



# Keeyask Generation Project

## Environmental Impact Statement

Supporting Volume  
Socio-Economic Environment,  
Resource Use and Heritage Resources



June 2012

# SECTION 2

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT..... 2-1**

**2.1 REGIONAL STUDY AREA OVERVIEW ..... 2-2**

**2.1.1 Historical Influences on Settlement ..... 2-2**

**2.1.2 Community Development in the Regional Study Area ..... 2-3**

        2.1.2.1 First Nations Communities ..... 2-5

        2.1.2.2 Northern Affairs Communities..... 2-5

        2.1.2.3 Growth of Incorporated Municipalities as Industrial  
                Communities ..... 2-5

**2.2 LOCAL STUDY AREA..... 2-5**

**2.2.1 Historical Overview of the Local Study Area..... 2-6**

        2.2.1.1 Pre-Contact..... 2-6

        2.2.1.2 Early Contact and Fur Trade..... 2-7

        2.2.1.3 Government, Treaty 5 and the Bayline..... 2-7

        2.2.1.4 Industrial and Hydroelectric Development..... 2-9

**2.2.2 Overview of Hydro Development First Order Effects..... 2-10**

        2.2.2.1 Kelsey Generating Station ..... 2-13

        2.2.2.2 Kettle Generating Station ..... 2-14

        2.2.2.3 Long Spruce Generating Station ..... 2-15

        2.2.2.4 Lake Winnipeg Regulation and the Churchill River  
                Diversion..... 2-15

        2.2.2.5 Limestone Generating Station..... 2-16

**2.2.3 Keeyask Cree Nations ..... 2-17**

        2.2.3.1 Cree Nation Partners ..... 2-17

            2.2.3.1.1 Tataskweyak Cree Nation..... 2-18

            2.2.3.1.2 War Lake First Nation ..... 2-25

        2.2.3.2 Fox Lake Cree Nation ..... 2-28

        2.2.3.3 York Factory First Nation ..... 2-35

**2.2.4 Gillam ..... 2-42**

**2.2.5 Thompson ..... 2-46**



# LIST OF TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
Table 2-1: Population of Regional Study Area.....	2-2
Table 2-2: Summary of Hydro Development in the Local Study Area.....	2-12

# LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2-1: Total Population <sup>1</sup> of the Regional Study Area by Community Type: First Nation <sup>2</sup> , Northern Affairs <sup>3</sup> , Cities and towns <sup>4</sup> and Other <sup>5</sup> (2001).....	2-4
Figure 2-2: Community Development in the Local Study Area.....	2-51

## 2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This section provides an overview of recent and past events that contributed to the current socio-economic environment of the Regional Study Area, which covers northern Manitoba (see Section 1.3 for the definition of the study areas) with a focus on communities in the Socio-Economic Local Study Area. The section includes:

- A discussion of the Regional Study Area and brief summary of the development of northern communities;
- An historical overview and high level summary of the major influences of change in the region;
- A description of hydroelectric development projects and their direct effects on the water, land and communities in the Local Study Area; and
- An historical review of each community in the Local Study Area. The focus of this section is not on developing a comprehensive historical account for each community; rather it focuses on identifying events and patterns of change that shape the current lives and decision-making processes of the people in each of these communities. The following communities are part of the historical review:
  - Cree Nation Partners (CNP), including:
    - Tataskweyak Cree Nation (TCN) and the Split Lake reserve community (formerly known as Split Lake First Nation); and
    - War Lake First Nation (WLFN) at Ilford (prior to 1980 WLFN Members were part of Tataskweyak Cree Nation);
  - York Factory First Nation (YFFN) and the York Landing reserve community;
  - Fox Lake Cree Nation (FLCN) and the reserve community at Fox Lake (formerly Bird) and Gillam (prior to 1947 FLCN was part of YFFN);
  - The City of Thompson; and
  - The Town of Gillam (as noted above, home to FLCN).

This section addresses and responds to the joint planning for the Keeyask Environmental and Regulatory Protocol outlined in Section 1.2.2, including Aboriginal traditional knowledge (ATK). One of the values acknowledged as important to the EA process and inherent in the ATK principles is to provide a historical review of the Local Study Area as context for the assessment. This section focuses on how the KCNs have an interrelated history with Manitoba Hydro.

To describe the historical context of northern Manitoba, this section compiles information provided through the KCNs' own community studies and environmental evaluation reports, key person interview (KPI) programs with northern communities conducted by the socio-economic study team as well as other sources of information including the Hudson Bay archives. Past studies related to hydro



development and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are incorporated into the discussion where applicable.

## 2.1 REGIONAL STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

This section presents an overview of the Regional Study Area and focuses on the development of northern Manitoba communities. For thousands of years Aboriginal people have inhabited these lands, situated on the Canadian Shield and along the Manitoba Hudson's Bay coastline and its interior. European settlement and influence began in the 1600s in northern Manitoba. In the past 200 years, a wide range of influences and activities have transformed the diversity of demographics, economy, infrastructure and use of the natural resources of the region.

The Regional Study Area includes a land area of approximately 438,929 km<sup>2</sup>. Map 1-2 illustrates the general boundaries of the Regional Study Area, which are consistent with those defined under Schedule D of the current Burntwood-Nelson Agreement (BNA). The Regional Study Area is also relatively consistent with Statistics Canada Census Divisions 19, 21, 22 and 23, differing slightly in the most southeastern and southwestern boundaries. The communities of the Regional Study Area are also depicted in Map 1-2. The southern boundary of the BNA hiring preference zone is depicted as context for the geographic size of the Regional Study Area.

Table 2-1 shows the population of the Regional Study Area for each census year from 1991 to 2006. According to Statistics Canada data, the population of the Regional Study Area was approximately 84,600 in 2006. Approximately 72% of the people self-identified as Aboriginal.

**Table 2-1: Population of Regional Study Area**

Census Year	Total Regional Study Area
1991	76,591
1996	83,134
2001	82,427
2006	84,600

Source: Statistics Canada 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007a.

Note:

- This is the total populations of Census Divisions 19, 21, 22 and 23.

### 2.1.1 Historical Influences on Settlement

The original inhabitants of Manitoba were nomadic Aboriginal tribes, who lived off the land and typically followed a seasonal cycle, timing their movements to take advantage of the region's natural resources. The first Europeans to arrive to what is now the Province of Manitoba were fur traders in the 1600s. With them came new external economic and social influences to the Aboriginal people who had occupied the area for several thousands of years. Between the 1600s to early 1900s, the fur trade expanded and

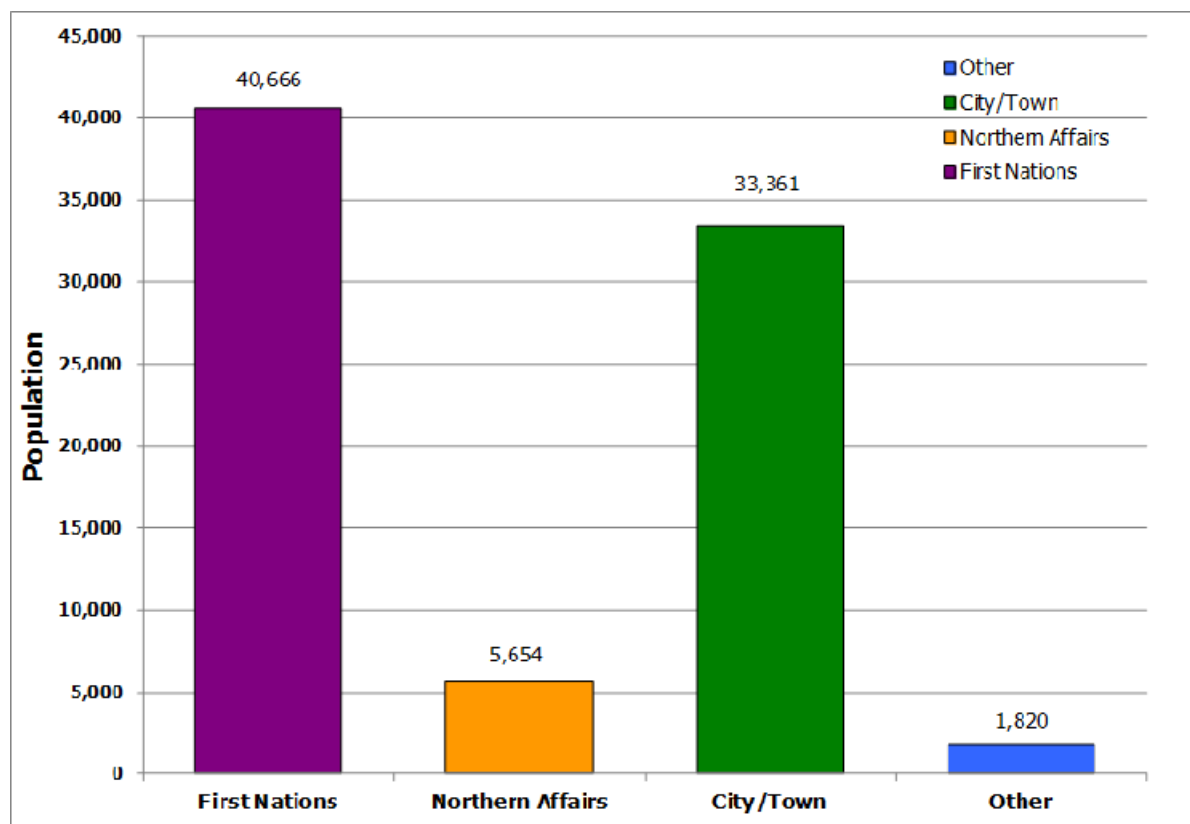
many Aboriginal people were introduced to external economic and social influences on the northern region. Although colonization of the southern regions of Manitoba began in the 1800s, it was not until the late 1800s that increased interest in northern Manitoba occurred.

In the 1800s, colonization began to fully claim and develop the southern regions of the province. Treaties were negotiated and implemented to transfer ownership of lands from Aboriginal tribes to the Crown for development by new immigrants in return for the protection of Treaty rights and reserve lands. Within eight years of Canada's confederation, Treaty 5 was negotiated (in 1875), and adhesions to the treaty were signed in 1908 and 1910 by Split Lake and York Factory First Nations, respectively. In 1912, Manitoba's political boundaries were extended northward to include the entire northern area of what is known today as the Province of Manitoba (Manitoba Historical Society 2010).

Among the many other external forces that followed were the *Natural Resources Transfer Act* of 1930, the registered trapline system, residential schools and the development of transportation and communication infrastructure. The Hudson Bay Railway, which had been under construction off and on since 1910, was completed in 1929 (Malaher 1984). These influences opened the north to further industrial expansion of forestry, mining and hydroelectricity. This historical influence and new settlement in the region affected the way of life and culture of the Aboriginal population, transforming their seasonal, more nomadic way of life to a more sedentary way of life in communities.

## 2.1.2 Community Development in the Regional Study Area

The Regional Study Area's communities have evolved into three distinctive groupings: First Nations reserve communities, Northern Affairs communities, and industrial towns and cities. The vast majority of the population live in these types of communities with a very small proportion of individuals living in other more remote areas classified under rural municipalities, crown land or server lands (NMEDC 1992). Figure 2-1 provides a visual representation of the proportion of the Regional Study Area population that lives in each type of community.



Notes:

1. Since Statistics Canada uses random rounding and other procedures to ensure confidentiality, the totals in this figure do not equal the total population counts for 2001 in the Regional Study Area.
2. The total population of First Nation communities was obtained by summing the population of each community in Census Divisions 19, 21, 22 and 23 that Statistics Canada defines as a First Nation.
3. The total population of Northern Affairs communities was obtained by summing the 2001 total population of each community listed as a Northern Affairs community by Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Government of Manitoba 2011).
4. The total population of cities and towns, which includes local government districts and rural municipalities, was obtained by summing the total population for each community in Census Divisions 19, 21, 22 and 23 that Statistics Canada defined as a city, town, local government district or rural municipality.
5. The total population included in "other" was obtained by summing the unorganized census division data in Census Divisions 19, 21, 22 and 23 but excluding all communities listed as Northern Affairs communities. This number is not precise as there could be overlap with Northern Affairs populations. This number has been rounded to the nearest 100.

**Figure 2-1: Total Population<sup>1</sup> of the Regional Study Area by Community Type: First Nation<sup>2</sup>, Northern Affairs<sup>3</sup>, Cities and towns<sup>4</sup> and Other<sup>5</sup> (2001)**

First Nations make up nearly half of the 2001 Regional Study Area population (49.9%). The next largest portion of the population (41%) resides in cities and towns in the Regional Study Area. Although the number of Northern Affairs communities is similar to the number of First Nation communities, the total Northern Affairs population represents the third lowest of the Regional Study Area, at 6.9%. The remaining population (2.2%) falls into the "Other" category living in rural, unorganized communities (Statistics Canada 2002). The information supports the diverse demographics now present in the Regional Study Area.



### **2.1.2.1 First Nations Communities**

Today, the population living in First Nations communities is primarily Status Indian. As shown on Map 1-2 (Socio-Economic Regional Study Area), there are 41 First Nation reserve communities listed. In 2001, the total population of these reserves was approximately 40,666 (Statistics Canada 2002). This is the largest segment of the population in the Regional Study Area.

### **2.1.2.2 Northern Affairs Communities**

Present-day Northern Affairs communities have developed as Non-Status Indians and Metis dispersed throughout the Regional Study Area. Many found employment on the Canadian National Railway and founded a number of small communities along the Canadian National Railway rail line (NMEDC 1992). The Northern Affairs communities include Metis communities and settlements adjacent to reserves. Together, all the Northern Affairs communities had a population of about 5,654 in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2002). Some had larger populations ranging from 300 people to about 700 people, while the majority had fewer than 100 residents and some had 10 or fewer people (NMEDC 1992).

### **2.1.2.3 Growth of Incorporated Municipalities as Industrial Communities**

As demand for natural resources increased, a number of single-industry communities were created across the north. These communities provided housing and services for employees in the mining, forestry, electricity and transportation sectors. Although some single-industry communities, such as Flin Flon, remain vibrant today, others experienced a decrease in population related to economic declines in industry employment. Approximately 41% of the Regional Study Area's population lived in incorporated industrial cities or towns in 2001. The City of Thompson represents over 42% of this population, with approximately 14,040 people in 2001. Together, the incorporated municipalities had a total population of about 33,361 in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2002).

Incorporated municipalities and industrial communities in the Regional Study Area have flourished and declined with the northern economy and demand for resources. The two largest communities in the Regional Study Area today are Thompson and Flin Flon, which were mining communities that diversified and became regional centres. The Town of The Pas was incorporated in 1912 and was the first regional centre to emerge in northern Manitoba. The Pas was built on the fur trade, the Hudson's Bay Railway, agriculture and the provision of government services. The forestry sector further diversified the economic base of northern Manitoba communities in the 1960s. Churchill is the region's most northerly incorporated municipality, which functions as a transportation centre and also relies on tourism for economic diversity. Gillam and Grand Rapids grew into industrial communities when Manitoba Hydro began major hydroelectric power development in the north. Snow Lake is a mining community in the Regional Study Area with an economy linked to the mining sector.

## **2.2 LOCAL STUDY AREA**

Section 2.2.1, below, describes drivers of change and community development in the Local Study Area from pre-contact to present day.

## 2.2.1 Historical Overview of the Local Study Area

This section describes the history of the Cree and outlines the development of Cree communities and industrial communities in the Local Study Area. Emphasis is placed on key drivers of change since European settlement and industrial development, beginning with the Hudson Bay Company York Factory Post of 1682 and ending with the present day Project Partnership. The overall purpose is to provide a snapshot of the past and to place each Local Study Area community in its historical context as related to the planning and environmental assessment (EA) process for the Project.

Figure 2-2 shows the overall themes of change that have influenced all of the main communities in the Local Study Area<sup>1</sup>. The figure illustrates major influences affecting development of the Local Study Area communities. Figure 2-2 highlights the common historic threads, drivers of change and major transitions that resulted in inter-cultural connections between the Cree and outsiders, including often distant outside institutions. The figure follows a temporal and visual history with the following key components:

- Blue rectangles represent the development of the KCNs communities;
- Orange rectangles illustrate communities that developed through European and industrial influences; and
- Yellow octagons reflect influences integral to change within the communities that were imposed by government and industrial development such as agreements, policy implementation processes and major developments.

