

Caring for Eeyou Istchee

**PROTECTED AREA CREATION
ON WEMINDJI CREE TERRITORY**

EDITED BY

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Introduction

RODNEY MARK, MONICA E. MULRENNAN,
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The history of protected area creation in Canada, as in other settler states,¹ has deep colonial roots. Early protected area policies routinely dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their lands, which resulted in widespread suffering and lasting distrust of government land management efforts (Colchester 2004). In recent decades, increased attention to social justice and Indigenous rights and a rethinking of environmental protection approaches have supported a new paradigm of conservation based on greater collaboration with Indigenous peoples and international recognition of their rights (Stevens 2014). However, translating this paradigm into meaningful action has been difficult and uneven. Too often, policy-makers have characterized Indigenous people as stakeholders rather than primary rights-holders. As stakeholders, they must compete with other more powerful interests to have their voices heard and to participate in defining the terms of environmental protection and development on their own lands.

This volume arises from the extraordinary experience of one particular Indigenous community, the Cree Nation of Wemindji, located in Eeyou Istchee (which translates as “the land of the people” and refers to the homeland of the Crees of northern Quebec) on the eastern shore of James Bay. But since “Eeyou” applies not only to Crees or other human beings, but to living beings in general, Eeyou Istchee also connotes “the living land.” Wemindji Eeyouch have established a protected area on their traditional territory that is defined by their priorities,² and they have done so in the context of state-supported, industrial-scale resource extraction on other

parts of their territory. Wemindji Eeyouch are no strangers to development, having seen extensive portions of their inland territory altered since the 1970s by the James Bay hydro-electric project and the construction of ancillary infrastructure such as roads and power lines. In the early 2000s, a new wave of development in the form of mining exploration raised the prospect of further threats to the ecological integrity of their territory. In response, community leaders articulated a vision of the future, featuring enhanced authority for decisions that affected their lives, to support their long-held responsibilities as stewards of their lands and waters.

The challenges that Wemindji Eeyouch confronted almost fifty years ago, and still grapple with today, mirror the complex and intractable challenges faced by many Indigenous communities. They must find a balance between protecting traditional territory and ensuring that hunting, fishing, and trapping remain a vibrant and viable way of life, while negotiating the terms of industrial-scale development on their territory and guiding community-based development to provide jobs and entrepreneurial possibilities for their youth. In search of solutions and seeking strategies for environmental and cultural heritage protection, Wemindji Eeyouch formed a partnership with a team of university researchers, which became known as the Wemindji Protected Areas Project. Partners agreed to prioritize local institutions of land and sea tenure, traditional authority in environmental stewardship, ecological and cultural knowledge, and environmental ethics.

Wemindji's achievements in creating a protected area, and thereby gaining some control over its lands, helped to motivate the regional Cree government to establish the Eeyou Protected Areas Committee, out of which emerged the Cree Regional Conservation Strategy (Cree Nation Government 2014). Recently, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognized the Cree Nation Government's innovative approach to protected area creation and welcomed it as a new member.

There have been obstacles, confrontations, and compromises along the way – but Wemindji Eeyouch have negotiated benefits from development even as they steadily increased the percentage of their territory that is off-limits to high-impact forms of industrial resource extraction. Yet they have continued to cultivate positive relations with development companies on certain parts of their territory. In these efforts, Wemindji provides

a source of inspiration for other Indigenous communities, most especially in achieving some balance between development and environmental protection. Wemindji Eeyouch have also demonstrated the potential of protected areas as a political strategy that redefines relations with government in terms of a shared responsibility to care for land and sea.

This book is one of two that emerged from the research conducted as part of the Wemindji Protected Areas Project. Its focus is on environmental protection in Wemindji territory. The second volume, which is still in development, is dedicated to the exchange of knowledge across cultures: hunters and scientists, local people and academics, northerners and urban southerners, First Nations and settlers.

