaptured York Fort in 1693. Although it was taken over again by Pierre Le Koyne Sieur d'Iberville (of New France) in 1697, the Treaty of Utrecht was signed and required the returning of all HBC posts (on Hudson and James Bay) to England. In 1717, on the west bank of the Churchill River, Knight constructed the "Churchill River Post" (later named Prince of Whales in 1719) to protect the HBC's interests. It took 40 years to complete the construction of the fort (Fleming, 1988). In 1783, the fort fell to the French, even though not a single shot was fired. Governor Samuel Hearne and his men were outnumbered, and logically, surrendered. Before returning the fort to the British, the French burned the interior and made several attempts to disable the fort using explosives. The remains of the fort remained abandoned until the 1930's, when the Canadian government began restoration.

In 1784, *The North West Fur Company*, a rival trading company often connected with the Métis people, was formed and established posts inland throughout western Canada (Kenney, 1932). In response, the Hudson Bay Company created an inland network of trading posts and York Factory became the major storage and supply depot. In 1936 the site was designated a National Historic Site and was eventually turned over to the Federal Government in 1968. Despite its importance as a trading post, the Churchill area was not heavily populated before the twentieth century. Until the industrialization of the area, the aboriginal population frequented the area only for trading purposes.

Industrialization of the Churchill area began with the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway line in 1929, and continued with the construction of a 70,000 metric ton capacity grain handling facility, including an elevator and loading docks. Constructed in 1931, the facility employed over 2,000 people, even throughout the Depression. Also, there was construction of a seaport by the National Harbours Board that contributed to an economic surge in Churchill that transformed the former trading post into a modern settlement. Still today, Churchill is Canada's most northerly seaport through which grain is shipped from western Canada to Europe. Ships from around the world have come to the Churchill seaport to load up on Canadian grain.



Grain elevator located just outside of Churchill.

Development and construction in the town did not end there. The Cold War would have a significant impact on the area. During the 1950s and 1960s, the town prospered as a staging area for American and Canadian troops involved in surveillance against the Russians. Located just a few kilometres outside the community once stood the largest joint Canada-U.S. military installation in the world (Fleming, 1988). During the Cold War the United States constructed a number of Distant Early Warning (DEW) radar stations across the Canadian arctic. Many aboriginal people were involved in the construction of these military facilities, and several Inuit from the community of Kuujjuaq (Nunavik-Quebec) were relocated to Churchill to work on it (Martin, 2001). Due to these military activities, the population of Churchill surged in the 1960's. With a population of 7,000 people, Churchill grew into "a miniature metropolis complete with its

own theatre accommodating more than six hundred spectators, a bakery, a post office, and schools" (Fleming, 1988: 20). The army set up a base that was home to 4,500 servicemen and support staff.

Up until 1985, an area 24 kilometres east of Churchill was home to the Rocket Research Range, a project that was jointly funded by Canada's National Research Council and the National Aviation and Space Administration (NASA). Because of its northern location, Churchill was an ideal place to launch over 3,500 low earth orbit satellites and scientific instruments. The centre was originally constructed by the Canadian and American military during the 1950's and was rebuilt in 1964 (Newton, 2000). It has been a major centre of activity for Canada's aerospace industry, therefore making Churchill, as residents like to recall, the rocket launch capital of Canada. Unfortunately for Churchill, the Rocket Range closed in 1985¹ and a number of projects have been proposed for the site, as the community is looking to revitalize the community's economy. One of them is Project Skywalker, a proposed commercial sub-orbital Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) that will be used to carry researchers to an altitude of at least 100km. Although no new projects have been approved for the site as yet, public meetings have been held to examine possible uses for the Churchill Rocket and Research Centre.

After initial prosperity, Churchill has experienced a serious step back in the second half of the twentieth century. There were a number of businesses closing in the area of Churchill, including the Rocket Range. However, none affected the community quite like the closure of the army base in 1964 (Newton, 2001). After its closure, the population, as well as the community began to decline and, in turn, negatively affected the entire Churchill region. In 1981, bulldozers demolished the army base.

With this huge void in the community, the provincial government implemented a number of redevelopment projects for the town, which translated into the construction of a 220,000 square foot commercial centre in Churchill. The construction began in September 1973, and was

¹ However, a last rocket was launched from the site in April of 1998.

completed in December of 1975 (Town of Churchill, 1999). Within the walls of this town centre, located on the shore of the Hudson Bay, are the Duke Of Marlborough High School, a cafeteria, a town library, a movie theatre, an indoor playground, the town of Churchill administration offices, and the Regional Health Authority which services the needs of local townspeople and other nearby northern communities.

Churchill's Economic Development

The population of Churchill has experienced a steady decline since the 1960s. The population as of 2001 is 963, down from 1,089 in 1996, which represents a decrease of 11.6% within a period of five years (Census Canada, 2001). However, the population is young. The largest segment of the population being between 0 and 14 years of age-40% (Geonorth and RT & Associates, 1997), and approximately 50% of the population is aboriginal: Cree, Inuit and Dene (Town of Churchill, 1999). According to Spearman (1975), the non-aboriginal population historically took a predominant role in the social, political, and economic life in the town. However, this statement may no longer be accurate considering several business owners, the mayor of Churchill, as well as town council members are now of aboriginal ancestry.

Unemployment among residents of Churchill is relatively high at 21% in comparison to the remainder of Manitoba (5%), due to the fact that employment is primarily seasonal. (Census Canada, 1996). The majority of employments are offered by the Hudson Bay Port Co., the Town of Churchill, the Churchill Airport, the Regional Health Authority, and the Northwest Territories Transient Centre (Newton, 2000).

Churchill's regional economy is largely drawn from tourism, which provides an important economic boost to the region (Newton, 2000). Tourism now accounts for 40% of the local economy (Town of Churchill, 1999). As a result, the town is a centre of local and private businesses including: restaurants, small department store, hotels, and tour operators. However, non-aboriginal people own the majority of businesses in the area. It is estimated that 130 people are directly employed, and 50 people are indirectly employed within the tourism industry (Town

of Churchill, 1999). Table one displays findings regarding employment in the tourism industry in different locations of the Canadian central and sub-arctic regions.

Table 1. Employment According to Tourism Sector (1990)

Community	Hotels	Restaurants	Airlines	Outfitter	Package Tours	Travel Agencies	Total
Arviat	3	7	3	7	3	0	23
Baker Lake	10	8	4	20	1	0	45
Coral Harbour	2	3	2	4	0	0	11
Chesterfield	3	2	2	6	0	0	13
Rankin Inlet	8	15	5	7	3	4	42
Repulse Bay	5	3	2	1	0	0	11
Whale Cove	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
Churchill	7	6	2	2	12(18)	1(4)	30(39)

Sources: Geonorth Ltd. And RT & Associates. *Tourism Potential in the Western Hudson Bay Area* (Yellowknife, 1997).

* () number includes business operating outside Churchill

Tourism in Churchill is very successful and growing rapidly by approximately 5% per year (Canada Grain Council, 1997). Data collected by Transport Canada indicated that in 1987 there were 28,700 passenger movements to and from Churchill Airport. In 1989, it was estimated that there was approximately 9,700 people who took “pleasure” trips to Churchill (Parks Canada, 1994). According to Geonorth and RT & Associates (1997), it is because of the growing number of visits to Churchill that the average tourism business in Churchill has been in operation for 15 years, a substantial period of time. A film director has even scouted the Town of Churchill. It was chosen in mid-winter as the site to film the sci-fi film “Iceman” (Fleming, 1988). In addition to choosing the old rocket range for their site, they employed a number of local people to take part in the movie project as well.

It is to be noted that elements of aboriginal culture are rarely integrated into the tourist businesses. Cultural tours typically focus on Euro-Canadian culture and historic sites. For example, the Fort Prince of Wales Historic Site. The lack of attention to aboriginal culture is

somewhat enforced by business owners who mainly stress the excitement of polar bear and whale watching. However, studies have shown that learning about culture is becoming increasingly more popular as a travel motivator. People, particularly the elderly and Europeans, are becoming increasingly more interested in learning history and experiencing cultures outside of their own backyards. Created in 1994, the Canadian Tourism Commission has begun giving individual recognition to the role that aboriginal tourism plays in promoting travel within Canada (Geonorth and RT & Associates, 1997). As a result it is to be expected that if Churchill wishes to expand its tourism industry the business actors might have to draw upon the expertise and cultural heritage of Churchill's aboriginal community.

Churchill has three distinct tourist seasons: 1) May to the first week of July, when bird watching is most popular; 2) July and August when the majority of tourists are American and whale watching is most common; 3) October to November when polar bears are the major attraction. Table two displays findings regarding activities in which visitors participate while in Churchill. As previously mentioned, business in Churchill remains seasonal. According to survey results, 25% of participants stress that an economic concern is the development of a shoulder season within Churchill (Newton, 2000). Not much happens during the months from November to May and, therefore, employment opportunities during that time are minimal, which is an economic concern for 17% of the respondents questioned about that issue (Newton, 2000). Taking into account Churchill's sub-arctic latitude, the town has a fairly long tourism season.

Table 2. Activities of Visitors of Churchill

Activities	
Polar Bear Viewing/ Whale Watching	82%
Work related reasons	11%
Eskimo Museum	80%
Shopping	72%
Visitation of Historic Sites	63%
Participation in Cultural Events	10%

(Source: Geonorth and RT & Associates. *Tourism Potential in the Western Hudson Bay Area*. (Yellowknife, 1997).

Although bird watching is not often documented in many pieces of literature, recently it has been suggested that it is growing in popularity, and therefore touring companies have been planning for the demand. This activity is seen, in addition to drawing upon aboriginal heritage, as a means to expand the tourism industry in Churchill. By attracting tourists during the slow season, this would help to make the tourist infrastructures more profitable, and all industry more sustainable because of the capability of providing year-round employment.

