



Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island

Management Options



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Approval Statement

I am pleased to approve the management options document for the development of the Michipicoten Post Provincial Park and Michipicoten Island Provincial Park management plans.

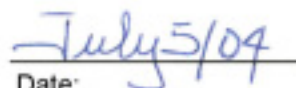
The purpose of this management options document is to:

- *present to the public the proposed policy direction for Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks, as specified in the policies and related directives of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ontario Parks and Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (1999)*
- *outline management topics and options, including zoning within Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks*
- *seek and reflect public input on the management topics and options*

Once the review of public consultation is complete, the planning team will review and summarize the comments received. Based on this information, a preliminary management plan will be prepared for each park and will include the preferred management approaches.



Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks



Date:

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1.0 Background

The *Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Background Information -Executive Summary-* provides additional information for the parks and their values. This information will assist readers in their decisions regarding the management options for Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island provincial parks.

1.1 Michipicoten Post

Michipicoten Post Provincial Park is an historical class park. *Historical parks are areas selected to represent the distinctive historical resources of the province in open space settings, and are protected for interpretative, educational and research purposes (OMNR 1992).* Michipicoten Post Provincial Park was originally established as Michipicoten Wilderness area in May of 1971. In June of 1982 it was regulated as a provincial park under the *Provincial Parks Act* (Ontario Regulation 429/82). The park encompasses 289 hectares.

The Post is located on the Michipicoten River mouth delta on the eastern shore of Lake Superior (Figure 1). The sandy delta was formed in a glacial spillway and is set in the typically rocky Lake Superior shoreline. This delta offers one of the largest (1.5 kilometres), accessible and scenic beaches on Superior. The park's mixed deciduous and coniferous forests are representative of the transition between the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence and the Boreal Forest Regions. Lake Superior moderates the area's climate resulting in cooler summer and milder winter temperatures. This moderating influence also provides a high incidence of lake effect summer fog and winter snowstorms. The delta has an extensive history of habitation, travel and trade by both Aboriginal and European people. It was a focal point for northern, southern and interior Ontario travel routes. The park's natural features include provincially rare and regionally significant plants, seasonal habitats for nesting and migratory birds including bald eagles and a scenic landscape on Lake Superior.

1.2 Michipicoten Island

Michipicoten Island Provincial Park is a natural environment class park. *Natural Environment parks incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences (OMNR 1992).* The park boundary encircles Michipicoten Island and all lands and water extending 2.5 kilometres off shore encompassing 36,471

hectares. It was regulated in 1985 under the *Provincial Parks Act* (Ontario Regulation 45/85).

Michipicoten is the third largest island in Lake Superior. It is located in the lake's north eastern corner (Figure 1). Michipicoten and surrounding islands and much of the Lake Superior basin were formed by volcanic activity that occurred in few other places in the Province. Volcanic and glacial events and weathering created remarkable geological features associated with the island. The park's mixture of deciduous and coniferous forests is representative of the transition between the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence and the Boreal Forest Regions. The island harbours a variety of provincially and regionally significant plants and animals including arctic relics and one of the southernmost populations of Ontario's woodland caribou. The park provides an ideal environment for studying plants and animals due to its isolated location and the absence of industrial and other land uses. Aboriginal myths and past activities on the island such as small-scale copper mining, commercial fishing, trapping and lighthouse operation since the 1800's enhance the cultural significance of the park.

There are privately and federally owned land holdings located within the park boundary. Park visitors travel along and explore the parks' island shorelines, bays and natural harbours. The patented land and federally owned properties are located in areas that are commonly used by park visitors. The private landowners and the Federal Government will be consulted through the park management planning process.

Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks are located within Ontario's Living Legacy's Great Lakes Heritage Coast (GLHC) Signature Site. The GLHC is a magnificent sweep of shoreline stretching from Port Severn on eastern Georgian Bay to Pigeon River on western Lake Superior. Located within this signature site, the Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Park management plans will identify initiatives to manage these important protected areas.

1.3 Ontario Parks Goal, Objectives and Principles

The goal of the Ontario Parks system is: *To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and to protect significant natural, cultural, and recreational environments in a system of parks.*



Michipicoten Island Michipicoten Post

Figure 1 - Regional Context

Legend

- Town
- Primary Road
- Railway
- Waterbody
- First Nations
- Provincial \ National Park
- Conservation Reserve
- Forest Reserve



