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Application for a Grant

Identification

This page will be made available to selection committee members and external assessors.

Program name

Aboriginal Research

Grant type (Strategic Grants only)

Strategic Research Grant

Application title

Seeking Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq knowledge, culture, capacity and empowerment

Applicant family name

McMillan

Applicant given name

Jane

Initials

L

Org. code

1120811

Full name of administrative organization

St. Francis Xavier University

Department/Division name

Sociology and Anthropology

Does your proposal involve human beings as research subjects? If "Yes", consult the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and submit your proposal to your organization's Research Ethics Board.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Does your proposal involve activity that requires a permit, licence, or approval under any federal statute; or physical interaction with the environment? If "Yes", complete Appendices A and B.

Yes ☐ No ☒

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
RTS requested from SSHRC (from page 7)				
Total funds requested from SSHRC (from page 8)	87,652	84,652	77,516	249,820

Signatures

The undersigned accept the terms and conditions as outlined in the corresponding program description; the instructions provided with this form; and any conditions applied to a grant pursuant to this application.

Applicant name (print)

Jane McMillan

Signature

Date

Dec 6/06

For department, institute, school

Name (print)

Susan Vincent

Signature

Date

7 Dec 10/06

For university

Name (print)

MARY B MCGILLIVRAY

Signature

Date

December 7/06

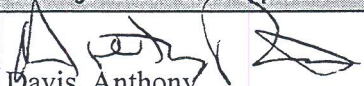

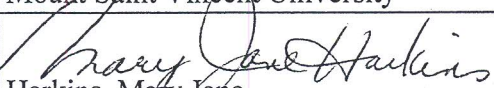



Family name, Given name

McMillan, Jane

Co-applicants' and Institutional Signatures

I have read and agree to the requirements set out in the "Signatures" section of the accompanying instructions.

Signature, Name and Organization of Co-applicant	RTS	Signature and Name of Authorized Delegate for Organization
 Davis, Anthony Mount Saint Vincent University	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Mount Saint Vincent University
 Harkins, Mary Jane Mount Saint Vincent University	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Mount Saint Vincent University
 Paulette, Mary Jane Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society
 Prosper, Kerry Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society
 Paul, Christina St. Francis Xavier University	<input type="checkbox"/>	 St. Francis Xavier University
 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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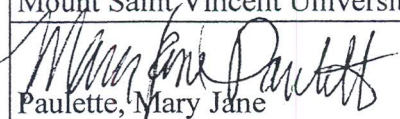
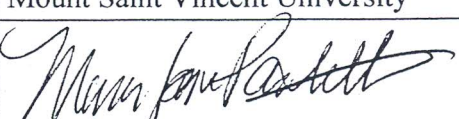

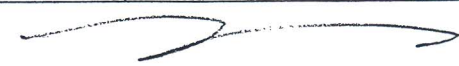
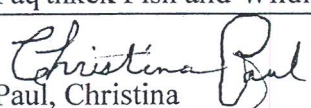


Family name, Given name

McMillan, Jane

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 Paulette, Mary Jane Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society
 Prosper, Kerry Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society
 Paul, Christina St. Francis Xavier University	<input type="checkbox"/>	St. Francis Xavier University
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Family name, Given name
McMillan, Jane

Participants

List names of your team members (co-applicants and collaborators) who will take part in the intellectual direction of the research. Do not include assistants, students or consultants.

Role Co-applicant <input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaborator <input type="radio"/>		CID (if known)	
Family name Davis		Given name Anthony	Initials
Org. code 1120511	Full organization name Mount Saint Vincent University		
Department/Division name Research Office			
Role Co-applicant <input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaborator <input type="radio"/>		CID (if known)	
Family name Harkins		Given name Mary Jane	Initials
Org. code 1120511	Full organization name Mount Saint Vincent University		
Department/Division name Education			
Role Co-applicant <input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaborator <input type="radio"/>		CID (if known)	
Family name Paulette		Given name Mary Jane	Initials
Org. code 1	Full organization name Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society		
Department/Division name Research			
Role Co-applicant <input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaborator <input type="radio"/>		CID (if known)	
Family name Prosper		Given name Kerry	Initials
Org. code 1	Full organization name Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society		
Department/Division name Research			
Role Co-applicant <input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaborator <input type="radio"/>		CID (if known)	
Family name Paul		Given name Christina	Initials
Org. code 1120811	Full organization name St. Francis Xavier University		
Department/Division name Coady International Institute			

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McMillan, Jane

Partners - Partners may be organizations in the public, private or non-profit sectors. Individuals are not eligible as partners.
Enter complete information for each partner.

Org. code	Full organization name			Organization type			
Address				Contact family name			
				Given name			Initials
City/Municipality		Prov./State	Postal/Zip code	Country code	Area code	Number	Extension
Country				Telephone number			
				Fax number			
E-mail							
Org. code	Full organization name			Organization type			
Address				Contact family name			
				Given name			Initials
City/Municipality		Prov./State	Postal/Zip code	Country code	Area code	Number	Extension
Country				Telephone number			
				Fax number			
E-mail							
Org. code	Full organization name			Organization type			
Address				Contact family name			
				Given name			Initials
City/Municipality		Prov./State	Postal/Zip code	Country code	Area code	Number	Extension
Country				Telephone number			
				Fax number			
E-mail							

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Family name, Given name

McMillan, Jane

Research Activity

The information provided in this section refers to your research proposal.

Keywords

List keywords that best describe your proposed research or research activity. Separate keywords with a semicolon.

collaborative research; treaty implementation; natural resource use; research training; ethnography; Indigenous knowledge; capacity building; cultural studies; empowerment strategies; policy; cultural anthropology; legal anthropology; Indigenous rights;

Disciplines

Indicate and rank up to 5 disciplines that best correspond to your proposal. Duplicate entries are not permitted.

Rank	Code	Discipline	If "Other", specify
1	60206	Cultural Anthropology	
2	60208	Ethnography	
3	62232	Aboriginal Law	
4	61408	Resource Management	
5	60220	Theory and Methods	

Areas of Research

Indicate and rank up to 3 areas of research related to your proposal. Duplicate entries are not permitted.

Rank	Code	Area
1	240	Indigenous peoples
2	180	Environment and Sustainability
3	131	Economic and Regional Development

Temporal Periods

If applicable, indicate up to 2 historical periods covered by your proposal.

From				To			
Year		BC	AD	Year		BC	AD
1975		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	2010		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
1600		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	2010		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

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Family name, Given name

McMillan, Jane

Research Activity (cont'd)

Geographical Regions

If applicable, indicate and rank up to 3 geographical regions covered by or related to your proposal. Duplicate entries are not permitted.

Rank	Code	Region
1	1110	Atlantic Provinces
2	9001	International
3		

Countries

If applicable, indicate and rank up to 5 countries covered by or related to your proposal. Duplicate entries are not permitted.

Rank	Code	Country	Prov./ State
1	1100	CANADA	
2			
3			
4			
5			



Family name, Given name
McMillan, Jane

Suggested Assessors - List up to 3 Canadian or foreign specialists whom SSHRC may ask to assess your proposal.
List keywords that best describe the assessor's areas of research expertise. Please refer to the Suggested Assessors section of the detailed instructions for more information on conflicts of interest.

Family name Asch		Given name Michael		Initials	Title Dr.		
Org. code	Full organization name University of Victoria		Keywords Aboriginal rights; Canadian jurisprudence; colonization; Indigenous justice				
Department/Division name Anthropology			Address PO Box 3050 STN CSC				
Country code		Area code	Number	Extension	City/Municipality Victoria	Prov./State BC	Postal/Zip code V8W3P5
Telephone number		1	250	4725189	Country CANADA		
Fax number		1	250	7216215			
E-mail masch@uvic.ca							
Family name Monture		Given name Patricia		Initials	Title Dr.		
Org. code	Full organization name University of Saskatchewan		Keywords Aboriginal claims; First Nation independence; colonial consequences; Indigenous jurisprudence				
Department/Division name Sociology			Address 1019 - 9 Campus Dr.				
Country code		Area code	Number	Extension	City/Municipality Saskatoon	Prov./State SK	Postal/Zip code S7N5A5
Telephone number		1	306	9666959	Country CANADA		
Fax number		1	306	6950			
E-mail trisha.monture@usask.ca							
Family name Henderson		Given name Sakej		Initials	Title Dr.		
Org. code	Full organization name University of Saskatchewan		Keywords Indigenous law; Aboriginal litigation strategies; cultural restoration				
Department/Division name Native Law Centre			Address 101 Diefenbaker Place				
Country code		Area code	Number	Extension	City/Municipality Saskatoon	Prov./State SK	Postal/Zip code S7N5B8
Telephone number		1	306	9666191	Country CANADA		
Fax number		1	306	9666207			
E-mail sakej.henderson@usask.ca							

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Research Relevance, Issues and Foci

The explosive decision in *R. v. Marshall*, 1999 affirmed Mi'kmaq treaty rights within the meaning of s. 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982. The *Marshall* decision has significantly influenced the relationships between Mi'kmaq and all levels of government and the larger society. Its consequences for community capacity building are even more remarkable. The decision is enabling the Mi'kmaq to specify their legal, economic and social cultures in ways intended to facilitate the full implementation of their treaty rights and sustainable community development (Clairmont and McMillan 2006). The time and resources spent on defending those rights in the past are now focused on the processes of applying those rights within discourses of responsibility and local empowerment (Battiste 2000, McCallum 2006, McEvoy 2006, Bankes 2006, Chartrand 2006). Negotiation is a key discourse in Mi'kmaq country these days, as is *kwilmuk Maw-klusuaqn* ("we are looking for consensus"), the strategy framing Mi'kmaq politics and policy development seated within the Mi'kmaq ways of life. These are processes where the concept of *Netukulimk* is situated as a central cultural frame organizing holistic resource usage according to Mi'kmaq worldviews, and which frame concerns about conservation, cosmology, access, and commerciality (UINR 2006). The purpose of this research is to document and analyse these processes in order to contribute to claims negotiations, treaty interpretation and the building of autonomous, independently sustainable First Nations communities (Borrows 2002, Monture 1999, Miller 2001, McNeil 2001). This research examines the cultural relatedness of Mi'kmaq natural resource use strategies, as they present an alternative approach to resource management and use. It also aims to contribute to local empowerment, cultural protection and revitalization, and capacity building in Mi'kmaq communities.

In collaboration with the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities, this program of research investigates Mi'kmaq strategies to implement treaty rights and relations and expand social capital. The analytical focus examines the creative processes of consultation and the plans the Mi'kmaq decide upon to establish and maintain sustainable community growth. The primary research question delineates how these processes are configured within Mi'kmaq value systems and how are they translated into legitimate actions within Mi'kmaq ecological knowledge, governance, jurisprudence and sociocultural perceptions and practices. The complementary question considers intergovernmental accountability between the legislature and Indigenous communities. The analytical framework examines emerging processes of heightened Mi'kmaq cultural productivity as people construct means for identifying with or against elements of culture, which translate onto ideas and practices of social regulation and the challenges of implementing communal rights in diverse communities.

The proposed research will work with the Mi'kmaq concept of *Netukulimk* through study of Mi'kmaq knowledge, culture, capacity and empowerment strategies, particularly as the Mi'kmaq take control over the economic, political, and juridical aspects of hunting and fishing. The research offers the prospect of contributing to an understanding of relations with and respect for ecosystems that will assist in developing new approaches to achieving sustainable ecosystem stewardship and natural resource use. The Mi'kmaq worldviews and practices, as encapsulated in the *Netukulimk* concept offer important alternatives for resource management. *Netukulimk* embodies Mi'kmaq methods of resource harvesting without jeopardizing the integrity, diversity or productivity of their environment (NCNS 1993). Thus, a revitalization of *Netukulimk*, coupled with consensus seeking processes in Mi'kmaq rights initiatives, marks for the Mi'kmaq a critical cultural touchstone for framing and articulating resource management within their communities and partnerships. This research is centred on community empowerment, sustainable development, and capacity building (Battiste and Henderson 2000, Blaser, Feit, McRae 2004, Menzies 2006).

The research builds, in part, on the successes of the Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries (SRSF) research partnership. This partnership developed

and employed a two-step research design and methodology for the purpose of documenting Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq relations with, knowledge, and use of American Eel (*K'at* [pronounced **ka:taq**]) within several Northeastern Nova Scotian estuaries and watersheds (www.stfx.ca/research/srsf). This research demonstrates the rich and diverse cultural relation that exists between the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq and *K'at*. The results from this research are widely disseminated through conferences (Davis et. al. 2003; Prosper et. al., 2004, 2005), research publications (Davis et. al. 2004), First Nations and fishing industry trade publications (Paulette and Prosper 2004; Paulette, Prosper and Davis 2004; Prosper and Paulette 2003a; and Prosper and Paulette 2003b), preliminary research reports (Prosper and Paulette 2001a; SRSF and PFWS 2002), and SRSF Fact Sheets (Prosper and Paulette 2002a and 2002b).

Led by a PFWS-determined process, the partnership began its research by engaging with the Mi'kmaw Ethics Committee in the review of proposed research. The Committee completed its assessments and provided its formal approval (22/11/01), thereby enabling the research to begin. Throughout, the Committee's advice and direction were respected through measures such as wide distribution of research results and outcomes (within the Paq'tnekek First Nation, the Mi'kmaq First Nation, and among non-Native fish harvesters). This research comprehensively and systematically documents Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq relations with *K'at* and use relations within several estuaries and related watersheds. This research has provided the PFWS and the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq with considerable research capacity and a substantial resource respecting matters such as the preservation and communication of cultural practices and understandings; provision of detailed and reliable documentation of historical relations and practices; and rich traditional knowledge and use testimonials essential to future treaty entitlement negotiations and settlements. These processes will be expanded in considering the operation of *Netukulimk* with respect to moose, plants, and other resources. Building on this record, the research proposes: 1) to deepen understanding of Mi'kmaq relations with and use of *K'at* (eel), *Tia'm* (moose), *Jakej* (lobster) and other key natural resources throughout Nova Scotia; 2) to further develop and demonstrate a results rich approach to organising and conducting social research that builds on and respects Mi'kmaq determined consultative and inclusive processes; 3) to further develop stand-alone research capacity within the Mi'kmaq First Nation; 4) to provide Mi'kmaq students and researchers with capacity-building opportunities through participation in all aspects of the research process; 5) to explore the Mi'kmaq concept of *Netukulimk* as a cornerstone principle in a new approach to natural resources and their use that begins respectful ecosystem stewardship; 6) to foster dialogue between Mi'kmaq and non-native natural resource users and managers; 7) to contribute to the linkage between research and treaty entitlement processes; and, 8) to develop learning modules for inclusion in elementary, high school and university curricula.