As tourism became more prominent, it was quickly realized that Wapusk National Park and Parks Canada could improve economic sustainability in Churchill by contributing significantly to Churchill's tourism economy. It is documented that there has been an increasing demand for nature-based recreation and tourism activities. According to visitor forecast studies conducted by Parks Canada, it was estimated that ten years after development, approximately 12,000 people would visit Wapusk National Park (Canadian Parks Service, 1990). Over twenty million dollars was planned to be spent in Manitoba during the park's first five years to conduct research, develop facilities, provide visitor services and operate the park. Of this amount, nine million dollars was to be spent in the Churchill area. As a result of these expenditures, it was expected that the community would experience an economic spin-off in terms of new business activities and new jobs.

Churchill's tourism strengths include the non-consumptive nature of the tourism product, with a unique combination of wildlife, landscape, heritage, and culture in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. In addition, employment in government service is significant, including employment at the Regional Health Authority, Ports Canada, and the local school division. However, the numbers of employment positions in these sectors cannot feasibly be expanded and employment opportunities for youths are limited. It is for this reason that tourism plays such a vital role in the town and why Wapusk National Park raised many expectations, as well as fears. Indeed, it was noted from preliminary town meetings with local residents that there are concerns about the limitations that a park might impose on tourism and habitat conservation, as well as enthusiasm stemming from the idea of attracting a new tourist clientele. Our study developed in Churchill was aimed at studying how the park could best be managed in order to stimulate tourist

development *while* also playing a role in nature conservation. That is to say, that our research question was whether is it possible for Wapusk National Park to be managed so that there is economic sustainability, while still enforcing the goals of Parks Canada and environmental advocates.



Tall buggy used for polar bear watching.

Wapusk National Park

Extending to the east and south of Churchill, encompassing 11,475 square kilometres of the tundra, muskeg, lakes and rivers in the Manitoban sub-arctic is Wapusk National Park. Wapusk, the Cree word for white bear, is home to the largest known polar bear denning areas in the world. It is also home to one of the largest caribou herds resident to Manitoba, beluga whales, and many other species of wildlife and vegetation, including 300 species of birds and 200 species of plants. According to Parks Canada, it is for this reason that the park is used as a “living laboratory” for gaining insights into biological process in protected areas (Parks Canada Service, 1990).

Parks Canada’s goal is to create a national park in each of the 39 natural regions of Canada, as defined by Parks Canada. The Hudson-James Lowlands Natural Region, extending from Caribou River in northern Manitoba to northern Ontario and into Quebec, was one of the 16 remaining natural regions without representation in the national park system. Wapusk National

Park is indeed representative of the features of the Hudson-James bay lowlands, and is also a place where the culture, traditions, and knowledge of the Cree, Metis, Dene, Inuit, and local people meet. The Churchill/York Factory area was chosen not only because of its natural and cultural value, but also because of its potential for attracting tourism as result of its close proximity to the town of Churchill (Parks Canada, 2000). In addition, a national park would provide long-term protection for a unique and fragile environment (Parks Canada, 2000).

In 1989, a study was conducted with the province of Manitoba, the community of Churchill, and both the York Factory, and Fox Lake First Nations to determine the feasibility of creating a national park. Studies were conducted to document concerns, ideas, and interests. After the study process, recommendations lead to the establishment of a management board comprised of Parks Canada staff, representatives from the Town of Churchill, Manitoba Natural Resources, and First Nations who would develop a first draft of the management plan (Parks Canada Service, 1990). During the winter of 1990, information was gathered through the compilation of nine technical reports. The working group analyzed the reports and prepared a booklet that outlined specific features of the project, including five park boundaries. The booklet was distributed to the public. Reviewing of the draft plan through meetings, newsletters, as well as public comments from community residents and stakeholders was highly encouraged. A series of open houses were held in the communities of York Landing, Gillam, Bird, Thompson, and Churchill to generate awareness and interest in the new park. Attendance was high, according to organizers, with approximately 260 entries in the guest book (Parks Canada Service, 1990). As a result of the varying comments and opinions, there were discussions of whether the research process should continue. However, it was recommended that additional information on several important issues be presented to residents of Churchill, including Aboriginal bands (Churchill Working Group, 1990). Although there were still many reservations from townspeople, Wapusk National Park became Canada's 37th national park on April 24 1996 through the signing of a federal-provincial agreement.

It would seem, that the consultation process contributes to the design of a structure that intends to create a balance between development and protection. Activities, according to the actual Park guidelines, can take place as long as they do not endanger the ecological integrity of

the park. Access is also authorized, but monitored in a way that minimizes disturbance to environmentally sensitive areas. Wapusk is not designed, as some residents' fear, to be left apart from human activities in order to stay pristine. With the same compromising attitude, Wapusk is managed by a park superintendent, as well as a ten-member board consisting of federal and provincial government representatives, the Town of Churchill, the First National of Fox Lake, and York Factory; to consider matters related to planning, development, and operation of the park. As a result, according to Parks Canada, Wapusk represents a model for management in cooperation with the community.

From Parks Canada's perspective, Wapusk National Park is a means to encourage public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the fragile Hudson-James Lowlands national region, and will help to leave this unique ecosystem unimpaired for future generations. Wapusk also brings Parks Canada one-step closer to its goal of establishing a national park in each of the 39 natural regions of Canada, beginning with Banff National Park in 1885. All of those goals were achieved by Parks Canada through a process of consultation and inclusiveness, allowing the voices of local users of the territory to be heard and instrumental in designing the park structure. It is for this reason that Parks Canada dared to claim, as an official shared with us: "Wapusk is a model of collaboration, internationally applauded".

Method

Participants

The data was collected over the course of 2 separate fieldworks, the first in August of 2001, and the second in November of 2003. Participants in the 1st study consisted of 24 men and women residing in the town of Churchill. The 2nd fieldwork consisted of 24 participants of both sexes as well. Participants were randomly selected according to the following two categories: 1) Randomly selected aboriginal and non-aboriginal community members, who wished to volunteer their perspectives on the development of the park; and 2) Key informants recruited among local business owners and those individuals having a key link to the park; including town officials, and actors behind local development efforts in Churchill. Also included in this group were Wapusk

Park management board members and Parks Canada officials, totalling 14 individuals for this category.

Procedure

For the 1st fieldwork, two researchers between August 26 and September 6, 2001 conducted interviews. Four interviews were conducted in French, and the rest in English. The preferred language used in each interview-English or French, was chosen by the participants. A 3rd researcher interviewed participants involved in the 2nd fieldwork on a one on one basis. There were 2 years separating the 2 fieldworks. Participants were approached in the streets, in their businesses, or by phone, and asked to take part in a fifteen to twenty minute interview regarding policy implementations for Wapusk National Park, the way these policies are perceived by the community, and the impact they have on the community. Participants were first given a report providing full information on the nature of the study and the length of their involvement. Participants were then asked to sign a consent form. The researcher also co-signed the document; assuring that in agreeing to participate in the study, the information participants divulged would be held in strict confidence. Participants were also given the option of anonymity. Two different interview guides were developed for the participants (see appendix #2 and #3) for the 2001 fieldwork. One interview guide was utilized for the key informants and the other was utilized for the group of citizens and business owners. 1 short-form survey was used for the 2003 follow-up research (appendix #4). Interviews were conducted in a public place, and tape-recorded only by the agreement of the participants. Of the total 48 interviews, 9 were not recorded, but notes were taken by the researchers documenting the responses. The municipality of Churchill was informed of the intended visits, and that there would be a request for interviews with people connected to the park.



Churchill Community Complex

Theoretical Framework

As human needs and numbers increase, so do land-use conflicts between local communities, the environment, and promoters of industrial activities. The greatest threat to ecological sustainability is the uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources by the human population. It is now commonly agreed that there exists a need to create more effective ways to manage and govern human behaviour to prevent the destruction of natural habitat. Nevertheless, there is still strong resistance to the implementation of policies that tend to check economic development. The recent debate about the Kyoto agreement, and the refusal of several states to sign it is an illustration of the difficulties encountered when attempting to control non-sustainable human behaviours. Practical examples of successful conflict resolution regarding economics and the environment exist but are rare. Conflict has always been present in varying degrees since the beginning of resource exploitation in Canada. Today the intensity of conflict appears to be rising exponentially, as more interests than ever before are competing for use and access to both renewable and non-renewable resources.

To add some depth to our discussion of state intervention over the control of natural resources and the preservation of natural habitats, it is important to examine the objectives and rationale behind the creation of protected areas in Canada. The criteria for the implementation of national parks will be discussed in greater detail. In Canada, the protecting of national environments is legislated through Parks Canada, one of few national institutions that constitute an important part of the Canadian identity. Canadian national parks are created according to the following objectives: the preservation, conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources; the protection of landscapes, including natural and historic sites; all while allowing the public to enrich themselves by experiencing the park's resources first hand (Agence Parcs Canada, 2000). Although some would argue that the protection/preservation mandate is somewhat more important, it has become increasingly more apparent that the conciliation of the objectives brings about serious conflict (Héritier, 1999; Swinnerton, 1991, 1989; Searle, 2000). In 1999, Parks Canada took the initiative and enacted a new regulation stressing the goal of environmental protection. This could easily result in tension between a mandate needed to protect the area, and adverse effects on the indigenous culture. However, the new policy does recognize that the

management of protected areas does strongly affect some forms of resource utilization, such as the subsistence hunting of aboriginals. According to Campbell, “for many aboriginal communities, subsistence practices such as hunting, fishing, and trapping on traditional territories relate more to issues of culture, lifestyle, and identity than to questions of economy” (Campbell, 1996: 4). Parks Canada believes that hunting by aboriginals can be considered forms of active management. It is because of circumstances like this, that for the past thirty years; Parks Canada has entered into an era of collaborative management in order to provide a method of management that takes into consideration the different variables, and works to integrate the different actors involved.