10 0 10 Kilometers

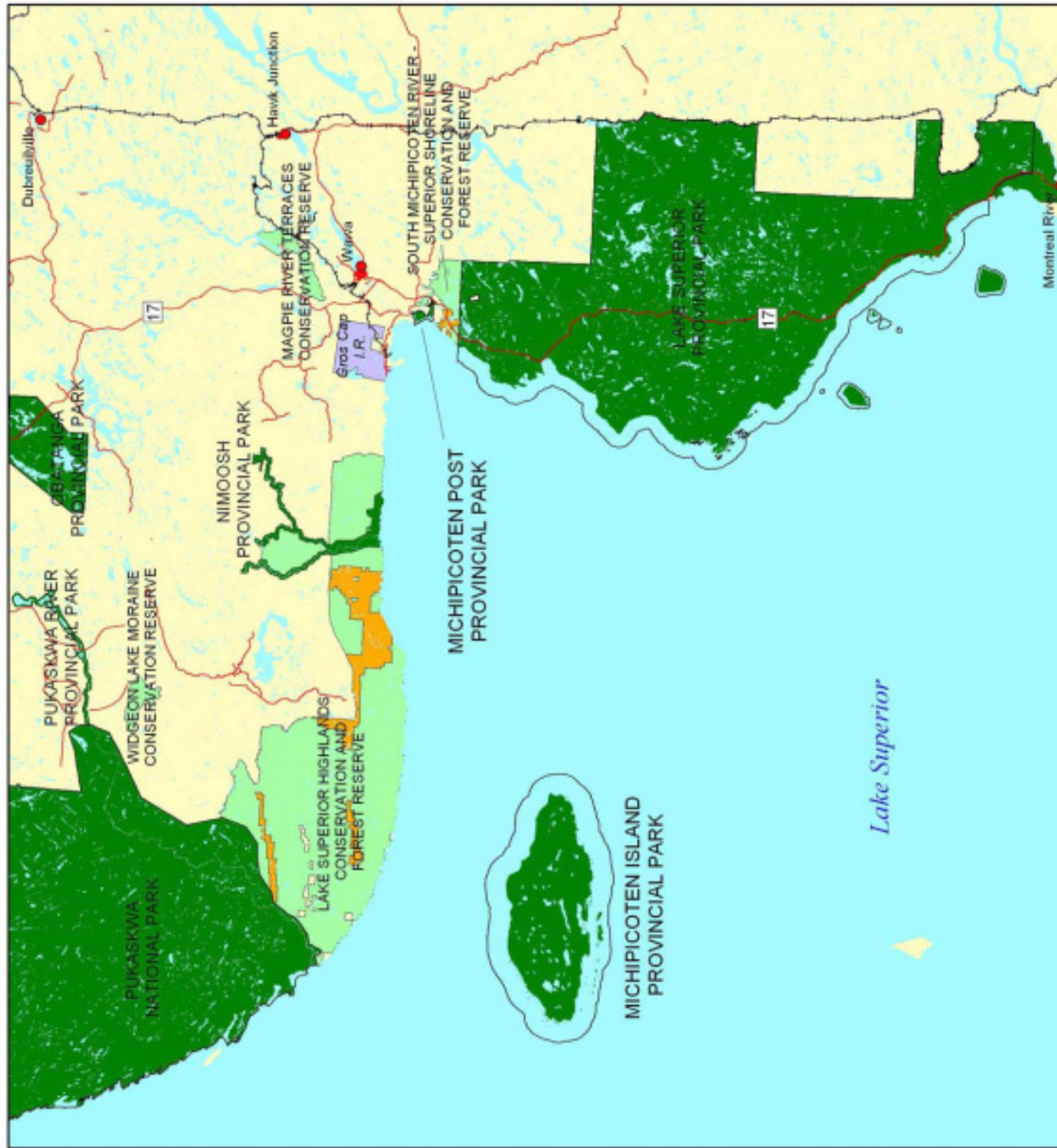
Projection: UTM Zone17 NAD83

DIGITAL DATA SOURCES AND DISCLAIMERS
Base data derived from the Natural Resources and Values Information System (NRVIS) compiled at a scale of 1:20 000.

This map is illustrative only. Do not rely on it as being a precise indicator of routes, locations of features, nor as a guide to navigation.
This map may contain cartographic errors or omissions.

Map Compiled By:
Ontario Parks, Northeast Zone
Ministry of Natural Resources
July 12, 2004

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Four objectives are derived from this goal.

1. **Protection:** *To protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.*
2. **Recreation:** *To provide outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high-intensity day-use to low-intensity wilderness experiences.*
3. **Heritage Appreciation:** *To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.*
4. **Tourism:** *To provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.*

Nine principles guide the management of the Ontario Provincial Park System and contribute to the achievement of the four program objectives.

1. **Permanence:** The provincial park system is dedicated for all time to the present and future generations of the people of Ontario for their healthful enjoyment and appreciation.
2. **Distinctiveness:** Provincial parks provide a distinctive range of quality outdoor recreation experiences, many of which cannot be provided in other types of parks; for example, wilderness travel and appreciation.
3. **Representation:** Provincial parks are established to secure for posterity representative features of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage. Wherever possible, the best representations of our heritage will be included in the park system.
4. **Variety:** The provincial park system provides a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, and protected natural and cultural landscapes and features.
5. **Accessibility:** The benefits of the system will be distributed as widely as possible geographically and as equitably as possible socially so that they are accessible to all Ontario residents.
6. **Co-ordination:** The provincial parks system will be managed to complement, rather than compete with, the private sector and other public agencies.

7. **System:** Individual provincial parks contribute to the overall objectives of the provincial parks system; all objectives may not be met in each park. The park system, rather than the individual parks, provides the diversity of experiences and landscapes that are sought.
8. **Classification:** No individual park can be all things to all people. Park classification organizes Ontario's provincial parks into broad categories, each of which has particular purposes and characteristics as well as distinctive planning, management and visitor services.
9. **Zoning:** Ontario's provincial parks are zoned on the basis of resource significance and recreational potential; various types of zones ensure that users get the most out of individual parks. Planning and management policies appropriate to each zone type are applied consistently throughout the parks system.

1.4 Park Classification and Zoning

No one park can be all things to all people. Therefore, a variety of different parks are provided to achieve the four objectives. Distinctive park environments and recreation experiences are provided through six classes of parks. Each provincial park in Ontario falls into one of these classes.

Wilderness Parks are substantial areas where the forces of nature are permitted to function freely and where visitors travel by non-mechanized means and experience expansive solitude, challenge, and personal integration with nature. Wilderness parks contribute principally to the achievement of protection, recreation, and heritage appreciation.

Nature Reserves are areas selected to represent the distinctive habitats and landforms of the province. They are protected for educational purposes, as gene pools for research to benefit present and future generations and for their intrinsic value to society.

Historical Parks are areas selected to represent the distinctive historical resources of the province in open space settings, and are protected for interpretive, educational and research purposes.

Natural Environment Parks incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and

educational experiences. Natural environment parks contribute to the achievement of all four objectives.

Waterway Parks incorporate outstanding recreational water routes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational opportunities.

Recreation Parks are areas which support a wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities for large numbers of people in attractive surroundings.

Park classification and zoning provide direction for the type and extent of management. Classification is the framework for the types of zones within a park (Table 1). Park zoning permits further refinement in the development of alternatives by setting limits on the range of management activities that can be considered in a park. Prescriptions for activities are described in *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992) and *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (1999). This approach allows for a general consistency across the Ontario Parks system.

Five different types of zones for Michipicoten Post and six different zones for Michipicoten Island can be considered for management planning (Table 1):

Natural Environment (NE) Zones include natural landscapes, which permit the minimum level of development required to support low-intensity recreational activities. Development is limited to backcountry campsites, portages, necessary signs and minimal interpretive facilities.

Development (D) Zones contain areas that support intensive car camping and day-use activities. They constitute a relatively small portion of most parks. Development may include roads, visitor control structures, beaches, picnic areas, car campgrounds, commercial service facilities, and orientation, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities.