Rodney Mark, co-author of this chapter, played an essential role as a leader of the Wemindji Protected Areas Project. Chief of the Cree Nation of Wemindji during the project's first six years, he then became deputy grand chief of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) until 2017. His reflections, which he shares below, show a profound understanding of local needs and aspirations, as well as a deep commitment to Eeyou values that support caring for the entirety of lands, waters, humans, and non-human beings that make up and inhabit Wemindji territory. His account also speaks to the resilience of Wemindji Eeyouch, although Rodney prefers to frame this in relation to "tradition." For him, a "traditional way of life" refers to a way of being on the land that relies mainly on hunting, trapping, and fishing. Sustaining it depends on the inter-generational transmission and adaptation of knowledge, sometimes referred to as traditional knowledge. "Traditional" in this sense does not mean old or no longer relevant. Rather, it is about adjusting to new conditions, changing with the times, keeping what is meaningful, and innovating as required. Thus, the traditional way of life on the land has changed profoundly over the centuries, but its vibrancy and relevance remain undiminished.

A WEMINDJI EYYOU PERSPECTIVE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: REFLECTIONS FROM RODNEY MARK

The real challenge in protecting and preserving a Cree traditional way of life is to ensure that lands and waters are available for that purpose. This requires a balanced and flexible approach to development in our territory while seeking to ensure that land users are comfortable and unhindered

in their hunting, fishing, and trapping practices. Today, those who spend most of their time living on the land see the economic potential of natural resource development in the territory. However, they feel strongly – with community support – that this development should not compromise a traditional way of life that is centred on hunting, fishing, and trapping. At the same time, they are well aware of the importance of optimizing benefits for the community and its young people in terms of quality of life. This means finding satisfying work without moving away from family and community, as well as not having to compromise on opportunities for training and advancement. The approach is flexible, but concern for the long-term impacts of development on the environment and its effects on the hunting way of life runs very deep. The bush, the coast, and the off-shore are vital resources for traditional land users and animals alike; this co-existence is essential for the survival of both.

Also, for all of us, our understanding of who we are in the world, and our place in the world, informs and motivates us. Our goal and fundamental interest in protecting a certain amount of Wemindji territory is about defending our concept of the world as a network of relations between all living things. Protecting the environment is about protecting the animals, a way of life, and all that nature gives. In our understanding and experience, environment (the land and water) is a living being that we are part of, and it is part of us. Animals and the environment, participating in each other's worlds, in the whole network of relationships of mutual respect and action, are the essence of a traditional way of life. Living well as part of that total community is our ultimate aspiration.

The parts of our territory that we prioritize for protection have historical importance to our communities and our families. There are stories in the land that are stories about us, about where we came from, and where we go from here. A culture that is evolving has a living connection from its past to its present. For us, continuity lies in recognizing the value of life and all living things, so what is called “culture” includes *all* the living things of the land that we protect. Our responsibility remains for all of our lands and waters – not just those that might some day be designated protected areas by provincial or federal governments.

The establishment of state-recognized protected areas is one strategy among many in a proactive approach to nurturing our way of life and the

relationships with the land that it depends upon. Family hunting territories are everywhere on our traditional lands and waters. There is no place that does not come under the authority and stewardship of our *nituuuu uchimaauuch* (traditional hunting territory leaders). We do not intend to ignore Cree responsibility for our entire territory, and we will continue to seek the best means to care for all of it. We already have some useful tools. Our hunting territories and the authority of our *nituuuu uchimaauuch* are recognized under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA). Together with other Cree communities in the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), we have co-management authority for wildlife everywhere on our territory. We also have co-management authority in environmental impact assessment procedures everywhere in our territory. We recognize that we need to avail ourselves of these to help mitigate the negative impacts of development. At the same time, we are experimenting with various technologies, such as hand-held tracking devices and satellite imagery, to enhance our own capacity as “the eyes and ears” of Eeyou Istchee (for details, see Brammer et al. 2016). The Grand Council of the Crees is also negotiating with provincial and federal governments to assert our self-government authority everywhere within our land and sea territory.