### 2.2.1.1 Pre-Contact

The Cree have resided on the land that is now northern Manitoba since before recorded history. Archaeological evidence suggests that ancestors of the KCNs have lived in and around the Local Study Area for over 5000 years (see the Heritage Resources section). They were not part of a community defined strictly by place, as their communities did not have defined or rigid geographic boundaries. Prior to first contact with European settlers, members of communities had a long nomadic history of living off the land in areas along the coast of the Hudson Bay and its interior northern region. Their territory covered the land and waterways surrounding the Nelson River and Hudson Bay Coast (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b; WLFN 2002; FLCN 2009a Draft; YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). Many lived in scattered hunting clans and followed an annual cycle of migration prescribed by the natural yearly cycle of the water and lands in northern Manitoba. The clans were comprised of extended families, who gathered at certain times of the year to share in harvest and engage in other traditional activities. There were customary areas where families would winter, and then reconvene with other family groups in the summer at specific gathering places. Knowledge of these traditional migration routes was passed on to younger generations through oral history, which taught how the waterways and lands provided travel routes and resources to sustain their lives. These clans were not associated with a specific First Nation but referred to themselves as *Ininewak*. In history documents, the

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<sup>1</sup> The Figure is located at the end of the chapter.

Cree name *Maskego-Eninivuk*, meaning Swampy Cree, is given to the group of *Ininewak* who lived in the Hudson Bay lowlands. Archaeological evidence shows their occupation of the land along these traditional routes and encampments date back several thousand years (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; WLFN 2002; FLCN 2009a Draft; YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

### 2.2.1.2 Early Contact and Fur Trade

Europeans journeyed into the Hudson Bay early in the seventeenth century and by the latter half of the century Europeans were settling within the Regional Study Area (Manitoba Historical Society 2010). The Cree's first contact with outsiders centered on the fur trade and Christian missions. These two elements foreshadowed the development of communities in the region as well as the Cree's transition from a more nomadic lifestyle to a settled lifestyle in communities. Fur trade posts were often located near traditional gathering spots and seasonal camps of the Cree, and more permanent communities grew out of the camps. York Factory was one of the first European settlements and was based around the Hudson Bay Company York Factory Fur Trade Post, which was built in 1684 (see Figure 2-2). Later, fur trade posts were established inland, creating a fur trade corridor to the south, with two documented posts along Split Lake. In 1886, a post was established at the north end of Split Lake. This was followed by the construction of a permanent Anglican Mission house in 1906 (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a). In general, throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, the Cree maintained an independent way of life during European settlement despite the increased permanence of outsiders. The Cree way of life and use of seasonal travel patterns remained fundamentally unchanged.

Throughout this early history there were Cree (some known as the Homeguard Cree) who began to establish more permanent settlements. They remained in close proximity to York Factory and other trading posts to support and benefit from trade and the European-influenced economy. Over time, the Homeguard and other Cree along the fur trade corridor began to rely on their work in the European driven economy and on York boats for goods, food items, alcohol and other provisions. In addition, lasting ties with Europeans were created through marriage, thereby creating children of mixed ancestry (Government of Saskatchewan 2010).

### 2.2.1.3 Government, Treaty 5 and the Bayline

European colonization and the establishment of the Dominion of Canada in 1867 resulted in the formation of an independent political structure, government controls and an even greater influx of European immigrants. The establishment of the *Indian Act* (1876) brought additional changes to the way of life of Aboriginal people. The *Indian Act* introduced a formal western system of governance and legislated the transfer of land to Canada through the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; Henderson 2012). Soon after the *Indian Act*, Treaties were negotiated, including the Treaty 5 adhesion in the Regional Study Area. At the time of the signing of Treaty 5 in southern Manitoba (1875), the Federal Government was mainly interested in obtaining lands that could be developed for agriculture. The later signing of the adhesion to Treaty 5 in northern Manitoba took place between 1908 and 1910. A number of Aboriginal Chiefs were involved in the Treaty 5 adhesions, including those from the Local Study Area. Signing events took place at the settlement of Split Lake in 1908 and at York Factory in 1910.

At this time, the formalization of Indian status members associated with the Split Lake Band (later named the Split Lake Cree Nation and now named Tataskweyak Cree Nation) and the Fort York Band (later renamed the York Factory First Nation) consisted of the Cree families and clans from the Local Study Area who travelled to a Treaty event to sign and receive their benefits (Beardy and Coutts 1996). The Treaty was a constitutionally recognized agreement between the government and the Aboriginal people. In general, the agreement was for the Split Lake Band and York Factory Band to give up rights to large parcels of agricultural and resource rich lands in exchange for compensation, the promise of reserve lands and provisions for their livelihood (Applied History Research Group 2001). The Treaty was seen as a way to protect the rights and the way of life for Aboriginal people, while at the same time helping them survive the political and economic changes occurring due to the influx of European immigrants. The administration of Treaties introduced the concept of Indian status and reserve lands (Henderson 2012). Formal and legal recognition of reserve lands was not provided under Treaty until much later for each of the KCNs communities. These factors were integral to changing the shape of communities in the Local Study Area and affected the ability of the Cree to maintain an independent way of life because the land they had always inhabited was now claimed by outsiders.

After Treaty 5 adhesions were enacted, the Hudson Bay Railway was built from The Pas to the Hudson Bay coast at Churchill. Completed in 1929, the railway increased access to the north and led to the creation of new Bayline communities on this new route (Malaher 1984). York Factory was not one of the Bayline communities; therefore, access to the community continued to be travel by boat. The Bayline service centres added to the decline of York Factory, and the post closed in 1957. YFFN was relocated to York Landing because the York Factory Post had become isolated and would be difficult to maintain as a reserve without an economic or transportation base.

Bayline communities at Ilford and Gillam became busy service centres. Both of these communities were inhabited by First Nation Members who lived in the region and who were looking for more regular wage employment. These Bayline stops provided reasonable and economical travel options for Indian Agents, other government personnel and outsiders to access the northern areas of Manitoba. This access facilitated the implementation and administration of the Department of Indian Affairs programs, such as residential schools and welfare, which were to have profound influences on where people lived, their loss of culture and the disruption of families.

The other key drivers of change on First Nation people within the Local Study Area were the management of natural resources and the RTL System. The history of resource management in Manitoba is complicated and interconnected with the onset of political and government structures discussed above. However, a complete recount is beyond the scope of this section. In general, the recommendations of the Manitoba Natural Resources Commission lead to *The Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Act* of 1930, which transferred management of natural resources to the Province (Weir 2012). The Manitoba Department of Natural Resources became the administrative body, and the development of the RTL system was implemented in 1940. The RTL system was put in place to address the overharvesting of furbearers in the region. The RTL system altered the patterns of traditional harvesting for First Nation Members and placed defined geographic boundaries on the hunting, trapping and fishing areas of individual harvesters. In addition, once the Province gained authority over resource management there was increased access to the region by prospectors and the mining and forestry industries, which

contributed to overharvesting in northern Manitoba. Ilford became one of the centres for administering the RTL system through a provincial office of the Department of Natural Resources. Ilford was also a hub for the local commercial fishery. Winter freighting facilitated by Ilford's establishment as a Bayline community increased its presence as a government and economic service centre. Most Ilford residents, many of whom were Members of TCN, eventually became part of the newly established War Lake First Nation in 1980.

#### **2.2.1.4 Industrial and Hydroelectric Development**

Thompson was the first industrial community to be constructed after *The Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Act*. The city of Thompson was established in 1959 as the centre for housing the new International Nickel Company (Inco) Mining and Smelting Operations. The construction of the Inco mining operations was completed and in operation by 1961. Thompson infrastructure included all the modern amenities of a western town and by 1965, was home to 8,500 people. In 1966, the construction of Provincial Trunk Highway (PTH) 6 connected Thompson to Grand Rapids, creating road access to the north (Thompson Unlimited 2007). The mining and smelting operations and town site required large amounts of electricity, which led to the construction of the Kelsey Generating Station, the first hydroelectric development along the Nelson River. Thompson would eventually replace Ilford as the service centre of northern Manitoba.

Between 1957 and 1995, four large hydroelectric generating stations and works associated with the Lake Winnipeg Regulation (LWR) and the Churchill River Diversion (CRD) water management system were developed. In conjunction with the first of three hydroelectric projects on the lower Nelson River, the Town of Gillam was modernized and expanded in the mid 1960s to serve as the operations and administration base for Manitoba Hydro's Nelson River generation, conversion and transmission activities. Construction and operation of these northern hydroelectric projects resulted in life altering changes to the water, land, and traditional way of life of First Nation Members living in the Local Study Area. Section 2.2.2 describes the first order effects of the Nelson River hydro development projects.

These developments were planned and implemented with little to no involvement or consultation with nearby communities whose traditional lands and ways of life were soon to be substantially altered. In 1974, TCN and YFFN joined together with three other First Nations to form the Northern Flood Committee. The Northern Flood Committee provided the foundation for these First Nations to begin asserting their rights by creating systems and processes to protect their use of land and water in the north and also to regain components of their traditional way of life. In 1977, the Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) was signed but the agreement was difficult to implement (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a).

After much delay and well after LWR and CRD had been planned, built and began operations, four First Nations, including TCN and YFFN, negotiated and entered into Comprehensive Implementation Agreements (CIA) with Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba and Canada. The CIAs addressed adverse effects caused by past Manitoba Hydro projects and outlined how the NFA would be implemented in each of these communities. A CIA with TCN was signed in 1992 and with YFFN in 1996. The CIAs clarified the obligations of each party and in addition, provided economic development funds and additional lands,



beyond the recommendations of the NFA. Those KCNs who were not a party to the NFA, including WLFN and FLCN, began independent negotiations with Manitoba Hydro after the NFA was signed. FLCN finalized an Impact Settlement Agreement addressing past adverse effects in 2004 while WLFN reached an agreement for past damages in 2005.

These agreements set the stage for a new era of local First Nation involvement in hydroelectric development, which is exemplified in this Project. TCN, WLFN, YFFN and FLCN were all invited and have become equity partners with Manitoba Hydro in the Project. They have participated jointly with Manitoba Hydro in Project planning and review of the Project EIS, and have negotiated community-specific Adverse Effects Agreements (AEA) with Manitoba Hydro in advance of Project construction beginning. Involvement of the KCNs in evaluation of Project alternatives, partnership development and detailed Project planning has been an integral and vital component of the Project. TCN's involvement has been since the early 1990s<sup>1</sup> and in May 2001, YFFN and FLCN signed the Keeyask Negotiating Principles and Process Agreement with CNP and Manitoba Hydro as a critical step towards concluding the Joint Keeyask Development Agreement (JKDA). This process culminated in the KCNs and Manitoba Hydro signing the 2009 JKDA, formalizing their partnership and marking a new era of the KCNs' involvement and decision-making in the Project.

## 2.2.2 Overview of Hydro Development First Order Effects

Since the late 1950s, Manitoba Hydro has been transforming the natural energy of waterways in Northern Manitoba into electricity to meet the power needs of Manitobans and earn income from export power sales. From the late 1950s to the present, more than 35 Manitoba Hydro generation, conversion and transmission projects have greatly altered the lives of the KCNs communities by modifying water levels and flows in waterways located in the traditional areas of these communities; changing the character of land used by community residents; and adding to the region's workforce and population. These effects have in turn resulted in changes to the surrounding environments and their use, including the following broad categories of environmental and socio-economic effects:

- Physical environment: water levels and flows, debris, erosion, ice;
- Biological environment: plants, animals, fish;
- Resource use patterns: trapping, hunting, fishing, gathering; and
- Socio-economic environment: economy, social and cultural well-being, lifestyle, governance, navigation and travel, and community infrastructure and cohesion.

Particularly influential have been the construction and operation of four generating stations along the lower Nelson River: Kelsey, Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone as well as the LWR and the CRD water management projects.

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed review of the KCNs engagement in pre-Project planning is included in the CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report.



This section also provides a snapshot of hydroelectric projects and first order effects<sup>1</sup> of the past 60 years of Manitoba Hydro development in northeastern Manitoba. This will provide context for understanding the environmental and socio-economic implications of Manitoba Hydro development on the KCNs communities discussed later in this section. The projects are identified and the most direct and obvious effects on water (change in levels and flows), land (area disturbed) and workforce (peak and/or total workforce requirements) are summarized based on available sources, most notably:

- Manitoba Hydro History and Timeline 1873-2010 (n.d.);
- Volume 1: Split Lake Cree First Nation: Analysis of Change (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a);
- Volume 2: Manitoba Hydro Projects and Related Activities in the Split Lake Cree Study Area: History and First Order Effects (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b);
- FLCN History Project July 31, 2009 (draft);
- YFFN Traditional Values, Occupancy and Community History Project (2010); and
- WLFN OWL Process Keeyask Project Draft Report 2002.

Table 2-2 outlines Manitoba Hydro projects in the traditional areas occupied by the KCNs communities and groups them into six time periods. The table indicates the years that construction initially took place and the in-service date of each hydroelectric project. For each project, additions and upgrades requiring construction have taken place after the in-service date and are not included in the original years of construction shown in Table 2-2.

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<sup>1</sup> The term first order effects is taken from the 1996 Split Lake Cree Post Project Environmental Review (Volume Two), and is defined as follows: “the most direct and obvious changes to the land and water environment arising from hydro electric development in the region [and] are the first step in a typical hierarchy of associated physical, biological and socio-economic changes”.

**Table 2-2: Summary of Hydro Development in the Local Study Area**

<b>Hydro Project Time Period</b>	<b>Description of Related Projects</b>	<b>Construction Years</b>	<b>In-service Date</b>
Kelsey Time Period	Kelsey Generating Station Airstrip at Kelsey construction site Rail Spur Transmission Thompson town site and INCO nickel mining and smelting plant electrified.	1957-1961	1960
Kettle Time Period	Kettle Generating Station Butnau Diversion Radisson Converter Station Transmission Kelsey-Radisson/Kettle-Radisson Bipoles I and II (HVDC) Gillam town site Expansion Telecommunications Towers Rail spur	1966-1974	1973
Long Spruce Time Period	Long Spruce Generating Station Roads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gillam to Long Spruce</li> <li>• Long Spruce to Sundance</li> <li>• Thompson to Split Lake</li> </ul> Rail spur Henday Converter station Transmission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kelsey-Mystery Lake/ Kelsey-Radisson/ Long Spruce – Radisson/ Long Spruce – Henday</li> <li>• Henday to Radisson (HVDC)</li> </ul> Sundance town site	1971-1979	1979
Lake Winnipeg Regulation and Churchill River Diversion	Lake Winnipeg Regulation Churchill River Diversion Northern Flood Agreement Implementation	1973-1977	1977

**Table 2-2: Summary of Hydro Development in the Local Study Area**

Hydro Project Time Period	Description of Related Projects	Construction Years	In-service Date
Limestone Time Period	Generating Station Road: Split Lake - Long Spruce Rail spur Transmission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radisson-Churchill/Radisson-Limestone</li> <li>• Henday Collector lines</li> <li>• HVDC#2 backup</li> </ul>	1985-1990	1991
Transmission	The Nelson River DC Transmission System (consists of Bipole I and Bipole II)	Bipole I: 1971-1977 Bipole II: 1978-1985	1972

Source: Manitoba Hydro 2012.

Below, a brief description of each time period is provided along with a summary of first order effects that can be discerned from available sources. Discussion of how these first order effects changed the way of life for each KCNs community is reviewed in Section 2.2.3.

### 2.2.2.1 Kelsey Generating Station

The Kelsey Generating Station is located on the upper Nelson River close to where it enters Split Lake. It is at the southern edge of the Split Lake Resource Management Area (RMA), about 25 km kilometres downstream from York Landing and 40 km south of the reserve community of Split Lake. Kelsey was the first hydroelectric generating station developed on the Nelson River, built in response to the request of Inco for Manitoba Hydro to provide over 100 MW of power to serve the new nickel mining and smelting operations, as well as the associated town site development now known as Thompson. The main construction took place over four years between 1957 and 1961. It began with the building of an airstrip and the rail spur line from the construction site to the Bayline, which was used for transporting the construction workforce and materials to and from the site. The town site of Thompson, 90 km from the western edge of the Split Lake RMA, was constructed during this time. Thompson did not exist prior to its development as the Inco workforce town site (Fraser 1985).