Wilderness (WI) Zones include wilderness landscapes of appropriate size and integrity to protect natural and cultural values, and to support extensive types of backcountry recreation, such as canoeing or hiking. Development is limited to wilderness (backcountry) campsites, portages, trails and signs necessary for route identification. Wilderness campsites are accessed by non-

motorized boats (e.g. canoes and kayaks) and by hiking; established at a very low density; and offer primitive levels of facility development (designated fireplaces and pit privies), in keeping with the character of the landscape that the zone protects.

Nature Reserve (NR) Zones protect provincially significant earth and/or life science features within a park in which a minimum of development is permitted. Development is generally restricted to trails, necessary signs, interpretive facilities (where warranted) and temporary research and management facilities.

Historical (H) Zones encompass provincially significant cultural resources. They generally focus on a specific site (e.g. occupation site, building) and that site's relationship to the surrounding landscape, so they may include related lands or water around the main feature. Development is limited to trails, necessary signs, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities and historical restoration or reconstruction where appropriate.

Access (A) Zones serve as staging areas, a means of both providing and regulating use in areas of the park geared towards extensive recreation. Generally, development is limited to roads, visitor control structures and group campgrounds. Provision may be made for limited orientation, interpretive or educational facilities, though generally more for self-use rather than through structured personal service. Limited facilities for research and park management may be present.

Table 1: Zone possibilities by park class

	PARK ZONES					
	NE	D	WI	NR	H	A
PARK CLASS						
Wilderness			*	*	*	*
Nature Reserve				*	*	*
Historical	*	*		*	*	*
Natural Environment	*	*	*	*	*	*
Waterway	*	*	*	*	*	*
Recreation	*	*		*	*	*

Table 2: Potential activities by park zones within historical and natural environment class parks
 (For more details refer to Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1992) and Ontario's Living Legacy Land use Strategy (1999))

ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES	Permitted activities and facilities in parks by zone										
	Historical class parks					Natural Environment class parks					
ZONES	NR	NE	HI	A	D	WI	NR	NE	HI	A	D
All Terrain Vehicles				M ^p	M ^p					M ^p	M ^p
Aircraft Landing:											
Commercial tourism		M		M				M		M	M
Private				M						M	
Boating (power):											
Commercial			M ^a	M	M			M	M ^a	M	M
Private				M	M			M		M	M
Campgrounds:											
Car				M	M					M	Y
Boat-in/walk-in				M	M	M		M		M	M
Group				M	M					M	M
Back-country		M				Y		Y			
Canoeing/kayaking	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Demonstration areas (i.e. logging exhibits, etc)			M ^a						M ^a		M
Hiking	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Historical appreciation – self guided			Y			Y	M	Y	M	M	Y
Horseback riding – trail		M	M ^a	M	M	M		M	M ^a	M	M
Mountain biking – designated trails		M		M	M	M		M		M	M
Nature appreciation – self guided	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Orienteering	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Outfitting services										M	M
Outpost camp (commercial)						M		M			
Painting/photography	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Picnic grounds		Y	M	M	Y				M	Y	Y
Playgrounds		M			M						M
Recreation programs (organized)		M	M ^a		M				M ^a	M	M
Resorts/lodges		M	M ^a		M				M ^a		M
Restaurants		Y	M ^a		Y				M ^a		M
Rock climbing		M		M	M	M		M		M	M
Sailing & Sailboarding	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Y	M	M	Y
Scuba and skin diving	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Cross-country skiing/showshoeing	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y
Snowmobiling		M		M	M			M		M	M
Spelunking (cave exploration)		M		M	M	M		M		M	M
Sport fishing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sport hunting		M ^p						M ^p			

Legend

Y normally encouraged in this zone

M may be encouraged in certain zones where deemed appropriate

blank not compatible with this zone; if now existing, a non conforming use to be phased out

M^a may be encouraged if authentic to the historical zone

M^p may be permitted if supported in management plan

1.5 Developing Management Options

Management options are identified from the assessments of park values. These options must conform to the policy direction, identified in *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992) and *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (1999).

Life science, earth science and cultural and recreational studies provide the assessments of each park's potential to contribute toward the achievement of Ontario Parks' four program objectives.

Management options are proposed based on constraint and capability analysis with consideration for potential issues associated with the parks. Plan options identify activities and zoning (Table 2) to show a variety of alternate management strategies. These reflect different emphasis for the protection of park values while offering a range of recreational uses. Visitor safety is a priority.

Criteria for the identification of specific zones are provided in the *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies* (1992). By defining a zone, certain planning, development and management policies are assumed. The presence or absence of a zone in any park is determined by the philosophy and objectives of that class of park.

Management planning options take into consideration:

- i. Potential benefits and negative impacts on park values, recreation, visitor safety and local socio-economic effects;
- ii. Park policies and guidelines consistent with *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies* (1992) and *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (1999); and,
- iii. The feasibility of proposals in relation to market analysis, resource characteristics, and the costs associated with park management, development and operation.

2.0 Management Options

The following management options discussion addresses a variety of ideas including park zoning and appropriate levels of protection and recreation. These options provide readers an opportunity to evaluate ideas and concerns about

potential management direction. Readers are encouraged to consider the options that are presented under a series of questions about park management with the understanding that each has the potential to influence other management decisions. Zoning, for example, provides predetermined levels for protection and permitted recreation uses. Readers can contribute to the discussion of management direction by identifying their ideas and alternate management options.

2.1 Michipicoten Post Management Options

1. Should the park access road and Driftwood Beach parking lot be upgraded and maintained?

The existing access road into Michipicoten Post Provincial Park is in need of improvement and ongoing maintenance. It extends approximately two kilometres west from the Trans Canada Highway (Highway 17) to the Driftwood Beach parking lot. The road is not regulated as part of the park. It provides access to both the park and to private land. Composed of sand and gravel, this road is susceptible to run off. The road is not maintained during the winter.