How we see ourselves as a Cree nation is reflected in the words “Eeyou Istchee,” which refer to the territory represented by the Grand Council of the Crees in our dealings with federal and provincial governments, and with other entities in Canada and abroad. Simply translated, “Eeyou Istchee” means “Cree land,” but at a deeper level, it declares awareness of our cultural self. We use the word “Eeyou” to distinguish Crees from other Indigenous peoples. But it also distinguishes Indigenous people in general from non-Indigenous people and humans in general from animals and other living things. At the broadest level, it embraces all living beings – all being is living in some way. So who we are, as Crees, as Eeyou, is nested within the more and more inclusive connections that make up the living world. “Istchee,” which focuses on the idea of land, has a similar extension of meanings. It can mean the living soil, the moss that is the ground in our forests, but it also refers to a Cree family hunting territory. At the broadest level, it encompasses the living world. So, ultimately, Eeyou and Istchee are one and the same. This is what our elders have shown us, and that is how we call ourselves and our land.

We (Wemindji Eeyouch) will develop protected areas, in co-operation with provincial and federal governments, in ways that respect and defend this outlook, which makes our lands and waters available for our children and grandchildren forever so they can experience as real our Cree values that sustain stewardship of land and sea and all the living things that comprise them. At the same time, we acknowledge that we have a responsibility to develop pathways between the experience of the bush and the outlook that requires, and the realities of village life and life in the wider society.

The elders tell us always that we must have balance to have a good life. People want jobs, but they want to live in the bush too. How to achieve balance, then, becomes key. Some of our children will have more opportunities than others to live in hunting and fishing camps, and to experience certain aspects of life on the land. We must not imagine that we can replace time lived on the land, but we can communicate and complement the knowledge of our people on the land by experimenting with new media and innovative modes of documentation and presentation. We are in the process of developing a Wemindji Eeyou knowledge center that provides an interactive virtual landscape of our territory so that the place names and the stories that go with those places can be enjoyed and assimilated by all Crees. The centre will also be a site for communicating our expanding knowledge of the archaeological record. As a research centre, it can support ongoing studies of recent and natural histories of our territory in partnership with researchers from McGill and Concordia, as well as elsewhere. Language teaching and research, cultural programming, mapping, and a library will also have a home there.

We intend that Wemindji's protected area network, our knowledge centre, a public website, and various cultural and ecological tourism ventures under development will together enable us to communicate our knowledge and experience to the wider world. We, the Cree people, have never sought to isolate ourselves, and we do not believe that our situation is unique. Relationship and respect are the basis for addressing social and ecological challenges everywhere. The promotion and protection of culture, and the promotion and protection of our ecological heritage, are one. Whereas Western notions of protection are centred on protecting the land for human good and preserving it by excluding or limiting human disturbance, the Cree view moves toward resolving the tension between

these two. That is, we see humans as part of the larger community of life and believe that each form of life has its own, equally essential, role in that community. In short, we're all in it together. We are talking, then, about caring for the whole community of life in Eeyou Istchee. This includes Cree land-based livelihoods and traditional activities, Cree knowledge, and the renewal of Cree knowledge by maintaining these connections.

**AA WIICHAAUTUIHKW: PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION
AND PROTECTED AREA CREATION**

Rodney's perspective provided a guiding spirit for the protected area project and the research that supported it. Our Cree colleague Dorothy Stewart used the Cree word "*aa wiichaautuihkw*," which can be translated as "they are coming together to walk together," to describe our partnership at the beginning of this journey. The word evokes the priority given to the relational aspects of our partnership since 2001, when our project began. As we look back over almost two decades of working together, we recognize the significance of our partnership in advancing Wemindji's approach to balancing development and environmental protection. Partnerships are what make things happen, and the relationships developed are sustained over decades.

The initial impetus for creating a protected area was very much a coming together of ideas. In July 2000, as Colin Scott and Peter Brown of McGill University took a canoe trip down the magnificent Paakumshumwaash-tikw (Old Factory River), they discussed the need to protect it. When they reached Wemindji village, they met up with Deputy Chief Rodney Mark, who had also been thinking about ways to protect the river's cultural, historical, and ecological values. Rodney's concerns were tied to his involvement in an annual canoe expedition on the river for Cree youth and to a growing sense of apprehension in the community regarding the proliferation of mining claims in the region. Next, Colin, Peter, and Rodney raised the possibility of protecting the Paakumshumwaau-Maatuskaau watersheds, speaking informally with local leaders and families whose hunting territories were directly threatened. More formal discussions with Wemindji Band Council members and other locals soon followed. With strong support for the idea, the next move was to build a research partnership. Rodney recalls contacting Colin. They talked and exchanged

ideas. According to Rodney, “I think he was thinking about building a protected area, and we were kind of thinking the same thing, and it kind of just fell into place. That made this partnership really successful because we were kind of independent, but we were interdependent at the same time. We complemented each other’s objectives, and that added value to both parties.”³