The program's processes and goals are critical to a variety of immediate needs, needs ranging from building research capacity and research-linked dialogues, through research inputs for treaty negotiation and entitlements respecting access to and governance of natural resource use, to documentation of cultural history, customary understandings, and practices of core importance to cultural identity, affirmation, and learning. The proposed research further develops and employs research processes that contribute to reliable documentation of cultural practices, traditional knowledge, and relations respecting natural resources and ways of living. These attributes address the need specified by Tobias (2000) for an approach that provides thorough and reliable land use and occupancy documentation. The evidence gathered will intersect critically with treaty processes, dialogue with governments, and public education. In short, the content, organisation, relationships, processes, and goals of this research embody in every respect the core objectives of SSHRC's Strategic Program focus on Aboriginal Research.

Summary of Proposed Research

The Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) partnership with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries (SRSF) developed a successful three step research design approach to documenting Mi'kmaq relations with knowledge and use of *K'at* (American eel) within several Northeastern Nova Scotian estuaries and watersheds (www.stfx.ca/research/srsf). This research demonstrated the rich and diverse cultural relation that has existed and that continues to exist. The research proposed here will employ this successful research process to expand and deepen documentation of Mi'kmaq relations with natural resources within the Mi'kmaq Nation. The research begins with community consultations, will employ detailed interviewing and documentation, and will engage a collaborative community-referenced research process wherein the richness of Mi'kmaq relations with *K'at*, *Tia'm* (moose), and *Jakej* (lobster), for example, will animate the meanings of and prospects for the Mi'kmaq concept of *Netukulimk*, as a cornerstone principle in developing new approaches to natural resource use and management.

The Supreme Court of Canada's *R. v. Marshall* decision has transformed the conditions of First Nations' access to and participation in natural resource use. The Court's commercial rights decision has required that room be made for First Nation participation. The current practice for integrating First Nations in commercial fisheries is largely designed and orchestrated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. It is a practice mainly concerned with maintaining the ways and means of the existing management regime. Few have ever asked the Mi'kmaq people what they would prefer or propose regarding the exercise of their treaty rights. Presently, the Mi'kmaq are consulting each other through Mi'kmaq rights initiatives and the *kwilmuk Maw-klusagn* [KMK] 'looking for consensus' processes, as they establish a nation-wide framework agreement on the approach to rights negotiations. This research holistically examines how this approach to consultation draws out qualities of Mi'kmaq culture and perspectives that offer tremendous promise for repositioning resource management, fishing and hunting practices, and natural resource use on a more environmentally and culturally sustainable basis.

Many Mi'kmaq struggle to make a decent and satisfying living, while maintaining their ways of life, language and culture. The deep and rich relations of the Mi'kmaq with land, sea, and air, live in the heart of Mi'kmaq culture. Now, Mi'kmaq treaty rights have been affirmed. Great responsibilities come with these rights. The Mi'kmaq idea of *Netukulimk* provides some guidance for uniquely Mi'kmaq approaches to resource utilization and regulation, approaches that have the potential to frame sustainable natural resource management. The concept of *Netukulimk* recognizes the interconnection of every animate life form and inanimate object. Starting with the principles embedded in the *Netukulimk* concept, Mi'kmaq culture offers the opportunity to build from a 'first principle' commitment to ecosystem stewardship. Such an approach would assure resource sustainability, strengthen Mi'kmaq culture, and contribute to achieving satisfying livelihoods. It also offers a place where Mi'kmaq and non-Natives can meet to develop an ecosystem stewardship approach as the first principle in resource management and livelihood sustainability. This process must begin with building mutually respectful understandings of concerns, preferences, and needs.

The proposed research will explore and animate the *Netukulimk* concept and its resource management potentials through the case of Mi'kmaq relations with and use of natural resources. The approach adopted is focused on further building Mi'kmaq stand-alone research capacity and providing research learning opportunities for Mi'kmaq university and senior high school students. The dissemination plan includes access to all research tools and outcomes through a project website, communications through Mi'kmaq and First Nation media and policy papers, and preparing research outcomes in learning modules for inclusion in high school and university curricula.

Detailed Description and Context for the Research

The Supreme Court of Canada's *R. v. Marshall* decision is permanently transforming the commercial fisheries, as well as the conditions of First Nations' access to and participation in natural resource use. By establishing that the Mi'kmaq First Nation has treaty-based rights for participation in commercial fisheries, the Court's decision has required that room be made for First Nation participation. This is being accomplished through Fisheries and Oceans buy-outs and redistribution to the various Mi'kmaq communities of available licenses, quotas and capacity. These attributes and consequences of the Court's decision have deepened concerns among non-Native fish harvesters about their future in the fisheries. They have also fueled suspicion, resentment, and conflict between the Mi'kmaq and non-Natives with respect to other natural resources (Davis and Jentoft 2001, McGaw R. 2003).

The current practice for integrating First Nations in commercial fisheries is largely designed and orchestrated by Fisheries and Oceans. It is a practice that has been most concerned with maintaining the ways and means of its fisheries management regime, a regime that has overseen resource collapses, fisheries moratoria, and tremendous dissatisfaction. The Mi'kmaq have been faced with ultimatums – either exercise your treaty rights within this system as specified in signed fisheries agreements or face arrest, interference, and years of expensive legal fights. With few resources to draw upon, facing high levels on community unemployment, and under threat, it is not at all surprising that most Mi'kmaq leaders have felt compelled to sign fisheries agreements.

Currently, the Mi'kmaq leadership are consulting with their people to determine what they would either prefer or propose to do with regard to the exercise of their treaty right for participation in the commercial fisheries and other forms of natural resource use such as the moose hunt. This sort of consultation has excellent potential to draw out qualities of Mi'kmaq culture and perspectives, that offer tremendous promise for repositioning natural resource management, practices, and uses on a more environmentally sustainable and culturally meaningful basis than is currently the case, and is elemental in moving toward self-determination and self-governance (Alfred 1999, 2005, Boxberger 1989, Hosmer 1999, Niezen 2003, Warry 1998).

Of course, Donald Marshall Jr. was fishing eel commercially when he was charged by DFO officers. This was no coincidence. *K'at* received little regulatory and resource management attention. At that time of little commercial interest, eel was one fish that had been basically left to the Mi'kmaq and others to harvest where and when they felt inclined (McMillan 1995). Harvesting eel to barter, among other things, is specifically noted by the Supreme Court as one of the activities embedded in the treaties that establishes the legal basis of the Mi'kmaq right to participate in commercial fisheries for livelihood purposes (Wicken 2002). Obviously, the Mi'kmaq have a long history of harvesting and using American eel and various marine and terrestrial resources (Leavitt 1995, Marshall 1997, and Prins 1996). It is certainly curious that these qualities seem to have been ignored in the debates and discussions of Mi'kmaq commercial fishing treaty entitlements (Coates 2003, Davis and Jentoft 2001, McGaw 2003).

In part to remedy this, over the last few years, the Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) and Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries (SRSF), through a research partnership, have been documenting Mi'kmaq relations with and use of American Eel (*K'at* [pronounced **ka:taq**] in the Mi'kmaq language). Building on the success of this partnership, our studies are concerned with understanding ways in which the Mi'kmaq people and their culture view and interact with life forms such as the eel and

moose. It is hoped that understandings of the Mi'kmaq and their culture will be improved, and that the potential contributions of the Mi'kmaq to repositioning fisheries and other resource management opportunities in the interests of all will be made clear (Davis et. al. 2004, Prosper and Paulette 2002b, SRSF-PFWS 2002). The research has also been designed and conducted to address issues respecting the practical and applied attributes of social science and anthropological research (Asch 2001).

For thousands of years, the Mi'kmaq have shared a long spiritual and cultural relationship with *K'at*. *K'at* have provided the Mi'kmaq with a variety of benefits, while in Mi'kmaq culture *K'at* have become associated with spiritual meanings. For the Mi'kmaq, *K'at* as food has been especially important. The importance of eel has rested in the fact that it is a high quality food accessible during times of food shortage, such as the winter. In these sorts of conditions, *K'at* has been drawn on as a food cache (Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq and Robert S. Peabody Museum of Anthropology 2001). In order to explore Mi'kmaq relations with eel, the past and present usage of *K'at* among the Paq'tnek First Nation Mi'kmaq in Northeastern Nova Scotia has been documented (Prosper et. al. 2004). The results from this research have been disseminated through a variety of means in community, research, and industry settings (Paulette and Prosper 2002, 2004; Paulette, Prosper and Davis 2004; Prosper and Paulette 2002a, 2002b; Prosper and Paulette 2003a, 2003b; SRSF and PFWS 2002). For the Mi'kmaq, *K'at* has always been there during good times and bad, and often has been critical during food shortages. Many rivers contain the remnants of stone weirs constructed for the purpose of catching eels and other fish (Leavitt 1995, Prins 1996, Smith and Wintemberg 1973). Eel has been described as one of the Mi'kmaq's favorite catches and was sometimes eaten raw or hung to be dried for later use (Denys 1908). Frequently, *K'at* has gotten the Mi'kmaq people through the hardest times of the year. Maybe this is why *K'at* plays a ceremonial role in various traditions and is offered as a gift to the Creator (Holmes-Whitehead 1988, Marshall 1997). The Mi'kmaq knew eels were likely available when there was nothing else to eat. For instance, a 19th-century Indian Agent reported having "...found four orphan children who were unable to rise for the want of food - whole families were subsisting upon wild roots and eels..." (Paul 2003:C2).

Many Mi'kmaq struggle to make a decent and satisfying living, while maintaining their ways of life, language and culture. The deep and rich relation of the Mi'kmaq with traditional food sources illustrates important qualities of the peoples' connections with nature and the gifts of the Creator. These qualities live in the heart of Mi'kmaq culture. The apparent decline in eel fishing and moose hunting and consumption among the young is troubling (SRSF and PFWS 2002). It foretells of a situation in which important cultural knowledge and practices may no longer be passed from elders to younger community members. Yet, it is not too late to recognize the important matters shown through Mi'kmaq relations with *K'at*, *Tia'm* and *Jakej*. Now, with the Court's ruling, Mi'kmaq treaty rights have been affirmed. Great responsibilities come with these rights. The Mi'kmaq idea of *Netukulimk* provides some guidance for a uniquely Mi'kmaq approach, one that has the potential to guide the development of new approaches to fisheries management. The concept of *Netukulimk* recognizes the interconnection of every animate life form and inanimate object. Starting with the principles embedded in the *Netukulimk* concept, Mi'kmaq culture offers the opportunity to build resource management from a 'first principle' commitment to ecosystem stewardship. Such an approach would assure resource sustainability, strengthen Mi'kmaq culture, and contribute to achieving satisfying livelihoods. It also offers a basis on which Mi'kmaq and non-Natives can meet and form alliances dedicated to developing an ecosystem stewardship approach as the first principle in fisheries management and livelihood sustainability. This process must begin with building mutually respectful understandings of concerns, preferences, and needs.

Research Design and Methodology

The research completed to date has documented, systematically and thoroughly, the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq's relations with *K'at*. The proposed research will achieve a similar outcome, respecting Mi'kmaq relations throughout Mi'kmaq country with *Netukulimk* by focusing information gathering on non-Paq'tnekek area sites already identified during previous research as important among the Mi'kmaq for harvesting. A cluster of non-Paq'tnekek resident Mi'kmaq has also already been identified through the previous research process as particularly knowledgeable about matters, such as harvesting and cultural uses of and meanings associated with the concept of *Netukulimk* in eel and moose procurement. This list of potential key informants will be augmented through a series of meetings and consultations with the non-Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq communities. Following consultation with and approval from the Mi'kmaq Ethics Committee, the proposed research will begin by completing interviews with these respected key informants, concerning their experiences with and knowledge of harvesting and use of *K'at*, *Tia'm* and *Jakej* within non-Paq'tnekek region sites. These interviews will be conducted by a two-person team within the informant's household. Most, if not all, of the interviews will invite all household members present to participate. At least one of the team members will be conversant in and trained to conduct the interview in Mi'kmaq, if desired by the informants. All interviews will be guided by an interview schedule and taped, after permission has been granted and a consent form signed. Where possible, nautical charts and topographical maps will be used for the purposes of recording information, such as where persons fish and hunt, experiences associated with each location, and observations and thoughts about each location's ecology. Through the course of these interviews, the persons participating will be asked to name others within the Mi'kmaq First Nation whom they consider to be especially knowledgeable. The second round of interviewing will focus on documenting the knowledge and experiences of the persons named. Similarly, those interviewed during the second round will be asked to identify other persons whom they consider to be knowledgeable about *Netukulimk*. Interviews will continue throughout the first two years of the proposed research, until both the persons named as knowledgeable begin to be repeated frequently and the information gathered on specific geographical locations, experiences, and understandings of cultural meanings is also established as repeating. Once these measures of 'information saturation' have been achieved, the interview documentation phase of the research focusing on *Netukulimk* will be drawn to a close. This research design and methodology will enable the research team to establish with the confidence that the results of the research are comprehensive and reliable representations of past and current Mi'kmaq relations with and knowledge of *K'at*, *Tia'm* and *Jakej*.

These attributes of the proposed research are critical to representing a comprehensive understanding the Mi'kmaq cultural meanings associated with hunting and fishing. They are also vital to documenting the manner in which Mi'kmaq relations with and knowledge/use of natural resources represent and intersect with the concept of *Netukulimk*. This thorough study of the culturally sourced understandings and practices associated with contemporary resource use will demonstrate and provide rich insight respecting *Netukulimk*. *Netukulimk*, in turn, will be explored as a first principle in developing a substantively new approach to imbedding ecosystem stewardship within natural resource management initiatives dedicated to achieving environmental and livelihood sustainability.

In providing the Mi'kmaq First Nation with a richly and reliably documented record of Mi'kmaq *K'at*, *Tia'm* and *Jakej* harvesting and use practices, this research will contribute substantially to establishing a basis for management entitlements and resource self-governance proposals concerning the regulation of activities. These attributes address the need specified by Tobias (2000) for an approach that

provides thorough and reliable land use and occupancy documentation. Located with reference to the *Netukulimk* concept, these proposals and initiatives offer tremendous potential to develop a Mi'kmaq-sourced and -led natural resource management initiative that holds the promise of meaningfully enhancing ecosystem and livelihood sustainability. This outcome speaks to the concerns and interests of Mi'kmaq and non-Natives alike, given the urgency for substantially new, ecosystem-based, approaches to natural resource management.