Option A Upgrade and maintain the Driftwood Beach parking lot and access road

The Driftwood Beach parking lot and the park's access road would be upgraded and maintained. Driftwood Beach is a popular recreation spot for park users. This option would require a higher level of service for the access road, Driftwood Beach parking lot and Driftwood Beach. The parking lot may also serve as the trailhead for an interpretive trail to the historic trading post site. With improved access, it is recommended that appropriate measures be taken to restrict off road vehicle access to Driftwood Beach and the coastal forest. The uses described in this option are permitted within access or development zones. Maintaining access to the Driftwood Beach parking lot corresponds with the zoning option A1 (Figure 2).

Option B Do not upgrade and maintain the Driftwood Beach parking lot and park access road

The existing road condition does not deter park use. This option does not support improvements to the access road or parking lot. This option would eventually result in unsafe road conditions. Signage would be provided to inform visitors that the road is not maintained. The road would

remain open and park visitors would use the access at their own discretion.

2. Should a parking lot be developed near Highway 17?

People use the park during the winter months for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Park visitors park along Highway 17 as the park's access road is not maintained. Snowmobile use has not been documented within the park.

Option A

Develop a parking lot near Highway 17

A new parking lot would be developed at the eastern limit of the park. Located adjacent to Highway 17 the parking lot would be approximately two kilometres from Driftwood Beach, the high-use area of the park. The parking lot would provide access throughout the year. An access point at this location would provide safe parking during the winter months. The development of a parking lot adjacent to Highway 17 is permitted in an access or development zone. The development of this parking lot corresponds with the zoning option A2 (Figure 2).

Option B

Do not develop a parking lot near Highway 17

This parking lot is not essential for continued use of the park. The parking lot would not provide direct access to Driftwood Beach or the historic trading post.

3. Should a formally recognized access point be provided at the Historic Trading Post?

Michipicoten Post Provincial Park was regulated as an historical park to protect and promote its significant values and features. The park currently has no facilities directed towards visitor education and heritage appreciation.

Option A

Provide a formally recognized access point at the historic trading post

Some visitors currently access the park via the Michipicoten River at the site of the former trading post. As an alternate to vehicle access this option would provide direct access to the former trading post. There are currently no facilities at this location and there is no information identifying the park or its values.

During its time at the Michipicoten Post the Hudson's Bay Company maintained docking facilities along the Michipicoten River. The Michipicoten River and the docking facilities provided the only access for the former post. Docking facilities would improve access and visitor safety and minimize bank erosion along the steep riverbank. The water channel along the post's northern limit is narrow and shallow. Canoes and kayaks and other personal and non-motorized watercraft easily navigate the waterway. Motorized watercraft would need to be operated with care.

The development of a docking (as described above) structure associated with the historic post may be permitted within historical, access or development zones. Establishing a recognized access point at the historic trading post would correspond with the zoning options A3 and H2 (Figure 2).

Option B

Do not provide a formally recognized access point at the historic trading post

Development of a docking facility and increased activity at the former trading post may result in unnecessary degradation of the historic site. Looting of the site is another management concern.

Signage would be provided to ensure park visitors are aware of the provincial park. The information provided should include park rules and regulations.

4. Should an information kiosk be developed within the park?

Michipicoten Post Provincial Park was regulated as an historical park to promote protection and appreciation of values and features associated with Aboriginal use, European exploration and the fur trade. The park currently has no facilities directed towards visitor education and appreciation associated with the site's historical significance.

Option A

Develop an information kiosk within the park

An information kiosk would be developed at one or more of the park's access points. The kiosk would consist of information boards focusing on traditional Aboriginal use of eastern Lake Superior, European exploration of interior Canada and the fur trade, the importance of the Michipicoten Trading Post, and other related themes. An interpretive trail may be developed to

complement the kiosk by providing additional information boards. The trail may be developed to connect the historic post, Driftwood Beach and one or more access points.

The development of the information kiosk (and interpretive trail) is permitted within historical, access or development zones. Interpretive trails are permitted within all zones. The development of an information kiosk would occur at one or more of the proposed access zones (A1 and A2) or at the proposed historical zone encompassing the historic trading post (Figure 2).

Option B

Do not develop an information kiosk within the park

Providing more information about pre-contact and historic values and features would increase awareness of this important aspect of Ontario's cultural heritage. However, providing an information kiosk may increase the incidence of disturbance at the historic site. The kiosk and interpretive trail may increase visitor use of the area and further impact park values and features. Looting of the site is another management concern.

Interpretive facilities could be provided elsewhere, promoting tourism opportunities for local businesses. One such example occurs at the Harry McCluskie Municipal Marina approximately 40 metres across the Michipicoten River from the former post site. There is an under-utilized building at the marina that could provide adequate visitor information services while providing a location to manage water access to the Michipicoten River and the former trading post site or Driftwood Beach. The marina also contains picnicking facilities including a roofed pavilion, which are underused.

5. Should boat-in campsites be developed?

Kayaking and canoeing are becoming more popular on Lake Superior and on the Michipicoten River. There is a limited capacity for shore camping opportunities in Michipicoten Bay. Paddlers often begin and end their trips in this area. Many paddlers travelling along Lake Superior are looking for a place to camp.

Option A

Boat-in camping would be permitted

There is a growing interest in travel along the Lake Superior coastline. Boat-in campsites would provide a destination and relief to those travelling

along Lake Superior and the Michipicoten River. The park would support approximately three boat-in campsites that would be accessible from Lake Superior at the southern end of Driftwood Beach. Camp sites would be located inland from the beach, sheltered in the park's forested area. This option would require the development and continued maintenance of the camping area. Boat-in camping is permitted in access and development zones. This management option corresponds with the zoning option A4 (Figure 2).

Option B

Boat-in camping would not permitted

Campsites would not be established and the park would not provide boat-in camping opportunities. New facilities within the park would compete with local businesses that benefit from providing overnight services for visitors.

6. What zones should be designated within Michipicoten Post Provincial Park?

Michipicoten Post was classified as an historical provincial park with the intention of protecting and promoting its significant cultural values and features. Park zones provide appropriate management direction for park use reflective of the park's significant heritage and recreation potential. Historical provincial parks allow the designation of five zone types (Table 1). The park currently does not have zoning.

The recreational activities that are permitted change with each zone type. Readers are reminded to refer to the permitted activities table (Table 2) when considering zoning options. A map (Figure 2) is provided to illustrate the zoning options. It will allow readers to view the zones in relation to each other and within the context of the overall park. The zoning options presented here for Michipicoten Post Provincial Park include historical, access and natural environment zones.

