



Balancing Forestry And Protection In The Whitefeather Forest

McGuinty Government Working in Partnership With Pikangikum First Nation

NEWS

October 26, 2009

The Ontario government and Pikangikum First Nation celebrated their continued partnership by signing terms of reference that will support protected areas and forest management planning in the Whitefeather Forest.

Under the terms of reference, teams will prepare plans by 2012 for:

- forest management activities
- management of dedicated protected areas – totalling 36 per cent of the Whitefeather Forest.

The public will be invited to participate in these planning processes in the near future.

Consultations were held on the proposal to regulate [dedicated protected areas](#) under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act. These proposed protected areas will contribute to the development of the Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage Site project.

These efforts are part of the Whitefeather Forest land use strategy – *Keeping the Land* – developed by Pikangikum First Nation and the Government of Ontario. This strategy commits to protecting areas of cultural and natural significance, maintaining customary stewardship responsibilities and creating new economic opportunities, such as forestry and tourism.

QUOTES

“Pikangikum First Nation has shown tremendous leadership in seeking to harmonize customary stewardship and new economic opportunities across their cultural landscape through the Whitefeather Forest land use strategy. The terms of reference we signed today will guide decisions around future forest management activities and establishing dedicated protected areas in the Whitefeather Forest.”

– Donna Cansfield, Minister of Natural Resources

“Pikangikum people have exercised our responsibilities to take care of the Whitefeather Forest for generations. As our Elders say, when you go out into the Whitefeather Forest you can see the land is still beautiful. It is our responsibility to continue to carry out our responsibilities for Keeping the Land. The dedicated protected areas that are being established in our partnership with Ontario will contribute to this.”

– Jonah Strang, Chief, Pikangikum First Nation

“Planning will support new economic opportunities such as cultural tourism in protected areas and forestry that help us realize the vision of economic renewal for our people in the Whitefeather Forest.”

– Alex Peters, President, Whitefeather Forest Management Corporation

QUICK FACTS

- The Whitefeather Forest land use strategy calls for the protection of 436,000 hectares in the Whitefeather Forest.
- The Minister of the Environment granted a [declaration order](#) providing Environmental Assessment Act coverage for forest management on the Whitefeather Forest in June 2009.
- Pikangikum First Nation is located approximately 90 kilometres north of Red Lake, Ontario, and approximately 80 kilometres east of the Ontario-Manitoba border.

LEARN MORE

- Find out more about the [Whitefeather Forest Initiative](#).
- Learn more about the [Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage Site project](#).

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