

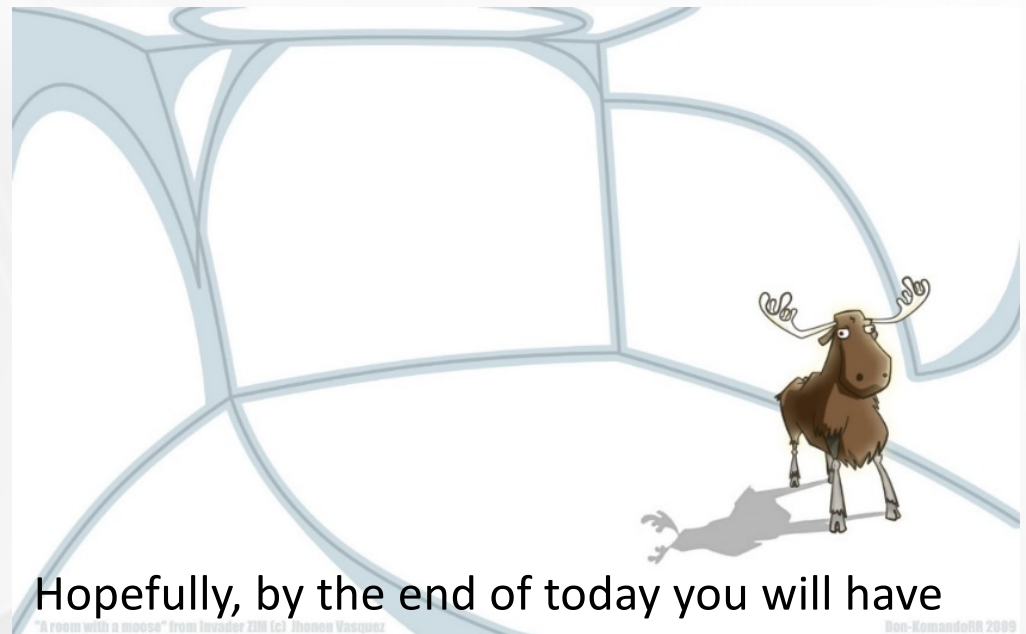


# **Effective Ideas For Indigenous Community-Base Participation in Resource Management**

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Sector**

# Outline for Presentation

- Please remember this is a topic that takes many months of planning and understanding and this is meant to be an overview. Like all Indigenous Peoples, I learned this from my elders and personal experiences. If you like to know more, please come see me afterwards.



Hopefully, by the end of today you will have learned:

- This is not a simple topic,
- There is much more Ontario needs to learn (ie Treaty Rights vrs Western Land Management), and
- The implication of Environmental/Resource Colonization that still exist in Ontario.



# Understanding the Field



- Canadians are routinely asked to consult with the Indigenous communities in their areas of work.
- However, the average Canadian lacks the knowledge on how Indigenous peoples view natural resources within their territory or how to go about engaging with them.
- Without an explanation of the Indigenous lens and spirituality, Canadians will continue to fail at creating equal partnerships for the benefit of Canada's Natural Environment.

# Creating an Effective Relationship with First Nations



- It always comes down to two things:
  - Language
  - People
- If:
  - **both parties** know and respect each other as people and;
  - **both parties** know how to communicate effectively with each other

***REMEMBER: First Nations are like anyone else, we are people too.***

# The Basics...

## Lands



- **Treaty Area:**

- More than 40 treaties and other land agreements cover Ontario. Treaties are legal agreements that set out the rights and responsibilities of First Nations and the various levels governments and those who occupy under their jurisdiction (Settlers/Canadians).

- **Traditional Territories:**

- the geographic areas identified *by a First Nation* to be the area of land which they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied or used.