The purpose of this research was to understand how to effectively combine protection of biological and historical heritage, with sustainable community development initiatives. Also, we want to understand if a co-managed arrangement is a satisfactory form of partnership. Although the park was only created in April of 1996, the seeds of local conflict were sewn in the late 1980s, when boundaries and regulations for a park were being established. Wapusk Park was established by the Canadian government to protect the area’s rich heritage, and what Parks Canada deems as beautiful scenery. Also, because the area encompasses the largest polar bear denning area in the world, sustainable management of the popular wildlife of Wapusk is important. This is not only because of the value of the denning, but also because Churchill’s economic viability is, for the most part, dependent on tourism largely attributed to the polar bears and other wildlife. A biologist employed by Parks Canada regards Wapusk as a living laboratory. For Churchill residents it is their source of livelihood. That is why the old-style of conservation approaches pioneered in North America where protected areas were established, as uninhabited islands of wildlife can no longer be applied without generating resistance or conflict. They want this source of livelihood to be protected, however, they want it to be accessible.

Prior consultations were conducted by Parks Canada with the two aboriginal reservations to the south of the park: York Factory and Fox Lake, whose traditional livelihoods depend upon the Park’s resources. Local consultations and joint strategies for building consensus helped resolve some of the conflicts, as did the creation of joint management committees and resource use schemes. Today, the park is jointly managed through a management arrangement between

community members (including Band leaders) and the Canadian government. Although the respective interests of the communities vary greatly and are not in agreement with the mission of Parks Canada, they are united on the management board. The inclusion of community people within Wapusk's management structure is innovative since the process of sharing decision-making power is with *non-traditional actors*, being those individuals other than Parks Canada officials, environmental groups, or Canadian government officials. Therefore, by studying the management of this park, it will give us the opportunity to reflect on the advantages and the limits of co-management for community development, as well as protection of the area.

Devising resource management strategies shared by the government and local communities is gaining recognition as ecosystems and community property are being threatened (Notzke, 1995). These strategies, commonly known as co-management schemes, are being used in Northern Canada and as far as Australia. Although there is not yet a precise definition of co-management, it has been broadly defined as "the sharing of power and responsibility between the government and local resource user" (Notzke, 1995: 395). It is about management, solving problems, and sharing responsibility for all decisions. It is also described by some as an inclusionary, consensus-based approach to resource use and development (Campbell, 1996). This idea of "collaborative management" is growing worldwide as an alternative for reducing conflicts, and for achieving successful management of resources in national parks (Weitzner, 2000). Joint management is being used increasingly more as a conflict resolution medium. It actively explores local participation and benefit sharing with the community for effective park management, as the zones surrounding parks and forest reserves are the sites of many conflicts between conservation managers and local populations. An important element of co-management is that it stresses conciliation rather than litigation as a means to resolve conflict. According to Campbell, "co-management has also been used to describe the process of combining western scientific knowledge and traditional environmental knowledge for the purpose of improving resource management" (Campbell, 1996).

The history of co-management is rather brief. Co-management first appeared in literature during the early 1980's as a means to describe several initiatives involving fisheries management and migratory wildlife (Campbell, 1996). Up until this time co-management agreements have

been used in the context of settled land claim agreements involving aboriginal people in Quebec, and in the northern territories (Campbell, 1996). However, none extend further than a decade. Although research on co-management is still quite new, according to Campbell, “the principles of co-management as non-confrontational, inclusionary, and consensus-based have been hailed by the academic community, industry leaders, government representatives, and First Nations alike as a viable means by which resource conflicts on aboriginal territory may be resolved” (Campbell, 1996).

Because of its recent gain in popularity, co-management has become the buzzword in the field of natural resource management, and therefore, has stirred up a number of important investigations over the past twenty years. Several publications have looked at the nature of the different forms of co-management practiced in Canada (Gardner, 2001; Berkes et al., 1991; Berkes, 1994; Pinkerton, 1994; McCay, 1995; Notzke, 1995, 1994, 1993; Campbell, 1996; Morgan et Henry, 1996; Renard, 1997; Rodon, 1992; Borrini-Feyerabend, 1996). It has been suggested in these pieces that although co-management encourages the collaboration between different parties, it does not include a genuine sharing of power. Much of the power belongs to the main authorities, such as the Minister of the Environment or other government representatives. Furthermore, Parks Canada uses the term collaborative management rather than co-management (Parks Canada, 2000), which reflects its incapacity to transfer power to a third party. The joint management of a national park would mean that Parks Canada would have overlapping jurisdictional interests and decision-making capabilities with another party. Under our parliamentary system, this is not possible because the ultimate responsibility belongs to the Minister (Weitzner, 2000). On the other hand, the actors concerned with the environment are not satisfied with the method of management in place because they do not exercise genuine decision-making power. Also, there is a weak integration of traditional knowledge in the process of decision-making (Weitzner, 2000).

One area of natural resource management and development that seems to have an unusually high incidence of conflict is when natural resource management affects aboriginal communities. It is for this reason that several investigations have been focusing on the area of aboriginal land claims (MacLauchlan, 1994; Rodon, 1992; Fengué, 1993). Many co-management

arrangements have been created out of conflict between aboriginal people and the non-aboriginal population (Campbell, 1996; Gardner, 2001). The central tension relates to the balance of power and the negotiation of relations between government and aboriginal peoples because aboriginal peoples have never had a strong voice in influencing what goes on in and around their communities. It appears that the issue of property laws is problematic since aboriginal groups are hesitant to share their sovereignty with a government agency (Krause *et al.*, 1998).

Historically, aboriginal people have been excluded from any meaningful input into how, where, when, or why resource development occurs on traditional land. It has largely been left up to the federal and provincial governments, and resource industries. This practice of exclusion has had significant negative economic, and social impact on aboriginal communities. Lack of aboriginal input and control over what happens to the land around them is one of the most critical issues facing aboriginal communities today. However, aboriginal people are similarly fighting for a more inclusive approach to natural resource use and development on traditional, and treaty lands. According to government and Parks Canada officials, traditional users can expect that having their land managed as a national park will assist them in looking after the land in the face of growing and competing pressures (Gardner, 2001). A park would establish a way to manage the land that could protect their interests and be sympathetic to their aspirations. With that in mind, it is important to note here that co-management arrangements established within land claim settlements in the northern territories appear to be working well (Campbell, 1996). Therefore, co-management is enjoying a successful reputation in the North because its schemes take into consideration the cultural difference between aboriginal and non-aboriginal parties. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommends that co-management regimes be supported because they offer resolutions to crisis, offer certainty, avoid litigation, allow for greater aboriginal involvement, and enhance state-Indigenous relations (Campbell, 1996).

Several investigations have underlined the benefits of co-management, including the economic fall-out for communities, the promotion of sustainable development, and the reduction of conflicts. Nevertheless, certain authors have mentioned that for co-management to be effective, it must meet certain conditions (Berkes, 1994, 1997, 1999). Crucial to the process of collaborative management are community organizations that have the confidence of local people.

Several factors will positively influence the results of a co-managed enterprise. Firstly, appropriate institutions must exist at the local level, as well as the national level. Second, a legal statute protecting the rights of the community must be in place. Third, community members should be encouraged to promote protection and preservation, therefore economic incentives should be available to local people who want to protect the area or resources. Fourth, the relationships of designated resource users within the community as a whole, and the role of community leadership in collaborative management must be maintained. Fifth, co-management implies that each participant at the negotiating table has equal rights of participation and negotiates on equal terms; the key to a successful conflict resolution process is to make it truly participatory. Each partner plays an important role, with government contributing administrative assistance, and/or scientific expertise, and enabling legislation. The local resource users provide knowledge of traditional management systems and practices developed from years of experience in the local environment. Finally, and most importantly, co-management cannot work unless there is trust between partners, they are all committed to the same goal of making it work, and there is follow through on agreed outcomes (Berkes, 1997). These recommendations need to be seen as part of an ongoing process of interaction between community members and the park management board, including Parks Canada officials.

In addition, several crucial issues need to be identified and addressed before co-management will operate successfully. These critical issues include: how strong and effective the management board is; the employing and training aboriginal staff; the growth of park management bureaucracy; tourism, and providing access to locals. While the conflict surrounding Wapusk has not ended entirely, confrontation has evolved into dialogue and compromise. Although it is too early to evaluate the long-term impact of resource use within Wapusk National Park, the lengthy process of sharing information and negotiating agreements should improve its chances of success.

According to Parks Canada, applying a collaborative management approach at Wapusk National Park will contribute to the ongoing debate about what is effective and appropriate conservation. While unique in many ways, Parks Canada suggests that Wapusk National Park is to serve as a blueprint for other areas that are trying to balance conservation with local

sustainability. However, if Wapusk National Park, the controversy, and the problems surrounding it is to serve as a blueprint, it would make one wonder what the situation is with parks that are somewhat less successful than Wapusk, but that is another issue that will not be discussed here.



The surrounding tundra.



A residential area in Churchill.

Results

Protection of Wildlife and the Environment

A key role of Wapusk national Park is protection of local wildlife and habitats while ensuring accessibility and economic viability. The following section summarizes responses gathered from the public regarding their thoughts on whether the development, and establishment of the park will help insure environmental protection. Participants were questioned about what they thought were some advantages of the new Wapusk National Park. Almost every participant responded that the best thing about the park was its ability to protect all aspects of the environment, especially the wildlife:

Of course, wildlife protection is the best thing about the Wapusk Park. (6,15)

I think people lose sight of what these parks are for. They are not for the economic development and so forth. They are to protect wildlife, habitat, natural, and cultural history. Parks Canada is not concerned with economic gains (#2, q8, 2003).