Kelsey's forebay raised water levels by approximately 9.5 m above natural levels, and flooded approximately 5,767 ha of shoreline for 150 km along the upper Nelson River from Kelsey to Sipiwesk Lake. No shoreline was cleared in advance, leading to considerable debris in the river along with flooding and erosion impacts on the upper Nelson (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a, 1996b). Kelsey did not result in any measurable changes in the water flows along the Nelson due to its operational parameters. A fire at the dam site in 1968 caused a release of stored up water, causing slush ice with effects felt at the communities of Split Lake and York Landing.

In terms of transmission projects, the first order effects in the Local Study Area were limited. A 93 km transmission line was built from Kelsey to Thompson with about 50 km traversing the southern edge of the Split Lake RMA. In addition, a rail spur was built from the Bayline to the construction camp at Kelsey. The influence of the Kelsey construction workforce on local communities was restricted due to lack of access between the construction site and the communities (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b). Thompson, by 1965, had a population of 8,500 and was connected to Winnipeg through the extension of PTH 6 from Grand Rapids.

### 2.2.2.2 Kettle Generating Station

The Kettle Generating Station, located at the Big Kettle Rapids (*Kitchi Askiko Powistik*) site, is within the eastern part of the Split Lake RMA, and is about 7 km north east of Gillam (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b; FLCN 2009a Draft). The Kettle Project is about 80 km downstream of Split Lake. At the time of construction, the vast majority of the about 300 people living in Gillam and the surrounding area were FLCN Members (FLCN 2009a Draft). Development of the Kettle Generating Station was the first of four projects, outlined in Phase I of the framework for northern hydroelectric development recommendations submitted by the Nelson River Programming Board in 1965. Demand for electricity in Manitoba was forecast to exceed available supply by the winter of 1970/71, thus providing the rationale for developing the Kettle Generating Station (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b). The main construction activities took place from 1966 to 1974. Construction involved several large related projects above and beyond the Generating Station, which had lasting first order effects on the Local Study Area, namely, the construction of the Radisson Converter Station, transmission lines from Kelsey to Radisson, modernization and expansion of Gillam to accommodate the construction workforce (and later operation personnel), a new airstrip and a road. Work camps to house project workers were also constructed, and both the Gillam town site and nearby work camps housed well over 1,000 outside workers during peak periods. Shortly after 1966, 24 km of dike was constructed along with a cofferdam, borrow pits and quarries, and the Butnau River dam. The forebay was closed in 1970, allowing the Kettle Generating Station to begin producing power. It was fully operational by 1974.

Closure of the forebay resulted in water levels at the structure to be raised by 30.48 m, tripling the size of Moose Nose Lake, and creating a reservoir named Stephens Lake, which flooded over 21,853 ha of land and inundated the traditional land use area of Moose Nose Lake area and the Butnau River. The water diversion of the Butnau into the Kettle River resulted in increased flows between Cache Lake/Butnau River, adding to the flooding and erosion.

Large tracts of land were used, with approximately 13,818 ha used for related projects, which included the expansion and modernization of Gillam and the Radisson Converter Station. This land area also included telecommunication towers, the Kelsey-Kettle transmission lines, the Kettle-Radisson Transmission lines, the Bipole I (HVDC) and Bipole II (HVDC) transmission lines and a right-of-way clearing that is 895 km long from the Radisson Converter Station to the Dorsey Converter Station northwest of Winnipeg. The Bipole I and Bipole II traverse south of Ilford and cross over much of the land used by WLFN and comprise a portion of land within the Regional Study Area.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Gillam changed in population from 300 to over 2,500 people to accommodate project workers and their families as well as workers needed to service the added population. In addition to the population boom of Gillam, the construction camp at the site resulted in an influx of over 1,500 workers into the town of Gillam (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b). During construction, the peak workforce at the site reached 2,500 people (Manitoba Hydro 1973). Following construction, the demographics of Gillam changed permanently from being a predominantly First Nation and Metis community, to a larger and modern industrial town site comprised largely of Manitoba Hydro operation and administration staff and their family members (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b; FLCN 2009a Draft).

### **2.2.2.3 Long Spruce Generating Station**

The Long Spruce Generating Station is located 16 km downstream of Kettle and approximately 27 km east of Gillam, between the communities of Bird (now known as Fox Lake) and Gillam on the Nelson River, and is approximately 96 km north east from Split Lake (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996b; FLCN 2009a Draft). Long Spruce was the next set of rapids after Kettle Rapids and was identified for hydro development along the lower Nelson River to meet growing electricity demands in Manitoba. The main construction activities for Long Spruce took place over seven years from 1971 to 1979.

Effects due to flooding and surface land use were far less than those experienced as a result of Kettle; however, the permanence of outsiders, the increased development of a road network and expanding hydro-related projects within the Local Study Area were part of the construction of Long Spruce. When the Long Spruce forebay was created in 1977, water levels rose at the structure by about 25.9 m, resulting in approximately 1,376 ha of land being flooded upstream. Related project activities, including roads, a converter station and transmission projects, affected over 9,308 ha of land during this time period.

Among the related infrastructure built during this time was an all-weather road from Thompson to Split Lake, which was to become the first phase of an all-weather road from Thompson to Gillam. By the onset of Long Spruce construction, Gillam had already experienced the boom-bust effect associated with the construction of Kettle and had changed into a modern hydro industry town site. Long Spruce construction employed over 2,000 workers at its peak, virtually all of whom were from outside the region. Most were housed at the project construction camp. Exact workforce numbers were not readily available through public sources. Operation and maintenance requirements of Long Spruce added to the Manitoba Hydro operation and maintenance workforce, including their associated families living in Gillam.

### **2.2.2.4 Lake Winnipeg Regulation and the Churchill River Diversion**

The operation of LWR and CRD altered the Nelson River and its tributaries in the Local Study Area by reversing the seasonal water level highs and lows and changing the natural cycle of flows. There was no construction of physical works related to LWR and CRD within the Local Study Area. The major components outside the Local Study Area included control dams at Missi Falls and Notigi, the Jenpeg Generating Station, a dam at Kiskitto Lake, and several control channels.

The LWR and CRD were the result of the 1966 Agreement between the Federal and Provincial Governments. Lake Winnipeg Regulation enabled Manitoba Hydro to control the natural flow of water into the Nelson River from Lake Winnipeg to make more outflow available in the fall and winter when demand for electricity is at its highest. In addition to helping Manitoba Hydro meet demand for electricity in the fall and winter, LWR provided a flood control mechanism for communities in southern Manitoba (Wojczynski, *et al.* 2010).

The CRD diverted part of the flow of the Churchill River into the Burntwood and Nelson river systems to maximize hydroelectric output. The main construction activities occurred between 1973 and 1977, although no construction workforce activity occurred within the Local Study Area. The diversion of water flows from the Churchill River into the Nelson River resulted in dewatering of approximately 6,880 ha of lakes and waterways, exposing new surface land, particularly on the Churchill River in the northern part of the Split Lake RMA. Even though CRD was beneficial to developing hydroelectric projects, the seasonal reversal of water levels and altered flows resulted in many changes to the environment and to the KCNs Members living in the Local Study Area.

### 2.2.2.5 Limestone Generating Station

The Limestone Generating Station is located approximately 25 km downstream from the Long Spruce Generating Station, at the eastern edge of the Split Lake RMA near the border of the Fox Lake RMA, approximately 6 km east of Fox Lake (Bird) and 50 km north east of Gillam (Manitoba Hydro 1986). The original start of construction for infrastructure associated with Limestone began in 1976, with the development of a road, rail spur and the construction of the Sundance town site. In 1979, construction was suspended because growth in electricity demand dropped, limiting the need to expand generating supply. Major construction recommenced after a sale of power to the Northern States Power Corporation was in place. The main construction activities took place from 1985 to 1990.

First power from Limestone occurred in 1990, and once the generating station was fully operational in 1992, the water levels at the station were raised by 33.53 m. The increase in water levels was largely contained within the Nelson River banks, resulting in 208.8 ha of flooding. Directly downstream of the Limestone Generating Station, the effects of dewatering and lowered water levels exposed new riverbed and rocks, and dried up at least one tributary of the river (FLCN 2009a Draft). Transmission projects associated with Limestone took up approximately 1,138 ha of surface land. At the same time, the road from Split Lake to Long Spruce completed the all-weather road system from Thompson to Gillam, with this new stretch of road network connecting from Split Lake to Long Spruce and occupying 667 ha of land. The construction work force peaked between 1,500 and 1,800 workers. The construction camps at Limestone and Sundance accommodated 1,400 and 400 workers, respectively. Very few workers and their families moved into Gillam because the Sundance community was an attractive residential option, and was located close to the Limestone project site.



## 2.2.3 Keeyask Cree Nations

This section provides a summary of the events and influences of change for each of the KCNs, individually known as TCN, WLFN, YFFN and FLCN. The summary is based on public documents and materials shared by the KCNs communities. Each of the KCNs is discussed separately, to acknowledge the history that has changed and shaped each community, in order to provide context for the Project EA.

The KCNs share much of the same experiences and patterns of change, including their history with national and provincial policy and government, hydroelectric development and the substantial changes to their way of life that these precipitated. The history of Canadian First Nations is complex and spans many years. The pace of change has intensified over the past 200 years with many changes to social and economic conditions of First Nations people and communities throughout the 20th century (TCN 2001).

In addition to a shared history, each of the KCNs has had different experiences with hydroelectric development. A number of factors have influenced the experience each of the KCNs has had with hydroelectric development, including, but not limited to, the proximity of the main reserve community to a hydroelectric project and construction workforce; the location of family ancestral territories and RTLs to areas affected by hydroelectric development; the First Nation's level of political and community organization; and the extent of previous involvement with the outside world. These differences and others, to some degree, have influenced how a community has perceived and responded to the outside influence of change, and therefore, how Members have been affected in their day-to-day lives. Each of the KCNs has provided its own environmental evaluation report that illustrates differences in how it sees the Project and the Partnership. These unique aspects of the KCNs history, especially as it relates to more recent events, relay how each First Nation perceives community well-being and decision-making processes.

The following provides an overview of the history of the KCNs. A holistic and meaningful history of each of the KCNs requires the perspectives and traditional knowledge of the KCNs. Please refer to community documents referenced in each of the following sections, as well as their own Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Reports for details on each of the communities.

### 2.2.3.1 Cree Nation Partners

TCN and WLFN signed a Memorandum of Co-operation and Understanding in May 2001, and began working together as the Cree Nation Partners (CNP) in the planning, studies and partnership processes related to the Project. The CNP share much of the same history, as many of WLFN Members were originally TCN Members. Community history sections are provided first for TCN, with discussion that covers sequential influences on the community. This is followed by a section on WLFN, with a review of early history and a focus on information after WLFN became a separate First Nation.

Representatives from each community sit on several key committees that oversee the regulatory, licensing and EA processes. Issue-specific working groups involving CNP representatives have included the following multi-lateral groups: Mercury and Human Health Technical Working Group, Aquatic Working Group and Mammals Working Group. As well, there was a bilateral CNP Socio-Economic Steering

Committee focused on participating in, reviewing and informing the socio-economic fieldwork studies needed for the EIS.

### **2.2.3.1.1 Tataskweyak Cree Nation**

Several documents that speak to the history of the living and ancestral experience of hydroelectric development from the perspective of TCN have been produced. Information provided in this section is from these key TCN documents:

- The collected volumes of a post project environmental review (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a, 1996b);
- The CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report; and
- Our People, Our Lands and Waters, Our Vision, Our Voice: The position of Tataskweyak Cree Nation Regarding Developments in the Split Lake Resource Management (TCN 2001).

The documents cited above provide a more in-depth understanding of the story and history of TCN.

Tataskweyak means “the place of tall trees” and is the Cree name given to Split Lake. TCN has historically been referred to as the Split Lake Cree – or Split Lake First Nation. However, in recent years the community reclaimed its traditional name and now refers to itself as Tataskweyak Cree Nation. The reserve community is still known as Split Lake.

Prior to the colonization and industrial development within the Local Study Area, TCN had ancestral family territories relatively consistent with their current RTL block and the Split Lake RMA (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report). TCN for centuries has made extensive use of their traditional territories interior to the coast along the Nelson River, travelling on boat and foot and harvesting the resources of the waterways and lands. It should also be noted that there are TCN Members with ancestral territories that extend beyond the RMA but, in general, the discussion focuses on the ancestral territories indigenous to the Split Lake RMA and RTL System. The Split Lake reserve is situated along the north shoreline of Split Lake at the heart of their homeland ecosystem, where many families of TCN ancestry gathered for thousands of years (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN FUR TRADE AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUTSIDERS**

Throughout much of its history, TCN has used and harvested the territories located inland from the Hudson Bay coast. The introduction of and relationships with the Europeans and the integration into an economy of trade were not instantaneous, and occurred more slowly. In general, for the ancestors of TCN, involvement with European settlers evolved over the latter part of the 1700s and in the 1800s, when there was a greater influx of population. Records show the Split Lake Cree were interested in the Hudson’s Bay fur trade and relationships with settlers, but did not view early involvement as essential to their survival. They were able to maintain their traditional way of life for hundreds of years after first contact with Europeans (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a). In 1886, a trading post was built at the present day location of Split Lake, which facilitated the establishment of a more permanent community. During this time, Cree from York Factory and other areas of the vast Hudson

Bay region came to settle around Split Lake to find relief from a scarcity of game and resources in their traditional family territories. The movement of the *Ininewak* from York Factory into Split Lake meant that extended traditional routes outside those indigenous to Split Lake would become part of TCN's ancestral history (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a).

### **DEVELOPMENT OF A CHRISTIAN FAITH**

Shortly after Split Lake was established as a more permanent settlement, Anglican missionaries visited. In 1897, they built a log school, followed by a church and mission in 1906. The first missionaries stayed in the community for many years, and introduced Christianity to the Cree of Split Lake in a way that was widely accepted. Historical accounts show that the Cree have had strong beliefs and values based on their relationship with the land and a deep connection to *Askiy*. For those Cree at Split Lake, the Christian faith fit well within Cree world views (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

### **TREATY 5 ADHESION AND THE FORMATION OF THE SPLIT LAKE BAND**

The 1908 signing of Treaty 5 at Split Lake came three decades after the first Treaty 5 was signed in southern Manitoba (Applied History Research Group 2001; CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report). Through the 1908 Treaty the Split Lake Band was formalized. Immediately after signing the Treaty, TCN's traditional lifestyles continued. Family groups left the Split Lake Band Reserve in the fall and winter and returned in the summer. The Split Lake settlement housed an Anglican Church and school, and those unable to leave with their family groups for hunting and gathering remained year round. The Split Lake settlement became the main region surveyed for a reserve in 1913; however, the area was not formally confirmed by the Crown as the Split Lake reserve until 1959 (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a). The Split Lake reserve had become a community with defined geographic boundaries and over the past century, the community has had to adapt to changes from the political and government structures that would unfold.

### **HUDSON BAY RAILWAY OPENS ACCESS TO THE NORTH**

The construction and operation of the Hudson Bay Railway brought changes to TCN. The development of the Bayline stop at Ilford, located along the Aiken River, became a frequented stop and service centre used by TCN. Some TCN Members who stayed year round in the community moved to Ilford, to take advantage of wage employment opportunities, the Hudson Bay store and other services based there (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report). While many Members continued to be self-sufficient based on traditional lifestyles, interest in wage employment grew as opportunities became more prevalent. Many Members sought to maintain a balance between their traditional patterns of living and wage employment.

### **NATIONAL POLICIES AND CHANGES TO COMMUNITY LIVING**

Ilford became the location for district offices to administer national programs and policies. While some of these programs were beneficial, others had a very disruptive and negative influence. For TCN, the most negative was the residential school system that started in 1929. Under this program, the Federal

Government required the eldest child from each family at Split Lake be sent to residential school, removing them from their home (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report). This resulted in great hardship and distress for the students attending the schools and for the parents whose children were no longer with them.

By the 1930s, attending school was a requirement for school-aged children whether they attended residential school or remained in the community. To conform to this requirement, women and children had to leave the traplines to live in houses closer to the local school. Families could no longer travel together into the bush and pursue their traditional lifestyle during the school year. Cree children had much less opportunity to learn the traditional way of life, including the skills in resource harvesting and oral traditions.