# Question(s)



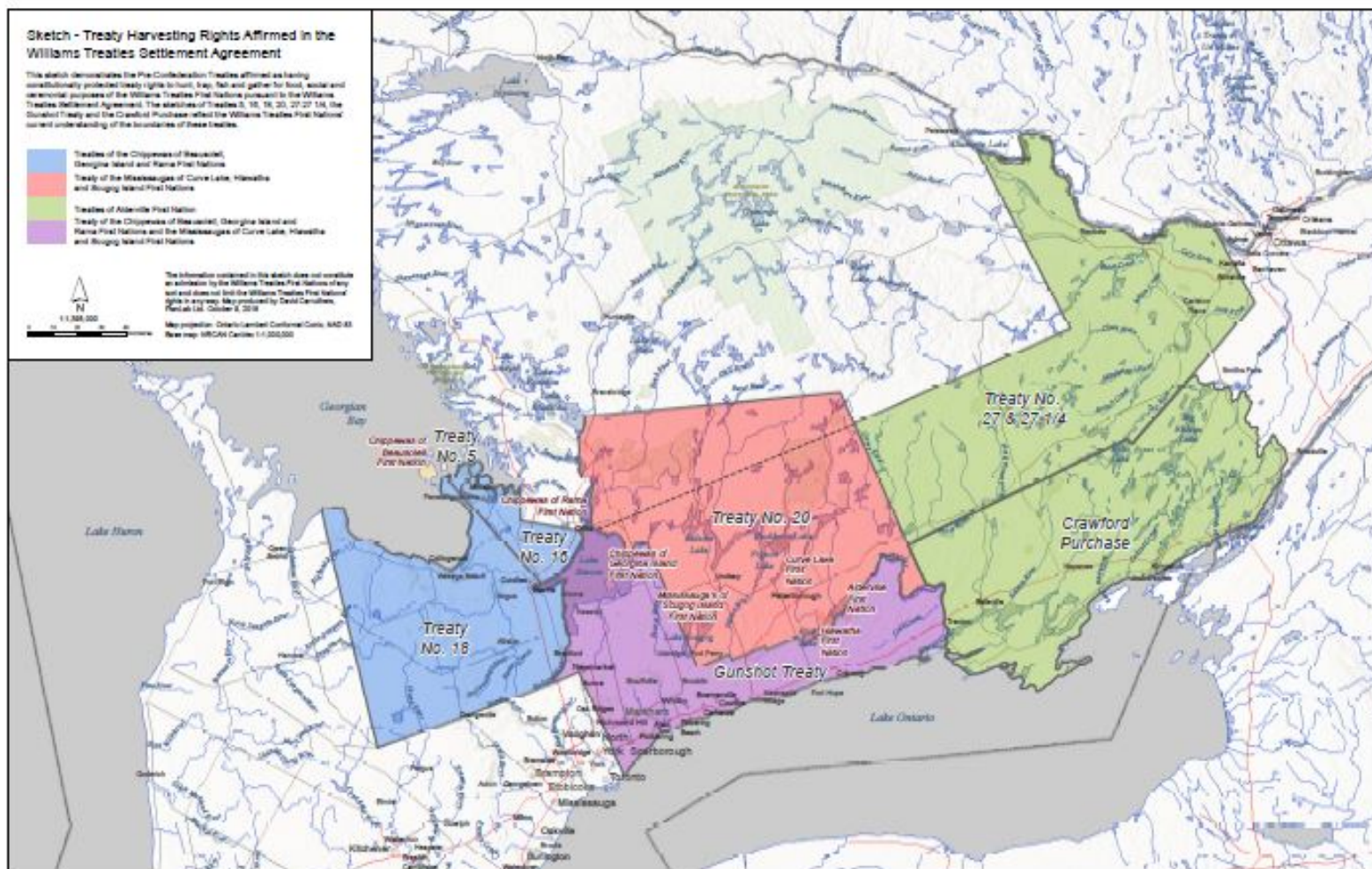
- How many people here know the Treaty Rights of the Indigenous peoples of the area? Even better how many communities have rights to where I am standing?
- Is the rights to access lands to hunt and fish a treaty right?
- My work or conservation effort does not involve or impact Indigenous Rights or Title?