Another respondent said something similar:

The park is good because it protects the animals. (16)

The particular wildlife that residents are concerned about is the hugely popular polar bear population, the animal that Churchill is most famous for:

It's [the park] basically set up to protect the polar bears. (6)

Wapusk was set up to protect the polar bear denning areas and to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area. This is the reason for the park (#2 q5, 2003).

The owner of an outdoor company was also concerned about the protection of the popular polar bears:

People are concerned about the denning areas of the polar bears. In all costs, those denning areas need to be protected. How far are we going to go, how are they going to patrol the area? (9)

To some individuals, the park represents much more:

It's more than just a park. It [the park] is more like a sanctuary, a wildlife preserve than a park. We have done a really good thing here for the environment (9)

Wapusk isn't a tourist attraction; it is a bear denning habitat preservation. It is not meant to be a tourist boost. Wapusk isn't really economically benefiting the town. It's nice change (#23 q5, 2003).

Two aboriginal women working at a hotel both said this:

Protecting the animals is probably the best thing about the park. (12,13)

As mentioned by Parks Canada officials in several interviews, Wapusk National Park is set up to protect the fragility of the northern sub-arctic ecosystem. A Parks Canada official speaks about its ability to protect different aspects of the environment:

...that area has the highest concentration of polar bear denning areas in the world and we wanted to protect that along with the caribou, and the taiga. It was an ideal location, it had everything we wanted to protect. (17)

According to another Parks Canada official, any doubt was eliminated once the benefits of the park were realized:

At first I was quite nervous about getting involved with the park because there was so much negativity surrounding the issue, but once I got a little more information about it protecting the polar bears, to protect the significance of the peat and low-land areas of Hudson and James Bay that all changed. (10)

Protecting the environment for future generations is important to Churchill residents, however one Aboriginal businessman mentioned that he was concerned about overuse by tourists:

The park is good because it keeps the environment healthy for future generations, I'm a little fearful that the park will make our town into another Banff. How you do a park in Banff is not how you do a park in Churchill. (5)

However, participants agreed that the park needs to be accessible to citizens of the town without compromising its preservation:

We have to take people out to experience the park, but not to upset the balance. It is possible to have wildlife preservation *and* park access. (8)

A business owner in Churchill had this to say:

Economic improvements and wildlife protection don't go well hand-in-hand. (9)

According to another local businessman, the sustainability of wildlife is very important to the town:

Sustainability of wildlife is very important to this town, and the park does that for us. (8)

Another respondent had this to say:

There is something special here, we need to maintain the integrity of the town, maintain the ecosystem. (20)

Town citizens feel strongly about protecting the park. A business owner and town councillor speaks of protecting the tundra:

It [the park] is very important because it protects the delicate tundra. Tundra buggies have to be careful of what they are doing out there. (11)

Another respondent responded from the RHA (Regional Health Authority) in the follow-up interview felt that there should be even less access to the park:

Personally for that type of Park I think there should be less access. I think it should be left alone without people mucking around and tearing up the land. It should be limited to only the odd researcher (#8 q5, 2003).

On the other hand, some people felt as though there were few or even not any good outcomes from the creation of the Wapusk Park:

There aren't any good things about this park, I go into the park for work and that is about it. It really doesn't affect me one way or the other because its 'no man's land. (7)

You can't hunt caribou anymore. They turned it around. You need a permit and have to sign papers. Lot's of things have happened since parks moved in. You used to be able to pick berries in the summertime, but you can't pick berries anymore (#5 q8, 2003).

A researcher doing fieldwork in Churchill area and that we interviewed at the research station made this comment:

There was no need for an immediate protection, this place was safe and not exploited unless in a traditional, and rather sustainable way. They could have left it like that for a while. No, I think the true reason is that Parks Canada had identified a number of ecosystems and they were looking to add a new piece to their intellectual construction. A construction where there is no place for human activity. They try to prevent Nature from evolving, from being transformed through human activities, in a sense they are playing God. They want to create a new paradise and they do not want to make God's mistake, they will ban man from their paradise before it will ruin it.

As can be seen by the preceding responses, a large number of local citizens place a high priority on environmental protection and feel that Wapusk National Park will play a major role in protecting local wildlife and habitats. There are of course, varying opinions concerning whether the park is/was the best way to address the issue. Also, some felt that there was no need for an intervention of any kind, and some expressed opinions of indifference. However, the testimonies indicate that the majority of citizens' interviewed felt that the park could play a vital role in ensuring the protection of the local environment.

Aboriginal Use of the Park

Respondents were asked how they believe aboriginal practices have been impacted as a result of the creation of the new Wapusk National Park. A very common response from aboriginal and non-aboriginal citizens of Churchill was regarding the issue of the new imposed hunting permits needed to enter the park. Several respondents made similar statements:

Aboriginal people are upset because they need a permit to hunt on land where they've hunted freely for years ... (1)

The tundra buggies are still allowed to go there, but as far as the local people, they need a permit to go out there to hunt. Which from the beginning we understood nothing was changing. But it has changed; you have to have a permit to go hunt in Wapusk Park. But the buggies still go out there, but the local people, not too many go out there are far as hunting is concerned anymore (#21 q5, 2003).

In addition to responses concerning the new hunting permits, one respondent also mentioned that the park has created a loss of freedom for hunters:

Because of the stupid hunting permits, people are concerned about their loss of freedom to hunt. (21)

One non-aboriginal respondent also felt as though aboriginal practices have been restricted and that further restrictions are on their way:

...and are afraid of the restrictions that will be coming later on. (5)

Another non-aboriginal respondent confirmed this:

It [the park] has definitely put restrictions on aboriginal practices... (9)

An employee from the town of Churchill confirmed this also:

The park is preventing locals from accessing the area. (3)

Concerns about citizen rights and the loss of land were also common responses to the questioning:

People were afraid that Parks would jump in and create a bunch of restrictions and people wouldn't be able to do anything. They say that the park is for us but nobody can use it...the biggest fear was that Parks Canada would take a piece of the world that should be saved from mankind but not allow mankind to go out and experience that part of the world. (8)

You do need a permit to enter the park, you have to be a status Indian to hunt traditionally there. If you are not status or not aboriginal at all, you can't go out there. I think this is wrong, it is a free country and people should be able to go where they want (#12 q8, 2003).

Another business owner stated:

Churchillites, particularly aboriginal peoples, feel as though they have certain rights to the land. (9)

A non-aboriginal resident expressed the same idea:

They need to respect the rights of the aboriginal citizens. (5)

Another non-aboriginal participant also expressed this opinion:

When they first began proposing the park there were a lot of negative feelings, most people were asking about their hunting rights. (6)

An aboriginal resident of Churchill made this statement:

Park Canada wants to protect the land by preventing aboriginals from using it. But we have used it since ever and it is still pristine. Aboriginals never over exploited nature. We take what we need, no more, no less. I don't know many parks, but those I have visited do not look like they are in good condition. I am sure those areas would be in better shape if aboriginals would still be able to use them (21)

On the other hand, there are differences of opinion about the impact of the park on aboriginal practices. Several non-aboriginal respondents indicated that the issue was not nearly as severe as others had indicated. One councillor of the town of Churchill mentioned the following:

Aboriginals had very negative feelings about the park at first, but after time they became more accepting. (11)

Several other non-aboriginal residents made similar statements:

It has had only a minimal impact on aboriginal practices because, they still have their rights, I don't think they mind the park that much. (7)

I'm not that close to Wapusk as of yet to see the impact. But I do know that traditional Cree and Dene here, I'm not hearing that it has been a problem at all (#24 q8, 2003).

One Parks Canada official mentioned this:

This park is different from other national parks; traditional local users are still allowed to use the park. People are still allowed to hunt, collect vegetation and drift wood. (10)

According to another non-aboriginal respondent, the park seems to have not disturbed aboriginal practices at all. A councillor of the town stated:

It [the park] has not had any impact on aboriginal practices; they still have access to the park. (6)

Another non-aboriginal resident made this comment.

Aboriginal people do not hunt for subsistence anymore. They hunt for fun like white peoples. I would say, yes they have been impacted by the park, but like we have. This is not a threat to their way of life because this way of life is already gone. (1)

However, the majority of the respondents think that the park could have affected aboriginal rights to the land. This opinion is so common that a park official speaks about the bad reputation that Parks Canada has in the town, and tried to explain it:

People are still really negative about the park, especially about Parks Canada, they just don't understand. They think we are taking away their land and that we are against them, this isn't true. (10)

Our interpretation of that general perception is that aboriginal people, because of the imposed hunting permits and the restrictions that they entail, think they have been dispossessed of their land. This feeling seems to be increased by the fact that people had understood, through the preliminary talks, that Parks Canada would not impose limitation to use of the land by local residents. Two participants, both aboriginal, spoke of a common feeling in the town that Parks Canada was dishonest to citizens:

When we were at these meetings, they said this [problems with permits] wouldn't happen. Aboriginals feel as though Parks Canada lied to them. (15)

The park is another way of taking land away (#3 q5, 2003).

A poster (See Appendix 5) posted in several public places in the town speaks of hunting permits, and categorizes hunters into various groups according to aboriginal status. The categories are so complex and difficult to decipher that much confusion had arisen among citizens. It reveals the bureaucratic definition of what is a traditional hunter or trapper that Park Canada tries to impose on the population of Churchill. As a result traditional hunters felt insulted by the fact they have to prove to a civil servant their "consecutive use of the land" the duration of their residence in Churchill or their aboriginal statute. However, the main issue surrounding access to the park revolved around aboriginal hunting rights and access to the park for traditional activities. Park's Canada states that hunting rights will be honoured, but according to the local aboriginal population, this is not the case. As our hypothesis suggested, there is a feeling of dispossession

amongst the aboriginal population who now feel cut off from their traditional lands, hunting rights, and other activities.