Historical (H1) Zones

Historical zones in historical parks may permit various recreational activities including canoeing and kayaking, hiking, self-guided historical appreciation, nature appreciation, nature viewing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and sport fishing. Snowmobiling, All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) use, camping and mountain biking would not be permitted in this zone. Two potential historical zones have been identified.

H1-Undesignated park land

The park's land base has experienced a considerable history of Aboriginal and European

habitation and use. The park's historical significance can not be isolated to one particular area of the park. Although the vast majority of activity occurred along the Michipicoten River, other activities in the surrounding areas provided the necessary resources for survival. Therefore, the land that is not designated as any other zone would be designated an historical zone. This zone would exclude all access zones and zones requiring more specific management direction. This zone would permit the development of information kiosks and interpretive trails.

H2-Hudson's Bay Company trading post

An historical zone would be designated at the former trading post. This zone would provide more detailed management for the historic trading post. This zone would permit the development of an information kiosk, docking facilities, and an interpretive trail.

Access (A) Zones

The park is reached by an existing gravel road leading from the Trans Canada Highway and by water from Lake Superior and the Michipicoten River. The park's access road is not currently maintained. This lack of maintenance does not discourage recreation in the park but forces winter users to park along Highway 17. Four potential access zones have been identified.

A1-Driftwood Beach parking lot

This zone would encompass the Driftwood Beach parking lot and a small area for a potential information kiosk. This option would be dependent on the improvement and maintenance of the park's access road. This zone would permit the improvement of the parking lot and the development of an information kiosk. It would provide an access point for Driftwood Beach and the historic trading post with the development of an interpretive trail. This access zone would ensure that visitors entering the park by road are aware of the park and its values.

A2-Park entrance adjacent to Highway 17

This access zone would be located at the road entrance to the park, approximately two kilometres from Driftwood Beach. This zone would permit the development of a parking lot near to Highway 17 at the park's eastern limit. A parking lot at this location would provide easier access to parking during the winter months. This access zone would ensure that visitors entering the park by road are aware of the park and its values.

A3-Historic trading post channel

This zone would encompass the shallow waterway that flows past the northern boundary of

the former trading post. This option would continue to provide park visitors direct access to the historic site from the Michipicoten River. This access zone would permit the development of a floating dock (in association with an information kiosk) and would permit access to the docking facilities by motorized and non-motorized watercraft. This access zone would ensure that visitors entering the park from the river are aware of the park and its values.

A4-South end of Driftwood Beach and the coastal forest

This access zone would be located at the southern end of Driftwood Beach and the coastal forest. This zone would permit boat-in camping and the development of the necessary boat-in campsites.

Natural Environment (NE) Zones

One potential natural environment zone has been identified.










NE1-Lake Superior

This zone would encompass the waters of Lake Superior within 200 metres of Driftwood Beach and the islands located at the south end of the beach. The waters of Lake Superior provide, among other opportunities, access to Driftwood Beach. The activities permitted in this zone will be consistent with those permitted by legislation within the Canadian waters of Lake Superior (i.e. fishing, boating, etc.).



Figure 2 - Zoning

Legend

-  Natural Environment Zone
-  Historical Zone
-  Access Zone
-  Water
-  River / Stream
-  Road
-  Tertiary Road / Trail
-  Township Boundary
-  Harry McCluskie Municipal Marina



200 0 200 400 Meters

Projection: UTM Zone17 NAD83

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Ontario Parks, Northeast Zone
Ministry of Natural Resources
May 3, 2004

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Ontario



2.2 Michipicoten Island Management Options

1. Should a trail system be developed on Michipicoten Island?

Michipicoten Island landbase encompasses a total of 18,400 hectares. The island's intriguing mix of landscapes, lakes, vegetation communities and cultural features could provide countless trail opportunities.

Option A

Develop a trail system on Michipicoten Island

An island wide trail system would combine all of the island's trail opportunities into one proposal. The trail plan would consider options to minimize costs and resources necessary for development and maintenance. This option focuses on providing high quality wilderness experiences.

Park trails would provide opportunities for both day hikes and multiple day excursions. An extensive trail system would require backcountry campsites.

Two trail proposals include a coastal trail and a historical trail associated with the former Quebec Mine. The coastal trail would follow the island's ever-changing shoreline. A second trail would extend from Quebec Harbour to the former Quebec Mine site. This historical trail would follow the former Quebec Mine road.

This option would require site assessments to identify appropriate locations for trail corridors and backcountry campsites. Private land and areas containing significant and sensitive features would be avoided during the establishment of trails and backcountry campsites. Trails and backcountry campsites would require ongoing maintenance.

Hiking trails are permitted in all park zones while backcountry camping is permitted in natural environment and wilderness zones.

Option B

Do not develop a trail system on Michipicoten Island

The park's current level of use is low and does not warrant the creation and maintenance of trails. Providing additional recreation opportunities in the park may increase general park use and reduce the park's sense of wilderness and isolation. Trail development and additional camping opportunities are not necessary.

2. Should a canoe route system be developed within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park?

Lake Superior and the interior lakes of Michipicoten Island provide a variety of recreation opportunities. Park visitors currently travel on Lake Superior exploring the many islands and shorelines within the park. The interior lakes of Michipicoten Island are rarely visited by canoeists. There are currently no formal portage trails or established canoe routes.

Option A

Develop a formal canoe route system within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park

A park wide canoe route system would link the island's interior lakes and Lake Superior. This system would help relieve some of the Lake Superior shoreline pressures and provide high quality wilderness experiences. A canoe route plan would work to minimize costs and resources necessary for development and maintenance.

Park visitors currently circumnavigate Michipicoten Island and camp at various destinations along its shoreline. Private land and provincially significant and sensitive habitats are located all along the shoreline.

A formal canoe route connecting the interior lakes would provide park visitors with an opportunity to explore the interior landscapes of Michipicoten Island. The route would begin with a portage trail connecting Quebec harbour to Channel Lake. The route may extend west to Michi Lake encompassing Cedar Lake and several smaller lakes. This route may be extended further west to connect to Lake Superior. Coldwater Lake may also provide a potential destination for canoeists and would be considered as an eastern extension of the canoe route.