# Treaty Rights



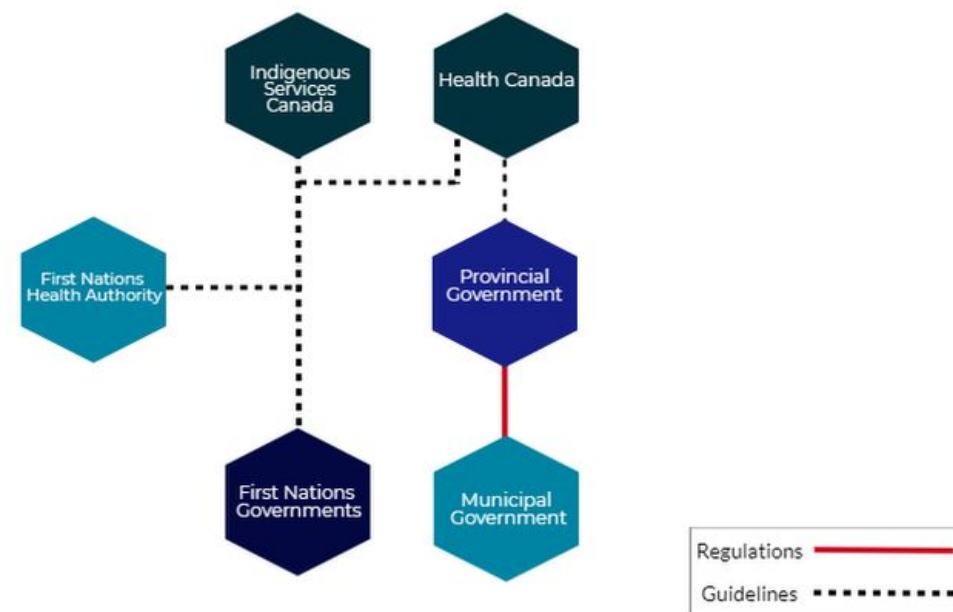
- It is important to know the Treaty Rights of those where you tend to do business?
- Most Canadians do not know the legal obligations of treaties prior to taking on a project and think its just an interaction of the Crown and FN groups!
- **Fun Fact:** The Original treaty's in my territory stated (1923): *No Settler could occupy no more then the depth of the plow (6 inches), damage or destroy a sugar bush or occupy/destroy a lake, river or wetland or island.*
- *“Within my territory’s new settlement (2017) the treaty states: Ontario and its inhabitants must respect Indigenous rights and manage changes to them in accordance with s.35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Ontario cannot uptake lands so as to deprive the FN signatories of a meaningful right to harvest in their traditional territory(s). All Ontario inhabitants must consult and accommodate these rights.”*





- In Ontario, there is huge divide on what or who governs the land. Both the policy makers and the general recreational user believes hunting and fishing rights are those granted through treaty and are not an inherent right to the original inhabitants as seen by the Canadian Constitution.

## Water Governance Structure



# The Main Problem

-Lets face it, there are many!