This work also builds previous research conducted by the principal investigator that examined the principles and uses of Mi'kmaq folk law, and chronicled the concepts, symbols, and methods of Mi'kmaq jurisprudence from early contact, through colonization, to the present. The main thrust of this research examined legal consciousness as sites of struggle and as articulations of Mi'kmaq identity through an investigation of the local lived law ways of the Mi'kmaq. Social constructions of legal consciousness, referring to how people come to think about, understand, create, and act upon, formal and informal laws that define social relations in everyday life, were examined using field-based ethnographic methodology. Research indicates the Mi'kmaq have competing legal discourses ranging from the utility of pre-contact social order traditions, to sophisticated power struggles over protecting identity and treaty rights, to questions about the validity of distinct and separate justice systems in fulfilling the goals of self governance. The study of consciousness construction helps delineate matters of community solidarity and dissent. These discourses are framed in concepts such as authenticity, continuity, tradition, cultural appropriateness, distinctiveness, community empowerment, harmony, forgiveness, and healing. Additionally, the concepts and the discourses framing and articulated as Mi'kmaq legal consciousness provide insight into the impacts of colonization on Mi'kmaq culture and contemporary responses to those experiences. The stories told by the Mi'kmaq participants in this research illuminate all manners of conformity, contest, and resistance as they combat the alienation and marginalization of their culture within and between their communities and the larger Canadian society. The constitutions of legal consciousness are historically situated, fluid and dynamic processes, often contested, within and between societies, as individuals and collectivities give meanings to their juridical experiences and beliefs, and thus provide information for analysis of the sources of solidarity, crisis, conflict and contradiction within the production of Mi'kmaq culture. Tracing these cultural productions assists in the development of meaningful jurisprudence in Mi'kmaq country in this current project examining *Netukulimk* and resource management, regulation and community empowerment.

Work Plan

<i>Periods</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
Winter Months	Refine and revise research design and tools; Begin recruitment for graduate and undergraduate students; Develop research proposal for Submission to the Mi'kmaw Ethics Committee (MEC); and, Begin information sessions within NS Mi'kmaq communities; Establish project website	Begin recruitment for graduate and undergraduate students; Begin information sessions within NB and PEI Mi'kmaq communities; Continue NS results analysis and dissemination Begin learning module design and development	Begin recruitment for graduate and undergraduate students; Continue with the interviews remaining; Continue results analysis and dissemination; Test run learning modules in senior high school and university settings

Spring Months	Once MEC approval is achieved, initiate consultations with NS Mi'kmaq communities; Initiate contact with known harvesters and users; Recruit high school seniors; Train student assistants	Expand consultations with Mi'kmaq communities; Initiate contact with known harvesters and users; Recruit high school seniors; Train student assistants	Complete remaining interviews; Recruit high school seniors; Train student assistants; Complete secondary documents research; Begin integration of all Information
Summer Months	Initiate research team interviews in NS; Initiate secondary documents/data research; Transcribe interviews as completed	Complete research team interviews; Continue secondary documents/data research; Transcribe interviews as completed; Continue with learning module design and development	Complete interviewing early summer; Complete secondary documents research; Transcribe interviews as completed; Continue information integration; Begin preparation of a final report and monograph; Complete learning modules
Fall Months	Preparation and analysis of results; Preparation of preliminary report; Presentation of results in Mi'kmaq community workshops; Preparation of documents for wider dissemination	Preparation and analysis of results; Preparation of preliminary report; Presentation of results in Mi'kmaq community workshops; Preparation of documents for wider dissemination	Presentation of results in Mi'kmaq community workshops; Preparation of documents for wider dissemination; Preparation of a project CD; Develop cultural exchange program with Monash University, Australia

Knowledge Mobilization/Dissemination Plans

This research group has an established collaborative track record respecting the timely dissemination of research results within as diverse a body of settings as possible. The approach adopted for the proposed program will differ, from other research, in so far as we intend to engage from the outset our work and its results more thoroughly within Mi'kmaq community settings through meetings and consultations. We also plan on deepening our relationship with the Mi'kmaq Ethics Committee. Through this relationship, we hope to contribute to understanding within the Mi'kmaq First Nation of the need to require formal ethics reviews and the development of formal research protocols for all research activities. We consider these to be essential knowledge mobilization activities and we will employ the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities and its associated ethnographic research lab at St. Francis Xavier University to facilitate analyses and dissemination.

A research project website will be designed and launched within the first months following a positive adjudication decision. All project material will be mounted and archived within the website, and, thereby, continually accessible to researchers, the Mi'kmaq community, and the broader public. As research results become available, thematically focused pieces will be developed for publication in Mi'kmaq community, First Nation, and other print media outlets. Preliminary research reports and project fact sheets for wide dissemination will also be continuously prepared and distributed. If resources permit, we will attempt to assure that most households within the involved Mi'kmaq communities receive copies of all printed materials. Workshops and meetings will be held, first, within the involved Mi'kmaq communities for the purposes of releasing and discussing research results. The results will also be

prepared for presentation at academic research, First Nations, and community capacity-building meetings. Of course, results will also be prepared for publication in academic research journals, with the prospect of developing a book-length monograph from the results, as well as the process and experiences.

The research group also plans on developing the results into 'variable degrees of complexity' learning modules for use within primary and secondary school settings such as Mi'kmaq studies and Oceans programmes, as well as in university course curricula. A curriculum translation and development expert has joined the collaboration for the singular purpose of working from the outset on translating research outcomes into effective public school and university curricula. Using a constructivist pedagogical approach (Clemons, 2006), students will participate in authentic learning using democratic principles, such as decision-making, dialogue, collaboration and critical reflection, as they identify and problem-solving community issues in partnership with community members (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Partnerships will develop as youths work with community members toward the stewardship and sustainability of their environment. Localized curriculum modules will be developed using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This design is based on a curriculum framework that supports the needs of diverse learners by providing multiple means of a) representation of information, b) expression of knowledge and c) student engagement (Rose, Meyer, & Hitchcock, 2005). Learning will become contextualized, meaningful and relevant as students observe phenomena, collect data, report findings and work in partnership with elders and local knowledge experts. Local knowledge will be translated into curricula that foster an appreciation of Mi'kmaq traditions, treaties, and culture. The First Nations youth will become empowered as they solve real-life, bioregional issues in a manner that fosters civic engagement and promotes sustainable community development. Finally, we think it critical that the results be communicated purposively both to non-Native natural resource user groups and to government settings. To this end, the team will develop and present 'briefing' documents within First Nation, industry, management and policy settings.

This research will lead to an international collaborative research project. Two of the researchers in this project are eel fishers in the Mi'kmaq fishery and one was an original litigant in *R. v. Marshall*. These experiences set a solid foundation for future cooperative work with the Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries, Aquatic Resources, Paqtneq Fish and Wildlife Commission, as well as future relations with Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, Eskasoni, Nova Scotia. Such joint initiatives lend themselves to international cultural exchange programs. The principal investigator is currently in negotiations with the Director of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies, Monash University, Australia, Dr. Lynette Russell, and Dr. Ian McNiven to establish a cultural exchange program between Mi'kmaq eel fishers and Aboriginal eel fishers of the Darumbal Noolar Murree, Australia. The *Netukulimk* research will assist in analysing comparative perspectives on significant natural resource management, and economic, social and cultural issues internationally. As a regular attendee at international conferences the principal investigator intends to develop a working group in Indigenous Resource Issues for the Program of International Research Collaboration (PIRC) as part of the Law and Society Association where the findings from this research will be examined and further international networks advanced. This is particularly timely research as it offers significant training opportunities, new research partnerships and strategies and increases awareness of the contributions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada and abroad.

Description of the Team

L. Jane McMillan (Principal Investigator) is the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities in the Department of Anthropology at StFX and Director of the Ethnographic Research Lab. For more than 15 years, she has worked with Mi'kmaq First Nations on sociocultural issues, including governance, ethnohistory, resource management and justice. Her monograph entitled "*Koqqwaja'ltimk: Mi'kmaq Legal Consciousness*" is a historically situated ethnographic study of early contact justice, the impact of colonization on such constructs, and an analysis of contemporary Mi'kmaq legal ideologies, practices, and the challenges of socio-legal capacity building. McMillan was one of the original litigants in the case that led to the Supreme Court of Canada Marshall Decision. She will lead the development of the collaboration's concern with exploring and operationalizing *Netukulimk*, particularly with respect to Mi'kmaq legal and policy interests and implications. **Anthony Davis** (Co-applicant). Recently appointed as Associate Vice-President (Research) at Mount St. Vincent University (September 1, 2004), Davis directed SRSF, community-university research alliance (CURA) (www.stfx.ca/research/srsf <http://faculty.msvu.ca/srsf>). The SRSF partnership mobilised research capacity within an alliance of Mi'kmaq and non-Native marine harvesting community organisations and university-seated social researchers. This capacity was developed, in part, through 'hands on' experiences in all facets of research projects, including the preparation and dissemination of results. Davis has worked in partnership with the PFWS throughout all aspects of the *K'at* focused research. Davis will play a key role in developing additional features of the research design and methodology, in training students to participate in all facets of the research, in conducting team interviews and participating in additional information gathering, and in research results preparation and dissemination. **Kerry Prosper** (Co-applicant) – Currently Director of the PFWS and Councillor with the Paq'tnekek First Nation, Prosper has played a central role in the design and conduct of the Paq'tnekek *K'at* research. He has contributed substantially to the design and development of formal interview schedules, to the conduct of interviews, and to the preparation of results for dissemination. Among Prosper's roles will be leading the development of consultations within Mi'kmaq communities, recruitment of student researchers, participation in interviews, information analyses, and research results preparation and dissemination. He will be responsible for assuring that the research outcomes, including primary information, are housed within the appropriate Mi'kmaq First Nation sites and available for educational, entitlement (legal) and cultural purposes. **Christina E. Paul** (Co-applicant). Ms. Paul is a member of the Maliseet St. Mary's First Nation. She is the First Nations Project Coordinator at the Coady International Institute, StFX. She heads the First Nations at-sea mentoring initiative which works in partnership with First Nation's communities to develop the technical skills of Aboriginal fishers working in the Maritime commercial fishing industry. **Mary Jane Paulette** (Co-Applicant). Ms. Paulette is Senior Researcher with PFWS, and participated in all aspects of the SRSF-linked research and research communications. Currently completing her Bachelor of Education degree, Ms. Paulette provides critical expertise respecting the translation of research outcomes into learning modules for incorporation within public school and university curricula. **Mary Jane Harkins** (Co-applicant): Harkins brings an extensive background in curriculum design, especially in the area of supporting learners with exceptionalities including the integration of technology and assistive technology to increase the participation of all learners with diverse need. She studied with Dr. Thomas Hehir, Director of the School Leadership at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Dr. David Rose, the Chief Cognitive Neuroscientist for Cognition and Learning at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). Harkins also has extensive experience as a coordinator for both qualitative and quantitative study grants including literacy and youth initiatives, such as the Gulf of Maine Institute Without Walls (GMIWW), under the guidance of a First Nations' Spiritual Leader. Harkins will lead the curricula knowledge translation initiative in collaboration with the Mi'kmaq team, particularly with Mary Jane Paulette.

Training and/or Role of Students

While St. Francis Xavier is largely an undergraduate university, it is our hope to attract many First Nation students to the programs offered therein. The proposed program of research offers undergraduate students significant opportunities to participate in this unique research programs and to collaborate on conference presentations and published papers. These experiences will help students excel in graduate programs. The ethnographic field school will engage scholars in Indigenous studies in collaborative participatory action research with First Nation communities across Atlantic Canada. The field school promises to develop sustainable collaborative research networks between First Nation interests and St. Francis Xavier University, and improve the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students with the goal of training them to conduct research meaningful to their communities. The field school will develop skills and capacities using the traditional wisdom and knowledge as generated by the communities in the planning and execution of all activities and events, and ensuring a respectful relationship between the University and First Nations, in which the communities may exercise some degree of control over the knowledge base resulting from the collaborative research.

Using the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities and its ethnographic research lab as the training locus, to the extent possible, all student research positions will be filled by First Nations persons. The plan is to engage one graduate student, two undergraduates and two senior grade high school students during most years of the proposed research. This plan reflects the recognition and commitment by the research team to employ every means possible to build First Nations research capacity and expertise, being with senior high school students. The team recognises that student recruitment may be a challenge, particularly at the graduate level. For instance, Maritime Canada does not house within its universities a Native or Aboriginal studies programme that trains social research graduate students. However, the team intends to recruit regionally and, if need be, nationally, to enable graduate student participation. The team considers the inclusion of senior high school students to be an essential step in fostering knowledge of and enthusiasm for research and scholarship. Such 'hands on' experiences are significant in making decisions to further pursue formal learning opportunities within university or college settings.

The graduate and undergraduate students will be trained in all facets of the project's research design and methodology. They will participate as full team members in the interview processes. They will learn to use qualitative data analytical software, such as *Atlas-ti* and be involved centrally in the analyses of information gathered, as well as in the development and presentation of results. Preferably, the university students will use research outcomes within degree-required papers and/or theses. The senior high school students, under the direct guidance of the graduate student, will be trained to participate in library, archival, and government document research. They will participate as observers and note-takers in research design workshops and community consultations, with the requirement that they prepare their notes for presentation to the research team. When possible and practical, these students will be provided with opportunities to participate in interviews and preparation of results. These students will also be asked to participate in the design and to develop research results for delivery as educational modules within public school settings.

In sum, the proposed research will provide as many as five students per year with a diverse and rich learning social research experience. The qualities of the experiences anticipated are such that they will build research know-how, and hopefully contribute to aspirations for and success in further formal educational attainment.

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Previous and Ongoing Research Results

The Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities awarded to McMillan (2006) examines the intersections of Indigenous knowledge, strategies for implementing treaty and aboriginal rights, and sustainable community development in Mi'kmaq country. The program of research investigates social change, social processes and social conflicts relating to the communal structures and relationships emerging from the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R. v. Marshall* [1999], which affirmed Mi'kmaq treaty rights. The Mi'kmaq are determining value systems and codes of conduct to help regenerate distinctive cultural identities in neoteric contexts to increase social cohesion in a period of rapid change and to assist in the management of their new relations with each other, their resources and the larger society. The negotiation processes and the management of new relations are integral to the sustainable success of self-governance, economic independence and social justice. The empowerment of Mi'kmaq communities is imperative for the creation of negotiated settlements, that are in the best interests of the cultural health of communities and will break negative cycles of colonial dependency and degradation. These are processes that will be repeated across the country, as treaty and land claims are settled in other Indigenous communities. "Seeking *Netutklimk*: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture, Capacity and Empowerment" is an integral piece of the CRC research program.

The Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities Collaborative Ethnographic Research Lab is a home to the data analysis of the CRC and a training centre for ethnographic field projects. It is located in the heart of Mi'kmaq country. The facility serves as a gathering place for Indigenous peoples and others to express and exchange knowledge, to conduct interviews, hold workshops and seminars, and conduct data compilation, viewing and storage. Associated with the lab is a mobile unit, which enhances the ability of researchers, students and community members to sustain access to each other and the university. It operates as an additional field site, where the conversations and activities occurring in transit to interviews, workshops and presentation are part of the ethnographic experience of knowledge and cultural exchange, and contributes to easing the transition toward full collaboration and reciprocal access, allowing for increased recruitment and retention of students and research participants. In addition, the lab has computer, video and audio recording and transcribing capacity.

McMillan has received a research stipend of \$3,000 from St. Francis Xavier University Council for Research to conduct archival research on Mi'kmaq moose hunting (awarded December 2006).

In November 2006, McMillan completed an extensive evaluation of the Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network in collaboration with Don Clairmont, director of the Atlantic Criminology Institute, Dalhousie University. The research findings were reported to the Mi'kmaq Tripartite Committee for Justice, as well as the larger Tripartite Forum, which includes representatives from Mi'kmaq, federal and provincial governments. Resulting from this research is an ongoing relation between McMillan and the Tripartite Forum which may be utilized to disseminate the research results of this project. The manuscript of the research will be published by the Department of Justice, Ottawa: Queen's Press 2007 and posted on their website.

The PFWS and SRSF partnership provided Davis and Prosper with the opportunity and the means to develop a results-rich, research-focused relationship. This relationship has matured through the course of developing and conducting researched focused on documenting Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq traditional

knowledge about and use of *K'at*. As noted earlier, the information generated through this research partnership has been disseminated to every household within the Paq'tnkek First Nation, as well as throughout the Mi'kmaq First Nation. Thus far, the partnership has produced and distributed one major research report, one background document, and two SRSF Fact Sheets. In addition, it has produced one poster for presentation at the November 2003 Aboriginal Research Policy Conference, delivered three research findings papers at international meetings (People and the Sea II/III, Amsterdam, September 2003/July 2004 and the 4th World Fisheries Congress, Vancouver, May 2004), and published one research paper, in the *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* (2004). The partnership has also published seven short articles on research results in Mi'kmaq, First Nation, and non-Native fish harvester community and trade publications.

The PFWS-SRSF partnership is continuing its analysis of the interview information as well as of the information digitised from the topographical sheets employed during the interviews. This information is being prepared for dissemination through reports, media print publications, a monograph and several research articles. This work is expected to progress over the next few years.



Family name, Given name

McMillan, Jane

Funds Requested from SSHRC

For each budget year, estimate as accurately as possible the research costs that you are asking SSHRC to fund through a grant. For each Personnel costs category, enter the number of individuals to be hired and specify the total amount required. For each of the other categories, enter the total amount required.

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
Personnel costs						
Student salaries and benefits						
Undergraduate	2	14,272	2	14,272	1	7,136
Masters	1	6,422	1	6,422	1	6,422
Doctorate						
Non-student salaries and benefits						
Postdoctoral						
Other	3	28,028	3	28,028	3	28,028
Stipends						
Undergraduate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Masters						
Doctorate						
Postdoctoral						
RTS requested (SSHRC portion)						
Travel and subsistence costs	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Applicant/Team member(s)						
Canadian travel	15,180		15,180		15,180	
Foreign travel	3,160		3,160		3,160	
Students						
Canadian travel	1,590		1,590		1,590	
Foreign travel	0		0		0	
Other expenses						
Professional/Technical services	5,000		2,000		2,000	
Supplies	2,000		2,000		2,000	
Non-disposable equipment						
Computer hardware						
Other						
Other expenses (specify)						
Communications	6,000		6,000		6,000	
Honoraria	1,000		1,000		1,000	
Workshops	5,000		5,000		5,000	
Total funds requested from SSHRC	87,652		84,652		77,516	

Budget Justifications

Personnel:

Students: The project will engage 2 undergraduate students over the first two years of the proposed research ($\$10/\text{hr.} \times 40 \text{ hrs./wk.} \times 16 \text{ wks} = \$6,400 + 736$ (11.5% of gross employer's contribution) = $\$7,136 \times 2 \text{ students} = \$14,272/\text{year}$. One undergraduate student will be recruited for the 3rd year ($\$7,136$ (as calculated above) as we anticipate the interview and research phase will be drawing to a close while the data analyses, outcomes preparation, and dissemination will be receiving most emphasis. Preferably, these positions will be filled by First Nations persons. The skill sets and cultural background these students bring to the project will be important to its progress. Similarly, the project's commitment to engaging and training First Nations students reflects its focus on capacity-building. One graduate student, drawn from MSVU's Faculty of Education, will be engaged over the three years of research. This student will work most closely with Harkins and Paulette on developing learning modules for public school and university curricula ($\$12/\text{hr.} \times 40 \text{ hrs./wk.} \times 12 \text{ wks.} = \$5,760 + 662$ (11.5% of gross as employer's contribution) = $\$6,422/\text{year}$.

Non-Students: The project will purchase 25% of Mr. Kerry Prosper's time as Director of the Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society and 25% of Ms. Mary Jane Paulette's time as PFWS Senior Research (total of $\$20,000/\text{yr.}$). It is critical that Mr. Prosper and Ms. Paulette have the time to dedicate to working within the research team and to achieving the project's goals.

High School Students: The project will also recruit and engage 2 Mi'kmaq senior grade high school students ($\$9/\text{hr.} \times 40\text{hrs./wk.} \times 10 \text{ wks.} = \$3,600 + 414$ (.115% of gross as employer's contribution) = $\$4,014 \times 2 \text{ students} = \$8,028/\text{yr.}$). These students will be trained to participate in document research, poster preparation and results dissemination activities. These students will be centrally engaged in the translation of research results into public school friendly learning modules. Their inclusion is a key piece in the proposed work's capacity building strategy in that providing opportunity for high school students in this manner will foster the development of interest in social research and research literacy, especially as these are associated with empowering Mi'kmaq and their culture.

Travel/Accommodation/Subsistence: These cost estimations refer to two major activities – research and knowledge mobilisation/dissemination.

Research-related Costs – Automobile travel (20,000 kms/yr. @ \$.33/km (university rate) = $\$6,600/\text{yr.}$), accommodation ($\$50/\text{day} \times 30 \text{ days/yr.} \times 2 \text{ persons/yr.} = \$3,000/\text{yr.}$), and subsistence ($\$40/\text{day} \times 30 \text{ days/yr.} \times 2 \text{ persons/yr.} = \$2,400/\text{yr.}$) associated with consultations, community meetings and workshops, and interviewing. Savings will be achieved through room-sharing and shared automobile usage (total = $\$12,000/\text{yr.}$).

Dissemination/Conference-related Costs – Canadian travel: 2 meetings per year for 2 persons - airfares and ground transportation = $\$1,500$, Accommodation ($\$100/\text{night} \times 3 \text{ nights} \times 2 \text{ persons} \times 2 \text{ meetings} = \$1,200$), and Subsistence ($\$40/\text{day} \times 3 \text{ days} \times 2 \text{ persons} \times 2 \text{ meetings} = \480). Total = $\$3,180$ in support of research team travel to conferences in Canada.

Students and/or non-university Mi'kmaq researchers will be supported for 1 Canadian conference/year ($\$1,590$).

International travel: 2 meetings per year for 2 persons (airfares and ground transportation = \$1,100 x 2 persons = \$2,200, Accommodations (\$110/day x 3 days x 2 persons = \$660), and Subsistence (\$50/day x 3 days x 2 persons = \$300). Total = **\$3,160/year**.

Funding for 1 international conference/year will be reserved for a non-university Mi'kmaq team member.

Professional/Technical Services: As successfully accomplished in the past, in Year 1, the team will recruit a senior year Information Systems undergraduate student to design and set up the project's website (\$5,000 contracted services). During the two subsequent years a senior Information Systems undergraduate will be contracted to unload information and to maintain the site (\$2,000 contracted services/year).

Other:

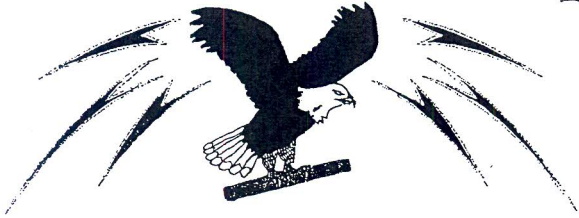
Supplies: Total = **\$2,000 /yr**. This is an estimate of the telephone, fax, courier, postage, photocopying, paper and printer cartridges. These resources are essential for establishing and maintaining contacts during the course of the research, as well as for supporting the production of printed materials for circulation within the contexts of community meetings, workshops, and other dissemination activities.

Honoraria: an allowance for symbolic 'gifts' reflecting respect and regard as an aspect of community consultations, particularly for Mi'kmaq elders and community leaders. Total = **\$1,000/yr**.

Room Rentals and Catering: estimated annual costs associated with room rentals for community consultations / workshops and research result dissemination workshops. \$1,000 per meeting x 5 meetings/yr. Total = **\$5,000/year**.

Research Communications: The proposed research places a considerable emphasis on communicating outcomes throughout the research processes, as well as with respect to the anticipated deliverables. The team will be disseminating results through means such as research reports, fact sheets, policy briefs, and posters. The goal of developing learning modules for inclusion in public school and university curricula will also require considerable resource support. The sum budgeted is in support of printing costs, including relatively high quality production values in pamphlets, fact sheets, poster printing and lamination, and learning materials. Total = **\$6,000/year**.

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq



Member Mi'kmaw Bands
Annapolis Valley • Bear River • Glooscap • Millbrook • Paq'tnekek • Pictou Landing

Main Office:
57 Martin Crescent, Millbrook Mi'kmaw Community
PO Box 1590 Truro, Nova Scotia Canada B2N 5V3
Tel (902) 895-6385 Fax (902) 893-1520

Sub-Offices: (Halifax)
Native Education Counselling Unit (902) 494-8863
Hospital Interpreters Liaison Program (902) 453-9358
Website Address: www.cmmns.com

November 29, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

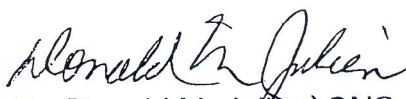
Via fax only

To Whom It May Concern:

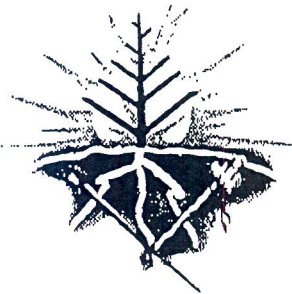
Re: Support letter

This letter is to offer our, The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying *Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity*. We have practical interests in this research for our hunting, fishing, gathering and community knowledge and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Mary Jane Paulette, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis. We also support the opportunity to have our members access the research training and information workshops what will result from this research project.

Yours in Recognition
of Mi'kmaq Title,


Dr. Donald M. Julien, ONS.
Executive Director

In unity there is strength and in strength there is power, justice and equality for all.



TREATY & ABORIGINAL RIGHTS RESEARCH CENTRE OF NOVA SCOTIA

PO BOX 341 SHUBENACADIE, NOVA SCOTIA BON 2H0 PHONE: (902) 758-1953 FAX: (902) 758-1759

December 4, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

Via fax only

To Whom It may concern:

Re: Endorsement Letter

This represents our letter of support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying *Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity*. We certainly appreciate this research for our hunting, fishing and gathering and community knowledge and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Mary Jane Paulette, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis. We, also support the opportunity to have our members access the research training and information workshops that will result from this research project.

Sincerely Yours,

for -> James Michael
Director



Pictou Landing Band Council

R. R. # 2, Site 6, Box 55

Trenton, NS

B0K 1X0

Phone: 902-752-4912

Fax: 902-755-4715

December 4, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in my position as the Fishery Coordinator and Council member for Pictou Landing First Nation to offer my support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity. We have practical interests in this research for our fishing strategies and research training and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Christina E. Paul and Tony Davis.

Sincerely,



Wayne Denny
Fisheries Coordinator
Pictou Landing First Nation

WD/tmf

Paq'tnkek First Nation
7 Dillon Street, RR #1 Afton
Antigonish Co., Nova Scotia
B0H 1A0

e-mail address: paqtnkekfirstnation@ns.sympatico.ca

Tel: (902) 386-2781

Fax: (902) 386-2043

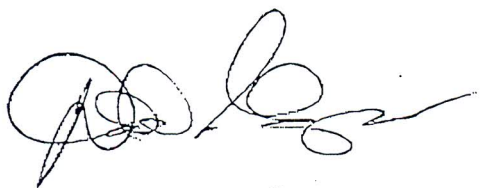
November 29, 2006

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To Whom It May Concern:

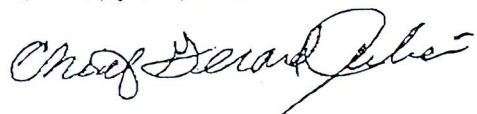
This letter is to offer Paq'tnkek First Nation support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity. We have practical interests in this research for our hunting, fishing, gathering and community knowledge and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants- Kerry Prosper, Mary Jane Paulette, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis. We also support the opportunity to have our members access the research training and information workshops what result from this research project.

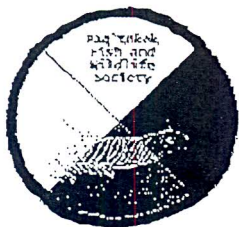
Sincerely,




COUNCILLOR ALBERT JULIANO


COUNCILLOR





PAQ'TNKEK FISH AND WILDLIFE SOCIETY

November 29, 2006

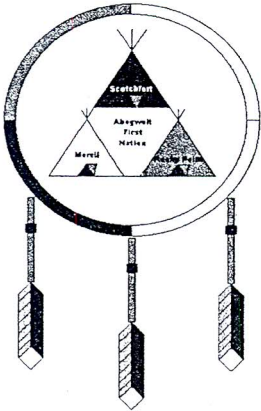
SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to offer our Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society, support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying *Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity*. We have practical interests in this research for our hunting, fishing, gathering and community knowledge and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Mary Jane Paulette, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis. We also support the opportunity to have our members access the research training and information workshops what will result from this research project.