Other changes in government would have additional effects on TCN, including *The Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Act* of 1930, which resulted in provincial ownership of traditional TCN lands and the eventual creation of the RTL system.

Family allowance was introduced in 1950, leading to further concentration of the TCN population in the community of Split Lake. By the 1950s, virtually all TCN families were living in the community of Split Lake and at Ilford. A few Members continued to live off the land year round. This type of planned, permanent community living resulted in unfamiliar patterns of living and a changed physical and social environment (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a).

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AFFECTS TRADITIONAL HARVESTING**

Changes in the pattern of resource use and the associated economy placed strains on available resources and created problems associated with competition. In the 1940s, the provincial RTL system was established. This resulted in the development of the Split Lake RTL Block, a series of traplines registered with the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources for the use of any Split Lake Cree Member. Individual trappers were registered to a trapline and later the provision of community-use traplines was established. This changed the communal aspects of traditional harvesting pursuits to more individualistic endeavours. In addition, individuals who were not Members of Split Lake Cree Nation were provided traplines in the area.

Mineral rights and exploration were also granted through the Department of Natural Resources. As a result, Inco developed a nickel mining and smelting operation at Thompson, on the edge of TCN traditional territories. As noted earlier, the Inco development and construction of Thompson was the impetus for the Kelsey Generating Station, which was the first generating station built in the Local Study Area. Kelsey was located near where the upper Nelson River enters Split Lake, an area that had traditionally been used by TCN Members. Provincial ownership of land and water resources in the region set the stage for hydroelectric development along the Nelson River from the 1960s to the 1990s. These developments would have a profound effect on the lifestyle and culture of TCN through effects on resources and traditional pursuits in the area, by increased TCN contact with the outside world and modernization.

## PERMANENT CHANGES TO WATER LEVELS AND FLOWS IN LAKES AND RIVERS

As presented in Section 2.2.2, construction and operation of hydroelectric development began with Kelsey in 1956, and subsequently, the Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone generation stations along with LWR and CRD were developed in the traditional resource area of TCN. The Split Lake reserve community and the RMA are surrounded by hydroelectric projects. The changes to water and land resources caused by these projects and their associated works were widespread and pronounced, resulting in adverse economic, social and cultural impacts on TCN that continue to be felt today. TCN experienced cultural disruption and changes to their way of life that reduced their ability to rely on the land and water for sustenance. TCN has described the changes as a “devastation of our homeland ecosystem caused by hydroelectric development” (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

These changes undermined the confidence Members had in using the land and water around Split Lake and in Members’ ability to protect their rights. Travelling, drinking water, and the harvests from the land and waters they traditionally relied upon became unfamiliar due to the changes experienced. Many TCN Members were no longer able to sustain their way of life. These environmental effects added to an already growing rate of change in the social environment from increased resource competition, cash reliance, modernization and access to outside urban centers.

TCN describes the devastation felt by hydroelectric development and LWR and CRD:

The adverse effects caused by this development were beyond the worst fears of our people. The Nelson River pattern of higher flows in the spring and summer, with declining and low flows in the fall and winter, dictated by Mother Nature, was reversed. Flooding of our lands occurred. Our local environment was fundamentally and permanently disrupted. There was damage to property and loss of homes. Wildlife patterns and habits we knew and depended upon changed. Hydro Development was the final step in removing forever our opportunity to fully support and sustain ourselves in our traditional ways (TCN 2001).

The LWR and CRD increased flows down the Burntwood River eight-fold, flooding 1,500 acres (600 hectares) of our home Reserve at Split Lake, caused enormous amounts of debris, and dewatered the Churchill River in the northern portion of our homeland ecosystem. Seasonal flows were reversed all along the Nelson and Burntwood rivers, and in combination with CRD raised winter water levels on Split Lake by about three feet (less than one metre) and reduced summer levels by about one foot. It also caused water level fluctuations such as never before occurred, or could occur naturally. The utterly-changed water regime and debris severely impacted transportation throughout our resource area, eroded shorelines, contaminated fish with mercury, disrupted access and seasonal cycles of harvesting and completely upset the state of harmony and balance throughout our homeland ecosystem (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

## THE NORTHERN FLOOD COMMITTEE AND THE 1977 AGREEMENT

Hydroelectric development precipitated the need for TCN to develop capabilities to interact and negotiate with Manitoba Hydro, which eventually strengthened the community’s internal capacity and its ability to acquire a central role in shaping the development and use of resources in its traditional area (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a). “The negotiation of the Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) from 1974 to 1977 marked a formal beginning to reclaiming the power and authority we once held” (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report). A key development in this



regard was the creation and operation of the Northern Flood Committee, comprised of five First Nations, including TCN, whose reserve lands had been affected by LWR and the CRD. The committee was established to redress the lack of meaningful consultation by Manitoba Hydro, the Government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada; to assert First Nation rights over the development and use of their traditional lands; and to advance the expectation that effects from these projects would be mitigated and the loss of reserve land, resource use, infrastructure and culture caused by these projects would be compensated for. The process of presenting a case for mitigation and compensation agreements with Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba and the Government of Canada, and the eventual negotiation of these agreements over a 15 year span, played an important role in building TCN's confidence in dealing with outside organizations and in engendering interest and capacity for becoming a self-sufficient community with its worldview intact<sup>1</sup> (TCN 2001). Over this period, the governance of First Nations changed and younger generations who were educated in English participated in negotiations at the provincial and national level. The result was a generational shift in leadership that, among other things, extended the role of community leadership from internal community governance to include political involvement outside the community.

The first major achievement of the Northern Flood Committee was the 1977 NFA. The agreement promised to replace affected reserve land and to provide compensation for adverse effects. However, it would be many years before the NFA was satisfactorily implemented, as it was an agreement containing promised actions that were open to widely varying interpretations. This made it very difficult to translate the agreement into action, thereby creating long delays in its implementation. TCN felt that the years after the NFA had been signed but was not implemented were some of the most difficult:

The people had believed that the promises in the NFA, had trusted that its terms would provide a vehicle to counteract the adverse effects of the hydro projects, protect the integrity of their lands and waters, and foster the social and economic recovery of their community. The failure of these expectations to be realized led to bitter disappointment and mistrust (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a).

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT SPLIT LAKE

During the same years the negotiations took place on the NFA and its implementation agreement, TCN experienced a number of events in their community that destroyed infrastructure and utility services. Flooding (both natural and related to both the LWR and the CRD), the loss of several community-used buildings (school, store) to fire and damages to electrical supply were among those events that occurred in the community during the 1980s. As noted in one document, “there was conflict between external values and Aboriginal cultural traditions” (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a). Instead of leading to a downward spiral, these unfortunate events helped prompt a new stage of energetic development in Split Lake. TCN began to plan, advocate and develop the Split Lake community to meet the future needs of their people. Among the community infrastructure projects that took place in the 1980s and 1990s, were a major water and sewer project, a new store, a new school and education centre,

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<sup>1</sup>These agreements included the signing of the Northern Flood Agreement in 1977 and the signing of the NFA Comprehensive Implementation Agreement in 1992.



an all-weather road to connect the community to Thompson, hook-up to the grid from Kelsey, an arena, the introduction of mail service, and the installation of telephone lines. TCN continues to build and develop the services, programs and infrastructure of the Split Lake community to focus on a future that fosters a “revival of cultural practices throughout the community” (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a) and assists active and successful participation in contemporary society.

### **COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT OF 1992**

Beginning in the mid 1980s, TCN took the lead in pursuing negotiations for a Comprehensive Implementation Agreement (CIA) that would essentially bring into action the recommendations of the NFA, instead of continuing with the approach that was being used at the time. These efforts resulted in the first CIA in 1992 with TCN, Manitoba Hydro, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada. The CIA used the NFA as a foundation to assign land and other compensations for TCN. Manitoba Hydro was also required to undertake joint planning with TCN for any future hydroelectric development affecting their traditional area. The CIA also enabled the creation of the Split Lake RMA (SLRMA) and its associated board, which greatly strengthened TCN’s influence over development and the use of resources in its traditional territory.

The years since the signing of the CIA have seen TCN build capacity, actively participate in community development and pursue complete self-governance. There has also been an increased resurgence in the pursuit of traditional activities and interest in the intergenerational transfer of knowledge, as it relates to the traditional Cree culture. TCN’s signing of the CIA meant they could take action to understand and move toward mitigating the **deleterious** effects of the historical events they had experienced, including embarking on an assessment of the effects experienced as a result of hydroelectric development through the Split Lake Post Project Environmental Review between 1992 and 1996. The TCN community has stated their aim to govern themselves and find systems, processes and programs for their community that will allow them to be successful, both in maintaining their traditions and culture, and in forging a successful role in modern society.

### **KEEYASK PLANNING**

The 1992 CIA set the stage for TCN to engage in discussions regarding their participation and partnership in the development of the hydroelectric project at Keeyask Rapids (formerly Gull Rapids) on the Nelson River. “The 1992 Agreement sets out the basis for a continuing, sustainable relationship with Hydro as a party with interests in the SLRMA, protecting TCN’s interests with respect to any future hydro development which may affect our lands and waters” (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

With the Project being located in the SLRMA, TCN entered into joint discussions and negotiations about Project development very early in the planning stages. A number of early Project planning activities occurred involving TCN between 1992 and 2000, including joint studies on the impact of future hydroelectric development at Birthday and Gull rapids and the community at Split Lake. These activities, which were strongly influenced by TCN, contributed to the decision by Manitoba Hydro not to pursue high head and intermediate head development options at Birthday and Gull rapids, but to focus future

planning on low head development at Gull Rapids. These activities also identified lessons from past hydroelectric projects in the SLRMA that informed TCN's and Manitoba Hydro's approach to dealing with Project development. The eight years of joint studies helped improve relations between TCN and Manitoba Hydro to the point where both parties were prepared to begin discussions on future development at Gull Rapids.

In October 2000, TCN and Manitoba Hydro entered into an **Agreement in Principle (AIP)** that set out the basis for pursuing a partnership arrangement in development of the Project. TCN took strong positions in negotiating the AIP and secured key commitments in a number of areas including participation in Project planning, the EA, partnership shares, job targets and negotiated contracts. In addition:

The AIP recognized TCN's right to participate in the environmental assessment of the Keeyask Project, and to conduct its own assessment of potential adverse effects on us, which would be the basis for determining whether TCN would proceed with the Project (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

The AIP provided funding for TCN to conduct its own assessment of the socio-economic effects of the Project as well as to review and approve planned Manitoba Hydro studies on the physical, biophysical and socio-economic environments. Technical committees were formed to address key development issues pertaining to the Project. Community representatives and technical experts from each of the KCNs were on these committees and were integral in the development of the Keeyask Hydro Limited Partnership. The agreement set out how the Project would address matters related to potential income opportunities, training, construction and operations employment, business opportunities, as well as other related matters.

In September 2001, Manitoba Hydro and the KCNs signed the Principals' Memorandum that set out the negotiating principles for concluding the JKDA. In October of 2002, the parties signed the Negotiating Principles and Process Proposal, which set out in greater detail, the negotiating principles and process for concluding the JKDA. Negotiations on the JKDA started in 2002 and culminated in community referendums in early 2009. This resulted in the formal signing of the JKDA in Split Lake in May 2009 by representatives from each of the KCNs and Manitoba Hydro (see Chapter 2 of the Response to EIS Guidelines).

In addition to the JKDA, TCN negotiated an Adverse Effects Agreement (AEA). The AEA provided mitigation measures, community-based programming and cash compensation, to avoid, offset or compensate for anticipated Project effects. Unlike past projects, where adverse effects negotiations took place after the start of construction, the negotiations and implementation of the Project-related AEA programs preceded the approval and construction of the Project. In another departure from the past, Cree Nation ATK was incorporated into the analysis underlying the negotiations, their own Environmental Evaluation Report and subsequently this EIS (CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report).

The JKDA and AEA were presented to TCN Members in 2008 and 2009 through a community consultation process about becoming partners in the Project. A ratification vote of the membership was

held in February 2009. TCN membership voted in favour of becoming partners in the Project according to the terms set out in the JKDA.

TCN, as part of CNP, conducted their own community-driven, self-assessment of the Project using the Overview of Water and Land (OWL) approach and application of the Mother Earth Ecosystem Model, which eventually became the Ancestral Homeland Ecosystem Model. The assessment relies heavily on concepts and views provided by community Members obtained through an elaborate consultation process that focused heavily on Elders and resource users.

In terms of TCN's involvement in the EA, representatives from TCN, as part of CNP, sit on several key multi-lateral committees that oversee the regulatory, licensing and environmental assessment processes (see Sections 1.2.2 and 2.2.3.1).

### **2.2.3.1.2 War Lake First Nation**

Information on the history of WLFN is based on the following sources:

- War Lake Owl Process Keeyask Project (WLFN 2002);
- History of War Lake. (WLFN 2008);
- The collected volumes of a post project environmental review (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a, 1996b); and
- CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report.

WLFN is located at Ilford, along the Hudson Bay Railway, and became a separate band in 1980.

WLFN and TCN share the same early history (described above) as many WLFN Members were previously Members of TCN who resided near Ilford. The following highlights the history of Ilford as it is connected to the history of WLFN Members. Ilford was once a popular place to live because, as a Bayline service centre, it offered both employment and access to natural resources. Ilford has experienced several changes since its role as a service and economic centre that have led to the community becoming more isolated and secluded. Below is a summary of changes that have altered community life for WLFN Members, with a focus on events that happened at Ilford.

### **CONNECTION TO THE HUDSON BAY REGION AND THE SPLIT LAKE RESERVE**

The Cree in Ilford live in much the same area as their ancestors (WLFN 2002). Cree families lived along the shore of the Mooseocoot Lake and made their living from lands around the lake. During this period, people moved with the seasons and there were no permanent settlements, rather, there were known areas where families would meet at specific times during the year and set up a temporary camp to visit, hunt, fish and trap together. Although integrated into the trapping economy, as specifically noted by WLFN Members, their decision to live in the Mooseocoot Lake area was not “influenced by the European fur trade” (WLFN 2002). Originally, Members of the Split Lake Band, the predecessors of the WLFN were signatories to the 1908 Treaty 5 adhesion. This way of life continued with little change until the community of Ilford was established.

## **GROWTH OF ILFORD AS A BAYLINE COMMUNITY AND SERVICE CENTRE**

Ilford originated as a construction and service centre during the building of the Hudson Bay Railway and became one of the Bayline communities to service the route from The Pas to Churchill. For the Cree living in its vicinity, travel became easier. Trappers could now transport their families, dog sleds, and other supplies for trapping on the train. Furthermore, trappers were able to access a larger portion of the north.

The Ilford area experienced a boom after 1917, when the railway to Ilford was completed. The town began to develop and grow, especially with the introduction of gold mining in the region. The completion of the railway brought new technologies and industries to the community that were blended into traditional means of subsistence. The railway to Ilford increased access to the north, as well as contact with outsiders. The railway also provided easy access to Manitoba's northern resources and wage employment opportunities with Hudson Bay Railway, the service industry and the commercial fishery, as well as opportunities in the south, such as summer employment as farm hands.

## **NATIONAL POLICIES AND CHANGES TO COMMUNITY LIVING**

The railway facilitated the implementation and administration of government with the opening of a district office for Indian and Northern Affairs at Ilford. By the 1940s, Ilford had become home to other government offices related to resource management and the implementation of federal programs in the north. Local Cree relied on the community at Ilford for wage employment, goods and services. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs used Ilford as the access point for federal program implementation (*e.g.*, social allowance cheques, school, and Treaty payments). By the 1940s, the residential school system and compulsory schooling were enforced at Ilford. Additionally, fur blocks and trapping zones were also introduced, affecting the activities and seasonal cycle of the Cree (WLFN 2002).

The time period between 1935 and 1943 saw the town of Ilford gain importance as a freight and supply center. Ilford became a central depot for commercial fishing, winter freighting to outlying communities and a support centre for mining development in the north. God's Lake Gold Mining Company was established in the 1930s, and by 1941 the company had both established a freight receiving and tractor train camp in the Ilford area and a winter road from Ilford to God's Lake. The tractor train was more heavily relied on throughout the 1940s, as were the systems of winter and ice roads built by the freight hauling Sigfasson family who, over the next 30 years, established a connected winter road system throughout northern Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan (WLFN 2008).