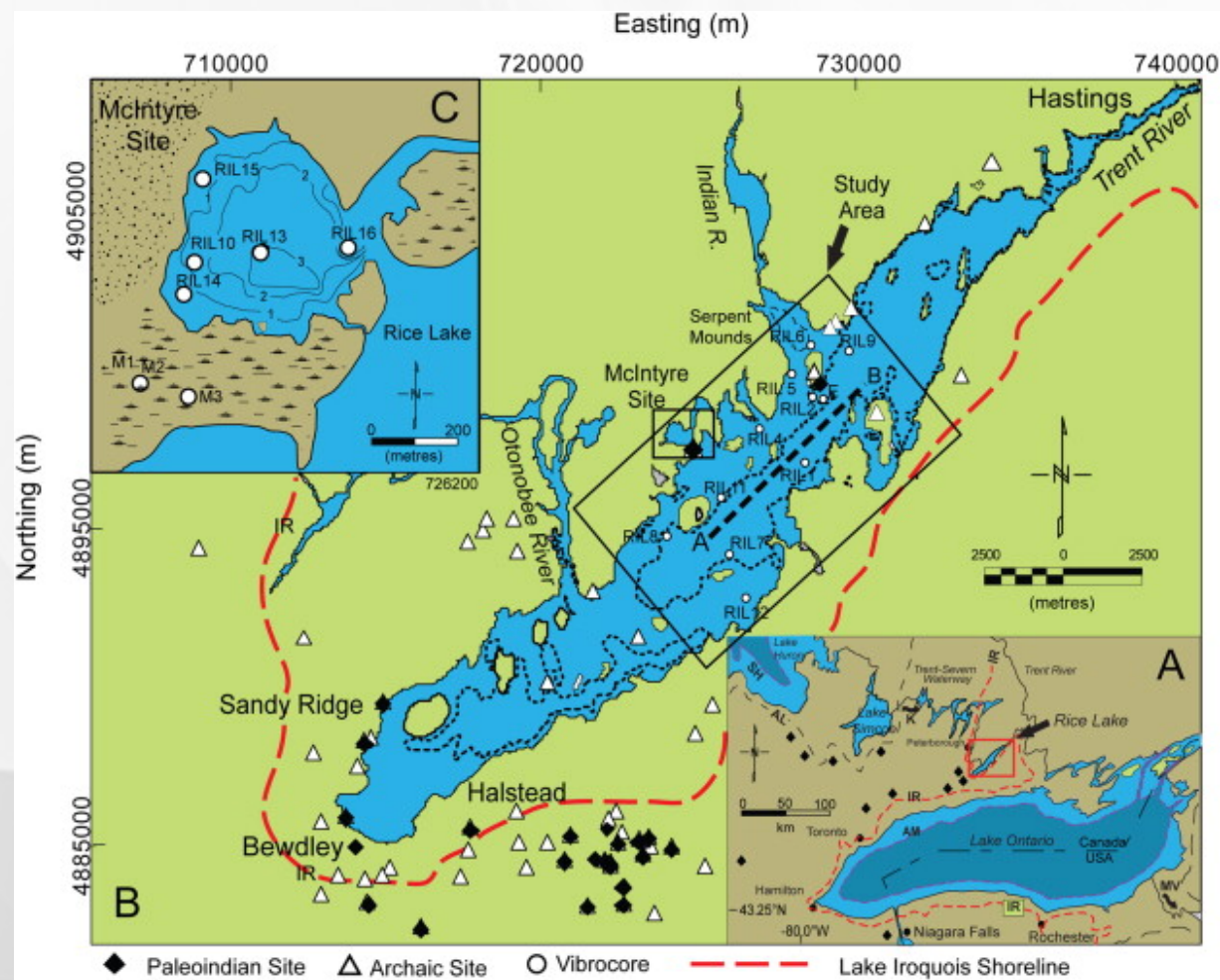
- It is interesting to look at the Eurocentric framework of conservation and how western science attempts at applying models against Indigenous values. This often results in conflict.
- Eurocentric conservation effort tends to lend itself with a social, political or economic driver.
- Where Indigenous perspective that is ingrained through tradition and countless years of oral teaching to respect the intricate balance of all living things and this value system placed on life, thus it outweighs the economic potential of the environment

# It is all a matter of scale



- One of the greatest challenges when looking at incorporating Indigenous knowledge with Eurocentric science is the differences in scale.
- Eurocentric science tends to isolate resources and species to a smaller geographic unit or disregard the linkages between a species and its habitat requirements or species-to-species interactions.
- Where an Indigenous knowledge approach to resource management looks at knowledge over time on a large geographic unit such as a watershed.