Michipicoten Island's interior lake shorelines and areas along the park's various Lake Superior shorelines have been identified as having provincially significant values and features.

This option requires site assessments to identify the appropriate locations for backcountry campsites and portage trails. Private land and areas containing significant and sensitive features would be avoided during the establishment of portage trails and backcountry campsites. Portage trails and backcountry campsites would require ongoing maintenance.

Canoeing is permitted in all zones while backcountry camping is only permitted within natural environment and wilderness zones.

Option B

Do not develop a formal canoe route system within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park

The interior lake shorelines have been identified as provincially significant and should be protected from the impacts of human activity. Park use does not currently warrant the creation of formal canoe routes and additional canoeing opportunities. Additional recreational opportunities would generate an increase in general park use. Additional use may reduce the visitor's sense of wilderness and isolation and would increase the extent of degradation occurring to the park's values.

3. Should Michipicoten Island Provincial Park permit additional commercial outpost activity?

One commercial outpost camp is currently located on the shore of Michi Lake. Floatplane access occurs on Michi Lake. There is potential for aircraft landing on several other lakes including Channel Lake and Cedar Lake. Aircraft landing associated with commercial tourism may be permitted in natural environment zones.

Option A

Permit additional commercial outpost activity

Some of the island's interior lakes could support additional commercial outpost use, either as an expansion of what exists or as new operations. Channel, Cedar, Coldwater, Triangle and Curtis Lakes are large enough for the safe operation of floatplane aircraft. A study is needed to determine how much and where additional outpost activity may be permitted on interior lakes. Commercial outposts are permitted within natural environment and wilderness zones. Aircraft landing is only permitted within natural environment, access and development zones.

Option B

Do not permit additional commercial outpost activity

Although other interior lakes provide potential for sport fishing, the wilderness characteristic of the park may be compromised with an increased incidence of aircraft around the park and a greater number of park visitors in the island's interior. Therefore new outpost operations would not be permitted within the interior lakes of the park.

4. What zones should be designated within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park?

The park currently does not have zoning. Natural environment class parks have the potential for six park zones (Table 1.). Table 2 identifies a list of recreational opportunities provided by each zone. Zoning will provide the most appropriate management direction for park use reflective of the park's significant values and recreation potential. Two options are provided with contrasting management perspectives. One option presents a protective management approach while the other has a recreation based objective. Each option is accompanied by a map. These maps will allow readers to see how the various zones can fit together within the context of the overall park.

Option A

This option would have a recreation-based objective. Figure 3 provides a map to accompany this option.

Natural Environment (NE) Zones

One potential natural environment zone has been identified.

NE1-Michipicoten Island and surrounding islands

As a natural environment park, land that is not designated as any other zone would be designated a natural environment zone. All of the recreation opportunities provided by the park are permitted within natural environment zones. NE zones also permit recreation that does not presently occur on Michipicoten Island such as snowmobiling and mountain biking. As these activities are unlikely to occur, and would potentially affect natural values and features this zone would not accommodate them.

Access (A) Zones

Access to the park is highly dependent on the weather on Lake Superior. The conditions on the lake are quite dynamic and can change dramatically from one hour to the next. One or more access points providing minor camping facilities and protection from stormy conditions is important. A designated camping area(s) would minimize visitor impact on privately owned land and on the parks significant and sensitive landscapes and features. Popular access points to the park are located on privately or federally owned land. The development of access facilities would be reviewed as the appropriate land and funding become available. One potential access zone has been identified.

A1-Lake Superior

This zone would encompass the waters of Lake Superior within two and one half kilometres of Michipicoten Island. The waters of Lake Superior allow park visitors to explore and access the various islands and shorelines within the park. The activities permitted in this zone would be consistent with those permitted by legislation within the Canadian waters of Lake Superior (i.e. fishing, boating, etc.).

Development (D) Zones

There would be no development zones within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park. Orientation, interpretive and educational facilities may be permitted within access and historical zones. If deemed appropriate, camping facilities may be permitted within an access zone. Development zones are not considered appropriate for the park.

Historical (HI) Zones

This option would not support the designation of an historical zone.

Nature Reserve (NR) Zones

The park is home to a variety of significant features (please refer to the *Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Background Information* document for more information). Provincially and regionally significant species are located all over the island including areas that are popular for recreating. Following the recommendations of life science inventories, the significant natural heritage areas identified on the island should be classified as nature reserve zones. Four potential nature reserve zones have been identified.

NR1-Interior island sugar maple forest

This zone would protect a representative portion of the parks provincially significant sugar maple forests and inland lake shorelines. Aircraft landing, motorized boating and backcountry camping are not permitted activities within nature reserve zones.

NR2-Interior lakes of Michipicoten Island

Select interior lakes would be designated nature reserve zones. These lakes are difficult to access. The interior lake shorelines have been identified as provincially significant and would be protected. Aircraft landing, motorized boating and backcountry camping are not permitted within nature reserve zones.

NR3-Quebec Harbour wetland complex

This zone would protect the wetland complex that extends east from Quebec harbour.

NR4-Sand beach communities and paleobeach complex

This zone would protect several significant features that have been identified along Michipicoten Island's shoreline. The sandy beaches are popular recreation destinations for park visitors.

Backcountry camping, boat-in camping and walk-in camping are not permitted in nature reserve zones.

Option B

This option has a more protective management objective. Figure 4 provides a map to accompany this option.

Natural Environment (NE) Zones

Two potential natural environment zones have been identified.

NE1-Michi Lake and Picoten Lake

This zone is different than *Option A* as it does not encompass the majority of the island. This option would encompass Michi Lake and Picoten Lake. This option may permit aircraft landing and the use of motorized boats on these interior lakes.

NE2-Lake Superior

This natural environment zone replaces the access zone **A1** of *Option A*. The activities permitted in this zone would be consistent with those permitted by legislation within the Canadian waters of Lake Superior (i.e. fishing, boating, etc.).

Different from the access zone **A1**, this natural environment zone would not permit the development of new dock structures. This zone would permit the replacement and improvement of existing dock structures.