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMERCIAL FISHING**

Commercial fishing at Ilford became an important local industry during this period and continued until the mid 1980s, providing stable employment for residents. In addition to employment provided by the fishery at Ilford, additional employment was generated by a number of supporting businesses, including the provision of local ice and crates. For the local Cree, Ilford allowed access to a wage economy and to their traditional life. In the 1930s, float planes gained popularity and the town of Ilford again provided a valuable service refuelling commercial planes used to transport fish from remote lakes to the commercial

fishery at Ilford. WLFN noted in their own study “[E]lders recall the dozens of float planes docked at Moosenose Lake and the exciting energy associated with a bustling industry” (WLFN 2002).

The commercial fishery and mining industries required the construction of homes for employees and offices for businesses in Ilford. This spurred the need for a variety of skilled and general construction labourers and provided additional employment in the community. Additional jobs necessitated additional community services and local entrepreneurs jumped on the opportunity (WLFN 2008). The Hudson Bay Store was very popular for many Aboriginal people of the region. In addition to the local Cree, some TCN Members looking for wage employment and other services moved to Ilford.

### **PERMANENT CHANGES TO WATER LEVELS AND FLOWS OF THE LAKES AND RIVERS**

WLFN Members felt the effects of hydroelectric projects in northern Manitoba, especially the changes experienced after LWR and CRD and the related Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone generation stations. These changes included flooding, reversal of the seasonal patterns of water flow on the Nelson River, changes to general land use related to the introduction of transmission lines and related projects, and changes to population via the workforce influx into the region. WLFN traditional harvesting areas were also traversed by a series of transmission projects, including Bipole I and Bipole II. The effects of hydroelectric and transmission projects on the biophysical environment placed pressures on the availability of resources and the resource based economy at Ilford.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ilford experienced major economic collapse partially due to the closure of the commercial fishery and the relocation of government offices to Thompson, which had become a larger, more accessible community in the preceding 20 years. The decline of the commercial fishery was in part related to the effects on lakes in the vicinity of the LWR and CRD, to changes to Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation regulations and to other changes to economic activities in the region. As a result, secondary industry left, the store closed and many publically provided services were relocated to Thompson. This was compounded by the decline in rail service to the community as the Split Lake reserve was now connected by road to Thompson and the Bayline was in disrepair (Manitoba Historical Society 1982). In a few short years, the population declined, wage employment was rare and the ability to rely on the waterways and lands for sustainability was limited in part by the effects of hydroelectric development. Within Ilford, infrastructure began deteriorating and unemployment became the norm (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a; WLFN 2002). Ilford evolved into an isolated community with no major economic base, no road access and very limited services.

### **WAR LAKE FIRST NATION ESTABLISHED AS AN INDEPENDENT FIRST NATION**

In 1976, Cree leaders began efforts to obtain a reserve at Ilford and to form an independent First Nation. In 1980, WLFN was established as a separate band at Ilford, which provided access to federal First Nation programs. Obtaining full access to these programs would prove to be a slow process. These programs allocated funding to make improvements to housing and other infrastructure in the community during the past two decades. Nevertheless, since the economic decline, limited infrastructure remains as part of the War Lake community. There is, for example, a health centre, school and multi-purpose band hall. WLFN at Ilford continues to be relatively isolated due to the lack of an all-weather road. Feasibility

studies for an all-weather road are currently underway. Planning is also underway to improve services and access at Ilford for WLFN community Members.

### **PAST ADVERSE EFFECTS AGREEMENT**

Five Manitoba First Nations, including some TCN Members who resided at Ilford, signed the NFA in 1977. As discussed in earlier sections, the agreement proved difficult to implement. As a result, the First Nations pursued negotiations for CIAs that were specific to the impacts they experienced. After 1980, WLFN became separate from TCN and therefore were no longer part of the ongoing negotiations for a CIA. As a result, the Split Lake CIA of 1992 did not include former Split Lake Members who were now Members of WLFN. WLFN Members therefore, were not party to the benefits of the Split Lake CIA. To redress this situation, WLFN decided to pursue its own settlement agreement. The March 2005 Past Adverse Effects Agreement, among WLFN, Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro, recognized WLFN's use of lands adversely affected by past hydro development with payment of compensation for adverse effects from past hydroelectric development (as defined in the Agreement). The Agreement included a provision for a Future Development process, whereby WLFN would work with Manitoba Hydro to address adverse effects on future projects on the Churchill, Nelson, Rat and Burntwood river systems.

### **KEYYASK PLANNING**

As noted above, an AIP was signed between TCN and Manitoba Hydro in 2000 that outlined the process for TCN participation in Project planning and the Keeyask environmental assessment. The AIP also outlined the terms by which a partnership agreement would be negotiated. WLFN signed a Memorandum of Understanding with TCN in May 2001 to consider participation in the proposed Keeyask Project. This led to the formation of the Cree Nation Partners (CNP) in 2003; and WLFN's signing of the 2003 Agreement Respecting the Terms of Participation with TCN and Manitoba Hydro. Since 2001, WLFN as part of CNP has been actively involved in Keeyask planning, development of the Keeyask environmental assessment, and negotiations of the JKDA. In 2009, WLFN voted to become an equity partner in the Project, recommending that their Chief and Council sign the JKDA and their AEA.

WLFN participated in Project-related activities as part of CNP and also received funding to conduct studies of the effects of the Project on WLFN using the approach outlined in their Overview of Water and Land. These are reported in the CNP Keeyask Environmental Evaluation Report.

#### **2.2.3.2 Fox Lake Cree Nation**

This section relied on the history and ATK of FLCN from the following key sources:

- Ninan: The story of the Fox Lake Cree - Draft (FLCN 2009a Draft);
- Fox Lake First Nation – Forgotten nation in the shadow of dams (FLCN 1997);
- Gillam Land Use Requirements and Availability (HTFC 2008); and



- Report on the Issues Related to the Setting apart of the Gillam Trailer Court as a “Reserve” within the Meaning of the Indian Act for the Use and Benefit of the Fox Lake Cree Nation (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007).

FLCN was recognized as an independent band in 1947. The FLCN primary reserve communities are surrounded by the Split Lake RMA and are located at Gillam and the community of Fox Lake (Bird). The Fox Lake Cree have inhabited the camps around Gillam, Fox Lake, and Bird for many years. Prior to 1947, the FLCN Members were part of YFFN and as such, were signatories to the 1910 Treaty 5 adhesion.

Much of FLCN’s early history is shared with that of YFFN. The onset of the railway settlement at Gillam in the early 1900s and the events and patterns of change since that time have resulted in experiences unique to FLCN, which are the focus of the following section.

### **CONNECTION TO THE HUDSON BAY REGION AND THE YORK FACTORY FIRST NATION**

Like other KCNs, Members of FLCN are people with deep ancestral ties to the land and waterways of the Hudson Bay region that date back thousands of years. Family ancestral regions linked to FLCN extend from the coast of the Hudson Bay to the interior:

For the Fox Lake Cree...summers on the Bay were integrated with life within the interior territory, reaching from the Fox River/Fox Lake area on the upper Hayes River, along the Kettle and Butnau Rivers to the lower Nelson River, and along the Nelson and its tributaries for several hundred miles to the north and east from Gull Lake (FLCN 1997).

With the onset of the fur trade, many FLCN ancestors traveled from their inland locations to York Factory in the summer to participate in the fur trade and exchange furs for European goods. Prior to the construction of the railway, the York Factory Post expanded its operations. Ancestors of the Fox Lake Cree gradually became more involved as *Ininewak* to support the Hudson Bay Company and to work in the summer on the York boats.

In 1910, the Cree inhabiting the area surrounding Fox Lake and Gillam, along with many others throughout the northeastern Manitoba, travelled to York Factory to sign the Treaty 5 adhesion. The Fox Lake people were then considered part of the York Factory Band. Some Fox Lake family territories were not traditionally around York Factory. Treaty membership for families who occupied the interior region may have been seen more as an arbitrary allocation at the time since their primary camps surrounded the Fox Lake, Gillam and Kettle region. Later, the desire to have reserve status and independence at Gillam would begin a lengthy process of requesting independence from YFFN (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007).

### **GILLAM BECOMES A BAYLINE COMMUNITY AND SERVICE CENTRE**

In 1912, with the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway, a small settlement existed approximately four miles east of the present town site of Gillam. This early settlement was largely an Indian-Metis village involved in the Hudson Bay fur trade and was transformed into the railway construction and survey camp that housed railway workers and families, including Members of FLCN (FLCN 1997; HTFC 2008). By

1920, there were many Cree who left York Factory for Fox Lake, Gillam and settlements inland due to a decline in activities and resource scarcity at York Factory (FLCN 2009a Draft).

A few years after completion of the Hudson Bay Railway, the Canadian National Railway established a new repair and works yard west of the small settlement leading to relocation of Gillam to its current geographic location. The new settlement consisted of a small cluster of buildings belonging to the Hudson Bay Railway and its workers on the north side of the “Y” in the tracks. On the east of the Y were homes belonging to Members of FLCN (HTFC 2008). In addition, the Hudson Bay Company built a store, which was popular among northerners. Gillam became a popular gathering place for surrounding Cree and outsiders now accessing the region by rail. The settlement and surrounding camps grew with an influx of Cree, Metis and others.

Over time, more Cree settled in the Gillam area and along the common railway stops where they could take advantage of wage employment and of the resources and land base around the region, including “Askiko Sipi (Kettle River), Kitchi Sipi (Nelson River) and Wabuttinah Sipi (Butnau River)” (FLCN 2009a Draft). FLCN Elders have described the settlement of their people in the Gillam area during the 1930s and 1940s as deliberate and logical:

They found themselves in an enviable position since, in addition to offering a steady supply of goods and sundries, Gillam offered full access to the Nelson River...and other rivers and areas of importance where traditional pursuits could be enjoyed (FLCN 2009a Draft).

The railway had been built through Cree traditional territory, thereby altering the landscape. The benefits of a wage economy through the railway were another means of sustenance within the traditional territory that could be used, while continuing other more traditional forms of living.

## **NATIONAL POLICIES AND CHANGES TO COMMUNITY LIVING**

The implementation of national and provincial policies, such as mandatory schooling and family allowance or social assistance, as well as the Cree’s desire for establishing formal reserve lands, began to change the relationship of Cree living at Gillam with their parent nation, YFFN. York Factory, as the primary community of YFFN, became the location of administration and implementation of these policies, including the ongoing requests for reserve lands. This was no longer acceptable or convenient to Treaty Members living at Gillam.

In Gillam, there was a one-room day school established in 1928 for the families of Canadian National Railways workers. Treaty children were not allowed to attend this school. A day school was available to Treaty Members at York Factory. By 1930, after mandatory schooling was in place, many FLCN children were sent to residential boarding schools across Manitoba. The effects of the residential school system are far reaching for Cree families. In general, the residential school system isolated children from their families, resulting in a loss of family attachment, language, and the ability to pass the knowledge on to younger generations (FLCN 2009a Draft). The implications and consequences of the residential school system in Manitoba are beyond the scope of this document.

In the early part of the 1940s, the Manitoba Department of Resource Management had established the RTL system. The Cree at Gillam were not assigned their own trapline block because they were not a

formally recognized First Nation when the RTL system was first established. As a result, Fox Lake Cree used the RTL blocks in both the Split Lake District and the Limestone District.

Treaty Members at Gillam felt isolated from their Band at York Factory, a location not connected by rail. York Factory began to decline and experienced reduced levels of activity and travel in and out of the community because it no longer was a custom port of entry. Communications between the Crown and the Band slowed and became increasingly complicated as the delivery of ground mail and visits from Indian Agents decreased considerably (FLCN 1997; YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwayminan*)). The Cree living at Gillam wanted to have independent Band status in order to formalize reserve land and receive services locally.

### **FOX LAKE CREE NATION ESTABLISHED AS AN INDEPENDENT FIRST NATION**

Requests to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for independence from YFFN were sent as early as the 1930s by Treaty Members living in the vicinity of Gillam. The requests indicated the need for reserve lands, Treaty benefits and rights at Gillam. After considerable delays, FLCN was unofficially recognized as an independent Band from YFFN in 1947. Originally named the Gillam Band, they were renamed the Fox Lake Band in 1949 and are now referred to as the Fox Lake Cree Nation. The formal separation without reserve lands or identified RTL section caused unease. Until the 1960s, FLCN continued to live as the majority population in Gillam and in surrounding camps, waiting for confirmation of reserve lands.

### **GILLAM DEVELOPED AS MANITOBA HYDRO'S NORTHERN HEADQUARTERS**

FLCN forwarded several requests after 1947 for reserve lands at Gillam, where their people had been long established and considered the Gillam area home. In the mid-1960s, FLCN was informed that their request for reserve lands would not be granted. Manitoba hydroelectric development along the Nelson River in northern Manitoba was approved and construction of the Kettle Generating Station began in 1966, near the Town of Gillam. With two other major hydroelectric projects to be developed near Gillam, Manitoba Hydro entered negotiations with Manitoba and Canada, and was granted claim to all lands necessary for the development of the Local Government District (LGD) of Gillam. From 1967-1971, Manitoba Hydro completely re-developed Gillam into a modern industrial town site to house the northern Manitoba Hydro headquarters that would operate and administer Manitoba Hydro's projects on the Nelson River. Gillam was a central location to the planned Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone Generating Stations. The town experienced a marked increase in population, followed by fluctuations in population size that mirrored the construction and operation phases of Manitoba Hydro projects. In addition, Manitoba Hydro became the dominating political and administrative force in Gillam:

Prior to the projects, the Fox Lake people lived in relative freedom, with little outside interference. But in short order, outside business and political structures were imposed on the community, and strangers assumed new decision making authority. The government and its Crown corporation were not the "protectors" of the people; instead, they became the primary actors in the people's exclusion, disempowerment and marginalization" (FLCN 2009a Draft).

At this time, FLCN families residing in the area were labelled as squatters, despite their long-standing residence in the Gillam area. At the time, there were 48 homes in and around the Gillam townsite (FLCN 1997). All of their homes and buildings were classified as “substandard” and relocated or demolished without compensation (FLCN 1997). Many FLCN Members moved to surrounding regions. Approximately 51 FLCN families remained in Gillam once Manitoba Hydro redeveloped the community. These FLCN families were relocated within the town site to make room for planned, modernized infrastructure to service Manitoba Hydro’s employees (FLCN 1997).

The planning and construction of Kettle in the late 1960s saw the population in Gillam increase from approximately 350 to 2,500 – a change that took place in a matter of weeks. An additional 1,500 outsiders working for Manitoba Hydro were located in a nearby construction camp. During construction of the Long Spruce Generating Station, the population increased again with an influx of 2,800 workers (FLCN 1997). FLCN became the large minority in Gillam, overwhelmed by the influx of non-Aboriginal workers associated with hydroelectric development. The composition of the community changed from predominantly Cree families to mainly single men working in construction who came from outside the Northern Region. The outsiders were not aware of Cree values and were not respectful of the lands, the waters and, more importantly, the people. In addition to the social issues associated with an influx of population, outsiders used the resources for hunting and fishing and placed strains on local resources. The identified struggles included loss of resources, language, family cohesion and community organization. An example of the disruption to community life can be characterized as follows:

Also at this time was the opening of one of the largest bars in all of Manitoba, at the Kettle Rapids construction camp. The male-only bar quickly became a social center for many workers, and consuming alcohol became one of the most popular leisure activities in the camps (FLCN 2009a Draft).

The impacts of Manitoba Hydro laying claim to Gillam, along with the development of hydroelectric projects, have been profoundly adverse and long lasting on the FLCN people. Today, community Members recall what came of the relationship with Manitoba Hydro: the loss of control of the community; a sense of disenfranchisement; limited land for resource use; and negative worker interactions with FLCN Members, which included pressure on women and safety issues during construction projects of Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone. Members were also falling into lifestyles involving alcohol and drugs (FLCN KPI Program 2009-2011). For further details related to social issues, see Section 5, Personal, Family and Community Life.

The social and cultural environment was transformed:

Our people identify the arrival of outside workers and availability and abundance of alcohol as two of the most detrimental effects of the Kettle project. As their personal stories demonstrate, the quiet town our people once knew was transformed almost overnight into a place where street parties, brawls and violence were commonplace (FLCN 2009a Draft).