The first steps in conducting research for the project took place during the summers of 2003, 2004, and 2005, as part of a McGill School of Environment undergraduate field course led by Colin Scott. Student efforts were directed toward gaining an understanding of community needs and issues, and conducting preliminary field survey work. A significant contribution of the latter was basic mapping of biodiversity and other features of the traditional territory that community members identified as important. The contributions of the nituuhuu uchimaach, as well as expert guides and mentors Leonard and Ronnie Asquabaneskum, Dorothy Stewart, Abel Visitor, and Freddie Atsynia, were particularly valuable in this regard. During these years, Clara Stewart, Fred Stewart, Elmer Visitor, and the Asquabaneskum family worked with Véronique Bussièrès, a master’s student at Concordia University at the time, to document stories and place names in the Paakumshumwaa area (Bussièrès 2005; Chapter 10, this volume). These early projects built on the more sustained research engagements of Wemindji Eeyouch with Colin Scott and Monica Mulrennan, of Concordia University’s Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, that enabled community members to weigh the possible benefits and impacts of an expanded research partnership (for a comprehensive account of the partnership, see Mulrennan, Mark, and Scott 2012).

A trans-disciplinary team of ten co-investigators from the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities joined the project in 2005. Daisy Atsynia, Fred Blackned, Leslie and Lot Kakabat, Beverly Mayappo, and Fred, Henry, and George Stewart, as well as various family members and many other residents, including administrative staff for the Cree Nation of Wemindji, joined as expert knowledge holders who could guide the research agenda. Many of the two dozen graduate students made significant contributions to both the research and this volume. A few of them, such as Véronique Bussièrès, Claude Péloquin, Jesse Sayles, and Katherine Scott, who also served as project administrator, worked with us after early

undergraduate field courses and continued through to master's and doctoral studies. Dorothy Stewart, whose family hunting territories are in the Paakumshumwaa-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve, also helped shape the project and became an invaluable liaison as translator, interpreter, and cross-cultural adviser.

The research partnership, which followed the principles of community-based participatory research through all its stages (see Mulrennan, Mark, and Scott 2012), was intended to achieve a cross-fertilization of Indigenous and academic perspectives that would yield detailed knowledge of local ecology and innovative approaches to environmental protection and cultural survival. According to Rodney,

It really validated the hunters' and land users' claims when the scientists basically made the same observations and correlated them back with the trappers' knowledge. To me, that was such a good thing for the trappers and land users. And I want to make sure that we use the protected areas to help get access to further research funds and that all these other things put together add value to Cree knowledge. I think that is basically the biggest goal I have for this project.⁴

Collaborative work presents challenges and opportunities for both communities and researchers, since there are many unknowns from the start. Participants must adapt to working with unfamiliar people and experiment with new ways of working. In the process, one can feel that the experience is much like skating on very thin ice. The outcomes of our work were valued in various ways, but the partners generally agree that the experience was mutually beneficial. Of most immediate value to the community, of course, are the tangible outcomes: the biodiversity reserve itself and the potential for creating the Tawich (Marine) Conservation Area. For the academic partners (as well as some community members), this book is a meaningful result of the partnership, as are the twenty related theses and dozens of papers, reports, and presentations that preceded it.

It is clear to all of us that the most satisfying results are the rich and mutually beneficial engagements and long-term friendships that persist to this day. New projects and new research partnerships continue to grow from the relationships that created this volume, such as the team working

on the community's new cultural learning centre and several recent master's and doctoral research projects. Many members of our team feel strongly that a research partnership does not terminate when the funding for a particular project runs out.