Sincerely,

RR #1 Afton
Antigonish Co. NS
BOH1AO
Phone: 1-902-386-2059
E-Mail: kerry@ns.sympatico.ca
mj.paulette@ns.sympatico.ca



Abegweit First Nation - Fisheries

PO Box 36
Mt. Stewart, PE
C0A 1T0

Ph.: 902-676-2936
Fax: 902-676-2427
E-mail: [fisheries @abegweitfirstnations.com](mailto:fisheries@abegweitfirstnations.com)

Chief
Councillor
Councillor

Roddy Gould Jr.
Robert Jadis
Danny Levi

November 30, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in my position as the Fishery Director of Abegweit First Nation's Fisheries in the province of PEI to offer my support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity.

We have practical interests in this research for our fishing strategies and research training and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis.

Sincerely,

Roger Sark
Fisheries Director
Abegweit First Nation



November 30, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa.

To whom it may concern,

Please be advised that as per the Department of Fisheries and Ocean's Gulf and Maritimes Region and St. Francis Xavier University's MOU dated March 07, 2006, I would extend my support in facilitating information exchange and promoting mutually beneficial research activities such as the research project between St. FX university and Mi'kmaq communities studying Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq knowledge, Culture and Capacity.

The results of this research may help in the future role of DFO and Mi'kmaq communities in the stewardship and management of aquatic resources in our area.

I look forward to working in collaboration with the applicants of this research project.

Sincerely,

Adrien Vautour

Area Aboriginal Programs Coordinator
Dept., of Fisheries and Ocean's Canada
Antigonish, NS



Aboriginal Student Advisor
St. Francis Xavier University
P.O Box 5000
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2W5

December 4, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Sir or Madam;

I am writing to offer my support of the research project currently in development through St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying *Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity*.

I am a member of the Paq'tnkek First Nation community and the Aboriginal Student Advisor here at St. FX. There is a definite need for this research in regards to hunting and fishing resources, as well as cultural components. Our community will be able to offer local knowledge and welcomes the opportunity to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants Kerry Prosper, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis.

If you require further information, please contact me at your convenience. I can be reached at (902) 971-0759 or email khanscom@stfx.ca.

We'lalin- Thank you,

Krista Hanscomb

Krista Hanscomb

THE PAQ'TNKEK MI'KMAQ AND KA'T (AMERICAN EEL): A CASE STUDY OF CULTURAL RELATIONS, MEANINGS, AND PROSPECTS

Anthony Davis
Associate Vice-President
(Research)
Mount St. Vincent University
166 Bedford Highway
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada, B3M 2J6

John Wagner
Social Research for
Sustainable Fisheries
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
Canada, B2G 2W5

Kerry Prosper
Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife
Society
Afton, Nova Scotia
Canada, B0H 1A0

Mary Jane Paulette
Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife
Society
Afton, Nova Scotia
Canada, B0H 1A0

Abstract / Résumé

The Mi'kmaq have a deep and rich relationship with *Ka't* (American eel-*Anguilla rostrata*). While the Mi'kmaq continue to harvest *Ka't* for food, their relations with and use of eel also embody important cultural meanings and practices. *Ka't* occupies a notable place within many ceremonial settings, is used for medicinal purposes and, as a consequence of the ways in which *Ka't* is shared, is central to traditional relations of reciprocity. Implications for the revitalisation and empowerment of Indigenous cultures are drawn from the lessons evident in this case study.

Les Mi'kmaq entretiennent des relations étroites et riches avec *Ka't* (anguille d'Amérique, *Anguilla rostrata*). Bien qu'ils continuent de pêcher l'anguille pour s'alimenter, leurs relations avec celle-ci et leur utilisation de l'anguille comportent également une signification et des pratiques culturelles. L'anguille occupe une position notable dans bon nombre de cérémonies religieuses, est utilisée à des fins médicinales et est au centre des relations traditionnelles de réciprocité, en raison de la façon dont on partage l'anguille. L'étude de cas permet de tirer des leçons générales au sujet de la revitalisation et l'autonomisation des cultures autochtones.

Vol. 6, No. 10

October 2003

The Navigator

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Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat (American Eel - *Anguilla rostrata*): A Case of Cultural Importance and a Story of Decline

Kerry Prosper and Mary Jane Paulette
Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society

In 1993, Donald Marshall Jr. was charged by DFO for commercially fishing eels without a license (eels are called Kat in the Mi'kmaq language). This began another journey by the Mi'kmaq through the legal system for the purpose of affirming treaty rights. In September 1999 the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed the charges against Donald Marshall, in the process affirming the treaty right to fish commercially in support of a 'modest livelihood'. The fact that Donald Marshall was fishing Kat

when charged and that the treaty clauses noted in the decision specifically mention Kat seem to have received no consideration in all of the events that have occurred.

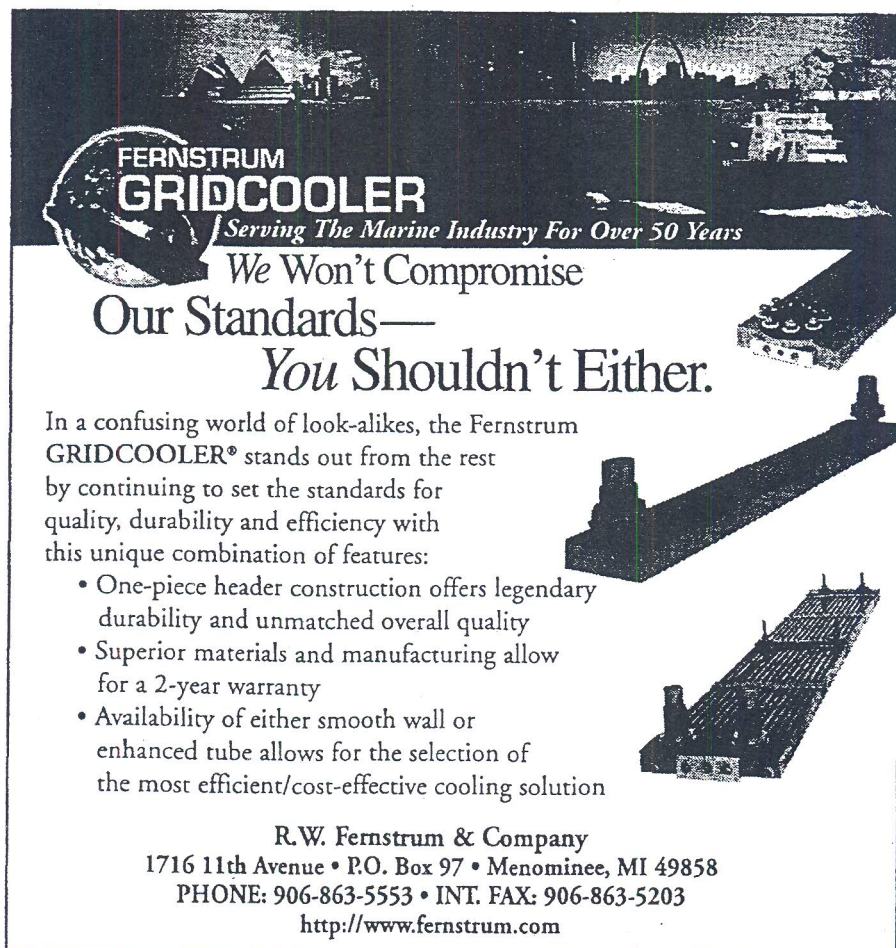
It is not coincidental that Junior Marshall was fishing eel or Kat. Historical and archaeological evidence clearly establishes that the Mi'kmaq intensively used marine resources for their material support, including Kat. It is also clear that the Mi'kmaq, as they became increasingly dispossessed and marginalized, came to rely even more

heavily on eel for their basic sustenance. Kat was one of the few marine resources for which the Mi'kmaq retained relatively open access, mainly because there was little commercial interest in eel until recently. For the Mi'kmaq, Kat is considered a critical food resource, one of the few sources of high quality nutrition to which they could turn and upon which they could rely should other food sources become inaccessible or scarce. As such, Kat is also culturally important to the Mi'kmaq.

Knowing that Kat has been culturally and materially important for the Mi'kmaq, the Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) in collaboration with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries (St. Francis Xavier University) has conducted a household survey in the Paq'tnkek community. The survey was designed to explore the relationship between the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat or American Eel and marks the completion of the first phase of an on-going research project. The results of the survey have been released as a preliminary report entitled: The Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat (American Eel).

The first step in this project was to submit a proposal to the Mi'kmaw Ethics Committee to seek approval for the research. "The Mi'kmaw Ethics Committee was appointed by the Grand Council in 1999 to establish a set of principles and protocols that will protect the integrity and cultural knowledge of the Mi'kmaw People".

This committee's objective is to



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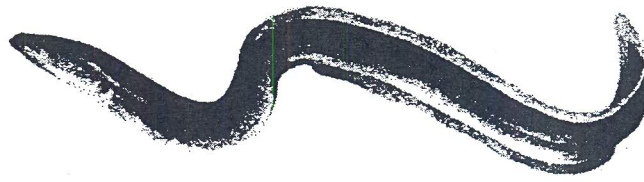
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Cultural relationship with Kat



For thousands of years the Mi'kmaq have shared a long spiritual and cultural relationship with Kat (eel). Kat have provided the Mi'kmaq with a variety of benefits, while in Mi'kmaq culture Kat have become associated with spiritual meanings. For the Mi'kmaq, Kat as food has been especially important. The importance of eel has rested in the fact that it is a high quality food accessible during times of food shortage, such as the winter. In these sorts of conditions Kat has been drawn on as a food cache.

In order to explore Mi'kmaq relations with eel, the Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society, in collaboration with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries at St. Francis Xavier University, has documented the past and present usage of Kat among the Paq'tnekek First Nation Mi'kmaq. Two important findings arising from this study.

Ninety Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq men and women were identified as direct participants in the eel fishery. But, the numbers of younger persons identified as experienced with fishing Kat shows comparatively low

rates of participation. Notably fewer than one in every ten boys 14 years of age and younger and not one girl in this age range have fished eel. This is worrying in so far as it suggests that few in the younger generation are learning and experiencing the Mi'kmaq relationship with eel. Cultural knowledge is at risk of being lost.

Those reporting that they either currently or in the past fished eel, were asked: "what do/did you do with the eel you've caught?" Responses show that the primary use of Kat has been for food. Substantial numbers of men and women also report using eel for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. Fewer than one in three men and

about one in five women report that at one time or another they have sold Kat, a notably low proportion given the fact that Mi'kmaq have had access to few economically valuable harvestable resources.

For the Mi'kmaq, Kat has always been there during good times and bad and often has been critical during food shortages. Many rivers contain the remnants of stone weirs constructed for the purpose of catching eels and other fish. Eel has been described as one of the "Mi'kmaq's favourite catches and was sometimes eaten raw or hanged to be dried for later use." Frequently, Kat has gotten the Mi'kmaq people through the hardest times of the

year. Maybe this is why Kat plays a ceremonial role in various traditions and is offered as a gift to the Creator. The Mi'kmaq knew eels were likely available when there was nothing else to eat.

Traditionally Kat was used as a major source of food for every stage of life. While just over 1 in 4 Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq fish eel, over 1 in 2 were reported as having eaten eel. From birth, a mother who was unable to provide breast milk for her child, would often use the broth from eel stew. The broth of eel stew would be cooked until it was mushy then wrapped with oats and bound in a cloth for the infant to suck on. This would provide the child with the solid nutrition until the mother was able to breast feed again.

When people were sick, eel stew was given to help maintain their nutrition and to restore their appetite. It is also for this specific reason that later in life Kat would again be used to restore elders' appetites. For example, on many occasions terminally ill people requested eel and eel broth as

(Continued on page 39)

Obedience

By Chris Quequish

Read: Deuteronomy 6:1-6

Keep these words in your heart that I am telling you today. Do your best to teach them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. Deut. 6:6-7

One spring evening during the ice breakup, we went down to the river to see the ice flowing by. My uncle Robert and several children went down with our pet dog. It was just a puppy but we really loved

him as he was very playful. We were curious about the big chunks of ice and wondered if we could jump on one and jump back before it got carried away. My uncle warned us not to go any closer as one might come right up the bank and hit us.

We were foolish to think we could jump from one block of ice to another because it was so dangerous. I am glad that my uncle was there to watch over us. However, the puppy wasn't so lucky. He jumped onto one ice block and went running across several and when he turned to come back, there

was no ice, only open water between him and the shore. The ice moved so fast it carried our puppy away and we never saw him again. It could have easily happened to us and we could have drowned, but because we listened we were all right. All of us cried, but my uncle said there was nothing we could do. We knew how dangerous it was so we never went down to the river except when we went with someone older.

Life is full of dangerous places into which we could get ourselves. We need to realize where those places are. They may

be places where people are drinking or taking drugs. Just as we learned a lesson from the puppy, we need to learn from others as we see their lives being destroyed through sin. We need Jesus to help us and guide us through His Word so He will be able to show us the safe place to walk in.

Question: Am I letting God lead and guide me?

Prayer: Lord, help me to listen to You today and every day. May I take advice from Your Word and practice it in my life. ▲

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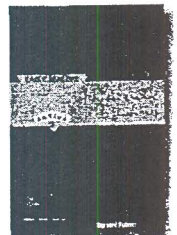
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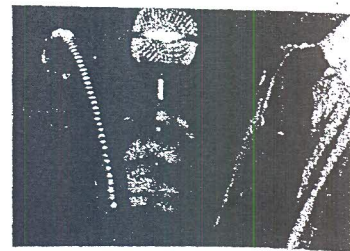
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starting to see it. That's my expertise, my background, bringing people together." Dion promises a strong voice for all westerners, not just Aboriginals, claiming that federal representation needs "fresh blood," and that he is just the person for that. He also praised



Joe Dion



Elijah Harper

CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH KAT

(Continued from page 37)

the one food desired as pleasing and digestible. Eating eel is often followed by a sense of well-being, relaxation, and rest.

Yet, in spite of these qualities, the younger Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq are much more unlikely to eat eel and to experience eating eel than are older community members. For instance, the results from our study show that over 90% of those forty years of age and older reported that they have eaten eel, while fewer than 1 in every 3 of those 25 years old or younger report

having ever eaten eel. There has been a sharp reduction in eel consumption and experiences with eel consumption among the youngest of the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq.