## PERMANENT CHANGES TO THE WATER LEVELS AND FLOWS OF THE LAKES AND RIVERS

For FLCN, the most substantial historical influence of change on their traditional way of life has been hydroelectric development:

The fur trade and the expansion of the railway did not alter the social or environmental landscape to a great extent. In contrast, the hydro dams prevented our people from living a lifestyle that they determined and managed (FLCN 2009a Draft).

The greatest effects to FLCN's traditional lands and waters were caused by the Kettle Generating Station and by LWR and CRD. The flooding of Kettle created a large reservoir at Stephens Lake that inundated Fox Lake traditional hunting, fishing and trapping areas, including the Moose Nose area (*Mososko*) and Butnau River (*Wabuttnow Sipi*). The LWR and CRD also caused life-altering changes to the environment described by FLCN:

Unheard of in our community's history, the seasonal flow volumes of the "mighty Nelson" were reversed, so that water levels no longer peaked between May and June, but rather during the months of November and January. Not only did this reversal of natural cycles impact the safety and freedom of our people's river travel, it made it more difficult to predict the behaviour of the river year round (FLCN 2009a Draft).

The increase and changes to the flows of the river increased shoreline erosion, turbidity and mercury levels in fish in Stephens Lake. FLCN was not able to readily adapt to the level of environmental disruption being experienced and their ability to maintain a traditional lifestyle, based on reliance on resource harvesting for sustenance, was limited (FLCN 2009a Draft).

The Limestone Generating Station dropped water levels below the dam along the Nelson River, exposing the riverbed along nearby estuaries. This changed the ecology of the rivers and the waterways became dangerous. As described by FLCN:

The affected tributaries included time-honoured fishing, camping, hunting, and gathering areas such as the Limestone River and the Moondance and Sundance Creeks...These changes have had catastrophic effects on the community's ability to maintain its relationship with the land (FLCN 2009a Draft).

## FOX LAKE CREE NATION RESERVE SETTLEMENT AT BIRD

The first formal and legal reserve land was provided to FLCN at Fox Lake and Armstrong Lake<sup>1</sup>, however these lands were not inhabited by their people. In 1985, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs formalized Fox Lake (Bird), approximately 53 kilometres north east of Gillam, as the FLCN reserve community. Many FLCN Members and their families had been living at Bird since at least the 1950s when the community was a railroad stop. The reserve at Bird included homes, a band hall, a school, and other community-shared infrastructure, including utilities, water and sewer treatment facilities built to accommodate the community. However, many FLCN Members remained in Gillam and began integrating themselves into the Gillam community. This emphasized the dislocation of the FLCN

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<sup>1</sup> Armstrong Lake is approximately 190 km from Fox Lake (Bird) as the crow flies.



Members, whereby only a small portion of the total population remained in their home communities of Fox Lake (Bird) and Gillam. The reserve community at Bird was renamed Fox Lake in 2010.

### **DELAYED INVOLVEMENT IN MANITOBA HYDRO NEGOTIATIONS AND THE 2004 FOX LAKE CREE NATION SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

FLCN was originally part of the Northern Flood Committee. Although they were equally affected by the hydroelectric developments, especially LWR and CRD, they were not signatories to the 1977 NFA (FLCN 2009a Draft). Negotiations to resolve FLCN's outstanding grievances with Manitoba Hydro did not begin until 1993. In 1997, the FLCN formally identified the scope of impacts needing to be addressed in negotiations with Manitoba Hydro and released a formal report titled Fox Lake First Nation: Forgotten Nation in the Shadow of the Dams – Grievance Statement (FLCN 1997). The FLCN Settlement Agreement was formally signed in 2004, resulting in compensation for the past adverse effects and provisions for a Future Visions Trust Fund. The Settlement Agreement also included other programs that involved mitigation, remedial works, compensation and future development. This agreement outlined the requirement that FLCN be provided a substantive role in the planning, construction and monitoring of future hydroelectric projects (FLCN 2009b).

### **HARMONIZED GILLAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

In February 2007, FLCN and Manitoba Hydro entered the Harmonized Gillam Development (HGD) process. The HGD is a framework for Manitoba Hydro, FLCN, the Town of Gillam and the Province of Manitoba to work together undertaking projects and initiatives that are mutually beneficial to them and that strive to improve relations between them. The HGD process is a series of processes developed to overcome years of strained relationships. The hope is activities under the HGD will contribute to a positive change in relationships between the parties and will bring the FLCN presence in Gillam to the forefront (HTFC and FLCN, *pers. comm.*, 2009). Included as part of the HGD is the Gillam Land Use Requirements and Availability Study that uses a cooperative process in land use planning for the primary needs of FLCN and Manitoba Hydro (HTFC 2008). Negotiations for additional reserve lands at several locations, including Gillam are ongoing and recognized as part of the HGD (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007). In 2010, a small urban reserve was legally recognized at Kettle Crescent in Gillam.

### **KEEYASK PLANNING**

FLCN has been more heavily involved in the planning and assessment of the Project than in the previous Nelson River hydroelectric projects. FLCN's involvement has increased the awareness of Manitoba Hydro and its consultants to the distinctive socio-economic effects that FLCN experienced during past hydroelectric projects. Effects resulted in part from interactions between project workers and Band Members and the transformation of Gillam to the main centre for Manitoba Hydro northern operations.

Engagement of FLCN in the planning and design of the Project has been ongoing since 2001 and included the signing of the Principals' Memorandum, agreeing to the framework outlined in the AIP signed by TCN and WLFN. FLCN did not finalize their Impact Settlement Agreement for past adverse effects of hydroelectric development until 2004. Until the agreement was completed and signed, it was



difficult for FLCN to participate in discussions about partnering in the Project (FLCN 2009b). FLCN representatives participated in the various JKDA technical committees that dealt with Project description, employment, business opportunities and commercial terms. In addition, FLCN negotiated and signed their own AEA with Manitoba Hydro that identifies mitigation and compensation measures to deal with the potential adverse effects of the Project. The AEA and JKDA were ratified by FLCN through a referendum in May 2009. Shortly after, the KCNs and Manitoba Hydro signed the JKDA to formalize participation in the Project.

FLCN continues to be involved in the EA and regulatory process for the proposed Project. The FLCN has also undertaken their own studies of the community's history and traditional resource use by Members, incorporating their worldview and other components of ATK. This is to support and contribute to the requirements of the EA process for the EIS.

FLCN has representatives sitting on several key committees that oversee the regulatory, licensing and EA processes. Issue-specific multi-lateral working groups FLCN representatives have participated in include: Mercury and Human Health Technical Working Group, Aquatic Working Group and Mammals Working Group. As well, there is a bilateral FLCN Environmental Studies Working Group focused on participating in, reviewing and informing the fieldwork studies needed for the EIS. FLCN also participated on a Socio-Economic Steering Committee with members of the EA Study Team related to collaborative socio-economic fieldwork undertaken with FLCN in Fox Lake (Bird) and Gillam (FLCN KPI Program 2009-2010).

### 2.2.3.3 York Factory First Nation

Information on YFFN reviewed for this section includes:

- The YFFN Evaluation Report: (*Kipekiskwaywinan*): Our Voices;
- York Factory First Nation Traditional Values, Occupancy and Community History Project (YFFN 2010);
- Voices from Hudson Bay: Cree Stories from York Factory (Beardy and Coutts 1996);
- Community-Identified Socio-Economic Conditions and Future Priorities: A Background Report for the Environmental Assessment Proposed Keeyask Project. Final Report (YFFN 2004a); and
- Initial Community-Based Environmental Overview for the Proposed Keeyask Hydro Project (YFFN 2002).

YFFN have ancestral ties with those Cree who camped along the Hudson Bay coast, and were among the first to have contact with Europeans. YFFN was relocated in 1957 and given a small reserve community at York Landing (*Kawechivasik*) along the southern shoreline of Split Lake, within the Split Lake RMA. The heritage site of York Factory remains part of YFFN's traditional territory and is important as the location of their ancestors and traditional land use area.

## EARLY CONTACT AND THE FUR TRADE

YFFN have their ancestry and roots along the coast and were among the first involved in providing services and furs for trade to the Europeans. The Hudson Bay Company York Factory Post was built in 1684, marking the beginning of permanent settlement and community in the region (Beardy and Coutts 1996; YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). In general, the ancestors of YFFN, the *Ininewak*, were the first to be referred to as the Homeguard Cree, a name given by Europeans to the Cree along the coast who were integral to York Factory's success in the fur trade and commerce of the region (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). At this time, life on the Hudson Bay coast centred around the fur trade: "As provisioners for the forts our people ensured a reliable source of food, clothing and many other services to the Europeans at the forts" (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)); or:

[A] small band of coastal Cree who inhabited the area around York Factory, had long specialized in supplying the post with a variety of country goods and services. The small furs, provisions, country technology, and services of the hunters, guides, packers, and couriers known as the Home-Guard Cree, were indispensable to the profitability of the fur trade at York (Beardy and Coutts 1996).

At first, YFFN *Ininewak* maintained their role while still following their usual seasonal pattern of living, in which springs and summers were spent along the coast both pursuing traditional activities and providing services for the fur trade. In the winter they would go inland to their family territories. Much later, some YFFN *Ininewak* would remain year round at the York Factory Post along the coast.

## THE ARRIVAL OF MISSIONARIES AND CHRISTIANITY

YFFN's history with missionaries and the development of Christianity among its Members is varied and complex. Over the years, missionaries from several religious backgrounds arrived at the York Factory Post; however, most did not stay long and did not fully integrate into the lives of the Cree, resulting in varying degrees of acceptance of Christianity by the Cree of the region. There were both Protestant and Anglican missionaries introducing Christianity among YFFN Members. The church that remains at the York Factory Post Heritage Site is the Anglican Church and is referred to as the "iron or tin" church. There are YFFN ancestors who adopted or melded Christianity through the Anglican Church as part of their worldview (Beardy and Coutts 1996; YFFN 2002). In addition, the early arrival of missionaries brought early schooling to York Factory, and some Cree children attended the day school before mandatory schooling and the residential school system were enforced.

## TREATY 5 ADHESION FORMS THE YORK FACTORY BAND

The 1910 signing of the Treaty 5 adhesion at York Factory came two years after the adhesion was signed at Split Lake. Through the 1910 Treaty, the York Factory Band was formalized (the Band was later renamed York Factory First Nation). YFFN signatories included the Cree surrounding York Factory and those from surrounding regions who had not been signatories to the 1908 Split Lake adhesion. Treaty Members of the York Band came from Gillam, Bird, Shamattawa, Split Lake and Ilford. Initially, changes to the way of life of YFFN Members were minimal. Those already integrated and active in the York Factory Post lived at its edge on a small settlement. The remaining families continued their seasonal

patterns of traditional harvesting and camps, often located a considerable distance from the York Factory settlement. Historically, YFFN would still go out on the land to their family territories that included “Fort Severn (Wasahoo), Big Trout Lake (Namakoos Sakahegan), Kaskatamakan, Shamattawa, York Factory (Kischewaskehekan), Port Nelson (Pawinakaw), the Bay line (Otapan Maskanow) and Churchill (Mantayo Seepee)” (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

### **THE DECLINE OF YORK FACTORY AND THE HUDSON BAY RAILWAY**

By the early 20th century, overharvesting placed a strain on animal populations at York Factory, which, coupled with other issues, resulted in YFFN wanting to sign the Treaty 5 adhesion. In addition to depleted animal populations, the railway provided outsiders with access to the region and changed the transportation patterns of the fur trade. York Factory had experienced decline in its economic viability as a fur trade post, warehouse and shipment centre. The construction and operation of the Hudson Bay Railway provided service and shipment of goods to several Bayline stops along its route from The Pas to Churchill. The Bayline became a more favourable transportation option than travelling by water to York Factory. The York Factory Post was not one of the Bayline service stops. Churchill replaced York Factory as a customs port of entry and became the main headquarters for export and warehouse storage. This added to the economic downturn and would contribute to the eventual closure of the York Factory Post. The wage economy became integrated as a component of livelihood for YFFN and many Members participated in both paid employment and traditional resource harvesting. As a result, many YFFN families moved away from the settlement to communities with rail access and services for employment, to pursue resource harvesting from these locations.

In 1933, the York Factory post lost its status as a customs port of entry, leading to a reduced level of traffic and trading. As well, Port Nelson (Pawinakaw) was abandoned and many of our relatives moved to Split Lake (Tataskweyak), Shamattawa, Churchill (Mantayo Seepee) and other sites along the railway line (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

### **NATIONAL POLICIES MEAN CHANGES TO COMMUNITY LIVING**

As with other First Nations discussed in this section, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs implemented policies and programs that had various impacts and on YFFN, with the most prominent impacts deriving from residential schooling. Families with their children could no longer travel into the bush together to pursue their traditional lifestyle. There was a day school available for children at York Factory, and by the 1930s, many children were sent to residential school. The willingness of government to pay for transportation of children to residential schools was minimal, so once children left the community, they did not return until their schooling was completed years afterward (Beardy and Coutts 1996). Some other First Nations along the railway were more fortunate and were able to arrange visits occasionally (FLCN 2009a Draft). The need to stay year round at York Factory to receive the family allowance or social assistance and have children attend school, together with the lack of economic activity that coincided with this timeframe, resulted in changes to YFFN patterns of living and to the physical and social environment (Split Lake Cree – Manitoba Hydro Joint Study Group 1996a).

In addition to federal policies, the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources instituted the Manitoba RTL System in 1940. The idea of a RTL district was supported by YFFN because it would place

limitations on already overharvested territories that were experiencing worrisome declines in animal populations. This was to restore species to their natural numbers, something essential to maintaining a lifestyle of living off the land. However, the implementation of a RTL district did not reach YFFN until 1948 when an RTL section was established at York Factory along the coast, covering most of the traditional territory of YFFN (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

For YFFN, a number of problems converged at this time: the displacement of its Members living in several distant communities (Bird, Gillam, Kettle and Shamattawa), the push for programs to be implemented at central and accessible reserve settlements, the dramatic decline in country food and the downturn of the York Factory Post economy. Members around the region of Gillam and Shamattawa were lobbying for formal separation from York Factory to acquire independent reserves and RTL sections. In 1947, Fox Lake and Shamattawa were provided formal independence from York Factory, which created additional demographic changes (FLCN 1997). York Factory had become increasingly isolated in terms of access and the Hudson Bay Company closed its business at York Factory in 1957. The location became undesirable as a centre from which to implement YFFN's programs and policies.

## RELOCATION TO YORK LANDING

At the same time that the Hudson Bay Company closed the York Factory doors in 1957, the Government of Canada relocated YFFN to York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*). This relocation to an inland settlement was a major event changing the lives of YFFN Members and their ability to successfully participate in resource harvesting.

Prior to their relocation inland, YFFN Members relied on coastal and marine-related harvesting. In addition, the region immediately inland from the coast provided for YFFN through the hunting of large game, the trapping of furbearers, fishing and other harvests for their traditional lifestyle. Because York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) was further inland, Members were much more isolated in terms of access to the resources of their coastal region. In addition, there was limited land available for YFFN resource use because TCN already had reserves established in the area, and held a large RTL section for most of the surrounding Split Lake area. York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) was provided the Community Trapline 13 by TCN for their resource harvesting needs, and had access to Split Lake through a summer ferry and winter road.

At York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) there was no resource area like at the coast. While the York Registered Trap Line Section on the coast existed until 1973, access to the area was not viable on a continuous basis. The RTL system, which had first served us well, ended up being a jurisdictional confinement to our people, given our relocation. When we were relocated to York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*), Tataskweyak Cree Nation gave up one of their traplines, Trap Line No. 13, for our community to use within the large Split Lake Trap Line Section, but it was small, crowded and insufficient to support our people, even though it is still being used today. (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

As a result, Members who relocated to York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) were faced with new patterns of resource harvesting, and were limited in the regions they were allowed to trap. Members had no access via rail or road to their coastal region and had lost Members to FLCN and the Shamattawa Band (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). The daily lives of YFFN Members were altered dramatically due to the relocation of the community. Daily life became characterized by a lack of access to the resources

that shaped the Cree way of life and isolation from both other Cree people and the coastal region that provided the basis of sustenance and livelihood since time immemorial.