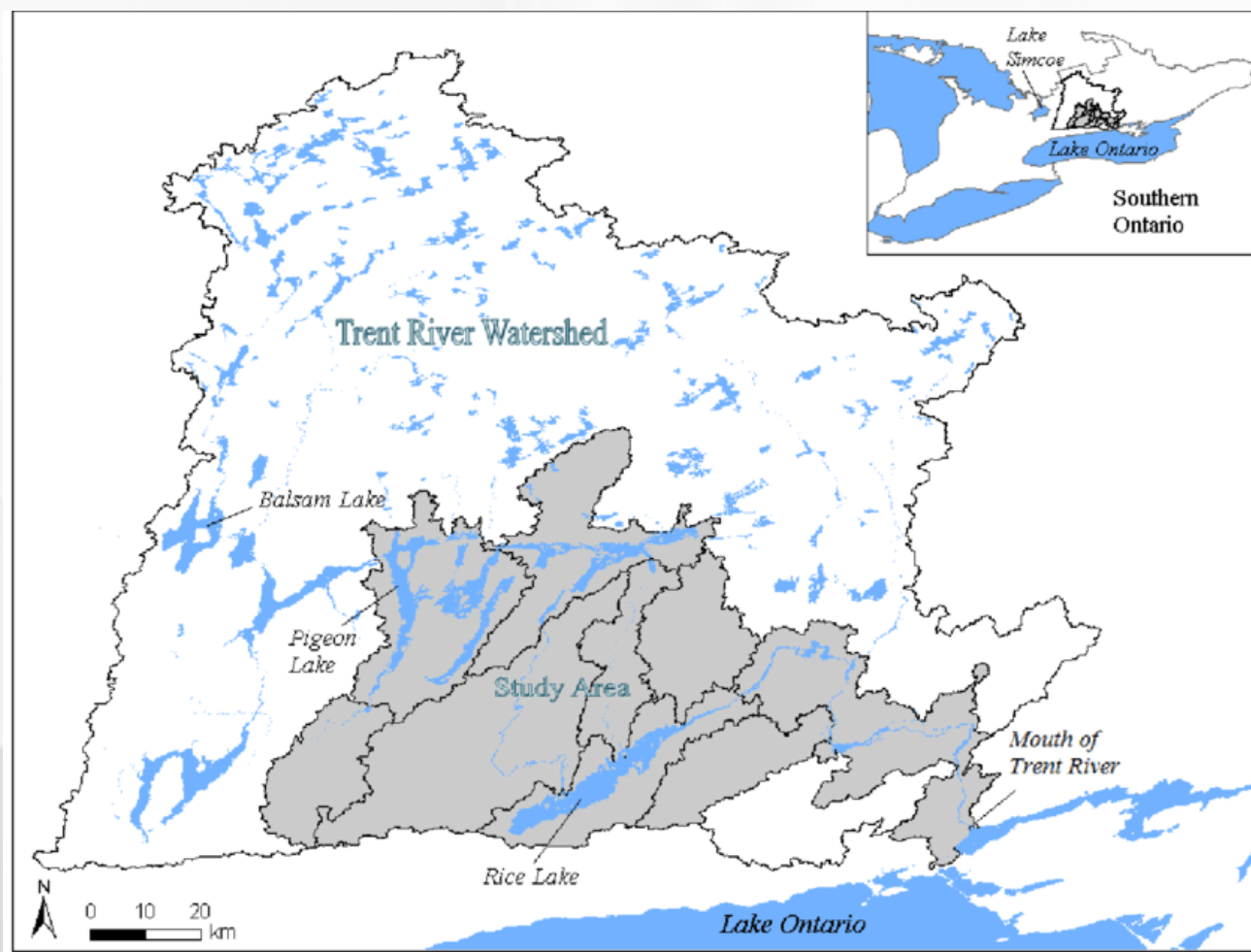






What is the cumulative impact?

How many project can the environment withstand?



- Sustainable resource management should have the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge.
- Since Eurocentric management concepts is now shifting focus to a cumulative impact approach rather than specific project-by-project needs analysis, what would be better than 10,000 years of good baseline data of an area.
- It is once this inclusion has taken place then a full understanding of the landscape can be viewed through two-eyed seeing and the conservation lens.
- Without this, then a sustainable future is not achievable under current industry practices.

- If Canadians truly want to create a system of co-management of resources then there should be a desire to shift from the mandatory duty to consult to a duty/desire to engage



# Closing Thoughts



- Canada still has a long road ahead towards reconciliation with not only its Indigenous peoples but understanding their relationship to the landscape.
- If Canadians only view the Indigenous peoples as what we are; as people then I believe and hope that this country would strive to be better and a leader nation once again. And not have a red line drawn across the landscape when there is a challenge or conflict.
- Canada may not need a tool kit or framework to work better with the original inhabitants. If proper education was taught to the non-Indigenous youth and community then honoring the treaties and the people would come naturally.

- Practitioners young and old must first understand our history both from a colonization and a spiritual aspect, embrace this and come to the table with an open mind.
- Younger generations of environmental practitioners seem to adapt to this concept better than the older generations. Practitioners must look beyond policy triggers for engagement or co-management and begin to form new cooperative, equal and meaningful partnerships.
- Once this is achieved the relationship will be closer to Indigenous peoples but help ensure the protection and sustainable management of Canada's natural resources for the future seven generations and beyond.



# Miigwetch! Questions?



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