Many Mi'kmaq struggle to make a decent and satisfying living, while maintaining the way of life, language and culture. The deep and rich relation of the Mi'kmaq with Kat illustrates important qualities of the peoples' connections with nature and the gifts of the Creator. These qualities live in the heart of Mi'kmaq culture. The apparent decline in eel fishing

and consumption among the young is troubling. It foretells of a situation in which important cultural knowledge and practices may no longer be passed from elders to younger community members.

Yet, it is not too late to recognize the important matters shown through Mi'kmaq relations with Kat. Now, with the Court affirmations, Mi'kmaq treaty rights provide the basis for increasing direct management authority over natural resources. Great responsibilities come with these rights. The idea of Netukulimk provides some guidance for a uniquely Mi'kmaq approach. The

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American Eel (K'at) and Sharing (Utkunajik) - A Key Mi'kmaq Cultural Characteristic

by Kerry Prosper and Mary Jane Paulette
Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society

Court decisions recognizing Mi'kmaq treaty rights to fish for subsistence, ceremonial and 'modest livelihood' purposes mean much more than only assured access to marine resources. For the Mi'kmaq these rights enable and support the expression of critical practices residing at the heart of the culture. The practice and the place of sharing (utkunajik in Mi'kmaq - pronounced _tk_nagik) among the Mi'kmaq and within Mi'kmaq communities involves more than just material items and considerations. It is a form of communication responsible for the existence and state of our culture. Our whole lives and the knowledge we possess are actually a result of our ancestors sharing stories, legends, food, and friendship, that is sharing equates with our way of life. Yet, this practice of passing down knowledge and sharing is being inhibited by a number of factors such as declines in natural resources, dropping levels of fluency in the Mi'kmaq language, exposure to non-Mi'kmaq cultural practices and technologies (e.g., T.V.), and the decline in consumption of traditional foods. In order to better understand these processes and to document experiences, the Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society is documenting our community's knowledge regarding the fishing, consumption and use of K'at (ka:taq- American Eel).

Throughout our research, community members have been asked to share their experiences, knowledge, stories and family histories associated with fishing and using K'at. This study has been designed to explore and to document the details of our

community's knowledge, including knowledge passed down by our ancestors.

This study has revealed some very interesting findings related to sharing (utkunajik). Evidence clearly indicates that a strong sense of sharing (utkunajik) remains present in our community. For example, the percentage of our community who fish K'at is 26.1% yet, 54% report eating K'at. This difference shows that a great amount of utkunajik is taking place within our community. When those who fished were asked: "What did you do with the eel you've caught?", most indicated they used K'at for food. But, "gave away" was the second most frequently mentioned use. Mi'kmaq men were more likely to give away catches than were women. This reflects the fact that within Mi'kmaq culture males have a responsibility to provide certain sorts of foods for his immediate family and community. Notably, sharing of K'at was specified by many regardless of where they were born and raised, showing that sharing of basic foods such as K'at is truly a cultural characteristic of the Mi'kmaq people.

Another interesting example of utkunajik is expressed in the special learning and caring relationship many noted as existing between the mothers' brothers and the mothers' children. Many among those who fish or fished informed us that they first learned how to fish eel from one of their Mother's Brothers (Uncles). This demonstrates a Mi'kmaq cultural practice where the mothers' brothers play a vital role in the teaching skills and the sharing of knowledge between generations within families and communities. This sort of special relationship and its meanings are surely another cultural characteristic of

the Mi'kmaq people.

Paq'tnekek elders have also told us there was a time when entire families would go down to Bayfield Beach on the evening of the first full moon in June. It is said that specifically at this time, when the tide goes out, the lobsters and eels would hide under the rocks along the beach or under the seaweed surrounding the rocks. Families would then search for the lobsters and eels by turning over rocks and/or peering under the seaweed. Often a home-made spear would be used to catch them. This consisted of a flat piece of wood with protruding nails (see the picture above). These families were certainly sharing an experience together and passing down knowledge while in the process. Upon their return home, they most likely also shared their catches with their families and other community members.

There are also other historical reasons behind the sharing of K'at within our community. "Paq'tnekek" in Mi'kmaq means "by the bay" which holds a significant definition, for it was once a Northeastern Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq winter campsite. It has also been noted to be the place to fish and get eels. "Paq'tnekek is the place to get eels. People often came either to ask for eels or to be shown where eels were fished at in the nearby waters" (Interview with Mi'kmaq Elder, October 11, 2003). This indicates our community also shared with other communities. It was not a coincidence that Paq'tnekek was the area where eel fishing led to the Court challenge that affirmed the Mi'kmaq treaty right to fish commercially.

Utkunajik is also a key aspect of the Mi'kmaq concept and practice of Netukulimk, that is, engaging respectfully and responsibly with all aspects of nature, including other

human beings. Within Netukulimk, sharing provides that all of nature's gifts are used in assuring that no one is left without. As an everyday way of living, utkunajik expresses and encourages positive, supportive, and respectful relationships and social values.

Overall, although there is a strong presence of utkunajik still expressed in our community, it seems that many are forgetting the origins and importance of sharing. Sharing begins with creation and creation is happening around us all of the time - every time a new seed takes root or when a new baby is born. We, as Mi'kmaq people, need to be more culturally responsible for our actions. It is specifically for this reason we should appreciate and encourage the practice



Spring tide during the first full moon of June brings Mi'kmaq families together to seek lobster and eels from amongst the rocks and sea weed of Bayfield Beach. Events such as this enabled our people to pass down knowledge from generation to another. Pictured above are Mr. John R. Prosper and Mr. Benjiman'o'q Paul from different generations of the Paq'tnekek Band. Thanks goes out to Mr. John R. Prosper for playing a vital role in preserving our community's knowledge with his contribution of the above photograph taken in June of 1958.

of utkunajik.

The research reported here was supported by Social Research for Sus-

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Sharing eel catch Mi'kmaq tradition

By Kerry Prosper and
Mary Jane Paulette

PAKTNKEK – Court decisions recognizing Mi'kmaq treaty rights to fish for subsistence, ceremonial and "modest livelihood" purposes mean much more than only assured access to marine resources. For the Mi'kmaq these rights enable and support the expression of critical practices residing at the heart of the culture.

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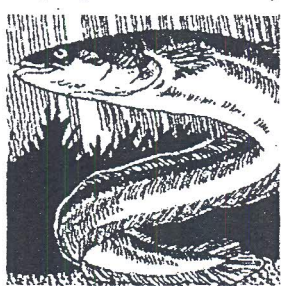
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Fish traps prove aboriginal title

By Stephen Hume
Vancouver Sun

COURTENAY – In the fall of 2002, on one of those grey West Coast afternoons with a sullen sky threatening rain, university archeology student Nancy Greene decided to go for a walk with husband David.

Greene remembers that the tide was exceptionally low and had receded more than a kilometre from the shoreline. Before them sprawled the vast mudflat of Comox Bay, stippled with pools of water, patches of weed and clam shells.

What she'd expected to be a gooey expanse proved firm and the two soon found themselves hiking the tidal flats, something they'd never done before.

Greene noticed odd, knob-like bits of driftwood protruding from the mud. The more she looked, the more she saw – dozens, then scores.

She stooped to examine one. The top had rotted but below the surface the wood had been preserved. It looked like it had been driven vertically into the seabed. It looked man-made. She discerned something that nobody else had apparently noticed in a century or more – the knobs of wood were in parallels.

"She saw these stakes

arranged in lines and that great big light bulb went on inside her head," David said with a grin as his wife reached for a good description of her epiphany.

Greene realized they were looking not at flotsam but at evidence of human engineering. Not only that, the scale appeared enormous. Everywhere she looked, she saw clusters and concentrations.

"I saw stakes everywhere – everywhere – just everywhere I looked. The more I saw, the more I realized that this was vast. I didn't even know what to call them," she recalled. "I didn't know they were called alignments. But I realized its potential importance as an archeological site."

What she was looking at, it turns out, was evidence of what could prove the largest prehistoric architectural feature on the West Coast.

There is also a tantalizing hint in the historic record. John Walbran's landmark study of B.C. place names says the headland enclosing Comox Bay was named Punta de Lazo de la Vega by the Spanish explorer Jose Maria Narvaez in 1791. He translates the term loosely as "the point of the snares on the plain" which might be a reference to extensive fish traps.



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Sharing is an inherent part of Mi' kmaq culture

BY KERRY PROSPER AND MARY JANE PAULETTE, (PAQ'TNEK FISH AND WILDLIFE SOCIETY), ANTHONY DAVIS, (SOCIAL RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES)

Court decisions recognizing Mi'kmaq treaty rights to fish for subsistence, ceremonial and 'modest livelihood' purposes mean much more than only assured access to marine resources.

These rights enable and

support the expression of critical practices residing at the heart of the Mi'kmaq culture. The practice and the place of sharing (utkunajik in Mi'kmaq - pronounced _tk_nagik) among the Mi'k communities involves more than just material items and considerations. It is a form of communication responsible for the existence and state of our culture.

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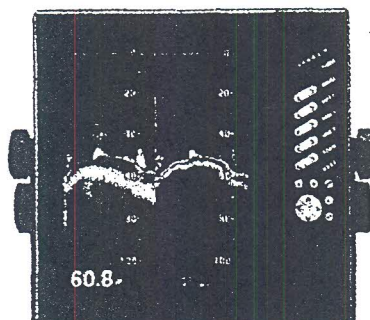
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Living Memories of our Ancestors

by Kerry Prosper & Mary Jane Paulette
Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society*

On the water on a calm night fishing eels can sometimes bring the strangest experiences. Through our research, we have had the privilege to listen and document such experiences from our Elders. It is particularly through these stories and our own experiences that we know our ancestors walk with us still. Let us listen with our hearts and minds to our Ancestors and Elders whose experiences clearly indicate that we as Mi'kmaq People are spiritually and culturally connected to this land and its resources:

The night is calm and the water glistens like glass. You and a friend are out eeling along the shoreline, for this is the ideal night for eeling. A lantern clearly illuminates the bottom, exposing any movements of eels who may be trying to hide from your presence. While you are both moving along the estuary, you see what appears to be a small glow on a distant shore. As you draw nearer to the shore, the glow grows larger and larger, to the point that you can now clearly recognize a fire. As you continue to focus, you begin to see outlines of people moving and dancing around the fire. You can now hear voices talking in a familiar language - Mi'kmaq. You know these words are of Mi'kmaq descent but the words do not make sense - for these are words not of

the present but of the past.

Curiosity quickly overwhelms you, and the both of you begin to move towards shore with hopes of getting a drink of tea and maybe something to eat. As the boat draws nearer to the shore, the fire slowly begins to die down. Despite this, you continue to paddle. Soon you realize there is no fire, no people dancing and no voices... the shore now appears empty. You and your companion still continue towards the shore. Just then, your lantern unexpectedly goes out. You scramble for the flashlight in the dark, but it doesn't work either. You now know both of you will have to go to shore and try to get the light working again before you continue on your journey.

As soon as you step out of the boat, someone or something begins nudging you, making you feel as though you are in the way. At first you assume it's your partner, but when you ask them - they ask the same in return. Chills run up and down your body. Without words or hesitation, both of you get back into the boat and leave. As the boat gets farther from the shore, the flashlight becomes functional and you are able to relight your lantern. You glance back towards the shore, and a small glow reappears. As the glow grows larger, you can once again hear the voices - voices from the past.

These types of experiences are not uncommon among the Mi'kmaq, as they are part of what acknowl-

edges us as a people. These types of stories speak of the presence of the spiritual linkages between our past, present and future. We have listened to these types of stories throughout our daily lives. They were passed down to us for a reason - to remind us of the importance of life. We need to respect them, for these stories describe the memories and experiences of our Elders and Ancestors, and the information they hold. These stories allow us to understand how connecting with the past helps us to treat the present in order to ensure our peoples' future.

Through our study, we have documented and examined such stories and found that our community has been participating in this whole process. Our community has kept in living memory the knowledge of our Ancestors and Elders. Many of those who were identified by the Paq'tnekek community as knowing a lot about fishing, cooking and preparing K'at were of the spiritual world. Although passed on, these persons are acknowledged as the providers of knowledge. Our community keeps in mind those who have taught us. Thus, our Elders' and Ancestors' knowledge is kept alive within the present.

The Mi'kmaq language also gives a new name to those who have passed on. If someone is referring to a person who has passed on into the spiritual world - an additional suffix of o'q is added to their first names. This additional suffix may

also be used to indicate the absence of a person physically, or to indicate unconsciousness. These people are still acknowledged even though they may be sleeping, absent or not of this world. Their state of existence is such that they are only not able to communicate directly at this time.

These stories describe the intersection between two worlds - a connecting point. This link between the past and present has been referred to in many legends. For instance, in the story of Papkootparout, "...there is a bridge across the gap created by physical death. Relationships between parents and children, or between husband and wife, are changed by death, interrupted perhaps, but not ended. This is the circle of life - the living have a connection with their dead ancestors, and at the same time they are the ancestors of those who have not yet come into this world."

The following is another story that tells us of the importance of respect:

A young boy is out fishing eels with his uncle, just as they have done many times before. Yet this day was different - everything was very calm and peaceful. As they approached a certain area, they could hear someone hollering. Almost immediately, the young boy hollered back. But as quickly as he hollered; he was silenced by his uncle. His uncle explains to the boy that the hollering is not coming from a human being, but from an individual from the



Mi'kmaq man and woman in a canoe; serpent Fairy Bay, Kejimikujik National Park, NS Olive and Arthur Kelsall, 1946—1955 Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax NS. The above petroglyph brings to life the voices of our Ancestors. It also demonstrates the Mi'kmaq world view in which humanity struggles to exist as a harmonious part of nature. Available on-line: <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/mikmaq/p0005htm>

past. If he was holler back, he would be showing disrespect to those voices of the past and something may happen to them.

What is additionally remarkable about the two experiences described here is that they both took place in the same place. This land holds a critical meaning for our people and must be treated with respect. These stories confirm we as a people are spiritually and culturally connected to this land for they are the same lands from which our Ancestors have gathered natural resources, fished, prepared foods and lived. This is the land where our Ancestors walked. Thus, we know our spiritual and cultural ties to this land were never broken.