Non-Aboriginal feeling of dispossession

It was our hypothesis, as the literature suggested, that aboriginal people would somehow have a feeling of dispossession. However, it was revealed that several non-aboriginals have experienced the same feeling:

There are some books now that say “Wapusk” in the title. Other than that, nobody can go in there. I go in there for polar bear modelling for a photographer that was not even from this country, but I can’t go in there to go and shoot some of the massive caribou that are in there to eat for the winter? I don’t get it, he can make money of it, but the locals can’t go eat out of there? I don’t get it. It’s messed up (#19 q5, 2003).

I would say that during the feasibility study, 85% of Churchill residents were strongly against the idea that their access to the land would be limited. They only agree to the Park because Parks Canada promised they would be able to go to the Park as they wished. Today they realized Parks Canada lied to them. (22)

Although reports from feasibility studies can’t totally support this statement, it is an indication of resentment against the regulations limiting the access to land. The following comment explains why people feel this way:

Since it is a park, we can't pick up berries, do fire, in the Park. It is a loss of freedom for local people. You can't also carry a gun, which is very dangerous because of the bears. I use to go in some parts of the Park, with my husband, by skidoo, but we are not going anymore. It is too bothering to apply for permit. That is why people were not so pleased to see a Park, they were afraid to loose their freedom and to be limited in their access to the land. (Question): Do you think this is happening? Answer: Yes. (24)

The respondent is referring to the hunting permits required to hunt in the park. However, a Parks Canada employee feels as though some future changes in the park’s regulations could be beneficial to citizens:

If they are going to allow certain companies into the park to do business, I think they should open it up a bit more to other interested individuals who want to do the same thing, such as guiding hiking, camping... (10)

Regarding the control of the land by Parks Canada, several respondents recommended that we should interview the researchers of NSC (Northern Studies Centre) of Churchill. The respondents were suggesting that since the creation of the Park, researchers have been upset by the limitations Parks Canada is imposing on their activities in the park. The people said this was a serious issue because the NSC is a community initiative. The community has created the research facility in order to accommodate students and researchers during the summer, and because they wanted to have a teaching institution in the town. Upsetting researchers and students could discourage them to come back, which would be detrimental for the community's economy and desire to have a vibrant research station. Following that advice, we have interviewed one researcher staying at the centre:

They (Parks Canada) want to regulate everything. They consider the Park as their private kingdom. If you want to do research you have to prove you will have no impact. You can't cut wood, collect berries, or trees. Guns are a serious issue. You have to apply for a permit and not everyone can have a gun. Students usually can't have a gun and that put them in danger. The most bothering thing is that Parks Canada is playing a role that belongs to the United States they are creating their own rule about gun control, they are going beyond their real power. I do not think the general public would be pleased to know that. It is the same thing with research, they want to approve our research, and they want to decide what is legitimate to research. Their idea is that they have their own scientist and because of that they should have the monopoly for researching in the Park. They are building their own kingdom, where only Park Canada laws will be applied.

Also in this category of land control, a restaurant owner mentions an incident where a French skier travelling across the Canadian Arctic had to acquire permission to access the park and was delayed during his trip because of the lack of proper authorization. He explains that he, as a citizen of Churchill, was embarrassed by the whole situation and said it was a shame because the exploits of the French skier was well covered by the European media who could

have gotten a wrong impression of Churchill, and as a result could deter tourists from coming to Churchill.

Since the preliminary proposals of the Wapusk National Park, Parks Canada has had a bad reputation within the town of Churchill. According to a Parks Canada official:

In the past and still today, Parks Canada has a very bad reputation... people are still negative about the park and especially about Parks Canada. (10)

However, according to another park official, town citizens were consulted about the park, and Parks Canada has always provided sufficient information:

Local people, including aboriginals, were consulted and provided with adequate information. (15)

However, another park official had one negative thing to say about Parks Canada:

Parks Canada doesn't communicate with community members. (10)

Another Parks Canada official said this:

Parks Canada has a good relationship with the community, but it wasn't always like that. (4)

And yet another Parks Canada official had something positive to say:

...we worked with all the interests groups to ensure that everyone knew what was going on and how things were going to work...some activities were going to be permitted and some wouldn't be permitted. (17)

A Churchill restaurant owner contradicted this:

I was never asked anything, Parks Canada only talked to a few people. They didn't consult me or anyone in the tourist industry that I spoke to. Parks Canada doesn't communicate with us. (1)

One business owner felt this way:

If we manage ourselves well and work with Parks Canada, it can be very positive and beneficial to everyone. Parks Canada has to take a strong leadership role. (8)

Another aboriginal business owner add to this:

Many local people don't get involved. That is how Parks Canada is, they have their own way of operating. (5)

An aboriginal woman spoke of how non-aboriginal locals have been displaced from the land and the general feeling amongst certain people that Parks Canada was less than honest:

Well, what I was told, I was told it would be free to use like it used to be. Especially the natives, they were told they would be able to use it at any time like I said "what about the local people? There are not all natives here", where are they going to go? Cape Marie, you have to cross the river they took away the water, you can't go up there anymore. Now you take this away... where are they going to go hunt? You can't go straight out the Bay. These people aren't natives. I don't know what they think now. I can't tell you, I haven't talked to anybody about it except natives, who aren't too happy about it. Wapusk Park I think should have never been Wapusk Park (#21 q8, 2003).

As can be seen by the responses, a large portion of interviewees had a negative perception of the park, or felt that they were left out of the decision making process. This contradicts the principles of co-management and cannot simply be summed up as a series of simple misunderstandings or shortcomings linked to the short length of the process.

Economic Spin-off

Participants were also asked various questions about what benefits, if any, Wapusk Park has brought to the town. According to many citizens of Churchill, the creation of the park has brought with it several advantages to their town. The most common advantage that respondents mentioned was in some way or another related to the economic vitality of Churchill. One aboriginal citizen claims that the park brings people, as well as money:

...if people come to see the park, its likely they'll come to the town and spend money here. (15)

The same participant adds later on in the interview:

The park is definitely economically beneficial. (15)

Another participant speaks about the park's impact on the tourism industry:

The park has had a huge impact on tourism; people are spending a lot more money here. (11)

One aboriginal businessman also speaks of the impact on tourism in the town:

The park has had a great impact on tourism, it brings people to our town, which in turn brings more money. (5)

A councillor of the town mentions that tourism is significant during bear season:

I think the park has brought more tourists to the hotel, especially during bear season, business is great. (12)

Another participant heavily involved in the tourism industry also says something similar:

...people are curious about the park, they want to see what its all about, as a result my business is booming, its pretty exciting. (14)

According to town citizens, as a result of the creation of the Wapusk Park, the tourism industry continues to grow, which in turn creates more employment opportunities for residents. A local businessman mentions that the park creates employment:

...good tool for community development because it creates jobs for town citizens. (8)

Another participant speaks of it's impact on the community:

It [the park] has definitely had as impact on the community, it employs people. (13)

Because the park is deemed to have brought many tourists to the town this has prompted residents and civic employees to beautify their town for the tourists. According to an employee of the town of Churchill, the park has inspired people to improve the appearance of the town. The pictures at the end of this section were taken by the researchers during our study:

The park has stirred up talks about future plans about community beautification like plants and benches and stuff, ways to improve the physical appearance to tourists. It has inspired people. (3)

Using the newly renovated tourist centre as an example, an employee for Parks Canada offers some direct examples of the economic contributions tied to the park:

Look at the facilities and the staff (of the tourist info building/train station). Already it is a few dollars. Look at the building here, and the equipment that has been invested for Wapusk National Park. If you look at the money already invested in that it is a lot of money invested in Churchill (#15 q5, 2003).

However, conflicting opinions did arise from town citizens. To some, the park has had no effect on tourism at all. This sentiment was found a lot more in the follow-up interviews taken in 2003 as it seems that over time the focus has shifted from economics to conservation:

The Park is mostly for preservation so it is not really a factor economically (#13 q8, 2003)

No. I don't think it has done anything to boost the economy at all except for the fact that you have federal money in play and park people which pretty much aren't here or from here (#22 q5, 2003).

One restaurant owner speaks, in a very sarcastic tone, about the lack of tourism the park brings as a result of its long distance from the town:

I don't think the park brings much tourism here. Parks Canada officials are the only one's who go on the park...to set up their picnics, do a tour around the park to see if everything is all right then go back to Winnipeg or Ottawa. Of course, the park could help the tourist industry, if it was closer to the town. (1)

According to another participant, tourist's expectations of the park are often quite high:

...more people come because they are interested, but I think people expect more than what is actually here, they expect it to be like Yellowstone or something... (6)

According to one Parks Canada official, the park is not all that popular to tourists:

...only three percent of tourists ask about Wapusk, few people actually visit the park... (4)

Another Parks Canada official adds this:

...we don't have much in terms of visitation because Wapusk National Park is designated a wilderness park, and as such we have very limited access to the

park in terms of trails, roads, or means of getting into the park...the ability to get into the park is quite difficult. (17)

A member a Parks Canada Board also mentioned:

People were expecting a huge economic spin off. Indeed, Churchill didn't receive what was promised. First the Park is not designed to attract tourist. There is an important issue. Parks Canada is supposed to offer a certain amount of jobs to the local people. But Parks prefers to send its own personnel. There are two issues raised by the population that you should be aware of. For example, Parks Canada recently hired people that just have moved a few months ago to Churchill, and they considered them local. But local people see this as a strategy not to offer them an opportunity to be involved in the park. More problematic even, is the recent nomination of the Superintendent of the Park. Two people from Northern Manitoba, highly qualified, applied...but Parks chose to nominate a woman from Montreal who hardly speaks English. (21)

Churchill residents raised this question of employment in the community often. It seems that they were expecting that Parks Canada would have put more effort into job creation for the members of the community:

I do not know much about the economic condition of Churchill, but people that grow up here know that there are few jobs. If they want to have a career they must leave the community. Parks Canada can only offer jobs for people such as warder. Parks should be committed to be an institution where local people can be sure to do their career in, and be able to be promoted year after year. That could be an incentive to local people to go to university in programs like administration or biology. But the indication Parks gives is local people only get the "go for" job. That should be different. Parks should even be committed to train local people and offer them bursaries to go to university. What good is a park in our community if it does not benefit our people first? (23)

Another community member mentioned this:

They promised a lot of money to the community, but where it is? I do not see any money. The train station they are renovating is the bottom line. People were expecting Parks Canada would help in bringing tourists, but they did nothing. People were expecting good jobs for the community, but almost nothing. The least they can do is refurbish the train station. Some big shots at the town house

brag it is big money. Yes it is a big expense but most of it goes on the purchase and transportation of construction materials. But how much really goes in the community economy, or permanent jobs, not much, from what I have heard. (24).