Wilderness (W) Zones

One potential wilderness zone would be identified.

W11-Michipicoten Island and Surrounding Islands

This zone would replace the natural environment zone from *Option A*. It would encompass all the areas that are designated as any other zone. Wilderness zoning provides an appropriate representation of the parks wilderness character. Backcountry, boat-in and walk-in camping are permitted within wilderness zones. Aircraft landing and motorized boating are not permitted within this zone.

Access (A) Zones

Access to the park is highly dependent on the weather on Lake Superior. The conditions on the

lake are quite dynamic and can change dramatically from one hour to the next. One or more access points providing minor camping facilities and protection from stormy conditions is important. A designated camping area would minimize visitor impact on the privately owned land within the park. Popular access points to the park are located on privately or federally owned land. The development of access facilities would be considered as the appropriate land and funding become available. There are no access zones identified within *Option A*.

Development (D) Zones

There would be no development zones within Michipicoten Island Provincial Park. Orientation, interpretive and educational facilities may be permitted within access and historical zones. If deemed appropriate, camping facilities may be permitted within an access zone. Development zones are not considered appropriate for the park.

Historical (HI) Zones

One potential historical zone would be identified.

HI1-Quebec Mine site

This zone would encompass the former Quebec Mine site. The Quebec Mine was the longest operating mine on the island. It supported a mining community that grew to a population of 150 to 200 at its peak in the early 1880s (Whyte, 2001). Backcountry camping and cave exploration are not permitted within historic zones.

Nature Reserve (NR) Zones

The park is home to a variety of significant features (please refer to the *Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Background Information* document for more information). Provincially and regionally significant species are located all over the island including areas that are popular for recreating. Following the recommendations of life science inventories, the significant areas identified on the island should be classified as nature reserve zones. Four potential nature reserve zones have been identified.

NR1-Interior island sugar maple forest

This zone would be an extended version of **NR1** from *Option A*. It would extend to the island's north shore and from Cedar Lake to Picoten Lake. This zone would protect more of the Island's sugar maple forests and inland lakes (and shoreline communities) and a large section of the island's northern escarpment. Backcountry camping is not a permitted activity within nature reserve zones.

NR2-Interior lakes of Michipicoten Island

This zone would be the same as **NR2** from *Option A*.

NR3-Quebec Harbour wetland complex

This zone would be the same as **NR3** from *Option A*.

NR4-Sand beach communities and paleobeach complex

This zone would be the same as **NR4** from *Option A*.

5. Visitor safety

The abandoned Quebec Mine site requires considerable clean up. Old and rusted mining equipment and dilapidated mining infrastructure marks the location of the mine site. Various mineshafts are located around the northern and western shores of the island and pose a safety risk to visitors who explore those areas. These mine shafts need to be filled in or have sufficient closure and signage to warn visitors of potential hazards.

3.0 Your Personal Invitation.....

As someone with an interest in the long-term management of Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Provincial Parks, you are invited to participate in the management planning for these parks. We hope that the Management Options presented in this document have enhanced your understanding of the resources and land uses and the choices that need to be made to make decisions on the management of these parks. We welcome any comments, concerns or suggestions you might have regarding the contents of this document. Please take a few moments to fill out the comment form and return it to the Northeast Zone office.

Please direct all questions and comments to:

Mike Pym
Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island
Management Planning
Ontario Parks
199 Larch St., Suite 404
Sudbury, ON
P3C 2A7
Tel: (705) 564 3165
Fax: (705) 564 3171



Michipicoten Island

Figure 3 - Zoning Option A

Legend

- Natural Environment Zone
- Nature Reserve Zone
- Access Zone
- Non-Parkland
- Water
- River / Stream
- Abandoned Mine Site



1 0 1 2 3 4 Kilometers

Projection: UTM Zone17 NAD83

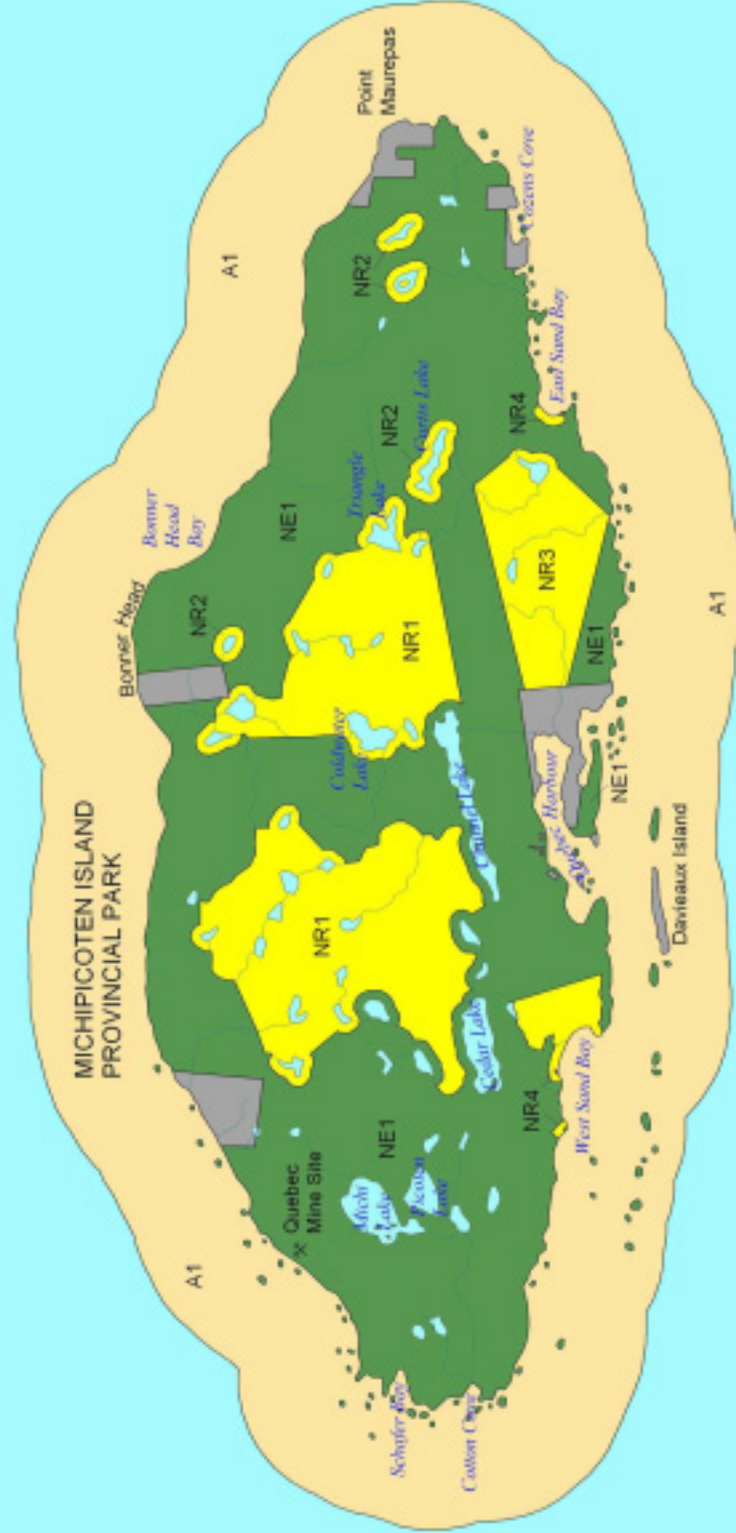
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Ministry of Natural Resources
May 3, 2004