WEMINDJI IN REGIONAL CONTEXT

Wemindji is located on the east coast of James Bay, northern Quebec, and is one of ten Cree First Nations in Eeyou Istchee (Figure 0.1). The village site of Wemindji, formerly known as Paint Hills, was established in 1959 at the mouth of the Maquatua River (Mwaakutwaashtihk), following the relocation of the community from Old Factory Bay, fifty kilometres to the south. Wemindji's traditional territory consists of twenty-one family hunting areas bounded by latitudes 52°30'N and 53°10'N and extending inland about three hundred kilometres. The community has a population of 1,444 (Statistics Canada 2017) and a mixed economy comprising formal wage-labour, income subsidies, and subsistence harvesting (Scott 1988, 1996).

Although this volume focuses on the Cree Nation of Wemindji, the community is closely tied through historical and kinship connections to other Cree groups, particularly the neighbouring Cree nations of Chisasibi to the north and Eastmain to the south. Wemindji, which has one-third the population of Chisasibi and twice that of Eastmain, fared comparatively better in terms of the impact from the James Bay hydro-electric project. What is now the Cree community of Chisasibi, located on the island of Fort George at the mouth of the La Grand River, suffered major disruptions during the late 1970s. It was forced to move from Fort George to the present site due to the dramatically increased flow of the La Grande River and the construction of reservoirs and power stations upstream. Eastmain was heavily affected by the massive flooding that occurred when the Eastmain and Opinaca Rivers were diverted and by the lack of provision for flow maintenance. The Eastmain diversion flowed through Wemindji territory en route to the La Grande Complex via Sakami Lake, flooding portions of inland hunting territories but leaving coastal hunting territories untouched (Alan Penn, pers. comm., October 25, 2017). Nevertheless, the majority of Wemindji's hunting territories were directly affected by reservoirs and river diversions.

FIGURE 0.1 Wemindji Cree family hunting territories and the Paakumshumwaaui-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve



Source: Adapted from a map drawn by Gwilym Eades.

The implementation of the JBNQA in 1975, arising from the James Bay Project, established a host of regional-level provisions that addressed differing categories of land (in relation to landownership, Cree harvesting rights, and provincial rights to develop), economic and financial compensation, environmental protections, and Cree institutions responsible for education, health and social services, and local government. Wemindji's status as a beneficiary of the JBNQA means that it is very much part of a regional Cree political society and the increasingly complex institutional landscape that supports it. This involves working with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, which has a complex social and political agenda at the regional level, shaped by recent governance agreements between the Cree Nation and both Quebec and Canada. This institutional context is relevant to an appreciation of the dynamics between Cree communities and the regional nation, including their shared interests in economic development and environmental protection (Alan Penn, pers. comm., October 25, 2017). Indeed, the fact that Rodney Mark became vice-chair of the Cree Nation Government and deputy grand chief of the Grand Council of the Crees after having served as chief of Wemindji reflects the linkages across various levels of Cree governance.

In October 2015, the Cree Nation Government launched the Cree Regional Conservation Strategy as a framework for the co-ordination of Cree engagement in conservation and protected areas planning. The strategy recognizes community-led initiatives supported at the level of the family hunting territory – such as the Paakumshumwaaui-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve – “as the building blocks of a regional conservation areas network” (Cree Nation Government 2014, 11). Co-ordination at the regional-planning scale is intended to ensure that the network takes account of ecosystem processes and ecological connectivity issues as well as the knowledge, circumstances, and priorities of hunting territories and communities (Cree Nation Government 2014, 11). Speaking of his commitment to Lake Bienville (Apishukimimiish) on his home territory of Whapmagoostui, some five hundred kilometres north of Wemindji, Cree elder Andrew Kawapit described the wider context and growing interest in Eeyou Istchee for the creation of protected areas at a public consultation

meeting on June 17, 2014 (the following quotation, translated by George Masty at the public meeting, refers to Kawapit as “he”):

He is talking about certain areas for the Cree that have always been important ... We have a special relation with Lake Bienville. He and his brother grew up there and that’s why they still spend time there. They have a relationship with this place and are still most comfortable being there. When you have a special relation with the land, you know that the place can be wounded. He wishes that we do not wound these special places any further. And if we do have developments, then he hopes that the developers are careful of certain areas that must be left undisturbed. This is how they must look at the land. About the land, he is aware, as are many of the elders, that when the land is changed, the animals are affected too ... If something happens to it, we are disturbed too. (Andrew Kawapit, public meeting of community consultations on the Eeyou Marine Region Agreement, Whapmagoostui, June 17, 2014.)