The time it would take for adaptation to the surroundings and the creation of a community at York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) are part of YFFN history:

Our younger Members were born in York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) and take only occasional trips to York Factory, Port Nelson, and Kaskatamakan. We now have homes, memories and a friendly community in this new place. Though we continue to be frustrated by isolation, resource access and conditions on Split Lake, and though we work hard to maintain ties to our coastal territory, York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) has become a home to us as well (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

## **PERMANENT CHANGES TO THE WATER LEVELS AND FLOWS OF THE LAKES AND RIVERS**

Manitoba Hydro began construction of the Kelsey Generating Station a few kilometres away from York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) one year after YFFN were relocated to the community. A construction crew arrived in York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*) without prior notice or consultation; YFFN found this particularly disturbing. This was further exacerbated when Kelsey began operations in 1961, flooding and bringing substantial changes to the water, ice formation, shorelines and surrounding environment (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)):

We no sooner were re-settled on the Aiken River at Split Lake when the first Hydro dam at Kelsey was built. Our new homelands and waters were changed, before we had barely begun to understand and learn about them (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

Over the next three decades, LWR, CRD and the related Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone generation projects were developed and caused flooding and changes in water levels and flows in the region. For YFFN, the effects of LWR and CRD were felt in the context of adapting to changes they were already experiencing from their recent relocation to York Landing (*Kawechiwasiik*). Members felt that they had never completely adjusted, and that the effects of past development still affected the Nelson River system (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

The LWR and CRD projects resulted in the reversal of seasonal water flow levels on Split Lake, Stephens Lake and along the lower Nelson River. As with the other First Nations affected, YFFN felt hydroelectric development substantially altered what had been readily available to them. Specifically, the changes identified by Members of YFFN as life-altering were: declining water quality, damaged fish and fishing conditions, decline in the number of wildlife, decline in the health of birds and animals, the lost safe travel on ice and water, shoreline erosion and changes to important cultural locations (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

The environmental effects of hydroelectric development also caused the following: limited access to habitat for acquiring country food, health issues related to elevated levels of methylmercury in fish, dangerous travel conditions, and a loss of traditional knowledge related to lack of intergenerational transfer of traversing the waterways and aquatic environment. Changes associated with hydroelectric development created further isolation from traditional lands along the coast and immediately inland. From the perspectives of YFFN Members, “there is nothing they can do to make it any worse...the damage has already been done” (YFFN KPI Program 2009-2010). These hydroelectric developments and



their environmental impacts added to the already strained and changing social environment. “Many of the changes that we have described are ongoing. They began with changes in the flow of the water and have passed along through the fish, animals, birds, shorelines and our community” (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

## THE NORTHERN FLOOD COMMITTEE AND THE 1977 AGREEMENT

For YFFN, the effects of the hydro developments were met with the sense of loss over their own ability to influence and address concerns for the community (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). In response to their perceived lack of community influence, YFFN joined as one of five allied First Nations (TCN, Nelson House, YFFN, Norway House and Cross Lake) to form the Northern Flood Committee. The committee became increasingly organized around the negotiations of mitigating and compensating the adverse effects felt by the First Nations related to both LWR and CRD. This was a time when the governance of First Nations changed, and younger generations who were educated in English needed to participate in leadership roles in negotiations at the provincial and national levels. The result was a generational shift in leadership and a national recognition of political involvement with the outside community:

We became defined as a Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) community by outsiders, rather than a proud Cree community that shared vast territories, history and culture with Cree now living in different places like Shamattawa, Churchill (Mantayo Seepee), Gillam (Akwayskimamaykuk), Bird, Fort Severn (Wasahoo), Split Lake (Tataskweyak) and Ilford (Moosokoochisik). We became a community under threat; under siege from outside forces, especially Hydro development (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

As noted previously, the Northern Flood Committee successfully negotiated the NFA in 1977. Although the recommendations of the Northern Flood Committee were positive and provided for compensations and future mitigation, the NFA experienced problems in implementation (as noted earlier). This led most of the First Nations that participated in the Northern Flood Committee to begin to negotiate independent agreements for mitigation and compensation of the adverse effects.

YFFN negotiated and finalized a CIA in 1995. Compensation and mitigation programs have had a hand in helping YFFN reconnect to their traditional routes and improve their community well-being. In recent years, the community has worked to reclaim their land of traditional use around York Factory on the Hudson Bay coast. The RMA formalized in the agreement is a part of YFFN history, but as noted by YFFN, the current RMA is not a good proxy of all ancestral territories. Funding has been available for cultural camps, sites and programs to support the objectives of reclaiming YFFN’s Cree language and traditions and to improve intergenerational relationships in the community. These efforts have met with varying degrees of success (YFFN 2004a; YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). “As noted earlier, these agreements have helped to identify us as ‘flood communities’ to outsiders, blurring where we come from and who we are as a community” (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

YFFN have goals and objectives for managing and overseeing their own programs and community development. YFFN would like future community planning to include a focus on improving their Members’ connection to Cree culture, customs and traditions while enabling successful and active participation in the surrounding modern society. YFFN has a desire to connect fully with their history at



York Factory. York Landing (*Kawechinasik*) and York Factory remain relatively isolated from the outside world and YFFN have identified the need for infrastructure to assist in achieving their new goals (YFFN 2004a). YFFN has chosen to move forward in the Partnership planning process of the Project to facilitate opportunities to address these goals, and to shape the Project in a way that ensures their views, knowledge and concerns are respected and addressed (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

## **KEEYASK PLANNING: YORK FACTORY FIRST NATION UNDERTAKING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

In 2002, YFFN began undertaking research and negotiations for partnership development in the Project as well as participating in detailed Project planning. Early in the process, YFFN signed a process agreement (2002) and contribution agreement (2004) with Manitoba Hydro. This provided funding for support, consultants and research to assist with negotiations and further inform YFFN's consideration of the Project (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). These agreements provided for community involvement and the use of ATK in preparing the EA. YFFN has participated in the research and process of planning for the Project, although their view of the development and of their participation is shadowed by the perspective that the Project will continue to degrade the lands and waters beyond predictions in the technical science-based EA. YFFN have taken the following stance with their Partnership:

We believe that a commitment to on-going reconciliation is the first step to forming a strong partnership; building effective advisory committees; and developing innovative cross-cultural approaches to monitoring and project management (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

YFFN was active in developing the JKDA for the Project. YFFN had representatives on technical committees that worked out the framework of the JKDA, including the minimum and maximum investment required by the KCNs, prospective construction jobs, operation jobs, **direct negotiated contracts** available to YFFN and YFFN's role in environmental monitoring and management of the Project (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)). At the same time, YFFN negotiated an AEA with Manitoba Hydro that provided mitigation measures, community-based programming and cash compensation to avoid, offset or compensate for anticipated Project effects. Unlike prior hydroelectric projects, these negotiations considered community priorities and knowledge to identify potential adverse effects and related compensation and mitigation prior to their occurrence.

In March 2009, YFFN held a referendum and ratified the JKDA and the AEA, with a majority of voters in favour of signing the agreements. In May 2009, YFFN Chief and Council signed the JKDA and AEA. In spite of this outcome, many in YFFN remain apprehensive about the Project and partnering with Manitoba Hydro in its development:

We recognize that these long-standing sentiments will not change quickly, but feel that as Partners, we must commit to reconcile our past interactions and work to build trust and respect between YFFN and Manitoba Hydro. In order to build trust and respect, our Members need to feel that Manitoba Hydro respects our First Nation, our values, and our concerns. Our people need to trust that they are not being managed or manipulated, but are meaningfully engaged as experts and stewards of our environment (YFFN Evaluation Report (*Kipekiskwaywinan*)).

As with the other KCNs, YFFN has also been integrally involved in the EA of the Project and has had YFFN representatives participate in several key committees that oversee the regulatory licensing and EA processes. Issue-specific multi-lateral working groups that YFFN representatives have participated in include the Mercury and Human Health Technical Working Group, the Aquatic Working Group and the Mammals Working Group. As well, a YFFN Environmental Studies Working Group was developed to focus on participating in, reviewing and informing the fieldwork studies needed for the EIS. YFFN also participated on a Socio-Economic Steering Committee with members of the EA Study Team related to collaborative socio-economic fieldwork undertaken with YFFN (YFFN KPI Program 2009-2010).

## 2.2.4 Gillam

Throughout its history, the Town of Gillam has gone through a series of community transformations. The town was named after 17th century fur traders for the Hudson's Bay Company named Captain Zachary Gillam and his son Benjamin, who resided in the region from 1668-1670 (Town of Gillam 2010). The area has served as a traditional harvesting camp for the Cree, as a railway construction and survey camp and as a divisional Hudson Bay Railway service centre (Bayline community). In the late 1960s, Gillam expanded and modernized to become Manitoba Hydro's northern centre of operations and administration.

A common thread in this history has been the presence of Cree people. FLCN and its predecessors have, and continue to be, an integral part of the population and life in Gillam. The interconnectedness of Gillam with FLCN cannot be separated. The following description of the town of Gillam draws primarily from these documents:

- Gillam Land Use Requirements and Availability (HTFC 2008);
- Report on the Issues Related to the Setting apart of the Gillam Trailer Court as a "Reserve" within the Meaning of the Indian Act for the Use and Benefit of the Fox Lake Cree Nation (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007);
- Fox Lake First Nation – Forgotten nation in the shadow of dams (FLCN 1997); and
- Ninan: The story of the Fox Lake Cree - Draft (FLCN 2009a Draft).

### SETTLEMENT ESTABLISHED AT GILLAM

Prior to the railway, the Cree inhabited the area around Gillam, trapping and fishing in the Nelson River area. Eventually, a small Hudson Bay Company post was established in the area. By 1912 and 1913, Gillam was a "quiet, largely Cree, rail hamlet" (FLCN 1997) with an estimated population of 350 that consisted largely of railway workers and their families (Town of Gillam 2010).

The early settlement located just east of where Gillam is today was used as a construction and survey camp for the Hudson Bay Railway. Before the railway to Churchill was completed, Gillam had earned the Cree name *Kaquyskimukkakh* or 'the place where trains turned around'. With the closure of York Factory, many FLCN families settled in Gillam and other encampments in proximity to the rail line, which offered them convenient access from the coast to other northern communities inland (FLCN

2009a Draft). Settling along the rail stops allowed the men to participate in rail maintenance work while still living off the land. “The Hudson’s Bay Company started a store in 1927/28 where the current Royal Canadian Legion stands. It was rumoured to be purchased for a single barrel of beer” (Town of Gillam 2010). The first one-room school was constructed in the community in 1927. In 1930, the Canadian National Railway established a new repair and works yard west of the small community at the divisional section of railway. The Gillam settlement was built up around this switch point where the railway, shaped like a Y, redirected trains northward to Churchill (Town of Gillam 2010). FLCN Members tended to settle on the east side of Gillam, along the south switch of the track (FLCN 2009a Draft; Town of Gillam 2010), while TCN families settled on the north side of the tracks (Town of Gillam 2010). In 1932, Len Gordon arrived in Gillam and took over the general store, which was operated as the White Fox Store. The first church built in Gillam was Anglican. The Roman Catholic Church was established later in 1942. “Ministers and religious teachers were brought into Gillam from the Northern Evangelical Mission” (Town of Gillam 2010).

Until the late 1960s, the settlement remained fairly small with the two churches, a small school, a hotel, a store, and a legion hall providing the majority of services to the community. The population remained small and included a large proportion of Cree families (FLCN 1997; FLCN 2009a Draft).

### **MANITOBA HYDRO HEADQUARTERS AT GILLAM**

The latter half of the 20th century brought change in the form of modernization and the development of Manitoba Hydro’s northern generation headquarters in Gillam. In 1963, a study of the hydroelectric potential of the Nelson River began, which considered the economic feasibility of developing generating stations from Split Lake to the Hudson Bay. In 1966, the Federal and Provincial Governments entered into an agreement to jointly undertake the development of the hydroelectric potential of the Nelson River, to bring power from northern Manitoba to the southern parts of the province. With this agreement in place, Manitoba Hydro began to develop the Kettle Generating Station (Manitoba Hydro 2010a), which would transform the community of Gillam entirely. Between 1966 and 1971, Gillam was transformed into a modern town site and the new generating station would accommodate increases in population for construction and operation crews of hydroelectric developments.

Manitoba Hydro continued to develop housing and infrastructure in Gillam to accommodate the operation and administration staff of large hydroelectric projects including the Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone generating stations, as well as the Radisson and Henday converter stations and associated transmission infrastructure. Construction and modernization of the town included the development of modern municipal infrastructure such as hydroelectric power, modern medical services, housing, a new school, commercial and retail services, an airport and road access to other parts of the province. The political and government structure also changed with an elected Mayor and Council. Manitoba Hydro becoming the primary landlord and economic contributor (HTFC 2008; Town of Gillam 2010).

Population increases associated with hydroelectric development in Gillam also caused the community demographics to shift to predominantly young families from the south who were employed by Manitoba Hydro; FLCN Members became the largest minority in the community.

Gillam's population boomed during the 1970s, reaching close to 3,000 residents at its peak during the Kettle and Long Spruce construction eras (see Section 2.2.2). During this time, some FLCN Members moved out of the community to other locations, including the York Factory Reserve, Split Lake and surrounding camps. Other FLCN Members continued to live and be integral parts of the community, although they began to feel unwelcome in their own community (FLCN 1997). Large tracts of land had been secured for future development by Manitoba Hydro. Many sites that were regularly used by FLCN for resource harvesting around Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone projects were fenced and restricted from their use. The restricted areas included construction sites for the generating stations as well as construction camps, dykes, borrow pits, quarries, access roads and the Butnau Diversion works. In addition, the large influx of non-local workers during the construction period of hydro development on the lower Nelson River, at construction camps and at Gillam, increased the use of land for recreational purposes by these outsiders. As a result, and in combination with limiting access to parcels of land for construction and operation of hydroelectric development, the ability for FLCN to continue harvesting activities for recreation, commercial gain or for Cree subsistence, became strained. The relationship of FLCN with Gillam is described further under Section 2.2.3.2. Aside from offering a place to live, the town also provided services to people from the surrounding construction camps for the Limestone, Long Spruce and Kettle Rapids projects.

Today, the population has stabilized with a relatively constant population base between 1,200 to 1,500 residents. The population of Gillam is often described as transient, as a sizeable portion of the population, consisting mostly of Manitoba Hydro employees and their families, move into the community for a number of years and then return to southern communities for a variety of reasons. Between 20% and 30% of Gillam's current population are considered long-term residents and are largely FLCN Members (HTFC 2008).

### **GILLAM IDENTIFIED AS PREFERRED RESERVE SETTLEMENT**

Many Cree who used the area around Gillam, Fox Lake, Kettle Rapids, Limestone River and Bird were signatories to the 1910 Treaty 5 adhesion as YFFN Members. After the Bayline became operational, the majority population in Gillam were families who referred to themselves as Fox Lake Cree and considered themselves independent from their parent First Nation. YFFN Treaty Members living in and around Gillam felt their rights and traditional lands were not protected without reserve and Treaty land unique to their geography (FLCN 1997). They requested reserve land and independent Indian status for their community as early as the 1930s (HTFC 2008). They hoped being separate from YFFN would result in Treaty land entitlements and RTLs around Gillam, Fox Lake and the surrounding area.

In federal communications, the Department of Indian Affairs began referring to those former YFFN Members living around Gillam as the Gillam Band and in 1947 Canada formally recognized them as a new Treaty band.

The newly formed Gillam Band found it difficult to secure a reserve settlement in Gillam. The RTL system was already established, leaving FLCN without independent RTLs. Without securing a reserve settlement or land, FLCN Members made use of RTLs from Split Lake to Limestone. The FLCN requested reserve land at Gillam was still waiting approval when, in 1966, the Province and Manitoba

Hydro entered into an agreement that established the LGD of Gillam, which meant that the Gillam reserve would not be approved at that time (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007).

### **THE HARMONIZED GILLAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Since 1966, the Town of Gillam has been funded by Manitoba Hydro, which has had a strong influence over the town's activities and development. This, in combination with the failure of the Provincial and Federal Governments to set apart reserve land for FLCN at Gillam, resulted in frustration for FLCN and a strain on the relationships among the stakeholders of Gillam (FLCN 1997).

By the mid 2000s, the stakeholder groups involved in Gillam's future development agreed on a process where Manitoba Hydro, FLCN, the Town of Gillam and the Province of Manitoba, joined together to undertake projects and initiatives that are mutually beneficial to the stakeholders and that strive to improve relations between them.