Some respondents felt that the Park mostly employs outsiders and is of no real benefit economically to local citizens:

It would have been good if they had realized how much aboriginals have had to struggle to live up here. They didn't and won't hire them. Not locals...no. They hire outsiders, they are running it (#5 q6/7, 2003).

At the tourist bureau of Churchill one respondent said:

I do not think there is much advertisements made about Wapusk Park. Only few people, approximately 2%, ask questions about Wapusk. However, we do not have much information to give them. If you look on the display we do not have much information on the park. However, I have a pamphlet, but look...the pile is full, nobody took a pamphlet. It is clear for me that Wapusk is not the reason why people come here. Some times people ask me questions about how to get to the park and the only thing I can tell them is that there is no access. ...I think if the park were accessible tourists would go. (Question: Why) They already go the Fort Prince of Wales, which is a park, and they really enjoy it. People like what Parks Canada offers to them. This is our heritage and we are proud of it. That is why if Parks Canada were to do something to connect Wapusk to the community, tourists would go. (22)

Someone in the community mentioned this:

I think if we had an access to the park people would come and the people in charge of the community development would be able to initiate some project using the Parks to offer new activities for the tourists. If we had more to offer, tourists would stay longer and it would greatly benefit the whole community. Think about it, we receive many tourists but they just come by. If we could convince them to stay one or two more days in the community that would totally change the spin off, and that would not make a big difference for the tourists. The biggest expense for them is too come to Churchill. Once here they can spend a few more hundreds. It is nothing for them, but if you multiply by the number of tourists, it is a totally different story. That is why people have accepted the park. They thought it would help to diversify the activities offered

to the tourist. But nothing happened. I even think it is the opposite, the park will prevent sustainability. (23)

Perceptions regarding the economic spin-offs of the park are mostly divided down the centre. On one hand there are those that feel that there has been a great economic surge because of the park, and on the other, those that do not feel that it has, or will, make any difference. In addition, there are those that feel that the park has the potential for substantial economic growth; all that is missing is the proper strategies to capitalize on this potential. It seems that people's assessment of the park might also be impacted by the general opinion they have about Parks Canada, those that see Parks Canada as an intruder trying to impose upon the community a way of managing the environment that is likely to result in minimal economic spin-offs. On the contrary, those who think Parks Canada is playing a big role in protecting the environment are more likely to assess the economic impacts in a positive way.

It is fair to say that park has generated some minor economic advancement for the community. However, it is also possible to make the hypothesis that the individual benefit each respondent gets from the Park (in the case of the businessmen) is influencing the general opinion they have of the park. As a result, businessmen getting some direct outcome from the park tend to see it a good way to protect the nature, tend to see Parks Canada as non-intrusive, etc. One a whole, based on the 2003 follow-up survey, there is a shift in the general consensus of what the park has been established for. The focus has moved towards conservation over anything else, and will not be sacrificed for economic gains, at least for the time being. However, what is sure is that nobody has a clear sense of the number of tourists coming to Churchill because Wapusk somehow sparked their interest. The number in tourists seems to have been increasing, but how much of this increase is the result of the exposure the Park gives to Churchill? No one was able to answer that question. It is actually quite noticeable that little reliable data exists that could help community stakeholders to make informed decisions, or to simply assess the impacts of each specific initiative.



A local residence with an urban style



Children enjoying Willow Park.



The view from the outside of the park.



The tourist information centre.



Caribou Hall

Climate Change

Perspectives regarding climate change and the potential impacts a warming climate will have on the community were also examined. It was found that many residents were very concerned about the future of the community if local wildlife and habitats, the basis of the town's economy, were adversely affected. The following excerpts illustrate this point and show that there is a significant level of concern amongst the townspeople:

This is an important issue indeed. Parks Canada is pretending to protect nature, but what can they really do. The main problem is to stop global warming, but what the government is really doing is trying to stop people from polluting. It is not because a couple of hunters using the park that it will be damaged, when

compared to the effects of the climate change. But still, the main concern of Parks Canada is to prevent us from using our ancestral land..

Another person felt that combating climate change was of great importance to the future of the community:

I think this is a the single most important issue that Churchill is facing (...) If the climate warms up at the pace scientists foresee, the polar bears will soon disappear, and the tundra will be destroyed. How will the community survive since the main economic asset of Churchill is tourism?

There were also those that did not see an imminent threat and felt that climate change was just a ruse used by the government to take the focus off other important issues:

Global warming is a joke of bureaucrats. Who knows for real what's going on? Is it true that weather is changing so fast that we cannot do anything? Anyway, my main fear is that the government will try to stop tourism in Churchill because of it. We have a tight enough economy and can't afford to pay the price for climate change.

Some residents saw climate change as yet another negative development that threatens the future of the community:

It's a good question. Climate change is a major issue. If it happens, it will be the end of Churchill. I can't even imagine how damageable that will be. We already lost the army base, then the rocket launch station. If we lost the polar bears, you can shut down the community. It is very important to do something. (Question: How to stop global warming) I do not think it is possible to stop it, although I wish we could, but I was thinking of planning something to help Churchill to adapt. I mean, I do not know what can be done, but we must do something. This community is investing so much in developing its tourist industry.

As can be observed from the preceding section, climate change is a concern amongst local residents, but there is a lack of potential solutions to the problem. There is also little consensus as to the severity of the threat. This suggests that there is a need for future research on this topic, especially in regards to any ideas or potential solutions local citizens have for adapting to future changes in climate.



The Polar Inn...climate change threatens the future of tourism in Churchill.

Discussion

This study is based on perception interviews, and therefore, the conclusions must be understood for what they are – expressions of the respondents’ reality or understandings, with no attempt to confirm or disaffirm these perceptions. However, these perceptions are very important to understand because they represent the “truth” in the eyes of Churchill residents, a “truth” that shapes their relationships with the other social actors. Although the study does not provide quantitative data to assess the impacts of the creation of National Park near Churchill, the testimonies we have collected and discussed in this paper reveal that it has had numerous repercussions on the social environment. The intention of this section is to analyze the results of the interviews conducted with the citizens of Churchill.

Protecting the Land: Conflicts between local and scientific understanding of nature and between Western and Aboriginal episteme

The majority of the aboriginal community members interviewed in the two fieldworks expressed negative views towards Wapusk National Park. The land, which was once used freely for hunting and traditional activities, is now accessible only by aboriginal peoples with treaty status and those with “special” permission. The fact that permits are now needed for hunting gave the aboriginal population a feeling that they are losing the freedom to hunt. In several of the interviews we found that community members feel that co-management was implemented to allow the State – represented by its national agency: Parks Canada – to put aboriginal people under a guiding influence. However, aboriginal peoples are not the only ones complaining about land access restriction; non-aboriginal community members believe that, as citizens of the town, they have a right to the land, a right that Parks Canada, according to them, has ignored. Hence, there is a generalized understanding of the importance of environmental protection, but respondents do not see the good in protecting an environment with no practical use. Because much of Churchill’s economic viability is based on the growing tourism sector, protection of the delicate tundra and wildlife (especially polar bear denning areas) is very important to the respondents. According to several respondents, these aspects are why a park is needed. However, they do not see what Parks Canada is doing to protect the polar bears or natural habitat besides

putting the area in isolation. They think that a more proactive stand should be taken. The climate is changing and the bears are thinning year after year, some even face starvation. What is Parks Canada doing, how are they publicizing this situation? Local users of the land care for its well being, they detect changes, report them, discuss solutions, and call for support. In their opinion, Parks Canada, by disconnecting the local population from the land will cut the link people have with it, and the land left alone will not be protected by any one, only Parks Canada officers will go into the Park and measure the slow disappearance of the polar bears without doing anything, since, the philosophy of protection is to put nature in isolation. Other respondents believe the park is not in any immediate danger because it is being exploited naturally and in a cautious way. They think that human activities in the land such as wood collecting and campfires, instead of harming the environment, contribute to prevent forest fires; in a sense human actions on the territory contribute to the harmony of the socio-environmental system.

Aboriginal respondents also think that the Park would be better protected if they could continue to use it in a traditional way, as according to them, aboriginal activities play a central role in maintaining natural harmony. Several also mentioned that contrary to the Western ideology of taking over the environment, aboriginal people do not want to control the land: they simply use it in a way that is sustainable because it is not abusive. This is why some interviewees see Parks Canada attempting to regulate park access as another manifestation of the Western ideology of appropriation, and they doubt Parks Canada good will. It is in their opinion that the true protection of the land is to be left under the usage of aboriginal peoples who belong to it, and who are a very important component of the milieu they were placed in. Because of this ideology it is clear that Parks Canada scientific rationality is not ready to convince aboriginal peoples to surrender their right to use the territory. Especially since many aboriginal peoples do not believe in the efficiencies of Western science and see the modern techniques of managing the environment as irrelevant and responsible for the major climatic and environmental disasters. Even the protected areas, said a respondent, are withering in Canada. It is our opinion that if Parks Canada wants to develop a true partnership with the community, the agency must move away from its traditional credo to embrace some of the aboriginal perspectives. It should not be impossible to overcome this tension between the users of the land and Parks Canada since the

majority of the respondents think a park is a good tool to protect the environment, and also think it can contribute to community development.