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE VOLUME

The chapters in this book address several major questions, some of which we’ve mentioned above: What do we mean by environmental protection in the Wemindji Eeyou context? What values, interests, and knowledge enter into advocating or opposing particular visions and projects of environmental protection? What is being protected? How does our understanding of the natural and cultural history of the area inform the design and purpose of environmental protection? What kind of protection is appropriate and worthwhile, and what compromises or trade-offs impinge on environmental protection?

This volume is divided into three parts. The chapters in “Part 1: Context” attempt to situate environmental protection in relation to the politics and power dynamics of Indigenous ecological knowledge, the shifting political landscape of protected areas in relation to northern Indigenous groups, and the legacy of early scientific studies in the James Bay area. “Part 2: What to Protect” examines changes over time in the community of life, both human and non-human, that makes up the Paakumshumwaau-Maatuskaau watersheds and the adjacent offshore. “Part 3: How to Protect”

concentrates on the efforts to safeguard the ecological and cultural heritage of the Wemindji area while also exploring options for a balance between large-scale development (specifically mining) and environmental protection.

Part 1 opens with a chapter from Monica Mulrennan and Fikret Berkes, who trace the history of dispossession and marginalization associated with early parks and protected areas, and identify relatively recent efforts to accommodate Indigenous rights and interests in protected areas. Particular attention is given to an emergent trend among many northern Indigenous groups, who (like the Cree Nation of Wemindji) have declared an interest in establishing protected areas as an element of their own governance strategies. The authors explore the thinking behind this phenomenon and identify opportunities and constraints that protected areas offer in a context of relentless expansion of northern resource extraction on Indigenous lands.

In Chapter 2, Wren Nasr and Colin Scott examine the political dimensions of Indigenous ecological knowledge in protected area creation and cultural continuity. They observe asymmetries of power in representation and knowledge production that have underpinned both historical and contemporary resource development and environmental protection projects. Crees, however, have proven remarkably effective negotiators and defenders of their autonomy through reliance on strategies that hinge on their distinctive knowledge and practices of environmental stewardship. As a result, hunting knowledge has acquired new relevance, and environmental protection in the territory has become a tool for reinforcing and enhancing Cree knowledge, values, and practices of caring for the land.

In Chapter 3, Ugo Lapointe and Colin Scott address the politics of mining in Wemindji territory, its relationship to protected area creation, and the search for a balance between development and environmental protection. Their story unfolds around Wemindji's decision to protect the culturally, historically, and environmentally significant Paakumshumwaau (Old Factory Lake), at the heart of the Paakumshumwaau-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve. This decision was at odds with the aspirations of a mineral development company that invested heavily in exploring the potential of gold deposits at the site. Eventually, the conflict was resolved positively, but

protecting valued lands and fostering economic development and livelihoods at the local level involves a potentially risky balancing act of resistance and accommodation that confounds simple stereotypes about Indigenous positions regarding development and environmental protection.

The partnership between Wemindji Eeyouch and a team of academic researchers that led to the creation of the Paakumshumwaa-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve was initiated and carried out in the context of northern (particularly subarctic) research, which has a long and not always collaborative history. In Chapter 4, Katherine Scott outlines this history in Eeyou Istchee, reminding us that researchers in various guises have visited James Bay since the earliest explorers began collecting new-to-them flora and fauna to take home for further study. Conversations between Scott and Cree partners revealed that though local people guided and looked after visiting researchers, their contributions were not always recognized. Too often, research findings were not communicated back to them. To support legal battles against Hydro-Québec in the 1970s, Crees began to employ academic researchers as consultants and have increasingly taken charge of their own research agendas and process. These initiatives nourished the relationships and work presented in this volume.