It is through these ties that we know we have a spiritual and cultural connection to the land and its resources. Yet, along with this, comes

the obligation to the land - to manage our resources in a sustainable manner. We need to think of those yet to be born for they will be our future. They will also be obligated to manage the natural resources for their own futures. These stories also tell us about the "circle of life, that life has no beginning and no end." The obligations passed on to us from our Ancestors will be passed on to the future - the unborn. It is with this article that we wish to acknowledge those who have passed on before us and with whose spirits we walk today.

To all of those who have passed before us, Wela'lin'.
*The research reported here was supported by Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries through grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. ☺

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Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat (Eels)

Donald Marshall Jr. was charged by DFO for commercially fishing eels (Kat) without a license. This began another journey by the Mi'kmaq through the legal system for the purpose of affirming treaty rights. In September 1999 the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed the charges against Donald Marshall, in the process affirming the treaty right to fish commercially in support of a 'modest livelihood'. The facts that Donald Marshall was fishing Kat when charged and that the treaty clauses noted in the decision specifically mention Kat seem to have received no consideration in all of the events that have occurred.

Knowing that Kat has been culturally and materially important for the Mi'kmaq, the Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) in collaboration with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries (St. Francis Xavier University) has conducted a household survey in the Paq'tnkek community. The survey was designed to explore the relationship between the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat or American Eel and marks the completion of the first phase of an on-going research project. The results of the survey have been released as a preliminary report entitled: The Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat (American Eel - *Anguilla rostrata*).

The first step in this project was to submit a proposal to the Mi'kmaq Ethics Committee to seek approval and earn the respect of the Mi'kmaq Nation. "The Mi'kmaq Ethics Committee was appointed by the Grand Council in 1999 to establish a set of principles and protocols that will protect the integrity and cultural knowledge of the Mi'kmaq People". This committee's objective is to ensure any research involving the Mi'kmaq would be conducted in a manner respectful to the Mi'kmaq People and their culture. They also recommend any information collected remain in the hands of the various Mi'kmaq communities. Thus ensuring the information would be used in a manner that benefits the Mi'kmaq Nation as a whole. Presently anyone who enters a Mi'kmaq community to study or gather information regarding the Mi'kmaq must first submit a proposal outlining their research plans and their intentions to the Committee prior to implementation. Respecting these principles and protocols, the Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society submitted a proposal describing

the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat research project. Following the committee's review of the proposal, authorization was received in November 2001 to begin the project.

With approval in hand, our next step was to develop a survey aimed at gathering and documenting each Paq'tnkek household's knowledge regarding the past and present fishing practices and use of Kat. In order to accomplish this task in a household setting, it was decided our survey should resemble a census-type questionnaire. Such a questionnaire could be conducted in a respectable and effective manner taking into account each household occupant's knowledge and experiences. A copy of the survey is available at www.stfx.ca/research/srsf/ResearchResources.

Prior to beginning the survey, our community's requirements needed to be considered. We had to ensure the surveyors would be able to meet the needs of our community's participants. For instance, in order to accommodate our community's Mi'kmaq-speaking people, the surveyors should be bilingual in Mi'kmaq and English. This would provide each participant with the option of communicating in the language of their choice. In turn, the participant would be better able to describe any details concerning their knowledge and experiences. We also felt the interviewers should have prior experience in conducting interviews/surveys. This would ensure a high level of comfort and a sense of open communication between all involved. The surveyors should also express a keen interest in the research, thus encouraging participation. Paq'tnkek band members Mary Catherine Laford and Delores Paul satisfied all of these conditions and were engaged as surveyors. Their efficiency and past experiences definitely contributed to the high 95% participation rate in our study, with 93 of the 98 available households taking part. This is an outstanding level of participation, indicating the interest of the community in the study as well as reflecting the diligence of the interviewers in their pursuit and conduct of the interviews.

Results of our findings revealed some interesting patterns regarding the state of the cultural relationship between the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat. First of all, 80 persons, 26.1% of the Paq'tnkek 'on reserve' community reported that they either currently fish or, in the past, have fished for

American Eel. Of these, 53 are men (66.2%) and 27 are women (33.8%). This indicates that although a dominantly male activity, women were quite heavily involved in eel fishery. Further analysis reveals that the women's participation in eel fishing has declined more rapidly than men in past years. When asked if an individual went fishing within the past year, twenty-two percent of the men, but not one woman reported fishing for eel. In addition, women mentioned they primarily fished during the winter as opposed to fishing in both seasons or in the summer.

Another significant finding involved the rate of eel consumption among the Paq'tnkek 'on reserve' population. In general, just over fifty-four percent of all household members surveyed (169 of 312 persons) reported having eaten eel, with men (56.1%) being slightly more likely to eat eel than women (52.2%). Out of these percentages, only 31% of the men and 25% of the women reported eating eel within the last year with a personal preference for winter-caught eels. Also observed within this pattern, females or males over the age of 27 years reported eating eel. For those younger than 27 years of age the rate of consumption declines remarkably. When the rates of consumption and fishing of eel were compared, the numbers of those reporting having eaten eel, contrasted with the much smaller number specified as fishing or having fished eel. This demonstrates that eel has been distributed widely, by those who catch it, within the Paq'tnkek community.

The past and present relationship between the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and a resource such as Kat is very dependent upon the availability and access to the resource. There are many influential changes that have impacted the way of life for the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq. Some of these contributing factors may be changing government policies, court cases, impacts of competing fisheries, environmental changes, global impacts on climate change, etc. Therefore, the Paq'tnkek cultural practices and relationship to Kat would have become susceptible to decline and loss over time.

This is an area of great concern for the Paq'tnkek community. Demographics of the Paq'tnkek community indicate there is a wide gap between the youth and senior population of this community. Such a gap has already inter-

fered with the passing down of knowledge from one generation to the next as evident in our study. The survey results has enabled our community to begin to understand the importance of the cultural relationship between the Mi'kmaq and Kat and the need to preserve it. The community can now begin to understand why there is a cultural decline and take steps to sustain and preserve this rich cultural relationship.

To assist with this process, the Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society (PFWS) is planning to further investigate this cultural relationship by interviewing in depth the individual(s) who received the most mentions as knowing a lot about fishing and/or cooking Kat in our survey. It is very important for communities to address these types of concerns in order for all of the Mi'kmaq nation to understand for ourselves and to one day become masters of our own destiny. The individuals who will be taking the lead role in Phase II of our project will be the major contributors to the preservation of our culture. ☉



Last winter, Kerry Prosper took his daughters, Jaden and Lenora Prosper on a winter eel fishing expedition on Pomquet harbour. Pictured above is one of his daughters Jaden holding an eel he speared that day. This is the creation of his children's first memories of eel fishing. This demonstrates the act of passing down knowledge to the next generation further preserving the cultural relationship of the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq and Kat. It also emphasises the cultural importance of the past and present traditional use of Pomquet harbour by the Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaq.

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ensure that any research involving the Mi'kmaq would be conducted in a manner respectful to the Mi'kmaq People and their culture as well as used in a manner that will benefit the Mi'kmaq Nation as a whole. Presently anyone who enters a Mi'kmaq community to study or gather information must first submit a proposal outlining their research plans and their intentions to the Committee. The Paq'tnekek Fish and Wildlife Society received authorization in November 2001 to begin their project.

With approval in hand, our next step was to develop a survey aimed at gathering and documenting each Paq'tnekek household's knowledge regarding past and present fishing practices and use of Kat. In order to accomplish this task in a household setting, we developed a census-type questionnaire. Prior to beginning the survey, we had to ensure the interviewers would be able to meet the needs of the participants. At least one interviewer needed to be bilingual in Mi'kmaq and English. This would provide participants with the option of communicating in either language, and in the language with which they would be best able to describe their knowledge and experiences. The effectiveness of the interviewers is evident in the fact that we achieved a 95% participation rate in our study, with 93 of the 98 available households taking part. This is an outstanding level of participation, indicating the interest of the community in the study as well as reflecting the diligence of the interviewers.

Our findings reveal some important patterns regarding the state of the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaqs' cultural relationship with Kat. First of all, 80 persons, 26.1% of the Paq'tnekek 'on reserve' community, reported that they either currently fish or, in the past, have fished for American Eel. Of these, 53 are men (66.2%) and 27 are women (33.8%). This indicates that, although a dom-

inantly male activity, women were quite heavily involved in eel fishery. Further analysis reveals that the women's participation in eel fishing has declined more rapidly than that of men in recent years. When asked if an individual went fishing Kat within the past year, twenty-two percent of the men, but not one woman reported fishing. In addition, women mentioned they primarily fished during the winter as compared with the male pattern of fishing in both seasons.

Another significant finding involved the rate of eel consumption among the Paq'tnekek 'on reserve' population. In general, just over 54% of all household members surveyed (169 of 312 persons) reported having eaten eel. Out of these, only 31% of the men and 25% of the women reported eating eel within the last year, with most expressing a personal preference for winter-caught eels. Also observed was the fact that mainly people 27 years of age and older reported eating eel. Eating Kat declines remarkably for those younger than 27 years. When the consumption patterns and level of participation in fishing of eel were compared, the numbers of those reporting having eaten eel far exceed the much smaller number identified as fishing or having fished eel. This demonstrates that eel was, in the past, and is currently distributed widely, by those who catch it, within the Paq'tnekek community. Sharing food resources such as Kat within extended families and communities is a deeply felt cultural practice among the Mi'kmaq.

The past and present relationship between the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq and a resource such as Kat is very dependent upon its availability and on access to the resource. There are many changes that have impacted on the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq way of life. Some of the predominant change agents have been and remain government policies, court cases, impacts of competing fish-

eries, introduction of commercial eel fishing and the elver fishery, environmental changes, and global impacts of climate change. Paq'tnekek cultural practices and relations with Kat have been susceptible to decline and loss over time as a consequence of change agents such as these.

This is an area of great concern for the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq community. In the Paq'tnekek community there is a wide social gap between youth and seniors. This gap has already interfered with the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next, as is evident in our study's findings. The survey results has enabled our community to begin to understand the importance of the cultural relationship between the Mi'kmaq and Kat and the need to preserve it. The community can now begin to understand factors fueling the decline and take steps to sustain and preserve this rich and important cultural relationship. It is very important for communities to address these types of concerns in order for all to develop understandings and to take action when necessary to preserve and revitalize their culture. †

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K'at (ka:taq - America Eel): A Mi'kmaq customary food cache

By Mary Jane Paulette, Paq'tnkek Fish and Wildlife Society, Kerry Prosper, Paq'tnkek First Nation, Nova Scotia, and Anthony Davis Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries, St. Francis Xavier University

The Supreme Court of Canada's Marshall decision is permanently transforming the commercial fisheries. By establishing that the Mi'kmaq First Nation has treaty-based rights for participation in commercial fisheries the Court's decision has required that room be made for First Nation participation.

This is being accomplished through Fisheries and Oceans buy-outs and redistribution to the various Mi'kmaq communities of available licenses, quotas and capacity.

This policy has had the immediate effect of grossly

inflating the market values of licenses and quotas to such an extent that many non-native new entrants must assume even more tremendous debt burdens than was previously the case.

Such a situation pretty well assures that 'fishing for

cerns among non-native fish harvesters about their future in the fisheries. They have also fueled suspicion, resentment, and conflict between the Mi'kmaq and non-natives.

It is time to step back from this set of circumstances, if

Donald Marshall Jr. was fishing eel commercially when he was charged by DFO officers. This was no coincidence. At that time eel received little regulatory and resource management attention.

debt' becomes a reality for many. In addition, the Court's decision clearly proclaims the fact that all non-natives participate in fishing as a result of a government allocated privilege, while Mi'kmaq participation is based on a legal right.

These attributes and consequences of the Court's decision have deepened con-

just to avoid having the emotional fall-out cloud the potentials for understandings and collaborations that offer some hope for a revitalized commercial fisheries managed with respect for the interests and concerns of both the Mi'kmaq and non-natives.

The current practice for integrating First Nations is

largely designed and orchestrated by Fisheries and Oceans. It is a practice that has been most concerned with maintaining the ways and means of its fisheries management regime, a regime that has overseen resource collapses, fisheries moratoria, and tremendous dissatisfaction.

Mi'kmaq have been faced with ultimatums - either exercise your treaty rights within this system as specified in signed fisheries agreements or face arrest, interference, and years of expensive legal fights. With few resources to draw upon, facing high levels on community unemployment, and under threat, it is not at all surprising that most Mi'kmaq leaders felt compelled to sign fisheries agreements.

Through all of this, few seem to have asked the Mi'kmaq people what they would either prefer or propose to do with regard to the exercise of their treaty right for participation in the commercial fisheries. This sort of consultation would have taken time and care. Also, it might have drawn out qualities of Mi'kmaq culture and

perspective that offer tremendous promise for repositioning fisheries management and fishing practices on a more environmentally sustainable basis than is currently the case.

Donald Marshall Jr. was fishing eel commercially when he was charged by DFO officers. This was no coincidence. At that time eel received little regulatory and resource management attention.

At that time of little commercial interest, eel was one fish that had been basically left to the Mi'kmaq and others to harvest where and when they felt inclined. Harvesting eel to barter, among other things, is specifically noted by the Supreme Court as one of the activities embedded in the treaties that establishes the legal basis of the Mi'kmaq right to participate in commercial fisheries for livelihood purposes.

Obviously the Mi'kmaq have a long history of harvesting and using American eel. It is certainly curious that these qualities seem to have been ignored in the debates and discussions of

Mi'kmaq commercial fishing treaty entitlements.

In part to remedy this, over the last few years we have been documenting Mi'kmaq relations with and use of American Eel (K'at [pronounced ka:taq] in the Mi'kmaq language).

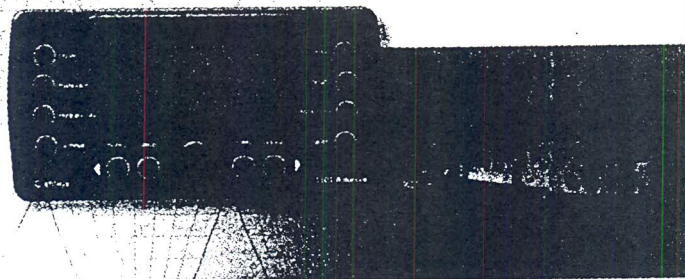
Our studies are concerned with understanding ways in which the Mi'kmaq people and their culture view and interact with life forms such as the eel. It is hoped that understandings of the Mi'kmaq and their culture will be improved, and that the potential contributions of the Mi'kmaq to repositioning fisheries management in the interests of all will be made clear.