Wapusk National Park and Churchill economic development

During the consultation stages, before Wapusk National Park was designed, a number of community meetings took place in Churchill between the late 1980s and late 1990s. Parks Canada and the Town of Churchill conducted studies to generate data on the amount of money projected to be invested into Churchill. Over twenty million dollars was to be spent on research, facility development, and the general operation of the park within the first five years following inauguration. Parks Canada also estimated the projected number of tourists expected to visit Churchill, and it was anticipated that the number of visitors to the park would rise up to 12,000 people within ten years of the park's existence. Those figures brought a lot of hope amongst community developers eager to find ways to revitalize a community economy much depressed since the loss of the army base and the shutting down of the Canada Rocket launch station. Many people raised concerns about the potential limitation Parks Canada might impose on land exploitation. However, according to one respondent, the projection of the economic benefits associated with the park, especially the 12 000 extra tourists, was a key argument that convinced many to agree to the project. However, this argument has so far been far less than true.

Several years since the inauguration of the park, participants have expressed concerns regarding the fulfilling of the "promises" in regards to promoting tourism and, therefore, generating money within Churchill's economy. In fact, respondents believe that the park did not contribute much at all to the local economy. Some even believe it did not contribute to increase the number of tourists, since people are not even able to visit Wapusk because no road connections were established between the Town of Churchill and the park. Actually, several respondents believe that the hidden goal of Parks Canada is to prevent tourists from coming to the area, and as a result, the park is seen as counterproductive in terms of tourism development. Yet some respondents believe that the park has contributed to some economic spin off and has also given some pride to a community that is now trying to embellish itself, and looking toward a brighter future. In addition, there are also some people that feel that the park has the potential for

substantial economic growth; but it has not yet brought this result since the proper strategies to capitalize on this potential are missing. However, there is one point where interviewees are largely in agreement. It is the fact that Parks Canada is not offering enough employment and training opportunities to local citizens. It is a recurrent complaint that outsiders are taking advantage of jobs that should be given to local residents.

In general, it seems that people's assessment of the park's economic spin off might also be influenced by the general opinion they have about Parks Canada. Indeed, those that see Parks Canada as an intruder trying to impose upon the community a way of managing the environment are the ones that are the more likely to see minimal economic spin-offs. On the contrary, those who think Parks Canada is playing a big role in protecting the environment are more likely to assess the economic impacts in a positive way. In fact, it appears that the perception respondents have towards Parks Canada's attitude (whether it imposes itself or is cooperative and listens to the community) is a key factor in the various discourses carried on about Wapusk Park, its sustainability, its efficiency, and its contribution to the community development.

The co-managing dilemma

"Parks Canada has a very bad reputation within the town of Churchill" said one of the Parks Canada officials that we interviewed. Indeed, many respondents complained about the approach of Parks Canada, and if we were to qualify in sociological terms the general idea expressed by interviewees, we would say that Churchill residents think that Parks Canada has not established a true strategy of co-management, but rather a strategy of cooptation.

The first criticisms go to the lack of transparency and the improper sharing of information. According to respondents, Parks Canada withheld important information from the public, and in some cases was dishonest to community members by not following through on promises made. For example, Parks Canada apparently promised that a huge economic spin-off would result because of the park, which according to respondents, has yet to occur. Parks Canada did promise, according to respondents, that no restriction of access to the park would be imposed on Churchill residents. Today, strict restrictions are put in place and community members are

fearful that Parks Canada will have more restrictions soon to come; as they fear Parks Canada's scientists will come with new information justifying more control and less access. In addition, townspeople indicate that community members are not satisfied with playing a mere consultative role in the management of the park. Although Parks Canada contends they consult the population since the municipality and population of Churchill are represented on the board of park, the citizens of Churchill do not see this as an efficient way of being consulted. They think this representation is a pretext for not publicly discussing the major issues, such as gun usage in park, and access to the park. Moreover, one member of the board we interviewed raised concerns about an unbalance power between local residents from both aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities, and that the people nominated by the government are strong personalities with titles (scientist, MLA, Minister), experience, and are well aware of the political astute.

According, to some community members, and some of them are quite vocal, Parks Canada does not want a true partnership with the community, and they simply follow their own agenda. Several people express genuine concerns about the transparency of the decision-making process and think that Parks Canada is controlling the entire process, favouring its own goals to the needs of the population. A recent incident seems to have especially upset the local population; it is the recent hiring of a French-speaking person from Montréal as the park superintendent, a nomination quite controversial since two local candidates had applied. We did not verify the value of these candidacies, but what the population thinks is that the hiring of this special candidate was the result of Parks Canada national bilingual policy. It is very possible that the candidate hired was the most qualified one, but we do not have any ground to verify. What we understand from the people questioning this hiring process is that their trust in Parks Canada is very low. They tend to think that Parks Canada's decisions are based on its own internal rule rather than based on a project to reach a compromise with the citizens of the communities concerned by the Park.

In sum, it appears that the co-management structure put forward to avoid potential conflicts between the different parties is not working properly. On the contrary, it seems that some people see it as a way of cooptation. Studying the management of Wapusk National Park in depth has given the opportunity to reflect on internal mechanisms that could be responsible for

that lack of trust. Trust being the key for a successful co-managing enterprise (Berkes, 1997), it should be a priority for Parks Canada to restore it. This study has also allowed identifying some of the advantages and limits of co-management for community development, as well as the protection of the area. However, much more is to be done in this respect. That is why a subsequent survey, comparing different structures of co-management will help to form a basis for building a successful management strategy for the future.

Conclusion

While it would seem that local citizens, aboriginal groups and Parks Canada share the same goals, the actual co-management process and final decisions regarding park policy has resulted in much debate. Aboriginals have been shown as the group with the most concerns concerning the park as it would seem that they are the demographic with the most to lose in terms of access and hunting rights. Business owners and residents however, are split down the middle, some offering praise while others left with a feeling of isolation from the whole process.

Parks Canada has held fast to the stance that every decision regarding the park was open to community involvement, but in the end, the actual decisions and policy has not seemed to reflect this. Citizens have even accused Parks Canada of withholding information, and in some cases, even lying to the community about the goals and principles of the park. Unless community perception is pointed in a more positive direction, the problems and conflicts will continue to grow. In order to do this Parks Canada must regain the community's trust and backing, meaning that they must adhere to the democratic and inclusive processes they promised initially and still report to be following. More importantly, the process must yield results in terms of economic and environmental gains. The satisfaction of all concerned parties may not be entirely possible, but many steps can be taken to improve the co-management process of Wapusk National Park. It is likely that this debate is far from over.

References

- Agence Parcs Canada. 2000. *Intacts pour les Générations Futures? Rapport de la Commission sur l'Intégrité Écologique des Parcs Nationaux du Canada*. Ottawa, ON.
- Beals, C.S. 1968. *Science, History and Hudson Bay. Volume 1*. Department of Energy and Mines, Ottawa.
- Berkes, F. 1999. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis.
- Berkes F. 1997. "New and Not-So-New Directions in the Use of the Commons: Co-Management". *The Common Property Resource Digest* (42): 5-7.
- Berkes, F. 1994. "Co-Management: Bridging Two Solitudes". *Northern Perspectives* 22 (2/3): 18-20.
- Berkes, F. George, P. and Preston, R. 1991. "Co-Management: The Evolution in Theory and Practice of the Administration of Living Resources". *Alternatives* 18 (2): 12-18.
- Borrini-Feyerabend, G. 1996. *Collaborative Management of Protected Areas: Tailoring the Approach to the Context*. Gland, CH: International Conservation Union.
- Campbell, T. 1996. "Co-Management of Aboriginal Resources". *Information North* 22 (1), 1- 6
- Canadian Grains Council. 1997. *A Seminar on Churchill, Manitoba*. Canadian Grains Council. Winnipeg, Manitoba.
- Canadian Parks Service. 1990. *A National Park in the Churchill Area: Potential Impacts on Tourism and the Economy*. Churchill, Manitoba.
- Census Canada. 1996. *Statistics for Churchill* (Local Government District). <http://www.statscan.ca>.
- Churchill Working Group. 1990. *Assessing the Feasibility of Establishing a National Park in the Churchill/York Factory Area*. Churchill, MB.
- Geonorth Ltd. and RT & Associates. 1997. *Tourism Potential in the Western Hudson Bay Area*: Yellowknife, NWT.
- Fenge, T. 1993. "National Parks in the Canadian Arctic: The Case of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement". *Environments* 22 (1): 21-36.