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Lake Superior



Michipicoten Island

Figure 4 - Zoning Option B

Legend

- Natural Environment Zone
- Nature Reserve Zone
- Historical Zone
- Wilderness Zone
- Access Zone
- Non-Parkland
- Water
- River / Stream
- Abandoned Mine Site



1 0 1 2 3 4 Kilometers

Projection: UTM Zone17 NAD83

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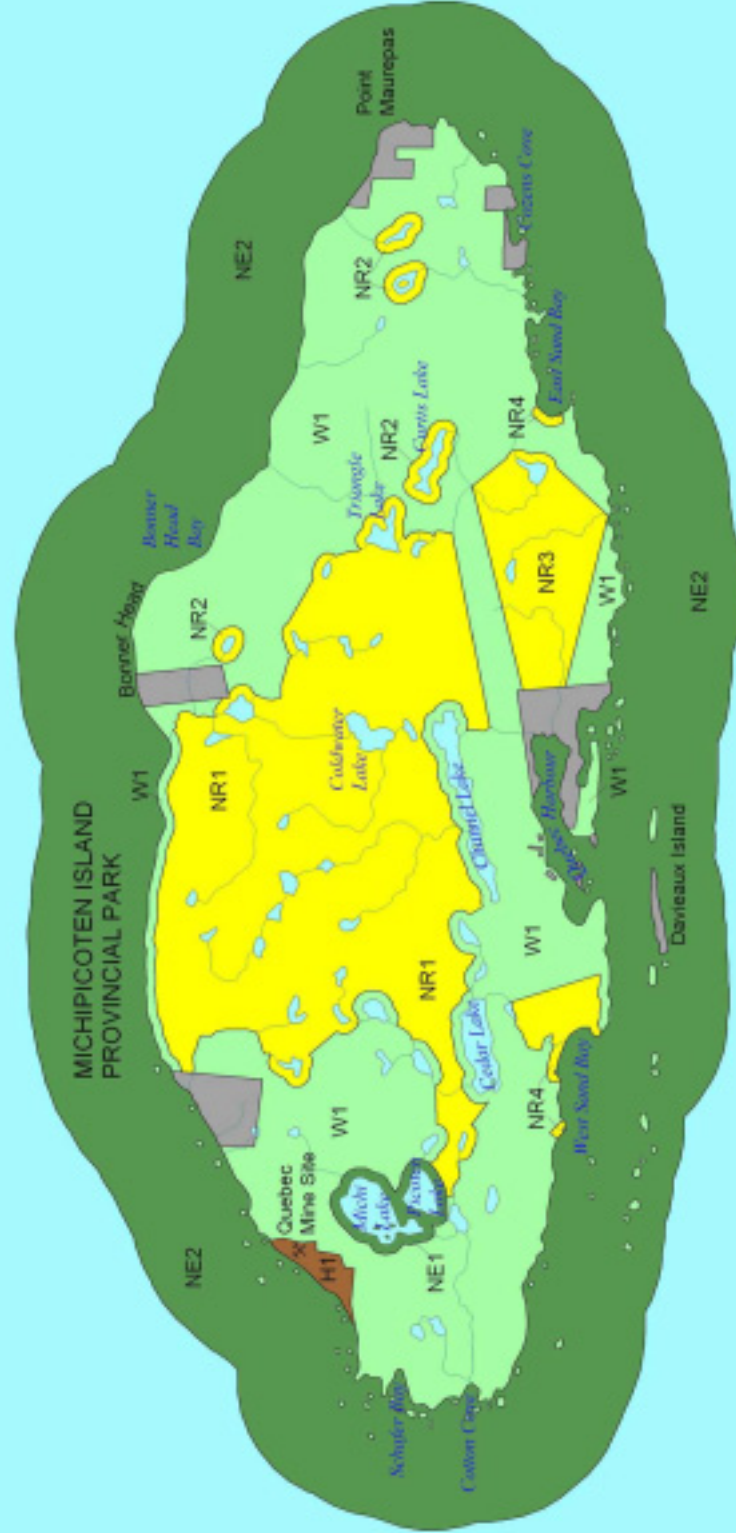
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May 3, 2004

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Lake Superior

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Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Management Options

Please direct questions and comments to:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone # : _____

Please send future correspondence in English.

Comments (if possible, please refer to a specific part of the document you wish to comment on):

[illegible]

Note: The Ministry of Natural Resources is collecting comments and information regarding the *Michipicoten Post and Michipicoten Island Management Options* document under the authority of the *Provincial Parks Act* to assist in making decisions and determining further public consultation needs. Comments and opinions will be kept on file for use during the planning period and may be included in study documentation, which may be available for public review.

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1987)*, personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent is obtained. However, this information may also be used by the Ministry of Natural Resources to seek public input on other resource management surveys and projects. For further information on this Act, please contact: Carole Trepanier, Sudbury District MNR at: 705-564-7488.

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