For thousands of years the Mi'kmaq have shared a long spiritual and cultural relationship with K'at. K'at have provided the Mi'kmaq with a variety of benefits, while in Mi'kmaq culture K'at have become associated with spiritual meanings. For the Mi'kmaq, K'at as food has been especially important: The importance of eel has rested in the fact that it is a high quality food accessible during times of food shortage, such as the winter. In these sorts of conditions K'at has been drawn on as a food cache.

In order to explore Mi'kmaq relations with eel, we have documented the past and present usage of K'at among the Paq'tnkek First Nation Mi'kmaq in Northeastern Nova Scotia. Here we describe and discuss two important findings arising from this study.

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From page 10

identified as direct participants in the eel fishery.

Of those 27 years of age and older, a substantial majority of the men and over 1 in every 3 women reported that they had gone or were currently eel fishing.

But, the numbers of younger persons identified as experienced with fishing K'at shows comparatively low rates of participation. Notably fewer than one in every ten boys 14 years of age and younger and not one girl in this age range have fished eel.

This is worrying in so far as it suggests that few in the younger generation are learning and experiencing the Mi'kmaq relationship with eel. Cultural knowledge is at risk of being lost. This possibility is also evident in the simple fact that eel fishery male and female participation rates decline dramatically from the oldest through to the youngest age categories.

Those reporting that they either currently or in the past fished eel, were asked: "what do/did you do with the eel you've caught?" Responses show that the primary use of K'at for male and female harvesters has been for food (see Figure 1).

This is also reflected in the notable percentages of men and women who report giving eel they've caught to others. Substantial numbers of men and women also report using eel for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. Fewer than one in three men and about one in five women report that at one time or another they have sold K'at, a notably low proportion given the fact that Mi'kmaq have

had access to few economically valuable harvestable resources.

For the Mi'kmaq, K'at has always been there during good times and bad and often has been critical during food shortages. Many rivers contain the remnants of stone weirs constructed for the purpose of catching eels and other fish. Eel has been described as one of the "Mi'kmaq's favourite catches" and was sometimes eaten raw or hanged to be dried for later use."

Frequently, K'at has gotten the Mi'kmaq people through the hardest times of the year. Maybe this is why K'at plays a ceremonial role in various traditions and is offered as a gift to the Creator. The Mi'kmaq knew eels were likely available when there was nothing else to eat.

K'at is also noted as one of the resources bartered by the Mi'kmaq in the Supreme

Court of Canada's affirmation of commercial fishing treaty rights (R v. Marshall, 1999).

Traditionally K'at was used as a major source of food for every stage of life. While just over 1 in 4 Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq fish eel, over 1 in 2 were reported as having eaten eel. From birth, a mother who was unable to provide breast milk for her child, would often use the broth from eel stew. The broth of eel stew would be cooked until it was mushy then wrapped with oats and bound in a cloth for the infant to suck on. This would provide the child with the solid nutrition until the mother was able to breast feed again.

When people were sick, eel stew was given to help maintain their nutrition and to restore their appetite. It is also for this specific reason that later in life K'at would

again be used to restore elders' appetites. For example, on many occasions terminally ill people requested eel and eel broth as the one food desired as pleasing and digestible. Eating eel is often followed by a sense of well-being, relaxation, and rest.

Yet, in spite of these qualities, the younger Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq are much more unlikely to eat eel and to experience eating eel than are older community members. For instance, the results from our study show that over 90% of those forty years of age and older reported that they have eaten eel, while fewer than 1 in every 3 of those 25 years old or younger report having ever eaten eel. There has been a sharp reduction in eel consumption and experiences with eel consumption among the youngest of the Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaq.

Many Mi'kmaq struggle to make a decent and satisfying living, while maintaining the way of life, language and culture. The deep and rich relation of the

Mi'kmaq with K'at illustrates important qualities of the peoples' connections with nature and the gifts of the Creator.

These qualities live in the heart of Mi'kmaq culture. The apparent decline in eel fishing and consumption among the young is troubling. It foretells of a situation in which important cultural knowledge and practices may no longer be passed from elders to younger community members.

Yet, it is not too late to recognize the important matters shown through Mi'kmaq relations with K'at. Now, with the Court's ruling, Mi'kmaq treaty rights have been affirmed. Great responsibilities come with these rights. The Mi'kmaq idea of Netukulimk provides some guidance for a uniquely Mi'kmaq approach, one that has the potential to guide the development of new approaches to fisheries management. The concept of Netukulimk recognizes the

interconnection of every animate life form and inanimate object.

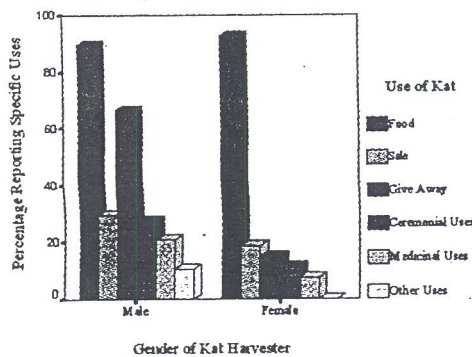
Starting with the principles embedded in the Netukulimk concept, Mi'kmaq culture offers the opportunity to build resource management from a 'first principle' commitment to ecosystem stewardship.

Such an approach would assure resource sustainability, strengthen Mi'kmaq culture, and contribute to achieving satisfying livelihoods.

It also offers a basis on which Mi'kmaq and non-natives can meet and form alliances dedicated to developing an ecosystem stewardship approach as the first principle in fisheries management and livelihood sustainability. This process must begin with building mutually respectful understandings of concerns, preferences, and needs.

For more information on the research and research collaboration visit: (www.stfx.ca/research/srsf)

Figure 1: Uses of Kat



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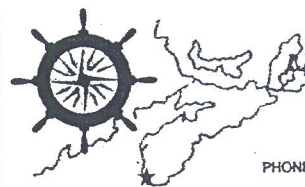
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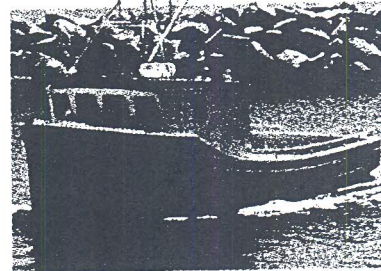
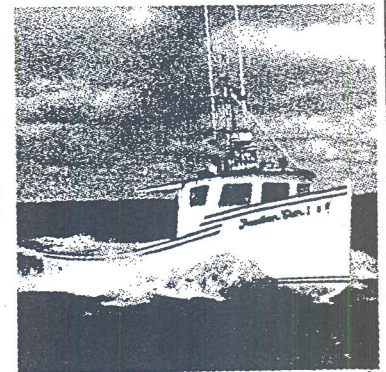


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Kat [ka'taq - American Eel]: A Mi'kmaq Customary Food Cache

by Mary Jane Paulette
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For thousands of years the Mi'kmaq have shared a long spiritual and cultural relationship with Kat. Kat have provided the Mi'kmaq with a variety of benefits, while in Mi'kmaq culture Kat have become associated with spiritual meanings. For the Mi'kmaq, Kat as food has been especially important. The importance of eel has rested in the fact that it is a high quality food accessible during times of food shortage, such as the winter. In these sorts of conditions Kat has been drawn on as a food cache.

In order to explore Mi'kmaq relations with eel, the Paq'tnekk Fish and Wildlife Society, in collaboration with Social Research for Sustainable Fisheries at St. Francis Xavier University, has documented the past and present usage of Kat among the Paq'tnekk First Nation Mi'kmaq. Here we describe and discuss two important findings arising from this study.

Ninety Paq'tnekk Mi'kmaq men and women were identified as direct participants in the eel fishery (Table 1). Of those 27 years of age and older, a substantial majority of the men and over 1 in every 3 women reported that they had gone or were currently eel fishing. But, the numbers of younger persons identified as experienced with fishing Kat shows comparatively low rates of participation. Notably fewer than one in every ten boys 14 years of age and younger and not one girl in this age range have fished eel. This is worrying in so far as it suggests

Table 1: Participation in Eel Fishing by Age and Gender

Age Categories	Gender	
	Male (N=53) %	Female (N=27) %
42 Years to Oldest	80.6	39.3
27 to 41 Years	55.2	32.4
15 to 26 Years	22.6	15.2
8 to 14 Years	9.7	0.0
Youngest to 7 Years	0.0	0.0

that few in the younger generation are learning and experiencing the Mi'kmaq relationship with eel. Cultural knowledge is at risk of being lost.

This possibility is also evident in the simple fact that eel fishery male and female participation rates decline dramatically from the oldest through to the youngest age categories.

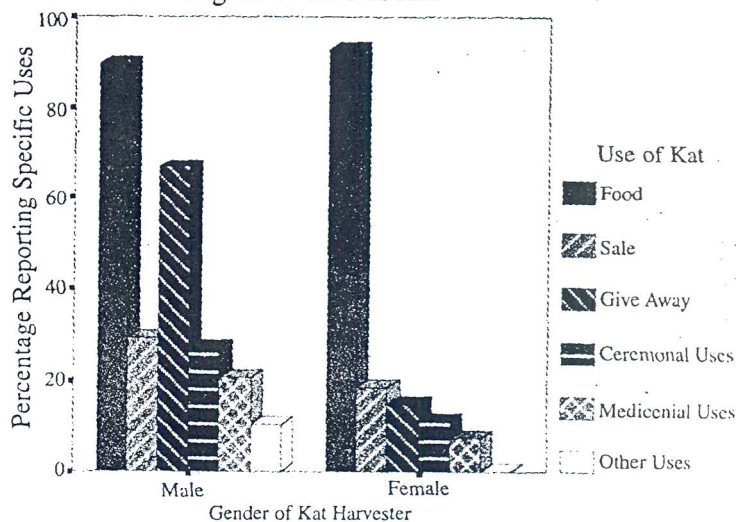
Those reporting that they either currently or in the past fished eel, were asked: "what do/did you do with the eel you've caught?" Responses show that the primary use of Kat for male and female harvesters has been for food (see Figure 1). This is also reflected in the notable percentages of men and women who report giving eel they've caught to others. Substantial numbers of men and women also report using eel for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. Fewer than one in three men and about one in five women report that at one time or another they have sold Kat, a notably low proportion given the fact that Mi'kmaq have had access to few economically valuable harvestable resources.

For the Mi'kmaq, Kat has always been there during good times and bad and often has been critical during food shortages. Many rivers contain the remnants

of stone weirs constructed for the purpose of catching eels and other fish. Eel has been described as one of the "Mi'kmaq's favourite catches and was sometimes eaten raw or hanged to be dried for later use." Frequently, Kat has gotten the Mi'kmaq people through the hardest times of the year. Maybe this is why Kat plays a ceremonial role in various traditions and is offered as a gift to the Creator. The Mi'kmaq knew eels were likely available when there was nothing else to eat. For instance, a 19th century Indian Agent reported having "...found four orphan children who were unable to rise for the want of food - whole families were subsisting upon wild roots and eels..." Kat is also noted as one of the resources bartered by the Mi'kmaq in the Supreme Court of Canada's affirmation of commercial fishing treaty rights (R v. Marshall, 1999).

Traditionally Kat was used as a major source of food for every stage of life. While just over 1 in 4 Paq'tnekk Mi'kmaq fish eel, over 1 in 2 were reported as having eaten eel. From birth, a mother who was unable to provide breast milk for her child, would often use the broth from eel stew. The broth of eel stew would be cooked until it was mushy then wrapped

Figure 1: Uses of Kat



with oats and bound in a cloth for the infant to suck on. This would provide the child with the solid nutrition until the mother was able to breast feed again.

When people were sick, eel stew was given to help maintain their nutrition and to restore their appetite. It is also for this specific reason that later in life Kat would again be used to restore elders' appetites. For example, on many occasions terminally ill people requested eel and eel broth as the one food desired as pleasing and digestible. Eating eel is often followed by a sense of well-being, relaxation, and rest.

Yet, in spite of these qualities, the younger Paq'tnekk Mi'kmaq are much more unlikely to eat eel and to experience eating eel than are older community members. For instance, the results from our study show that over 90% of those forty years of age and older reported that they have eaten eel, while fewer than 1 in every 3 of those 25

years old or younger report having ever eaten eel. There has been a sharp reduction in eel consumption and experiences with eel consumption among the youngest of the Paq'tnekk Mi'kmaq.

Many Mi'kmaq struggle to make a decent and satisfying living, while maintaining the way of life, language and culture. The deep and rich relation of the Mi'kmaq with Kat illustrates important qualities of the peoples' connections with nature and the gifts of the Creator. These qualities live in the heart of Mi'kmaq culture. The apparent decline in eel fishing and consumption among the young is troubling. It foretells of a situation in which important cultural knowledge and practices may no longer be passed from elders to younger community members.

Yet, it is not too late to recognize the important matters shown through Mi'kmaq relations with Kat. Now, with the Court's

affirmations, Mi'kmaq treaty rights provide the basis for increasing direct management authority over natural resources. Great responsibilities come with these rights. The idea of Netukulimk provides some guidance for a uniquely Mi'kmaq approach. The concept of Netukulimk recognizes the interconnection of every animate life form and inanimate object. Starting with the principles embedded in the Netukulimk concept, Mi'kmaq culture offers the opportunity to build resource management from a 'first principle' commitment to ecosystem stewardship. Such an approach would assure resource sustainability, strengthen Mi'kmaq culture, and contribute to achieving satisfying livelihoods.

For more information on the research and research collaboration visit:
www.sfx.ca/research/srsf

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November 29, 2006

SSHRC Aboriginal Research Grants
Strategic Programs and Joint Initiatives
Ottawa, Ontario

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to offer Paq'tnekek First Nation support to the research project from St. Francis Xavier University and Mi'kmaq communities studying Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Culture and Capacity. We have practical interests in this research for our hunting, fishing, gathering and community knowledge and welcome the opportunities to work with Jane McMillan, the principal investigator and the co-applicants- Kerry Prosper, Mary Jane Paulette, Christina E. Paul, and Tony Davis. We also support the opportunity to have our members access the research training and information workshops what result from this research project.

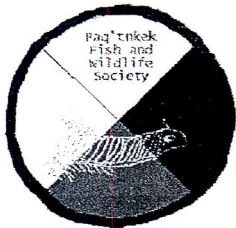
Sincerely,



Albert Juliano
Councilor

Aune Marie Paul
Councilor

Chief David Piche



PAQ'TNKEK FISH AND WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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