- Fleming, M. 1988. *Churchill: Polar Bear Capital- of the World*. Winnipeg, MB: Hyperion Press Ltd.
- Kenny, J. 1932. *The Founding of Churchill*. London, Herts: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd.
- Kruse, J. Klein, D. Braunt, S. Moorehead, L. and Simone, B. 1998. "Co-Management Of Natural Resources: A Comparison of Two Caribou Management Systems". *Human Organization* 57 (4): 447-458.
- McCay, B.J. 1995. "Common and Private Concerns". *Advances in Human Ecology* 4: 89-116.
- McLachlan, L. 1994. "Co-Management of Wildlife in Northern Aboriginal Comprehensive Land-claim Agreements". *Northern Perspectives* 22 (2/3): 21-27.
- Morgan, J.P. and Henry, J.D. 1996. "Hunting Grounds: Making Cooperative Wildlife Management Work". *Alternatives* (oct/nov): 24-29.
- Newton, S. T. 2000. *Sustainable Development for Canada's Artic and Sub-artic Communities: A Case Study of Churchill*, Winnipeg, Manitoba Department of Natural Resources, University of Manitoba.
- Notzke, C. 1995. "A New Perspective in Aboriginal Resources Management: Co-Management". *Geoforum* 26 (2): 187-209.
- Notzke, C. 1994. *Aboriginal People and Natural Resources in Canada*. North York, On: Captus Press Ltd.
- Parks Canada. 1994. *Overview of the Draft Agreement for a National Park Near Churchill, Manitoba*. Churchill, Manitoba.
- Parks Canada. 2000. *Wapusk National Park of Canada*. <http://www.parkscanada.pch.gc.ca>
- Pinkerton, E. 1994. "Summary and Conclusions". In *Folk Management in the World's Fisheries*, C.L. Dyer and J.R. McGoodwin, eds. Niwot: University Press of Colorado: 317-337.
- Renard 1997. "Collaborative Management for Conservation". In *Beyond Fences: Seeking Social Sustainability in Conservation*, volume 2, G. Borrini-Feyerabend, ed. Gland, CH: International Conservation Union. 65-67.
- Rodon, T. 1992. *Parc Nationaux et Revendications Territoriales Autochtones au Canada: Analyse des Acteurs, Strategies et Enjeux*. M.A. Thesis: Universite Laval.
- Searle, R. 2000. *Phantom Parks. The Struggle to Save Canada's National Parks*.

Toronto, ON: Key Porter Books.

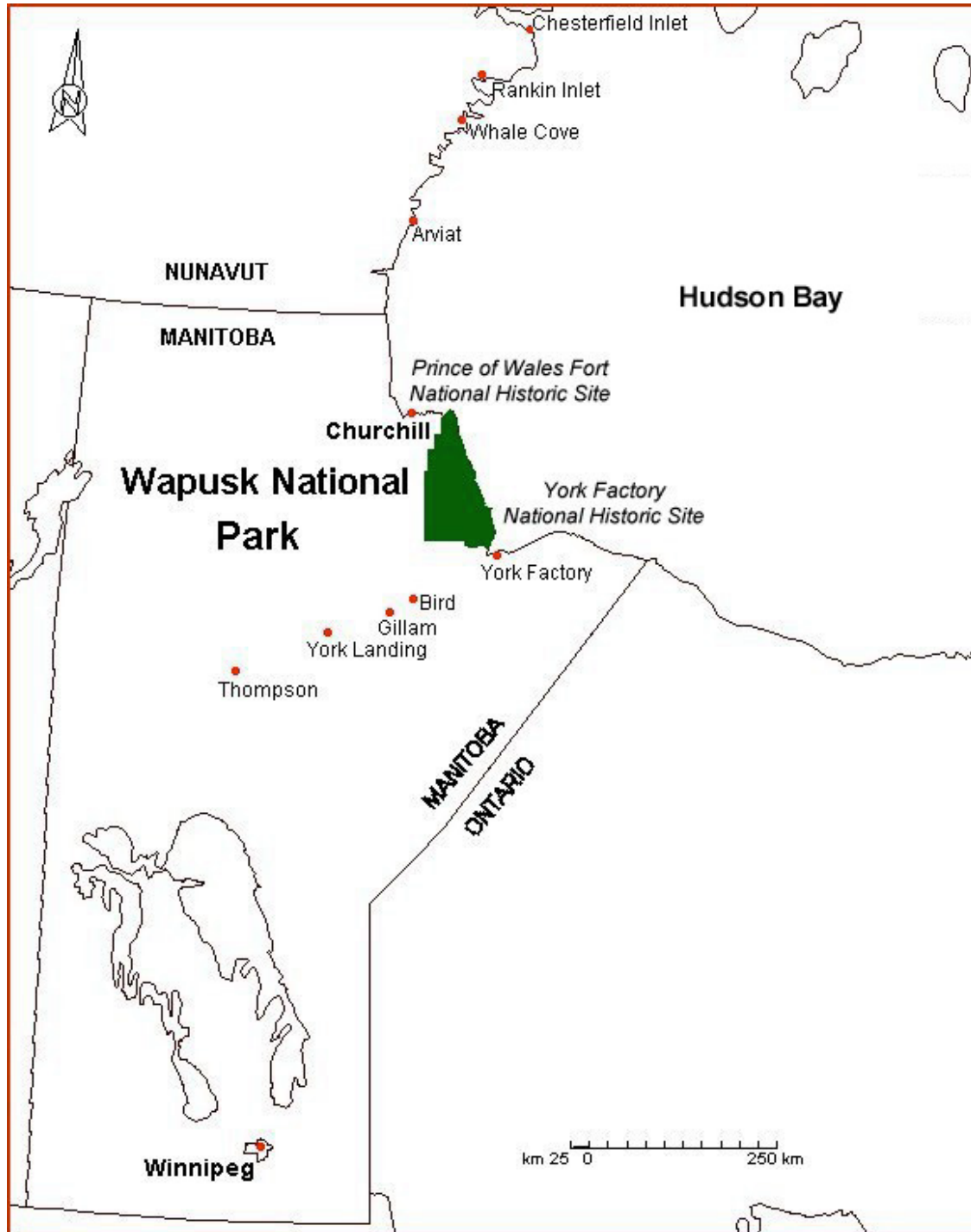
Spearman, D. 1975. *Comparison of Social Welfare Needs with Service Network in two Northern Manitoba Communities*. Winnipeg, Centre for Settlement Studies: University of Manitoba.

Swinnerton, G. 1991. *People, Parks and Preservation. Sustaining Opportunities*: Edmonton, Albert: Environment Council of Alberta.

Town of Churchill. 1999. *Profile of a Northern Community*. Churchill, Manitoba.

Weitzner, V. 2000. *Taking the Pulse of Collaborative Management in Canada's National Park and National Park Reserves: Voice from the Field*. Winnipeg, Department of Natural Resources Institute: University of Manitoba.

Appendix 1-Wapusk National Park



(Source: Parks Canada. Wapusk National Park of Canada. (Churchill, 2000).

Appendix 2

Interview Guide

For Park Administrators

A) Background

1. How long have you been a citizen of the town of Churchill?
2. Do you remember the preliminary stages of the creation of the park?
3. How long have you been involved with the park?
4. What is your role?

B) Benefits/Outcomes

5. What are some of the good things about the park?
6. Are the benefits a) economic b) social c) political d) a mix
7. Is the park a good tool for community development in Churchill?
8. What are your perceptions of satisfaction of the structures in place?
9. Was the process of creation acceptable?
10. What kind of impact does the park have on Aboriginal practices?
11. Does the park contribute to the maintenance of traditional practices or does it accelerate change?

C) Decisions and Relations between Parties

12. What spurred on the choice and delimitation of the Wapusk site?
13. Were there any board members that were not in favour of the idea?
14. Describe the existing relations between community representatives and park administrators.
15. Is there respect between parties?
16. Is there trust between parties?
17. Are the community representatives depictive of all members of the

community? Are all groups represented?

18. Do community representatives and park administrators meet? How often?

19. How are decisions made?

20. Is there full participation?

21. Are there any issues that those involved could not come to consensus on? What were they? How were they resolved?

22. Are the meetings open to the public?

D) Future Challenges

23. What are some future challenges for the park?

24. Can there be any future changes that will result in improvements?

25. Can global warming become a threat?

26. Do you have any advice for others who may want to enter into a similar project?

27. Are there any additional comments you would like to make that we did not discuss?

Appendix 3
Interview Guide
For Citizens

A) Background

1. How long have you been a citizen of the town of Churchill?
2. Do you remember the preliminary stages of the creation of the park?
3. Do you know how the park is managed and who is involved in the process?
4. What is your opinion of the role Park Canada has played in the management of the park?

B) Benefits/Outcomes

5. What are some of the good things about the park?
6. Are the benefits a) economic b) social c) political d) a mix
7. Is the park a good tool for community development in Churchill?
8. What are your perceptions of satisfaction of the structures in place?
9. Was the process of creation acceptable?
10. What kind of impact does the park have on Aboriginal practices?
11. Does the park contribute to the maintenance of traditional practices or does it accelerate changes?

C) Decisions and Relations between Parties

12. Do you know what spurred on the choice and delimitation of the Wapusk site?
13. Were there any board members that you know of, who were not in favour of the idea?
14. Is the board representative of all members of the community? Are all groups represented?
15. Are the meetings open to the public?

D) Future Challenges

16. What are some future challenges for the park?
17. Can there be any future changes that will result in improvements?
18. Can global warming become a threat?
19. Do you have any fears about the future of the park?
20. Are there any additional comments you would like to make that we did not discuss?

Appendix 4

Follow-up Questionnaire

Questions

Demographic Info

1. Do you wish to be cited in the research document? If yes please state and spell your name.
 2. Are you a resident of Churchill? If yes, how long?
 3. What is your current occupation?
 4. Do you wish to state your ethnicity?
-

Wapusk National Park

5. In your opinion, have recent measures taken by the federal, provincial, and local governments (such as the implementation of the park) done anything to boost the local economy?
 6. Do you think the implementation of Wapusk National Park was a good thing for the community? Why or why not?
 7. Do you think the co-management structure composed of representatives from the Town of Churchill, and Federal/Provincial governments is producing sufficient results? Have they (or do they) take the perspective of citizens into account?
 8. Do you see Wapusk National Park as an obstacle to community members (both aboriginal and non-aboriginal) traditional and modern usage of the land?
-

Appendix 5

Poster for Hunters and Trappers