Part 2 focuses on deciding what to protect, a distinct challenge in one of the world's most dynamic coastal environments, where human beings have lived for more than five thousand years. The particularities of this history – in terms of connections between shoreline displacement, ecological diversity, wildlife resources, and human settlement and adaptation – have not been documented previously; we begin that task in this volume. In Chapter 5, Florin Pendea and his colleagues present a synopsis of landscape evolution in eastern James Bay since the last Ice Age. Their study is based on the examination of a site at Old Factory Lake. Extensive investigation by this team of archaeologists, palynologists, and community members supports a reconstruction of how the coastal landscape changed as the ice receded, the land rose, and humans entered the area as early as six thousand years ago. Their account not only underscores the length of time that humans have occupied this land, but argues that they were present in greater numbers and capable of sustaining more permanent settlements than previous studies have suggested.

In Chapter 6, Jim Fyles and his colleagues embrace the tradition of storytelling in their intriguing account of the ecological history of Paakumshumwaa's dynamic and diverse land- and seascapes. They join scientific perspectives with Wemindji Eeyouch ways of understanding the diverse and complex patterns in marine and terrestrial plant ecosystems and the varied bio- and geophysical processes that have shaped them.

Whereas Fyles and his team focus on the physical features and vegetation of the area, wildlife biologists Murray Humphries, Jason Samson, and Heather Milligan worked closely with Wemindji hunters and trappers to provide an account of some of the mammals in the Paakumshumwaa-Maatuskaau watersheds. In Chapter 7, they highlight, most notably, the extraordinary co-existence of species at the limits of their northern and southern ranges.

People, of course, have also played an integral part in the changing face of Eeyou Istchee's landscapes and ecosystems. Chapters 8 and 9 discuss human adaptations to changes in the availability of Canada geese, the seasonal hunting of which is the primary subsistence activity for Wemindji Cree hunters. In Chapter 8, Claude Péloquin and Fikret Berkes examine the multiple complexities of change in the goose hunt over recent years. They explain how Eeyou hunters have adapted their hunting practices to changing conditions while at the same time maintaining Cree principles of respect and reciprocity. In Chapter 9, Jesse Sayles and Monica Mulrennan investigate coastal landscape modifications, specifically in relation to the creation of ponds and flyways, as examples of Wemindji hunters' efforts to resist and redirect change so that important goose hunting places may be created and maintained.

In the final chapter of Part 2, Véronique Bussi eres, Monica Mulrennan, and Dorothy Stewart pick up the narrative thread. They take us from Paakumshumwaa (Old Factory Lake) down the Paakumshumwaashtikw (Old Factory River) and onto the coast and offshore, reminding us of the profound connections and continuities that Wemindji Eeyouch maintain with these lands and waters through memories of lives lived here, place names, and stories.

Part 3 deals with the challenge of how to protect by documenting the journey of the Wemindji Protected Areas Project in relation to the various

strategies, obstacles, and opportunities encountered. In Chapter 11, Julie Hébert and co-authors provide a comprehensive account of the Quebec provincial government process that established the Paakumshumwaau-Maatuskaau Biodiversity Reserve. In Chapter 12, Monica Mulrennan and Colin Scott offer a parallel portrayal of efforts by the community and regional Cree leadership, as well as the federal government, to establish the Tawich (Marine) Conservation Area. Both accounts are of value in giving rare behind-the-scenes insights into the process of establishing protected areas. In the Conclusion, Monica Mulrennan, Katherine Scott, and Colin Scott highlight some of the challenges and achievements of the project.

NOTES

- 1 Although Canada is a settler state, it practises extractive colonialism in the North rather than settler colonialism. This distinction has implications for protected area establishment and conservation (see Chapter 1, this volume).
- 2 “Eeyouch” is the coastal dialect expression for “our people.” “Eeyou Istchee” means “the land of the/our people”. “Eenou” or “Eenouch” are used by inland communities. The words are pronounced “ee-yooch,” “ee-nooch,” and “ee-you ist-chee.”
- 3 This statement was made during a conversation between Rodney Mark and Katherine Scott, which was recorded in February 2012.
- 4 Conversation between Rodney Mark and Katherine Scott, recorded in February 2012.

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