In February 2007, Manitoba Hydro and FLCN signed and agreed to a Joint Statement on HGD:

Harmonized Gillam Development must focus on building a community where all residents live, work, play and prosper together, where there is mutual use and enjoyment of community facilities and services and where residents respect and support the interests and ambitions of their neighbours (HTFC 2008).

The HGD process is a series of activities, discussions and projects developed to overcome years of strained relationship. The hope is that the activities and decision-making processes will improve the relationship between Manitoba Hydro and FLCN and will bring FLCN presence in Gillam to the forefront. Activities under the HGD have been ongoing since 2007 and have included key issue studies, development of working groups, committees and organizations and special one-time events or actions. Also included are:

- Report on the Issues Related to the Setting apart of the Gillam Trailer Court as a "Reserve" within the Meaning of the Indian Act for the Use and Benefit of the Fox Lake Cree Nation (Grahame McLeod and Associates 2007);
- Gillam Land Use Requirements and Availability Study (HTFC 2008);
- Joint Employment Business Opportunities (JEBO) meetings and organization;
- Hydro Town of Gillam and FLCN Apprenticeship Program;
- Via Rail Sub-Committee – looking at developing the railway station as a Heritage Building or some form of commercial development;
- Hydro-FLCN cultural awareness programs including history sessions about FLCN to Hydro employees;
- Cooperative Community events planning committees (for example, FLCN invited to Gillam Spring Clean Up, Manitoba Hydro employees invited to FLCN festival); and
- Initiatives to increase awareness of FLCN history to Gillam (for example, new and large sign welcoming the incoming people to Gillam as FLCN's traditional territory).



It is noted that:

In general, Manitoba Hydro continues to be the primary economic driver and landlord in Gillam and has made a commitment over the next several years to increase public education of FLCNs ties and history in Gillam. Together Manitoba Hydro and FLCN have been committed to the Harmonized Gillam Development Process. Related activities have contributed to positive attitude changes but the process is slow moving and all stakeholders will need to continue their commitment to the process (HTFC 2009).

## 2.2.5 Thompson

In 1956, the mining company Inco announced the discovery of a large nickel ore body at Cook Lake, where present-day Thompson is located. Thompson was built as an industrial community, providing services and housing to workers employed in the nickel mining operations. Over the past 60 years, Thompson, now known as the “Hub of the North”, has evolved from a single-industry town to a regional centre serving much of northern Manitoba (Thompson Unlimited 2007). Development in Thompson has been different from other communities in the north, since many other northern communities began as Aboriginal hunting and fishing sites that eventually developed into trading posts or Bayline service communities, with in-migration of non-Aboriginal and Metis people. Thompson began as a planned industrial town but has experienced an increase in the number of Aboriginal residents in recent years and has developed into an important economic and governance centre for the northern Aboriginal population. This has led to increases in the provision of services and resources in Thompson for the local and regional Aboriginal population (NMEDC 1992).

The following overview of Thompson is based on several sources including documents referenced in each of the KCNs discussions above (see Section 2.2.3) which were useful in understanding the evolution and context of Thompson and its increased importance in the Regional and Local Study Area. In addition, several other key documents referenced include:

- The City of Thompson Tourist and Economic Development materials, which include The Spirit Way Official Guide Book and the Thompson Unlimited Community Profile (Thompson Unlimited 2007); and
- A journey north: The great Thompson nickel discovery (Fraser 1985).

### THOMPSON CONSTRUCTION AND THE KELSEY GENERATING STATION

A government policy at the time provided the provincial Minister of Mines and Natural Resources with the power to incorporate any community for industrial development as a LGD (Robson 1993). This policy enabled Inco to enter into agreement with Manitoba regarding the acquisition of land and the development of related infrastructure for the construction of the Thompson Inco Nickel Mine and town site. A town site was to be developed for 8,000 people that included the construction of roads and sidewalks, sewers, a drainage system, a water treatment plant, schools and a civic administration building that also housed the jail and fire hall. The agreement with the Province also had provisions for Manitoba Hydro to develop the Kelsey Generating Station to provide power to the Thompson mining operations



as well as to the community. During the winter of 1957 and 1958, development of the town site occurred rapidly and coincided with the construction of the Kelsey Generating Station.

Kelsey was designed to provide over 100 MW of power to serve the new nickel mining and smelting operations and to serve Thompson. The Kelsey power plant started generating power in 1960, and in 1966, Kelsey was connected to the Province's electrical grid. By 1966, the town had expanded with several infrastructure projects including the library, theatre and recreation centre. Provincial Trunk Highway 6 (PTH 6) was constructed and connected Thompson to Grand Rapids (Thompson Unlimited 2007).

Located 90 km from the western edge of the Split Lake RMA, the modern town site of Thompson was also connected by road to southern parts of the province and would eventually develop into an important service centre. External influences would contribute to modernization throughout the Local Study Area.

### **ECONOMIC DIVERSITY THROUGH RESOURCE AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS**

By 1961, the first nickel was produced from the Thompson Nickel Mining Centre and was sold on the world market. The development of the mine has continued to be very profitable for Manitoba and Inco. Since its origin, Thompson has relied on nickel mining and processing as its primary economic base; however, in the past 30 years, the economy has diversified, moderating the impact of changes in the nickel sector.

While continuing to serve the nickel mining sector, the city of Thompson has become a service centre to the northern Manitoba and opened its doors to a number of industries including fishing, forestry, mining, and construction. Within the past decade, the diversification of Thompson's service and economic sectors are estimated to have brought as many as 60,000 people into the community for varying lengths of time (Thompson Unlimited 2007). Residents of surrounding communities use Thompson as a shopping centre and rely on it for access to health and other publically provided services that are not available in other northern communities. The resource industry of northern Manitoba often relies on Thompson as a place to conduct business meetings and provide training. Thompson is also known as the Winter Weather Testing Capital of North America. Every year, companies from the automobile, helicopter, snowmobile and other high-tech industries test their equipment and vehicles in the winter conditions of Thompson (Thompson Unlimited 2007). The city is also a marshalling point for a wilderness adventure tourism industry that is especially of interest to many out-of-country tourists (Tourism North 2008). Manitoba Hydro has also continued with hydroelectric development in northern Manitoba and much work and planning is done through Thompson.

### **POPULATION CHANGE**

Thompson has continued to experience overall positive growth over a short period of time. The community was originally designed for 8,000 residents. In 1959, its first year of existence, there were approximately 2,500 residents in Thompson. This number quickly jumped to 8,500 by 1966, and by 1970, the population reached 20,000 and Thompson was incorporated as an urban municipality. During the early years, Thompson operated very much as a one-industry town. The population was transient and primarily consisted of young couples and their children. These families moved in and out of Thompson

relatively quickly, working at Inco for only short terms. Municipal planning, undertaken by the Thompson Municipal Planning Branch in 1975, indicated that the young and transient population identified certain social issues that needed attention. Specifically, a high turnover rate in the middle of school years was felt to be a barrier to a quality education. Additionally, marital stress and juvenile delinquency were identified as problems related to low community attachment and a lack of informal support systems in Thompson.

Since the 1970s, the population growth in Thompson has slowed and shifted from transient, young families employed by Inco to a diversified population using the city as a regional centre. Today, over 13,000 people reside in Thompson (Statistics Canada 2007) and more families are choosing Thompson as a permanent place to live. While first generation residents tended to leave the community upon retirement, many of their children who were born and raised in the community are remaining and intend to retire in Thompson. As well, the Aboriginal population in Thompson is growing through in-migration. Thompson is a primary service centre and meeting place for First Nation and Metis communities across northern Manitoba.

### **THOMPSON INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES EVOLVE AS TRANSPORTATION HUB OF NORTHERN MANITOBA**

Prior to the construction of a railway spur connecting Thompson to the Hudson Bay Railway at Sipiwesk, the major economic and service centre in northern Manitoba was The Pas. Permanent communities established along the Hudson Bay Railway became known as Bayline communities that relied on goods and services shipped along the Bayline from The Pas, which was then known as the gateway to the north (Earl 1958).

Prior to 1958, Thompson and the surrounding District of Mystery Lake were generally inaccessible, but by 1966, a road and air transportation system connected Thompson to southern and northern regions of the province. This access, along with the declining reliance on the Bayline, resulted in Thompson assuming the role of a regional service centre. The boom in Thompson led to several large projects, including Canada's first indoor shopping mall, government offices, a full-service hospital, the Mystery Lake School District, a personal care home, a large commercial base of businesses, banks and other infrastructure traditionally found in modern Canadian cities.

Residential, government and business infrastructure are in high demand today as Thompson adjusts to serving northern Manitoba and industry demands. These demands include increased levels of day-to-day business that have resulted in increased access to technology, including high speed internet and cell phone coverage.

### **THOMPSON AS MAJOR ABORIGINAL CENTRE FOR NORTHERN MANITOBA**

In parallel with Thompson's development as the regional centre of the north, Aboriginal people have also had a large influence on the day-to-day organization and activities of the community. Thompson has become a central location for Aboriginal agencies, services and government administration (NMEDC 1992). The city experiences a regular influx of Aboriginal and Metis people from across Manitoba and Canada who visit for education and training, health care, employment, social services, and other

Aboriginal organizational planning initiatives (Thompson Unlimited 2007). Additionally, Aboriginal organizations and government agencies that service northern First Nations and Metis communities often have central offices in Thompson. Thompson was also used as a central meeting location for First Nation partnership planning with Manitoba Hydro and newly proposed hydroelectric developments.

Thompson acts as a health service centre for northern Manitoba. Based in Thompson, the Burntwood Regional Health Authority administers health care for northern Manitoba (except the areas around Flin Flon, The Pas and Churchill) and operates a full-service hospital. The northern Manitoba Aboriginal population rely on the hospital at Thompson for acute care (hospital stays and emergency services) and specialty health services (such as dialysis, chemotherapy, obstetrics, neurology, *etc.*). As such, there is a continuous flow of Aboriginal and Metis people into the city to deal with a variety of social and health issues.

### **EXPANDING GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION**

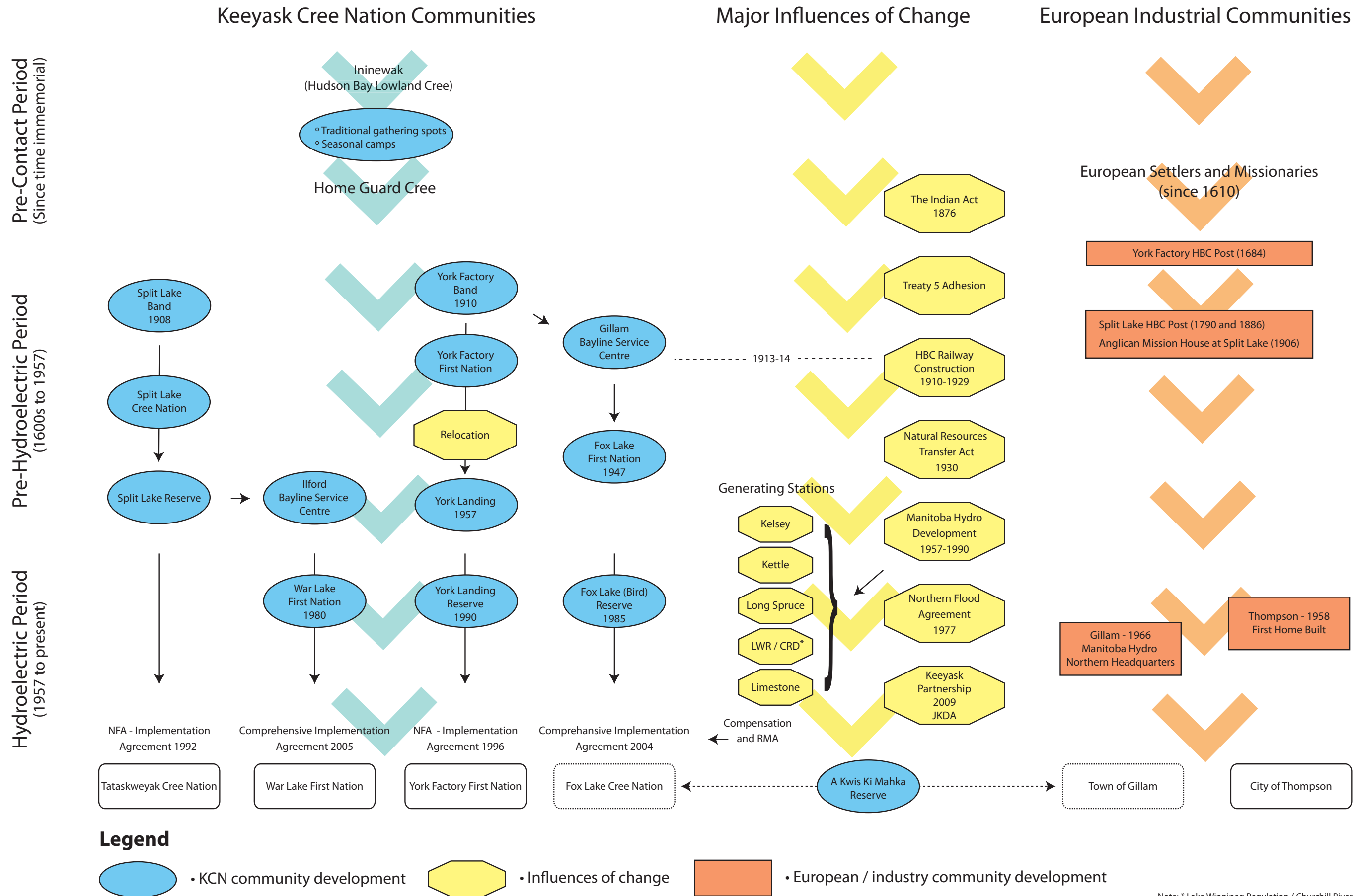
In 1966, Inco turned over the community infrastructure to the City of Thompson and in 1967 Thompson was incorporated as a town and administered as a LGD. Inco Ltd. and the Province of Manitoba (Taunton 1978) jointly appointed the administrator. In June of 1970, Thompson was incorporated as a City of 20,000 residents and was governed by an elected Mayor and Council (Thompson Unlimited 2007). The LGD of Mystery Lake remained to provide services to the area outside of the City of Thompson and to operate a number of other facilities, such as the airport (Taunton 1978). Currently, the City has an area of 17.18 km<sup>2</sup> and has experienced a period of substantial growth in recent years (Thompson KPI Program 2008-2010).

By the latter half of the 1970s, studies were undertaken to help address issues and pressures on Thompson from industries and services outside the mining industry. These studies suggested that municipal planning needed to increase informal community leadership and greater government organization in the community (Kuz 1977). The past three decades have seen several levels of government and organizations involved in planning various aspects of community in Thompson. The Mayor and Council are faced with an expanding portfolio of planning issues and a decreased reliance on Inco to provide fiscal and political support to the community.

The City of Thompson has made a commitment to the sustainable future of Thompson. A Sustainable Community Plan was developed by the City and the LGD in 2010 to “address the challenges and opportunities for the benefit of current residents and future generations” (City of Thompson 2010a). In 2006, Inco was acquired by the Brazilian company Vale and was known for some time as Vale Inco (currently known as Vale). In 2008, Vale Inco engaged in a wide range of expansion and construction activities and the company committed to keeping Thompson mining operations going until 2027. Overall, Vale Inco has been the main driver of economic growth in the Thompson economy. In 2009, the company announced that plans to increase investments in the Thompson operations were dependant on changes in market conditions (Blout and Simoes 2009).

Vale’s activities have an important influence and contribute to fluctuations in Thompson’s economy and population. Prior to Vale acquiring the mining and processing facilities in Thompson, the company was publically talking about mine closures starting in 2013. Vale is on record stating that they were “working

to keep the mines operating until 2027 and possibly even until 2030” (Western Investor 2007). However, on November 17, 2010, Vale announced plans to close the Thompson smelter and refinery by the end of 2015 and to reduce the local workforce by about 40% or 500 jobs. Despite this announcement, Vale is focusing work on finding new sources of ore as the company transitions to mining and milling. According to a Vale press release, Vale sees a “strong and long-term future for [its] operations in Manitoba” (Vale 2010).



Note: \* Lake Winnipeg Regulation / Churchill River Diversion

**Figure 2-2: Community Development in the Local Study Area**